Audio Recordings in PowerPoint

Instructions for Windows | PowerPoint 2011

Embedded Audio vs. Linked Audio
...and why we recommend the latter

As you may know, PowerPoint comes equipped with its own audio recorder, which can be used to record and insert sounds directly into your slideshow. **Very short audio recordings** can be made using PowerPoint’s recorder, and the resulting audio files (.wav) will be **embedded** in the PowerPoint (.ppt or .pptx). This means that the audio data is saved within the PowerPoint file itself.

When a file from your computer is **linked** in PowerPoint, it means that PowerPoint inserts an audio icon into a slide, and when clicked, PowerPoint looks up the audio file on your computer and plays the sound. This is different from hosting audio online and inserting a URL to play the audio.

**In older versions of PowerPoint, the size limit for embedded audio can be as small as 100 KB (only a few seconds!).** The best way to make sure you don’t lose your audio is to create a recording outside of PowerPoint and insert it into PowerPoint as a **linked** audio file. File types other than .wav (such as .mp3 and .mp4) will always be inserted as linked files. **Adding linked audio instead of using the built-in recorder helps keep the PowerPoint file from being too large, and prevents broken or lost audio.** Using the method below will allow you to change the location of your presentation files without losing your audio (including moving it to another computer).

Adding Audio Recordings (linked) to PowerPoint

1. First, create a folder on your desktop to hold your PowerPoint and all of the linked sound files. If you have already created a PowerPoint presentation and/or audio files, **move them all to this folder before you add any audio to your presentation.**

2. If you have not already created your audio, you can make a recording using Audacity, a free software program. (If you already have a recording, skip to Step 10.)

4. Choose “Audacity for Windows” from the list and on the next page choose “Audacity 2.0.5. Installer.”

5. When the download finishes, double-click the downloaded file to run the Audacity 2.0.5 installer. Click “Next” on each screen, and then “Install” until the installation is complete.

6. To record with Audacity, open the program and make sure your headset or microphone is set up. (For help setting up your microphone, visit [www.stolaf.edu/services/wlc/instructions_students.html](http://www.stolaf.edu/services/wlc/instructions_students.html))

7. Click the record button to begin recording, and when you are finished, click the stop button.

While you are recording, you should see red bars moving back and forth on the right side of the window as you speak.
8. When you are ready to save your audio recording, go to File > Export. (Do not choose “Save As,” as this will only save your Audacity project as .aup – not a playable audio file.)

9. **Make sure to save this file in the folder you created in step 1.** When saving your file, you have the option to choose an audio format type. The default choice is .wav, which is fine. Mp3 and mp4 files will also work with PowerPoint.

10. Once you have gathered all the necessary files, open your PowerPoint file.

11. Navigate to the slide on which you wish to place the audio.
12. In the editing ribbon in PowerPoint, find the “Insert” tab. Then find the “Media” section on the far right.

13. Click on “Audio” and choose “Audio from File…” from the drop-down menu.

14. In the “Insert Audio” window that appears, navigate to your audio file and select it.

15. Click “Insert” to add your audio to the PowerPoint slide.

16. Now your recording will appear as an audio icon on the slide you chose. Move the icon wherever you’d like it on your slide and then save your presentation.

17. By default, your sound will only play while you are viewing this particular slide. To change how your recording appears on the slide, or how it plays during the presentation, right click on the recording you inserted and on the drop down menu select “Format Audio.”
18. If you want your sound to continue to play as you advance through the presentation, first click on your audio file and then find the “Playback” section in the ribbon. Click on “Start” and choose “Play across slides” from the drop-down menu.

Always be sure to play your slideshow for yourself before presenting, to make sure you are happy with how your audio plays!

19. When you are finished, be sure to save your PowerPoint. Then, when you are ready to copy your presentation to a new location (i.e., a flash drive, Google Drive, another computer, or simply a different place on the same computer), move/copy the whole folder you created (with the PowerPoint file and all of your audio).

Do not remove the PowerPoint from your folder, as your audio link will immediately break.

As long as you keep the folder intact (and only relocate it as a whole), you will be able to play your presentation and hear your audio.