Music Tech Pro Tools 10 Recording and MIDI guide for Mac

For HSC Stage 6 and Tertiary students

Tutorial 1 **Setting up a session**

Objective - to introduce students to the basics of a Pro Tools session setup

Outcomes - by following this tutorial, students will gain an understanding of how to;
- set up a session
- assign audio to output device
- create and name an audio track
- operate transport bar functions

1. Session setup and Edit Window overview
2. Set up audio in Playback Engine
3. Creating tracks
4. Naming tracks
5. Transport bar overview, and links to external resources

1. Setting up a session and Edit Window overview

1a. Launch Pro Tools

1b. From the Menu select *New Session* or type *Command + N*

1c. This window will open. Follow the arrows below

Click here to create a blank session

Set the sample rate, 44.1 kHz

Select stereo output

Select file type, WAV

Select 16 bit

Then click OK, and save

New Session

Create Session from Template...

● Create Blank Session...

Session Parameters

Audio File Type:
BWF (.WAV)

Sample Rate:
44.1 kHz

Bit Depth:
● 16 Bit
○ 24 Bit
○ 32 Bit Float

I/O Settings:
Stereo Mix

☐ Interleaved

Cancel   OK

1d. Save as PT Tut 1 intro, and edit window will open

This is the multi-tool window. The cursor changes shape depending on where you place it in the track. This enables you to do different tasks without having to select a new tool each time

Here is the position of the piece, in bars/beats, min/sec or frames. Select display options from the drop-down menu here

These rulers give you information regarding bars/beats, min/sec, tempo, time signature, and position markers which you can insert at various points in the piece, in order to, say, jump ahead from a verse to a chorus

Audio and MIDI clips will appear in this window once you start recording
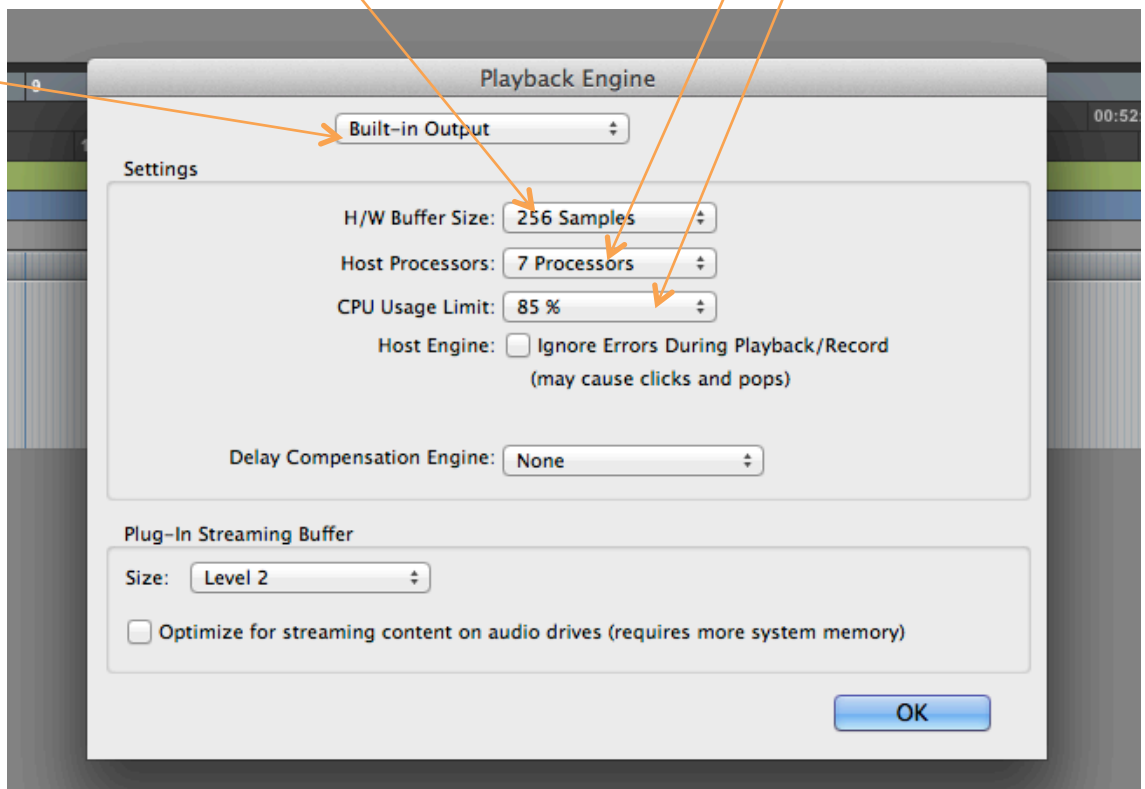
2. Set up audio in playback engine

2a. From the menu select Setup > Playback Engine. This window will appear

2b. Select options from the drop down menus as per the arrows

Select 256 samples. This will achieve acceptable delay, or latency, when recording

Select the number of processors and CPU usage appropriate to your computer

Click here to select audio outputs. If you have an interface attached, it should appear here. Otherwise select Built-in Output or Built in Line output to route audio through the computer's built-in speakers.

Playback Engine

Built-in Output

Settings

H/W Buffer Size: 256 Samples

Host Processors: 7 Processors

CPU Usage Limit: 85 %

Host Engine: ☐ Ignore Errors During Playback/Record
(may cause clicks and pops)

Delay Compensation Engine: None

Plug-In Streaming Buffer

Size: Level 2

☐ Optimize for streaming content on audio drives (requires more system memory)

OK

2d. Click OK to return to the main edit window.

Latency is the delay caused by the audio signal, e.g. a vocal, being converted in the interface from analogue to digital to be recorded, and then converted from digital back to analogue so that you can hear it. A more powerful computer can be set at a lower hardware buffer size, resulting in lower latency and a shorter delay. 256 samples is generally an acceptable delay.
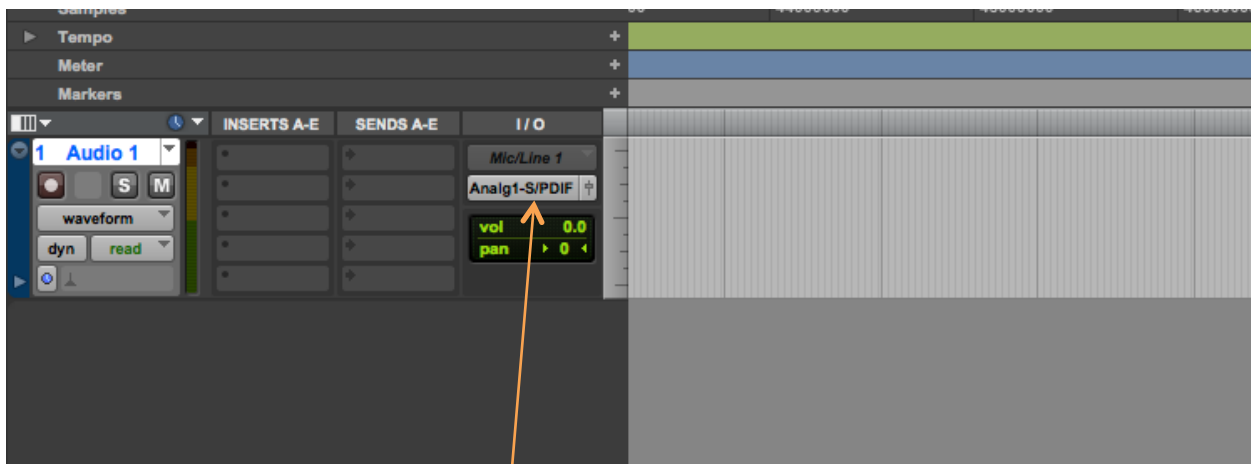
3. Creating Tracks- creating an audio track

3a. From the menu select *New* or type *Shift + Command + N*
This window will appear.

3b. Select Audio Track from the drop-down menu, click *Create*

3c. An audio track will appear in the edit window

Your audio output is already selected here.
You can change the output of the track if you
have a multi-output interface.

3d. Other tracks, i.e., Aux Inputs, Master Faders, MIDI and Instrument tracks are created in the same way. You will learn about creating these in later tutorials.

4. Naming tracks

4a. To name a track, double click in the default name label, in this case Audio 1, and the naming window appears

Double click in the track name

Type in the new instrument name here
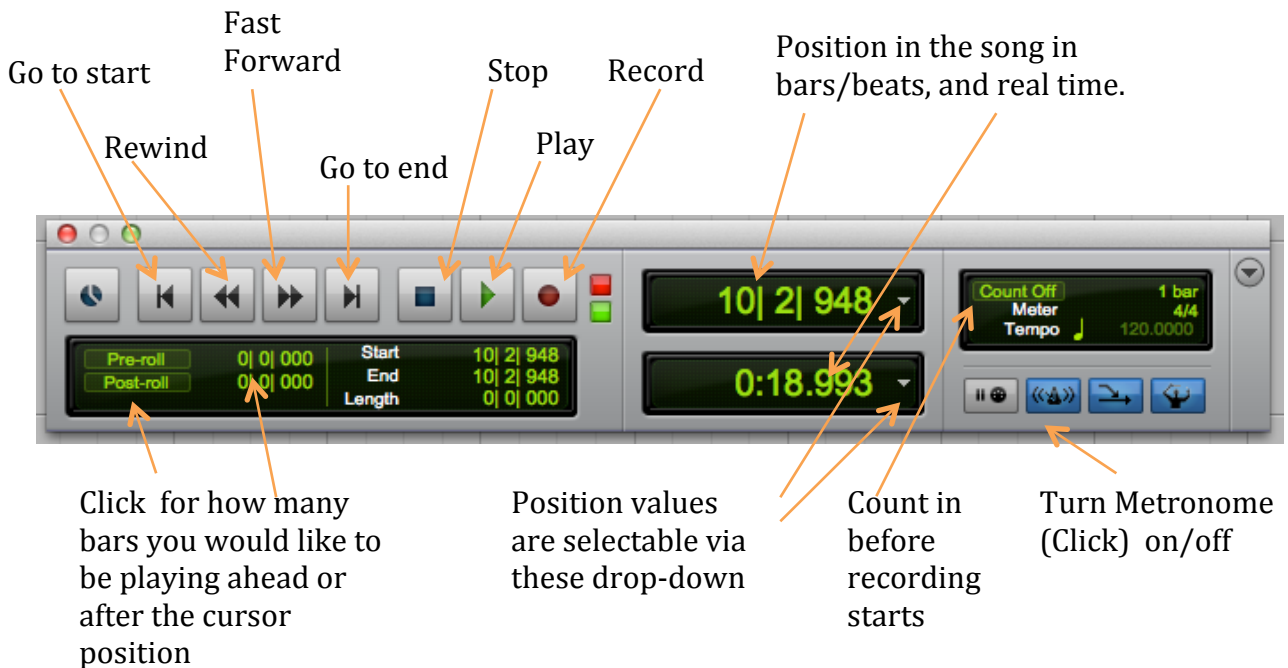
Click OK to change the name
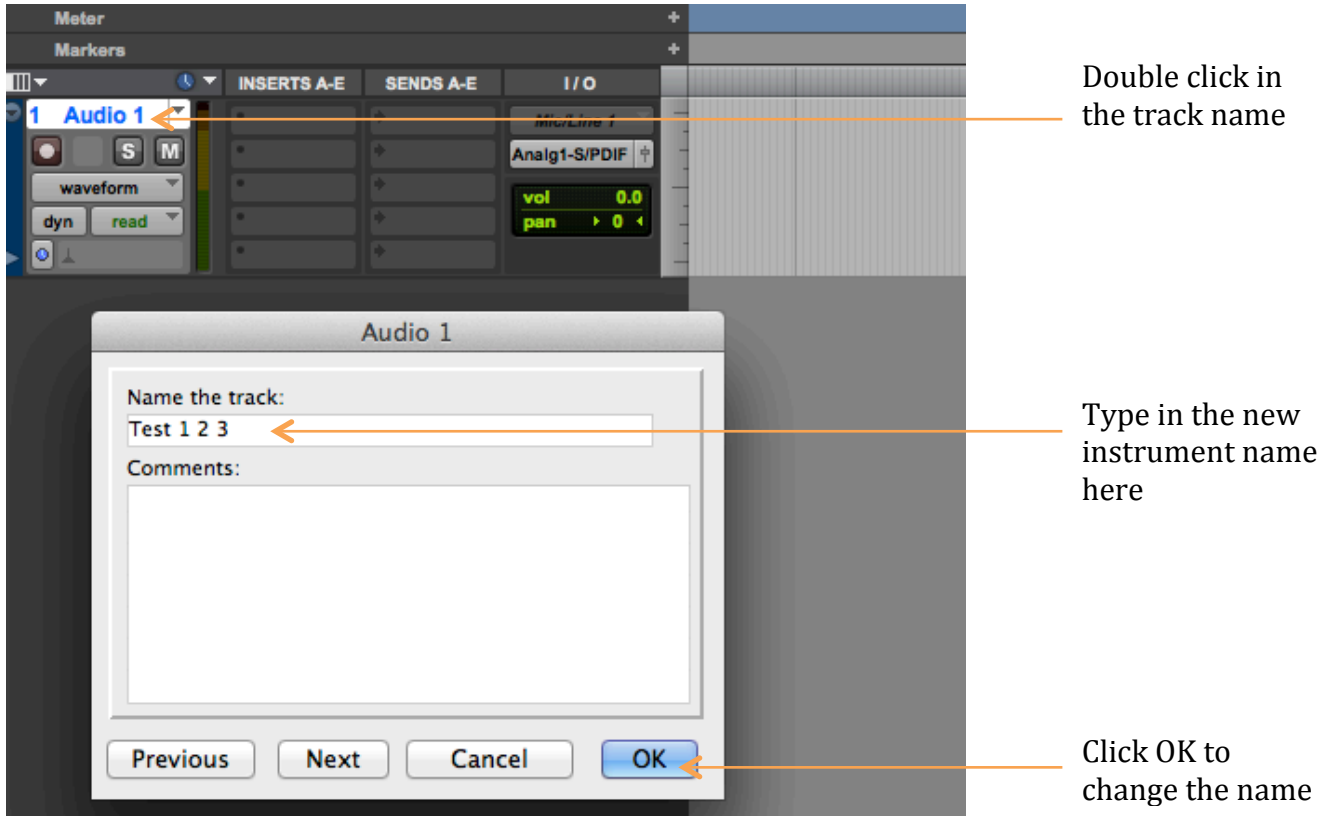
4b. Type in the name of the instrument or audio you wish to record on that track, and click OK
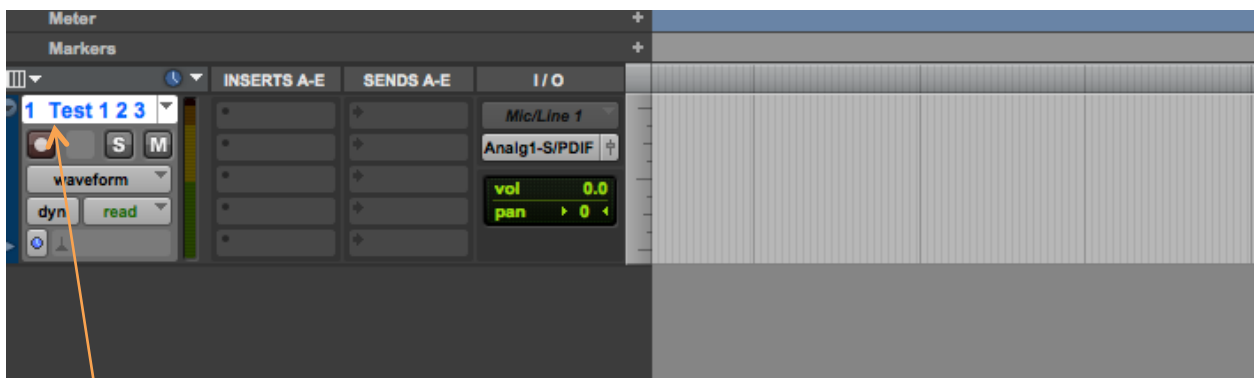
4c. The new track name appears. If you have multiple tracks to re-name, you can name them in sequence by clicking the *Previous* or *Next* buttons in the track re-naming window

5a. The Transport Bar

From the Transport Bar you can start and stop play and record, select tempo and time signature, turn the metronome on/off, and other functions.

Go to start   Fast Forward   Stop   Record   Position in the song in bars/beats, and real time.

Rewind   Go to end   Play

Click for how many bars you would like to be playing ahead or after the cursor position

Position values are selectable via these drop-down

Count in before recording starts

Turn Metronome (Click) on/off

5b. Links to external resources

Here is a link to a video presented by Joey Biagas, which explains in greater depth the process of opening and setting up a Pro Tools 9 session.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V2DhGI-ETHg

Music Tech Guru has some excellent free PDF downloads such as 'Microphone Basics', 'Guide to Mixing' and 'Guide to Recording'.
http://www.musictechguru.com/free-downloads.html