How to Make Your Own Ringtones

by Mike Sullivan | Cove Apple Club | December 9, 2015 | Some Rights Reserved

Apple ships every iPhone and iPad with a very nice selection of sounds that are used to alert you when you receive an incoming call, text message, email or FaceTime call. And as nice as all those sounds are, sometimes you want to have your own distinctive sound for those events — perhaps to stand out in a roomful of other iPhones' sounds, or to express something unique about your personality.

Of course you can **buy** optional ringtones in the iTunes store (there are literally millions of them for sale!), but it's almost as easy to make your own — **free** — using built-in tools on your Mac.

Where to get music or sound effects for your ringtones:

There are at least a half-dozen different ways you can find or create original ringtones for your iPhone or iPad:

•   You can use any song you've **purchased** on the iTunes store, or any track you've ripped from a CD **you own**, to create a ringtone. Both of those uses are considered "fair use" under US Copyright law, as long as you don't sell or otherwise profit from the creation of the ringtone.

•   **FreeSounds.org**: tens of thousands of royalty-free sounds, sound effects and music clips. Free to download, free to use — just sign in with a free account.

•   **SoundJay.com**: more free sounds, but the site has no search feature, and previewing the sounds requires the Adobe Flash browser plug-in, so only try this site if you can't find what you need at **FreeSounds.org**

•   **FreePlayMusic.com**: thousands and thousands of original music tracks, all available to download and use for personal use starting at $0.99 each. Very high-quality, and lots of different themes and genres.

•   **iTunes Store** (iTunes App on Mac, PC or iOS): Over 20,000,000 songs for sale, most at $1.29 per track or less. You can edit any song you've purchased from iTunes into a ringtone and be in compliance with US copyright, as long as you don't sell or otherwise profit from the creation of the ringtone.

•   **Voice Memo App** on iPhone: Record your own voice or any sound around you with your iPhone's built-in microphone and Voice Memo app.

•   **QuickTime Player** (Mac app): QuickTime Player can record high-quality audio and video on your Mac.

Apps for editing your ringtone audio

Here are some apps that can be used to edit your audio file to make it into a ringtone:

•   **GarageBand**: Apple's music creation and music education app ships free with every new Mac, and is for sale on the Mac App Store for older Macs for just $14.99.

•   **Sound Studio**: Mike's choice for a simple, inexpensive, high-quality visual audio editing app. Dozens of features, easy to learn and use. Available on the Mac App Store for $14.99 or at **www.felttip.com**

•   **Audacity** - Free, open-source audio editing app for Mac, Windows and Linux. Extremely powerful, but a steep learning curve! Download at AudacityTeam.org

•   **But the only apps we're going to use for this how-to are QuickTime Player and GarageBand — already installed on every Mac!** Just open your Applications folder and double-click to open them!

How to edit your ringtone with QuickTime Player

We'll assume you've already got the sound effect or audio clip you want to use for your ringtone on your Mac.

1. Make a copy of the original file as a backup before you start!

    1. Select the file in the Finder
    2. From the File menu, choose Duplicate
    3. Rename the file to XXXXX - BACKUP

2. Right-click on the file in the Finder

3. From the contextual menu, choose Open with…

4. Select QuickTime Player from the pop-out menu

5. QuickTime Player opens and the file loads.

6. Drag the right edge of the QuickTime Player window to expand the timeline as wide as necessary.

7. From the QuickTime Player Edit menu, choose Trim, or type Cmd-T. The waveform is displayed in the timeline.

8. Drag the left and right edge handles of the audio trimmer to edit the start and end of your ringtone. Press the space bar to hear your clip as you crop it.

9. Click Trim to complete the edit and crop your clip.

10. If needed, press the space bar to listen to your clip again. Type Cmd-L to "loop" your clip so you can hear how it will sound when repeatedly sounded on your iPhone.

11. When you're happy with your clip, click File

12. Choose Export from the File menu, then choose Audio Only

13. Type a name and choose a location for your new clip. Leave the extension blank.

14. Quit QuickTime Player.

Use GarageBand to turn your clip into a ringtone and send it to iTunes

1. In the Applications folder, open GarageBand

2. From the New Project selector, choose Empty Project

3. From the Input selector, click once on the microphone icon, then choose "No input" from the Input drop-down box, then click Create

4. Drag your clip file onto the GarageBand clips window. The waveform will be displayed. Press the space bar to hear your clip.

5. From the Share menu, choose Ringtone to iTunes

6. iTunes opens and shows your new ringtone in the My Tones window.

7. Click once on the name of the tone, then type a new name for your your tone if necessary

8. Connect your iPhone to your Mac with the charge/sync cable

9. In the source bar, click on the iPhone icon

10. In the sidebar, click on Tones

11. Choose to either sync all Tones or just selected Tones to your iPhone

12. At the bottom of the iTunes window, click Apply to sync and save the new Tone to your device

13. Click the eject icon to disconnect your iPhone from iTunes, then unplug the charge/sync cable

Choose your new ringtone on your device

1. On your iPhone or iPad, tap Settings

2. Tap Sounds

3. In the Sounds and Vibration Patterns section, choose an event to modify with your new Tone

4. Select one of your new Tones from the list