How-to by example

Here's the project we are going to export for subsequent work using Pro Tools. It's not a complicated project but there are enough tracks to make manual "track by track" export tedious.

The first step is to instruct GarageBand to show the track lock buttons on each track. Select the 'Track' main menu, then "Show Track Lock".

Each track now shows a new button with a lock icon like the one highlighted here. Click on each of these buttons in turn so that lock is on for every track in your project.

Your project should now look something like this.

The lock feature creates the audio files with only the tracks effects applied; it does not include the master effects, which is of course how we want it. If you want to export without track effects you will still need to disable all of the effects on each track using the inspector.

Now you are ready to export. Except... there's no button or menu item that seems to deal with the locked tracks. What exactly does GarageBand do, and when does it do it?
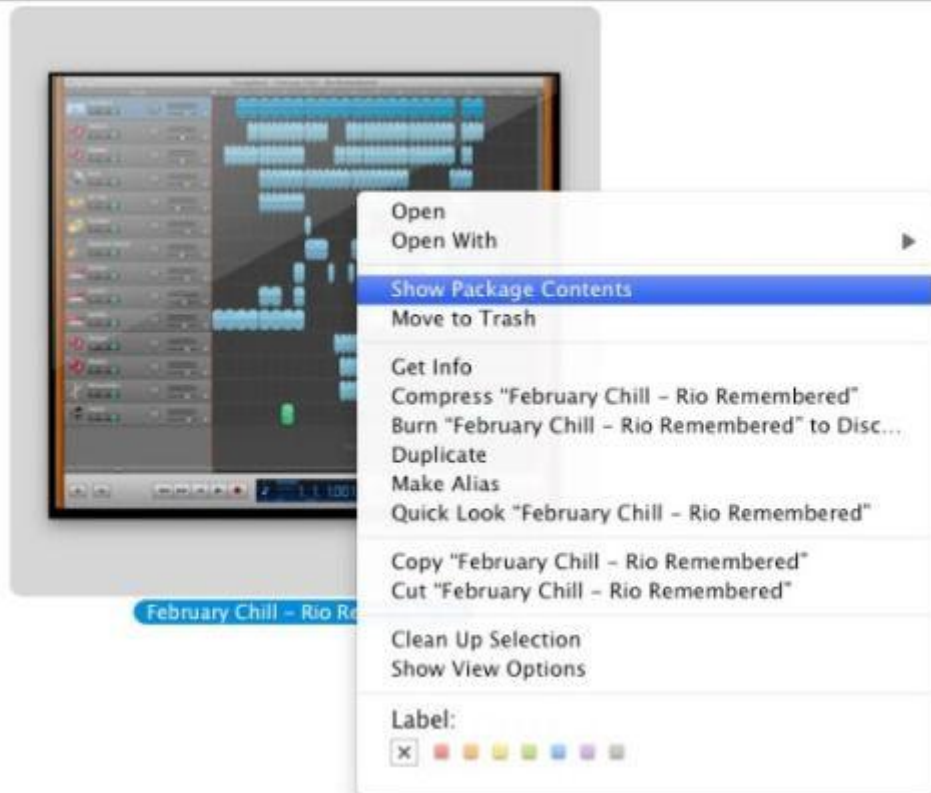
GarageBand will create the audio files the next time you press "Play". Press it now and you should see something like this.

Depending on your computer and your project this step can take a bit of time.
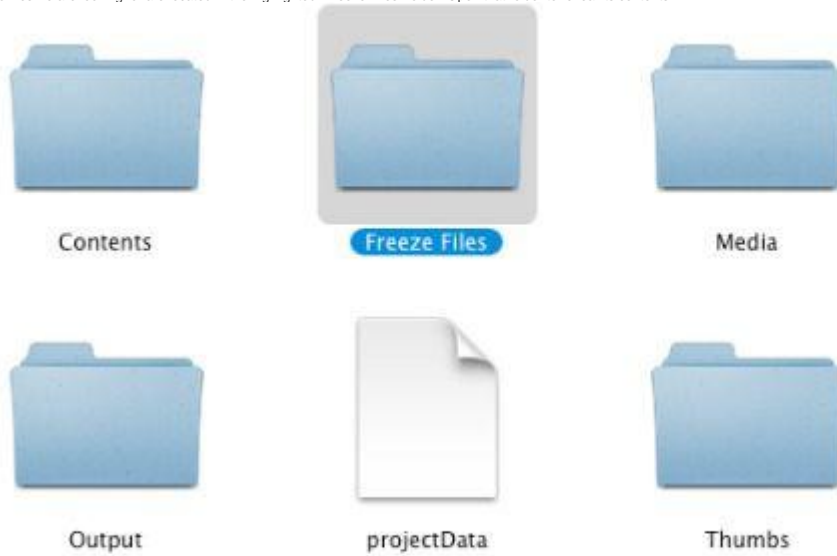
Once GarageBand finishes all that is left is to locate the audio files and then you can import them into another DAW to continue work. Where did the files get placed?

Open a Finder window and locate the project's GarageBand document. Right click (or control-click if you are using a one button mouse) and select "Show Package Contents".
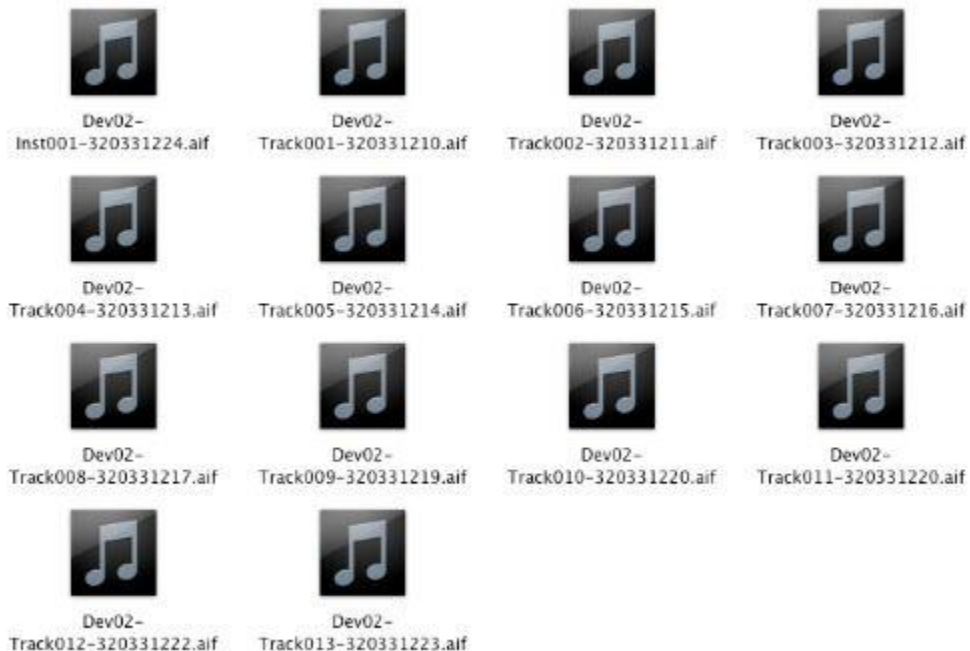
The Finder will open another window that shows the "insides" of your GarageBand project. You will see something like this.

The audio files we are looking for are located in the highlighted "Freeze Files" folder. Open that folder to reveal its contents.

Contents

Freeze Files

Media

Output

projectData

Thumbs

For the example project you will find one file per track. Notice that they have somewhat odd names. This is one disadvantage of this method, the audio files do not include the track names. (But once you import these into your other software it's usually pretty obvious what is what.)

Dev02-
Inst001-320331224.aif

Dev02-
Track001-320331210.aif

Dev02-
Track002-320331211.aif

Dev02-
Track003-320331212.aif

Dev02-
Track004-320331213.aif

Dev02-
Track005-320331214.aif

Dev02-
Track006-320331215.aif

Dev02-
Track007-320331216.aif

Dev02-
Track008-320331217.aif

Dev02-
Track009-320331219.aif

Dev02-
Track010-320331220.aif

Dev02-
Track011-320331220.aif

Dev02-
Track012-320331222.aif

Dev02-
Track013-320331223.aif

Copy all of these files into an easy to find location. This step is necessary because most audio software does not let you "look" inside the GarageBand project to locate the "Freeze Files" folder. It's also good practice to do this since GarageBand considers these files somewhat temporary. These are rather large files (in this example the total size is just under a giga byte) so be sure you have enough free hard disk space!

All that is left is to perform the import into your other DAW, or if you are collaborating, send the files so your partner can import them. The steps to perform an import depend on the software but Pro Tools LE 8 will be shown to highlight what to expect.