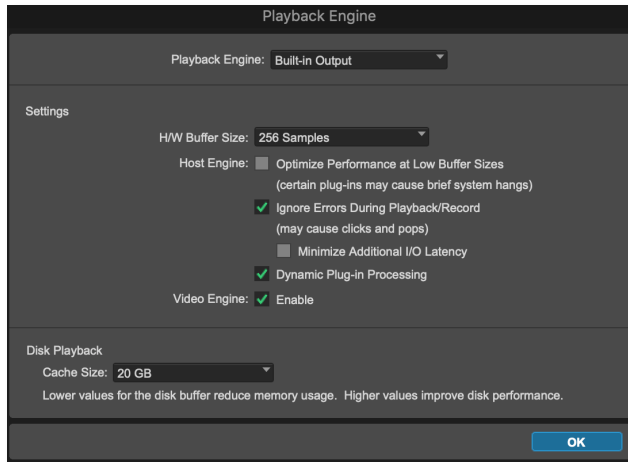


# IN THE BEGINNING, THERE WAS SOUND.

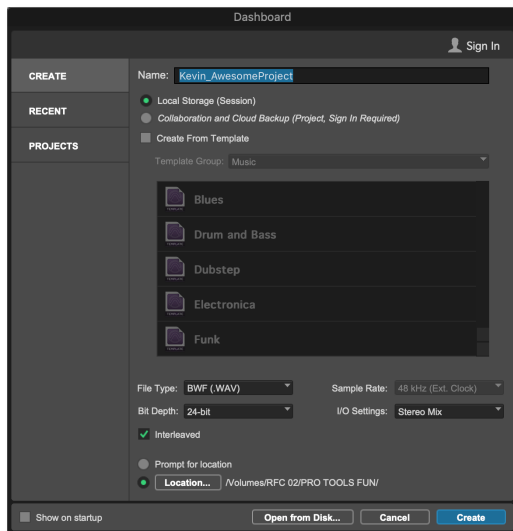
Launch Pro Tools! Before you begin working, go to **SETUP>PLAYBACK ENGINE** and make sure that it's set up properly. Unless you're using an external interface, you'll want to set this to "Built-in Output." Increasing your H/W Buffer and Cache size will help your computer keep up with more demanding Pro Tools sessions.

**\*\*\*Always work off an external drive, 7200 RPM or SSD**



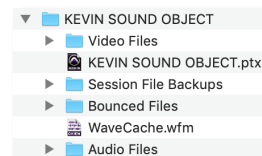
Create a new session by selecting **FILE>NEW SESSION (CMND-N)**

A new dialog box will appear. Adjust the settings so it looks like this:



**\*\*\*Always use 48KHz, 24bit, .WAV**

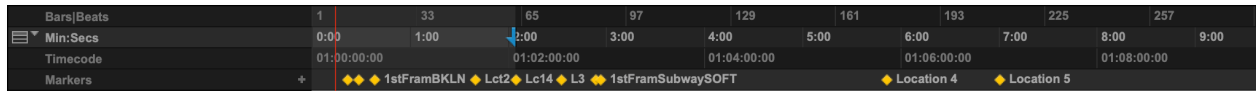
Name your session. Use the **LOCATION** button to direct Pro Tools to your external hard drive. Click **OK**. Pro Tools will then automatically create a new folder for your session. Within that folder will live your session file, a session back up folder, and a folder named "Audio Files" which importantly will be where Pro Tools will place any files it has to generate or convert.



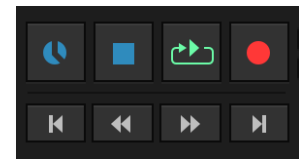
# THE EDIT WINDOW

This is where you'll spend most of your time. The open space in the middle is for laying audio tracks. Tracks are where your source material can be placed for edited. The tracks are then layered together for a final mixed audio file.

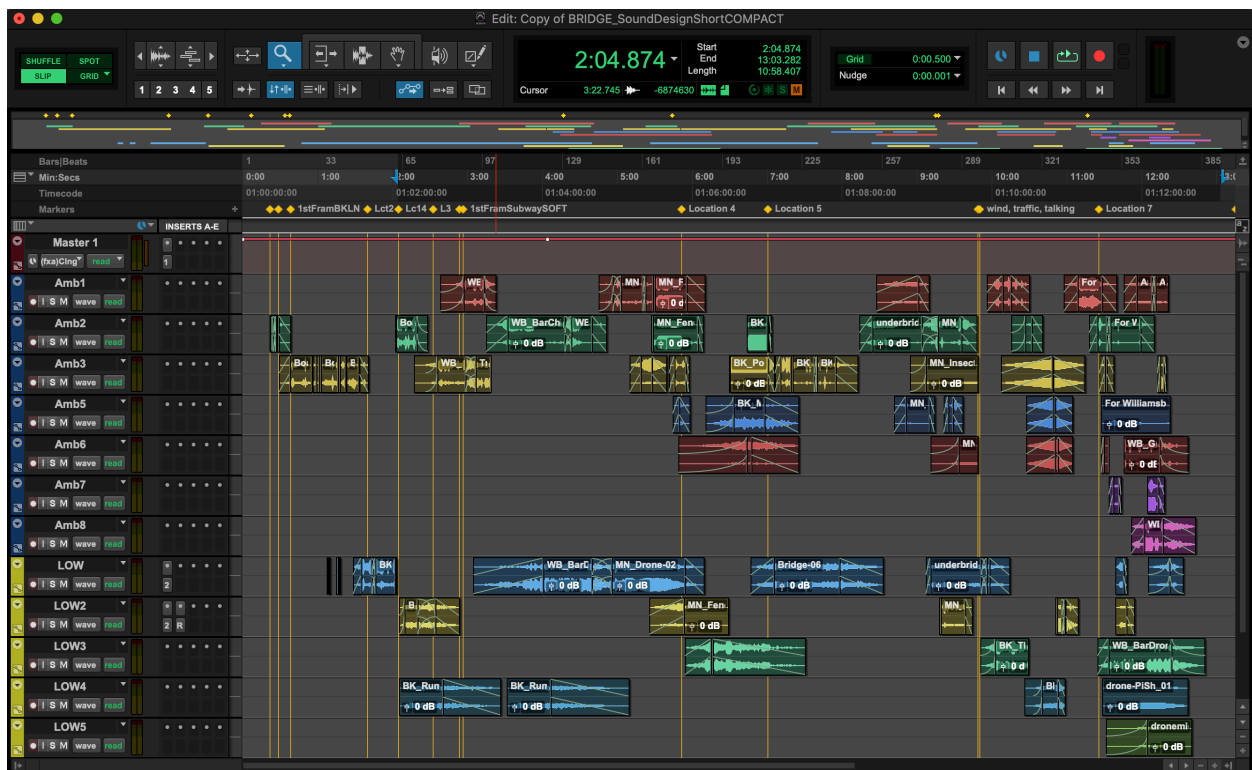
At the top of the edit window is your timeline. Place your cursor on the timeline to navigate Pro Tools.



You'll also see the "transport" above with buttons that function just like a tape deck.



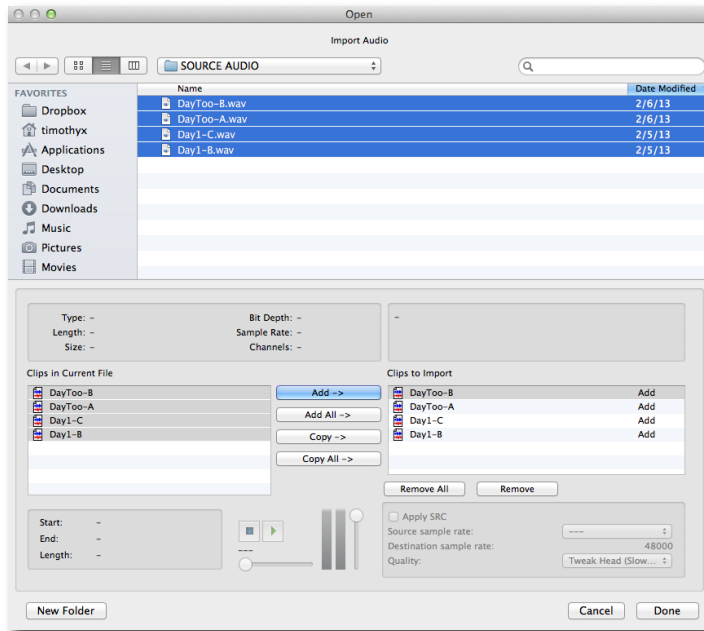
This is roughly what an edit window should look like when in use:



# IMPORTING AUDIO

Import audio into your session by selecting in the menu at the top:  
**FILE > IMPORT > AUDIO**

A new dialog box will appear that looks like this:



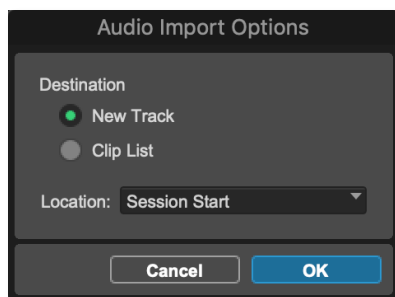
Find and select the files that you want to import.

Click on the **ADD** button to tell Pro Tools you would like to import them. **COPY** is the safest option as it will copy the files to your **AUDIO FILES** folder. This will keep things organized and add redundancy in case a file gets corrupt later.

If their settings match your session settings, Pro Tools will link directly to these files (again, so you should never rename, move, or delete them). Easy peasy.

If their settings do not match your session settings (not the end of the world), Pro Tools will convert (IE, write) new files and place these in your **AUDIO FILES** folder.

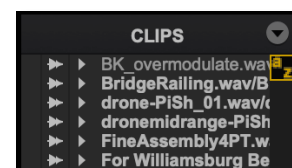
A new dialog box will appear that looks like this:



The easiest route if for you to import each of these files to a new track. IE, this means if you are importing 4 stereo files, Pro Tools will create 4 distinct tracks with the appropriate audio in each. **BUT**....not the best option if you are, say, importing 24 files of audio.

Another option is to select **CLIP LIST**. This will not create tracks for your files, but simply import them into your "audio bin," where you can drag them into already created tracks as needed.

Your audio bin lives to the right side of the edit window and looks like this:

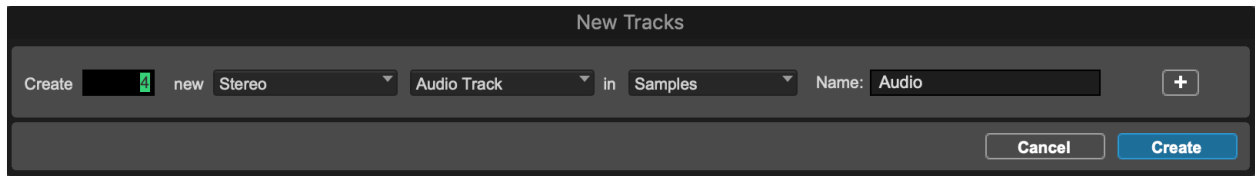


# ADDING TRACKS

You may have already created tracks when importing your audio, but likely you will want to add more to your session going forward. In general, it's recommended to have similar or singular material on a track.

Create a new audio track by selecting in the menu at the top:

**Track > New Track (CMND-Shift-N)**



Select the number of tracks you'd like to add to your session. If you're working with stereo files, you'll likely want stereo tracks.

Select a file from your audio bin and drag it into a track so it looks like this:

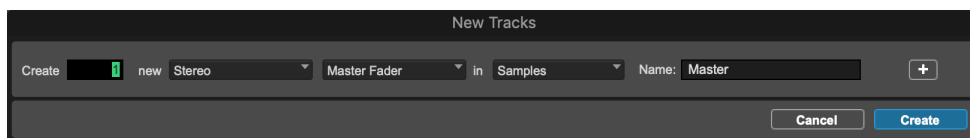


The S button will "solo" the track (mute all other tracks) during playback. The M button will "mute" the track during playback.

Once audio files are placed in tracks and you begin editing, they become what Pro Tools calls audio "REGIONS." As you cut into your tracks, you will create more and more individual regions.

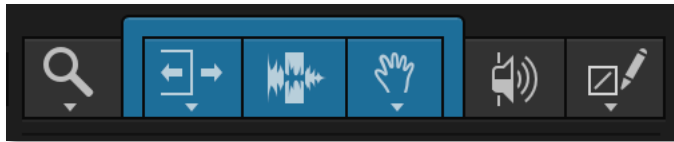
I always recommend adding a "master" track to all your sessions. Any changes to this track will affect your entire mix (plug-ins, volume, pan, etc). It is also extremely useful to look at the master track VU meter to gauge your overall session output and confirm that you are not peaking.

Create a master track the same as above, but select "Master Fader."



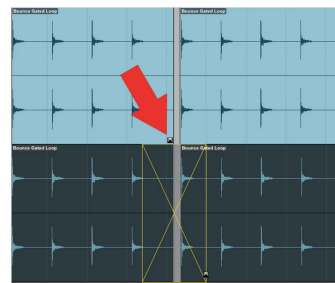
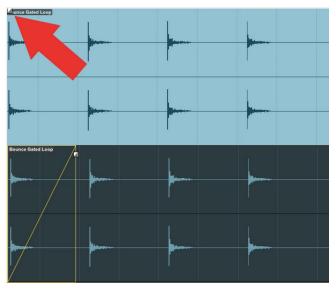
# EDITING TOOLS

Above your timeline in your edit window live several useful buttons. These are the bread and butter of your editing toolkit.



The tools are (from left to right):

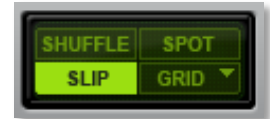
- ZOOMER – Lets you zoom in/out on a particular region of audio (hold down command key to zoom out). To get global view of your session (fully zoomed out), simply double-click on this button. TIP: You may also zoom in/out by using keyboard shortcut Command-[ or Command-]
- TRIMMER – Can be used to shorten or extend audio regions.
- SELECTOR – Use to select portion of your audio regions.
- GRABBER – Use to select entire audio regions and move them in the timeline.
- SCRUBBER – When placed over audio region and moved, lets you scrub through (audition) audio. (rarely used)
- PENCIL – Advanced tool and to be used with caution. Most usefully can be used to manual draw automation (volume, etc), but can also used on micro level to repair waveforms.
- SMART TOOL – If you click on the upper portion of the toolbar (notice are in blue), you will engage the smart tool. When your cursor is placed on the:
  - UPPER section of an audio region, it becomes a SELECTOR.
  - BOTTOM section of an audio region, it becomes a GRABBER.
  - BEGINNING/END of an audio region, it becomes a TRIMMER.
  - **UPPER** BEGINNING/END of an audio region, it becomes a FADE TOOL.
  - **BOTTOM** BEGINNING/END of an audio region, it becomes a CROSSFADE TOOL.



Click & drag with the SMART TOOL to determine duration of fade/crossfade.

## EDITING MODES


There are four “modes” of editing in Pro Tools, each performing time-based tasks in a unique way. Unless you know what you’re doing, I suggest always working in SLIP MODE, but here is the breakdown:



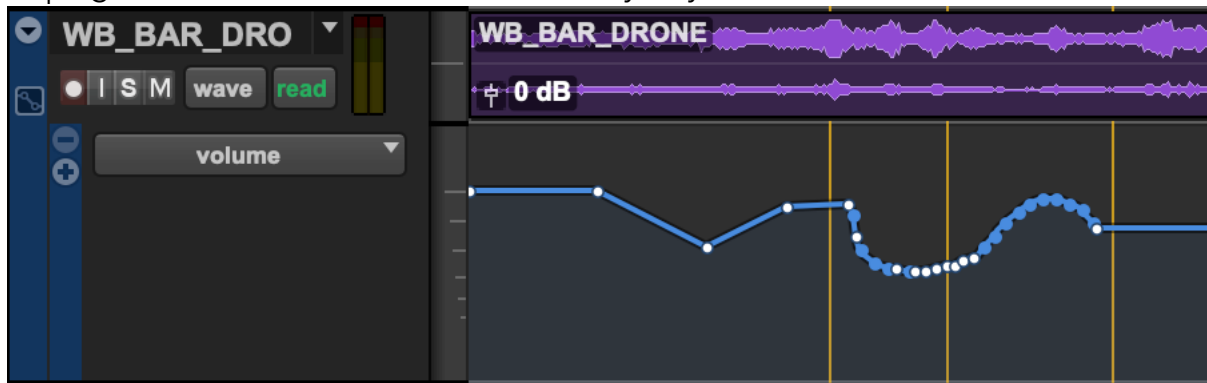
- SLIP MODE – This mode is the equivalent of normal mode, you may move audio regions anywhere in the timeline.
- GRID MODE – Depending on grid setting, will only select and move audio regions on a certain grid (1E, one second). This is useful if you are working in sync or with rhythmic constraints.
- SHUFFLE MODE – As you move or delete portions of an audio region, the space left over will be filled with remaining audio. WARNING: This means everything on your track to the right will shift in the timeline. BE CAREFULL.
- SPOT MODE – When moving a region, Pro Tools will ask you for timecode coordinates (rarely used).

## AUTOMATION

There are many, many methods for automating volume, panning, etc. in your session, but I find the following most intuitive:

Notice the small toggle button on the lower left of the track? 

This allows you to toggle on/off the automation lanes for everything from volume, pan, to plug-in automation. You can add as many as you want, but the default is volume.



\* Use the GRABBER tool to make keyframes that can be adjusted up or down to increase/decrease volume.

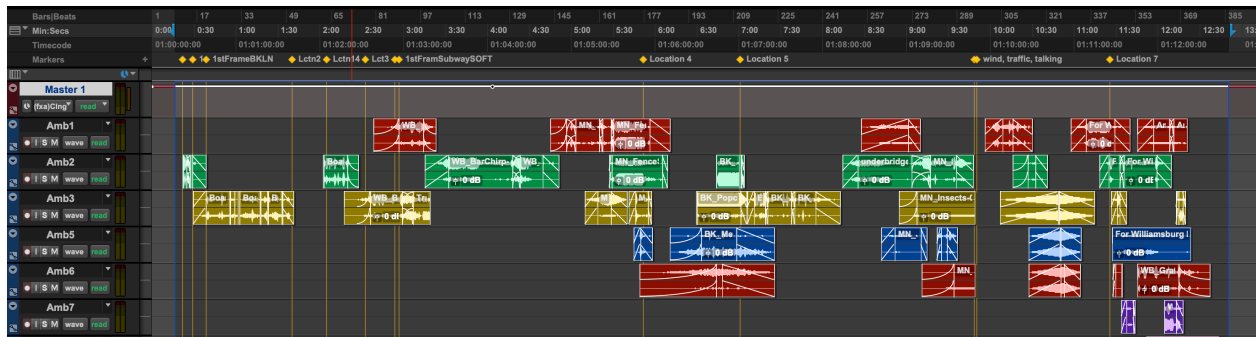
\* Use the PENCIL tool to draw keyframes freehand.

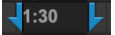
# EXPORTING AUDIO (BOUNCE MIX)

Once you have crafted your compositional masterpiece, you'll want to mix your session down to a single file. Unlike video editing software, Pro Tools must playback the entire mix through your audio hardware to do this, including all plug-ins. This is why rather than calling it "export" we call it "bounce" mix. Make sure none of the tracks are in solo or mute that you don't want to be.

Here's what you need to do:

Set the in and out points in your timeline to determine the coordinates and duration of your mix. The best way to do this is to use the SELECTOR tool to highlight a section of your timeline. You can also SHIFT-SELECT using the GRABBER tool to select all the regions in your session.

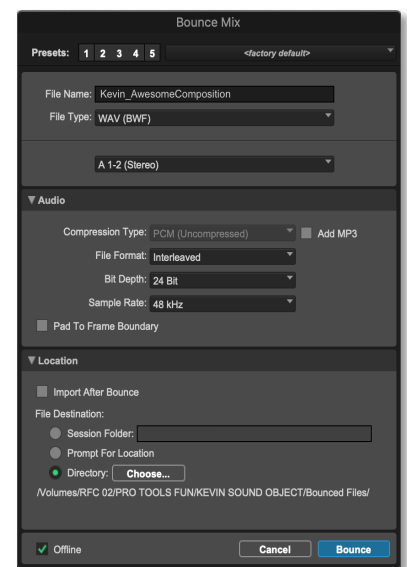
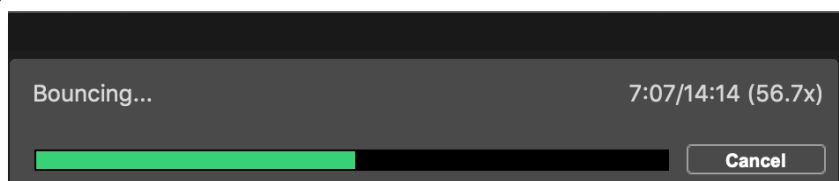


Notice the blue half-arrows on the timeline, those are your in and out points. 

Bounce your session to disk by selecting in the menu at the top:  
**FILE> BOUNCE MIX (CMND-OPTION-B)**

Match the settings to the right. By default, the directy target for your mix should be the "Bounced Files" folder in your session folder. Confirm this. No hit BOUNCE.

If you've selected OFFLINE, then your mix will bounce offline at higher speeds. Deselect OFFLINE if you would prefer to listen to your mix in real time as it bounces (sometimes a nice final check).



# THE MIX WINDOW

You are less likely to use this window unless you are working with larger sessions in the final mix stage. As you can see it gives you a more analog looking interface with faders and potentiometers than can be adjusted virtually by moving your mouse. I would recommend avoiding it until you're ready to get in deeper. I find the mix window a good place to insert plug-ins. You can also do this in the edit window, but it will clutter things. A mix window should look something like this:



Notice the “fast menu” at the bottom left.



This is where you can decide what to show in the mix window. The same is true for the edit window, or wherever you see this icon.

Click on the fast menu and check the following:

Now you have a place to insert real-time plug-ins into your tracks.

Again, you can also do this in your edit window.





## REAL-TIME PLUG-INS (INSERTS) – TRACK-BASED

Inserted real-time plug-ins, as the name suggests, affect audio that you're listening to in real time. What that means is that when you have audio on a track, and you insert a plug-in in that track, your audio plays \*through\* the plug-in during playback and the final mix. There are some real advantages here. It allows you to audition what you are doing with the plug-in in the context of all the tracks playing at the same time.

Importantly, it allows you to infinitely tweak the plug-in settings down the road, since they exist separately from your audio regions.

Find the track that contains the audio region(s) that you want to affect. Click on the first available insert slot:



**IMPORTANT:** By inserting a plug-in into a track, you are affecting \*ALL\* the audio regions on that track during playback. SO....only place audio that you want affected by the plug-in on that track. All others, move to another track. It's okay to have lots of tracks, that's something Pro Tools is good for!

IMPORTANT: By inserting a plug-in into a track, you are affecting *\*ALL\** the audio regions on that track during playback. SO....only place audio that you want affected by the plug-in on that track. All others, move to another track. It's okay to have lots of tracks, that's something Pro Tools is good for!

## AUDIO-SUITE PLUG-INS – REGION-BASED

If you just have some minor tweaks or just want to make some weird generative effects with plug-ins, you might try AUDIO-SUITE plug-ins. Many of the same plug-ins exist whether they are RTAS or AudioSuite, it's more a matter of how the audio is processed and workflow. RTAS plug-ins are applied to *\*tracks\**, AudioSuite plug-ins are applied to *\*regions\** in your Edit Window. Also, unlike RTAS, AudioSuite plug-ins must be auditioned individually and cannot be listened to in real time with the rest of your tracks until the plug-in has been applied. You set the plug-in parameters, hit RENDER, and then Pro Tools writes a new audio to replace the audio region in your track.

Here's how it works:

Using the GRABBER tool, select the audio region you would like to be affected by the plug-in. Select your desired plug-in, for example: **AUDIOSUITE > EQ > EQ3 7-Band**

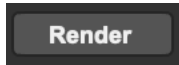
A pop-up window for the plug-in will appear.



By hitting the speaker icon on lower-left of the plug-in, you can preview your audio while you make changes to the plug-in. Use the BYPASS button to toggle back and forth and listen to what changes you are making.



When you are happy with your settings, hit RENDER on the lower right of the window.



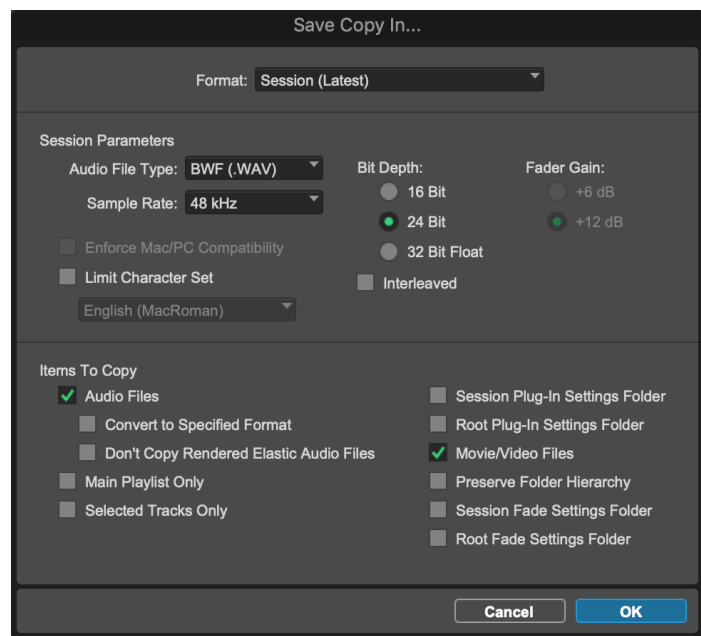
A new audio region with the plug-in applied now lives where your old audio region did. You can now close the plug-in window. If you are unhappy, hit CNTRL-Z and start again. Or find the original region in your audio bin.

## ARCHIVING YOUR SESSION

Once you are done working with your session, it's always a great idea to archive it. This is also the best way to bring your session from one location to another and ensure that everything is connected.

To do this: **FILE > SAVE A COPY IN**

Select LATEST version of Pro Tools and check to copy all audio and video files. This will ensure everything ends up in one tidy folder that you can move wherever you need it to go.



## WORKING WITH VIDEO

Working with video is not so very different than creating a standard sound-only session. Although you can import video into Pro Tools, remember it is an audio program. That means we aren't editing your images. Rather, you are importing images to edit and mix your sound to. The movie is simply a reference file that you can use create sound-image sync work.

As such, it's not so important to bring a hi-res video into Pro Tools. Although a H.264 file is sometimes suitable, the best practice is to import a codec like ProRes LT which doesn't demand as much computer resources for playback. When you are done, you can export your sound to that video or as a .wav audio file to be synced with the hi-res video file later on.

## HOW TO IMPORT A REFERENCE VIDEO

**FILE> IMPORT> VIDEO** | Then locate your video file.

Set your video to begin at session start and select **IMPORT AUDIO**.

Set your **AUDIO FILES** folder as your destination.

If prompted to start Avid Video Engine, please do so.



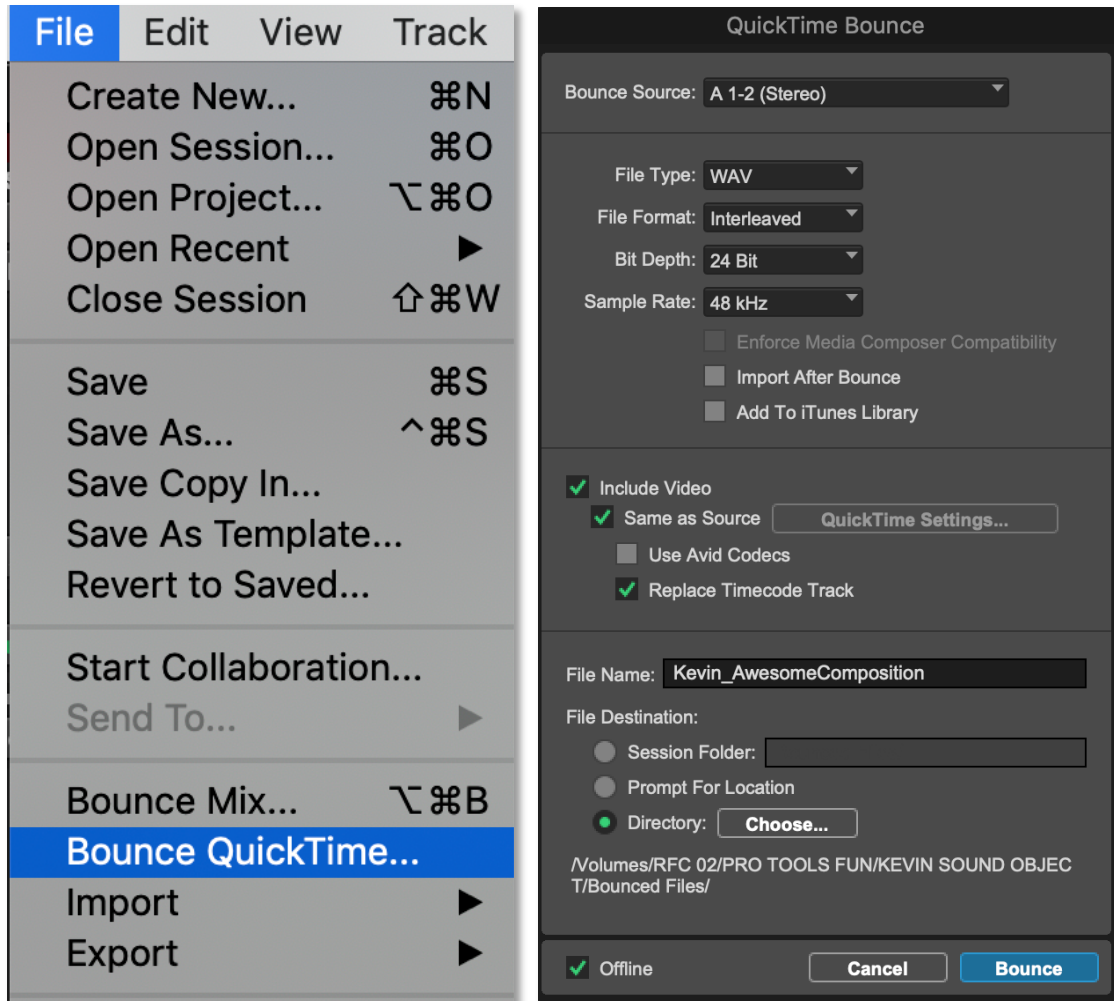
Now a video window will magically appear and will play back in sync with your Pro Tools timeline. You can always close this window and make it appear again by going to **WINDOW> VIDEO**

Your imported video will add a video track and an audio track. You may want to use this audio track as material, but most likely it will serve only as a sync reference. Therefore, you should mute this track.

Your computer will be more CPU efficient if you set the video track to **BLOCKS** rather than **FRAMES**.

## HOW TO EXPORT YOUR MIX TO VIDEO

Set your IN and OUT points as you normally would. Go to **FILE> BOUNCE QUICKTIME**



You have now crafted a sound for picture masterpiece!