

Chapter 1

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Introduction

Please Read This Chapter

Please read this chapter even if you don't read anything else in this book. Technical writers hate to admit it, but there are people in this world who seldom read manuals. If that describes you, you'd probably rather sit and play with your Audicity until you've figured it out.

That's okay.

Even though Audicity uses several powerful computer processors to create quality digital audio productions quickly, you don't need to know a thing about computers to use it. We've borrowed the hands-on, "edit with your ears" aspects of the analog studio and combined them with the power and quality of the digital world. The result is a system that lets you work quickly and intuitively, using your ears, eyes and touch. The interface enhances your creative flow, rather than getting in your way. As you start working with Audicity, you'll quickly forget you're working with a computer.

Of course, Audicity is a sophisticated digital system and we had to do a few things differently than you would in the analog world. For that reason, you should glance through the next few pages before you start playing. It explains some of the essential concepts and controls you'll use.

We've also included a separate "How To" document to keep at the Audicity's side, or to copy and hand out, so you have another reference if the manual isn't nearby. That document is an expanded version of Chapter 2, and is a good introduction to working with audio workstations. Check it out!

If you want to do the best productions, flip through this whole manual. Audicity does things that are impossible with analog equipment, and quite a few you won't find on other computerized systems.

No matter how you learn to use the Orban Audicity, don't ever be afraid to try things while you're editing:

- If you do something that doesn't sound good, you can immediately undo it with the *Undo* button, located on the Audicity's Console.

And don't worry about accidentally damaging the machine. Audicity is more rugged than analog equipment: No combination of keystrokes or fader moves can possibly break it¹.

¹To satisfy our lawyers, we should point out this is no guarantee against normal wear or wanton destruction. So, while we encourage you to play with Audicity, we don't encourage you to play *football* with it.

What You Shouldn't Do...

If you see *Optimize* or *Check Up* highlighted on the screen, don't press the *Enter* button. Press one of the arrow buttons instead, until the highlighting goes somewhere else.

These are serious computer operations, and exiting from them the wrong way can damage data on your hard disk. Please don't play with them until you've read their instructions. (*Optimize* is actually Norton's *Speed Disk* and *Check Up* is Norton's *Disk Doctor*.)

On the other hand, you can do full audio productions, using every editing and mixing feature we've got, without ever going near these functions.

How To Use This Manual

Please read this chapter, even if you plan to just poke around. These few pages can save you time and frustration.

For a quick start, read Chapter 2. It takes you, step-by-step, through recording and editing a basic production.

Production heavyweights² will want to read Chapters 3 to 7: These detail the Job Controller/Information screen (the screen you see when you first power up the Audicy), the Console (the physical mixer with its faders, buttons and scrubwheel), and how to edit and add effects. These chapters describe everything Audicy can do — and there are plenty you won't discover by just poking around.

Chapter 8 is for fun: It reveals some special studio tricks we've developed on Audicy. Use them to speed up your work, add special effects to your productions, or just amaze your friends and clients.

Chapters 9 through 13 provide information on many of the Audicy's options. Chapter 9 describes the Multi-Track DAT Backup System, while Chapter 10 deals with other removable media options, from Jaz drives to external hard drives. Chapter 11 is about the Intelligent Digital Module, Chapter 12 about the SMPTE TimeCode and Machine Control option, and Chapter 13 covers Cart Options. Read them if you have — or want to learn about — these hardware options.

Chapter 14 tells you how to install the Audicy, while Chapter 15 tells you what to do if anything goes wrong.

²And those who'd like to be.

How To Ignore This Manual (Using Online Help)

Online Help

The Audicy actually provides three types of online Help.

- Push the *Help* button and you'll see brief operating hints about what you're currently doing. You can press *Help* any time. If you push it repeatedly, you'll get additional tips.

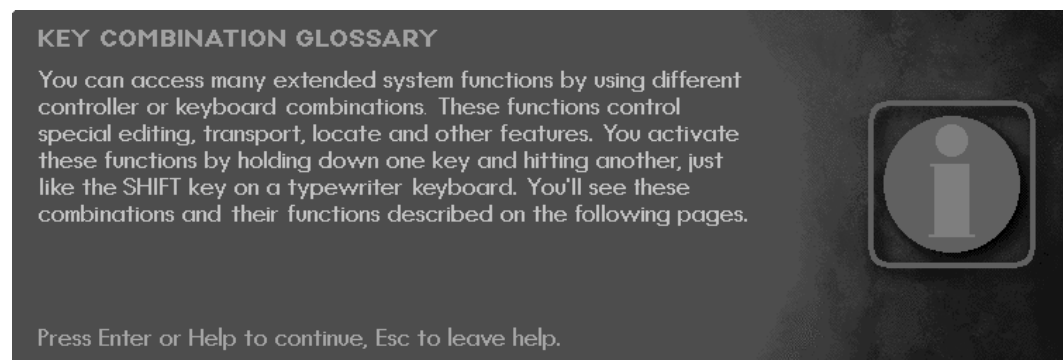


Figure 1-1: One of Audicy's Many Online Help Screens

- Press *Shift+Help* for an instant display of the Audicy's two-button shortcuts and special functions; this is the *Help* screen shown above.
- You'll also see hints in the Message Window. This is the black box below the center of the screen. Every time you press *Enter*, this area provides information about your current operation.

Note: The *Help* button flashes when it wants to tell you something. Press it for important messages, warnings, or hints about a particular function³. If you ignore the flashing, it'll stop after a minute.

When you're ready to get back to work, push the *Esc* button.

A Word About Style

We refer to “tape,” “tracks,” or “rewinding” in this book as if there actually were such things in the Audicy. Of course, there aren't.

- Even though Audicy is a multi-computer system, it's designed to feel like analog equipment. Think of it as a remote control for a mixer, a

³You can set what kind of messages make *Help* flash. See *Defaults*, in the Job Control Screen (Chapter 3).

rack of effects processors, and a couple of tape recorders in another room.

- Besides, terms like “Pointer Values” “D-RAM” and “Hashing” are for computer jockeys. Audicy is a piece of production equipment.

We’ve bulleted important stuff like the information directly above, as well as multiple items in a list.

An asterisk indicates tips or shortcuts to make the Audicy work better for you.

Checkmarks are used with warnings of things that might damage your production. You won’t find too many of them.

Words that appear on Audicy’s screen look like the on-screen font: *Make New*.

Knobs and buttons on Audicy’s Console look like the Console engraving: *Record*.

Audicy also has a typewriter-style keyboard, normally hidden in a slide-out drawer on the right-hand side of the Console’s front. Most of the time, you can totally ignore the keyboard — it’s just there to let you name productions or library sounds⁴. For convenience, some of the keyboard’s keys do the same thing as Console buttons; these are described in the text.

Text which appears as field names, field choices or field information (within the Audicy forms) appear in quote marks.

Here Are The Basics

Audicy’s screens and Console are divided into areas based on how they function. Once you understand these areas, you’ll find it easier to find buttons or information.

Job Controller Screen

When you first power on the workstation, you’ll see a screen with just the words “Orban AUDICY Digital Audio Workstation” and a copyright notice across the top. This is the Job Controller screen, where you can manipulate whole productions.

If you don’t want to, the Audicy will give them a standard name and the current date and time.



Figure 1-2: Job Controller Screen

Editor and Mixer Screen

The Editor screen, shown below, is the screen you'll use most of the time. While it presents a lot of information, you'll find that it's logically arranged and its features will become obvious as you use the system. There's a full explanation of the Editor screen in Chapter 5 of this manual.

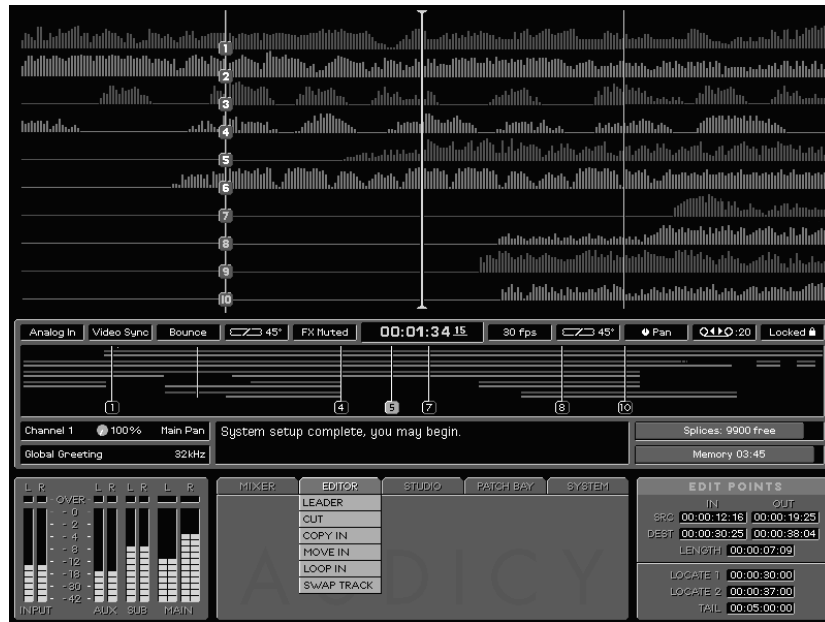


Figure 1-3: Editor Screen

1. How to get to the Editor screen from the Job Controller:

- A) Use the arrow buttons to highlight Make New.

- B) Use the right arrow to highlight Make Temp.
- C) Press *Enter* a few times⁵.

Within a few seconds, the new production will be open and you'll see the Mixer screen. (It's similar to the Editor screen, but has a picture of a mixer across the top; and it's also covered thoroughly in Chapter 5 of this manual.) To change to the Editor screen, just press the *Editor* button on the Console.

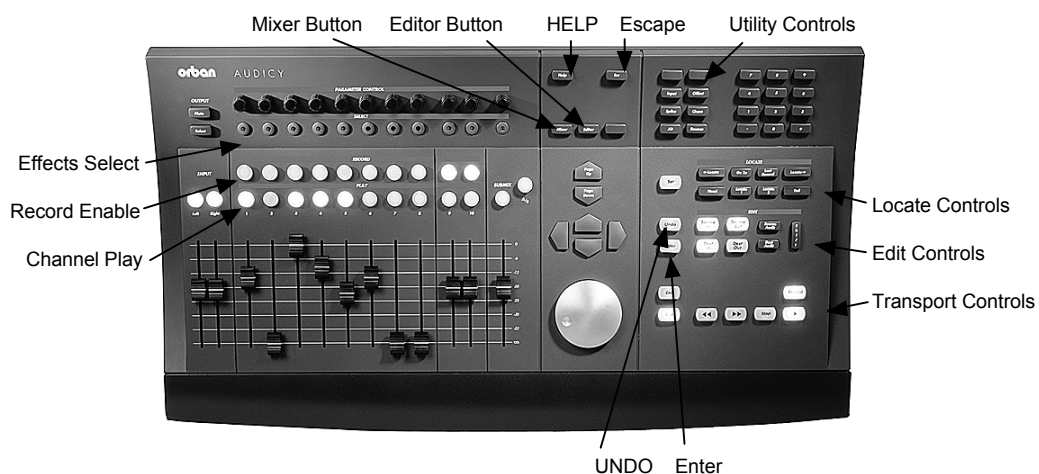


Figure 1-4: Console

Can't find the proper buttons? Check the picture above.

Navigating Through Menu and Submenu Choices

Most of Audicy's functions are selected by highlighting their name in an on-screen menu. The menu headings appear across the center of the lower half of the screen, and individual choices drop down over the name AUDICY.

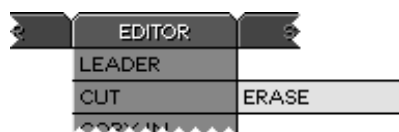


Figure 1-5: Menus and Submenus

Use the Console's *left* and *right* arrow buttons to steer across the menu headings. As you pass each heading, a list of choices will appear below it. Then use the *up* and *down* arrows to highlight an individual choice.

⁵ How many? Three or four, depending on the options installed in your Audicy. Just keep pressing it until the information form on the top half of the screen goes away.



Figure 1-6: Arrow Buttons

- You can use the four arrows in any sequence to get to the choice you'd like to do, so that its name is highlighted.
- Then press the *Enter* button to carry out that choice.
- You may want to then check the Message Window for information about your last operation.

The Editor and Mixer menu headings have a special function: If you press *Enter* while they're highlighted, they'll draw the appropriate screen without changing the audio. This is the same as pressing the *Editor* or *Mixer* buttons.

Once a menu choice is highlighted, it stays highlighted until you use the arrow buttons to move somewhere else. This saves time if you're doing repetitive operations: You can highlight Cut, press *Enter* to cut some audio, and then cut other marked audio by just pressing *Enter* again.

When you highlight some menu choices, you may notice submenus off to one side. For example, if you highlight Cut under the Editor heading, you'll also see the submenu choice Erase. You can use these choices just like the main menu choices.

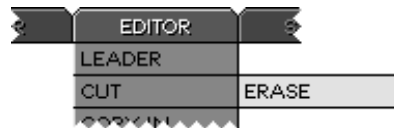


Figure 1-7: Erase Submenu Is Located To The Side Of Cut

Source and Destination Buttons

While Audicy lets you edit with your ears, you'll need your fingers to tell the system where you want those edits to be. That's what the edit marking buttons are for. They work like grease pencils would with analog tape, or clicking a mouse to select part of a waveform in a graphic audio editing program.

The four marking buttons are located with the Console's *Edit* Controls (see Figure 1-4). There are two *In* buttons and two *Out* buttons. Use them to mark the beginning and ending of the sound you want to edit. They're covered in more detail in Chapter 2, but you can feel free to experiment now.

The two *Source* buttons, on the top row, tell the system where to Cut, Erase, or add space (Leader), and what sounds to Copy, Move, Loop, or otherwise process.

Audicy always assumes that you want to work on what you're listening to; that is, the channels whose *Play* buttons are lit up. Just press a channel's *Play* button to turn it on or off.

The two *Dest* buttons, on the lower row, tell the system where sounds should go when you Copy or Move, or where to put the results of a process like Time-Fit. *Dest* is short for destination.

- Sounds go onto tracks that are “record-ready”: Press the *Record* button (directly above the track's *Play* button) to turn it on or off. It flashes when the track is in ready mode.
- You can change which *Play* or *Record* buttons are on, even after you've marked an edit.

After you've marked where an edit should go, and highlighted a menu choice on the screen, just press the *Enter* button.

Undo and Esc Buttons

There're two more buttons you should know about, just in case things don't go as you expect:

Press the *Undo* button to cancel the effects of your last audio operation.

- *Undo* always undoes the last operation that affected audio: recording, cutting, leafering, copying and so on.
- If you press *Undo* a second time, it “undoes itself” and restores the operation.

Press the *Esc* (Escape) button if you want to cancel an ongoing operation.

- If you ask for something that takes time (like time-fitting a lengthy piece of audio), *Esc* stops the operation immediately.
- If the top half of the screen has been taken over by text (for example, because you pressed *Help*), *Esc* restores the display.

Audicy Keyboard

The Audicy also has a typewriter-style keyboard, so you can name sounds or productions, or save text — scripts, effects setups, or whatever you want — with your work. We've even included a Notepad word processor in the Audicy system. Most of the time, though, you can ignore the keyboard. If you want to use it, details are in Chapter 3.



Figure 1-8: Audicy Keyboard

The cursor (arrow) and *Esc* keys on the keyboard work just like their counterpart buttons on the Console. The two *Enter* keys work just like the Console's *Enter* button.

Congratulations!

You're now ready to work — and play — with Audicy. In a short time you'll be doing complex productions⁶!

But don't throw this book away. Even if you plan to teach yourself the Audicy (or have someone else teach you), this book is still a valuable reference.

- It'll help you use the Audicy system more effectively.
- And it just might show you some production tricks you would have thought impossible.

⁶Matters of taste and production judgment are still up to you. Tin-ears can do just as bad a job on Audicy as with any other system. They'll just do it faster.