Stuart's Audacity Cheat Sheet
File Types

Here's a quick-reference table that compares file types typically used with Audacity and how you'd want to use them.

File Type	Stands For	Uses	Notes	File Size
AUP	**AU**dacity **P**roject	Store Audacity 2.x project in progress	Must be located along with its companion data folder, e.g. **myProject.aup** and **myProject_data**	N/A
AUP3	**AU**dacity **P**roject v3	Store Audacity 3.x project in progress	No companion folder; all data stored in AUP3 file.	N/A
WAV	**WAV**eform Audio File Format	Store master recording; sometimes used for client delivery	Only contains audio data; no project info. No file compression*.	Large
MP3	Moving Pictures Experts Group MPEG-1 or 2 Audio Layer **3**	Deliver to client	Only contains audio data; no project info. "Lossy" file compression*.	Small
FLAC	Free Lossless Audio Compression	Store master recording; sometimes used for client delivery	Only contains audio data; no project info. Lossless file compression*.	Small
MP4	MPEG-4 Part 14	Video container file	NOT used for audio-only projects. MP4 has no relation to MP3; it is NOT a newer version number.	N/A

Legend

	Audacity Project
	Compressed* data; some loss
	Uncompressed data; no loss
	Compressed* data; no loss

*Compression refers to file size compression, NOT audio compression. File formats do not affect or imply audio compression.

NOTE: MP3 is described as "lossy" compression. This does not mean that any audio is lost. The data that is lost doesn't really affect how humans hear the audio. That's why MP3 files are smaller than their equivalent WAV files.

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