

SERMON EDITING GUIDE (AUDACITY)

This step by step guide covers a generic setup. Please ignore any sections that do not apply.

The first and most important step is to record your sermon. This can be done on a computer using an audio input from your sound desk or on a portable recorder.

Record the sermon at the best possible quality and rather record for longer than you need. It is better to have more than you need than miss a portion of the sermon due to user or technical error.

The quality of your initial recording is the crucial first building block to the quality of your uploaded audio.

To start

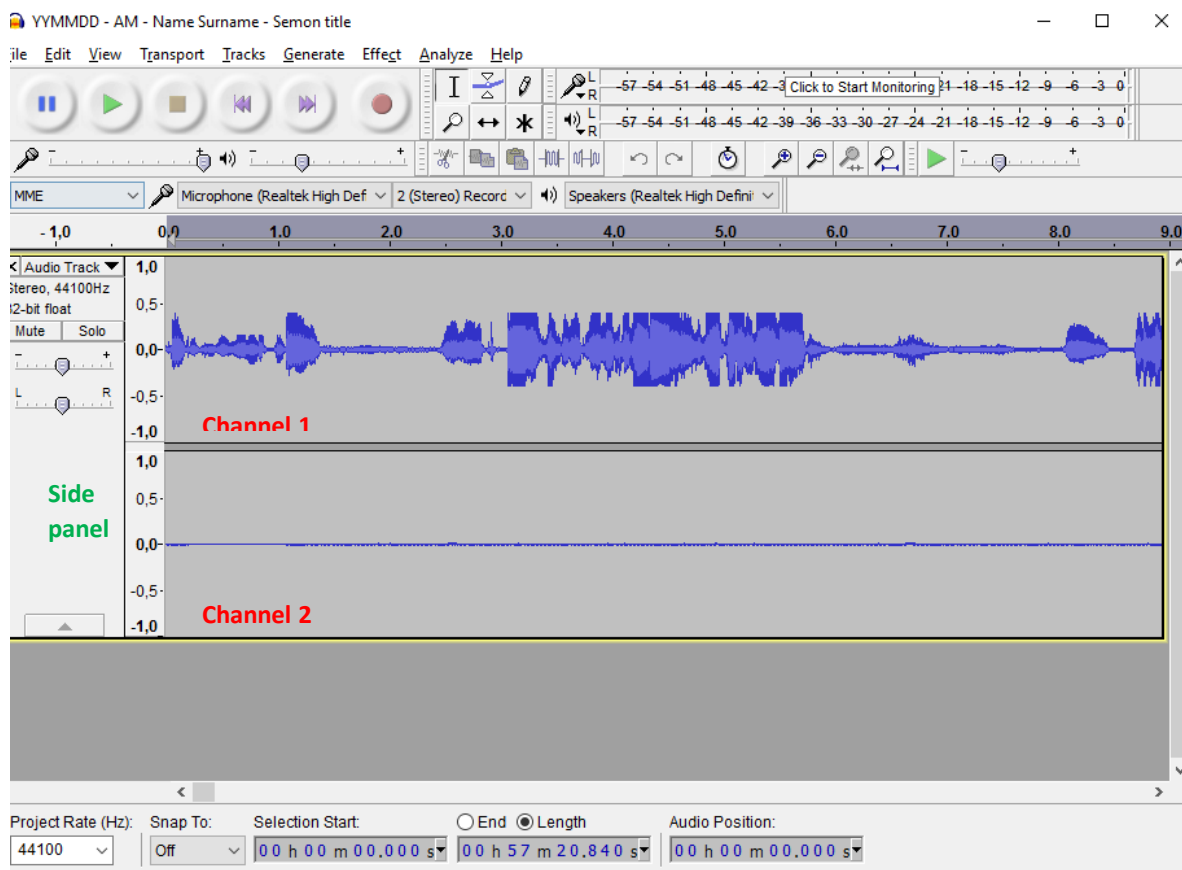
- Open up your recorded sermon

TIP

If you make any mistake in the following steps you can always undo you action by selecting **Edit** and then **Undo**, or use the standard Windows keyboard shortcut to Undo (**Ctrl + Z**)

1. Convert from Stereo to Mono

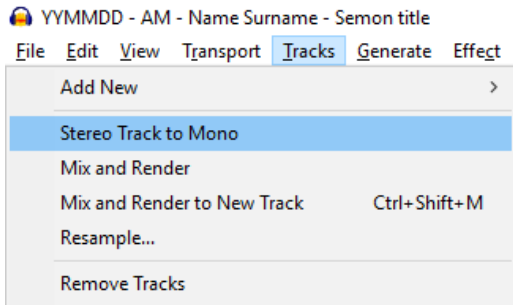
- After you have opened your file you should see something similar to below:



If there are two channels, it is recorded in stereo and you will have to convert it to mono

- **Select** the track by clicking on the **side panel** indicated in green on the screenshot above

- Go to the top menu bar and click on **Tracks** --> **Stereo Track to Mono** as seen below. The processing might take a few minutes, so be patient.



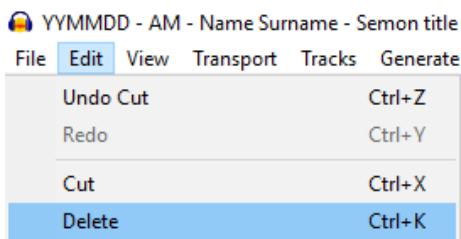
- Wait for it to finish and then continue to next step

2. Topping and tailing

- Listen** to the audio and place yourself in the listener's position. The aim is to cut out the unnecessary stuff at the beginning and end, without losing context for the sermon. It must not confuse the listener or leave him/her hanging.
- Aim to cut at the beginning where the Sermon starts at logical point and again at the end cut so that it stops at a logical conclusion. The ministry need not be included, but if it forms part of the logical flow, it can be. Worship and live song vocals must not be included.
- If you did not attend the service yourself ensure that you **listen** to enough of the sermon to know if it makes sense to the listener or not. It is always worth double-checking yourself.
- So **listen** and select the point where you want to cut.
- Select your cut point by clicking the mouse at the exact insertion point (you can also move the insertion marker with the cursor keys). You can also zoom in and out for accuracy or ease of navigation.
- Highlight the portion of the audio track you are going to cut. Use your mouse to click and drag or hold the SHIFT key while scrolling left or right with the cursor buttons. See below.



- Press delete on the keyboard or select **edit** and **delete** as seen below. This will remove that piece of audio.

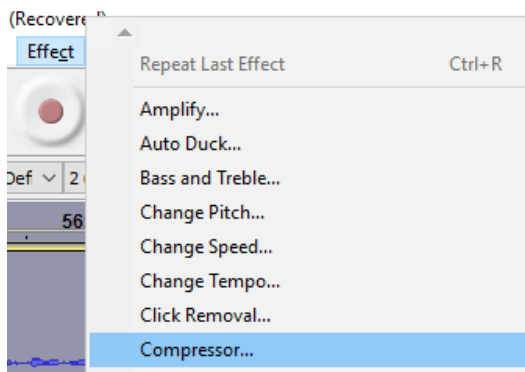


- Listen** again. Do the beginning and end make sense.
- If you think you have made a mistake you can undo your action by selecting **Edit** and **Undo** as seen below or pressing **Ctrl + Z**.

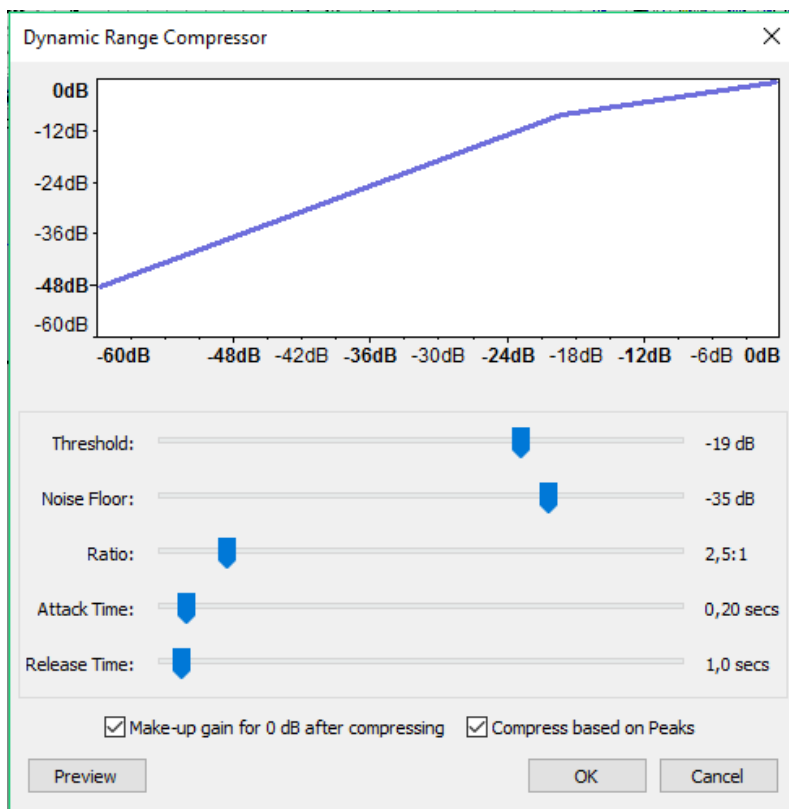
3. Compress

Compression is one of the steps involved in equalising the audio levels. It suppresses the louder parts and amplifies the softer ones. Do not overuse as it can sound artificial.

- Select the whole track as done in step 1 with the stereo to mono conversion.
- From the top menu bar, select **Effect** --> **Compressor** as seen below.



- A pop up window will display as seen below. Please check that yours uses the same settings as shown.

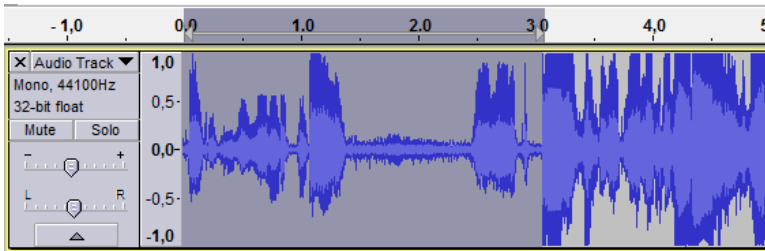


- Press ok and wait for it to finish.

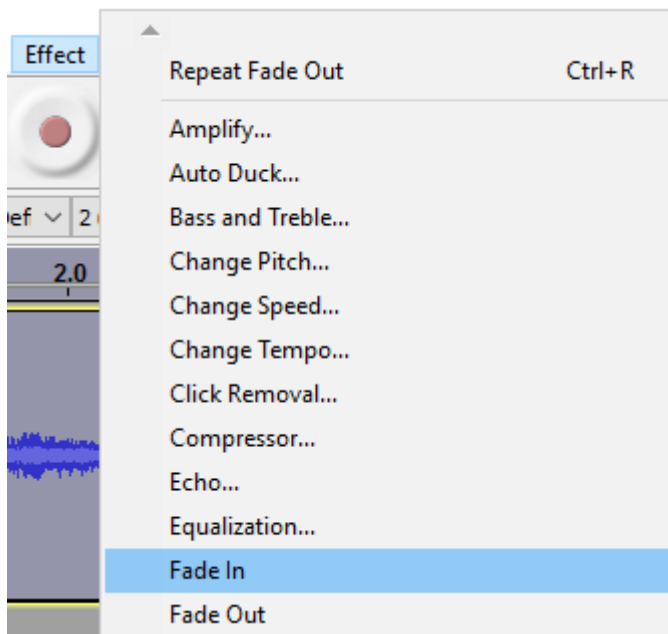
4. Fade In and Out

Fading the audio in/out helps to lead the listener into and out of the sermon. Abruptly starting or ending on even a low level signal can be jarring.

- Highlight the portion of the audio you want to fade in. This can be anything from 0.1 seconds to three seconds.



- Select **Effect --> Fade in**



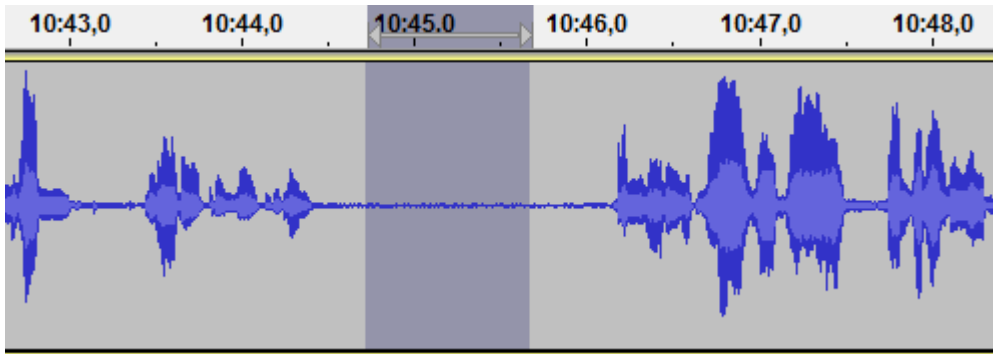
- Listen to the edit. If it sounds wrong or unclear, undo and redo.
- For the fade out listen to the last section of audio and select the last 7-20 seconds
- Select **Effect --> Fade Out**.
- Listen to the edit. If it sounds wrong, undo and redo.

5. Noise removal (for a constant noise like a buzz)

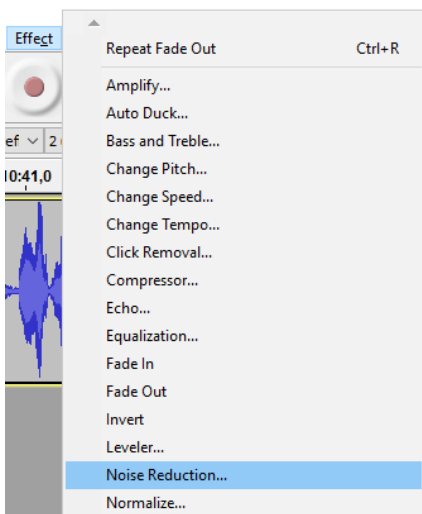
If you have a constant background noise (like a buzz) you can remove/reduce it with this function. Removing might sound weird as you may have absolute silences punctuating the speech. This is hard on the ear and will fatigue the listener. Reducing the noise to a more manageable level (not removing it totally) can counter this problem.

- If there is an annoying buzz sound in the background go to a part in the audio where the noise is isolated and there is a pause in the speech/sermon. This will look like a fuzzy line with no major peaks.

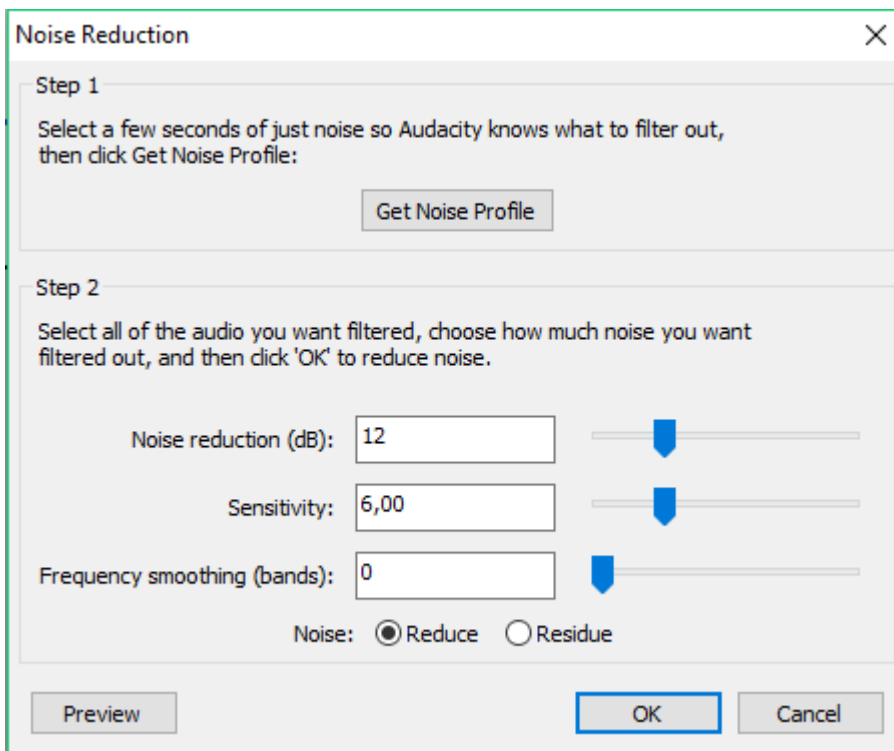
- Highlight this portion of the audio as indicated.



- Listen to the selection to be sure you have the correct noise you are trying to isolate and that it has no speech or other noise mixed in.
- From the top menu bar **Effect --> Noise Reduction**



- The screen below will pop up



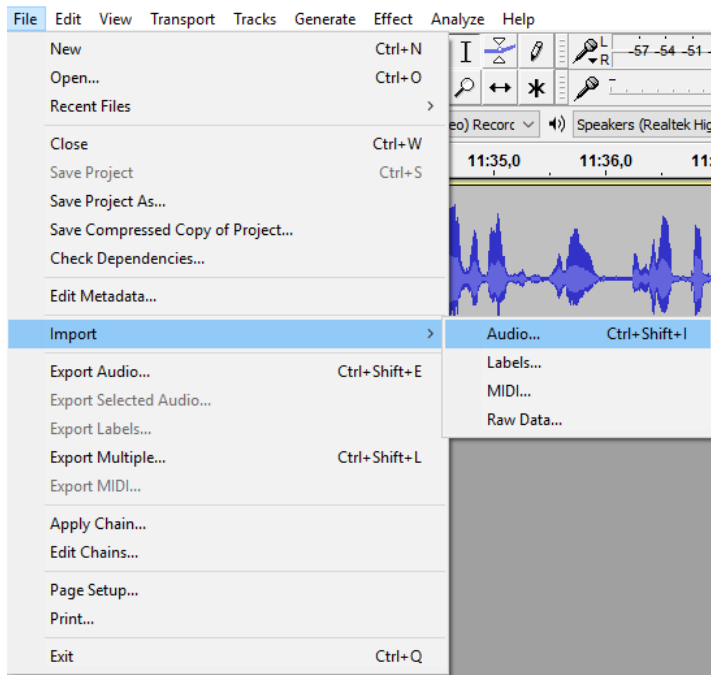
- Click on **Get Noise Profile** as you have already selected the audio with the noise. The screen will disappear.

- Select the whole track by clicking on the side panel.
- Again select **Effect --> Noise Reduction**
- The press OK and wait to finish.
- Listen to the track, there should be a noticeable difference that buzz is less.
- Listen and evaluate that the speech sounds more or less natural. If it sounds wrong to your ear, then it is wrong. Undo and redo with different settings. Start by decreasing the noise reduction by 3 dB.

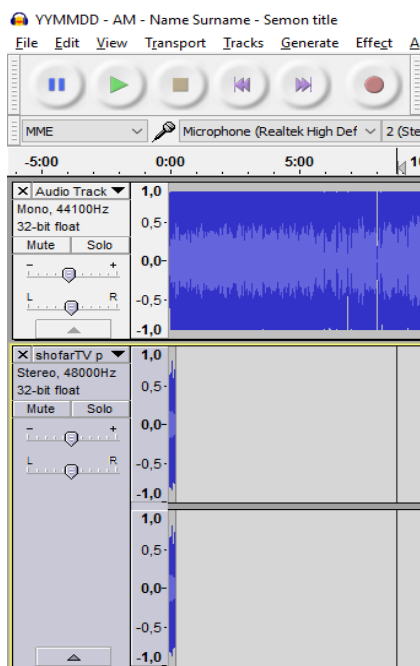
6. Add Intro and Outro (OPTIONAL)

The intro and outro round off the sermon and are especially useful if you are doing a podcast feed.

- On the top menu bar, Click on **File --> Import --> Audio...** (alternately drag and drop the audio tracks into Audacity from your file manager)

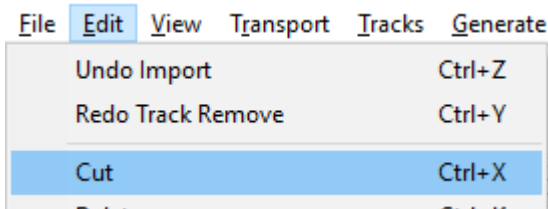


- A popup screen will appear. Browse to the correct location where you have saved the files and import.
- They will appear as a second track below your existing track, as below.

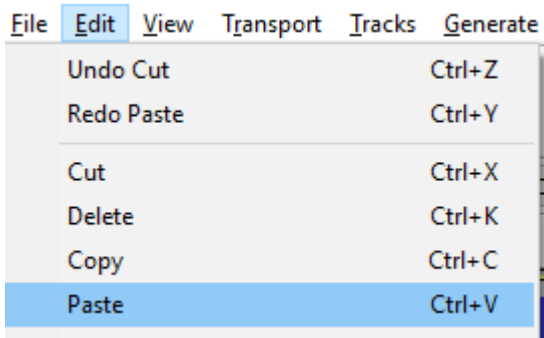


- This track happens to be in stereo, so convert it to Mono as shown in [Step 1](#).

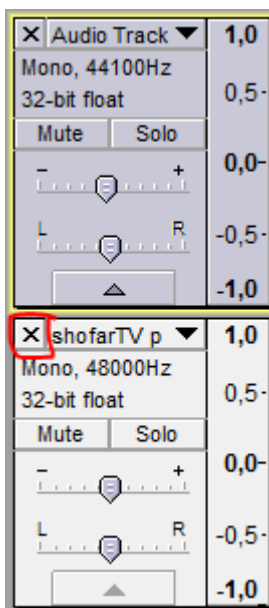
- You can now select the whole intro track and then **Edit --> Cut** or CTRL + X



- Select the point you want to insert the intro/outro (right at the beginning or right at the end, whichever is applicable) and then **Edit --> Paste** or CTRL + V



- The intro should now be part of your sermon track, listen if it is in the correct position and the transition to the sermons sounds right. Otherwise undo and redo the insertion.
- You can now remove the empty track that is left by clicking on the X in the left top corner as seen circled in red below

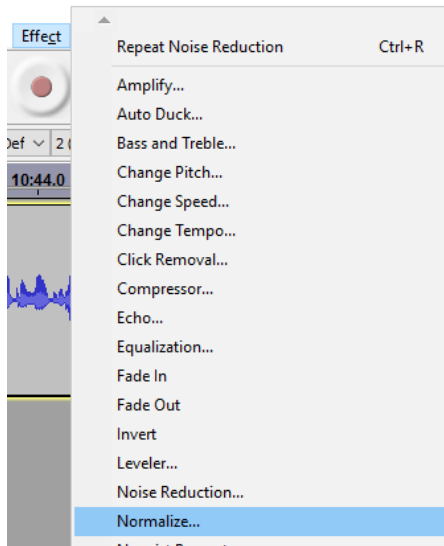


- To add the outro, repeat the steps of this section again but when pasting the section in select the end position of the sermon and make sure that there isn't a too long gap between the sermon ending and the outro.

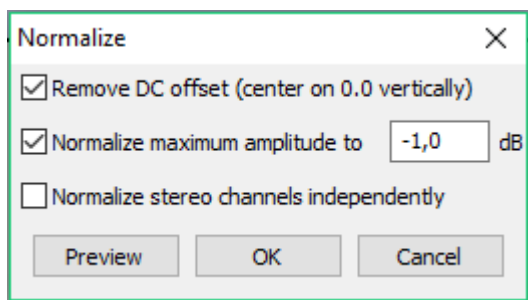
7. Normalise

This is a final step to smooth the audio levels

- Select the whole track by clicking on the side panel.
- On the top menu bar select **Effect --> Normalize**



- This screen will pop up

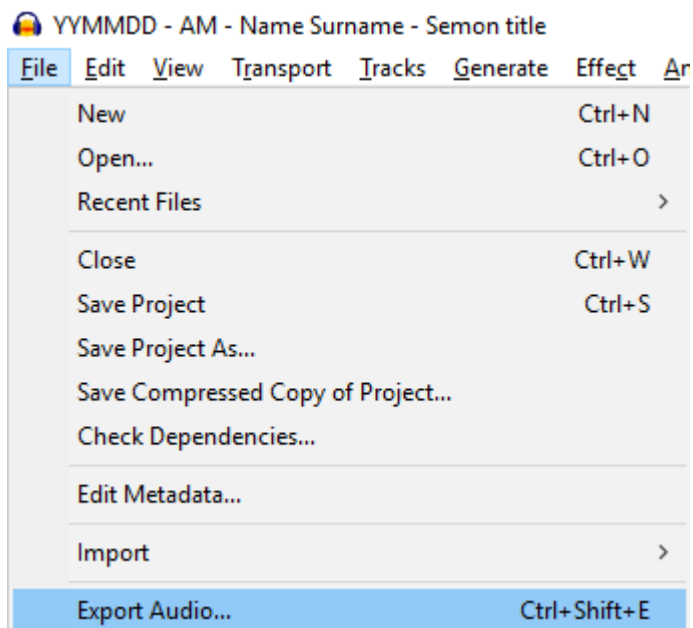


- Press Ok and wait for it to finish.

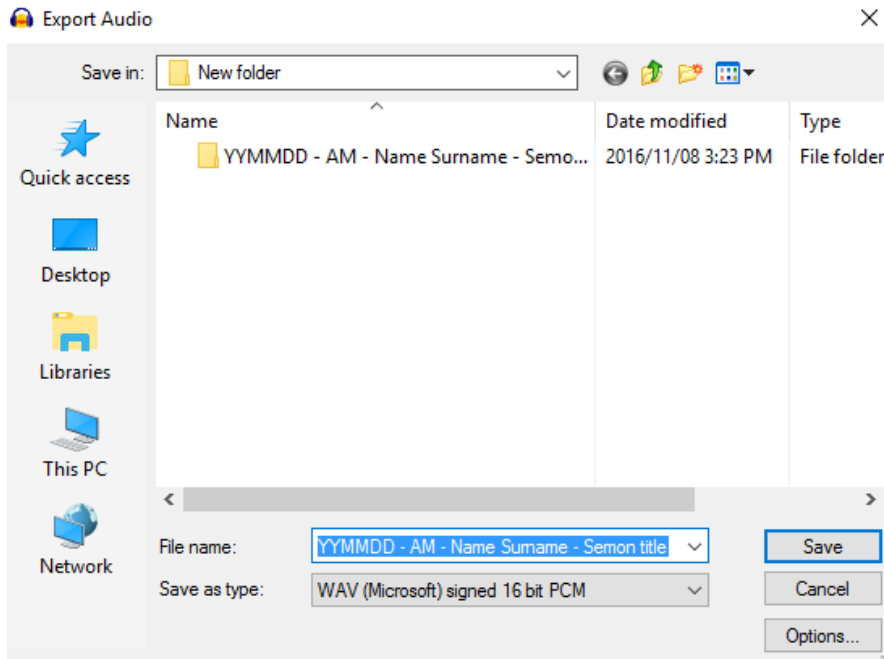
8. Export as MP3

Now that you have finished editing the sermon your aim is to save this track in MP3-format in a size range of 30 MB

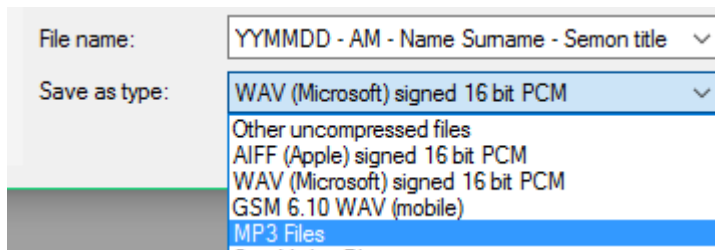
- Select **File --> Export Audio**



- This will pop up

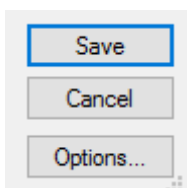


- Select the **Save as type**: drop down menu and click on **MP3-Files**

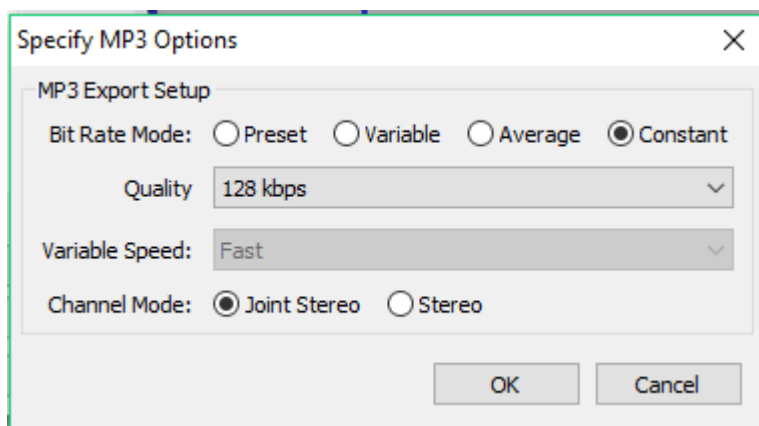


Select your bitrate for the export

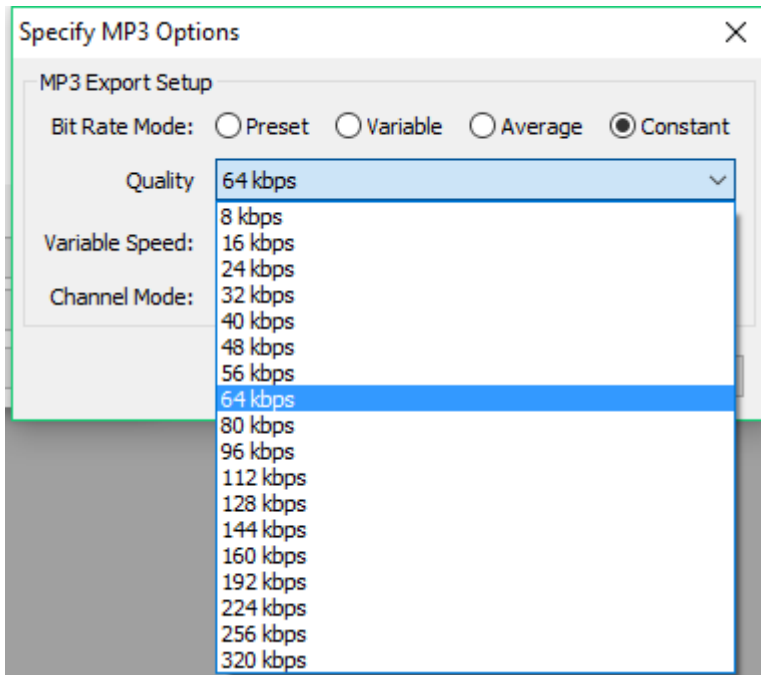
- If you have not set your bitrate previously, please select **Options...** in the bottom right hand corner.



- This screen will pop up



- Click on the **Quality:** dropdown menu and select a bitrate (kbps) that is in line with the length of your sermon. This will determine the size of your MP3 export, but also influence the audio quality.
- You are aiming for a **maximum file size of 35 MB** but 30 MB is better.
 - Use the following as a guideline: **80 kbps** should work for a **1-hour** sermon and **112 kbps** for a **30 minute** sermon.
 - **56 kbps** is about as **low** as you should go. Lower than this your audio quality really starts to suffer.

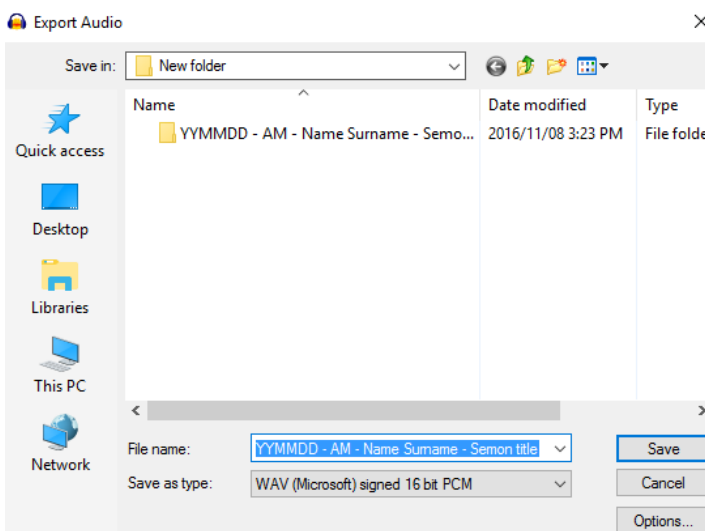


- Click on **OK** to return to the Export Window

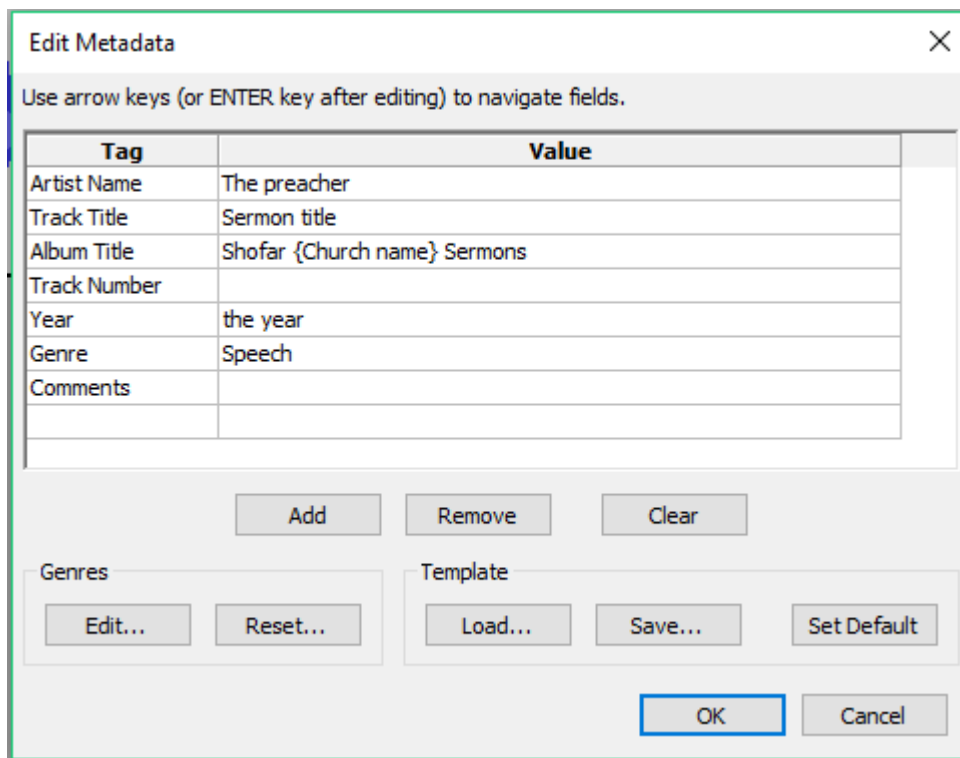
Name you file correctly

Naming your file correctly is essential to it being available on the download site

- Type in the correct details according to the following naming convention
 - **YYMMDD** – the date of the sermon (e.g. 170108, followed by a space, a dash and a space)
 - **tt** – AM or PM (these are the only options, if you have more than one service in a timeslot you will have to vary the sermon title, followed by a space, a dash and a space)
 - **Name Surname** – The preacher’s name and surname separated by a space, followed by a space, a dash and a space)
 - **Sermon Title** – The sermon title in plain text, no special characters (, # . “ ~ ‘ | / \ } ; :) as these will prevent the sermon from displaying
- The type will be MP3 and the name will look something like this: 171123 - AM – Fred May – A word in season



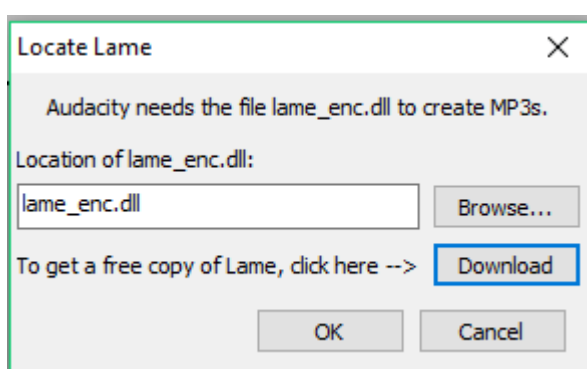
- Click on **Save** and the following window will appear



- Please enter all the details for example as below

Tag	Value
Artist Name	Theuns Pauw
Track Title	The Lord's Prayer
Album Title	Shofar Frasnchoek Sermons
Track Number	
Year	2016
Genre	Speech
Comments	

- After filling in the details press **OK**
- If this pops up like below you must [install LAME](#) (click on this link to install) before you can continue to export as mp3. This will only happen once, after you have installed LAME it is done. See below for instructions.



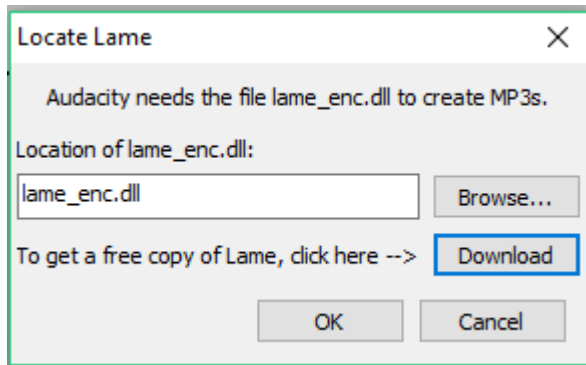
- If the window does not pop up your export will continue.

Continue exporting

- The export will take a couple of minutes to process.
- Check the size of the exported MP3 file by right clicking on it and selecting properties.
- If it is bigger than 35mb please reduce the size by dropping the bitrate as described above

9. Installing LAME (Only if you haven't installed it before)

- Once this window has popped up, click on **Download** if you have not installed Lame before. Follow the instructions and, if you encounter any problems please contact itsupport@shofaronline.org



- A website will open and click on blue link that says **LAME download page**
- It will redirect you to a new page. Click on the blue download link with the name **Lame_v3.99.3_for_Windows.exe**. Should the name differ slightly and have a higher number value e.g. v3.99.4 you can still download the file as it will be safe to do so.
- Open downloaded file and click on **install**. Windows will warn you about opening .EXE files, but you can continue.
- Click **Yes** for trusted program
- Click **Next** until and lastly **Finish** to finish install
- Click **OK** on the last screen on your audacity pop up
- It will fail - Just repeat the instructions from the top of this section ([Export as MP3](#)) again.