

# Digital Podcast

## Five Steps to Free Podcasting

How you can podcast with a free website, free audio software, free hosting and free bandwidth. Free as in doesn't cost you a penny, except for your computer and microphone.

Making a podcast is a five step process

1. Create your audio file
2. Upload your audio file
3. Create your show notes on your website
4. Create and publish your RSS feed
5. Tell everyone you know where to find your RSS feed

There are four free tools you can use to podcast for free.

1. Blogger (<http://blogger.com>) is free a blog based website where you can post information about your shows and blog about anything you want
2. Audacity with the Lame plug in (<http://audacity.sourceforge.net>) is free audio recording and editing software
3. Internet Archive (<http://archive.org>) provides free hosting and bandwidth
4. Feedburner (<http://feedburner.com>) is a free service for hosting your RSS feed

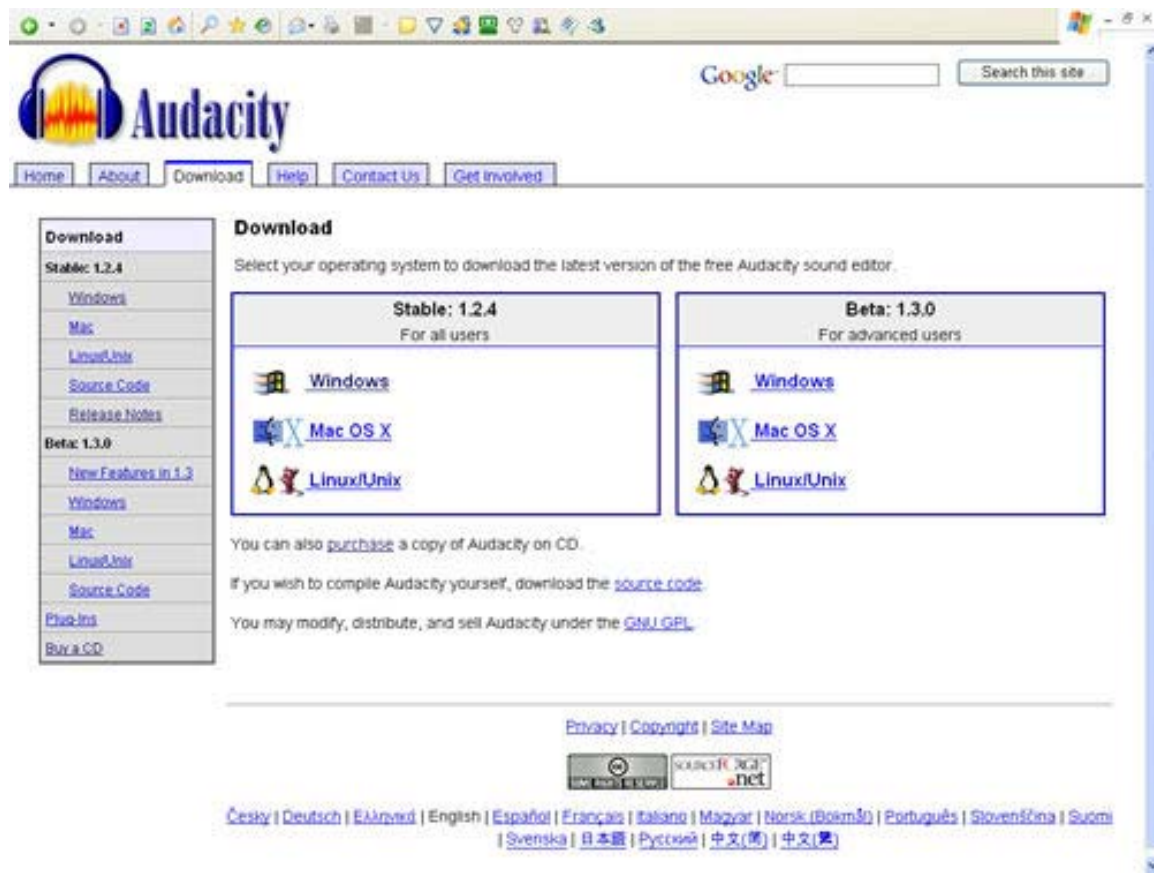
### **Step one – How to create your audio file?**

Most Windows based computers come with sound recording software built into them. On a Windows XP box you can find it by going to start > all programs > accessories > entertainment > sound recorder. You can use this tool to play around with a microphone that comes with your computer or a plug in microphone. It's a good way to check and see what kind of audio quality you can get. I found my cheap gamer Logitech mic worked, but the sound volume was kind of low.

Audacity was my solution. Audacity is a free open source software recording and editing tool that will take you a long way in podcasting without costing you anything, but the time to set it up and learn it.

You can download Audacity at <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/download/>

This is a screenshot of the Audacity download page



The most recent version at the time I'm writing this is Audacity 1.2.4b.

You need to download Audacity and install it on your computer. You then need to download one more piece of software called Lame. Lame is a plug-in to Audacity that allows you to export audio files in mp3 format. You can download this software from <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/help/faq?s=install&item=lame-mp3>

Lame cannot be included with the Audacity distribution automatically due to mp3 licensing issues. Installation is quite easy and involves copying one file from one folder to your Audacity folder.

Here are the specific instructions for installing Lame for Windows and for the Mac. If you need more information you can go to <http://www-users.york.ac.uk/~raa110/audacity/AudacityHelp.html#LAME> for more tips on installing Lame.

### Installing Lame in Audacity - Windows

- Download the archive file from the site above, and open it in a utility like [winzip](#), [7-zip](#), or some versions of Windows Explorer
- Take the lameenc.dll file and extract (uncompress) it to a directory on your hard drive. The directory where you installed Audacity would be a good idea. This is probably C:\Program Files\Audacity or similar if you used the installer
- Open Audacity and go to File > Preferences.
  - Go to the 'File Formats' tab.
  - In the bottom of the window there is a section tabled 'MP3 Export Setup'.
  - Click on the link tabled 'Find Library'
  - This will ask you if you want to locate the lame encoder. Click 'yes'.
  - In the dialogue box, go to the folder where you put the lame-enc.dll file earlier, and select it.
  - Click OK.
- You should now be able to export files to the mp3 format.

### Installing Lame in Audacity - Mac (OS X and OS 9)

- Download the .sit file from the site above, and open it in Stuffit Expander
- Take the LibLame.so file and extract (uncompress) it to a directory on your hard drive. The directory in Applications where you installed Audacity would be a good idea.
- Open Audacity and go to File > Preferences.
  - Go to the 'File Formats' tab.
  - In the bottom of the window there is a section tabled 'MP3 Export Setup'.
  - Click on the link tabled 'Find Library'
  - This will ask you if you want to locate the lame encoder. Click 'yes'.

- In the dialogue box, go to the folder where you put the LibLame.so file earlier, and select it.
- Click OK.
- You should now be able to export files to the mp3 format.

You are now ready to run Audacity and make your first audio file. When you open Audacity you will see a screen that is mostly a blank page. At the top will be a control bar like this:



To start recording, just hit the red record button and start talking into your microphone hooked up to your computer. It should start recording right away. You can stop the recording with the yellow button. There are all kinds of buttons to play with. I suggest your experiment with as many as possible to see what does what.

The Audacity website even provides tutorials.

These articles give step-by-step instructions for common tasks using the free Audacity sound editor.

- [Audacity 1.2 Tutorial by Dan Eliot](#) - Learn how to open and edit a WAV file, and save the result in an MP3.
- [How to Setup Audacity](#) – Video of how to set up Audacity
- [Editing tools in Audacity](#) – Video introducing editing tools in Audacity
- [Basic Editing with Audacity](#) – Video showing basic editing
- [Adjusting Sound Levels In Audacity](#) – How to change the audio volume
- [Importing and combining audio files](#) – How to combine two or more audio files in Audacity

- [How to save and export as MP3](#) – Video showing how to export in mp3 format for podcasting.

For additional help, see the [Audacity documentation](#).

I suggest you record and save your file in wav format until you have done all the editing you want and then exporting it to mp3 format for distribution as a podcast. You will want to make sure you pay close attention to the settings on your podcast. If you are just doing talk, then mono should be fine. If you want to play music, you will need to set it up as a stereo file. Michael Geoghegan of Reel Reviews Radio posted a great blog article

<http://reelreviewsradio.com/archives/2004/12/27/podcast-about-the-podcast/> about the settings you might want to use for your podcast.

### ***Step two: Upload your Audio file to the Web***

For other people to get to your podcast it needs to be on a computer that is able to serve up files to other computers over the web. If you have your own website you can transfer the file up to your web site and serve it from there.

If you don't have a web site you can use a free service called the Internet Archive <http://archive.org> . It's free to create an account. Once you've created your account you can go to [http://www.archive.org/audio/audio-contribute.php?stage=upload\\_info](http://www.archive.org/audio/audio-contribute.php?stage=upload_info) to find out how to upload your audio file.

You can now upload directly to the Internet Archive at <http://www.archive.org/contribute.php>.

At the end of the process you will get a link to a page listing your audio files.

It will look something like this [http://www.archive.org/audio/audio-details-db.php?collection=opensource\\_audio&collectionid=AlexNesbittFreePodcast](http://www.archive.org/audio/audio-details-db.php?collection=opensource_audio&collectionid=AlexNesbittFreePodcast)

Once your audio is approved by Archive.org (there can be a 24 hour delay) you can return to this link to find the address of your audio file. It will look something like

<http://audio64.archive.org/2/audio/AlexNesbittFreePodcast/freepodcastsample.mp3>

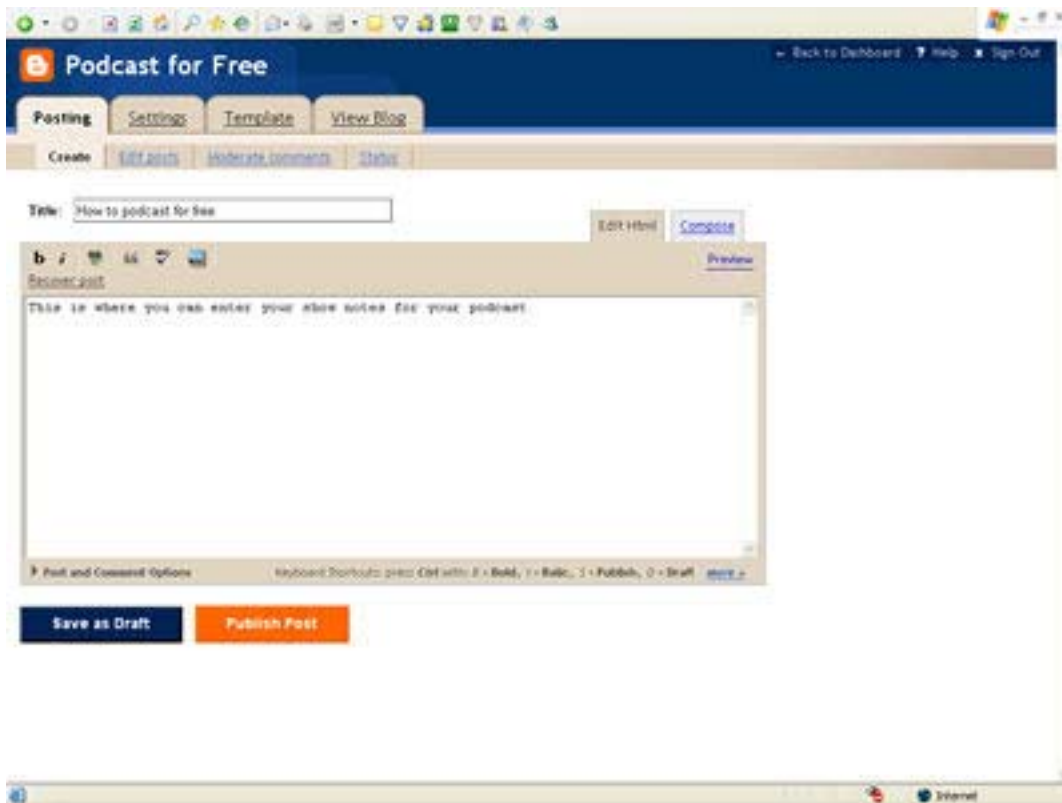
Make sure you get this link, because you will need it for your podcast feed.

### **Step three: Create Show Notes on Your Website.**

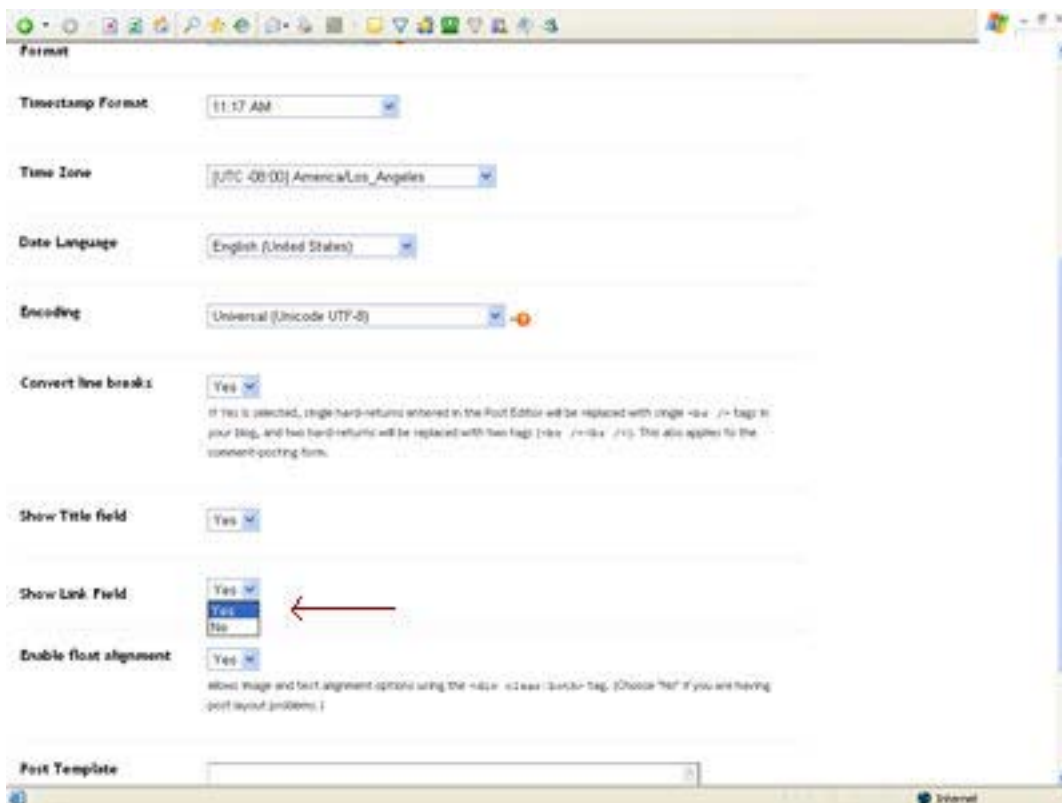
If you don't have a website, you can get one for free at Blogger <http://blogger.com> It takes three easy steps to set up your account, name your blog and choose your template.



Once you have set up your blog account and chosen your template you can enter your show notes and anything else you want to post about your podcast.



Make sure you set the show link field in “Settings-Formatting”



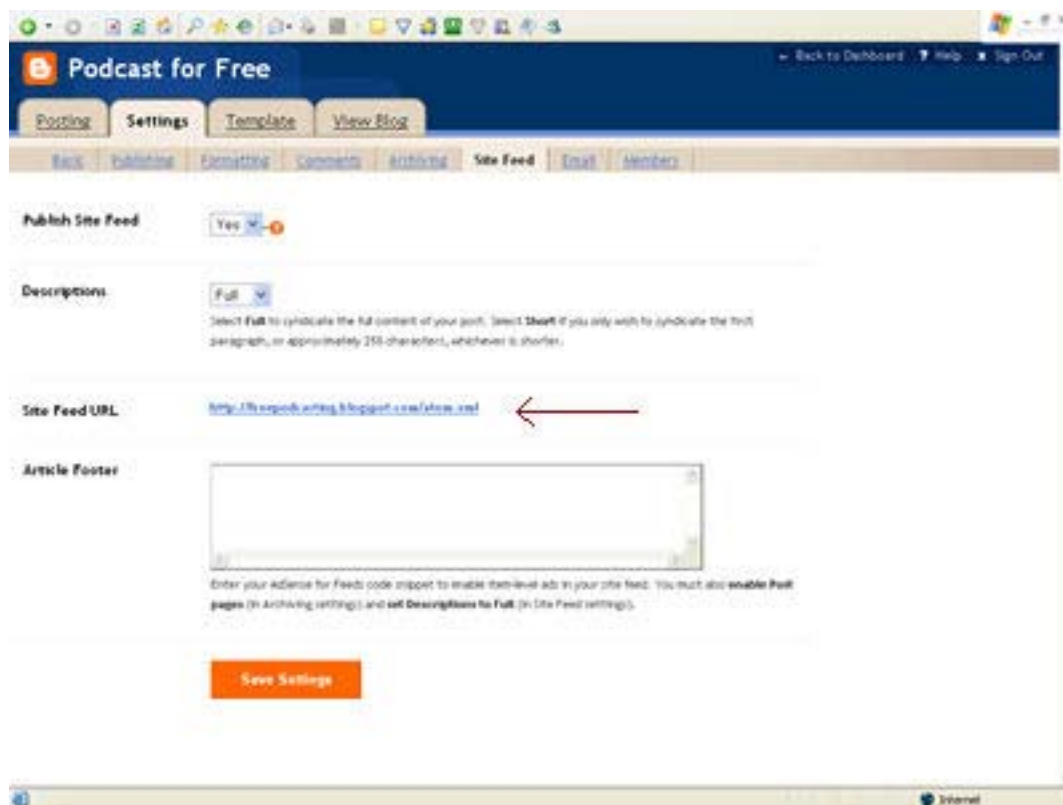
You will need to make sure that your website shows links so that you can add a link to your podcast on the web. To do this go the “Settings” tab at blogger and chose the “Formatting” sub-tab. Scroll down until you find the “Show link field” selector. Make sure to set this to yes. Make sure you save your settings.

Go to “Posting-Create” to add a title to your podcast. Add show notes and anything else you want to share about your podcast. Put the link to your audio file in the link field. Once you’re done publish your post.

The title of your post will be a link to your podcast.

### **Step four - Create and publish your RSS feed**

Next go to the “Settings-Site Feed” tab and find your feed address as shown below:



The feed provided by Blogger is in a format call Atom – not what you need for podcasting. For podcasting you need a feed that conforms

to a standard called RSS 2.0, so we now have to convert your Atom feed into a RSS feed.

That's where Feedburner <http://feedburner.com> comes in handy. Feedburner allows you to take your Atom feed and make it into an RSS feed.



Once you get to FeedBurner, give them your Atom feed address from Blogger and click on the “I’m a podcaster” check box. Click next and add some account detail. In return, Feedburner will give you an RSS feed with an address like <http://feeds.feedburner.com/PodcastForFree>. You can then add more information like the category you want for your podcast, a description of your podcast and other useful information for podcast directories. Feedburner will offer you all kinds of services for your podcast, but you don’t need to buy anything.

I like to have my podcast feed on my blog website so everyone can get to it. So back to Blogger we go. You will want to go to the Template tab and scroll down until you find and change this code in the window.

Before edit	<pre>&lt;h2 class="sidebar-title"&gt;Links&lt;/h2&gt; &lt;ul&gt;   &lt;li&gt;&lt;a href="http://news.google.com/"&gt;Google News&lt;/a&gt;&lt;/li&gt;   &lt;li&gt;&lt;a href="http://help.blogger.com/bin/answer.py?answer=110"&gt;Edit- Me&lt;/a&gt;&lt;/li&gt;   &lt;li&gt;&lt;a href="http://help.blogger.com/bin/answer.py?answer=110"&gt;Edit- Me&lt;/a&gt;&lt;/li&gt; &lt;/ul&gt;</pre>
Change to	<pre>&lt;h2 class="sidebar-title"&gt;Links&lt;/h2&gt; &lt;ul&gt;   &lt;li&gt;&lt;a href="http://feeds.feedburner.com/PodcastForFree"&gt;Podcast Feed&lt;/a&gt;&lt;/li&gt;   &lt;li&gt;&lt;a href="http://digitalpodcast.com"&gt;Digital Podcast&lt;/a&gt;&lt;/li&gt;   &lt;li&gt;&lt;a href="http://castwiki.com"&gt;CastWiki&lt;/a&gt;&lt;/li&gt; &lt;/ul&gt;</pre>

This sets up new links for your blog allowing everyone to find your podcast feed. Just make sure you use your podcast feed, not the one used for this example. Once you're done editing, save your changes and **republish your blog** to make the changes show up.

You should then click on your podcast feed link to make sure it works and make sure the podcast is included in the RSS file. It may not be there in the beginning if it has not yet been approved by Archive.org. Feedburner will only include a podcast enclosure when there is a valid mp3 that can be downloaded. Give it some time and it should show up.

### **Step five – Tell everyone about your podcast**

Add it to the directories. [Podcast Cookbook](http://www.podcastcookbook.com/2008/05/23/promote-your-podcast-in-podcast-directories/) has a great list of podcast directories at <http://www.podcastcookbook.com/2008/05/23/promote-your-podcast-in-podcast-directories/>

[directories/Tell%20you%20friends;%20tell%20everyone%20that%20you%20are%20now%20a%20podcaster](#) !

### ***Advanced Podcasting Tips***

If you're interested in advanced podcasting tips check out [PodcastCookbook.com](#) where I have been collecting some notes on ways to make your podcast better. I start with how to get your own [website URL](#), how to buy [inexpensive podcast hosting](#), how to [set up your podcast website](#) and much more.