

Clean-up Audio Noise in Soundtrack Pro (Set Noise Print)

The first thing you do in STP is to find a section of your audio file where there is nothing but background sound. You may need to use the up and down arrow keys (no modifier keys) to zoom in and out of the Wave Form Editor window to get in close enough to isolate a section of "room tone." It doesn't take much, but the larger the section you highlight (within reason), the better. Click and drag to highlight that section of the sound file that is only the background noise you want to filter out. Then go to Process > Set Noise Print.

This step pretty much explains itself; it sets the sample of what you want to remove. Click outside your selection to deselect everything.

Next, go back to STP's Process menu and select Reduce Noise. An adjustments dialog will appear. In the lower-left corner is a play/stop button with which you can audition your sound as you adjust it. Play with the Threshold and the Reduction levels until you find the best settings to reduce the noise to your liking. Some recordings clean up really quickly and purely. Some take more work and are just too noisy to fix completely. You can also check the Noise Only box to hear what STP is removing from the recording, fully isolated from the rest of the sound. Once you're satisfied, click the Apply button.

You'll see the Reduce Noise entry in your Actions list as its red bar fills to indicate the progress of the noise reduction algorithms. When STP has finished processing the noise reduction effect, you can play it back to hear your results. You may want to apply other filters and such. Notice that no matter what you do, the Action list is always there for reference. You can uncheck and check each Action to further experiment.

Since you're working with an STP Audio File Project, you always have that Actions list available to you to manage the effects you've applied. If you export the project as an AIFF file, the Actions will be flattened, and you will not be able to go back and undo any of them.

At this point, save your project. When you hit Save, a dialog box will appear that will ask you to make a choice. Choose the first option, Include Source Audio, since you're already working with a copy of the original.

Once your file is saved, you can quit STP and return to FCP. Notice two things right away. First, you already have your "(sent)" file imported in the Bin. Second, note that the new file has already replaced the original in the Timeline (Figure 6, left). Poof, done!