

Introduction to Cool Edit Pro

Introduction

Cool Edit Pro is an application for manipulating audio files. While it is a very powerful program for such a simple task as cropping and adjusting scanner recordings, it is a popular program that many people may have on their system.

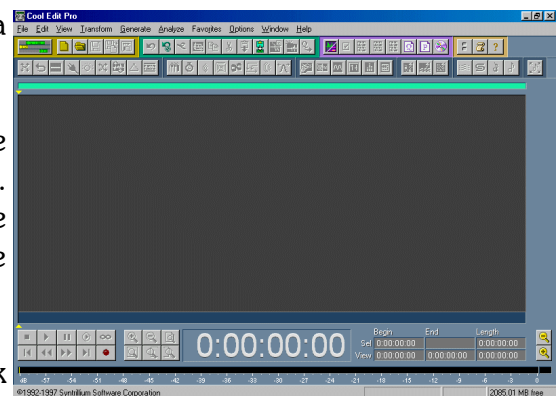
Starting Cool Edit

When you start the Cool Edit program, you should see a screen like the one here to the right.

The Cool Edit program can operate in two modes – the *Single Waveform* and *Multi-track Editor* views. Everything we need to do can be done in the Single Waveform view so there should be no need to change views.

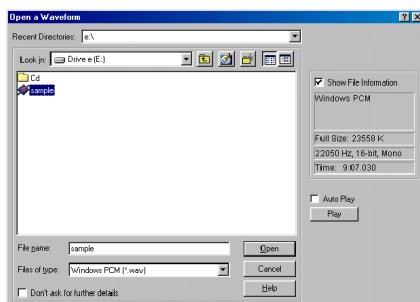


Should you need to change views, click on the *View* menu and choose the first option, or press the *F12* key on the keyboard.



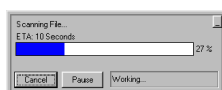
Opening a File for Editing

After you have completed the recording of audio (such as from Scanner Recorder, covered in a separate tutorial), you can use Cool Edit to trim or edit the audio file.



Click on the *File* menu and choose *Open* (or just press *CTRL+O*) and you will get an open file dialog box. This box is based on the standard Windows open file dialog, it just has more “bells and whistles”

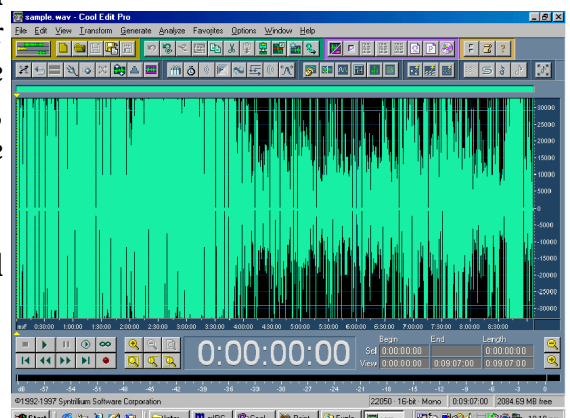
Navigate to the file you wish to open and click on it once. Cool Edit shows the audio type in the grey section of the dialog box. Click on the *Open* command button to open the audio file.



Depending on how large the file is (and how much memory you have in your computer), Cool Edit may spend some time opening the file for editing. As the file is opening, you should see a box on the screen which displays the progress of the open command.

After the file is opened, the *Waveform* will be displayed in the main Cool Edit window.

We can now start to edit the file.

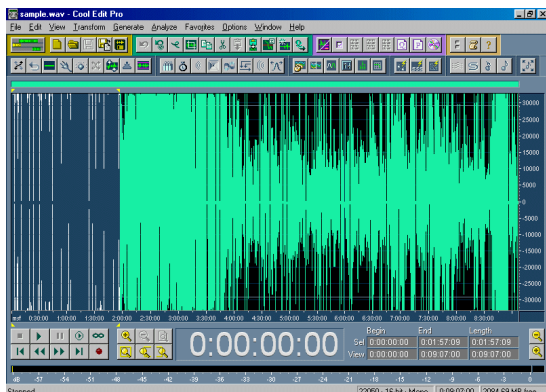


Trimming Excess Audio

Sometimes you may only want part of the recorded audio included in your final file. Using Cool Edit, we can trim the audio to our own specifications.

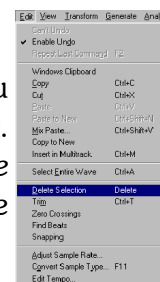


We shall use the *Play* and *Stop* commands to locate the beginning of the audio we wish to include. Clicking the *Play* button begins the playback. As you play the audio file, you will notice a vertical line traversing the waveform from left to right. This is the current “position” in the file. Once you have found the beginning of the section you want to edit, click on the *Stop* button and remember the approximate position of the vertical line.



Using the mouse, click the left button somewhere just to the *left* of the position the vertical marker was at when the file was playing and drag the mouse to the left. A block will be highlighted.

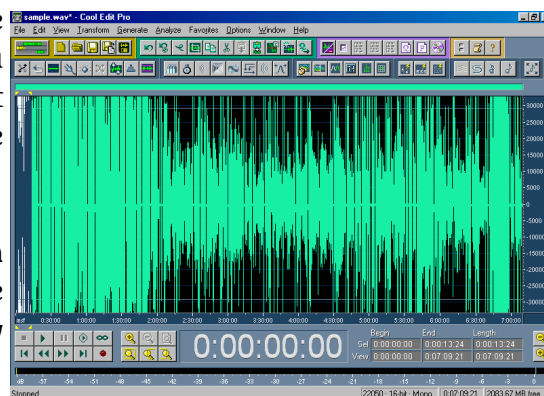
To delete this block, click on the *Edit* menu and choose *Delete Section* from the list. Alternatively, you could just press the *Delete* key on the keyboard – that has the same effect.



The highlighted section will now be deleted. Play the file again and take note of the exact start of the area you wish to set as your “beginning”. This time, highlight from just *after* (to the right of) this spot, back to the beginning of the file.



Click on the *Zoom to Selection* button (second row shown, first on the left) and the waveform window will change so that only the selected section occupies the window.



Play the file again, highlight and delete the audio until you have deleted everything before the section you want as your “beginning”. If you make a mistake, take advantage of the *Undo* command, found in the *Edit* menu.

You have now successfully trimmed the beginning of the file. Restore the display to show the entire waveform by clicking the *Zoom Out Full* command (top row, far right of the Zoom tools). Repeat this highlight-and-delete process for the end of the file. Instead of subjecting yourself to listening to the entire audio file, right through to near the end, click the mouse button once somewhere inside the waveform display and then click the play button to play from that point.

You have now completed the file trimming. Save the audio file back to the hard disk. Depending on the quality of the original audio file, you may not need to edit the waveform any further. Many audio files will be suitable for converting to a final compressed format at this point. If you have no further editing requirements, see the document; *Introduction to Audio Compression using MP3*, otherwise read the document *More Cool Edit Commands and Techniques*.