

Eleven | R A C K

Intro to Pro Tools

Pro Tools LE® and Eleven Rack™

Version 8.0.1



Welcome to Pro Tools LE and Eleven Rack

Read this guide if you are new to Pro Tools® or are just starting out making your own music. Inside, you'll find examples of how to record, compose, mix, and produce your own music in Pro Tools.

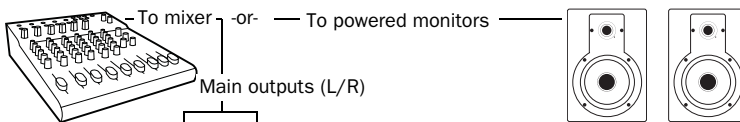
One quick question: Have you installed Pro Tools yet? If not, follow the *Eleven Rack Quick Setup* instructions or the detailed *Eleven Rack User Guide* to install software and your Eleven|Rack™ hardware.

💡 *Do not connect your Eleven Rack to your computer until you've installed Pro Tools from your installer DVD as described in the Eleven Rack Quick Setup instructions.*

Connect Headphones, a Mixer, or Powered Monitors

You have to be able to hear your music, so plug in some headphones or a monitoring system:

- Plug headphones into the jack on the front panel. If your headphones have an 1/8-inch plug, use an 1/8-inch to 1/4-inch adapter.
- If you're setting up to listen through a mixer/P.A., or powered monitors, connect them to the XLR monitor outputs Main Out L and R on the back panel (L to left, R to right).



Listen to the Demo Session

To get started, you can use the Demo Session to see and hear many of the things you'll soon be doing in Pro Tools. The Demo Session also gives you sound to play so you can test your headphones or speakers.


To install and open the Demo Session:

1 Put the Pro Tools LE® Installer disc in your DVD drive and do one of the following:

- On a Mac, open the Additional Files folder, then open the Demo Sessions Installer folder. Double-click the Install LE Demo Session.pkg, then follow the instructions on-screen to install the Demo Session. Make a note of where you install it.

– or –

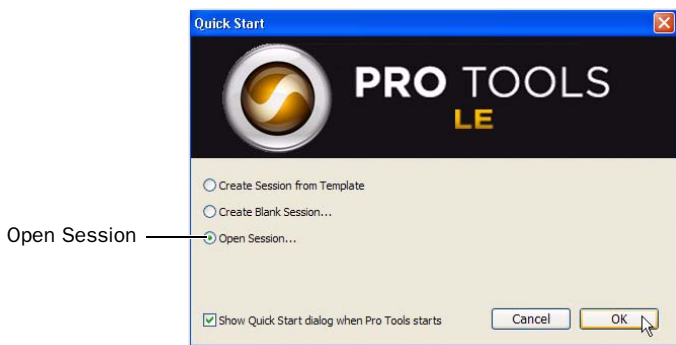
- On Windows, open the Additional Files folder, then open the Demo Sessions Installer folder. Double-click LE Demo Session Setup.exe, then follow the instructions on-screen to install the Demo Session. Make a note of where you install it.

 *For best performance, Digidesign® recommends using an external hard drive for Pro Tools recordings. But if you don't have an external hard drive yet, it's OK to put the Demo Session on your system drive.*

2 Launch Pro Tools LE by clicking its icon in the Dock (Mac) or double-clicking its icon on your desktop (Windows). If this is the first time you're launching Pro Tools, enter your Authorization Code (located on the back of your Eleven Rack DVD wallet). This is only required the first time you launch Pro Tools.

3 Next, do either of the following depending on what you see on-screen:

- If the Quick Start dialog appears, click Open Session, then click OK. Navigate to the file "Filtered Dream" and select it (it's in the folder "Filtered Dream Demo Session"), then click Open.



Quick Start dialog, Open Session

– or –

- If the Quick Start dialog does not appear, choose File > Open Session (click the File menu to choose Open Session), then open the file "Filtered Dream."

Pro Tools opens the session, which should look similar to the following:



4 For now, go ahead and close the Eleven Rack Control window; we'll get to that soon.

Play and Listen

To play the Demo Session:

1 On the front of the Eleven Rack, turn the Volume knob counter-clockwise to a low level (less than 3.0 on the display).



2 To start and stop Pro Tools, press the Spacebar, or click the Play and Stop buttons on-screen. (These buttons are located at the top of the Edit window; you can also have them appear in their own Transport window by choosing Window > Transport.)



Stop and Play controls in Edit window (left) and Transport window (right)

3 While the session plays, gradually raise the Volume knob until you reach a good listening level.

4 Explore Pro Tools while the demo plays by using the zoom and Track view controls to zero in on different tracks:



Click to select the Zoomer tool and then drag-select to zoom in. (Double-click the Zoomer tool to zoom back out again)

Click the Horizontal and Vertical Zoom buttons to adjust size and length of what is shown in tracks

Click the Track Options selector and choose a display height

5 Next, click the Window menu and choose Mix (Window > Mix). The Mix window shows tracks in vertical channel strips.



Mix window

Tracks

The Edit window and the Mix window are the two main work areas in Pro Tools. Throughout the rest of this guide, you'll see examples of both windows being used for different types of production work. (To learn about the Eleven Rack Control window, see the *Eleven Rack User Guide*.)

6 Press the Spacebar or click the Stop button to stop playback.

7 When you're through checking out the Demo Session, choose File > Close Session.

The Demo Session is a great example of a complete, finished project that has been arranged, edited, and mixed. You don't need to return to the Demo Session for anything else in this guide, but you might want to check it out again later, after you've been introduced to a few more Pro Tools features. If you want to return to the Demo Session or any recent one, click File > Recent and choose the Demo Session (if it is still one of your most recently opened sessions), or choose File > Open and open it that way.

Record Yourself

In this section you're going to create a new *session*, then record yourself playing guitar through an Eleven Rack *Rig*.

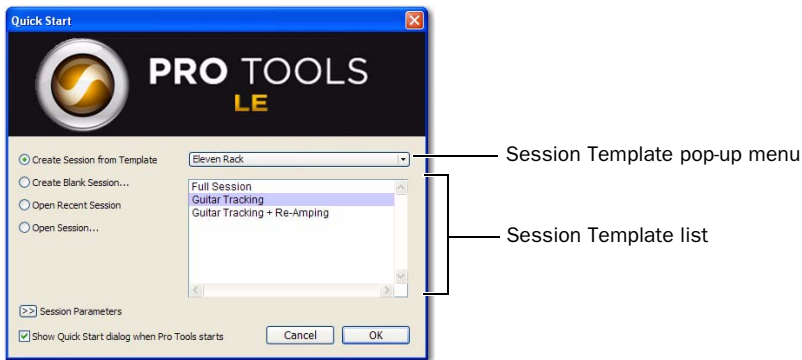
Create a New Session from a Template

Session templates save you the time of having to create tracks and effects, and assign signal routing. The template shown in this example (named “Guitar Tracking”) is one of three provided that consist of audio tracks, instrument tracks, effects and busses tailored specifically for recording (or *tracking*) guitar.

To create a new session from a template:

1 Do one of the following:

- If you followed the previous section and closed the Demo Session, choose File > Open, navigate to the Session Template file “Guitar Tracking” and select it, then click Open.
- If you just launched Pro Tools and the Quick Start dialog appears, select Create Session From Template, then click the Session Template pop-up menu and select the Eleven Rack category. Select the Session Template file Guitar Tracking from the list and click OK.



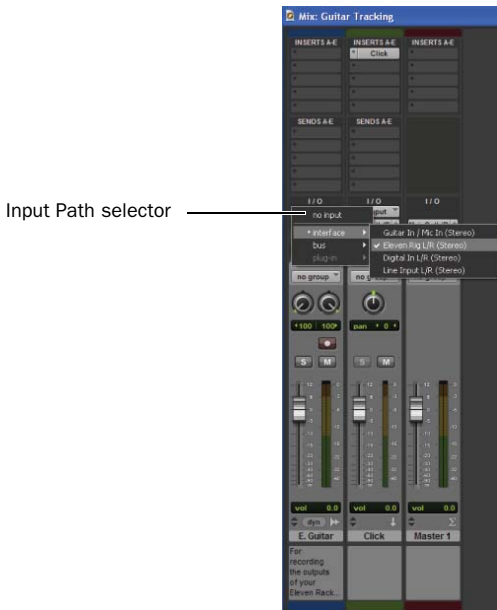
Quick Start dialog

2 In the New Session From dialog, leave the settings unchanged and click OK.

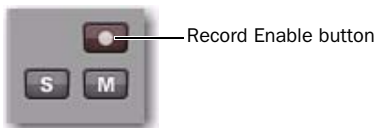
3 When the Save New Session As dialog appears, name the session, choose where you want to save the session and click Save.

4 Make sure the Mix window is open by choosing Window > Mix.

5 In the middle of the *E.Guitar* track's channel strip notice where it says Eleven Rig L/R (Stereo). This shows which Input channel is assigned to this track. (To specify a different input channel, click the Input Path selector and choose the other channel.)



6 Click the *E.Guitar* track's Record Enable button.



Record enabling a track in the Mix window

7 Next, choose Options > Low-Latency Monitoring. This setting is highly recommended when tracking through the Eleven Rig (it provides the best way to hear your guitar while recording to be able to get the right “feel.”)

8 Now turn your guitar's volume knob(s) up about halfway and play a few chords or leads. You should be able to hear the guitar through Pro Tools!

Select a Rig

Eleven Rack stores combinations of amps, cabinets, and effects as *Rigs*. You can quickly load any of the preset Rigs, and save your own custom combinations.

To select a Rig:

- 1 Choose Window > Eleven Rack (click the Window menu and choose Eleven Rack) to open the Eleven Rack Control window.
- 2 In the Eleven Rack Control window, click on the Rig Input menu and choose Guitar.
- 3 Click on the Rig name (under the Rig Settings menu) and choose a preset from the User sub-menu. Presets are pre-configured settings files, and they're a great way to see examples of what a Rig can do.



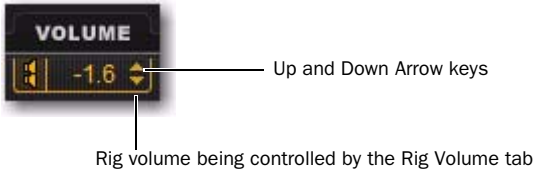
Selecting a Rig preset in the Eleven Rack Control window

Record Some Guitar

To record your guitar with Eleven Rack:

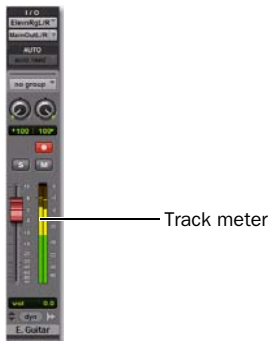
1 Go back to the Pro Tools Mix window.

2 Strum your guitar, and watch the meter in the Pro Tools track to see if you need to adjust the Rig volume by using the Rig Volume tab. (Don't move the on-screen fader to try and adjust input level because it isn't going to have any effect; the on-screen fader is only for setting your listening level.)



3 Click on the Up Arrow key until the on-screen track meter show green most of the time, or yellow for your louder passages (the Rig Volume tab lets you set and control the overall Rig volume).

- If the track meter shows red, gain is too high; lower the Rig volume (Down Arrow key).
- If you barely see green in the track meter, Rig volume is too low.




4 In the toolbar (or in the Transport window) click the Return to Zero button to jump back to the start of the session, then click the Record button. This tells Pro Tools that you're happy with your levels and are ready to record (think of the Transport Record button as a "master" record enable button).



5 Choose Window > Edit so you can watch what happens when you record.

6 When you are ready to start recording, click Play on the Transport window or press the Spacebar. After you've pressed the Spacebar, you'll hear 2 bars of "click, click, click..." (it's the Click track playing a 2 bar *count off* before recording begins).

 *Your Eleven Rack session templates already include a Click track with count off enabled. For more information on using a click track/metronome, see the "Using a Click (Metronome)" section on Page 11. To learn even more about recording with a click, see the Pro Tools Reference Guide.*

7 To stop, press the Spacebar or click Stop. Here's what Pro Tools looks like after a track has been recorded and the transport has been stopped.



Fresh guitar!

After you've recorded, it's time to listen back.

Listen to Your Work

To play back a recorded track:

- 1** Click the track's Record Enable button again to take it out of Record mode.
- 2** If you used a Click track to record but don't want to hear it during playback, click the M (Mute) button on the Click track, or disable the Click by deselecting the Metronome Click button so it's highlighted blue in the Transport window. (Also, in the Click/Countoff Options dialog (Setup > Click/Countoff), you can enable the Only During Record option to have the click while recording, but not while playing back.)
- 3** Click Play in the Transport window or press the Spacebar to start playback.
- 4** When you want to stop, press the Spacebar or click Stop.

When you're happy with a take, go ahead and save the session (File > Save) and then proceed to "Record More Guitar (Overdub)" on page 10.

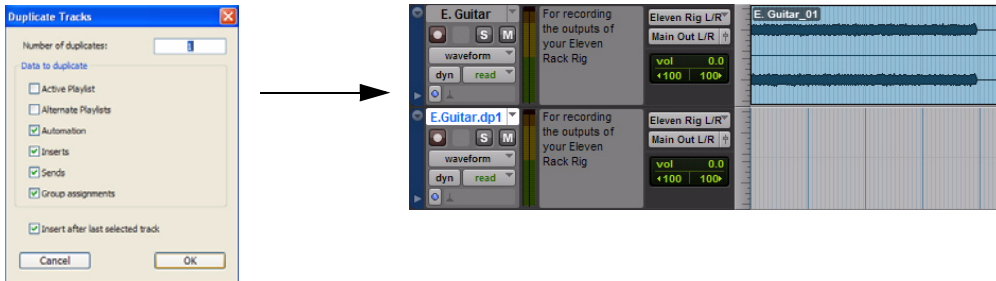
If you're not happy with your take, you can undo it. Choose Edit > Undo Record Audio once you have recorded an audio track and the transport has stopped. (Or, press Command+Z (Mac) or Control+Z (Windows)).

Record More Guitar (Overdub)

This section shows you how to layer multiple guitar tracks in multiple recording passes (known as overdubbing). You'll see how to quickly duplicate and re-use the track you recorded to in the previous section in order to record new guitar tracks with different tones.

To duplicate one or more tracks.

- 1 In the same Pro Tools session you used in the previous section, click the *E. Guitar* track to select the guitar track you want to duplicate.
- 2 Do one of the following:
 - Choose Track > Duplicate.
 - Press Option+Shift+D (Mac) or Press Alt+Shift+D (Windows).
 - Right-click the name of the track in the Track List, or Mix or Edit window, and select Duplicate.
- 3 In the Duplicate Track dialog, click to de-select Active Playlist and Alternate Playlists, then click OK.




Duplicate Tracks dialog (left) and both tracks in the Edit window (right).

- 4 Click the new track's Record button so you can hear yourself again.
- 5 Select the newly created track, choose Window > Eleven Rack, and then choose a new tone (Rig) from the Rig Settings menu.
- 6 With your new track set up and record enabled, and your 2nd tone chosen, click the Transport Record button again.
- 7 Now click Play in the Transport window or press the Spacebar to start recording. It might take a few tries to get the right balance between the previously recorded track and the new one (Now you can use the on-screen fader to raise or lower the playback level of the previously recorded track).
- 8 When you want to stop, press the Spacebar or click Stop.
- 9 Click the track's Record Enable button again, click Return to Zero and then press the Spacebar again to listen back. Balance the playback levels of the tracks using their on-screen faders.

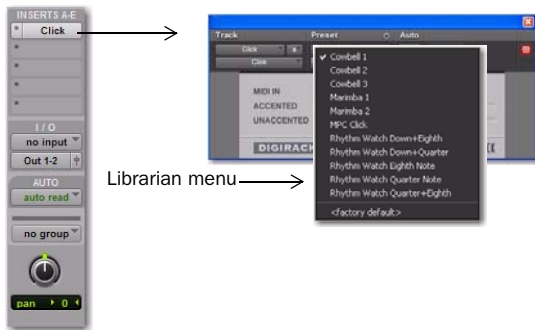
Using a Click (Metronome)

A click track (also known as a metronome) gives you a steady time reference while recording guitar tracks. Eleven Rack session template sessions include a click track already added and ready to go. Pro Tools also provides a menu command to quickly add a click track in one step.

 To create a click track in a new session, you can quickly add one by choosing Track > Create Click Track. Pro Tools creates a new Auxiliary Input track named “Click” with the Click plug-in already inserted.

To use a click track:

- 1 Choose View > Mix Window to display the Mix window.
- 2 At the top of the track, select the Click plug-in.
- 3 In the Click plug-in window, click the Librarian menu and pick a sound. You can pick a cowbell, sidestick, and other common click sounds.



Creating a Click Track

- 4 Select View > Transport > MIDI Controls to view the MIDI controls in the Transport window.
- 5 Click the Metronome Click button so it's highlighted blue.



- 6 Now click Play in the Transport window or press the Spacebar to listen to the click.

To silence the click track:

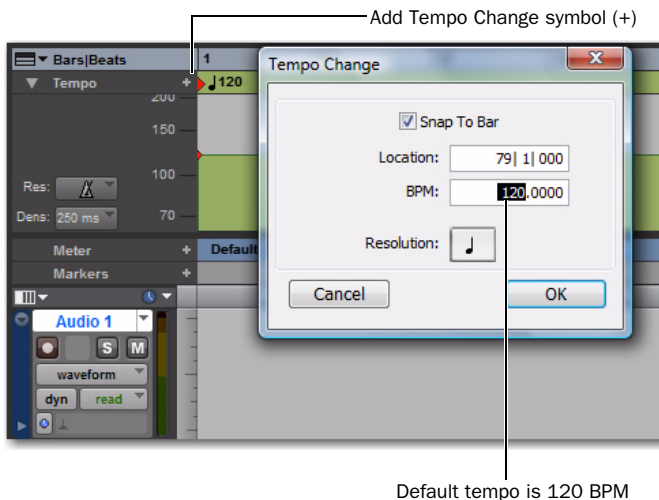
- Do one of the following:
 - Mute the Click track by clicking the M (Mute) button on the Click track.
 - or –
 - In the Transport window, deselect the Metronome Click button so it's not highlighted blue. Then deselect the Count Off button so it's not highlighted. (Doing both silences the click track and turns off the Count Off.)

Setting the Tempo

You can specify the session *tempo* to make the Click faster or slower.

To adjust the tempo do the following:

- 1 Choose View > Rulers > Tempo. See where it says “Tempo” in the Edit window? Click on the plus symbol (+) that appears next to it. Then type the tempo you want in the Tempo Change dialog and click OK.



- 2 Press the Spacebar or click the Play button to listen to your click play back at a different speed. Repeat the previous steps if you need to enter a different tempo.
- 3 Press the Spacebar again or click Stop when you're done.

Using MIDI to Compose

What's MIDI?

MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) data isn't audio, and it has no sound of its own. MIDI is just a way for musical devices like virtual instrument plug-ins, MIDI controllers, and MIDI sequencers to talk to one another.

Hardware MIDI instruments connect via MIDI cables to the MIDI inputs and outputs on your audio interface or MIDI interface. Virtual instruments are inserted as plug-ins on Instrument tracks in Pro Tools and accessed directly from within Pro Tools. If you don't have a MIDI Controller, skip to "Mix and Change Your Sounds" on page 15.

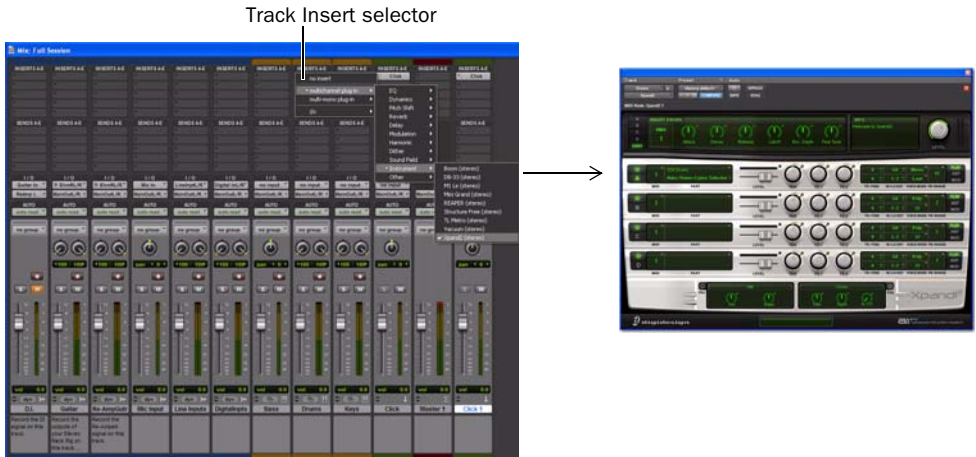
Make Beats and Compose with a MIDI Controller

Here we'll show you how to compose with a MIDI controller/keyboard (you can also compose using just the mouse) using the Session Template file named "Full Session."

To record MIDI on an Instrument track:

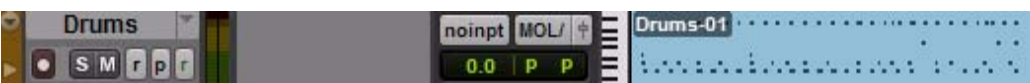
- 1 Choose File > Open, navigate to the Session Template file "Full Session" and select it, then click Open.
- 2 Make sure your Eleven Rack is connected to your computer.
- 3 Use MIDI cables to connect your MIDI controller/keyboard directly to the MIDI ports on the back of the Eleven Rack. (For details, see the *Eleven Rack User Guide*.)
- 4 Choose View > Mix Window to display the Mix window, then navigate to the *Drums* channel strip.

5 Click the Track Insert selector near the top of the Instrument track and choose Xpand!2 from the Instrument sub-menu. Pro Tools inserts the plug-in on your track and opens its plug-in window.



Inserting Xpand!2 on a track (left) and the Xpand!2 plug-in window (right)

- 6** Click the Librarian menu and choose a preset sound from the Drums sub-menu.
- 7** Select Options > MIDI Thru. (Verify that MIDI Thru is checked, if not select it to “check” it.)
- 8** Click the Record Enable button to enable the Instrument track for MIDI recording.
- 9** Now play your MIDI controller/keyboard and hear the drum sound. Pick another drum sound if you want by choosing a new patch from the Drum sub-menu.
- 10** In the Transport window, click Return to Zero to start recording from the beginning of the session. You can also record to a selection in a track or from the cursor location in the Edit window.
- 11** If you want to record to the metronome or click track included with this session, configure the Click and session tempo (see “Using a Click (Metronome)” on page 11).
- 12** When you are ready to start recording, click Play or press the Spacebar. To stop, press the Spacebar or click Stop.



Instrument track with MIDI data (the drum line)

13 Click the track Record button again to take it out of record enable and play back what you just recorded.

If this sort of composition interests you, see the *Pro Tools Reference Guide* (Help > Pro Tools Reference Guide) to learn more about virtual instruments and composition in Pro Tools, including Loop Playback, and how you can apply all sorts of other musical treatments to your rhythms, sounds, and patterns.

Mix and Change Your Sounds

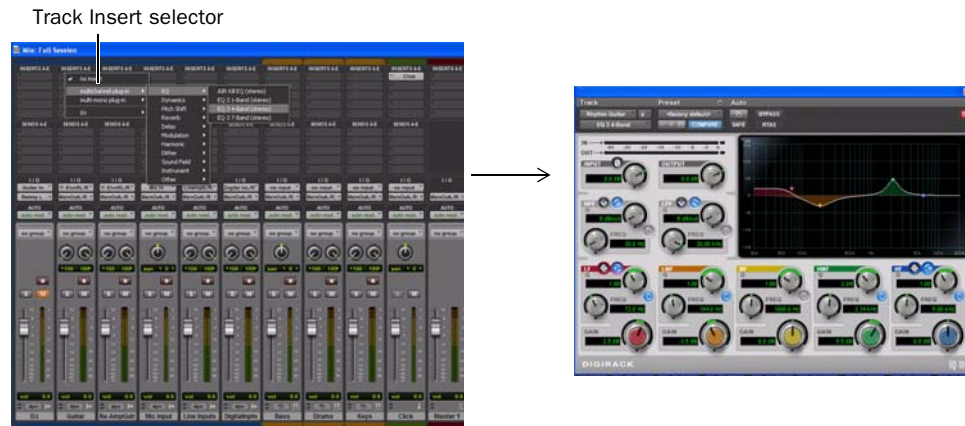
Your Pro Tools LE system comes supplied with a wealth of plug-ins that you can use to change the sounds you've recorded. This section shows one example of how plug-ins can effect, or *process* your sound by showing how to use EQ on one track. (Virtual instruments are plug-ins that *make* sound, and you can learn how to use them in "Using MIDI to Compose" on page 13). To finish up we'll fade out the ending.

EQ

An equalizer, or EQ, shapes and manipulate a sound's frequency spectrum. It's one way to give your guitar sound more low-end punch, or more bite on the highs or upper-mids.

To apply EQ to a track:

- 1 Choose Window > Mix.
- 2 In the top part of the track you want to EQ, click a Track Insert selector and choose EQ 3 4-Band (stereo) from the EQ sub-menu. Pro Tools inserts the plug-in on your track and opens its plug-in window.



Inserting EQ on a track (left) and the EQ 3 4-Band (mono) plug-in window (right)

- 3 Press the Spacebar to start playback.

4 In the plug-in window, click the Librarian menu (shown below) and choose an available Settings File (preset) from the list.



5 Choose other presets and you can hear what their settings do to your sound. Try out different plug-ins to start learning about the different colors you have at your disposal. (The electronic *DigiRack Plug-Ins* guide is installed in your Documentation folder, and it's a great place to learn more about EQ, delay (echo) and other types of effects.)

6 Press the Spacebar again to stop playback.

Fade Out

To put the finishing touch on a song it's sometimes nice to go with the classic fade out. Here's an example of how to use *mix automation* to fade out a track. (There are many other ways to create fades described in the *Pro Tools Reference Guide*.)

To do a fade out:

1 First, locate the Master Fader track provided in the session template. Make sure you're in the Edit window.



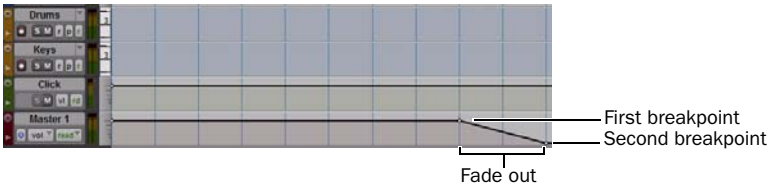
Master Fader in the session

2 In the Master Fader track, click with the Grabber tool (it's in the toolbar) at the place you'd like the fade to start. This creates a white dot or "breakpoint."



Grabber tool

3 Click again with the Grabber a little later in the track, and drag that new breakpoint down to its lowest possible position, so it looks something like this:



4 Switch to the Selector tool (click the I-beam-looking tool in the Toolbar), then click to place the cursor a few seconds or a few measures before the first breakpoint of your fade.

5 Press the Spacebar to hear the fade out. Choose Window > Mix and watch the on-screen fader as it moves in accordance with the automation breakpoints and fade out.

Pro Tools lets you automate almost any parameter on any track (this is how many cool effects are achieved, including filter sweeps, auto-pan, and more). Regardless of what you automate, you can edit breakpoint automation using many of the same tools we use to edit audio, such as the Pencil and the Trimmer. You can also use the on-screen faders and knobs to "perform" automation instead of writing it manually. You can learn more about how to record and edit your control moves in the *Pro Tools Reference Guide*.

Get Your Music Out to the World

After you've finished recording and editing tracks in a Pro Tools session you're ready to *mix down*. In these pages you'll see how to do this using the Pro Tools Bounce to Disk feature to combine all the tracks that make up a session into a single "master" audio file. After the new audio file has been bounced to disk, you can burn it to a CD or convert it to MP3 using a CD burning application like iTunes.

To create a stereo master from a session:

1 Use the Selector to click-drag the length of the session in the Timeline, or on a track. (You may want to use the Filtered Dream Demo Session the first time you try to Bounce to Disk.)



2 Choose File > Bounce to > Disk.



3 In the Bounce Options dialog, do the following to create a CD-compatible 2-track of your audio:

- Choose Outputs 1–2 as the Bounce Source.
- Choose BWF (.WAV) for the File Type.
- Choose Stereo Interleaved for the Format.
- Choose 16 for the Resolution and 44100 for the Sample Rate.

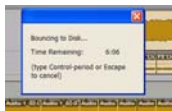
💡 *Digidesign also offers an MP3 Option that lets you bounce directly to MP3 format. Check the DigiStore on our website (www.digidesign.com), or contact your Digidesign dealer if you'd like more information. To learn more about the other options in the Bounce to Disk dialog, see the Pro Tools Reference Guide.*

4 Choose Convert after Bounce, and click Bounce. (If you make no selection, your entire session will bounce from start to finish.)



Bounce options (shown set to create audio CD burnable tracks)

5 In the Save Bounce As dialog, name your bounce and pick where it should be saved, then click Save. Pro Tools begins bouncing to disk. Pro Tools bounces are done in real time, so you hear audio playback of your mix during the bounce process (you cannot adjust any Pro Tools controls during a bounce).




After Mixdown, Mastering

After the bounce is completed, you will have an audio file that you can convert to MP3 using most common CD burning software. Converting to MP3 lets you listen to it on your iPod, post on your site, or send via email. Or, use the burner software to write the file to an audio CD that can be played on standard CD players. Listening to a reference CD in an environment other than your studio is a time-tested, professional way to see how your mix translates to other systems or listening environments.

Import a Song from a CD

This section shows you how to import a track from a CD into a Pro Tools session. What we show you here lets you import an entire song or individual tracks, as well as loops (beats, drum patterns, or other pre-recorded musical building blocks) that you can use to build compositions from scratch. You can even use this capability to import a song you just finished so that you can jam along, edit it into a loop to use for another composition, or to further process it to “master” your project.

 *Pro Tools has a powerful feature called Elastic Audio. Elastic Audio can change the speed of audio without changing pitch or change the pitch of a track without changing its speed. This is very handy for learning or transcribing riffs and solos. For more information, see the Pro Tools Reference Guide.*

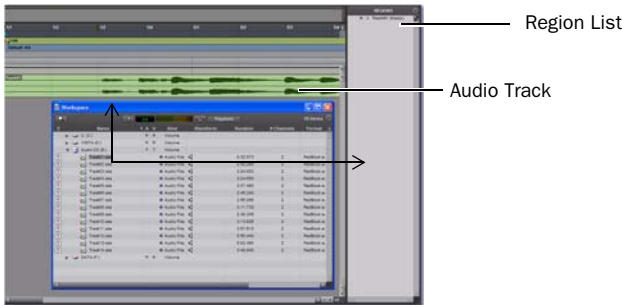
To create a new session:

1 Do one of the following:

- If you already have a session open, choose File > Close. Now choose File > New Session. In the New Session dialog, choose Create Blank Session, then click OK.
- If you just launched Pro Tools and the Quick Start dialog appears, select Create Blank Session, then click OK.

2 In the Name the Session dialog, choose where you want to save the session, and then name it and click Save.

5 Drag the item from the Workspace to the open area in the middle of the Edit window; Pro Tools creates a new audio track containing the song. The song appears in its new track where you let go of the mouse.



You can also drag items from the Workspace to the Region List and then later drag them into the track area. This lets you assemble a collection of audio for later use in different tracks or even the same track.

6 Close the Workspace browser, then press the Spacebar to begin playing back the song in Pro Tools (see “Play and Listen” on page 3).

Learn More

We hope this quick introduction has inspired you to make music with Pro Tools. To learn more about any of the topics presented, check the *Pro Tools Reference Guide*. Search for any terms you’re curious about. You can also watch any of the video tutorials included with your package or online at the Digidesign website (www.digidesign.com).

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