

soundBlade

User Manual

Sonic Studio, LLC
www.sonicstudio.com



Table of Contents

Chapter 1 Introduction	13
Chapter 2 Quick Start	15
2.1 Before You Begin	15
2.1.1 Requirements	15
2.1.2 Installation	15
2.2 Creating CDs With soundBlade	15
Step 1: Assemble your audio	15
Step 2: Edit segments and tracks	16
Step 3: Adjust crossfades	16
Step 4: Burn the Project to a CD	16
2.3 Quick Start — Make A CD	16
1 Open	16
2 Choose	16
3 Drag	16
4 Check	17
5 Insert	17
6 Execute	17
Chapter 3 Basic Operation	19
3.1 General Workflow & Explanation of Terms Used	19
3.2 Project Layout	20
3.3 Starting a Project: Opening Files	22
3.3.1 Opening Projects	22
3.3.2 Opening Sound Files	22
3.3.3 Adding Your First Sound File	23
3.4 Waveforms	23
3.5 Auditioning Sound	24
3.5.1 Playback	24
3.5.2 Playback from the Edit Point	25

3.5.3	Playback from Playhead.....	25
3.5.4	Play All.....	25
3.5.5	Time Displays.....	25
3.6	Navigating the Waveform Display	26
3.6.1	Scrolling.....	26
3.6.2	Zooming	26
3.7	Selections	27
3.7.1	Selecting a Region	27
3.7.2	Selecting Segments	28
3.8	Recording Audio.....	30
3.8.1	Edit Recording	30
3.8.2	Initiating a Recording	31
3.9	Simple Editing	31
3.9.1	The Fade Tool.....	31
3.9.2	Deleting Part of a Sound File.....	33
3.9.3	Splitting a segment into new segments.....	35
3.9.4	Manipulating Fades.....	35
3.9.5	Changing the order of songs	36
3.9.6	Simple Track Spacing: AutoSpace.....	37
3.9.7	Exporting Selections & Segments.....	37
3.10	PQ Marks: Defining Metadata	38
3.10.1	Inserting PQ Marks Manually.....	38
3.10.2	Moving PQ Marks.....	38
3.10.3	Removing PQ Marks	38
3.10.4	Inserting PQ Marks Automatically.....	39
3.10.5	Tracks	39
3.10.6	The Marks Button	40
3.11	Delivery	40
3.11.1	The Mark Info Window	41
3.11.1.8	The PQ List Button	42
Chapter 4 Advanced Editing		45
4.1	FadeTool Options	45

4.1.1	Changing Fade Parameters	45
4.1.2	Changing the shape of the Fade	46
4.1.3	Changing the Fade Duration	47
4.1.4	Changing the Fade Type.....	47
4.2	Edit Fade	48
4.2.1	Selections in the Edit Fade Panels	49
4.2.3	Global Modes	49
4.2.4	Audition Controls	50
4.2.5	Additional Fade Parameters	51
4.2.6	Fade Selectors	51
4.2.7	Nudging Fades	52
4.2.8	Edit Point Offset.....	52
4.2.9	Fade Library.....	53
4.2.10	Exiting Edit Fade Mode	53
4.3	Drag & Drop.....	53
4.3.1	Resequencing	53
4.3.2	Drag-Replace	56
4.3.3	Drag-Overlay.....	56
4.4	Text Mode	56
4.4.1	Gain Adjustment.....	56
4.4.2	Combo Project Configuration	58
4.5	Gain Overlay Mode	58
4.6	EDL Desk Events.....	60
4.6.1	Showing Desk Events in the Panels.....	60
4.7	SRPs	62
4.8	Edit Groups.....	63
4.9	Project Sample Rate.....	64
4.10	Advanced PQ	65
4.10.1	Album Info	67
4.10.2	Track Info	67
4.10.3	A Word About PQ Offsets	69

Chapter 5 Recording Audio	75
5.1 4 Steps to Recording.....	75
1 Open a new Project	75
2 Set New Sound File Parameters	75
3 Record enable Panels	75
4 Start your recording	75
5.2 Audio Recordings.....	75
5.2.1 Selecting external input(s).....	75
5.2.2 New Soundfile Parameters.....	77
5.2.3 Track arming and enabling recording	80
5.2.4 Initiating a recording	80
5.2.6 Edit Recording	81
5.3 Automated Punches.....	82
5.3.1 Recording a selection or segment.....	82
5.3.2 Recording using SRPs	82
5.4 Bouncing.....	83
5.5 Recording and time stamps	85
Chapter 6 The Desk and Meters	87
6.1 The EDL Desk.....	87
6.2 Desk Setups	95
6.3 The Panner.....	95
6.4 Meters Window: The Master Section	97
Chapter 7 The Background Manager	103
7.1 The Audio Client tab	105
Chapter 8 Menus	111
8.1 The File Menu	111
8.1.1 New Project	111
8.1.2 Open Project	112
8.1.5 Open Sound File... ..	112
8.1.6 Close Window	112
8.1.7 Save Project.....	112

8.1.8	Save Project As...	112
8.1.9	Save As Default Project	113
8.1.10	Reveal Sound In Finder	113
8.1.11	Build Sound Waveform...	113
8.1.12	Export Sound File...	113
8.1.13	Save Reversed	113
8.1.13	System Information	114
8.1.14	Quit.....	116
8.2	The Edit Menu	116
8.2.1	Undo (action)	117
8.2.2	Redo (action).....	117
8.2.3	Cut.....	117
8.2.4	Copy	117
8.2.5	Paste (Replace / Insert / Overlay)	117
8.2.6	Select/Deselect All	118
8.2.7	Delete Selection	118
8.2.8	Clear Selection.....	118
8.2.9	Replace	118
8.2.10	Insert	118
8.2.11	Replace Left	119
8.2.12	Replace Constrained	119
8.2.13	Delete Selection	119
8.2.14	Clear Selection.....	119
8.2.15	Create Crossfade / Create Segment	119
8.2.16	Create Crossfade from In Point Create Segment from In & Out Point(s)	119
8.2.17	Delete Crossfade	119
8.2.18	Move Segments.....	120
8.2.19	Segment Gain	120
8.2.20	Reverse Polarity	120
8.2.21	Nudge Segment Left/Right.....	120
8.2.22	Edit Segment Name	120
8.2.23	Sync To Edit Point.....	121
8.2.24	Sync To Matching	121

8.2.25	Sync SRP To wherever.....	121
8.2.26	Sync SRP To In Point	121
8.2.27	Edit Fade Mode	121
8.2.28	Loop And Fill	121
8.2.29	Editing Auto Tool Override	121
8.2.30	Auto Space All Segments	121
8.3	The EDL Menu	122
8.3.1	Show/Hide Text View	122
8.3.2	Show/Hide Gain Overlay	122
8.3.3	Bypass/Enable Gain Overlay	122
8.3.4	Show/Hide Desk Events	123
8.3.5	Show/Hide Gain Overlay	123
8.3.6	Bypass Desk Events	123
8.3.7	Create Gain Nodes	123
8.3.8	Select Gain Nodes	123
8.3.9	Refresh	123
8.3.10	Standard/Large Track Size	124
8.3.11	Select / Deselect All Tracks	124
8.4	The Play Menu.....	124
8.4.1	Play From Selection	125
8.4.2	Play Selection	125
8.4.3	Play From Playhead.....	125
8.4.4	Repeat Play.....	125
8.4.5	Stop.....	125
8.4.6	Mute Track.....	125
8.4.7	Solo Track	125
8.4.8	Record Arm.....	125
8.4.9	Record	126
8.4.6	Around Selection Center	126
8.4.7	Play from Selection	126
8.4.8	Play to End of Selection	127
8.4.9	Play to In Point.....	127

8.4.10	Play From In Point.....	127
8.4.11	Play to Out Point.....	127
8.4.12	Play From Out Point.....	127
8.4.13	Play Between In and Out Points.....	128
8.4.14	Move Playhead	128
8.4.15	Hide Playhead When Stopped.....	128
8.5	The Mark Menu	129
8.5.1	Mark Info	129
8.5.2	Track Start Mark	129
8.5.3	Track End Mark	129
8.5.4	Index Mark	129
8.5.5	Delete Mark	129
8.5.6	Lock Marks from Selection	130
8.5.7	Unlock Marks from Selection.....	130
8.5.8	Lock All Marks	130
8.5.9	Unlock All Marks.....	130
8.5.10	Analog Black to Marks.....	130
8.5.11	Edited Black to Marks	131
8.6	The Selection Menu	132
8.6.1	Set In Point	133
8.6.2	Set Out Point	133
8.6.3	Set In & Out Points	133
8.6.4	Clear In Point	133
8.6.5	Clear Out Point	133
8.6.6	Clear In & Out Points	133
8.6.7	Nudge Right/Left.....	133
8.6.8	Move In Point/Out Point.....	134
8.6.9	Move In Point to Out Point	134
8.6.10	Find & Set Points	134
8.6.11	Select Nudge Size	134
8.6.12	Set SRP	135
8.6.13	Set SRP from selection	135

8.6.14	Lock SRPs from Selection.....	135
8.6.15	Unlock SRPs from Selection	135
8.6.16	Clear Selected SRPs	135
8.6.17	Drop Edit Point at Playhead	135
8.6.18	Edit Point to Playhead.....	135
8.6.19	Move Edit Point to...	135
8.6.20	Edit Point to Next Peak	136
8.6.21	Select Start to Edit Point.....	136
8.6.22	Select Edit Point to End	137
8.6.23	Selection from Selected Segments	137
8.6.24	Select Segment to End	137
8.6.25	Select Segment to Start.....	137
8.6.26	Select Segments from Selection	137
8.7	The View Menu	138
8.7.1	Move Forward/Backward.....	138
8.7.2	Zoom In/Out	138
8.7.3	Zoom In Around In/Out Point.....	138
8.7.4	Zoom In/Out around Edit Point	139
8.7.5	Zoom In/Out around Playhead	139
8.7.6	Zoom to Previous/Next.....	139
8.7.7	Zoom around Playhead	139
8.7.8	Zoom around Selection Center	139
8.7.9	Zoom to Selection Start/End.....	140
8.7.10	Zoom to Selection.....	140
8.7.11	Zoom to Entire Project/Track.....	140
8.8	The Desk Menu.....	140
8.8.1	Save Desk Setup.....	140
8.8.2	Open Desk Setup.....	141
8.8.3	Bypass All Events	141
8.8.4	Bypass / Active.....	142
8.8.5	Lock / Unlock.....	142
8.8.6	Move Event.....	142

8.8.7	Show Gain Overlay	142
8.8.8	Show/Hide Gain Overlay	142
8.8.9	Bypass Gain Overlay	142
8.8.10	Create Gain Nodes	142
8.8.11	Select Gain Nodes	143
8.8.12	Lock/Unlock Nodes From Selection	143
8.8.13	Lock/Unlock all Nodes In Track	143
8.9	The Windows Menu	143
8.9.1	EDL Desk	143
8.9.2	Meters	143
8.9.3	Panner	143
8.9.4	Mark Info	143
8.9.5	The Preferences Window.....	144
8.9.6	Setting Preferences — Editing Tools Tab	145
8.9.7	Setting Preferences — Time Display Tab.....	146
8.9.8	Setting Preferences - EDL Tab.....	147
8.9.9	Setting Preferences — Delivery Tab	148
8.9.10	New Soundfile Preferences.....	150
8.9.11	Audio I/O Preferences	150
8.9.12	Background Manager.....	150
8.9.13	Project	150
Appendix 1 Best Practices	
A1.1	Introduction	153
A1.2	Source Material Considerations.....	153
A1.3	Hardware Considerations	154
A1.4	Delivering DDPs	154

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Chapter 1.....Introduction

soundBlade is an easy to operate, task-specific tool for premastering on your desktop. soundBlade is ideal for:

- Auditioning the audio prior to sequencing
- Sequencing your material and refining audible transitions
- Defining PQ metadata for your replication master
- Creating a reliable replication master for your title

soundBlade allows you to audition, edit and mark up your finished mixes without the need to tie up an expensive, DAW-based production system. Since premastering is predicated on the generation of metadata for the finished CD, PQ marks can be added, deleted or moved in time, while ISR codes and UPC/EAN entries can be easily defined and edited. Also, since soundBlade runs on any Apple Macintosh with 10.4.3 or newer, including laptops, it is highly portable so you can take it with you, whenever and wherever needed.

2.1 Before You Begin

2.1.1 Requirements

At a minimum, soundBlade requires the following:

- Apple Macintosh G4 500 MHz, 1 GHz or faster preferred
- 1024 x 768 pixel or larger display
- 512 MB RAM minimum, 1 GB or more preferred
- OS 10.4.3 or newer

For delivery of the final DPP files for replication, a data storage device, such as a CD-R, DVD-R or data tape drive, is required as well. Since soundBlade uses OS X's Core Audio, the quality of audio playback will be entirely dependent on the hardware and driver(s) used.

Note that, though soundBlade is not tested with prior versions of Macintosh hardware, operation with older hardware should be usable as long as the CPU supports the required OS version. Slower hardware, especially older hard disks, may have difficulties “keeping up” with the application, however, resulting in drop-outs during playback and possible interruption or artifacts during deliveries.

2.1.2 Installation

To install soundBlade, please refer to the PDF copy of the Installation Guide provided on the supplied CD-ROM.

2.2 Creating CDs With soundBlade

soundBlade makes it easy to quickly create professional quality, Red Book-formatted CD-Rs. In four steps, you can make an audio CD. Here is an overview:

Step 1: Assemble your audio

Start by creating a new Project and adding audio files to the Project. When you command-drag an audio file into the Project, it is imported as a segment and added as a CD track.

You can arrange and edit your audio in the Waveform View. A track is created for each new segment, and you can edit the track order with the Track Bar or the Mark Info list.

Step 2: Edit segments and tracks

You can edit segments and tracks in a variety of ways, working either graphically in the Waveform View, or numerically in the Text View and Mark Info window. You can copy, reorder, trim, split, adjust gain, invert polarity and normalize segments. It's also possible to combine several segments into one track, or create several tracks with only one segment. As you work, you can play all, or any part of, the Project to immediately hear the result of your work.

Step 3: Adjust crossfades

When you add a segment, soundBlade creates a CD track and adds track marks to define the pause between tracks. You can create crossfades between overlapping segments, and adjust the crossfades in the Waveform View. You can also insert Index Marks to create subdivisions within a track.

Step 4: Burn the Project to a CD

When you burn your Project, soundBlade uses supported CD burning hardware that is connected to, or installed in, your Macintosh. The following section walks you through the creation of a simple CD in six easy steps, using individual audio files and default settings for pauses and crossfades.

2.3 Quick Start — Make A CD

This section covers six basic quick steps to create a CD:

1 Open

Open soundBlade.

2 Choose

Choose File > New to create a new Project.

3 Drag

Collect the desired audio files, drag them and, holding down the command key, drop the files onto the top Panel in the order that you want them to appear on the CD. The command key is only needed just before you drop the files. soundBlade will automatically create CD Tracks, shown in the Track Bar, from your audio files.

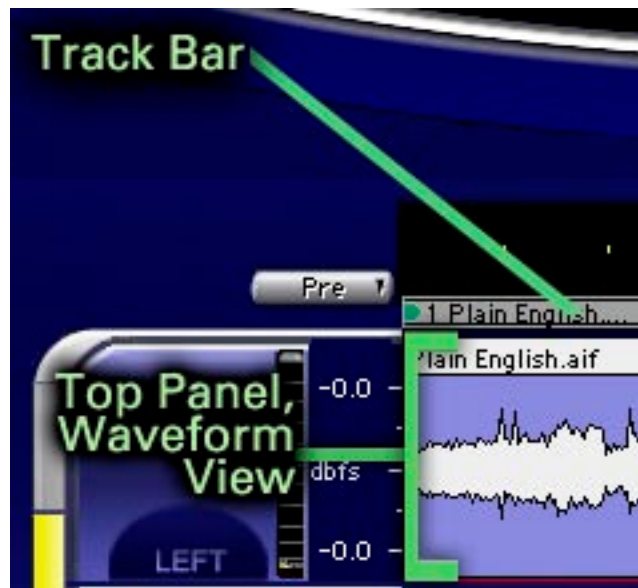


Figure 2.1: A Project showing the Track Bar and top Panel

4 Check

Choose Window > Mark Info.

The name of the CD burner is shown in the DEVICE field. If there is no blank disc in your CD burner's tray, the STATUS field prompts you to "Insert media for delivery".

5 Insert

Insert a blank CD-R disc, if you have not already done so. The STATUS field will tell you, "Media ready for delivery".

6 Execute

Click the Execute button in the Mark Info window. soundBlade will ask you to "Specify Folder for DDP Image. CD will be replicated from DDP image." Using the Finder browser, specify a New or existing folder and click the OK button. soundBlade begins delivering your Project to the blank CD. The STATUS field shows the progress of the burn process. When the burn process is complete, the CD is ejected from the CD burner, ready to play.

Chapter 3..... Basic Operation

3.1 General Workflow & Explanation of Terms Used

In order to prepare your finished master, soundBlade offers fast, simple audio editing along with creation and modification of metadata. Though soundBlade is designed to primarily create finished stereo programs, it also includes CD-R and, DDP file creation as well, the professional's preferred method of delivery of production masters for disc replication.

When opening a sound file into soundBlade, you are creating a copy of the file in memory that you can manipulate. This copy is placed into a 'Project,' the workspace created by soundBlade. Within the Project, you can add sound, create and edit Marks that will generate PQ codes, and place SRPs, persistent editing-related placeholders inside the Project. All this information can be saved and later recalled.

Raw sound files can be imported from various file formats, including AIFF, WAV, BWF and SD2 with regions. These files are edited, allowing you to compile a new program from various sources.

When you are satisfied that your Project is acceptable, you can create a Compact Disc that allows you to check the completed program. These "check discs" or "refs" are perfect for approvals but not for replication. The audio data on these CD-Rs, technically CD-DA-formatted Orange Book discs, contain error-protected metadata but not error-protected audio data. So, errors can propagate through premaster to replication, resulting in costly rework. For disc replication, you should save your changes to the Project and "deliver" a DDP file set, a reliable, error-protected file format specifically designed for interchange between facilities and optical disc replication.

Note: For more information on delivering finished mixes, visit <www.grammy.com> or contact the National Academy of Recording Arts & Science for their "Delivery Recommendations for Master Recording."

3.2 Project Layout

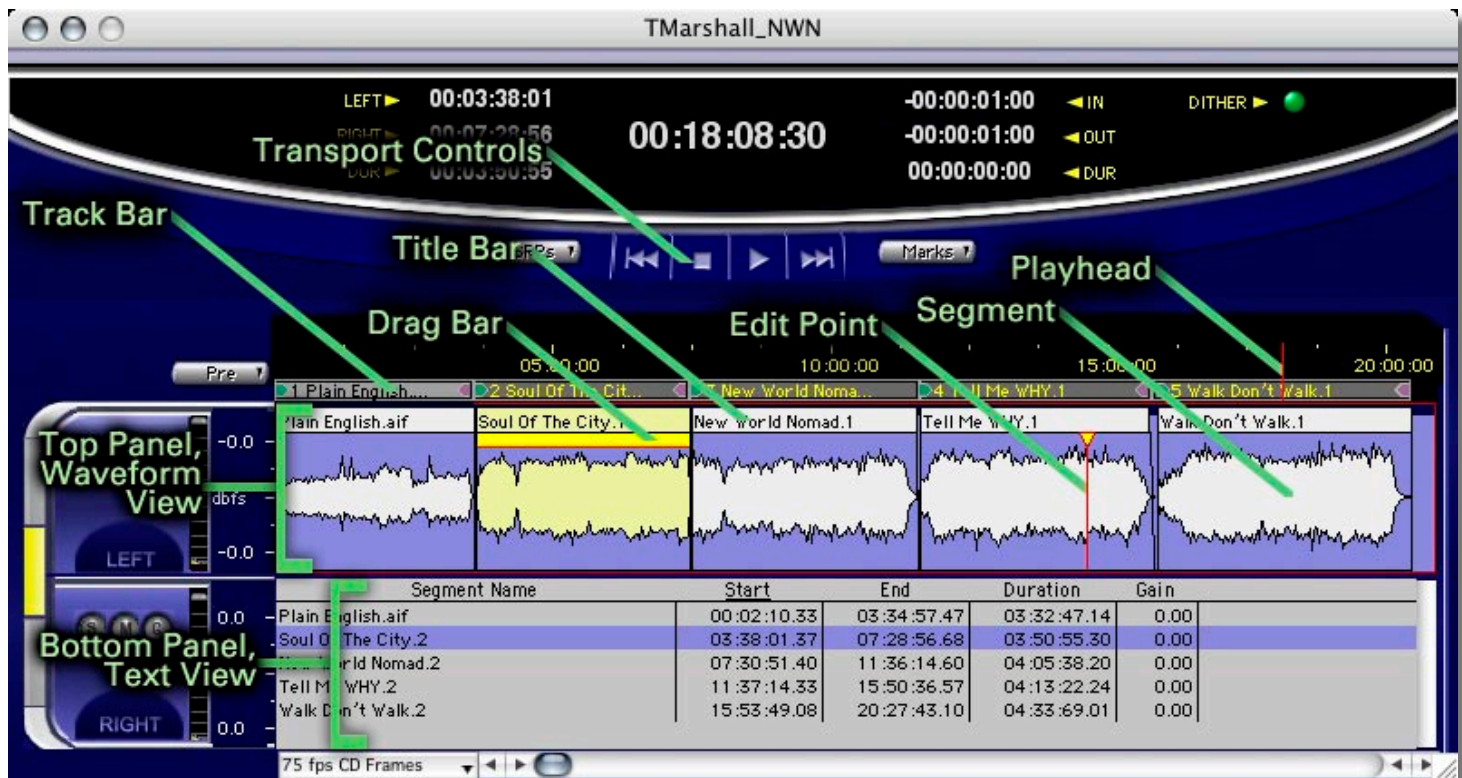


Figure 3.1: Main components of the Project window

In soundBlade, all tasks are performed in or via a Project. The bottom half of a new Project shows four empty Panels, two stereo containers for sound. The top two Panels are yellow "Destination" containers, where finished material is assembled, while the bottom two Panels are blue "Source" containers that supply raw segments of audio to the Destination Panels. The first and third Panel shows the left channel while the second and fourth Panel represents the right channel.

A slider appears at the bottom of the Project, directly beneath the lower Panel, allowing you to scroll across the time line. To the left of this slider, a drop down menu is available, where the time standard can be selected. The function of this time standard control is discussed further in section 3.7.1.

To the left of each Panel are solo and mute buttons, labeled with an S and M respectively. To the right of the mute button is a gain overlay button, labeled G. When activated, the buttons will light up "in color," otherwise they are grey. The function of this button and the application feature it brings up will be discussed later in section 4.5. To the right of these three buttons are the ready record or record arm button and the Desk Events enable button, which will be discussed in sections 5.2 and 4.6 respectively.



Figure 3.2: Area to the left of the Panels with function buttons

Immediately above the waveforms, is a black banner with time code values in yellow. At the top of the black area is the time line for the waveforms. The bottom of the black area is reserved for “PQ Marks” and the Track Bar, discussed in section 3.9. The data underlying the whole of the two Panels, with Marks and all data describing the audio program, is also referred to as the ‘EDL’ or Edit Decision List, and is saved as a separate file within each Project’s folder.

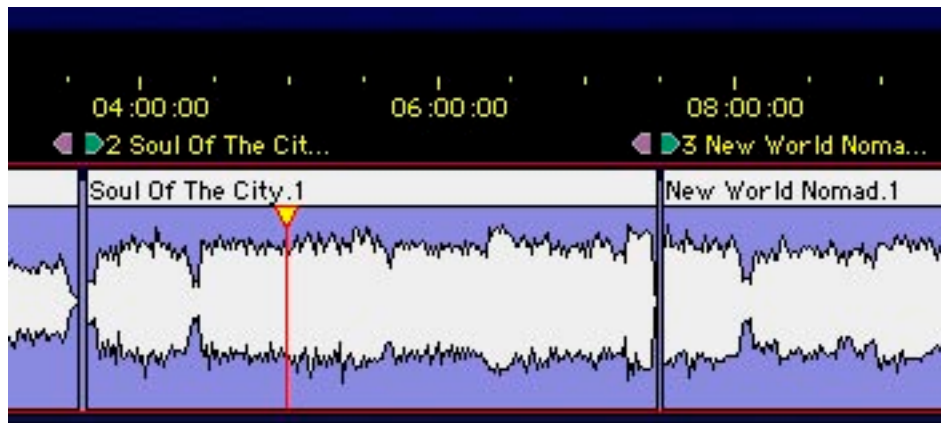


Figure 3.3: Waveform display with Marks above the Panels

To the left of the time line, a drop down menu is located for selection of the Project default sample rate. It will be discussed in section 4.9 below.

Above the time line and Marks are the transport controls. They offer dedicated buttons for deliver (burn), play, stop, fast forward, rewind and record. Also along this bar are the SRP, Burn and Marks buttons. The function of these are explained in sections 4.7, 4.9.4.7 and 4.5 respectively.



Figure 3.4: A Project’s Transport Controls

Finally, at the top of the main window are time displays on the left, for the Playhead, and, on the right, for edit locations. In the middle is a display showing the current location of the Playhead and other time information related to that Project.

3.3 Starting a Project: Opening Files

3.3.1 Opening Projects

To create a new Project, select File > New Project... from the menu bar. A blank, default Project opens.

Alternatively, you can open an existing Sonic Studio Project by selecting File > Open Project... from the menu bar. This brings up a standard Mac OS browser dialog for finding and selecting the desired Project file. Confirm your selection with Choose and the Project opens into a new Project window.

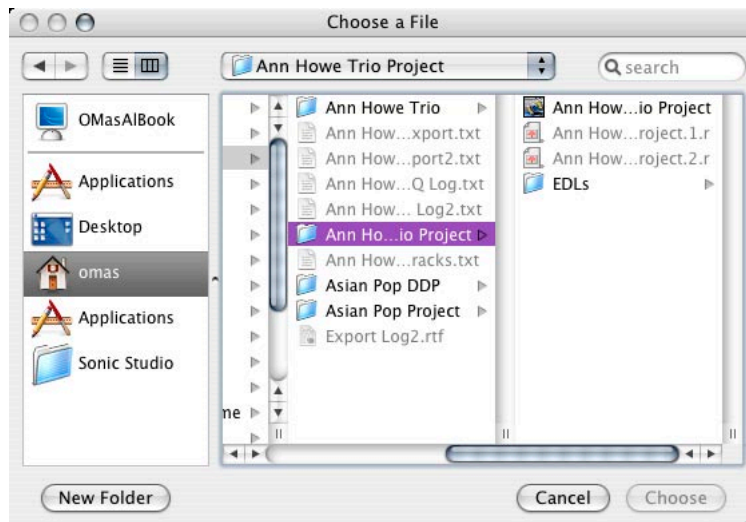


Figure 3.5: Mac OS browser dialog for opening a Project

After highlighting your selection and clicking Choose, the Project will be opened, together with any available metadata already saved in the Project folder.

A third way to open an existing Project is by simply drag the file from any folder onto the application icon or the application's Dock icon.

3.3.2 Opening Sound Files

Once your Project is open, you need to open your sound files into the Project. As with Projects, using either the File menu or dragging and dropping will work. By holding down the command key when dragging in sound files, soundBlade will autospace the new segment. Section 4.2 below will discuss autospacing functions in detail.

By selecting File > Open Sound File... from the menu bar, you will bring up a standard Mac OS browser dialog for finding and selecting the desired audio file. soundBlade will open AIFF, WAV, BWF and SD2 files with regions. Confirm your selection with Choose and the sound file opens into your Project.

3.3.3 Adding Your First Sound File

In addition to the Open Sound File... command, you may also drag and drop sound files into a Project. soundBlade makes the job of CD assembly easy by providing a special behavior for adding your first sound file to a Project. If you drag sound files into the top Panel of an empty Project, soundBlade will automatically place them on the time line at 00:00:02:00 or 2 seconds. By holding down the command key before dropping files, soundBlade will also automatically add PQ metadata for the segments. This is useful if your performing basic pre-mastering chores and only need to top & tail edit and resequence.

Note that command-dropping only applies to drag and drop, not to the Open Sound File... command. An exception to the default drag and drop behavior, soundBlade normally uses the time code location of your cursor to determine the address of the “head” or start of the resultant sound file, as well as the selection status of already placed sound files. Later in this chapter, section 3.8 discusses these topics in more detail.

3.4 Waveforms

A waveform display provides visual reinforcement of audible cues when editing. Normally, the audio file types that soundBlade opens contain metadata such as sample rate and related information, but no information on visualization. Waveform shape information therefore has to be generated by soundBlade itself. The application generates individual “waveform files,” one for each channel, in order to display high resolution waveforms in the Panels at any zoom level. The generation of wavform files is typically performed in the background so normal operation is not interrupted.



Figure 3.6: Display of a sound file without waveform metadata

If waveform files are absent from one or more audio files included in the Project, soundBlade will automatically start generating those files in the background. Waveform files, identified

by their “.r” extension, are placed in the same folder as the audio files and can be read by any other Sonic Studio product.

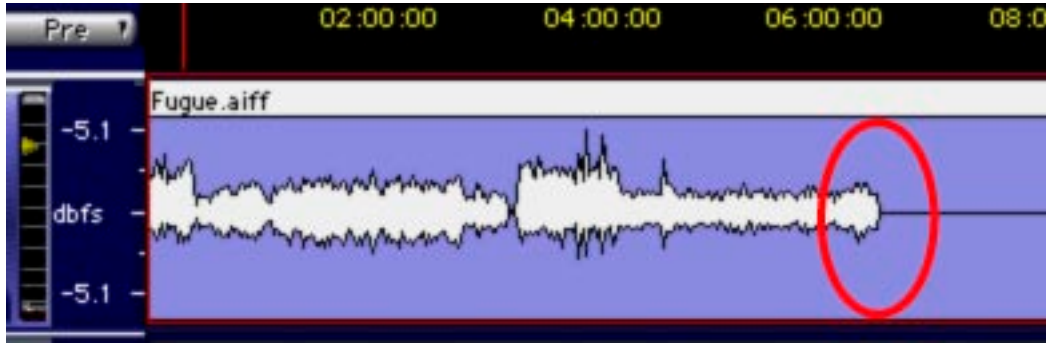


Figure 3.7: The building of waveform metadata in progress

Once the waveforms are visible, the arrow keys control the viewing window and a quick tap of the E key always zooms out to view the entire Project. In section 3.6 below, navigating your Project is discussed in more detail.

3.5 Auditioning Sound

3.5.1 Playback

When you press the keyboard’s Space Bar, the cursor changes to a “speaker & note” and playback begins. A thin vertical red line, the Playhead, spans the Panels and time line and moves horizontally to indicate the location of playback.

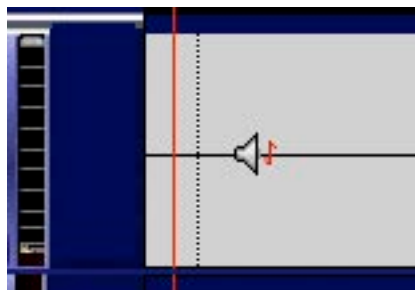


Figure 3.8: The cursor changes into a speaker & note shape during playback

When you first open a sound file and begin listening, playback, once started, will begin at the left edge of the audio. The Playhead will move to the right, across the file. When you hit the Space Bar again, playback ends and the Playhead halts its motion. When you hit the space bar a third time, the Playhead will jump back to the left side of the waveform display, the beginning of the sound file, and playback will begin again.

3.5.2 Playback from the Edit Point

When you click anywhere inside the waveform display, the entire Panel, or rectangle containing the waveform display, is selected. The selected Panel has a medium blue background and hairline red border. Once selected, a click anywhere in that Panel produces a thin vertical red line, with an inverted yellow triangle on top. This is the “Edit Point.”

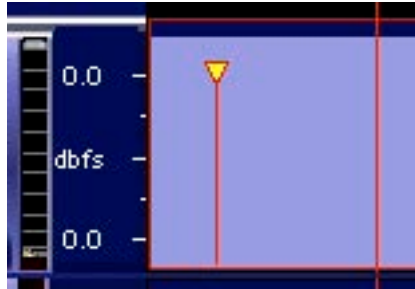


Figure 3.9: Empty Panels with Edit Point at left and Playhead at right

When the Edit Point is present, playback will always start from the Edit Point. When you stop playback and start again, the Playhead will jump to the Edit Point and start playback from there.

You can move the Edit Point by clicking on a new location in the waveform display. The Edit Point will jump to the click location. Alternatively, you can click and drag the Edit Point’s yellow triangle to move it to a new location.

3.5.3 Playback from Playhead

The Playhead itself can also be manipulated directly. By double clicking in the lower half of the black time line banner, the Playhead is moved to the click location and playback begins. The Transport Controls above the top Panel provide tape transport emulation, so you can play, stop and continue playing from the current location. You can also select the Play > From Playhead command.

3.5.4 Play All

At the bottom left of any Project is a Play All button. This button overrides the normal audition behavior of playing the Edit Group and, as the name implies, force soundBlade to play all Panels instead. This mode is useful any time you want to hear the entire Project and can be used to play out, to an external recorder, “four track” program or all four channels in a Project.

3.5.5 Time Displays

The large, central time code display in the center top of the Project window is live and editable, as are the LEFT, RIGHT, IN, OUT and DUR fields where applicable. Click on any subdivision or click-drag on the entire central time code display to select and modify the current address of the Playhead.

For all editable time code addresses, a single click in any HH:MM:SS:FF subdivision will highlight that subdivision, allowing you to type in a value. By click-holding and dragging up or down, the cursor will change to an arrow and the numeric value displayed will increase or decrease respectively. Click-hold for more than two seconds, and the rate of change increases. The arrow keys also let you move to a particular subdivision and increment or decrement the current value. Option-dragging a time code address allows you to quickly “clone” that value into another editable field.

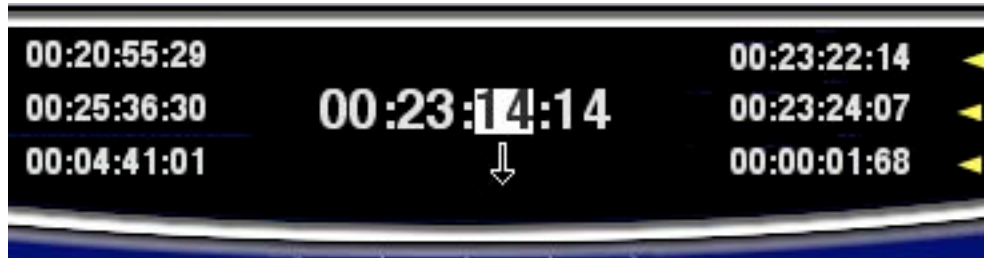


Figure 3.10: Click-dragging down to edit a time code address

All modifiable time code fields in soundBlade support cut, copy and paste. Double clicking on any time field will select the entire field, allowing you to enter a complete time code address.

3.6 Navigating the Waveform Display

There are many tools for quickly moving around inside of the waveform display.

3.6.1 Scrolling

If you are zoomed all the way out, the entire waveform will be displayed. If you are not zoomed out entirely, some of the waveform will be off the edges of the Panel. You can move the window view left or right by moving the slider control at the bottom of the waveform display. You can also move the window view left and right by using the Left and Right Arrow key respectively.

Finally, you can drag the view left or right by simultaneously holding the control, option and command keys. When you click-hold, the cursor changes to a hand to indicate you are in Move View mode.

3.6.2 Zooming

You can zoom in using the Down Arrow key, and zoom out using the Up Arrow key. To zoom all the way out, hit the E, for “entire,” key.

3.6.2.1 Zoom around Edit Point

As you zoom in and out, it is likely that you will want to keep the Edit Point in view. To do this, hold down the Apple or command key as you use the Up Arrow or Down arrow keys. This will keep the Edit Point centered in the middle of the display.

3.6.2.2 Zoom to Selection

Clicking and dragging on the waveform itself selects a region, highlighted in yellow–orange. Typing command-G or selecting View > Zoom to Selection... will zoom around that selected region. See section 3.7 for more information on region selection.

You can also zoom to a selection while making the selection. By holding down the command and option keys while click–dragging on the waveform will define a selection and zoom to that selection as well.

3.6.2.3 Zoom Around Time Selection

If you click and drag in the black time line banner above the top Panel while holding down the Apple or command key, the Panel will zoom to display the region of the time line that your click–drag defined.

3.7 Selections

Selections let you highlight a portion of the audio where you want to perform a desired operation.

3.7.1 Selecting a Region

To select a region, click–drag on the waveform display. At the point that you want the selection to start, click and hold down the mouse button, then drag to complete your selection. An area will be highlighted in yellow–orange, indicating the selected region.

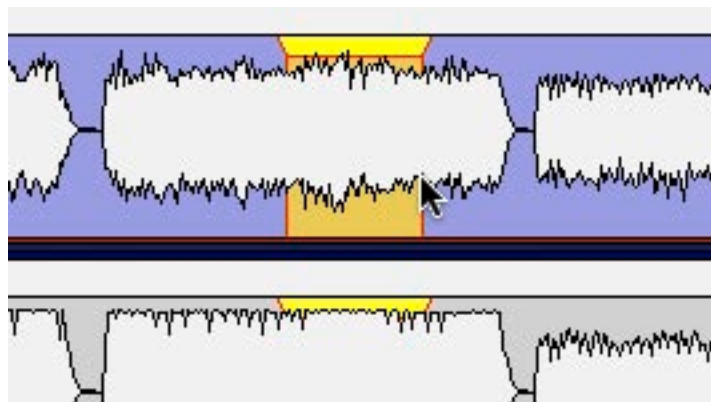


Figure 3.9: A region selected, indicated by the yellow highlight

You can click–drag either left or right to define a selection. In addition, you can fine tune the boundaries of a selected region. Hold down the shift key and click on either side of the selected region then, while continuing to hold the shift key, drag left or right to expand or contract the selection.

While selecting regions, the LEFT, RIGHT and DUR fields at the top of the Project are active and editable. See section 3.5.4 above for more information on manipulating time code addresses.

Note that the format in which all time fields are represented in soundBlade is user selectable. By clicking in the time standard display to the left of the time line slider, a drop down menu offering four choices becomes available.

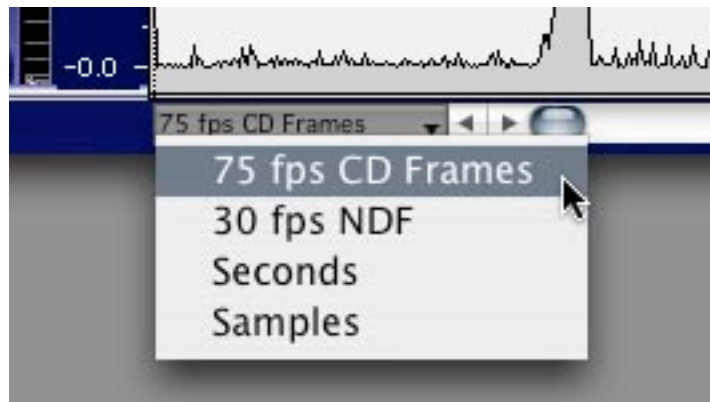


Figure 3.10: The time standard menu

Options are:

- 75 fps CD Frames
- 30 fps NDF
- Seconds
- Samples

75 fps CD Frames is the default setting and the internal time code format for CD-DA discs (audio CDs). 30 fps NDF signifies non-drop frame time code, the default time code format typically used by DAWs to prepare material for CD release. The Seconds setting shows all times in multiples and fractions of seconds. Finally, Samples displays all times in absolute samples based on the selected sample rate. These same selections can also be made in the Preference window. See section 4.9 for more information on time standard settings.

Note that, because soundBlade is designed to create the metadata necessary for Compact Disc replication, all of your PQ marking decisions are directly tied to, literally quantized to, the 75 frame standard. Unless you are using soundBlade as a general purpose editor, you should always use the 75 fps CD Frames standard for CD preparation.

Note also that, when a region is selected and playback is invoked, the Playhead relocates and playback starts at the beginning of the selection.

3.7.2 Selecting Segments

An entire sound file “segment,” the representation of contiguous samples from a single sound file, can be chosen as a selection. Click on the white Title Bar at the top of any segment, which displays the source sound file name.

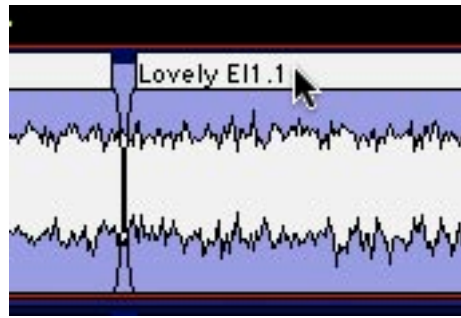


Figure 3.11: The Title Bar

The waveform highlights yellow-orange and a bright yellow bar appears below it, running the entire length of the segment, to indicate that the segment has been selected.

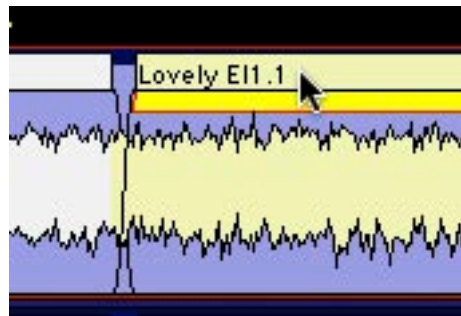


Figure 3.12: A selected segment, indicated by the yellow highlight

By holding down the shift key and simultaneously clicking in other segment's Title Bars, a selection of contiguous segments can be made. Also, while holding down the Apple or command key and clicking any Title Bars, a group of non-contiguous or random segments can be selected simultaneously.

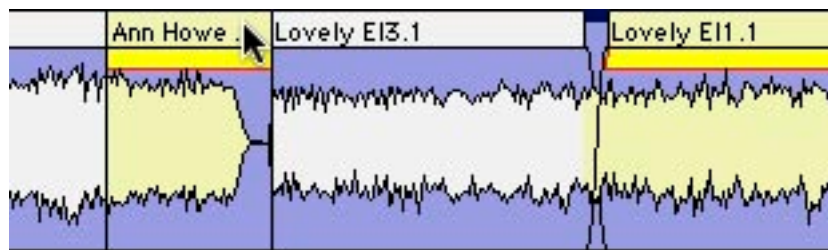


Figure 3.13: Multiple selected segments

Note that, when one or more segments are selected and playback is started, the Playhead moves to the head of the first selected segment and playback commences from there.

3.8 Recording Audio

In addition to assembling audio from existing sound files, soundBlade offers the possibility of recording audio from external audio sources. Supported file formats for recording are AIFF and BWF. Sample rate and resolution are limited by the capabilities of the available hardware.

Audio can be recorded directly into any Panel, in either mono or stereo. First, you must specify where the recorded file will be stored and in what format and resolution the recording will be made. To do this, select Windows > New Soundfile Settings. The New Soundfile Settings window appears.



Figure 3.14: The New Soundfile Settings window

To select the destination folder for the recorded sound file and subsequent recordings, click on Set Folder to open a standard Mac OS browser and select the target destination folder. Then click OK to confirm your choices and return to the New Soundfile Settings window.

Next, the default sound file prefix can be set in the “Soundfile” field. Additionally, in the “Take #” field, a starting take number suffix can be entered that will be incremented for each new recording, creating unique file names for subsequent recordings. Finally, the word length and file type for the recording can be set via the appropriate corresponding drop down menu. You do not have to close the New Soundfile Parameters window to save your settings.

3.8.1 Edit Recording

This option, located in the New Soundfile Settings window, allows opening, viewing and editing of the file being recorded during the recording.

To use the Edit Recording option, choose Windows > New Soundfile Settings. Select the Edit Recording option and initiate a recording. Open the sound file in a Project. You can now drag the Out fade as the audio is recorded and use the EDL > Refresh command to update the waveform display. This feature provides an autosave function, as the file is updated continuously during recording. If anything happens to interrupt the record, the file will be intact up to that point.

Note that, when the Edit Recording option is selected, it uses about 15% more disk bandwidth for a stereo recording, so hard drive performance may be affected.

3.8.2 Initiating a Recording

To initiate a recording, “arm” the desired Panel(s) by clicking on the Record Ready button, labeled “R,” on the left of the corresponding Panel. After arming, click the green Record button in the Transport Controls to start the recording. The Playhead starts at the beginning of the time line to record audio. To start recording at another place on the time line, simply place the Edit Point at the desired position and click the Record button. The Record buttons turns red, recording begins and the Panel backgrounds that are in record along with their corresponding record arm buttons turn red, while the cursor changes to a microphone symbol.

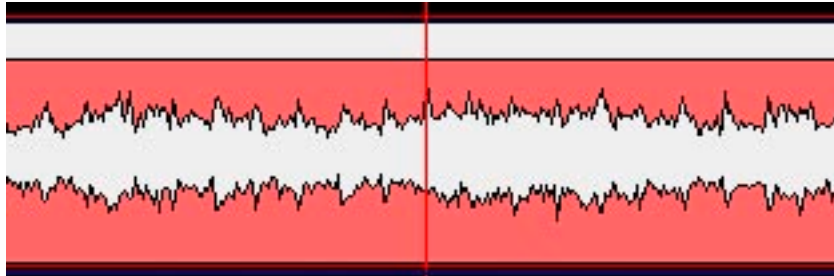


Figure 3.15: A Panel in Record Mode

Once recording is finished by either hitting the space bar or the Stop button in the Transport Controls, the newly recorded audio segments are shown in the Panel(s) while soundBlade generates the waveform files in the background.

Note that, as recording is non-destructive, any existing audio segments in a Panel that seem to be “overwritten” during recording are not physically erased from your computer’s hard disk. They are merely replaced in the waveform display and can be reopened at any time. Alternatively, the original state of the Panels before the recording was started can easily be restored by selecting Undo from the Edit menu.

3.9 Simple Editing

There will be occasions where raw sound files need modifications. soundBlade offers advanced editing features, as well as simple tools to change amplitude and transitions.

3.9.1 The Fade Tool

The head (start) or tail (end) of segments are represented in the display by a thin black vertical line. When zooming in, this line will reveal itself to be a curve representing a ‘fade’ or amplitude versus time “envelope.” Each segment starts with an Fade In and ends with an Fade Out. Fade Ins and Outs are both “Black Fades” where “black” refers to “Edited Black,” the absence of audio data in the Panel.

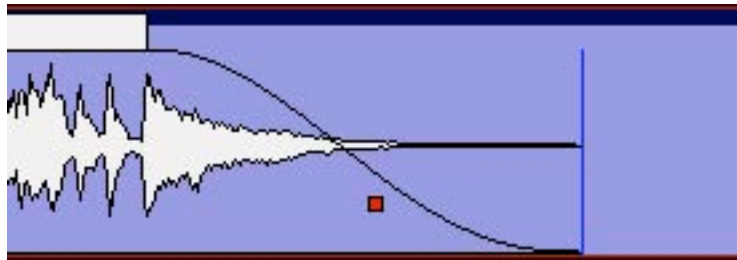


Figure 3.16: End of a segment with Fade Out glyph

Fades have a specific starting location and duration. Both parameters can be easily adjusted with the “FadeTool.”

First, the duration or length of the fade can be changed. To do so, zoom in so you can see what you’re doing and have reasonable control of the fade. Then, click–hold and drag on the upper “inside” edge of the fade to the desired location.

Note that, with the cursor on the upper inside edge, the cursor changes into a cross with left, right and up arrows indicating you can change the duration.

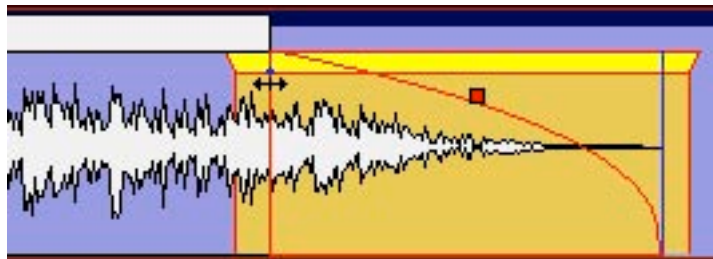


Figure 3.17: Fade tool symbol while moving top inside edge of the Fade

Of course, the length of a fade can also be changed by moving the lower or “outside” edge of a fade, leaving the inside edge in place. To do so, move the cursor over the fade near the bottom of the display until the cursor changes into the FadeTool again. This time, the cursor changes into a cross with left, right and down arrows.

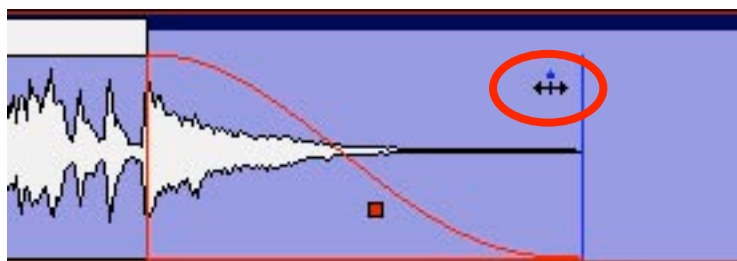


Figure 3.18: Fade tool symbol indicating you are changing the outside edge of the fade

Click–hold and drag the bottom end of the fade to the desired position. Release the button to confirm the change. Remember that modifying the outside edge is only possible within the limits of the actual samples of audio data represented by the segment.

If the cursor is moved over the middle portion of a fade, the FadeTool cursor also appears but this time as a horizontal arrow with a vertical center line. In this trim mode, you are able to move the entire fade left or right, changing its location without changing its duration. This allows you to “hide” or “reveal” portions of the underlying segment, by shortening or lengthening the segment duration, trimming the segment as you go. Click–hold on the fade and drag the fade left or right. Releasing the mouse button fixes the fade in that location. While you are moving or changing a fade with the FadeTool, the waveform is “live,” continuously changing visually to reflect the modifications you are making.

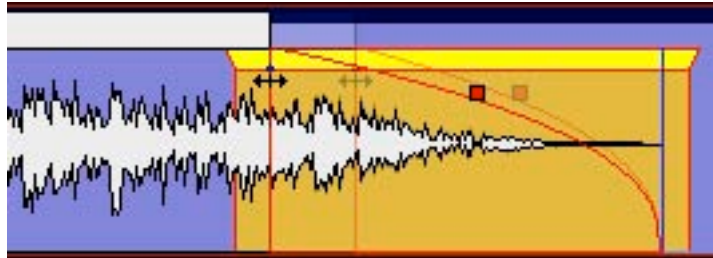


Figure 3.19: Dragging the inside edge to lengthen a Fade

Note that the maximum duration of a fade is equal to the underlying sound file duration. As mentioned above, it is not possible to move a fade past the actual start or end of an underlying sound file.

Also, moving Black Fades so more than two overlap is not allowed as well. A modal “Check-ForTripleOverlap” dialog will pop up, telling you that your command would result in three Black Fades lying on top of each other.

3.9.2 Deleting Part of a Sound File

It may be necessary to edit out some part of a sound file. soundBlade allows you to do so quickly or with great precision. To easily cut out a portion of a sound file, simply select the region that you want to remove. Then, select Edit > Delete Selection or hit the delete key to remove the selected region and “slip” all downstream segments left to close the gap. More on this later...

More precise editing can be performed with In points and Out edit points, special marks you can place in the Panel. An In Point is shown as a vertical line with a triangle at the bottom, pointing right, while an Out Point has the triangle pointing left.

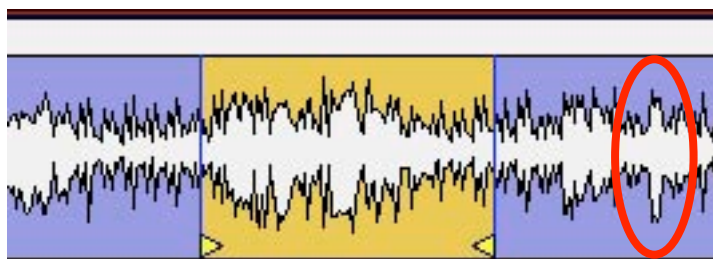


Figure 3.20: In Point and Out Point with highlighted area in between

There can be only one In Point and one Out Point in a Panel at any time. If both an In Point and Out Point are present, and if the In Point is to the left of the Out Point in the waveform display, then the area between the In and Out Point will be highlighted in yellow. The Selection > Set In Point command drops an In Point at the location of the Edit Point.

Note that the IN, OUT and DUR time fields at the top *right* of the main Project window are always active and fully editable. These fields allow you to precisely alter the location of, and duration between, the In and Out Points, a functionality which comes out handy when the exact points are well known by their time value.

Once the region is defined, it can be modified in two different ways. The region can be either deleted or cleared. To clear the defined region, leaving an empty area, select the Edit > Clear Selection command.



Figure 3.21: A cleared selection — the circled material has not moved

The selected region now is cleared of its contents, leaving the audio before and after the selected region in the same place. The In and Out Points also stay in place. Effectively, you have now created two new segments that can be further edited and/or moved independently.

Alternatively, the selection can be deleted. To do so, select Edit, Delete Selection from the main menu. Hitting the delete or backspace key on the keyboard will perform the same action.



Figure 3.22: A deleted selection — the circled area has moved

As a result, the selected region will be deleted and all audio to the right of the selected region will be moved left to the beginning of the now deleted section, closing the "hole." Again, the In and Out Points stay in place.

Similar to clearing the selected region, you now have two new segments. When deleting the selection, however, the two new segments are joined together with a "Crossfade." It is represented in the waveform display as an overlapping Fade In and Out.

The delete functions mentioned above also work with one or more selected regions. Simply click–drag to select a region, and hit delete or option–delete.

Note that, when you have both Edit Points and region selections, soundBlade always defers to Edit Points rather than selections. This can easily lead to erroneous edits when IN and OUT Points are beyond the displayed area and the selected segments or regions are visible, leading to the user’s perception of a non performing edit, meanwhile audio out of view has been modified. Because of that, it is always a good idea to either choose Selection > Clear In & Out Points or check for the presence of Edit Points by glancing at the IN and OUT fields at the top right of the Project. Non–zero positive values indicate the location of an Edit Point.

3.9.3 Splitting a segment into new segments

Occasionally, existing segments need to be split in separate segments before further editing can be performed. This can be achieved by manually creating a new Crossfade within a segment.

To create a new Crossfade, simply place your cursor at the desired location, and double click. This moves the Edit Point to the click location. Then, select Edit > Create Crossfade from the main menu or hit Option + G on the keyboard. A new Crossfade is created at the location of the Edit point. Also see section 3.8.2 above for information on deleting segments.

3.9.4 Manipulating Fades

With Crossfades, the FadeTool can also be used to modify or move the fades, either as a complete Crossfade or as individual Black Fades. When the cursor is moved over a Crossfade, it changes into a pair of parallel horizontal arrows. The Fade Out changes to red while the Fade In changes to green.

To move the whole Crossfade either left or right, once again hiding and revealing audio on either side, simply click and drag the Crossfade to the desired location. Release the mouse button to drop the Crossfade at a specific spot.

To modify the fades individually, press the option key while modifying the Fade Out, and the Apple or command key while modifying the Fade In. With these modifier keys, the FadeTool works as if the fades were isolated, as described in section 3.8.1 above. While operating on one fade of a Crossfade individually with modifier keys, the fade not being manipulated will deselect, indicated by its color changing to black.

If you decide that default duration of your crossfade is not right, simply hold down the shift key and place the cursor over the center of the crossfade until the cursor changes into the pair of parallel horizontal arrows. Click–drag up or down and the duration will increase or decrease, respectively.

Note that, to be able to do any of the above fade manipulations with accuracy, it may be necessary to zoom in until the Crossfade extends over a significant proportion of the waveform display. The View > Zoom To Previous command will zoom you out to your previous view quickly after such fine adjustments.

3.9.5 Changing the order of songs

It is not uncommon that the order in which tracks or songs appear on the final CD needs to be changed. There are two scenarios that are applicable to this need. The simple case is where PQ metadata is already present. This would apply if either the command key is held down when audio is dragged into the top Panel of a Project, which automatically creates CDTracks or, PQ Marks are added manually. See section 3.10.1 for more information on manually adding PQ metadata in order to use the Track Bar. For more information on automatically creating CD Tracks, see section 3.10.4 below. For more information on CDTrack re-ordering with the Track Bar, see section 3.10.5.

If PQ metadata is not present, the songs or group of songs you want to move need to be present as separate segments. This can be achieved by either manually creating a new Crossfade or by deleting the space between tracks in an existing sound file, meanwhile creating new segments that can be moved and edited independently.

To create a new Crossfade, simply move your cursor to the desired location, and double click. This will move the Edit Point to the click location. Then, select Edit > Create Crossfade. Also see section 3.8.2 above for information on deleting segments.

Once the material is divided in the required number of segments, the re-ordering can be done. There are several ways this can be achieved. First, segments can be selected, then dragged and dropped into place. This allows you to change the track order very quickly, but may be inaccurate when placing the files with precision on the time line. Section 4.3 below discusses an autospacing option that helps with precise track timings.

To drag a segment, first select the segment by clicking on the white Title Bar at the top of any segment. See figure 3.7.2 above. Notice the bright yellow Drag Bar that appears under the Title Bar in any selected segment.



Figure 3.23: The Drag Bar

Click-drag the Drag Bar to move the segment to the desired location. Remember that shift-clicking or command-clicking on multiple segments will select contiguous or segments respectively.

Secondly, segments can be moved by altering their respective time line positions directly via the Move Segments window. Select the desired segments, then select the Edit > Move Segments... command. The Move Segments modal dialog appears, showing the current position of the first, or only, selected segment.

The desired new segment start time can now be entered directly into the time code address shown. Once the 'Move' button is clicked, the segment moves to the new location.

The Move Segments dialog offers three extra options. By clicking on the 'Where' button, you can select via a drop down menu the new start time for the segment:

- The current position of the Playhead
- The location of the In Point, or
- The location of the Out Point

There is also an SRP button that provides a list of any SRPs placed in the Project. By choosing one of these four options, the time display of the move segment window changes to the relevant time. SRPs, persistent markers you can place anywhere in time, are discussed later in section 4.7 below.

After choosing your option, clicking the 'Move' button will move the segment and close the dialog. Clicking 'Cancel' leaves the segment at its original position and closes the dialog.

3.9.6 Simple Track Spacing: AutoSpace

Once all your segments are placed in the right order, the AutoSpace function offers a simple but effective tool to change all pauses between songs to a pre-defined value. Simply select Edit > AutoSpace All Segments and all segments will be moved on the time line, with equal space between according to the Preference > Editing Tools > AutoSpacing Duration setting. In Preferences, the length of the AutoSpace can be set to 1, 2 or 3 seconds.

Note that, if a song is composed of more than one segment, then the AutoSpace command should be used with care as the command will "breaking apart" the song, autospacing its component segments. Also, the AutoSpace command should be used *before* you place PQ marks to prevent unwanted Mark (re)location.

3.9.7 Exporting Selections & Segments

Selections, including both selected segments and selected regions, can be exported as 16 bit/44.1 AIFF files. To do this, simply click-hold on the Drag Bar of one or more selected segments or regions, and drag them to the Desktop. soundBlade will write the data as AIFF.

Note that selected segments or regions exported in this manner are free of modifications from either the gain overlay or plug-ins.

Alternatively, selections or segments can be exported in more other formats by invoking the File > Export function from the main menu. See section 8.1.12 for more discussion of this function.

Note that, when exporting selected segments and regions, segment gains are applied but Gain Overlay settings are not.

3.10 PQ Marks: Defining Metadata

Once all of your tracks for the CD are put in the right order and spaces between the tracks are adjusted to taste, the PQ Marks can be created. PQ Marks generate the TOC or Table of Contents for the final replication master. PQ Marks are shown in the black banner just below the time line.



Figure 3.24: The Track Bar and its PQ Marks

With the Track Bar visible, Start of Track marks are indicated by a arrow pointing to the right while End of Track marks are indicated by a arrow pointing left. Index marks are indicated by a yellow arrow pointing down.

3.10.1 Inserting PQ Marks Manually

To insert a new PQ Mark, place the Edit Point at the location where you want the new Mark to appear. Then select **Mark > Track Start Mark**, which adds the new Start of Track mark.

Note that soundBlade always quantizes the location of PQ Marks so that, in keeping with the Red Book specification for CD-DA or Compact Disc-Digital Audio discs, they are located on CD frame boundaries.

3.10.2 Moving PQ Marks

It's easy to relocate PQ Marks. Simply click-drag on a Mark to move it to the desired location.

3.10.3 Removing PQ Marks

To remove one or more PQ Marks, click-drag in the waveform display to select a region that includes the Mark(s) you want to remove. Then, select **Mark > Delete Mark** and all Marks within the selected region will be deleted. If you are working in the **Windows > Mark Info** window and have a Mark selected, you can also use the **Mark > Delete Mark** command to remove the Mark. The Mark Info window is discussed in detail in section 3.10.1 below.

A third method is to use the contextual menu to delete or otherwise modify a Mark. Simply control-click on a Mark, and make your selection from the menu.

3.10.4 Inserting PQ Marks Automatically

3.10.4.1 Command–Dragging

The fastest and easiest way to generate PQ metadata is to simply drag and drop. By holding down the command key before dropping one or more sound files onto the top Panel of your Project, soundBlade automatically creates CDTrack definitions by generating Start and End of Track Marks for each file. These Track definitions can later be rearranged or modified to taste. See section 3.10.5 below for more information of resequencing.

3.10.4.2 Edited Black To Marks

Apart from placing PQ Marks manually at the desired positions, soundBlade has the ability to generate PQ Marks automatically. If the entire Project was created by editing each song/segment, the most efficient way to generate PQ Marks automatically is to Edit > Select All, selecting all segments, then select the Mark > Edited Black To Marks command. You can also click–drag to select a region, then select the Mark > Edited Black To Marks command. soundBlade automatically places Start and End of Track marks at the outside edges of all segments, using the location of Black Fades. The final result is a collection of marks accurately placed at the begin or end of each Black Fade.

3.10.4.3 Analog Black To Marks

If you’ve done a fair amount of fancy editing and track timing, then Edited Black To Marks may not be the ideal choice. Also, if your material consists of one long, consolidated file with few or no edits, then you may want to automatically place PQ Marks with the Analog Black to Marks function instead. This function measures the amplitude of your audio and places PQ Marks at the edges of long duration quiet passages. Both amplitude and duration are user adjustable.

To use, first click–drag to select a region on which to work. Then, select the Mark > Analog Black To Marks... command. In the resulting modal dialog, specify the amplitude and duration of the selected region you want to mark.

The results of the Analog Black To Marks function are not as accurate as Digital Black to Marks, but will provide quite usable PQ Mark placement even with un–edited material. The placement accuracy is dependent on the settings used, as well as the assumption that tracks always start and end with an increase then decrease in amplitude and quiet in between. However, it is very likely that those same criteria also apply to other moments in the course of a musical piece so, the results of the Analog Black To Marks function should always be checked for acceptable accuracy. You may also try the command, check the result and adjust the parameters prior to undoing or deleting marks and using the function again. See section 3.9.6 below for useful information on checking mark accuracy.

3.10.5 Tracks

soundBlade allows you to display and manipulate (CD) Tracks. The Windows > Preferences > EDL > Show Track Bar preference enables or disables the Track Bar. Each CDTrack that will result

from your current PQ placement is shown in grey while the pre-gap or the pause between tracks is shown in blue.

3.10.5.1 Moving Tracks & Resequencing

A Track, *always with its pre-gap*, can be selected by clicking on its Track Bar. Selecting a Track also selects the underlying audio that is associated with that Track. When you move a Track, you also move the associated audio. This means that you can quickly resequence your deliverable by dragging and dropping Tracks. The Track, with its Marks, can be moved by click-holding a Track's track Bar, dragging left or right to a new position in the Track sequence, and dropping. The Track Bar updates to graphically display the new Track definition.

The Windows > Mark Info window is another way to move Tracks. As with the Track Bar, click-hold a Track entry and drag it up or down on a new position and drop it to resequence.

3.10.6 The Marks Button

In the Transport Controls, the Marks Button can be seen. Clicking on it reveals a list of all PQ Marks in the Project along with their timings. Selecting one of the entries in the drop down list moves the Edit Point to the selected PQ Marks, without changing the zoom level. This allows for a quick and accurate check of the position of all PQ Marks.

3.11 Delivery

After completing the necessary editing of sound and PQ Marks, the next and final step in your production workflow is to start a "Delivery." This process creates a new DPP image file set, incorporating all edits and changes, ready to be sent to a replication service for glass mastering. The DPP file set is then used by soundBlade to generate your CD in the background.

DDP or Disc Description Protocol is the industry standard method for delivering all the data and metadata needed for disc replication to a "pressing plant." Unlike audio CDs, DDP file sets contain error-protected audio data plus all ancillary metadata or, "data about the data." DDP file sets, when used for replication, avoid potential errors that can crop up between the time you create a replication master and the moment that a "glass master" is created during replication. CD-DA discs, or audio CDs, do not protect the audio data from errors since they assume that the CD player will hide or "conceal" any errors during playback. This situation leads to errors in replication when recordable CDs, formatted as Red Book (audio) discs, are used as replication masters.

Note that the DDP files created by soundBlade, always in their enclosing folder, can be copied to any writable medium you choose, CD-ROM, DVD-R, Jazz, Zip or hard disk, for transport to the replicator. Of course, the medium you choose must have enough space to hold the file set. Also, always check with your replicator to determine which physical medium and format they can handle and whether they are even capable of using DDP as a premastering format. Many bargain companies are not ready to handle DDP deliveries so, we at Sonic Studio suggest you find a reputable facility that does accept DDP file sets of your valuable masters. Check the Support section of the Sonic Studio web site <www.sonicstudio.com> for a list of DDP-friendly replication facilities worldwide.

3.11.1 The Mark Info Window

To begin the PQ Delivery process, select the Windows > Mark Info command. This opens the Mark Info window which displays all the P-W metadata you have defined.

3.11.1.1 Global Metadata

At the top of the Mark Info dialog are three fields that define global information about the disc. The Album Title and Artist generate the disc's global information that, when placed in a transport that reads CDText data, will appear on the transport's display.

CDText, a subset of the CD+G specification, provides for the imbedding of textual information about the overall disc and tracks in the R through W codes of the "PQ" subcode stream of a Compact Disc. Many portable and in-dash car players can read CDText data off of a disc, but few home players can.

Note that CDText should not be confused with network services such as Gracenote's CDDb or FreeDB that attempt to match CDs inserted into a computer drive with an on-line database of extant CD titles. Such network services are used by iTunes and other applications for user convenience but have no relationship to CDText.

3.11.1.2 Track Metadata

This section provides information about individual track attributes. The next two fields, Track Title and Track Artist, are also part of the CDText specification, and data entered into these fields will also appear on CD players equipped to read this metadata. soundBlade auto-populates the Track Title based on the segment name and, if you have provided an Album Artist prior to PQ creation, soundBlade will also auto-populate the Track Artist metadata as well.

Track Start and Track End are generated by your Mark placement. Though editable, you should assume that they are correct. Likewise, the Copy and Emphasis buttons generate the SCMS Copy flag and Emphasis flag in the PQ stream and should, in general, be left turned off. Section 4.7 below discussing PQ parameters in more detail.

3.11.1.3 Track Listing

The next section in the Mark Info dialog provides a list of details about each defined track. Name, start and end times, as well as duration are shown.

Double clicking on an entry in the list will start playback at that location in the Project. This gives you a quick method for double checking Mark placement. See section 4.7.4 for details about the Track Listing, Total Tracks and extended listing.

Note that, if you have placed your (text) insertion point in the TRACKTITLE field, the up/down arrow keys on the keyboard will move you up and down through each entry in the list of PQ details.

3.11.1.4 PQ Status & Validation

Below the Track Details section is a single field with an indicator to its left. This is the PQ Validation field, a non-editable status field that indicates whether your metadata, as defined, is valid and meets the Red Book specification for Compact Discs.

A green indicator means everything is valid, while a red indicator mean you should inspect your PQ information for non-Red Book-compliant entries. The accompanying field calls out the problem entry, making it easy to rectify the problem.

3.11.1.5 Device & Status/Validation

The Device field provides a list of available disc writing devices, and provides details about the (selected) mechanism. To the right of the Device label is a selector that, for multiple connected mechanisms, allows you to choose the target device. The Status field provides an indication of the status of your delivery media and/or progress on the delivery.

Note that you may see a “Sound begins more than 2 frames before Start Mark” message. This a reminder to check that you are not unintentionally truncating any audio at the head of your Project. Remember that, according to the Red Book specification for CD-DA discs, the first 2 seconds or 150 CD frames are “pregap,” and the first track start is at 2 seconds. Any audio before the 2 second mark will be replaced by 150 CD frames of digital zeroes on any CDs delivered and in DDP file sets. Pregap is a logical region of the disc reserved for mode changes and other non-audio functions.

3.11.1.6 The Execute Button

Once the above options are set, this button starts the process of creating a new delivery, written to the location shown in the “Path/Device” field. When you click the Execute button, a standard Mac OS file browser opens where appropriate, allowing you to specify the location that will be used. A new or empty folder should be specified to contain the newly created or modified DDP file set. Once the destination is specified, soundBlade begins the delivery process, with progress shown in the validation field at the bottom of the PQ Delivery window. During delivery to a CD-R when no media is present in the selected drive, soundBlade will prompt you to insert media and wait for a blank disc to be inserted.

Note that, once a delivery has started, the Execute button changes to an Abort button, allowing you to halt the delivery process. If a delivery is aborted, the resulting CD-R or DDP image file set is not reliably usable for either duplication or playback purposes.

3.11.1.7 The Eject Button

The Eject button will cause the host to eject an inserted disc from the selected CD writer.

3.11.1.8 The PQ List Button

This button generates a Sonic Studio-standard PQ List, the industry’s standard text representation of a compact disc’s table of content. This file is typically printed and a hard copy sent, along with the DDP data set, to your replicator.

NWN PQ Log.txt

Styles Spacing Lists

Sonic Studio
soundBlade 1.0

Client : Big Endian Records
Project : soundBlade Project
Title : NWN PQ Log.txt
Date : 08/08/06
W0 : 060000_1
UPC/EAN : n/a

Date Generated: Tuesday August 8, 2006
Page Number: 1

PQ Log:

Delivery Type: DDP/CD - (times are 75 fps)
Time Format: 75fps CD Frames
PQ Track 1 Offset: 00:00:10 PQ Start Offset: 00:00:10
PQ Splice Offset: 00:00:07 PQ End Offset: 00:00:02
PQ MinIndex 0 Width: 00:01:00
PQ Track / Index Information:

T-X	TITLE/ISRC	COPY	EMPH	NO	OFFSET TIME hh:mm:ss:ff	OFFSET TIME hh:mm:ss:ff	OFFSET DURATION hh:mm:ss:ff	CD TIME mm:ss:ff
1	0 Pause				00:	00:	00:02:00	00:00:00
	1 Plain English.aif				00:01:74	00:01:64	03:33:18	00:02:00
						Total:	03:35:18	
2	0 Pause				03:35:05	03:35:07	00:01:62	03:35:19
	1 New World Nomad.aif				03:37:05	03:36:70	04:09:15	03:37:05
						Total:	04:11:02	
3	0 Pause				07:46:08	07:46:10	00:01:61	07:46:22
	1 Soul Of The City.aif				07:48:07	07:47:72	03:54:08	07:48:08
						Total:	03:55:69	
4	0 Pause				11:42:03	11:42:05	00:01:61	11:42:16
	1 Tell Me WHY.aif				11:44:02	11:43:67	04:15:11	11:44:03
						Total:	04:16:72	
	LeadOut				15:59:01	15:59:03		15:59:15
	Total:						15:59:14	

Figure 3.25: A PQ List open in TextEdit

4.1 Fade Tool Options

4.1.1 Changing Fade Parameters

soundBlade offers a simple and intuitive tool for changing a fade's gain characteristics: the FadeTool. In the previous chapter, we have seen how to use this to perform simple operations. The FadeTool offers additional possibilities to alter fades according to your needs and preferences.

The FadeTool is enabled by default. By holding the control key and typing A, you can quickly disable or enable the FadeTool. Alternately, you can force the FadeTool off by default. In the EDL tab of the Windows > Preferences window, the FadeTool check box keeps the FadeTool enabled until you choose to disable it manually.

When moving the cursor over a fade with the FadeTool enabled, the default cursor changes into the FadeTool and the selected fade turns either green for an Fade In, red for an Fade Out or both. Depending on cursor location relative to the fade, the FadeTool modifies the start, end, length or position of the fade. See section 3.9.1 for basic information about the FadeTool.

If you zoom in on a Fade so that more than about 10% of the waveform display is occupied by the fade, you will see the thin blue vertical line that represents the edit event and a diagonal line or "curve" that represents the gain law or change in amplitude dictated by the fade. Situated in the middle of the diagonal curve and attached to that line is a square "bead," the Control Point for the fade curve.

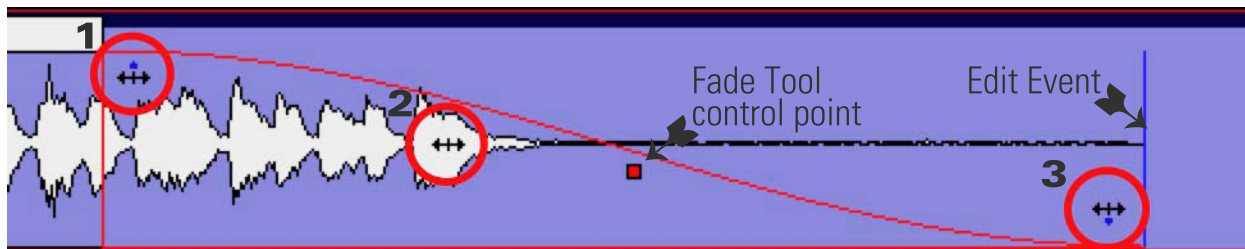


Figure 4.1: Anatomy of a Fade

Figure 4.1 above shows the major parts of a Fade and the various contextual shapes that the cursor assumes based on location. Note the Control Point and edit event, discussed in upcoming sections.

On the left, the #1 cursor is set for an "inboard" duration change. Placing the cursor at that location and click-dragging will increase or decrease the duration of the fade without changing the edit event location or gain law. This is the preferred handle to use when changing duration.

Next is the #2 cursor shape, displayed when the cursor is set to change the overall location of the fade. Placing the cursor in that location and click-dragging will re-locate the fade, “sliding it” earlier or later on the time line without changing the duration, edit event or gain law. Remember that you cannot move a fade past the head or tail of the underlying audio.

In position #3, the cursor is set for a duration change “toward the outside” of the Fade. Placing the cursor in that location and click-dragging will increase or decrease the duration of the fade without changing the overall location or gain law. These “outboard” handles *do* effect the location of the edit event, so it’s recommended that you not use the outboard handle, employing the inboard handle instead as mentioned above. Section 4.1.4 below discusses edit events as they relate to controlling fade parameters.

4.1.2 Changing the shape of the Fade

By clicking the Control Point “bead,” shown in Figure 4.1, and dragging it up or down, you can adjust the rate of change setting for the fade. Specifically, for all fade types except exponential, moving the Control Point adjusts the “dB down” while, for an exponential fade, the Control Point adjusts the “Alpha” or shape. In either case, as you make this change, the fade curve will dynamically change in response and the underlying audio will also change since you are affecting the gain across the fade event.

When the FadeTool is active, holding the control key brings up a contextual menu.

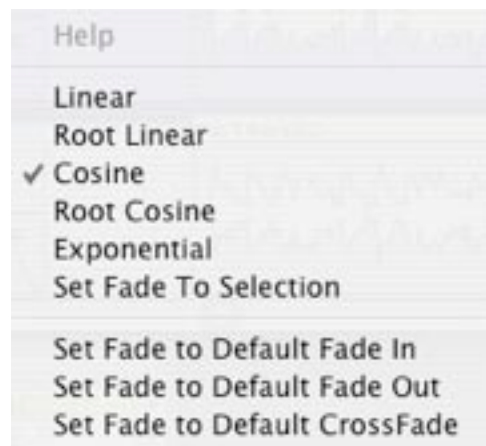


Figure 4.2: The Fade Tool contextual menu

The FadeTool contextual menu offers the following choices for gain law or curve:

- Linear — default 6 dB down in the center
- Root Linear — 3 dB down in the center
- Cosine — default 3 dB down in the center
- Root Cosine — default 6 dB down in the center
- Exponential — provides very rapid reduction in gain across the Fade

soundBlade provides five fade shapes to allow you to produce a pleasing edit or transition, no matter what sort of material you have available. You can also use fades for less obvious purposes, such as applying a new Crossfade on an unwanted sound, changing the gain law to exponential, and adjusting the duration to “drop out” or suppress the unwanted sound. Though each gain law is useful in certain situations, the linear fade shape is the most widely applicable.

4.1.3 Changing the Fade Duration

In the FadeTool contextual menu, the Set Fade to Selection forces the fade duration to match the duration of a selected region that encloses the fade. When a region is selected, this option stretches or shrinks the length of the Fade to match the position and length of the selected region. The contextual menu changes to reflect the currently selected FadeType.

The FadeTool functions also apply to a Crossfade. Figure 4.3 below shows the FadeTool in Crossfade Mode. Notice that the cursor assumes a double horizontal arrow shape and both fades are highlighted, both green and red.

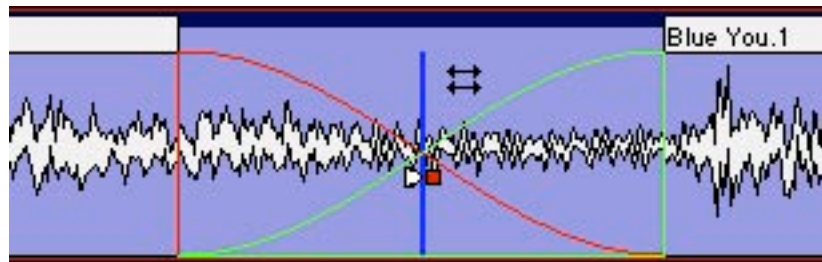


Figure 4.3: The FadeTool in Crossfade Mode

By click-dragging left or right, the overall Crossfade location can be altered. By shift-click-dragging, notice the cursor shape changes to a vertical arrow, the Crossfade duration can be symmetrically altered. Holding the command key allows you to override symmetrical mode and alter duration with the left edge anchored while holding the option key provides the same override mode for the right edge.

4.1.4 Changing the Fade Type

The FadeTool contextual menu also offers two choices for fade type. These choices, accessed by hold the control key while using the FadeTool, allow you to change the context in which the fade will be used. For the purpose of CD preparation, Fade Ins and Fade Outs are fundamentally different from Crossfades. The difference is where the actual edit event occurs in the underlying audio and this subtly but profoundly effects the accuracy of your PQ Marks and resulting metadata.

With a Crossfade, the edits occur at the very center of the two Black Fades (see section 3.9.1). Fade Ins and Fade Outs, on the other hand, are designed to be used as the transition to or from “Edited Black,” where no audio is present on the time line. Use the Set Fade to Crossfade option when you expect to connect its associated segment to another segment for a seamless edit between segments.

The ‘Set Fade to Default...” options force all fade parameters back to their appropriate defaults.

- Set Fade to Fade In/Out: forces parameters to the appropriate default Black Fade
- Set Fade to CrossFade: forces parameters to a default Crossfade
- Set In/Out Fade(s) to Selection: forces either a Black Fade or Crossfade to the duration and overall location of a selected region.
- Set Fade To Default...: changes the Fade(s) based on user defined pre-sets from the EDL > Edit Fade Mode.

When the FadeTool is active, any change you make using the tool, to a Fade or to the underlying audio is real time. The default fade shape can be selected in the EditingTools tab in Windows > Preferences.

4.2 Edit Fade

While the FadeTool provides quick but coarse fade controls, soundBlade also provides a full featured Edit Fade Mode or “EFM.” EFM affords powerful facilities to control the duration, shape, and relationship of its start and end times relative to the edit event.

To enter Edit Fade Mode:

1. Click-drag across a fade to create a time selection or place the Edit Point within a fade or cross-fade.
2. Choose Edit > Enter Fade Mode.

The Edit Fade Mode window displays the following Panels:

- Result Panel — This Panel displays the resulting audio in real time, so you can see the results of your manipulations.
- Out Fade Panel — This Panel displays the fade out or To Black Fade of a crossfade. Audio to the right of the Out Fade displays against a grayed background, indicating that it occurs after the fade ends and is not heard. If you are editing only an Out Fade, then only Out Fade Panel will display.
- In Fade Panel — This Panel displays the fade in or From Black Fade of a crossfade. Audio to the left of the In Fade displays against a grayed background, indicating that it occurs before the fade and is not heard. If you are editing only a In Fade, then only the In Fade Panel will display.

Note that, in the In and Out Fade Panels, the edit events are distinctive, shown as orange vertical lines while, in the Result Panel at top, edit events are blue to match their appearance in non-EFM mode Panels elsewhere in the Project.

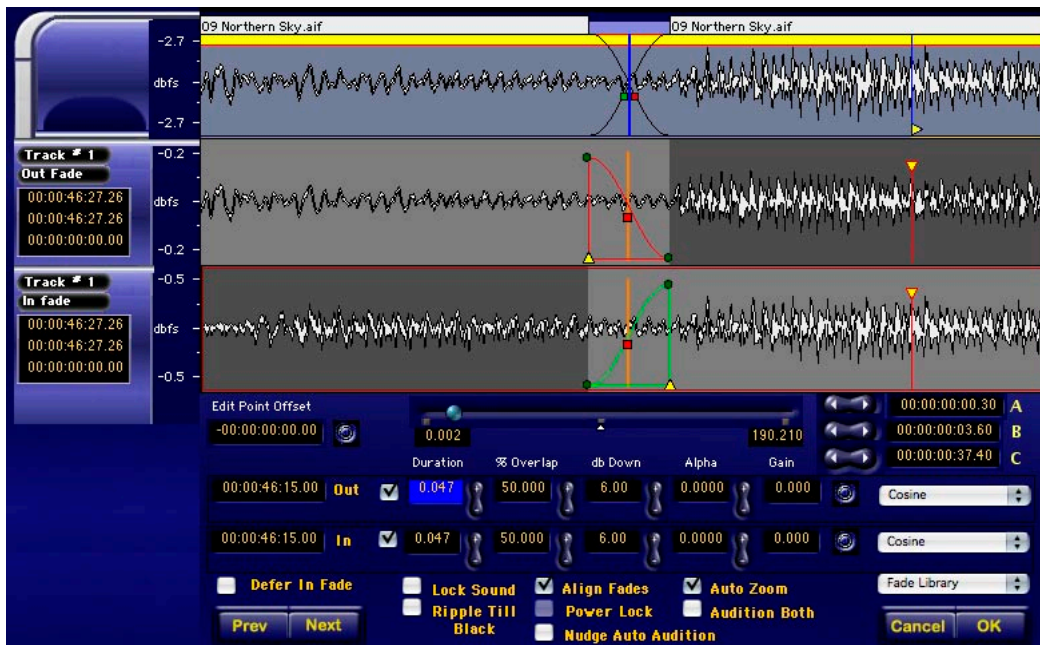


Figure 4.4: Edit Fade Mode

4.2.1 Selections in the Edit Fade Panels

soundBlade allows you to make selections in the Fade Panels for fade positioning, navigation and auditioning.

You can click anywhere in the In or Out Fade Panel to set/move an Edit Point. You can also drag the Edit Point to position it precisely. With In or Out Edit Points positioned in the Panels, you can use the right bracket key for the Out Fade Panel, and the left bracket key for the In Fade Panel, to move the Out or In Fade, respectively, to the Edit Point position.

You can also click-drag in the In or Out Fade Panel to make a time selection. Time selections are useful for auditioning the underlying audio of a Crossfade using the command in the Play menu. To audition either the In or Out Fade audio alone, clear the appropriate check box to the left of the Duration field. To audition both while working only one Black Fade, enable the Audition Both check box discussed below.

4.2.3 Global Modes

EFM provides five global Edit Modes that affect fade editing operations: Auto Zoom, Align Fade, Lock Sound, Power Lock, and Ripple Until Black. You can enable any of these options using the appropriate check boxes located at the bottom of the EFM window.

4.2.3.1 Lock Sound

Lock Sound mode affects the behavior of the underlying sound during fade adjustment. When Lock Sound is not enabled, moving the edit event, the orange vertical line, causes the audio

“under” the In Fade to “slip” on the time line. This preserves the In or From Black Fade location relative to the audio. When Lock Sound is disabled, the In Fade audio is locked to the time line and cannot move during fade edits. This mode is of particular interest when editing sound against picture or conforming audio to pre-existing visual material.

4.2.3.2 Ripple Until Black

Ripple Until Black mode affects the behavior of sound that occurs later on the time line from the current fade in EFM. When Ripple Until Black is disabled, moving the edit event moves the In Fade sound and all sound occurring after it in the Panel. When Ripple Until Black is enabled, only the sound of the In Fade’s segment, and any subsequent segments that crossfade without silence between them, slips on the time line during fade edits. Segments that occur after a space of Edited Black, or edited silence, remain locked to the time line and do not move. This control is useful for conforming sound to picture “locally” on the time line, without affecting sync downstream.

4.2.3.3 Align Fades

Align Fade Mode affects the fade’s “% overlap” or position relative to its edit event. When Align Fade is selected, changes to the overlap value apply reciprocally to both the In and Out Fade, keeping them aligned relative to the edit event. When it is not selected, changes to the overlap value cause the fades to move in opposite directions, effectively changing the amount that the fades overlap one another. This control allows you to position the entire crossfade event relative to the underlying audio.

4.2.3.4 Power Lock

Power Lock affects only exponential fades. When Power Lock is enabled, crossfades are controlled such that each curve perfectly complements the other. The sum of the gains of the Black Fades equals unity.

4.2.3.5 AutoZoom

When Auto Zoom is selected, soundBlade automatically zooms to accommodate edits that you make to the fade so as to preserve a consistent display. For example, if you extend the fade’s duration beyond the currently displayed time range, soundBlade will auto-zoom out to show the entire fade.

4.2.4 Audition Controls

In addition to the global modes discussed above, EFM also provides settings for auditioning fades.

4.2.4.1 Audition Both

When only the In or Out fade is selected for editing, soundBlade normally auditions only that fade. If Audition Both is selected, soundBlade overrides the state of the In and Out check boxes

and plays both fades. This enables you to hear how changes made to one fade affect the sound of the crossfade as a whole.

4.2.4.2 Nudge Auto Audition

When Nudge Auto Audition is selected, soundBlade plays the fade each time you nudge it using the A, B and C nudge controls at upper right of the EFM. This allows you to hear the effect of fade edits without having to manually play.

4.2.5 Additional Fade Parameters

soundBlade features a single slider for adjusting multiple fade parameters. The Fade Parameter slider allows you to effect fine adjustments of each parameter by clicking to select its field.

To adjust a fade parameter, click in the desired parameter field to select it or press the tab key to move between fields. Drag the Parameter slider to adjust the parameter's value. You can also type a numeric value from the computer keyboard. To nudge a parameter value up or down by small increments, click + or - on the adjacent Parameter nudge button.

- Duration — The Duration slider adjusts the duration of the selected fade. Fade Duration is expressed in seconds, and has a minimum value of 0.0021 seconds or 2.1 milliseconds.
- Overlap — The Overlap slider affects the degree to which the In and Out fades overlap one another in normal mode or, the edit event in Align Fades mode.
- dB Down — The dB Down slider adjusts the amplitude at the center of the fade. The dB Down parameter affects only the Linear and Cosine fade variations.
- Alpha — The Alpha slider affects only Exponential fade types, and controls the placement, in time, of the gain change produced by the Exponential envelope. Alpha is a dimensionless variable with a range of -1.0 to +1.0 and can be thought of simply as a shape adjustment.

4.2.6 Fade Selectors

When editing crossfades, you can choose to work on either the In or the Out Fade individually using these check boxes to the left of the Duration field. When both are selected, parameter adjustments apply to both the In and the Out Fade. Drop down menus to the right allow you to choose In & Out Fade types.

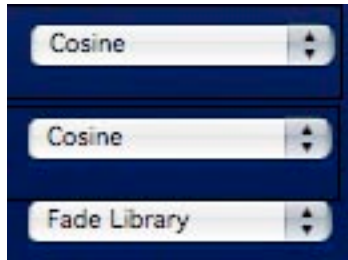


Figure 4.5: The fade selector menus above the Fade Library menu

4.2.6.1 Selecting Fade Types

You can select the shape of the fade curves in two ways, by choosing a curve while you are working with the EFM Parameters or, by choosing a curve while working directly on the fade.

To select a Fade Curve from the EFM Parameters, click on either of the Fade Selectors to the right of the EFM window, then select from the family of available curves. To select a Fade Curve directly, control-click on a fade, as discussed in section 4.1.4 above, and select a fade type.

4.2.7 Nudging Fades

soundBlade provides controls for “nudging” or incrementally changing the position of the edit event with respect to the time line. soundBlade provides three preset nudge values labeled A, B and C respectively.

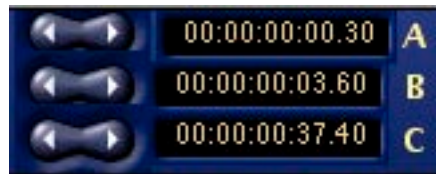


Figure 4.6: The nudge controls

The Fade Nudge buttons for each of the nudge values “advance” or “retard” the selected fade, moving the fade earlier or later by their respective A, B or C values. You can edit these values directly in the EFM window or set the default values in the Time Display tab of the Preferences window. Nudge values in the EFM window are edited by clicking in the field and typing, or using the +/- keys on the keypad to increment or decrement the selected value. This does not change the default Nudge A, B and C values in the Time Display preferences.

4.2.8 Edit Point Offset

Where the In and Out edit events in a Crossfade lie at different locations on the time line, there is an offset between them. You can set the amount of offset precisely by double clicking in the Edit Point Offset box in the upper left corner and typing the desired value. soundBlade moves the In Fade by the specified amount. soundBlade displays the offset between the In Fade and Out edit events using the default time code units.

To eliminate an offset between fades, click the unmarked button immediately to the right of the Edit Point Offset field. You can also click to place an insertion point in any time field, then use the +/- keys of the keypad to increment/decrement the value.

4.2.9 Fade Library

soundBlade provides a library for saving and recalling fades, and includes the ability to save a Fade as the default. To save a fade as the default, In EFM, create a custom fade, then choose Fade Library > Save Custom Fade As.... soundBlade opens a Save Fade dialog. Type the Default name exactly as it appears in the Fade Library menu:

- DefaultCrossFade — This defines the Default Crossfade
- DefaultCrossFadeOut — This defines the Out Fade component of the Default Crossfade.
- DefaultCrossFadeIn — This defines the In Fade component of the Default Crossfade.

Note that you can save a To or From Black Fade and call it DefaultOutFade or DefaultInFade, respectively, but neither Fade will be used as a default. In soundBlade, the only default fade is the DefaultCrossFade and its respective In and Out Fade components.

4.2.9.1 Applying Fade Parameters From the Library

To apply fade parameters from the Fade Library to the currently selected fade(s), hold down the option key and type a number. This recalls fades from the Fade Library. Zero recalls the default fades and numeric keys 1 through 9 corresponds to items 1–9 in the user defined area of the Fade Library. Note that this feature works only with the numeric keys along the top of the keyboard, not with the numeric keypad.

4.2.10 Exiting Edit Fade Mode

To exit Edit Fade Mode, click OK in the EFM window or select the Edit > Edit Fade command. soundBlade exits EFM and commits your fade modification to the Project. To exit EFM without saving your changes, click the Cancel button. soundBlade exits EFM without saving your changes made in the EFM.

4.3 Drag & Drop

4.3.1 Resequencing

For rapid assembly of program material, soundBlade provides three easy methods for automatically snapping to either 1, 2 or 3 seconds of Edited Black between segments.

4.3.1.1 AutoSpace All Segments

The first method is the Edit > AutoSpace All Segments command discussed in section 3.9.6 above.

4.3.1.2 Drag & Drop

The second method entails manually dragging either CD Tracks. Dragging Tracks requires that the Show Track Bar preference in the EDL tab of Windows > Preferences be enabled. Once Track Bars are visible, click–hold on any song’s Track Bar to select it, and drag it to the desired location. Existing Tracks “shuffle” into place and the dragged Track takes its place, where dropped, in the CD track sequence. The audio associated or “attached” to the Marks shuffles along with the Marks. The pause between an End of Track Mark and a subsequent Start of Track Mark are always considered to be part of that Track.

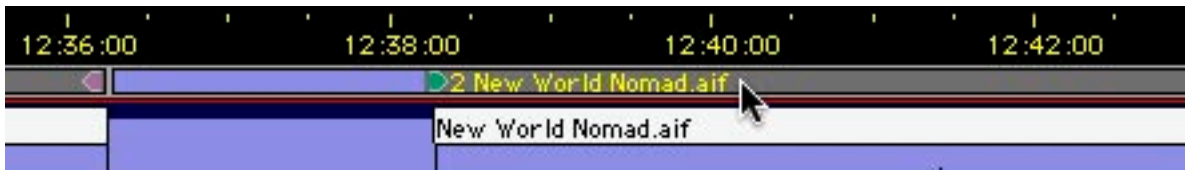


Figure 4.7: The Track Bar

This same drag–to–resequence behavior is also available in the Windows > Mark Info dialog. Simply drag an entry in the track list to a new location to resequence Tracks.

4.3.1.3 Snap to Zone

The third method entails manually dragging and snapping segments to a pre–defined song timing. It is best to drag segments if you have not created PQ Marks to prevent unwanted Mark relocation.

This drag and snap segments method of resequencing requires that the Snap to Zone preference in the Editing Tools tab of Windows > Preferences be enabled. Once the Snap Zone preference is set, click on a segment’s Title Bar to select it. After it’s selected, all you have to do is click–drag on its Drag Bar as you move its head close to another segment’s tail. You will see either a vertical red or blue bar appear, visually indicating you are in the snap zone.



Figure 4.7: The Title Bar and Drag Bar

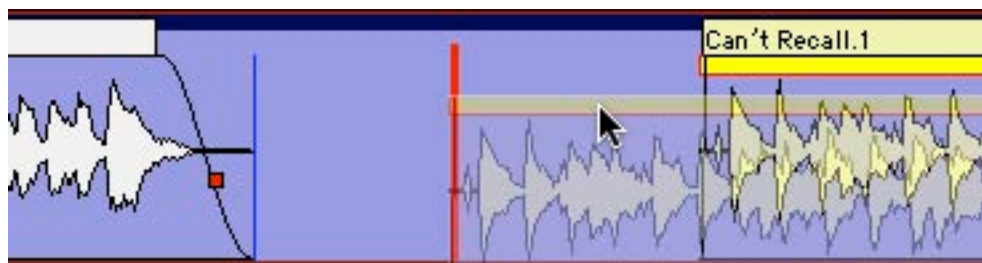


Figure 4.8: The red auto-spaced snap indicator



Figure 4.9: The blue flush snap indicator

The bold blue bar indicates a “flush” snap where, if you drop at that location, the two segments will be tightly butted with no space, no Edited Black in between. The bold red bar indicates an auto-spaced snap where, if you drop at that location, the two segments will have a precise, preset space between. The duration of the inter-segment spacing is determined by the AutoSpacing Duration selector in the Editing Tools tab of the Windows > Preferences window.

Drag and drop with autospacing is useful in conjunction with the Edit > Clear/Delete Selection commands to start with one long continuous segment, such as a consolidated complete mix, and quickly segment, space and resequence the individual songs.

Note that, when using this fully manual method, sequencing should be performed prior to Mark placement. This will prevent erroneous repositioning of Marks as your segments are shuffled.

4.3.2 Drag-Replace

When you drag and drop one segment on top of another, with no modifier keys employed, then the dragged segment replaces the existing audio where it's dropped. As with all editing in Sonic Studio's products, this move is non-destructive.

4.3.3 Drag-Overlay

Shift-dragging segments is another useful editing feature. With the shift key held down, one segment will overlay another when you drop it on top. The two segments coexist in the same location on the time line and sum together during playback. This feature is useful when used in conjunction with Text Mode, discussed in the next section, so you can individually control the overlapping segments. Also see section 4.3.2 below for creating a combination waveform plus text Project layout.

4.4 Text Mode

Text Mode provides a playlist view of the Panel's contents, with editable segment names along with editable start and end times. An editable Gain value, see section below, along with a non-editable Duration value are also shown. To view Text Mode, select the EDL > Show Text View command. To switch back to Waveform mode, select the EDL > Hide Text View command.

4.4.1 Gain Adjustment

Compiling audio from different sources will usually make it necessary to alter the amplitude of some of your source material. The last column in Text Mode displays the current gain of all segments. When Segments are opened or added to the EDL, the segment gain is nominally set to zero dB. By double-clicking on the Gain value of the selected segment, the Segment Gain modal dialog opens.



Figure 4.10: The Segment Gain dialog

The Segment Gain dialog offers several options for altering segment gain. The large central field lets you enter the gain directly. Alternatively, course and fine adjustments are available via up/down arrows. Simply click the arrows to increment or decrement gain in 1.0 or 0.1 dB steps.

Segment Gain can be applied in two different ways. First, it can be applied as an 'Absolute' value, meaning that the entry in the central gain field will be applied in place of the previous value. The value entered in the gain field will *replace* any previous state.

Alternatively, the gain can be applied as a 'Relative' value. In relative mode, the entry in the central gain field will be added to the previous value. Positive values will be added to the previous state while negative values will be *subtracted from* the previous gain state.

Finally, a third 'Normalize' radio button is available. Choosing this option will cause the segment's absolute sample amplitude to be evaluated, after which the amount of headroom or surplus level below 0 dBFS will be entered in the central gain field. In other words, this function shows how much gain can be added before digital clipping will occur. The value given is relative to the current gain state.

As with other modal dialogs in soundBlade, gain changes will not be applied unless the OK button is clicked. The Segment Gain dialog is also available via a segment's Title Bar contextual menu. Control-click on any Title Bar to invoke the Segment Gain dialog. Other functions, like Reverse Polarity and Build Waveforms, are also available.

Segment gain can be applied to multiple segments at once. Simply command-click on the desired segments in the Text View list, then open the Segment Gain window to make a change.

Changes in Segment Gain will be applied to all selected segments equally, as described above. This implies that, in relative mode, the gain changes will retain any relative loudness differences between selected segments.

4.4.2 Combo Project Configuration

Note that, if you find that you use Text Mode a fair amount, you may want to create a special default Project that combines both Waveform and Text mode. To do this, open a new, empty Project. Now, click on the bottom Panel to select it and change it to Text Mode with the EDL > Show Text View command. Finally, save it as the default Project with the File > Save As Default Project command. Once this is set, all new Projects will have a left and right waveform with an additional right channel Text Mode.

4.5 Gain Overlay Mode

As described in section 4.3.1 above, the gain of individual segments can be easily changed with the Segment Gain dialog. soundBlade offers another, global, time line-oriented approach to changing amplitude. Gain Overlay Mode can be used to change level independent of segments and fades and works as a master automated fader.

Gain Overlay Mode is enabled by clicking on the G button to the left of a Panel, and is available only when in Waveform Display Mode. When enabled, a red line appears superimposed on the waveform display. The waveform display's amplitude scale, along the left edge, switches to a different standard that ranges from -144 to +24 dB, the range of gain change available. Initially, the Gain Overlay is flat at the 0 dB setting.



Figure 4.11: Gain Overlay function activated, showing the red Overlay and Nodes

To change gain, simply point at the desired time location and click on the Overlay. The cursor changes to a round shape and a square Node will appear. Nodes can only be added, deleted or modified while playback is stopped.

You can also place gain nodes with region selections or the Edit Point. To use this function, first click-drag within the waveform display to select a region. Then, select Edit > Create Gain Nodes to add two nodes at the "edges" of the Gain Overlay and the selected region. Because the Edit Point is really a zero duration selection, it can also be used to create a single gain node with the Create Gain Nodes command.

When you add a node, a yellow highlighted Gain call-out appears in the Title Bar of the associated segment.

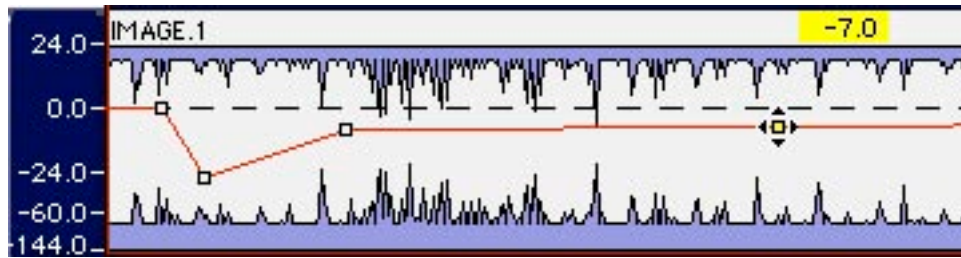


Figure 4.12: A newly created Gain Node with its Gain call-out

If you click-drag a Gain Node, it can be moved both horizontally and vertically. Dragging a Gain Node horizontally moves it to a different time location while dragging it vertically changes the gain. The current gain value of that node is continuously shown in the yellow Gain call-out.

When moving Gain Nodes vertically, the gain changes in steps of 1 dB. By holding the option key while dragging a Gain Node, the resolution of the gain change increases to 0.1 dB to provide fine control.

Note that gain changes between Gain Nodes follows a linear gain law. By adding multiple Nodes, other curves can be emulated. Unwanted Gain Nodes can be deleted by holding down the option key while clicking on the Node.

You can make changes to a group of Gain Nodes simultaneously. To do so, select a region that includes the Node on which you want to work. Then, select the EDL > Select Gain Nodes command. All selected Gain Nodes will fill with yellow to indicate their state. You can also shift-click to “gather” a collection of grouped Nodes.

When grouped, only the gain can be modified. When changing the gain of grouped Nodes, the Gain call-out shows both the current value and gain delta or difference from the original value. Also, when grouped, holding the option key for fine gain adjustment is disabled.

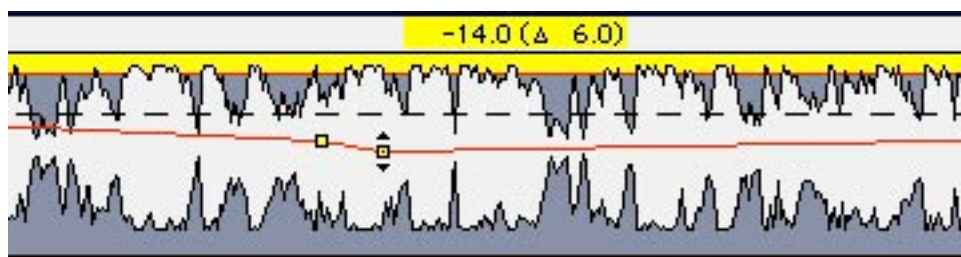


Figure 4.13: The Gain call-out for grouped Nodes

Once your Gain Overlay is configured according to taste, all or some Gain Nodes can be locked against unwanted changes. To do so, first click-drag to select a region containing the Gain Nodes you want to lock. Then, move the mouse over one of the selected Gain Nodes and control-click to invoke a contextual menu.

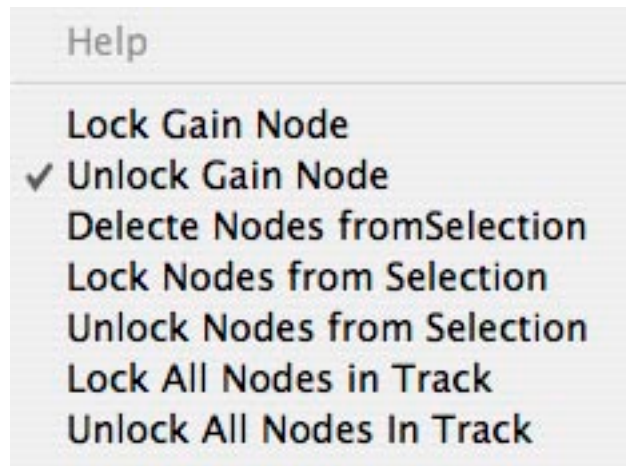


Figure 4.14: The Gain Node contextual menu

By default, the Unlock Gain Node option will be checked. To lock the selected Gain Nodes, click on the GainOverlayNode Locked option. The selected Gain Nodes will now turn red to indicate their locked status. Unlocking the Gain Nodes simply requires selecting the GainOverlayNode Unlocked option.

In the same contextual menu, Nodes can also be locked and unlocked for the whole Panel by selecting the Lock/Unlock All Nodes InTrack options.

Delete Nodes from Selection deletes all Gain Nodes in the current selection. If no selection is made but one or more segments are selected, all nodes within the selected segment(s) will be deleted.

Once Gain Overlay is used, the gain changes stay active in the output of soundBlade, both during playback and Delivery. To temporarily bypass the Gain Overlay, select the EDL > Bypass Gain Overlay command. Also, the Gain Overlay can be put into bypass mode by option-clicking the “G” or Gain button on the left side of each Panel. In both cases, the Gain Overlay line will turn grey and the Gain button will turn yellow, both indicating the bypass state. Once in Bypass, Gain Overlay can only be activated again by selecting the same command, which changes to Activate Gain Overlay. When off or disabled, the Gain turns grey.

Note that, while in Gain Overlay Mode, all normal editing functions are disabled and only the gain nodes can be manipulated. Reverting to normal Editing can only be achieved by selecting the Hide Gain Overlay command.

4.6 EDL Desk Events

In addition to Gain Overlay, soundBlade offer the option to add plug-ins to a Project.

4.6.1 Showing Desk Events in the Panels

As with Gain Overlay, Desk Events can be visible or hidden and the two can be used simultaneously. By default, Desk events are hidden and can only be made visible in the Waveform display. To show Desk Events in a Panel, select the EDL > Show Desk Events command. Alterna-

tively, the “D” or Desk Events Overlay button at the left of each Panel shows or hides the Desk Events Overlay as well.

Added as an extra layer, in standard Panel size, five rows appear. These are event plug-in slots or placeholders for plug-ins to be inserted. Audio passing through the event plug-in slots is applied first to the top slot, then to each slot below in order. So, the top slot is pre-slot two while slot three is post slot two.

To insert a plug-in, click-drag to define a selected region for plug-in insertion. Alternatively, select one or more segments with which to associate the plug-in. Move the cursor over the region or selected segments, then over to one of the **event plug-in slots** into which plug-ins can be inserted.

Note that, when Desk Events are shown, a selected region will show as a green area instead of yellow. Also **note** that, over the time period of the selection or selected segment(s), the event plug-in slot becomes highlighted with a blue frame to indicate the selected Region and plug-in row.

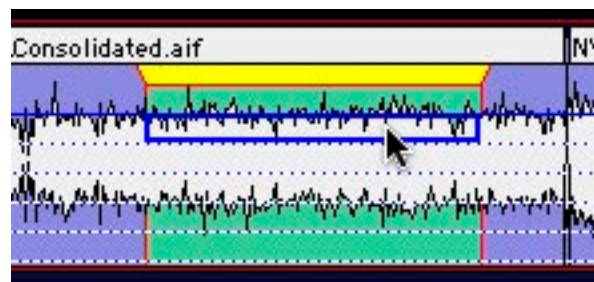


Figure 4.15: Desk Event mode with time selection

Control-clicking on a slot produces a contextual menu similar to the normal menu that appears when control-clicking on a segment or region but, in this mode, available plug-ins are listed as well. Select the desired plug-in from the contextual menu. The selected plug-in “drops in” as an event, into the selected region or segments and shows in the events overlay as a green bar. soundBlade supports both VST and AU plug-ins and, either type can be freely intermixed in the event plug-in slots.

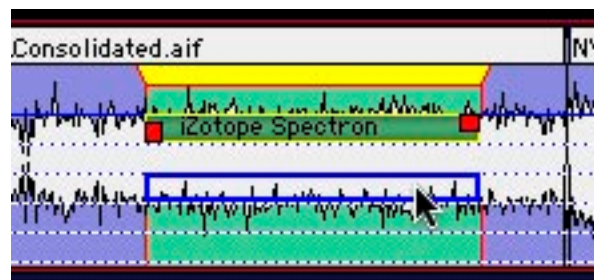


Figure 4.16: Plug-in inserted in the events overlay

Once a plug-in is in place, its settings and location can be modified. To modify the plug-ins settings, double click on the plug-in name and the plug-in will open. Close the opened plug-in window to save its settings.

To change the location and duration of an event, first select the event by clicking on it. The selected plug-in is marked by two red squares at its lower left and upper right edges. By click-holding either of the two red boxes, the plug-in location can be moved earlier or later, thus changing the location and duration of the event. To move the entire event without changing its length, click-hold on the middle of the event and drag it to the desired new location. To move an event from one row to another, click-hold it and move it up or down to the desired event plug-in slot. Multiple events can be selected by shift-click-holding them and dragging. All actions changing the length or place of an event can now be applied to all selected events simultaneously.

Note that, though it is possible to place plug-ins in the same slot and have them overlapping, this will effectively not work as overlapping Plug-ins are not supported in soundBlade. If more than one plug-in has to be applied to the same time region, simply place the necessary plug-ins in different slots.

When control-clicking on an event, whether selected or not, a contextual menu appears. The choices are:

- Bypass/Unbypass Event: bypasses or unbypasses the Event
- Set Selection from Plug-in: creates a region from the start point to the end point of the selected event.
- Delete Selected Plug-ins: deletes all selected plug-ins.
- Select Plug-ins in Slot in Selection: selects all plug-ins in the selected slot in the currently selected region. Plug-ins outside the selection in the same slot are not selected or deselected.
- Select All Plug-ins in Slot: selects all plug-ins in a slot.
- Select All Plug-ins: Selects all plug-ins in the entire Project in all rows.

Finally, as with Gain Overlay, active Desk events, events that are not bypassed, are always active regardless of whether the overlay is visible or not. To bypass all events, regardless of visibility, control-click the “D” button at left in a Panel. When events are active, the D button turns green whereas when all events are bypassed, it turns red. When yellow, some Events are bypassed and other are still active.

4.7 SRPs

SRPs or Selection Reference Points are persistent placeholders that are saved in a Project. SRP commands are under the Selection menu, and are placed either with the Edit Point, the Playhead or, at the leading edge of a selected region. They can be locked to the time line, unlocked and deleted. Option-clicking allows you to drag them to a new location on the time line. They also carry a optional comment label that’s useful to jog yours or someone else’s memory at a later date.

As with many objects in soundBlade, SRPs have their own contextual menu. Control-clicking on an SRP brings up the following menu;

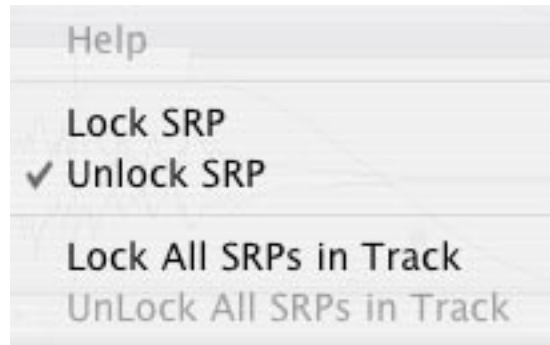


Figure 4.17: The SRP contextual menu

The menu offers the following options:

- Lock SRP
- Unlock SRP
- Lock All SRPs in Track
- Unlock All SRPs in Track

Note that the last two options are global in nature and will change the state of all SRPs present, regardless of region selection. Also note that, if an *unlocked* SRP is enclosed within or touches a segment, it will become associated with that segment and will move if the segment is moved.

4.8 Edit Groups

Sometimes a monaural edit is needed on a stereo pair. soundBlade provides a simple “Edit Group” control to depart from the default behavior of performing edits on both channels of a stereo pair when you operate on only one. The default Edit Group mode is stereo, as indicated by the stereo Edit Group indicator.



Figure 4.18: Stereo editing mode

The stereo editing mode selector straddles the two Panels. Above and below the stereo editing mode selector are the two mono editing mode selectors for each channel.



Figure 4.19: Mono editing mode

Simply click on either mono selector to make changes to one channel or the other exclusively.

4.9 Project Sample Rate

To the left of a Project's time line, a drop down menu is located for selection of the Project default sample rate. This menu has a simple function, to set the sample rate when making address calculations on the time line. Since, "under the hood," soundBlade uses samples per second as the counting method for all time code, time line and address calculations, sample rate becomes the basis on which all the above calculations are made. soundBlade converts 75

fps, 30 fps or seconds time standard display mode, discussed in section 3.7.1, to samples when constructing a Project.

Note that the Project default sample rate has nothing to do with the sample rate of any audio interface used, nor does it impact the clocking of your system. It is only for locating segments on a Project's time line.

4.10 Advanced PQ

Section 3.10 above covers the basics of PQ creation and manipulation. This section delves into some arcana of the P through W metadata functionality in soundBlade.

All PQ information and additional metadata can be viewed and modified with the help of the Mark Info window. It can be opened by selecting the Windows > Mark Info command.

Mark Info - soundBlade Project

PQ Info | PQ Delivery

ALBUM TITLE **New World Nomad**

ALBUM ARTIST **Terry Marshall**

PQ OFFSETS ☒ Display Offsets ☐ Disable Offsets

START OFFSET **00:00:00:10** SPLICE OFFSET **00:00:00:06**

END OFFSET **00:00:00:02** TRACK 1 OFFSET **00:00:00:10**

UPC/EAN MIN INDEX WIDTH **00:00:01:00**

TRACK TITLE **New World Nomad.aif**

TRACK ARTIST

TIME **00:00:01:65.00** ISRC

OFFSET **00:00:00:10.00**

☐ Lock ☒ Default ☐ Copy Enabled ☐ Emphasis

☒ TOTAL TRACKS **4** TOTAL DURATION **15:59:14**

Name	Start	End	Duration
1-New World ...	00:01:65	04:11:05	04:09:15
TrackEnd	04:11:05		
2-Plain Engl...	04:12:67	07:46:10	03:33:17
TrackEnd	07:46:10		
3-Soul Of Th...	07:47:72	11:42:05	03:54:08
TrackEnd	11:42:05		
4-Tell Me WH...	11:43:67	15:59:03	04:15:11
TrackEnd	15:59:03		

 **Sound begins more than 2 frames before Start Mark**

Figure 4.20: The Mark Info window

Apart from the PQ information, this window contains additional fields for Album Title, Album Artist, Track Title and, for compilations, Track Artist. These fields provide input for the generation of CD-Text metadata. Additionally, ISRC Codes or ISRC, and a Universal Product Code/European Article Number, or UPC/EAN, code can be entered as well.

ISRC or International Standard Recording Codes are unique, machine-readable identifiers for each track on a disc. On the other hand, UPC/EAN identifies the *entire* disc.

Creation of PQ Marks must follow a few simple rules, laid down in the “Red Book” or Compact Disc–Digital Audio (CD-DA) specification. The most important of these rules are:

- There is a maximum of 99 tracks allowed on a CD
- There is a maximum of 99 indexes allowed within each track
- Index Markers are not allowed between End of Track and Start of Track marks
- The minimum duration of a track, the minimum distance between Start of Track and End of Track marks or two consecutive Start of Track marks, must be 4 seconds, including offsets.
- Two consecutive End of Track marks are not allowed but two consecutive Start of Track marks are allowed

soundBlade validates the PQ Marks against Red Book specifications and shows the result at the bottom of the PQ Window.

Note that Index Marks are infrequently used as most CD players available do not offer the ability to locate to Indexes.

4.10.1 Album Info

4.10.1.1 Album Title

In this field, the title of the album can be entered.

4.10.1.2 Album Artist

In this field, the artist’s name can be entered.

4.10.1.3 UPC/EAN Code

This is the product’s Universal Product Code/European Article Number, usually displayed as a barcode on the package. UPC/EAN barcodes are 13 digits and, in the United States, the leading digit or country code should be set to zero before entering the additional 12 trailing digits.

4.10.2 Track Info

4.10.2.1 Track Title and Track Artist

These text fields directly represent the title and artist of the selected track in the list below. These fields are used to generate CDText metadata.

soundBlade assigns default names to marks and the tracks they generate. The Start Marks are numbered and named based on their associated segment’s name. The End Marks and Index Marks are not numbered, and are called End and Index respectively.

You can assign your own names to the Marks. Just select a Mark from the Track Info list, type a new name into the TrackTitle field, and hit the enter key. The new name will appear in the list, in the CDText metadata, and also in the Track Bar, if visible. All this information is saved as part of the Project.

Track Artist is entered in a like manner. Select a mark from the Track Info list, type an artist into the Track Artist field, and hit the enter key. The artist's name will appear in the list and also in the resulting CDText metadata. If, prior to Mark generation, you enter an Album Artist, as mentioned in section 4.7.1 above, soundBlade will automatically use that text string for the Track Artist.

Note see appendix N.N for a discussion on CDText.

4.10.22 Track Start

This field displays the location of individual Marks. The location can be edited by typing directly into this field. The corresponding PQ mark will be moved accordingly.

4.10.23 Track Offset

This field shows the offset, if any, that is applied to the selected Mark. If the default offset is not appropriate, you can enter a custom offset for every Mark.

4.10.24 ISR Code (ISRC)

This field shows the International Standard Recording Code or ISRC, if any, that is associated with the selected Start of Track mark. Like UPC/EAN, ISRC cannot be self-assigned and must be created in conjunction with the IFPI <www.ifpi.org> or one of its local branches.

Note see appendix N.N for a explanation on ISRC's.

4.10.25 Copy Enabled Button

This button displays and controls the state of the Copy Enable bit, the "flag," of the SCMS or Serial Copy Management Scheme. The flag is set and copying is enabled when the Copy Enable button is red.

The default state for this button is off. That is, copying is not allowed.

SCMS or "scums" flags, implemented for consumer digital recording devices, are generally ignored by professional audio equipment. Consumer digital audio equipment however, broadly recognises the SCMS bit and inhibits the possibility of making digital copies from CD's with the SCMS flag set. Hence it is common practice to disable the SCMS on CD-Rs or DDP masters intended for duplication.

4.10.2.6 Emphasis Flag Button

This button shows and controls the state of the Emphasis Flag or bit of the selected track. When the Emphasis Flag is set, a CD player will de-emphasize the track on playback. The Emphasis flag is set when the button is red.

Note that digital emphasis is rarely, if ever, used in modern production. This flag provides backward compatibility with archival material. Do not set the Emphasis Flag unless you are sure that emphasis was applied to the original data and that it has not been de-emphasized prior to use in your soundBlade Project.

4.10.3 A Word About PQ Offsets

In the Mark Info dialog, the Track Offset field is non-editable. This because PQ Offsets are applied globally, based on your Windows > Preferences > Delivery > Offsets preferences.

PQ Offsets are correction factors, subtracted from absolute song timing, to compensate for deficiencies in real world CD transports. They attempt to correct for the variation found with a CD transport's ability to locate to an address, fill its audio data buffer, unmute the audio output and commence playback. Less expensive transports typically require back-timing, hence the PQ Offset, to make sure the buffer is full prior to track start so audio is not cut off by the transport's muting circuit. With Offsets enabled, the factory defaults are very conservative and will produce satisfactory results with even the lowest quality transport but, always deliver a copy of your CD and check a range of target transports for an optimal setting.

Note that, as a rule, offsets are applied during the delivery of an original CD or DDP file set. The Windows > Preferences > Delivery > Offsets > Disable Offsets check box will enable or disable offset compensation. Offsets are applied globally to an entire Project.

4.10.4 PQ Track Info

4.10.4.1 Total Tracks & Extended Listing

This field shows the total number of Start Marks that will appear on the disc. To the left of the Total Tracks field is an unmarked Extended Listing check box that, when unchecked, simplifies the Track Listing by hiding End of Track Marks and Indexes. This mode, showing only the essential CD Track information, is designed for resequencing Tracks by dragging and dropping as discussed in section 4.7.4.3. below.

4.10.4.2 Total Duration

This field shows the total playing time of the CD. The total playing time includes all pauses between the individual tracks as well as the "pregap" mode changing pause before the start of Track 1. The inclusion of pregap results in a different duration than would result from simply adding the disc running times, and complies with the method CD players use to calculate and display Total Duration as specified by the CD-DA Red Book.

4.10.4.3 Track Listing

This field shows a list of all Tracks present. For Start of Track marks, each entry shows the track number and name, the start and end times along with the duration. If the Extended Listing check box, mentioned in section 4.8.4.1 above, is checked, then End of Track and Indexes are also listed along with their times.

Any individual Mark can be selected by clicking on that row in the list. A selected Track is highlighted in yellow while information on the highlighted Mark will appear in the fields above within the Track Info section. See section 4.8.2 above for more information on Track Info.

If you double click on a Track Start entry in the list, soundBlade will automatically begin playing that Track based on the current timings. This provides a quick way to confirm your Mark locations.

The Track Listing also provides the ability to resequence CD Tracks. If you click-hold on any (Start of) Track entry, and drag it to a new location in the list, you can drop it and the audio implicit in the Track definition will also shuffle to the new location. This allows you to quickly resequence CD Tracks. See section 4.2.1 for a more general discussion of auto-snapping, including resequencing.

4.10.4.4 PQ Validator

soundBlade validates your PQ entries against the Red Book specifications. If they meet the requirements, the indicator at the lower left corner will be green and the status field will show "PQ Information is valid." If the PQ marks violate the Red Book requirements, the button will be yellow, and a message will appear describing what is wrong with the entered parameters.

Note that you may see a "Sound begins more than 2 frames before Start Mark" message. This is a reminder to check that you are not unintentionally truncating any audio at the head of your Project. Remember that, according to the Red Book specification for CD-DA discs, the first 2 seconds or 150 CD frames are "pregap," and the first track start is at 2 seconds. Any audio before the 2 second mark will be replaced by 150 CD frames of digital zeroes on any CDs delivered and in DDP file sets. Pregap is a logical region of the disc reserved for mode changes and other non-audio functions.

4.10.4.5 Destination Device Selection & Status

The Device field provides details about your CD-R mechanism. When multiple CD-R mechanisms are connected, there is a selector, represented as a white disclosure triangle, to the right of the Device label. This selector allows you to toggle between the available target mechanisms. soundBlade can only address one mechanism at a time. The Status field below the device field provides an indication of the status of your delivery media and progress of the delivery:



Figure 4.21: Device field with white disclosure triangular for selecting multiple CD-R mechanisms.

Note that soundBlade is designed to address Apple-supplied, in-built CD-R and DVD-R mechanisms as well as most third party, FireWire-attached drives supported by the operating system. USB-attached products as well as some third party drives do not function with Apple's optical disc frameworks so, always test new mechanisms prior to use.

4.10.4.6 The Execute Button

Once the above options are to your liking, this button starts a new delivery, writing to the location shown in the "Device" field. When you click the Execute button, a standard Mac OS file browser opens where appropriate, allowing you to specify the target location for a DDP file set. A new or empty folder should be specified to contain the newly created file set that will form the basis for your CD-R delivery. Once the destination is specified, soundBlade begins the delivery process, with progress shown in the validation field at the bottom of the PQ Delivery window. During delivery to a CD-R when no media is present in the selected drive, soundBlade will prompt you to insert media and wait for a blank disc to be inserted.

Note that, once a delivery has started, the Execute button changes to an Abort button, allowing you to halt the delivery process. Aborting a delivery in the midst of the delivery process will render the resulting disc or DDP file set unusable.

When you insert a blank CD-R into your target drive, you may see a dialog asking, "You inserted a blank CD. Choose an action..." Clicking on the Ignore button will close this dialog and release the mechanism for soundBlade's use. This behavior results from the settings in the CDs & DVDs pane of the Mac OS System Preferences. You may want to set your CDs & DVDs preferences to Ignore so as to eliminate that extra step.

4.10.4.7 The Burn Button

As a quick alternative to the Execute button

4.1 O.4.8 Delivering Multiple CDs

It is easy to deliver multiple identical CDs once you have an existing DDP file set. Click on the “Use” button when specifying delivery to a folder that already contains a DDP file set. This will re-use the existing file set, “burning” another CD.

4.1 O.4.9 The Eject Button

The Eject button will cause the host to eject an inserted disc.

4.1 O.4.10 The PQ List Button

This button generates a PQ List, the industry standard text representation of the current Compact Disc’s content. This file is typically printed and the hard copy is sent, along with the appropriate DDP data set saved to your blank medium of choice, to the replicator.

Chapter 5..... Recording Audio

In addition to assembling audio from existing sound files, soundBlade offers the functionality of recording audio from external audio sources. Supported file formats for recording are AIFF and BWF. Sample rate and resolution are limited by the capabilities of the available Core Audio hardware. Audio can be recorded directly into any Panel, in either mono or stereo.

Note that audio is recorded as non-interleaved files when recording in AIF or BWF format.

5.1 4 Steps to Recording

1 Open a new Project

Audio can only be recorded in Panels, so a Project must be open. Choose File > New to create a new Project or File > Open... to open an existing Project. By default, soundBlade records external audio from the first two input channels of the active interface, as defined in OS X's Audio MIDI Setup utility.

2 Set New Sound File Parameters

Choose Windows > New Sound file Preferences. Set the destination directory, filename, word length and file type for the sound file you wish to record. See section 5.2.1 below for more information.

3 Record enable Panels

Record Enable the desired tracks for recording. To do this, click on the R button in the upper left corner of Panel 3 and 4. See section 5.2.2 for more explanation.

4 Start your recording

Initiate the recording of audio. To do this, use the Transport Controls at the top center of the Project. Clicking on the green record button will start a recording. See chapter 5.2.3 for more information.

5.2 Audio Recordings

5.2.1 Selecting external input(s)

By default, soundBlade records audio from the first four available inputs of the interface currently configured as input in Audio MIDI Setup. However, soundBlade can be configured to record from any valid input source by means of the Windows > Audio I/O Preferences window.



Figure 5.1: The Audio I/O Preferences window

The bottom half of this window shows the currently active audio interface as selected in Audio MIDI Setup.

Note that virtualized or “aggregated” devices, as defined in OS version 10.4 and higher, appear as one recording interface.

In the area of the audio interface icon, the line inputs L1 to Ln are shown, together with a drop down menu selector. Of the available inputs, only the first four are valid for recording in soundBlade. When one of the line input selectors are clicked, a list of all available inputs for that selected audio interface are shown. Selecting any available input from the audio interface re-maps that input to soundBlade’s inputs used for recording external sources.

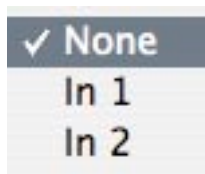


Figure 5.2: Input selectors

soundBlade's clock source should be checked as well. To do so, select either "internal" or "external" from the Master Clock source selectors.

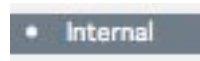


Figure 5.3: Clock source selection

In addition, due to OS X restrictions, the sample rate must be set to match the incoming clock source, even when an external clock source is selected.

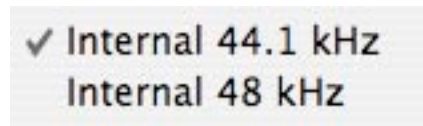


Figure 5.4: Sample rate selection

The settings in the Audio I/O Preferences window reflect the settings in Audio MIDI Setup at the instant you open the Audio I/O Preferences window. However, the information in Audio I/O Preferences are not dynamically updated if anything in Audio MIDI Setup are changed while the Audio I/O Preferences window is open. To make sure that the Audio I/O Preferences window accurately reflects the current setting of Audio MIDI Setup, press the "Re-Scan I/O" button. This updates the Audio I/O Preferences and re-loads the current settings from Audio MIDI Setup. To open Audio MIDI Setup from within soundBlade, click the "Audio MIDI Setup.." button in the Audio I/O Preferences window.

Note that any new settings in the Audio I/O Preferences window come into effect immediately. However, only after saving the settings with the "save" button will the new settings be stored as defaults used for subsequent soundBlade sessions.

5.2.2 New Soundfile Parameters

You must specify where recorded files will be stored and in what format and resolution the recordings will be made. To set the sound file parameters or, to change the current parameters, select Windows > New Soundfile Preferences. The New Soundfile Parameters window appears.

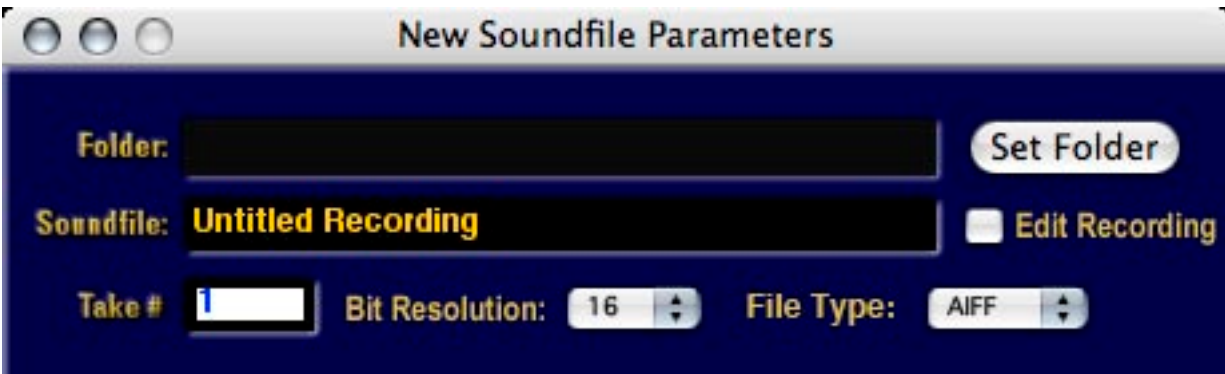


Figure 5.5: The New Soundfile Parameters window

To select the destination folder for recorded sound files, click on Set Folder to open a standard Mac OS browser and select the target destination folder. Then click OK to confirm your choices and return to the New Sound file Settings window.

Note that, although it is possible to select a destination for your sound files on external direct-attached or network-attached volumes, this is no guarantee it will work flawlessly. Please check that the necessary Quality of Service is supported throughout the entire virtual path to the selected volume. This is especially true of USB-attached mechanism. USB is not suitable for audio production.

Next, the default sound file prefix can be set in the “Soundfile” field. Recorded sound files will be collectively placed in a folder carrying the same name as the sound file prefix. Additionally, in the “Take #” field, a numeric take number suffix can be entered that will be incremented for subsequent recordings, creating unique names for each file.

The word length and file type for the recording should also be set via the appropriate drop down menu. You do not have to close the New Soundfile Parameters window to save your settings.

When selecting BWF as recording format, the New Sound file Parameters window is extended by some extra fields



Figure 5.6: The New Sound file Parameters window for BWF recording format

The “Originator,” “Reference” and “Date/Time” fields can be filled with up to 22 characters. The “Description” and “Coding History” fields each hold up to 120 characters. The standardized contents of these metadata fields are stored in the header of the BWF file.

- Originator — an ASCII string containing the name of the originator/producer of the audio file.
- Reference — Technically known as the “OriginatorReference,” an ASCII string containing a non-ambiguous reference “allocated by the originating organization.” The EBU has defined a format for the OriginatorReference field. For more information, see EBU Recommendation R99-1999[2].
- Date — Technically known as the “OriginationDate,” ASCII characters containing the date of creation of the audio file. The format is “yyyy-mm-dd” (year-month-day).

Year is defined from 0000 to 9999, month is define from 1 to 12, day is defined from 1 to 28,29,30 or 31, while the separator between the items can be anything but it is recommended that one of the following characters is used:

1. - (hyphen)

2. _ (underscore)
3. : (colon)
4. (space)
5. . (stop or period)

- Time — Technically known as the “OriginationTime,” ASCII characters containing the time of creation of the audio file. The format is “hh-mm-ss” (hours-minutes-seconds).

Hour is defined from 0 to 23, while minute and second are defined from 0 to 59. The separator between the items can be anything but it is recommended that one of the above characters.

- Description — An ASCII string containing a un-formatted description of the sequence. To help applications which only display a short description, it is recommended that a résumé of the description is contained in the first 64 characters, and the last 192 characters are use for details.
- Coding History — The Coding History field is usually filled in and appended by any application that creates and subsequently modifies a BWF sound file.

Finally, the optional “Edit Recording” check box enables files to be opened while their recording is in progress. This feature allows you to begin to mark and make other editing decisions while a recording progresses. See section 5.2.6 below for more information.

Note that the sample rate of the sound file to be recorded is not set via this window. It is set in your host’s Audio MIDI Setup. See section 5.2.1 above for more information.

5.2.3 Track arming and enabling recording

To prepare audio for recording, any track you want to record audio into must be enabled or “armed” first. To arm the desired Panel(s), click on the Record Ready button, labeled “R,” on the left of the corresponding Panel. To disarm a Panel, simply click the Record Ready button again and the Panel will return to “Safe” mode again.

5.2.4 Initiating a recording

To initiate a recording, click the green Record button in the Transport Controls to start the recording. The Playhead starts at the beginning of the time line or at the Edit Point if present. The Record buttons turns red, recording begins and, the backgrounds of the Panels in record along with their corresponding Record Ready buttons turn red while the cursor changes to a microphone symbol.

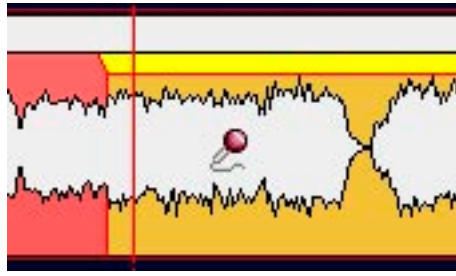


Figure 5.7: A Panel in record mode showing the “microphone” cursor

Once the recording is stopped, by either hitting the space bar or the Stop button in the Transport Controls, the newly recorded audio segment(s) are shown in the Panel(s) while soundBlade generates waveforms in the background.

If recordings replace any existing segments in the Panel, the original segment will be joined to the new recording with a default Crossfade.

Note that any existing SRPs, Track Marks or Gain Overlay nodes will be deleted by a recording. Since recording is non-destructive, any existing audio segments in a Panel that seem to be “overwritten” during recording are not physically erased from your designated volume, only the edit decision list has been modified. They can be reopened at any time. Alternatively, the original state of the Panels before the recording was started can easily be restored with the Edit > Undo command.

5.2.5 Manual punch in

It is also possible to “punch in” audio at any desired location within a Panel while playback is in progress. To punch into record, first arm the Panel(s) where the punch in is needed. Then, locate the Edit Point or Playhead in advance of the punch in point, providing 1 to 3 seconds of pre-roll, and commence playback by pressing the spacebar or the Play button on the Transport Controls. When the Playhead arrives at the desired punch in point, select Play > Record or click the Record button from the Transport Panel, and the punch will start. To stop the recording, either tap the space bar, select Play > Record or click the Record button again and the recording will stop, leaving the Playhead at the location where the punch out occurred.

5.2.6 Edit Recording

This option, located in the New Sound file Parameters window, allows opening, viewing and editing of the file being recorded during the recording.

To use the Edit Recording option, choose Windows > New Soundfile Preferences. Select the Edit Recording option and initiate a recording. Open the sound file in another Project from the one in which you are recording it. You can now drag the Out fade as the audio is recorded and use the EDL > Refresh command to update the waveform display. This feature provides an auto-save function, as the file is updated continuously during recording. If anything happens to interrupt the record, the file will be intact up to the moment of interruption.

Note that, when the Edit Recording option is selected, soundBlade uses about 15% more disk bandwidth for a stereo recording, so hard drive performance may be affected.

5.3 Automated Punches

When the length of a recording is known in advance, soundBlade can be set to record for a preset duration. This “timed” recording can be used for unattended recording, conserving disk space, or to replace parts of pre-existing material in one or more Panels. To automate a recording, a number of options are available.

5.3.1 Recording a selection or segment

Select a region of the desired length in the Panel(s) where recording should take place, then initiate the recording. When the recording is started, it will commence at the start of the selected region, and stop automatically at the end of the selected region. This is useful for a quick pick up or “one shot,” timed recording.

Alternatively, recording can replace one or more segments. Simply select the segments to be replaced, then initiate the recording. Recording commences at the start of the first segment, and end at the end of the last selected segment.

Note that, if multiple segments are selected, the recorded sound file will appear as one continuous sound file. If the selected segments are consecutive but not contiguous, the non-selected segments in between will be “replaced” as well. See the end of section 5.2.1 above for more information.

5.3.2 Recording using SRPs

Another method of automated recording is by using SRPs. To do so:

- Arm the Panels in which you want to record.
- Place SRPs, via the Selection > Set SRP command, at the exact start and end locations where recording should punch in and out. If multiple, consecutive recordings are required, set as many even numbered SPRs as required to define those actions.
- Select the top armed Panel, then click-drag to select a region that extends from before the first SRP to the last SRP placed for recording.
- Start the recording by selecting Play > Selection from the main menu.

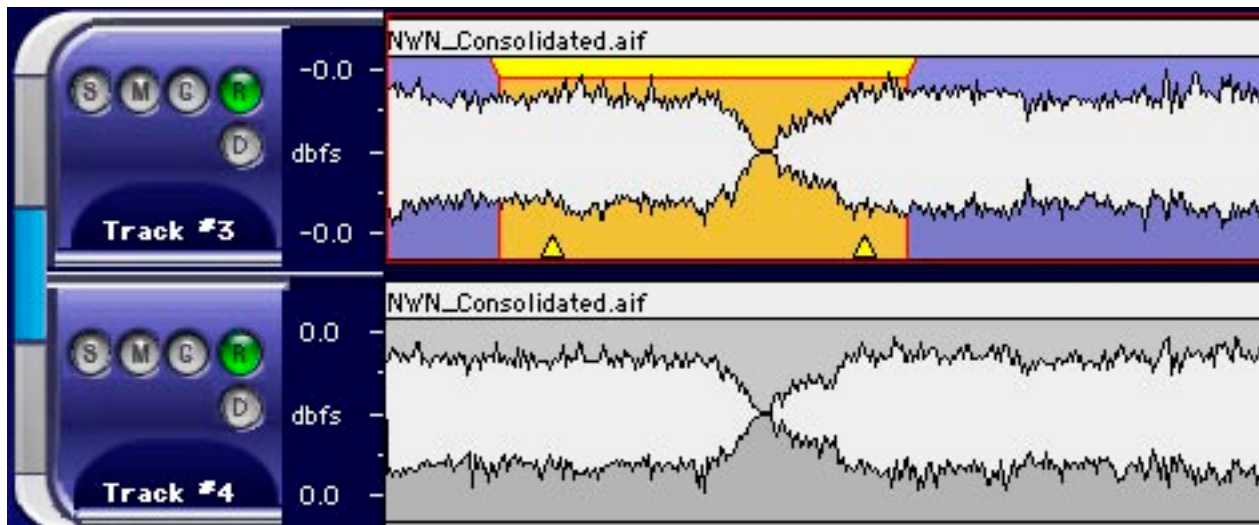


Figure 5.8: Panel with selection enclosing SRPs armed for recording

Playback commences at the start of the selection. At the first SRP, soundBlade will drop into recording, punching out at the next SRP. This repeats itself until the end of the selection is reached. Playback stops and the areas marked by SRPs are replaced by newly created sound files. If recording was still active when the end of the selection was reached (an uneven number of SRPs was included in the selection), recording will stop at the end of the selection as well.

Note that for this method of “timed” recording, soundBlade only uses the SRPs in the top Panel being played and recorded. If SRPs are set in any other Panel that is armed for recording, they will be ignored and recording in those Panels will take place at the same position as in the top Panel being played.

After recording, the SRPs will be erased and in their place, default crossfades will connect the newly recorded segments to any existing audio segments.

5.4 Bouncing

Apart from recording from external sources, it is also possible to bounce or play audio from one Panel while recording into another, meanwhile applying processing with internally or externally available processing options. As soundBlade normally records from external sources, soundBlade needs to be set up to record from an internal source, the Panel(s) containing sound material to be re-recorded. To perform a bounce, an extra feature of soundBlade called the “EDL Desk” will need to be used. More in-depth information on how to use and setup the EDL Desk is given in Chapter 6. To record audio from Panel to Panel, it is also necessary to understand that sound can only be bounced from Panels 3 and/or 4, with Panels 1 and/or 2 acting as recording destinations.

To perform a stereo bounce, with built-in audio, from Panels 3 and 4 into Panels 1 and 2, do the following:

- Edit the audio to be captured and/or processed in Panels 3 and 4.

- Select Panels 1 and 2 and arm those Panels for recording. Remember to set or change the desired New Soundfile Parameters if necessary.
- Click the “Play All” button at the bottom of the Project.
- Set up the EDL Desk to perform a bounce from Panels 3 and 4 into Panels 1 and 2. Patch the Desks inputs for M3, M4, None, None and the outputs as M1, M2, M3, M4.
- Select Panel 1 and start the recording by selecting Play > Record from the main menu, or by clicking the Record button in the Transport Panel. Stop the recording by clicking on the Stop button in the Transport Panel.

As the EDL desk allows for internal processing and routing the audio through external sound processors, the recording in Panels 1 and 2 will contain all processing applied in the entire sound path.



Figure 5.9: Panels and EDL Desk prepared for Capture.

Captures can be done manually, starting and stopping at any point of choice. Capturing can also be done from different time areas in Panels 3 and 4 than the time area into which the capturing takes place. This can be done by un-selecting “Play All” in the Project window, allowing you to start the recording first, then selecting Panels 3 and 4 and playing back from any location in those Panels.

Also, capturing can be performed using SRPs, allowing for exact time predefined insertion of sound material. To set up a capture using SRPs, first prepare for a normal capture as described above. Then, before initiating the Capture, setup SRPs’ and a necessary selection, then start the capture as if performing a recording using SRPs.

Note that, as bounces include all processing in the entire signal path. Dither may or may not be applied, according to the settings of soundBlade’s preferences and any external processors used. Also, resolution of the recorded bounces can be set to 16 or 24 bits in the New Soundfile Parameters window.

5.5 Recording and time stamps

When recording a sound file in AIF or BWF format, a time stamp is added to the sound file. The timestamp added is the time of the corresponding position in the Panel(s). This allows for the sound files to be placed in the exact original location on the time line in any application that recognizes and is able to handle this feature.

The recording of true time code, either internally generated or externally fed, is currently not supported in soundBlade.

Chapter 6.....The Desk and Meters

6.1 The EDL Desk

soundBlade offers a compact and convenient solution for mixing audio signals from the Panels, the EDL Desk. In addition to level adjustment, routing, panning and monitoring, the Desk offers the possibility to add plug-ins for sound manipulation and modification. The Desk is made visible by selecting the Windows > Desk command.



Figure 6.1: The Desk

6.1.1 The Desk Components

The Desk resembles a typical “in-line” mixing console, with four “strips” for each output bus. M1 and M2 are outputs, sending signal to the designated physical audio interface, while M3 and M4 are internal buses meant for bouncing and other processing.

6.1.1.1 The Faders

In the bottom half, faders are provided that control the level of the audio signal sent from the Project’s four Panels and sent to the input of the Desk. To the right of each fader is a Peak Program meter with an overload indicator above it, signalling in red when overloads occur.



Figure 6.2: A fader with gain scale and meter

The fader’s scale ranges from -144 dB to +6 dB. Alongside each scale, three white triangles or “hot spots” provide quick gain changes. Clicking on a hot spot commands a preset gain of, from top to bottom, 0 dB, -6 dB and -144 dB.

Below the fader is a gain call out field where the gain setting of the fader can be manually entered as a numerical value. Additionally, next to the gain call out are plus and minus buttons. Clicking these increases or decreases the gain setting of the fader in 0.1 dB steps. Below the fader gain call out is a text field or “scribble strip,” in which a descriptive label can be entered. To change the contents of the scribble strip, simply click on it and enter the desired text string from the keyboard. Save the new label by hitting the Return key.

By default, all faders work independently. As the primary intended use for soundBlade is stereo editing or four channel work, faders can be conveniently linked in pairs or groups. To do so, hold down the control key and click a fader. A contextual drop down menu appears.

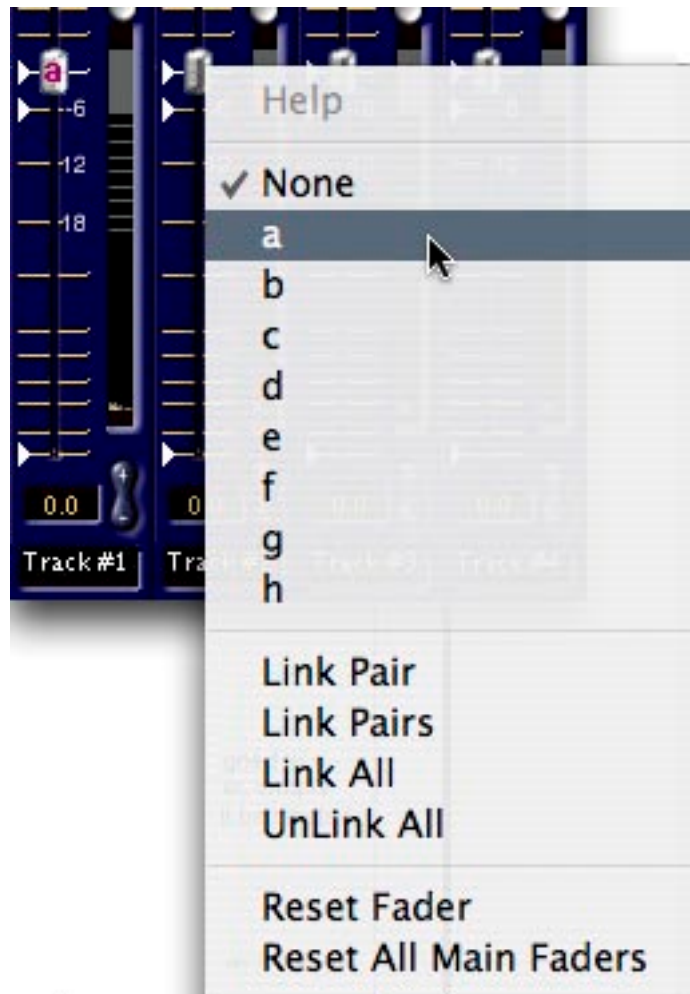


Figure 6.3: Linking faders in groups or pairs via pull-down menu

There are two ways faders can be linked to other faders. First, a fader can be assigned to a “group,” identified by the letters “a” through “h.” To assign a fader to a group, simply select the desired group letter.

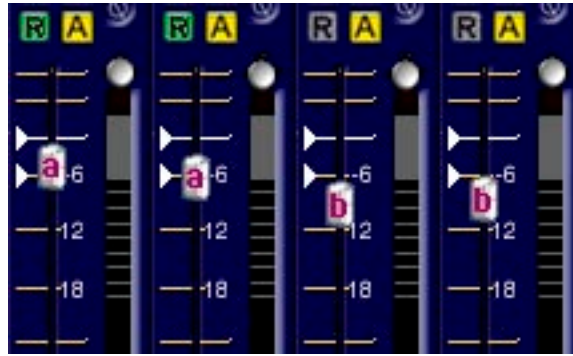


Figure 6.4: Fader assigned to fader group, indicated by group letter superimposed on fader.

This method of linking faders allows faders to be linked in any combination. As a result, if one of the linked faders is now moved, all linked faders will move as well with the same velocity, applying the same relative gain changes.

Note that, when linking faders, the relative gain settings of the individual faders are preserved.

Alternatively, faders 1 and 2 and faders 3 and 4 can be quickly linked in pairs. To do so, again hold down the control key and click on one of the faders to be linked. As the drop down menu appears, select “Link Pair.” If either fader 1 or 2 was clicked, fader 1 and 2 will be assigned the first available unused group letter and thus linked. The same applies to faders 3 and 4. To link all faders in pairs simultaneously, choose the plural “Link Pairs” from the drop down menu.

To unlink individual faders from their assigned groups, control click on the fader and select “None” from the drop down menu. To unlink all faders simultaneously, select “Unlink All” from the drop down menu.

Finally, to reset a fader to its default unity gain position, removing it from any group or link, select “Reset Fader” from the drop down menu. To reset and unlink all faders on the Desk, select “Reset All Main Faders” from the drop down menu.

6.1.1.2 Monitor Controls

Directly above the faders are four buttons arranged in a square, the monitor control buttons:

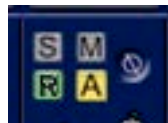


Figure 6.5: The monitor controls

The four buttons replicate the corresponding buttons to the left of each Panels in the Project. When selected, each button will light up in its own color. Otherwise, the buttons remain grey.

The S or “Solo” button provides exclusive monitoring for its associated strip. Whenever a solo is engaged, all strips with disabled solo buttons will be muted on output and their associated M or “Mute” button will highlight in yellow. Multiple tracks can be soloed simultaneously.

When engaged directly by the user rather than by the solo function, the Mute buttons turn green. This indicates they will not unmute when an active Solo is disengaged.

Below the solo button is the R or “Record Enable” button. Only tracks that are record enabled will drop into record when recording. When a strip is record enabled and soundBlade is not in record mode, the Record Enable button highlights green to indicate the track is in record ready or “armed.” Only when Record Mode is engaged will the Record Enable button turn red, signaling a recording in progress on that strip and corresponding Panel.

Finally, to the right of the R button is M or Monitor button. This button has 3 states:

1. O or output — During playback with monitor set to Output, the strip always routes the audio from the corresponding Panel. When playback is paused or stopped, the strip outputs silence or digital null data. This can be thought of as “repro” mode.
2. IN or input — During playback with monitor set to Input, the strip always outputs the selected input signal routed to that strip, regardless of playback status. See section 6.1.1.3 below for more information on selecting inputs.
3. A or automatic — During playback with monitor set to the default Auto mode, the strip outputs the audio from the corresponding Panel. When playback is stopped or when Record Mode is engaged, the strip outputs switches to sending the audio from the selected input. This can be thought of as “sel-sync” mode.

Note that Automatic only works in the described manner for tracks that are Record Enabled. If not, Auto mode replicates Output mode.

6.1.1.3 Input and output routing, panning

Above the four monitor control buttons are two selectors for input assigns on the top row, and output routing on the bottom row.

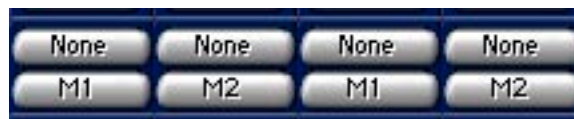


Figure 6.6: input and output routing selectors

The input assigns on the top row select the input source for routing through the strip and Panel. By default, they are assigned L1 to L4 for Panels 1 to 4. Alternatively, the output buses of the individual strips, labelled M1 to M4, can be assigned to be recorded or bounced as well. The selector can also be set to “None” so no audio will be routed to the input of the corresponding strip.

Note that the inputs of the Desk are “hard wired” or virtually routed directly to the output of each corresponding Panel.

The output routing on the bottom row controls the destination of each strip. By default, each strip is routed to an individual output labeled M1 to M4. Alternatively, outputs can be set to “none,” disconnecting the strip from any output bus. To allow for panning, the selector can

be set to “Pan,” which routes the strip output through the pan matrix discussed in section 6.3 below.

6.1.1.4 Inserting plug-ins

At the top of each strip, four slots are available for inserting plug-ins. soundBlade supports both VST and AU plug-ins and, either type can be freely intermixed in the slots.

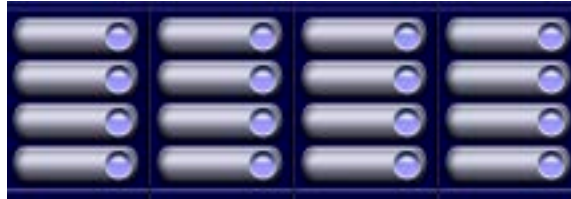


Figure 6.7: Selection slots for plug-ins

To insert a plug-in into one of the slots, simply click on the slot button and a drop down menu appears, showing all valid plug-ins available. Then, select the desired plug-in from the list. The plug-in will be inserted in the slot and the selected plug-in will open for manipulation of its parameters.



Figure 6.8: A partial Plug-in List

The slot, with its inserted plug-in, will turn green to indicate the presence of a plug-in. Additionally, the name of the plug-in will appear on the slot's button. To deselect a plug-in from any slot, click on the slot and select "off" from the plug-in list.

As with faders, plug-in slots can be linked to stereo pairs or larger groups, effectively linking the controls of the plug-in. Hold down the control key and click on the slot you want to link. The following contextual menu drops down.

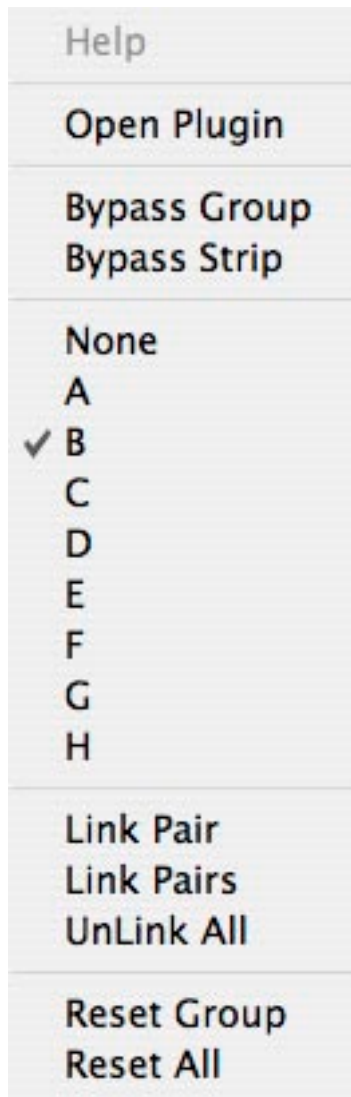


Figure 6.9: Contextual menu for linking of plug-ins in the Desk

As with faders, selecting one of the letters assigns a group to the individual slot. This can be used to link multiple plug-ins across all Desk strips. Also, plug-ins can be linked in pairs. When “Link Pair” is selected from the contextual menu, the adjacent plug-in slot is selected and linked as a pair. If no plug-in was present in the slot selected, and a plug-in was present in the adjacent slot, the plug-in and the current settings are copied to the slot selected and both are linked. To indicate linked slots, the slot buttons are labeled with the corresponding letter.



Figure 6.10: Linked plug-in slots

As with the faders, the Link Pairs option in the contextual menu links the slots in strips 1 and 2, and 3 and 4, into paired slots. To unlink a single plug-in slot, open the contextual menu and select “None” to unlink the corresponding slot. To unlink all slots simultaneously, select “Unlink All” from the menu.

Note that, unlike plug-ins inserted in the master “Meters” section discussed in section 6.4 below, plug-ins added to a strip always work as monaural plug-ins. Although identical plug-ins can be paired in the Desk, this will not render two paired mono plug-ins into a stereo plug-in. For plug-ins like EQ, the effect may be that two paired mono plug-ins effectively work as a stereo plug-in as the control values of the two plug-ins will be modified together when linked. However, plug-ins that derive a steering signal from the input signal (compressors, expanders) or generally use a stereo input (reverb), will continue to work as 2 separate mono plug-ins. Only the controls of two paired plug-ins will be linked, not the actual audio path of the plug-ins.

6.2 Desk Setups

Desk “setups,” static snapshots of the Desk’s state, are always saved within a Project. Thus, when opening a previously saved Project, the desk’s state will be restored to the settings when last the Project was saved. Not saved with a Project are two special desk states, called “Desk A” and “Desk B.” These separate desk setups provide two distinct states, for A/B comparison or recording and playback routing. To save the current setup as either Desk A or Desk B, first make sure the Desk is open. Then, select Desk > Save Desk Setup > Save Desk A/B to save the current state. To recall Setup A or B, select Desk > Open Desk Setup> Desk Setup A or Desk Setup B from the main menu.

Note that desk setups A and B are available in any open Project only during the current run and do not persist across application restarts.

In addition to this, the desk setup, including all plug-in settings and positions, can be saved to a file as well. To do this, select Desk > Save Desk Setup > Save To File. A standard Mac OS save dialog appears, allowing you to enter an appropriate file name and destination directory for the desk setup file.

Note that, by default, soundBlade directs the save file dialog to the ~/Library/Preferences/Sonic Preferences/Defaults directory, in your home directory, as this is the directory where Desk Setup A and B are stored automatically.

Desk setups can be recalled or opened from a stored Desk Setup file. To open a stored Desk Setup file, select Desk > Open Desk Setup> Open from File..., which will bring up a standard Mac OS file browser. Navigate to and select the desired file.

6.3 The Panner

From the output routing selectors, the output of a strip can be sent to either one of the four output buses available to soundBlade. In addition to this one-to-one routing, output can be panned between any or all of the four outputs by means of the panner. To assign a strip output

to the panner, open the panner by selecting Windows > Panner, which brings up the Panner window.



*Figure 6.11:*The Panner in four channel mode

By default, the panner opens in stereo mode. In the upper left corner, the channel to which the panner currently applies is indicated. As this Track indicator is also a drop down menu, it operates as a strip selector for the panner as well. In the upper right corner, the Type indicator/menu is visible and offers three options:

1. Off — In this state, the panner is turned off and the selected strip is restored to the state it was in before the strip was routed through the panner.
2. Stereo — In this state, if either strip 1 or 2 is set to stereo, the other desk strip is bus paired to it as a stereo panner. The same behavior applies to strips 3 and 4.
3. MultiChannel — In this state,, the panner unfolds to show a circular joystick panner with multichannel buses, each bus indicated by a loudspeaker symbol. Note that the multichannel plus LFE choices in this menu are not operational.

Next to each loudspeaker symbol, an output selector is located. This allows for a completely flexible assignment of outputs from the panner. Any output can be assigned to any panner

position. As only one output can be assigned to a single panner position, attempting to patch an already assigned strip output to another panner output will re-assign that strip output to the new choice, swapping positions with the strip output formerly assigned to that output.

To change the panner state, click-hold on the red dot and drag it towards effect the desired output. The output level fields, located next to each loudspeaker symbol, indicates the panner output level in dB and are updated continuously during panner movement. Alternatively, simply click on the location in the Panner circle where you want to place the panner, and the panner moves to it instantly. Additionally, clicking on one of the loudspeaker symbols moves the panner to that position instantly.

At the bottom of the multichannel panner, two call outs and one selector are located. The “Angle” call out at left shows the angular position of the panner on a 360 degree, polar coordinate scale. To manually input the angle of the panner directly as a numerical value, click in the Angle field and enter the desired value, and confirming it by hitting the Enter key.

The Method selector, in the center, should be kept at the default “Standard” setting as the “Soundfield” rematrixing choice is not yet operational.

The Spread field is an call out showing the extent to which sound is panned across multiple available outputs. Spread varies from 1.00 to 99.9, and is at its maximum when the sound is panned equally to all outputs, with the position indicator is in the center, and equal amplitude appearing on all outputs.

6.4 Meters Window: The Master Section

In a separate window from the Desk, the Meters window provide the final output control for both the Project and Desk. The Meters window can be opened by selecting the Windows > Meters command.

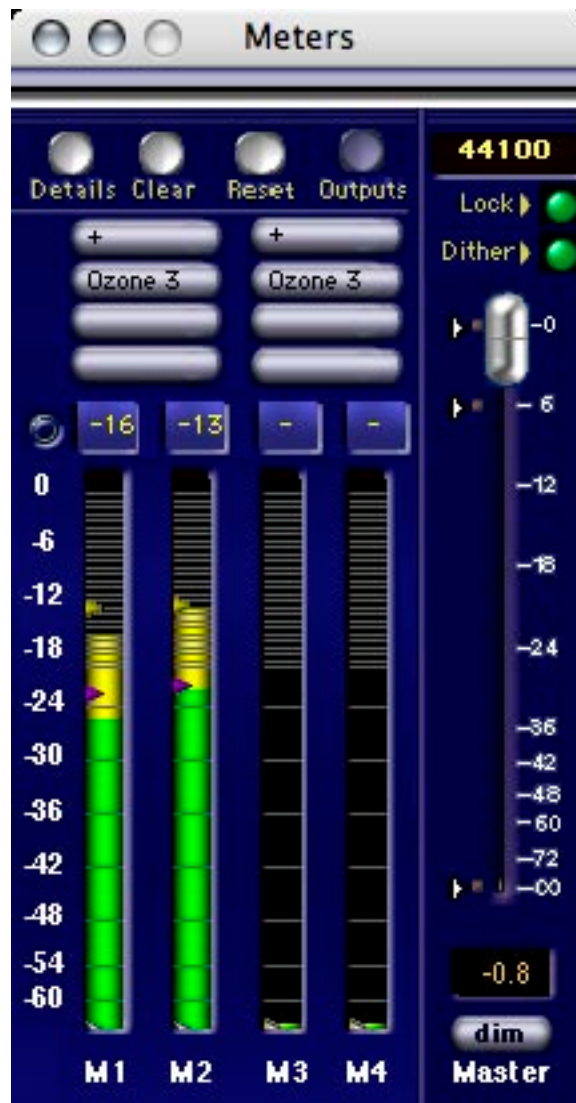


Figure 6.12: The Meters window.

The Meters window resembles a master fader section of a typical mixing desk and features a number of elements. Most important, at right, is a Master fader.

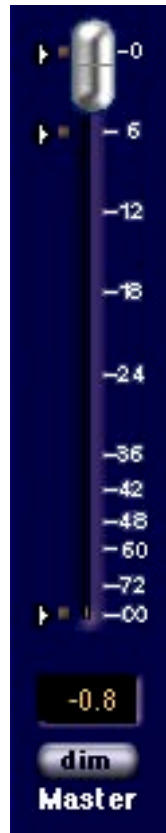


Figure 6.13: Master Fader of the Meters Window.

The Master Fader controls output amplitude across all four buses. As with the strip faders discussed in section 6.1.1.1, it has a amplitude scale at the left, with three triangular hot spots for rapid gain setting. Clicking on a hot spots instantly moves the fader to the corresponding preset position.

Below the fader is a gain call out field where the gain setting of the fader can be manually entered as a numerical value. To alter the master fader's position, a new value can be manually entered in this field and, after confirming the new value with the Enter key, the fader will move to the corresponding position.

Also, at the bottom a "dim" button is found. Clicking the dim button immediately moves the fader to the predefined position of -20 dB, returning to it's original position when the dim button is disengaged. When the dim button is engaged, it's label color changes to red to indicate that dim mode is active.

Above the master fader are additional useful indicators. The top field represents your interface's current sample rate. It can be changed via the Audio I/O Preferences window discussed in section 5.2.1 above. The Lock indicator is green when the host system is locked to the indicated clock and yellow when locking is in progress. When red, a proper lock to your selected clock source is not established, a serious situation that cannot be ignored.

Note that this unlocked status indicates that you should determine the cause and rectify the situation before continuing. Damage to your monitoring signal chain and data corruption during recording can result.

The third indicator shows green when dither on output is enabled and grey when dither is disabled. To disable dither, control-click on the “Dither” label, and a contextual menu appears, allowing dither to be enabled or disabled. Dither parameters can be set via soundBlade’s Windows > Preferences > Delivery Tab.

To the left of the Master fader is a section from which the window gets its name, the bus meters. All four output buses have their own individual peak program meter. Above each meter is a field showing the numerical value of the current instantaneous amplitude. When an overload occurs, these boxes turn red.

Above the scale at left is a small, round, unlabeled button. It selects the peak-hold mode for the meters and numerical call outs, and turns red when enabled. If peak hold mode is engaged and an overload has occurred, the frame surrounding a numerical display turns red. To clear the overload display, for individual channels with peak-hold engaged, click on the indicator and the red surround will disappear.

Above the meters is a small section which contains slots for plug-ins. As with the strips, plug-ins can be inserted here. An important difference however is that plug-ins in this master section work as true stereo plug-ins. For plug-ins such as compressors, limiters and reverbs that require a stereo input for normal operation, the master section is the correct place to insert and use them.

To insert a plug-in in any slot, click on the slot and a menu appears. Select the desired plug-in to add it to the slot. To change the settings of a plug-in, right-click on the slot and a contextual menu appears.

Select “Open Plugin” from the menu to open the plug-in for modification. Via the same menu, all or individual plug-ins can be bypassed or reset by selecting the appropriate menu option. To bypass a plug-in, option-clicking on the appropriate slot performs the same task.

Note that, contrary to strip plug-ins, master section plug-ins cannot be linked.

Finally, above the Output Desk are four more buttons. Clicking on the Details button opens or closes the “Meter Details” window.



Figure 6.14: The Details Meter window

The twelve value indicators show the current instantaneous values for Peak Power, Peak RMS and VU (Volume Indicator scaling) for each output. With the Meter Scaling slider, the scaling of the meters can be adjusted to provide more resolution at higher amplitudes.

Clicking the Clear button clears the peak values for the numerical level indicators, as well as any overloads indicated. Clicking Reset resets the peak-hold of the meters, as well as any peak-hold value in the Meters Details window.

Finally, the Outputs button acts as a source selector for the Meters window, toggling between output and input buses as source for the meters. By default, soundBlade shows outputs M1 to M4 but in input mode, inputs L1 to L4 can be metered as well. The label below the button indicates the current input source for the meters. In addition to that, when the inputs are selected as source for the meters, the numerical value indicators above the meters have a green background to indicate the different meter mode.

Note that, though the master fader is attached to the master section as a whole, its function does not change with the source selector.

Chapter 7..... The Background Manager

To increase productivity and to free up soundBlade from task that are time consuming and suited for unattended completion, soundBlade comes equipped with the Background Manager.

The Background Manager consists of two sections, each represented by its own tab. The first section is the “Audio Client.” In this section, sound files can be selected for processing, and processes can be assigned to them.

The second section of the Background Manager is the “Queue Manager.” Once sound files have been assigned a process, processes can be managed via the Queue Manager.



Figure 7.1: The Background Manager showing the Audio Client tab

7.1 The Audio Client tab

To open the Background Manager, select the Windows > Background Manager command. By default, the Audio ClientTab is selected when the Background Manager opens. It largely consists of 2 areas, the “Soundfiles” area and the “Processes” area, topped by the Target Folder field.

In the Target Folder field, the target folder for newly created sound files is specified. To select a target folder, click on the Choose button at upper right. A standard Mac OS browser opens, allowing you to navigate, create and/or choose the desired destination folder.

Note that, upon initiating a process, the Background Manager will ask to confirm the destination folder.

In the Soundfiles area, sound files can be selected and added by the clicking Add Sound File button. A standard Mac OS browser opens, allowing you to navigate to the location of the desired sound file(s). Once a sound file is selected, it is placed in the Soundfiles list. When a sound file is selected in the list, the black status bar below the list displays the sample rate, word length and number of channels of the selected file. Multiple sound files can be added to the list by repeating this action.

To remove sound files from the list, click to select the list entry and delete it by hitting the backspace or delete key. To clear the list of all sound files, click the Clear All button to the right of the Soundfiles list.

7.1.1 Applying Processes

Once all sound files have been selected, one or more processes to be applied to them in the Processes area. An “Add a Process” menu allows for selection of the desired process(es).

Note that, for basic versions of soundBlade, only SRC or sample rate conversion is available. More background Processes are available when optional packages for soundBlade are purchased.

When a process is selected, in the space below the Processes area, details and available parameters are shown for the selected Process. This enables adjustment or selection of further options, depending upon the Process selected.

Processes can be deleted from the processes list by clicking on the process and then hitting the backspace or delete key. To clear all processes from the Processes list, click the “Clear All” button to the right of the Processes list.

Once all necessary processes have been selected and placed in the right processing order, they can be automatically performed upon the selected sound files by clicking the “Execute” button. The sound files and the processes to be applied upon them are then “queued” and processing commences. To indicate this action, the “Queue” indicator to the right of the Execute button shows the number of sound files and processes queued.

Once the processes are being executed, all sound files and processes remain in their respective lists. This allows for a quick method of applying different processes to the same file(s) or visa versa. To erase both lists and start new lists for sound files and processes, simply click

“Clear All” next to both lists and the Audio Client is cleared from its current list of sound files and processes.

Note that the order in which sound files are processed is fixed and dependant upon the order in which sound files and processes are listed in their respective areas. The primary processing order is defined, top to bottom, by the order in which the sound files are listed in the Soundfiles area. The secondary processing order is given by the order of processes in the Processes list. So, in practice, if more than one sound file is listed and multiple processes are listed as well, first the initial sound file in the Soundfiles list is processed by all processes listed in the Processes list in the order in which they are listed. Be aware that each process is performed upon the resulting file of the previous process. When all listed processes are performed upon the first listed sound file, the following sound file is processed with the same processing in the same order. This is repeated until all sound files are processed with all listed processes.

The end result of this is one resulting sound file per process per sound file. To avoid the creation of superfluous sound files, select “Delete intermediate files” at the bottom left of the Processes area. This causes the Background Manager to delete all intermediate sound files, creating only one final resulting sound file per input sound file. If disk space is not at a premium, it is recommended that intermediary files are retained until the job is finished.

The following processes are available in the Background Manager, depending upon the purchased package of soundBlade:

7.1.2 Sample Rate Conversion

The SRC/varispeed background process is a fixed ration, non-adjustable process, with six choices of target sample rate. As with any SRC process, if the target sample rate matches the clock rate of the playback system, then the process is considered a sample rate conversion. If, however, the target sample rate does not match the clock rate of the playback system, then the process is considered a varispeed. In either case, the actual processed data in the file is identical, only the sample rate flag is different. SRC preserves pitch and duration, while varispeed produces modified pitch and duration from the original.

7.2 The Queue Manager tab

To monitor and manage queued processes, the Queue Manager tab offers status information and limited options to influence the queued jobs and tasks being performed.

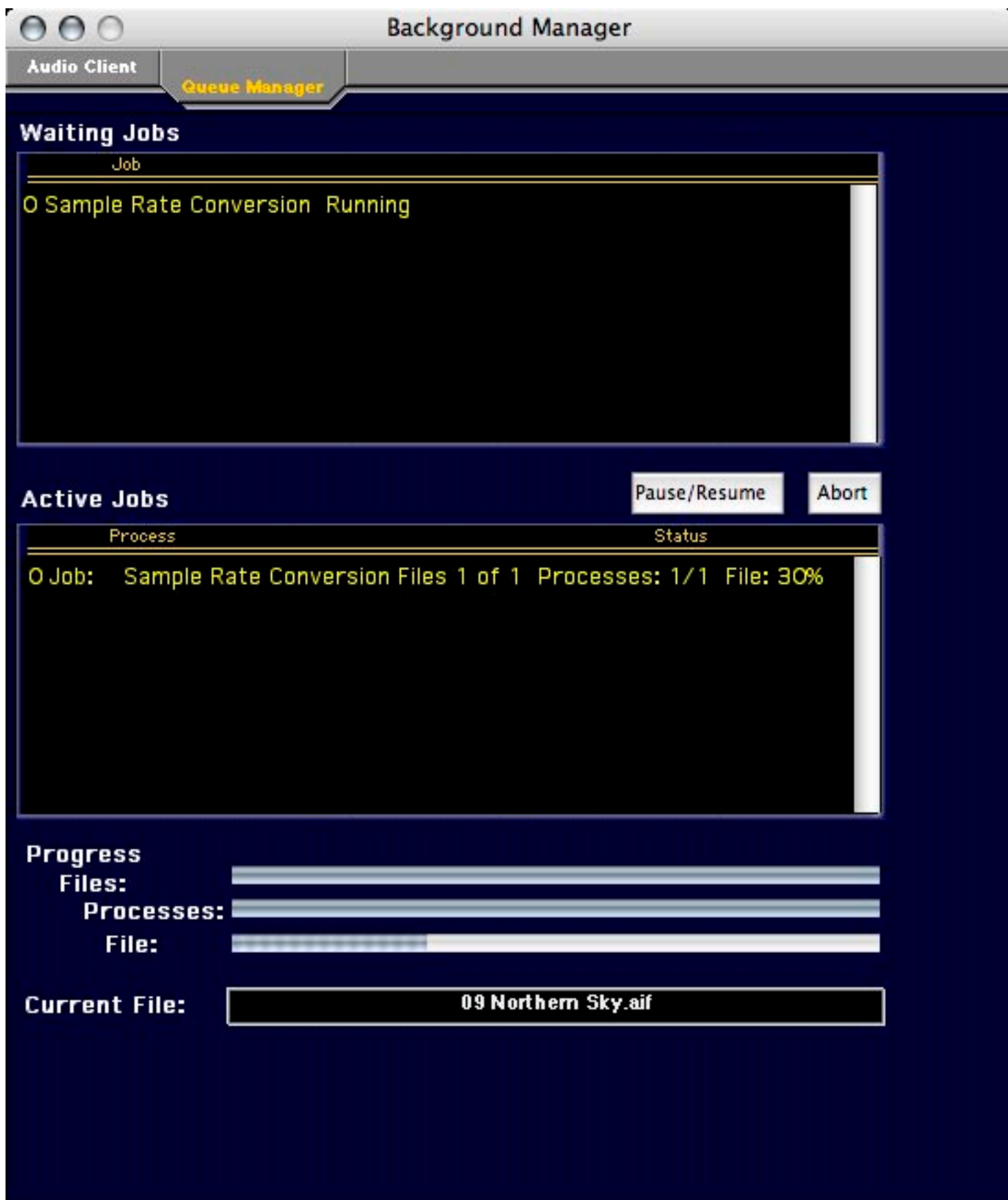


Figure 7.2: The Queue Manager tab

In the top half of the window, all processing jobs in the Queue are listed.

In the bottom half, the active jobs are listed. The progress bars below this area show which file is being processed and which process of the total number of processes to be applied is currently being applied.

To suspend currently running processes, click the "Pause/ Resume" button. The current process is halted and queued processes are held in the queue. To resume processing, click the Pause/Resume button again.

To abort the current process, click the Abort button and the current process will be aborted, initiating the next process in the Queue.

Chapter 8..... Menus

For all menus, the keyboard equivalents for all commands are listed in Appendix 1. Also note that the word folder is used to describe disk directories, in keeping with Mac OS tradition. Finally, all edits in soundBlade are both instantaneous and non-destructive. The only exception is the File > Save Reversed command, which “renders” or creates a new sound file of the reversed material.

8.1 The File Menu

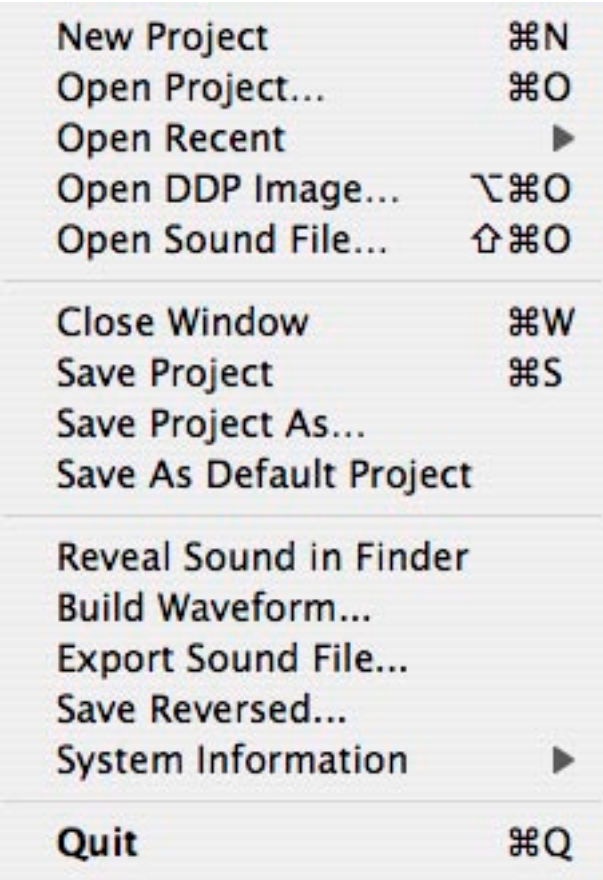


Figure 8.1: The File menu

8.1.1 New Project

Selecting New Project from the File menu will open a new, empty Project. Any currently active Projects are unaffected but moved to the background. soundBlade allows you to have as many open Projects but, when the application runs out of RAM, it will begin to use virtual memory, significantly slowing down the application.

8.1.2 Open Project

A Project file lets you save your editing work in a set of files, along with most of the editing metadata you added. An additional feature of a Project is that you can save your edit decisions without committing them back to a DDP file set. The Project file saves all segment names, SRPs, marks and edits and, they are all restored upon re-opening that Project.

Selecting File > Open Project brings up a standard Mac OS file browser. Locate the requested Project file and select it to open the Project in a new window.

8.1.3 Open Recent

With this menu, a list of recently opened projects and soundfiles is shown. Selecting on of those files will re-open it.

8.1.4 Open DDP Image...

In addition to soundfiles, soundBlade can open DDP file sets. Selecting “Open DDP Image” from this menu invokes a standard Mac OS browser. To open a DDP file set, select its containing folder and choose “Open” from the browser window.

8.1.5 Open Sound File...

This command opens a Mac OS file browser, allowing you to select any sound file recognized by soundBlade. This includes AIFF, WAV and BWF files along with SD2 files with region definitions. See section 8.9.4.1 for more information on importing SD2 files. soundBlade is also able to open audio files by dragging and dropping the files into the top Panel of a Project.

8.1.6 Close Window

This command closes the currently active window. This can be a Project, the Mark Info window, Status Window or, the Preferences window. Upon closing a Project that contains unsaved changes, soundBlade will open a dialog asking for changes to be saved, discarded or offering to cancel the close window operation.

8.1.7 Save Project

This will save the current state of the active Project. It is saved with its current name and path. This command will overwrite any previously saved Project file with that name and path.

8.1.8 Save Project As...

This command lets you save a copy of the active Project under a new file name or different path. soundBlade allows you to choose either a destination folder or, you can navigate to an existing folder. If the destination is empty, soundBlade simply writes the audio and/or metadata files as directed. If, however, the destination folder is not empty, soundBlade alerts you that a potential conflict exists to overwrite files and asks for more direction.

8.1.9 Save As Default Project

This command save the foreground Project as the default document layout when new Projects are created. Since this is a literal “save as,” you should always deploy an empty Project, without any sound files opened into the Project, before you invoke this command.

8.1.10 Reveal Sound In Finder

This command requires a single selected segment. As the name implies, Reveal Sound In Finder switches context to the Finder and opens a new window with the source sound file highlighted.

8.1.11 Build Sound Waveform...

Files originating from a non-Sonic Studio product includes sample values but do not contain the amplitude-specific metadata needed to draw our very detailed audio time versus amplitude “waveforms.” If you would like to add waveforms while working with your sound files and have unchecked the default Windows > Preferences > EDL > View > Background Waveforms preference, you must select the Build Sound Waveform... command.

First, select the parent sound file by clicking on the segment’s Title Bar. The Title Bar will turn yellow to show that it is selected. Then, select the File > Build Sound Waveform... command.

8.1.12 Export Sound File...

This command exports sound files in either AIFF or BWF format, in 16 or 24 bit word length. It exports the audio only with amplitude changes from segment gain, but not from Gain Overlay or plug-ins.

To use this function, first click-drag in a Panel to create a selected region. then choose the destination directory with the Set file button. Finally, set the file type and word length, then click the Export button. soundBlade will “play” the selected region, exporting the audio as it plays.

8.1.13 Save Reversed

This command saves one or more selected segments or regions in reversed time order, creating a new sound file and segment that “plays backwards.” After invoking the command, a Mac OS file browser appears in order to select the location and file name of the new reversed file to be created. After the operation is complete, the reversed material will be edited back into the Project, replacing the original segment(s) or region(s).

Note that this operation may take a lot of time, depending upon your system configuration and the length of the selected file(s) or region, during which time soundBlade may appear to be inactive.

8.1.13 System Information

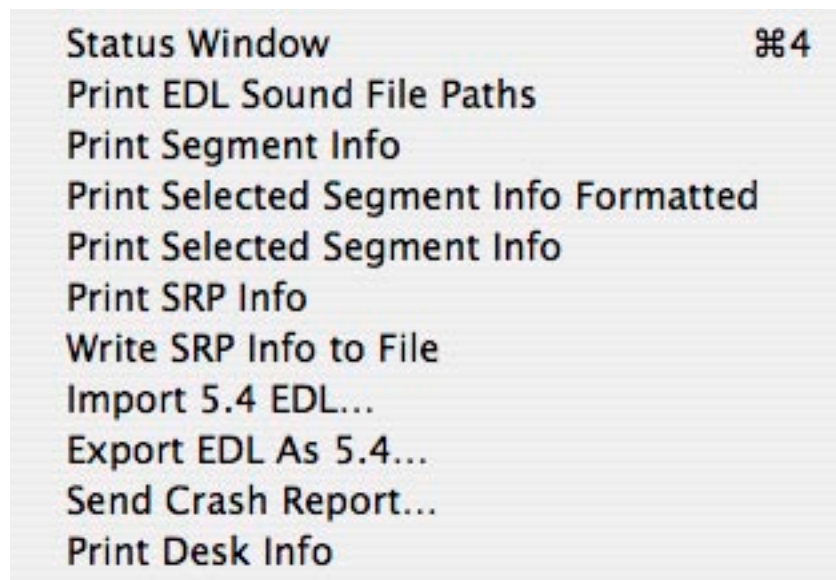


Figure 8.2: The File > System Information submenu

8.1.13.1 Status Window

Invoking this command opens up the Status Window. While soundBlade is running, it outputs information to the Status Window, printing details on installed options, system status and actions undertaken by the application. Also, at the command of the user, certain information regarding EDL or Projects can be output to the Status Window. See the following sections for more information on user selectable printing to the Status Window.

8.1.13.2 Print EDL Sound File Paths

This command outputs a list of all locations of all sound files in use in the current Project. The output is written into the Status Window.

This command is useful if you work in a facility with multiple drives or network-attached storage on which some of your material resides. Printing the explicit path allows you to keep track of the location of all source material, for both documentation and backup.

8.1.13.3 Print Segment Info

This command prints highly detailed information on all segments in the current EDL. The output is written into the Status Window.

8.1.13.4 Print Selected Segment Info Formatted

This command prints user information on the currently selected segment(s). The output is written to the Status Window in the form of a table showing the file name, start and end time, duration and gain in dB.

8.1.13.5 Print Selected Segment Info

This command prints highly detailed information on all selected segments in the current EDL. The output is written into the Status Window.

8.1.13.6 Print SRP Info

This command prints detailed information on all SRPs in the active Panel. The output is written into the Status Window.

8.1.13.7 Write SRP Info to File

This command prints detailed information on all SRPs in the active Panel to a new file. The output is formatted in a table with details on track location, ordinal number, lock status and type, as well as any textual label added to the SRPs. Lock status is indicated by an “L” for locked and a “U” for unlocked. Standard SRPs have a “C” type indication while Sync SRPs, used on other Sonic Studio products, show an “S” type.

Note that, though the default name of the file created with this command has a “srp” suffix, you should manually remove that suffix and replace it with a “.txt” file extension.

8.1.13.8 Import 5.4 EDL...

For backwards compatibility with legacy Sonic Solutions 5.4 DAWs, soundBlade can import EDLs created with version 5.4 of that software. To import a 5.4 EDL, first a new Project has to be created by choosing File > New Project from the main menu. Then, select “Import 5.4 EDL” and a standard Mac OS browser will appear. Navigate to the location where the 5.4 EDL is stored, select it and open it by clicking “Open” in the browser window.

8.1.13.9 Export EDL As 5.4...

For compatibility with legacy Sonic Solutions 5.4 DAW’s, soundBlade can export Projects in 5.4 EDL format. To import the current Project to a 5.4 EDL, select this option and a standard Mac OS file save window will appear. Browse to the location where the 5.4 EDL must be stored and enter the desired name for the 5.4 EDL. Select “Save” to save the Project as a 5.4 EDL.

Note that, as Sonic System 5.4 will only run on original Mac OS 9–based hard and software, you must observe OS 9 file naming conventions.

8.1.13.10 Send Crash Report

This command collects the latest crash report for soundBlade and sends it via your internet connection to Sonic Studio.

8.1.13.11 Print Desk Info

This command outputs all EDL Desk and Output Desk settings to the status window.

8.1.14 Quit

Selecting Quit from the File menu begins the process of closing the soundBlade application. Any open Projects that have been modified will produce a modal dialog asking you to determine the Project's disposition. See section 8.1.6 above for more information on this dialog.

8.2 The Edit Menu

Undo Select 1 Segment	⌘Z
Redo Edit	⇧⌘Z
Cut	⌘X
Copy	⌘C
Paste (Replace)	⌘V
Paste (Insert)	⇧⌘V
Paste (Overlay)	⇧V
Select All	⌘A
Deselect All	⌘D
Delete Selection	⌘⌫
Clear Selection	⇧⌘⌫
Replace	F1
Insert	F2
Replace Left	⌘F1
Replace Constrained	⌘F1
Create Segment	⌘G
Create Crossfade from In Point	⇧⇧⌘G
Delete Crossfade	
Move Segments...	⇧F1
Segment Gain...	⇧G
Reverse Polarity	
Nudge Segment	▶
Edit Segment Name	
Sync To Edit Point	
Sync To Matching	
Sync SRP to Wherever...	⌘F3
Sync SRP To In Point	⌘F4
Edit Fade Mode	⌘F
Loop and Fill	
Editing Auto Tool Override	⌘A
Auto Space All Segments	

Figure 8.3: The Edit menu

8.2.1 Undo (action)

This command reverts the last command executed. For clarification, the Undo command also appends the last action performed to the menu name.

soundBlade provide an almost unlimited number of undos. The only limiting factor is the amount of RAM which, when completely used, will force the operating system to use virtual memory. This will slow down the operation of soundBlade.

Note that some individual commands actually perform several functions “behind the scenes” though to you, the user, it appears to be only one function. For that reason, you may have to Undo several times to recover a state that was reached with a single user command.

8.2.2 Redo (action)

This command reverts the last undo command, reinstating the last command performed. Additionally, for clarification the Undo command in this menu shows the last action undone.

8.2.3 Cut

The Cut command operates on a region within Edit Points as well as selected regions or segments, removing the defined item from the Project and placing it in soundBlade’s “Clipboard.” The Clipboard is a temporary memory location reserved by the operating system for each running application.

8.2.4 Copy

The Copy command operates on a region within Edit Points as well as selected regions or segments, copying the defined item from the Project and placing it in soundBlade’s Clipboard. Unlike the Cut command, the Copy command leaves the defined item intact instead of deleting it after copying the selection to the Clipboard.

8.2.5 Paste (Replace / Insert / Overlay)

The Paste command inserts the content of the Clipboard into the Project, replacing, in order of highest to lowest priority, either:

1. A region within Edit Points
2. Selected regions or segments
3. From the Edit Point position

...for the duration of the audio currently of the Clipboard. The inserted content is placed between Crossfades and the Edit Point is moved, for visual reference, to the end of the inserted material.

8.2.6 Select/Deselect All

These commands select or deselect all segments or regions in the current Project.

8.2.7 Delete Selection

If a region or segment is selected, this command will delete the defined item. It will then “slip” or move left any audio after the deleted region or segment, filling in the space formerly occupied by the selected segment or region. A Crossfade is placed to transition across the deletion.

Note that, as with all editing in soundBlade, if both an In and Out Point are present, and the Out point is after the In Point, then they take precedents over both selected region and segments.

If only an In Point is present, then the command will not work. Finally, if both an In and Out Point are present, the Out point is after the In Point, and the edit points are inside “Edited Black,” the empty area between segments, then that region defined by the edit points will be deleted and “downstream” audio will be moved left.

8.2.8 Clear Selection

Clear Selection works similarly to the Delete Selection command. The Clear Selection command clears the selected segment, region or area defined by Edit Points, but does not move any other audio on the time line.

8.2.9 Replace

The Replace command replaces a selection or area between In and Out Points with a selection or Segment from another Panel. If the selection from the “source” Panel is empty or no selection is made as a source, the “destination” will be replaced with digital silence.

Replace will replace the contents of the “destination” Panel(s) with exactly the same time length as the selected “source” material. All audio within the selection to be replaced will be discarded and replaced with the “source” material.

The replace command joins the audio material before and after the replace with a default crossfade.

8.2.10 Insert

The Insert command works similar to the Replace command. Instead of replacing the audio material in the selection made in the “destination” panel(s), it inserts the selected “source” material and moves the audio to the right of the insert point with exactly the same time as the source material’s length.

The insert command joins the audio material before and after the insert with a default crossfade.

8.2.11 Replace Left

Like the replace command, Replace left replaces the selection with the source material, only not to the right but to the left of the Edit Point in the “destination” material.

8.2.12 Replace Constrained

Replace constrained replaces the “destination” material with the selected source material at exactly the same time position in the “destination” Panel(s) as the selected “source” material has in it’s own Panel(s)

8.2.13 Delete Selection

This command deletes the current selection or selected segments. The outer edges of the selection are joined with a default crossfade and all subsequent audio is shifted relatively.

8.2.14 Clear Selection

This command clears the current selection or selected segments, leaving all audio in place and replacing the audio to be cleared with digital silence. The edges of the cleared area are faded out and in with default crossfades.

8.2.15 Create Crossfade / Create Segment

This command is context sensitive and it’s appearance in the menu will change according to the current Panel’s state. It either creates a new crossfade from the current Cursor’s position when no selection is made, or it creates a new segment at the place of the selection when a selection is made. This command uses crossfade defaults when creating crossfades.

8.2.16 Create Crossfade from In Point Create Segment from In & Out Point(s)

As with the previous commands, this command is context sensitive and it’s appearance in the menu will change according to the current Panel’s state. It either creates a new crossfade from the current In Points position when no Out Point is seen, or it creates a new segment at the area included by a set In and Out Point. This command uses crossfade defaults when creating crossfades.

8.2.17 Delete Crossfade

The Delete Crossfade command deletes all “frivolous” Crossfades, ones that cause no audible change in the underlying audio, from the selected region. Superfluous Crossfades are usually created with the Create Crossfade command, discussed in the previous section and, after an extensive editing session, the Delete Crossfade command will clear any visual clutter, making it easier to see the operative edits.

8.2.18 Move Segments

The Move Segment command allows the user to move one or more segments to another location on the time line. Selecting this command opens the Move Segments modal dialog, which shows the current position of the Playhead or start of the first selected segment.

Entering a new start time and clicking the Move button causes the head of the first selected segment to move to the new location. All selected segments will also move by the same amount, maintaining their relative position to each other.

Additionally, this dialog offers three extra options. By clicking the Where button, you can load either the current position of the Playhead or the location of extant In point or Out Points, all from a drop down menu. Then, by clicking the Move button, the segment(s) shift to the new location. The SRP button lets you load the current position of any extant SRPs, also from a drop down menu.

The Move button moves the defined item to the location shown in the dialog's time code address. Clicking the Cancel button leaves the selected segments at their original position.

8.2.19 Segment Gain

This command invokes the Segment Gain dialog. For more detailed information on the Segment Gain dialog, See .

8.2.20 Reverse Polarity

The Reverse Polarity command inverts the polarity of the selected segment(s) in all selected Panels. Segments with inverted polarity acquire a small, bright red dot in the upper left corner of their Title Bar to visually remind you of their inverted status.

Note that, to change the polarity relationship between a stereo pair, this command must be applied to only one channel of the pair. To do this, change the Edit Group Selector of one Panel, located on the left edge of both Panels, from the default stereo setting to mono. To read more about Edit Group Selectors, refer to section 4.6 for more information.

8.2.21 Nudge Segment Left/Right

The Nudge Segment commands move or “nudge” the selected segment(s) left or right, earlier or later respectively, on the time line by a predefined value. The default “Nudge B” value used is defined in the Time Display tab of Preferences window. See section 8.9.7 for more information on the Time Display preferences.

8.2.22 Edit Segment Name

When a segment is selected, choosing the Edit Segment Name command allows the user to edit the name of the segment as it appears in the Title Bar, and in Text Mode view. As with all actions in a Project, changing the Segment name has no effect on the underlying referenced

sound file. This command is equivalent to double clicking on the Title Bar to change a segment's name.

8.2.23 Sync To Edit Point

Contents to be fixed.

8.2.24 Sync To Matching

Contents to be fixed

8.2.25 Sync SRP To wherever...

Contents to be fixed.

8.2.26 Sync SRP To In Point

Contents to be fixed.

8.2.27 Edit Fade Mode

When a selection contains one or more Fades, this command invokes the Edit Fade Mode window. See section 4.2 for a detailed description of Edit Fade Mode.

8.2.28 Loop And Fill

This command repeats the audio contents of the clipboard and fills a selection, repeating the contents of the clipboard as many time as necessary. To invoke Loop and Fill, first copy a selection or segment to the clipboard. Then, make a selection in the desired Panel where the looped audio should appear. Finally, invoke the Loop And Fill command. The selection will be filled with as many times the duration of the contents of the clipboard to match the duration of the selection. The contents of the clipboard will be joined by a default crossfade.

8.2.29 Editing Auto Tool Override

This commands toggles the Editing Auto Tools state, either enabled or disabled. See section 8.8.6 for more information on the EDL preferences.

8.2.30 Auto Space All Segments

The AutoSpace function offers a simple but effective tool to change all pauses between tracks to a pre-defined value. Simply select Edit > AutoSpace all Segments and all segments will be moved on the time line, with equal space between according to the Preference > Editing Tools > AutoSpacing Duration setting. See sections 3.8.5 and 4.2.1 above for practical discussions about the autospacing function.

8.3 The EDL Menu

Show Text View	⌘T
Hide Gain Overlay	⌘G
Bypass Gain Overlay	
Show Desk Events	⌘D
Bypass Desk Events	
Create Gain Nodes	
Select Gain Nodes	
Refresh	⌘R
Standard Track Size	⌘5
Large Track Size	⌘6
Select All Tracks	⇧A
Deselect All Tracks	⇧D

Figure 8.4: The EDL menu

8.3.1 Show/Hide Text View

The Show/Hide Text View command toggles the display of the selected Panel between Text Mode and Waveform Mode views.

8.3.2 Show/Hide Gain Overlay

This command forces the selected Panel to show or hide the Gain Overlay feature. The Gain Overlay is only visible in Waveform Mode, and is shown as a thin red line superimposed on the waveform display. Projects saved with Gain Overlay will open with Gain Overlay visible upon reopening.

Note that, although Gain Overlay may not be visible, when activated it is always active in the audio output signal path. Only the EDL > Bypass Gain Overlay command will bypass any Gain Overlay functionality. See section 8.3.3 below for more information on the Bypass Gain Overlay command.

8.3.3 Bypass/Enable Gain Overlay

This command bypasses or engages the Gain Overlay function. When in bypass, the Gain Overlay line in the waveform display turns grey and the corresponding Gain Overlay Button(s) on the left side of each Panel turn yellow.

Note that the Bypass/Enable Gain Overlay function can only be selected when Gain Overlay is shown. Option-clicking on a Gain Overlay Button will also bypass the Gain Overlay function.

8.3.4 Show/Hide Desk Events

This command shows or hides Desk Events in the Panels.

8.3.5 Show/Hide Gain Overlay

The Show/Hide Gain Overlay command shows or hides the GainOverlay in the selected Panel(s).

8.3.6 Bypass Desk Events

When One or more Desk Events are selected, this command disables the selected Desk Events. If no Desk Events are selected, all inserted Desk Events will be bypassed. Selecting this command again re-enables all or the selected Desk Events. See section 4.6 for more detailed information on Desk Events.

Note that enabled or active Desk Events show up as green strips in the Desk Overlay, and that disabled Desk Events show up as red strips.

8.3.7 Create Gain Nodes

With Gain Overlay enabled and a region of the time line selected, this command creates Gain Overlay nodes at the boundaries of the region. To use this function, first click-drag within the waveform display to select a region. Then, select Edit > Create Gain Nodes to add two nodes at the “edges” of the Gain Overlay and the selected region.

Because the Edit Point is really a zero duration selection, it can also be used to create a single gain node with the Create Gain Nodes command. For more detailed information on working with the Gain Overlay, see section 4.5 above.

8.3.8 Select Gain Nodes

This command selects all Gain Nodes contained within the currently selected segment(s) or region. Selected Gain Nodes can then be subject to simultaneous changes such as gain setting, lock state, or deletion.

For more information on working with Gain Overlay mode, see section 4.5 above.

8.3.9 Refresh

The Refresh command redraws the current waveform display for the selected Panel. This command is especially useful after rebuilding the waveform files of one or more segments, to force the waveform display to display the updated information.

8.3.10 Standard/Large Track Size

The Standard and Large Track Size commands resize the selected Panel(s) to standard or large vertical size. Large sized Panels are two times as tall as standard size, offering a better display with larger display or desktop settings. A Large Panel also lists more segments in Text Mode.

8.3.11 Select / Deselect All Tracks

The Select All Tracks and Deselect All Tracks commands select or deselect all Panels.

8.4 The Play Menu

From Selection	⌘
Selection	⌘
From Playhead	⌘
Repeat Play	⌘
Stop	
Mute Track	^M
Solo Track	^O
Record Arm	^R
Record	/
Around Selection Center	▶
Play from Selection	▶
Play to End of Selection	▶
To In Point	F5
From In Point	F6
To Out Point	F7
From Out Point	F8
Play between In & Out Points	^⌘F5
Move Playhead...	
✓ Hide Playhead When Stopped	⌘P

Figure 8.5: The Play menu

8.4.1 Play From Selection

This command starts playback from the beginning of a selected region. If no region is selected, then playback starts at the Edit Point. If the Edit Point is not available, playback commences at the start of the first segment in the Project. This command is equivalent to tapping the Spacebar on the keyboard. The Play From Selection command will continue to play until either the Spacebar is hit again or the Playhead reaches “midnight” (23:59:59:74).

8.4.2 Play Selection

This command plays a selected region or segments. Whereas the Play From Selection command mentioned in section 8.4.1 above will continue to play until stopped, the play Selection command stops automatically at the end of the selection.

8.4.3 Play From Playhead

In normal operation, when you tap the Spacebar to start playback, the Playhead will jump to the Edit Point or, the start of the file if there is no Edit Point, and begin playback. The Play From Playhead command emulates a tape transport, with playback instead starting at the current Playhead location.

8.4.4 Repeat Play

If there is a selected region, the Repeat Play command will repeatedly play the region until stopped. If there is not a selected region, soundBlade will repeatedly play the entire Panel. Repeat playback continues until you stop play with the menu command or by hitting the Spacebar.

8.4.5 Stop

This command stops playback and/or recording and is equivalent to tapping the Spacebar during playback or clicking on the Stop button in the Transport Bar.

8.4.6 Mute Track

This command mutes playback from a track and is equivalent to selecting the “M” button to the left of a Panel.

8.4.7 Solo Track

This command solos a track and is equivalent to selecting the “S” button to the left of a Panel.

8.4.8 Record Arm

This command arms a track to “record ready” state. This command is equivalent to selecting the “R” button to the left of a Panel.

8.4.9 Record

The Record command starts soundBlade in recording mode. Tracks armed for recording start recording while other tracks in the same edit group will simultaneously perform playback

For more information on recording, see Chapter 5

8.4.6 Around Selection Center

This command plays a section of sound centered around a selected region. When you choose Play Around Selection Center, a submenu appears, allowing you to select the length of playback time.



Figure 8.6: Play Around Selection Center submenu

8.4.7 Play from Selection

Like the Play Around Selection Center discussed in section 8.4.6 above, this command requires that you first select a region. Also, this command offers a submenu with duration choices for playback. Unlike Play Around Selection Center, this command begins playback at the left edge of the selection and continues, for the specified duration.



Figure 8.7: Play from Selection

8.4.8 Play to End of Selection

This command is the opposite of the Play from Selection command discussed in section 8.4.7 above, except that playback ends at the trailing edge or right side of a selected region. If there is not a selected region, playback ends at the Edit Point. This command also offers a submenu with a number of choices for the duration of the playback.

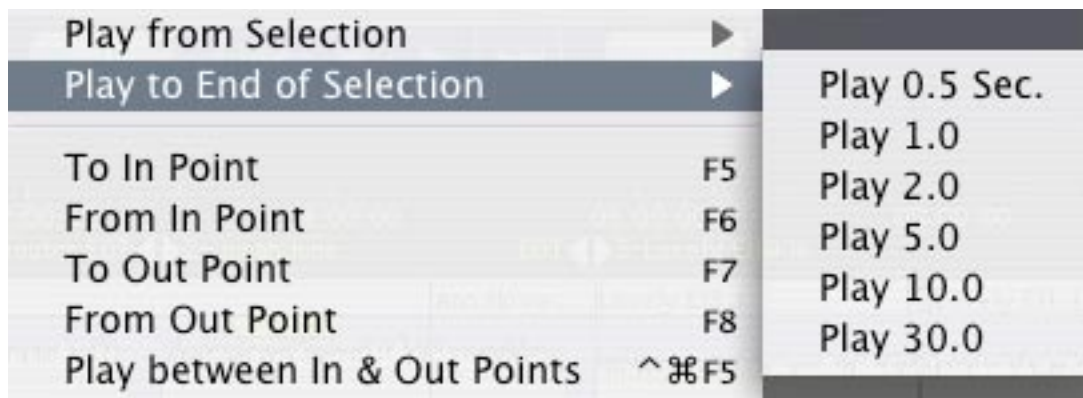


Figure 8.8: Play to End of Selection submenu

8.4.9 Play to In Point

This command plays a section of sound up to the In Point. The duration of playback is preset by the Play Around In Point preference. See section 8.8.4 below for more information on the Time Display preferences.

8.4.10 Play From In Point

This command plays a section of sound starting at the In Point. The duration of playback is preset by the Play Around In Point preference. See section 8.8.4 below for more information on the Time Display preferences.

8.4.11 Play to Out Point

This command plays a section of sound up to the Out Point. The duration of playback is preset by the Play Around Out Point preference. See section 8.8.4 below for more information on the Time Display preferences.

8.4.12 Play From Out Point

This command plays a section of sound starting at the Out Point. The duration of playback is preset by the Play Around Out Point preference. See section 8.8.4 below for more information on the Time Display preferences.

8.4.13 Play Between In and Out Points

This command starts playback at the In Point and continues to the Out Point.

8.4.14 Move Playhead

This command lets you place the Playhead at a specific location on the time line. When you select this menu item, the Move Playhead modal dialog appears.

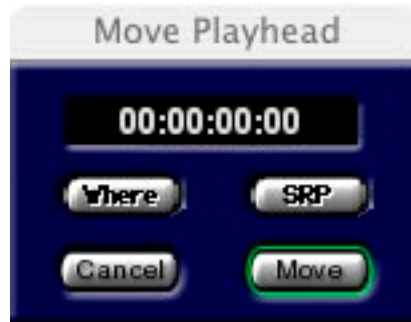


Figure 8.9: The Move Playhead dialog

When you enter a new time code address in the Move Playhead dialog and click Move, the Playhead will jump to the new location. Besides manually entering a new location, you can also use the Where button to load the address of the In or Out Point, if present, while the SRP button loads the locations of any existing SRPs. Clicking the Cancel button leaves the Playhead at its original location.

Note that, when the Playhead is visible by disabling the Play > Hide Playhead When Stopped toggle, you can hover the cursor over the Playhead's location, either in the time line or Panels, the cursor changes shape to a sine wave-with-vertical line. Once in that mode, you can click-drag the Playhead to a new location.

8.4.15 Hide Playhead When Stopped

This command is somewhat of a misnomer in that it toggles, on or off, the ability to drag the Playhead to a new location when stopped. A check mark appears next to this menu item when this function is disabled.

This command applies to relocating the Playhead in either a Panel or on the time line, and is useful if you find yourself grabbing the Playhead accidentally while attempting to edit or modify some other object in a Project. Even with this command enabled (checked), you can always double click in the time line to relocate the Playhead and begin playback at that location.

8.5 The Mark Menu



Figure 8.10: The Mark menu

8.5.1 Mark Info

The Mark Info command opens the Mark Info window. This command is equivalent to the Windows > Mark Info command. See section 3.9 for more information on the Mark Info window.

8.5.2 Track Start Mark

The Track Start Mark command inserts a Start of Track PQ mark at the location of the Edit Point.

8.5.3 Track End Mark

The Track End Mark command inserts an End of Track PQ mark at the location of the Edit Point.

8.5.4 Index Mark

The Index Mark command inserts an Index PQ mark at the location of the Edit Point.

8.5.5 Delete Mark

The Delete Mark command is used to remove existing PQ marks. If a region is selected in a Panel, all of the PQ marks inside the selection are deleted. If no region is selected, this command will remove a PQ mark if the Edit Point is at the exact time location of that mark.

8.5.6 Lock Marks from Selection

The Lock Marks from Selection command is used to lock PQ marks to the time line. This command locks all PQ marks inside a selected region. Once locked, mark locations cannot be modified until they are unlocked. This command is equivalent to clicking the Lock button, if disabled, in the PQ Info tab of the Windows > Mark Info window.

Note that this command does not affect the ability to change Title, emphasis state, ISRC or SCMS metadata associated with a Mark. Also note that this command does not attach marks to audio segments. Editing any audio with locked PQ marks will change the time relationship between those marks and the associated audio.

8.5.7 Unlock Marks from Selection

The Unlock Marks from Selection command is used to unlock PQ marks within a selected region.

8.5.8 Lock All Marks

This command locks all PQ marks on the time line, regardless of selected regions or segments. Once locked, the location of PQ marks cannot be altered until they are unlocked.

8.5.9 Unlock All Marks

This command unlocks all PQ marks on the time line.

8.5.10 Analog Black to Marks

This function measures the amplitude and duration of the audio in a selected region, placing End of Track and Start of Track marks in locations that approximate the end of one track and beginning of the next. Both amplitude and duration are user defined. The default amplitude is set in the Editing Tools tab of the Windows > Preferences window.

When invoking this function, the Analog Black to Marks modal dialog appears. In the dialog, the default parameters can be changed, after which the Analog Black to Marks function is started by selecting OK. By clicking on the Cancel button, the operation is stopped without further action.

Note that the results of the Analog Black to Marks function is never as accurate as the Edited Black to Marks function, discussed in section 8.5.11 below. The accuracy of the mark placement depends entirely on the accuracy of the parameters used so, you may want to zoom in and, with the Show Track Scale in dB preference set (Editing Tools tab of the Windows > Preferences window), visually estimate amplitudes of your fade outs and noise floor. The result of the Analog Black to Marks function should always be checked for errors and unintended placement.

8.5.11 Edited Black to Marks

The Edited Black to Marks command automatically places Start and End of Track PQ marks at the beginning and end of all Fade Ins and Fade Outs respectively. To use the Edited Black to Marks command, you must first select either segments or a region.

8.6 The Selection Menu

Set In Point	[
Set Out Point]
Set In & Out Points	^⌘[
Clear In Point	^[
Clear Out Point] ^
Clear In & Out Points	^ \
Nudge Right	▶
Nudge Left	▶
Move In Point...	⌘[
Move Out Point...	⌘]
Move In Point to Out Point	⌘ \
Find & Set Points	⌘ \
Select Nudge Size	▶
Set SRP	⌘;
Lock SRPs from Selection	
Unlock SRPs from Selection	
Clear Selected SRPs	^;
Drop Edit Point at Play Head	\
✓ Edit Point to Playhead	⌘⌘ \
Move Edit Point to	▶
Edit Point to Next Peak	
Select Start to Edit Point	⌘ -
Select Edit Point to End	⌘ =
Selection from Selected Segments	
Select Segments To End	⇧⌘→
Select Segments To Start	⇧⌘←
Select Segments from Selection	

Figure 8.11: The Selection menu

8.6.1 Set In Point

The Set In Point command drops an In Point at the location of the Edit Point. There can only be one In Point in a Panel at any time.

Note that the IN, OUT and DUR time fields at the top right of the Project window are always active and fully editable. These fields allow you to precisely set the location of, and duration between, the In and Out Points.

8.6.2 Set Out Point

This command places an Out Point at the location of the Edit Point. There can only be one In Point in an EDL at any time.

8.6.3 Set In & Out Points

If there is a selected region in the Panel, then Set In & Out Points will create an In Point at the start of the selected region and an Out Point at the end.

8.6.4 Clear In Point

Clear In Point will, if present, remove the In Point.

8.6.5 Clear Out Point

Clear Out Point will, if present, remove the Out Point.

8.6.6 Clear In & Out Points

Clear In & Out Points will, if either is present, remove both the In Point and the Out Point from the Project.

8.6.7 Nudge Right/Left

These commands makes it easy to slightly move or “nudge” an In and/or Out Point to the right or left. When you select this command, a submenu comes up allowing you to advance or retard an In Point, an Out Point, or both simultaneously.

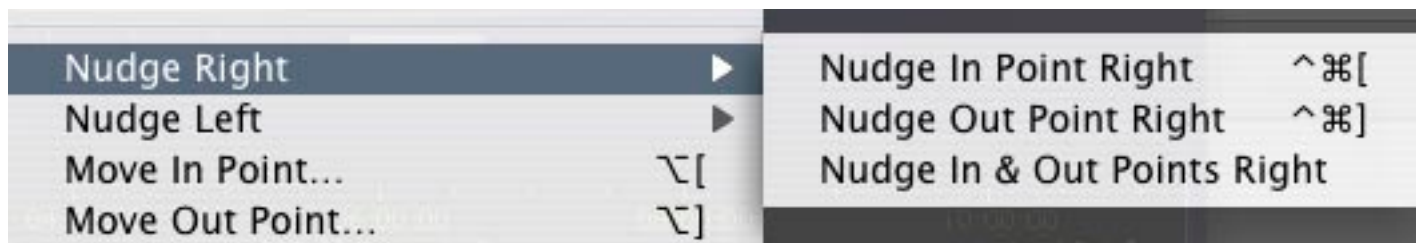


Figure 8.12: The Nudge Right command and submenu

The nudge amount is set in the Time Display tab of the Windows > Preferences window. See section 8.8.4 for more information on the Time Display preferences.

8.6.8 Move In Point/Out Point...

When you select either of these commands, this brings up the Edit In/Out Point modal dialog.



Figure 8.13: The Edit In Point dialog

When you enter a new time code address in the Edit In/Out Point dialog and click Move, the appropriate Edit Point will move to the new location. Besides manually entering a new location, you can also use the Where button to load the address of the Playhead or other Edit Point, if present. The SRP button loads the locations of any existing SRP while clicking the Cancel button leaves the Edit Point at its original location.

8.6.9 Move In Point to Out Point

This command forces the In Point to replace the Out Point.

8.6.10 Find & Set Points

This command places an In Point at the beginning and an Out Point at the end of a selected segment. More specifically, this command places Edit Points at the edit events for the black fades defining the boundaries of the segment(s). If multiple segments are selected, the In Point is placed at the beginning of the first selected segment, and the Out Point is placed at the end of the last selected segment.

Note that this command does not operate on selected regions. Also note that edit event locations can affect Mark placement. See section 4.1.4 above for more information on edit events inside fades.

8.6.11 Select Nudge Size

This command allows you to select one of the three nudge presets used by the Selection > Nudge Right/Left and Edit > Nudge Segment commands. The presets are defined in the Time Display tab of the Windows > Preferences window. See section 8.8.4 for more information on the Time Display preferences.

8.6.12 Set SRP

This command places an SRP or Selection Reference Point in the selected Panel at the location of the Playhead.

8.6.13 Set SRP from selection

This command places two SRP to mark the start and end of a active selection.

8.6.14 Lock SRPs from Selection

This command locks all SRPs within a selected region.

8.6.15 Unlock SRPs from Selection

This command unlocks all SRPs within a selected region.

8.6.16 Clear Selected SRPs

This command removes all SRPs within a selected region, whether they are locked or not.

8.6.17 Drop Edit Point at Playhead

This command moves the Edit Point to the current location of the Playhead and is typically used when the Edit Point to Playhead command, discussed in section 8.6.18 below, is disabled (unchecked).

8.6.18 Edit Point to Playhead

This command toggles a mode on or off whereby, when playback is stopped, the Edit Point jumps to the location of the Playhead.

8.6.19 Move Edit Point to...

This command has a submenu, with ten possible choices.

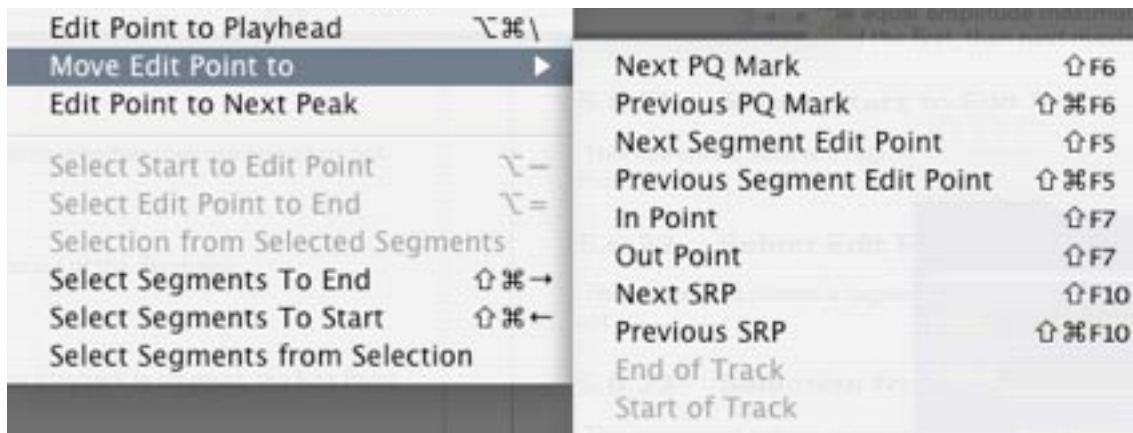


Figure 8.14: The Move Edit Point to submenu

With this set of choices, the Edit Point can be quickly moved to a number of predefined positions:

- The next PQ mark
- The previous PQ mark
- The next Segment Edit Point ...the Black Fade or Crossfade
- The previous Segment Edit Point ...the previous Black Fade or Crossfade
- The In Point
- The Out Point
- The next SRP
- The previous SRP
- The End of Track ...the last Fade Out of the Project
- The Start of Track ...the first Fade In of the Project

8.6.20 Edit Point to Next Peak

This command examines the amplitude of all audio samples in the selected region or segments, and moves the Edit Point to the location of the maximum sample within the selection. If there are more than one equal amplitude maximum samples, then the command moves the Edit Point to the location of the first, then next maximum samples in turn.

8.6.21 Select Start to Edit Point

This command selects a region from the first Fade In of the Project to the location of the Edit Point.

8.6.22 Select Edit Point to End

This command selects a region from location of the Edit Point to the last Fade Out of the Project.

8.6.23 Selection from Selected Segments

This command selects a region from the first Fade In of the first selected segment to the last Fade Out of the last selected segment.

8.6.24 Select Segment to End

This command selects all segments from the Edit Point to the last segment in the Project, including the segment in which the Edit Point is located. If the Edit Point has not been placed, the command selects all segments from the first selected segment to the last segment in the Project.

Note that, to quickly determine if the Edit Point is placed somewhere in the Project regardless of zoom level, simply check the left DUR or duration field at the top of the Project. Since the Edit Point is really a zero duration selection, the DUR field will show a zero value whenever the Edit Point is present, even though it may not currently be in view.



Figure 8.15: The DUR field showing the presence of the Edit Point

8.6.25 Select Segment to Start

This command selects all segments from the first segment in the Project to the Edit Point, including the segment in which the Edit Point is located. If the Edit Point has not been placed, the command selects all segments from the first segment in the Project to the selected segment.

8.6.26 Select Segments from Selection

This command selects all segments that are part of the selected region, including the segments in which the start and end of the selection is located.

8.7 The View Menu



Figure 8.16: The View menu

8.7.1 Move Forward/Backward

These commands move the contents of the Panel forward and backward along the time line. The zoom factor or magnification stays the same.

8.7.2 Zoom In/Out

The zoom commands change the zoom factor or magnification, expanding or reducing the time scale by 90%, with 10% overlap from the previous view for visual context. Zooming in provides more detail while zooming out lets you see more of the overall program.

8.7.3 Zoom In Around In/Out Point

These commands change the magnification of the waveform display while centering the waveform display on the In Point or Out Point. The amount of time shown around the In or Out Point is defined by the Zoom to In/Out setting in the Time Display tab of Windows > Preferences. See section 8.8.4 for information on the Time Display tab.

8.7.4 Zoom In/Out around Edit Point

These commands change magnification while keeping the waveform display centered on either the Edit Point and is very handy for determining context. The amount of time shown around the In or Out Point is defined by the Zoom to In/Out setting in the Time Display tab of Windows > Preferences. See section 8.8.4 for information on the Time Display tab.

8.7.5 Zoom In/Out around Playhead

These commands combine a Zoom In/Out command while keeping the waveform display centered on the Playhead, also very handy for determining context.

8.7.6 Zoom to Previous/Next

These commands are like Undo/Redo for zoom commands. soundBlade remembers the last lower resolution (out) zoom level. To return to an prior zoomed out level, choose Zoom to Previous. To return to the more recent zoom level, choose Zoom to Next.

8.7.7 Zoom around Playhead

This command zooms with the Playhead in the center of the waveform display, and is very handy for determining context. The level of zoom is determined by a submenu.

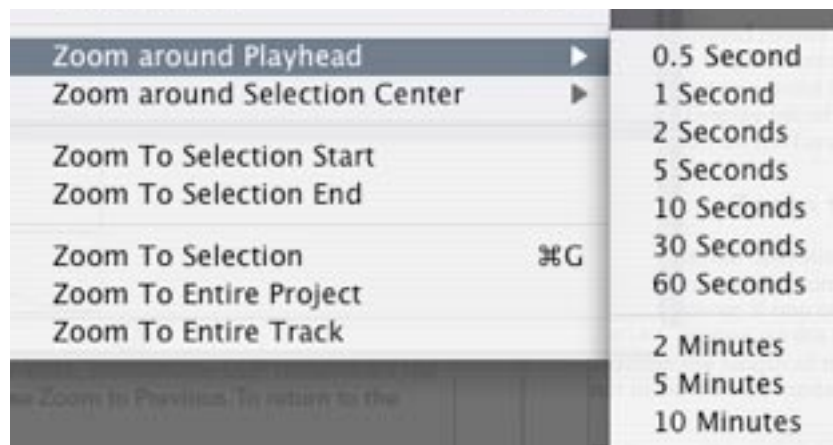


Figure 8.17: The Zoom around Playhead menu

The amount of time chosen in the submenu indicates the total amount of time shown in the display after the Zoom Around Playhead command is selected. The amount of time will be equally divided between the area to the left and right of the Playhead position.

8.7.8 Zoom around Selection Center

This command is similar to Zoom around Playhead, except that instead the display is centered around the centre of a selected region or selected segment(s).

8.7.9 Zoom to Selection Start/End

This command zooms the waveform display to the start or end of the current selection with the start or end of the selection centered in the waveform display and is very handy for refining a selection's boundaries. The amount of time shown around the selection boundaries is defined by the Zoom to Sel Start/ setting in the Time Display tab of Windows > Preferences. See section 8.8.4 below for information on the Time Display tab.

8.7.10 Zoom to Selection

This command zooms to the currently selected region such that the selection is centered in the waveform display and covers a preset percentage of the waveform display area. The amount of time shown around the selection boundaries is defined by the Zoom to Sel Start/ setting in the Time Display tab of Windows > Preferences. See section 8.8.4 for more information on the Time Display tab.

8.7.11 Zoom to Entire Project/Track

Under normal operation with a stereo Project, these two menu commands work identically. These commands zoom so that the entire program is shown across the entire waveform display. However, if one of the two Panels contains more audio information, stretching over a longer duration on the time line than the other channel, the Zoom to Entire Track command will zoom to the length of the selected track. This situation typically occurs if the two Panels contain dual mono material or a wildly "stereo" program created in mono editing mode.

8.8 The Desk Menu

soundBlade offers a compact mixing console called the 'EDL Desk'. It can be brought up by choosing Windows > EDL Desk from the main menu or by hitting command+0 from the keyboard. The following window is brought to front:

8.8.1 Save Desk Setup

The Save Desk Setup command opens a submenu:

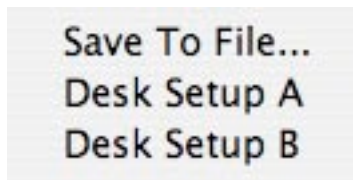


Figure 8.19: the Desk > Save Desk submenu

8.8.1.1 Save To File...

The SaveTo File command saves the current desk Setup to a single file. The command initiates a standard Mac OS “Save file” window to name and save the desk setup file. See section 6.2 for more information on saving Desk Setups

8.8.1.2 Save Desk Setup A/B

As soundBlade has two predefined Desk Setups, Desk Setup A and B, this command allows for immediate storage of the current Desk Setup under one of those two presets.

8.8.2 Open Desk Setup

The Open Desk Setup command opens a submenu:

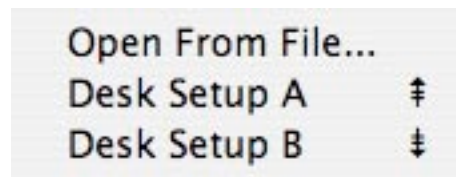


Figure 8.20: the Desk > Open Desk submenu

8.8.2.1 Open From File...

The Open From File command opens a file containing soundBlade Desk Setup information. The command initiates a standard Mac OS “Open file” window to select locate and open a Desk Setup File. See section 6.2 for more information on saving Desk Setups.

8.8.1.2 Open Desk Setup A/B

As soundBlade has two predefined Desk Setups, Desk Setup A and B, this command allows for immediate recall of either one of those Desk Setups.

Note that this command discards the current Desk Setup.

8.8.3 Bypass All Events

Implementation ongoing

8.8.4 Bypass / Active

Implementation ongoing

8.8.5 Lock / Unlock

Implementation ongoing

8.8.6 Move Event

implementation ongoing

8.8.7 Show Gain Overlay

This command Toggles Gain Overlay display in the selected Panels.

8.8.8 Show/Hide Gain Overlay

This command bypasses or engages the Gain Overlay function. When in bypass, the Gain Overlay line in the waveform display turns grey and the corresponding Gain Overlay Button(s) on the left side of each Panel turn yellow.

Note that the Bypass/Enable Gain Overlay function can only be selected when Gain Overlay is shown. Option-clicking on a Gain Overlay Button will also bypass the Gain Overlay function. Also, this command is not active while Desk Events are visible.

8.8.9 Bypass Gain Overlay

This command bypasses the Gain Overlay function and renders it inactive.

Note that, while Desk Events are visible, this command is not active.

8.8.10 Create Gain Nodes

With Gain Overlay enabled and a region of the time line selected, this command creates Gain Overlay nodes at the boundaries of the region. To use this function, first click-drag within the waveform display to select a region. Then, select Edit > Create Gain Nodes to add two nodes at the “edges” of the Gain Overlay and the selected region.

Because the Edit Point is really a zero duration selection, it can also be used to create a single gain node with the Create Gain Nodes command. For more detailed information on working with the Gain Overlay, see section 4.4.

8.8.11 Select Gain Nodes

This command selects all Gain Nodes contained within the currently selected segment(s) or region. Selected Gain Nodes can then be subject to simultaneous changes such as gain setting, lock state, or deletion.

For more information on working with Gain Overlay mode, see section 4.4.

8.8.12 Lock/Unlock Nodes From Selection

These commands lock or unlock all Nodes in the Gain Overlay, enclosed in a active selection.

8.8.13 Lock/Unlock all Nodes In Track

These commands lock or unlock all Nodes in the Gain Overlay, regardless of any active selection.

8.8.14 Lock/Unlock All Nodes In Edit Group

These commands lock or unlock all Nodes in the Gain Overlay. They apply to all tracks within the current Edit Group.

8.9 The Windows Menu

The Windows menu provides quick access to all available windows within soundBlade and an active Project.

8.9.1 EDL Desk

This command toggles the EDL Desk on or off. See section 6.1 for a detailed description of this window.

8.9.2 Meters

This command toggles the Output Meters Window. See section 6.4 for a detailed description of this window.

8.9.3 Panner

This command toggles the Panner Window. See section 6.4 for a detailed description of this window.

8.9.4 Mark Info

For more information on the Mark Info window, see sections 8.5 discussing the Mark Menu and section 3.10 discussing the specifics of the Mark Info window.

8.9.5 The Preferences Window

Some of the functions and commands within soundBlade can be changed to adhere to your preferred values or behavior. All of these preferences can be adjusted in the Windows > Preference Window



Figure 8.21: The Preference window showing the Editing Tools tab

The Preference window is displayed by selecting the Windows > Preferences command.

8.9.6 Setting Preferences — Editing Tools Tab

8.9.6.1 Editing Auto Tools

The Editing AutoTools section has the following options:

- **Fade Tool:** When checked, the Fade Tool will be enabled for editing. To learn more about the Fade Tool and its properties, see section 3.8.1 and 4.1 for a full description.
- **Snap to Edit Point ON:** When checked, dragging a segment near the position of the Edit Point will cause the segment to auto-snap. This feature is really only applicable when dragging audio into a Project from the Finder or another open Project.
- **Snap To Zone:** When the zone snap is checked, dragging a segment near the start or end of another segment will cause the segment to auto-snap to the red or blue snap locations. See section 4.2 for more information on the drag & drop, auto-snap function.
- **AutoSpacing Duration:** As described in section 4.2, AutoSpace uses a pre-selected time value to space the segments. Here, this value can be selected between 1 and 3 seconds. Alternatively, AutoSpace can be turned off as well.
- **Analog Black Threshold:** This field shows the default value used by the Mark > Analog Black to Marks command for the amplitude threshold. This value, expressed as dB below 0 dBFS, sets the loudness threshold below which a Start of Track or End of Track mark will be placed. See section 3.9.4 for more information on automatically placing PQ Marks.

8.9.6.2 Edit with Audio

- **Selection Reference Points:** When editing, this setting causes SRPs to move along with their associated segment. They are also included with the audio when it is copied to the clipboard.
- **Gain Overlay:** When editing, this setting causes gain nodes to move along with their associated segment. They are also included with the audio when it is copied to the clipboard.
- **Desk Events:** When Editing, this setting causes desk events to move along with their associated segment. They are also included with the audio when it is copied to the clipboard.

8.9.6.3 Default Fade

This selector determines the default fade curve used when any new fades are created soundBlade. The five curve options are:

- Cosine
- Root Cosine
- Linear
- Root Linear
- Exponential

Linear fades, the default, are the most broadly applicable choice. Section 4.1.2 briefly discusses the five curve shape options.

8.9.6.4 Import

- SDII Regions Into Segments: When on, Sound Designer II regions, if present, will automatically be converted to separate segments upon opening in soundBlade. When off, the entire SDII image will be imported as one continuous segment.
- SDII Regions To Marks: When on, Sound Designer II regions, if present, will force soundBlade to put marks at the region's start points. When off, the entire SDII image will be imported as one continuous segment.

8.9.7 Setting Preferences — Time Display Tab

8.9.7.1 Time Display

The Time Display time code format selector allows you to preset the display time code format to 75 frames per second, 30 fps NDF, seconds or samples. Compact Discs use a special time code format, 75 fps, not used elsewhere while 30 fps NDF or "30 non-drop," 30 frames per second non-drop frame, is the legacy standard used by the original, 1600/1610/1630 series of video cassette-based CD preparation systems.

8.9.7.2 Nudge A/B/C

The values in these fields define the amount of time that segments will be 'nudged' when the Edit > Nudge Left/Right commands are applied. For a complete description of the working of these commands, see section 8.2.13.

8.9.7.3 Zoom to In/Out

The time value entered here defines the amount of time in the total display after a View > Zoom Around In/Out Point command. See chapter 8.7.3 for a full description of these commands.

8.9.7.4 Zoom to Sel(ection) Start/(End)

The time value in this field defines how much time will be displayed when the View > Zoom to Selection command is applied. For a full description of this command, see section 8.7.10.

8.9.7.5 Play Around In/Out Point

The values in these fields define how much time will be auditioned when the Play > PlayTo/From In/Out Point commands are invoked. For a full description of these commands, please see sections 8.4.10 and 8.4.11.

8.9.7.6 Show Subframes

When enabled, all time fields at the top of the Project display additional time code subframe information.

8.9.8 Setting Preferences - EDL Tab

8.9.8.1 View

The View section has the following options:

- **Show Track Bar:** When checked, an additional layer of visual feedback is enabled in the Project. This alternate view provides a graphical approach to evaluating and manipulating your PQ metadata. Existing metadata is displayed from an object-oriented perspective, whereby each CD Track that will result from your current PQ placement is shown in grey while pre-gap or the pause between tracks is shown in blue. Section 3.9.5 above discusses the Track Bar.
- **Show Segment Names:** When checked, segment names will show in the Title Bar. When unchecked, the Title Bar of segments remains empty.
- **Background Waveforms:** When checked, waveforms will be generated in the background upon opening sound files from other DAWs. When unchecked, no graphical “waveform files” will be produced automatically. The File > Build Waveform... command will manually generate waveform files.
- **Remove Waveforms on Close:** When checked, waveform metadata will be deleted when a Project is closed.
- **Zoom Factor (%):** When zooming in or out, the display will be zoomed by the factor defined in this field. The default 90% means that 90% of the current waveform view will be zoomed, with 10% overlap for visual context. This preference only applies to selections.

8.9.8.2 Display Auto Tools

The Display Auto Tools has the following options:

- **AutoScale On:** When enabled, the display is scaled vertically so that the maximum peak within the entire Panel becomes full scale. This preference provides overall amplitude scaling while maintaining visual context between loud and soft passages.

- **Scale to View:** When enabled, the display is scaled vertically so that the maximum peak within the currently visible waveform becomes full scale. This preference provides local magnification, excellent for fine editing, but requires that you refer to the numeric vertical scale to determine the general amplitude.
- **Show Track Scale in dB:** When enabled, the amplitude scale is shown in dBFS, or dB full scale referenced to a “full” 24 bit AES/EBU data word. When off, the Panel’s amplitude scale is shown as a non-dimensional normalized value ranging from 0 to ± 1 , equating to or silence or full scale, respectively.

8.9.8.3 Playing Auto Tools

The Playing Auto Tools section has the following settings:

- **AutoScroll Playhead:** When selected, the Playhead will move as normal until it reaches the right edge of the waveform display. Then, the Move Forward command automatically takes place, moving the waveform view to the right.
- **AutoScroll Track:** When selected, the Playhead stays centered in the waveform display while the underlying waveform display continuously scrolls.

8.9.9 Setting Preferences — Delivery Tab

8.9.9.1 Delivery

- **Keep DDP Image:** This check box retains the directory or folder containing the DDP files set that forms that basis for all CD-R deliveries. See section A1.4 for information on using the DDP file set for replication.
- **Emulation Mode:** The Emulation Mode check box causes soundBlade to emulate a CD-R “burn,” allowing you to validate your Project’s settings without writing to a disc. While disabling writes to your optical mechanism in this mode, soundBlade does write a CD’s worth of data, approximately 650 MB, to your hard disk.
- **Write CD Text:** This check box causes soundBlade to write CD Text-specific CD+G metadata to a delivered CD-R. CD Text metadata is not included in DDP file sets. See section 3.10.1 for specifics about CD Text.
- **CD Write Speed:** The speed selector calls out the speeds that the target mechanism and host are capable of providing for your delivery. When choosing CD-R delivery speed, remember that the speed is inversely proportional to pit jitter. That is, higher speeds will induce more jitter in the CD’s physical pit structures while lower speeds will result in less jittery pit structures. Lower jitter is generally better in terms of subjective audio quality, because it requires less vigorous clock regeneration in the digital-to-analog converter or DAC to attain a reasonable amount of jitter in the final analog output.

8.9.9.2 Offsets

- **Start Offset:** It takes a typical CD player about two to twenty frames to fill its buffer and start producing valid audio data after it has located the correct Track Start. The Start Offset back times the Track Start time that the player reads to ensure that the beginning of the track will not be cut off by the player.
- **End Offset:** The End Offset prevents the player from muting too early at the end of the track. This offset value applies to all End of Track marks, including the last.
- **Track 1 Offset:** This setting allows the Start of Track Mark for Track 1 to have it's own offset value. This is because Track 1 on a Compact Disc is different from the remaining tracks and requires an extra long offset to allow CD transports to initialize prior to the onset of audio data recovery.
- **Splice Offset:** If a Start of Track mark is not preceded by an End of Track mark from the previous track, it is considered to be a "splice" or segue. The Splice Offset applies only to the special case of splices. The Splice Offset must always be equal to or less than the Start Offset. Splice Offsets are typically a bit more than half of the normal Start of Track offset.
- **Minimum Index Width:** This field sets the minimum time between Index marks. According to the Red Book standard, Index marks should be at least 1 second apart. End marks that are closer to the Start than the Minimum Index Width are ignored.
- **Disable Offsets:** If this button is enabled, the offsets shown in the offset windows will not be subtracted from the PQ mark times, either for display or for delivery.
- **Restore Defaults:** As a fail-safe, this button will restore all PQ offsets to their factory defaults.

8.9.9.3 Dither

- **Dither On Output:** When on, dither will be applied to the output at all times, redithering the output to 16 bits of resolution. When off, both the monitor and delivery outputs will be bit transparent. The DITHER indicator in the upper right of the Project window reflects the current state of the Dither on Output preference. Section A1.2 includes a discussion of redithering.
- **Turn Off Delay:** defines the time (in seconds) before dither is turned off after the last moment audio has been played.
- **Bit Resolution:** this selector allows for rounding off of the output signal to either 16 or 24 bits.

8.9.10 New Soundfile Preferences

This command opens the New Soundfile window. For more information on the New Soundfile Preferences Window, see section 3.8 for a detailed description.

8.9.11 Audio I/O Preferences

This command opens the Audio I/O Preferences window. For more information on the Audio I/O Preferences Window, see section 5.2.1 for a detailed description.

8.9.12 Background Manager

This command opens the Background Manager. For more information on the Background Manager, see Chapter 7.

8.9.13 Project

Any open Project window will be listed below the above describes menus. This allows for quick jumping from one Project to another.

A1.1 Introduction

Although versatile in many ways, not every function that soundBlade offers is the best way of structuring your CD creation and replication workflow. Some solutions are better than others, either for quality reasons or other reasons beyond the scope of this manual. In this appendix, we'd like to provide some guidelines in order to get the best out your software and establish a smooth and efficient production flow.

A1.2 Source Material Considerations

soundBlade handles a variety of source file formats. It is therefore very tempting to 'grab' what you need and add it to your Project. However, some source material might be in formats other than the final 44.1 kHz sample rate and 16 bits word length necessary for CD production. soundBlade determines the characteristics of the files you import based on the metadata they contain. It will warn you if the sample rate is not the required 44.1 kHz where necessary, while resolutions longer than 16 bits are rounded down and redithered to 16 bits during the delivery stage. Although all of the conversions implemented by soundBlade are of very high quality, you may consider modifying your audio material beforehand with your favorite utilities.

In recording and production environments, the AES/EBU data used for digital interchange may contain a resolution of up to 24 bits of linear PCM-encoded data, sampled at up to 192 kHz. Audio Compact Discs, on the other hand, carry only 16 bit data. That's one very good reason not to use CD-DA discs, "audio CDs," as a mastering source. Mastering engineers always appreciate source material at the highest possible resolution and sample rate in order to produce the best possible result.

Because all your material destined for inclusion in a final CD replication master will eventually be rounded off (where necessary) to a 16 bit word length, any material using 17 to 24 bits must be word length-reduced to match the CD-DA standard. This is usually accomplished by "rounding down" longer length words to 16 bits. Because the audio data is being modified, it must also be redithered or subtly randomized with an injection of tiny amounts of "shaped" noise in order to prevent distortion. In the Window> Preferences > Delivery pane, you will find that soundBlade has a default preference to always redither the data when delivering either a CD, DDP or when simply playing back audio. This is necessary whenever any audio data is modified, as with a fade or gain change, in order to "linearize" or reduce subtle distortion in the resulting data. Redithering is always a trade off between lower distortion and a slightly but audibly elevated noise floor. soundBlade uses an exclusive, spectrally shaped "2nd order" or triangular PDF redithering scheme. PDF or Probability Density Function describes the amplitude versus frequency plot of the dither generator. Our shaped dither is an excellent trade off between audibility and optimal linearity.

It's a good practice to prepare all source material needed before moving forward with sequencing, editing and finishing a new replication master. By organizing your source material and storing all relevant data in the same directory, your projects will be highly portable and you'll avoid situations where files have "gone missing" from a job because they were not included in the Project subfolder.

A1.3 Hardware Considerations

soundBlade is fully compliant with Mac OS 10.4.3 and higher. Therefore, sound material can be used from any drive that your computer can access. This includes network-attached and removable drives as well near-line optical drives. That said, not all mountable storage devices are suitable for reliable real-time or higher speed reads and writes of sound files. In order to ensure a smooth and uneventful workflow, we suggest the following guidelines:

1. Reserve the drive containing your operating system, the "boot volume," for just that, the operating system.
2. Use a dedicated, separate direct-attached hard disk, with more than enough free space, to store, record and playback all of your sound files. Optimize the performance of this dedicated drive by regular maintenance.
3. Speaking of maintenance, be sure to regularly check your boot volume for problems with a proven file system utility, like Alsoft's DiskWarrior < www.alfsoft.com>.
4. Although you may find it will actually work, never use network, flexible media or optical drives to record or playback sound files due to their excessive latency. Always copy files from those drive types to a dedicated, local, direct-attached hard disk first, then use that disk for all soundBlade work.
5. Do not use audio files with the same file name within a Project. Rename beforehand, where necessary, with a descriptive name for later ease of archiving and restoration.

A1.4 Delivering DDPs

DDP file sets created by soundBlade, always in their enclosing folder, can be copied to any writable medium you choose, CD-ROM, DVD-R, Jazz, Zip or hard disk, for transport to your replicator. Check that the medium you choose has enough space to hold the file set. Also check with your replicator to determine which medium they can handle and whether they are even capable of using DDP as an premastering format. Many bargain companies are not ready to handle DDP deliveries so, we at Sonic Studio suggest you find a reputable facility that does accept DDP file sets of your valuable masters.

Note that, for the PDF version of this document, only the page numbers, *not the preceding subject text*, are hyperlinked.

Index

A

- Absolute 57
- address
 - time code* 37
- AIFF export 37
- Album Artist 66, 67
- Album Info 67
- AlbumTitle 66, 67
- Analog BlackTo Marks 39
- Around Selection Center 126
- AutoSpace All Segments 54, 121

B

- burning CDs 15, 16, 40, 71
- Bypass/Activate Gain Overlay 122

C

- CD
 - Album Artist* 66
 - Album Title* 66
 - ISR Codes* 66
 - Track Artist* 66
 - Track Title* 66
 - UPC/EAN* 66
- CD-R delivery 15, 16, 40, 71
 - delivering multiple CDs* 72
- changing Fade parameters 45
- changing Fade shape 46
- changing Fade type 47
- changing track order 36
- Clear Selected SRPs 135
- Clear Selection 118
- combo Text+Waveform Project 58

- Copy 117
- Copy Enabled 68
- cosine Fades 46
- CPU
 - maintenance* 154
- Create Gain Nodes 123, 142
- Crossfades 34
 - deleting* 119
- Cut 117

D

- DDP 42, 70
 - Delivery* 40
 - file sets*
 - opening 22
- default Project 113
 - combo Text+Waveform* 58
- default time code format 28
- Delete Crossfade 119
- Delete Selection 118
- deleting part of a sound file 33
- delivering multiple CDs 72
- Delivery 40
 - Use button* 72
- Delivery preferences 148
- Device (CD-R/DVD-R) 70, 90, 91
- dither 149, 153
- drag-overlay 56
- drag-replace 56
- drag & drop 53
 - drag-overlay* 56
 - drag-replace* 56
 - ReSequence* 53
- Drag Bar 36, 37
- Drop Edit Point at Playhead 135
- DUR field 25, 27, 34, 137

E

- editing
 - Auto Tool Override* 121
 - Crossfades* 34
 - deleting* 33

- drag-overlay* 56
- drag-replace* 56
- drag & drop* 53
- DUR field* 137
- Edit Groups* 63, 64
- Edit Point* 137
 - placing & moving 135
- FadeTool* 31
- ReSequence* 53
- selecting Regions* 27
- selecting Segments* 28
- SRPs* 62
- Editing AutoTool Override 121
- EditingTools preferences 145
- edit event 45, 47, 134
- Edit Groups 63
- Edit menu 116
- Edit Point 58, 137
 - moving* 135
 - placing* 135
- Edit Point to Next Peak 136
- Edit Point to Playhead 135
- Edit Recording 81
- EDL menu 122
- EDL preferences 147
- Eject 42, 72, 88
- Emphasis Flag 69
- Execute 42, 71
- exponential Fades 46
- Exporting Audio
 - Selections & Segments* 37
- extended (Track) listing 41, 69

F

- Fades 32
 - edit events* 45, 47, 134
 - shape*
 - changing 46
 - gain laws 46
- FadeTool 31
 - changing parameters* 45
 - changing the shape* 46

changing the type 47

File menu 111

G

Gain 56

Absolute 57

changing multiple segments 57

Normalize 57

Relative 57

Gain Nodes

creating 123, 142

locking & unlocking 60

selecting 123, 143

Gain Overlay 58

Bypass/Activate 122

Show/Hide 122

H

hardware 154

HH:MM:SS:FF 26

I

importing

sound file types 19, 112

inserting PQ Marks automatically 39

inserting PQ Marks manually 38

installation 15

IN field 25, 34, 35, 133

ISRC 66, 68

L

LEFT field 25, 27

linear Fades 46

Listings 70

PQ List 72

Lock Gain Node 60

M

maintenance 154

Mark Info 41, 65

Extended Listing 69

Total Tracks 41, 69
Track Listing 41
Mark menu 129
mono editing mode 64, 140
Move Forward/Backward 138
Move In/Out Point 134
Move Playhead 128
Move Segments 120
Move View mode 26
moving PQ Marks 38

N

New Project 111
Normalize 57
Nudge Segment 120

O

offsets 68
Open Project 112
Open Sound File 112
OUT field 25, 34, 35

P

Panels
 Show/Hide Gain Overlay 122
 Show/Hide Text 122
 standard/large size 124
Paste 117
playback 24
 Around Selection Center 126
 Between In and Out Points 128
 From In Point 127
 From Out Point 127
 From Playhead 125
 From Selection 125, 126
 Move Playhead 128
 Repeat Play 125
 Selection 125
 Stop All 125
 to End of Selection 127
 to In Point 127

- to Out Point* 127
- Play Between In and Out Points 128
- Play From In Point 127
- Play From Out Point 127
- Play From Playhead 125
- Play From Selection 125
- Play menu 124
- Play Selection 125
- Play to End of Selection 127
- Play to In Point 127
- Play to Out Point 127
- PQ 147
 - Copy Enabled* 68
 - Emphasis Flag* 69
 - Listings* 70
 - offsets* 69
 - PQ Marks* 39
 - Analog BlackTo Marks 39
 - Edited BlackTo Marks 39
 - inserting
 - automatically 39
 - manually 38
 - moving 38
 - removing 38
 - pre-gap* 40, 147
 - UPC/EAN Codes* 67
 - validating* 70
- PQ List 72
- PQ Listing
 - Listing* 70
- PQ Marks 67
- PQ Validator 70
- Print
 - EDL Sound File Paths* 114
 - Segment Info* 114
 - SRP Info* 115
- Project
 - combo Text+Waveform* 58
 - default* 58, 113
 - layout* 20
 - new* 22, 111
 - adding the 1st sound file 23
 - open* 22, 112

Panel 12, 20, 25

punch in 81

R

recording

Edit Recording 81

punch in 81

timed 82

redithering 149, 153

Redo 117

Red Book 38, 40, 42, 69, 70, 149

Refresh 123

Relative 57

removing PQ Marks 38

Repeat Play 125

Resequence 40, 53, 70

Reveal Sound In Finder 113

reversed sound 113

Reverse Polarity 120

RIGHT field 25, 27

root cosine Fades 46

root linear Fades 46

S

Save Reversed 113

SCMS - Serial Copy Management Scheme 41

Scrolling 26

Segments

Auto-space 22, 37

changing order 36

deleting 33

Drag Bar 36

Move Segments 120

Nudge Segment 120

Reverse Polarity 120

Segment Gain 56

snapping 55

snap zone 54

Title Bar 29, 57

Select/Deselect 118

Clear Selection 118

Delete Selection 118

- selecting a Region* 27
- selecting Segments* 28, 137
- select Regions* 137
- Selections 27
- Selection from Selected Segments 137
- Selection menu 132
- Selection Reference Points 62
- Select Edit Point to End 137
- Select Gain Nodes 123, 143
- Select Segments from Selection 137
- Select Segment to End 137
- Select Segment to Start 137
- Select Start to Edit Point 136
- Set SRP 135
- Show/Hide Gain Overlay 122
- Show/HideText View 56, 122
- ShowTrack Bar 54, 147
- snap zone 54
- sound begins more than 2 frames... 42, 70
- Sound Designer files 146
- sound files
 - adding the 1st sound file* 23
 - importing* 19
 - opening* 22, 112
 - Sound Designer II* 146
 - source material* 153
- source material considerations 153
- spacing tracks: AutoSpace 37
- SRPs 62
 - clearing* 135
 - setting* 135
- SRP from Segment Edit Points 135
- SRP from Selection 135
- Standard/LargeTrack Size 124
- Status (CD-R/DVD-R) 70
- Status Window 114
- stereo editing mode 64
- Stop All 125

T

- Text Mode
 - Gain* 56

Show/Hide Text View 56, 122
timed records 82
time code 26, 27, 28
 default format 28
time code address 26, 27, 37
Time Display preferences 146
time line 20, 23, 25, 27, 38
 moving forward/backward 138
Title Bar 29, 57
TotalTracks 41, 69
Track Artist 67
Track Bar 39, 54, 147
Track Listing 41
TrackTitle 66, 67
transport controls 21

U

Undo 117
Unlock Gain Node 60
UPC/EAN 66, 67
Use button 72

V

View menu 138

W

waveforms 23, 26, 113, 138, 147
 moving forward/backward 138
 refresh 123
 scrolling 26
 zooming 26, 138, 139, 140
Waveform Mode 58, 122

Z

zooming 26, 138, 139, 140