

St Michael's Lutheran Primary School

7D - ICT Skills Session

Sound Recording

There are many uses for recording your own voice, music or other sounds on your tablet, computer or other recording device.

- To create narrations for presentations
- To create soundtracks for video clips or animations
- To practice reading and to listen to yourself reading
- To tell a story
- To create podcasts
- To create read along books for younger students
- To record yourself singing

There are several pieces of hardware and software around that will allow you to record sounds. Today we will take a look at two of them and I will then describe what you can do with the resulting sound files.

Windows Sound Recorder



Sound Recorder is a Microsoft Windows accessory that allows you to record sound through an internal or external microphone and save it as a Windows Media Audio (wma) file.

The Acer Iconia tablets have an internal microphone, so there is no need to plug another microphone in, but you may wish to plug in a headset so that you can listen to your recording without bothering other people in the room. On a desktop computer, you will need to plug in both a microphone and a headset.

To access the Sound Recorder, go to the **Start Menu** then select **All Programs**, then **Accessories** and then find **Sound Recorder**. You may like to drag it to your task bar to make it easier to find in the future.

When you open the Sound Recorder, a simple window will open on your screen.



The green bar indicates the input level (volume) of the microphone, so if you start speaking you should see the green bar move according to the level of your voice. When you are ready to start recording, press the **Start Recording** button. The window will soon look like this:



You can see by the timer that I have been recording for 6 seconds. To stop recording, simply press the **Stop Recording** button and a **Save As** window will open, prompting you to save the wma file. You may wish to save it in your 'Music' folder in a sub-folder called 'Sound Recordings'.

Easi-Speak Microphones



These portable microphones record voice, music or other sounds directly into the microphones memory. The recordings can then be played back through a built in speaker on the microphone or the files can be downloaded to a computer by simply plugging the microphone into a USB port and dragging and dropping the MP3 or WAV files to a folder on your tablet or computer. The microphones have 128mb of memory which allows for up to 4 hours of recording time.

The microphones are very easy to operate by using the red and green buttons. Full instructions are in the boxes that the microphones are stored in.

Sound File Types

The two methods of recording sound files that I've described, result in 3 different types of sound files. Sound Recorder produces **wma** files and the Easi-Speak microphones produce **mp3** or **wav** files. I'll describe these file types here and explain what can be done with each type of file.

Sound File Type	Description
wma	Windows Media Audio File. Uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play in Windows Media Player and other software media players. • Add to Windows Movie Maker project. • Upload to Edmodo, blogs, wikis etc. Limitations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot edit file in Audacity. • Cannot play on iPods, iPhones etc
mp3	Moving Picture Experts Group (MPEG) Audio Layer III File Uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play in Windows Media Player and other software media players. • Add to Windows Movie Maker project. • Upload to Edmodo, blogs, wikis etc. • Edit file in Audacity. • Plays on iPads, iPods, iPhones etc
wav	Waveform Audio File Uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play in Windows Media Player and other software media players. • Add to Windows Movie Maker project. • Upload to Edmodo, blogs, wikis etc. • Edit file in Audacity. Limitations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot play on iPods, iPhones etc

Converting Sound Files

To overcome some of the limitations mentioned in the table on the previous page, it is possible to convert a sound file to a different format. For example, you can convert a **wma** file that was created with Windows Sound Recorder to an **mp3** or **wav** file. This is an extra step, but may be worth it if it means you can record the sound on the device of your choice and play it back on a different device.

There are a few programs that you can install on your computer to convert sound files. One that is installed on a few of the computers at this school is called **Format Factory**. For details about this computer program, [click here](#).

Another way of converting sound files is to upload them to a website which will convert them and allow you to download the converted file. This may take a bit longer, but does not require special software to be installed on your computer. Some examples include Online-Convert.com, [zamzar](http://zamzar.com) and [convert.files](http://convert.files.com).

Editing Sound Files

When you record a sound file, often you will want to remove parts of the recording, such as the beginning, ending and any mistakes. You may also want to adjust the volume in places, add special effects or join several recordings together. At school we have a software program called **Audacity** for doing this. For details about this program, [click here](#).