Editing Audio in Logic Pro 9

Introduction to Music Production, Week 2

Joe Muscara - May 5, 2015

Introduction

My name is Joe Muscara and I live in Houston, Texas where "Rock Awhile," the first rock and roll recording, was made by native Houstonian Goree Carter in 1949. This lesson is for week two of Introduction to Music Production at coursera.org. I will be showing a few of the many editing techniques available in Logic Pro 9.
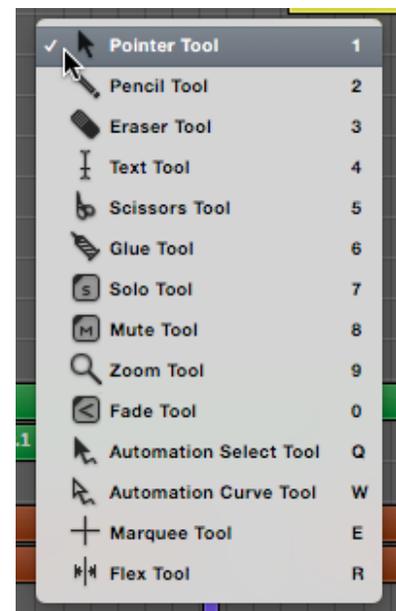
Before We Begin

Logic Pro is a very deep and powerful program. There is usually more than one way to do something, whether it be a menu item, a keyboard shortcut, or a cursor tool. If you're familiar with Logic Pro, you may have a completely different method to do some of the tasks I describe below. What's important is that you use what's best for your workflow. Also, while I am showing Logic Pro **9**, these techniques are the same or similar in Logic Pro 8 and X. Consult your documentation for specifics.

The audio editing examples below assume that you have already recorded audio in Logic Pro and that you know some of Logic Pro's terminology. If you want to try these techniques and you do not have a recording to work with, you can make a test recording with your built-in microphone, or you can use one of the audio (blue) Apple Loops.

Some Basics

Logic Pro allows you to configure the cursor several ways, many of which are beyond the scope of this lesson. However, there are a few useful shortcuts that you will use often. First is zooming. When you hold down Control and Option, the cursor becomes the Zoom tool or magnifier. You can then select an area in the Arrange area (as well as some of the editors) to zoom. To zoom back out, simply click once in the Arrange area with the Zoom tool.

Another shortcut is the Esc key, which lets you choose a different tool for the cursor from the Tool menu instead of having to go to the Tool menu at the top of the Arrange area. In addition, by clicking on a tool while holding down the Command key, that becomes the Command-click tool. Did you
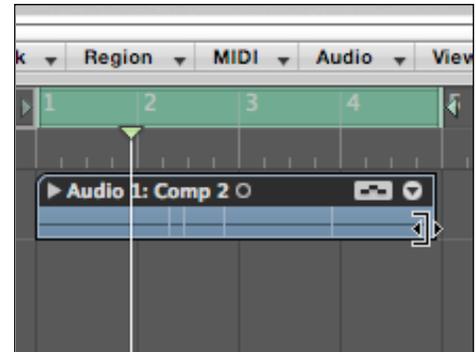
know that Logic Pro assigns two tools to the cursor, where the second one is only a Command-click away? Now you do.

Trimming Audio

Audio regions in Logic Pro are like a window into the actual audio file that you recorded. You can have multiple regions looking into the same audio file, and they can use different parts of it. The parts can be completely separate or they can overlap. When you edit an audio region, the edits are almost always *nondestructive*, meaning that your original audio file remains untouched.

Trimming or resizing an audio region is one such activity. Before you resize a region, you may want to zoom into it so you can see what you are trimming. To resize the region, move the cursor over the lower right or lower left edge of the region. The cursor will turn into the Resize tool and you can click and drag the edge.
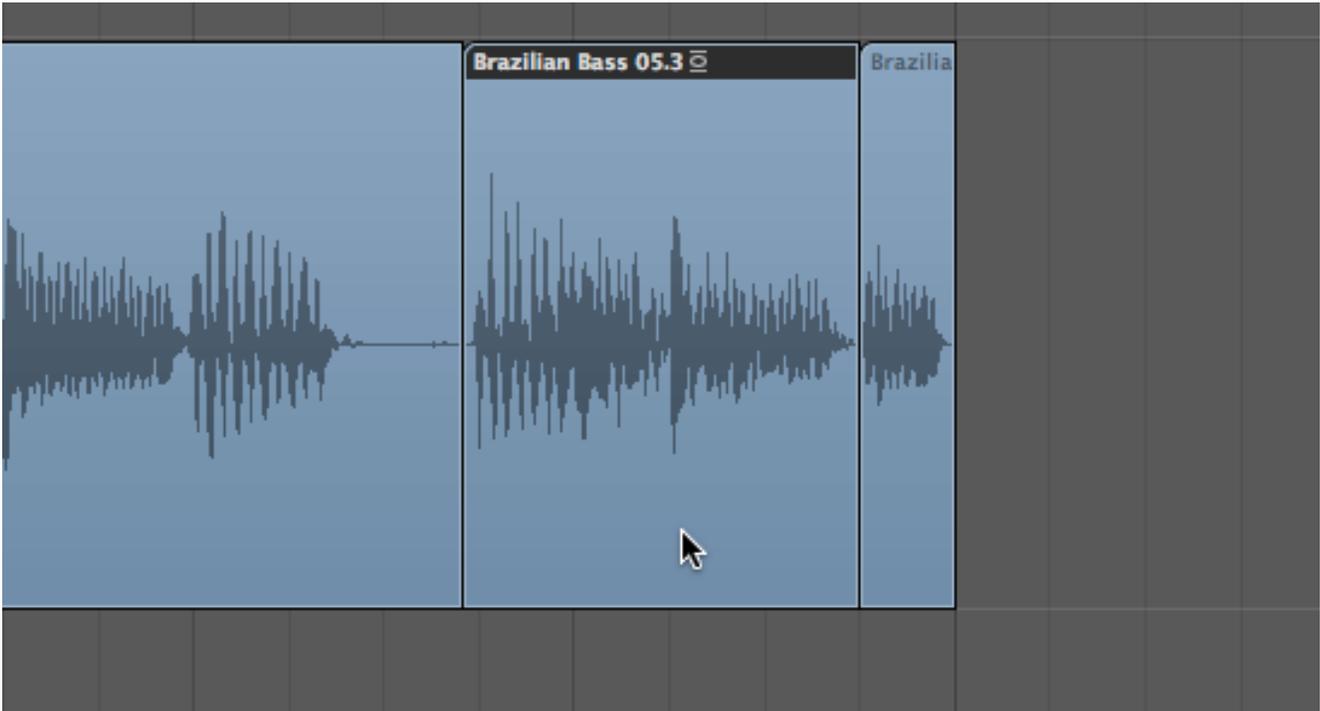
Separating Audio

There are a number of ways to split or separate parts of an audio region. One such way is with the Marquee tool, which is the default tool when you Command-click. Select the portion of the audio you want to separate by Command-dragging over that portion. The portion will be highlighted.
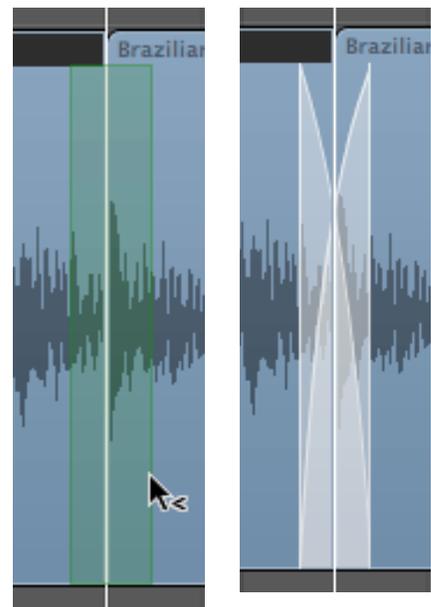
Then, by merely clicking on the selection with the Pointer tool, the selection is automatically divided. You can then drag it to move it or Option-drag it to copy it elsewhere.
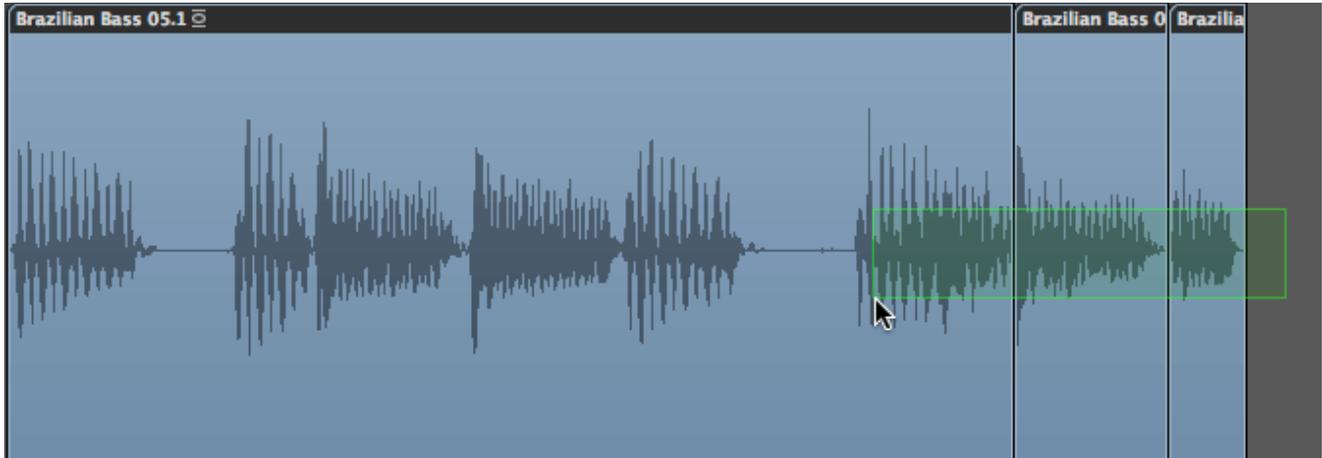

Crossfades

To crossfade between two adjacent regions, choose the Fade tool and drag it over the adjoining parts of the two regions that you want to include in the crossfade. Logic Pro automatically applies a crossfade when a fade is applied over two adjoining regions. If you want to adjust the crossfade, Control-Shift-drag the Crossfade tool up or down on the crossfade.
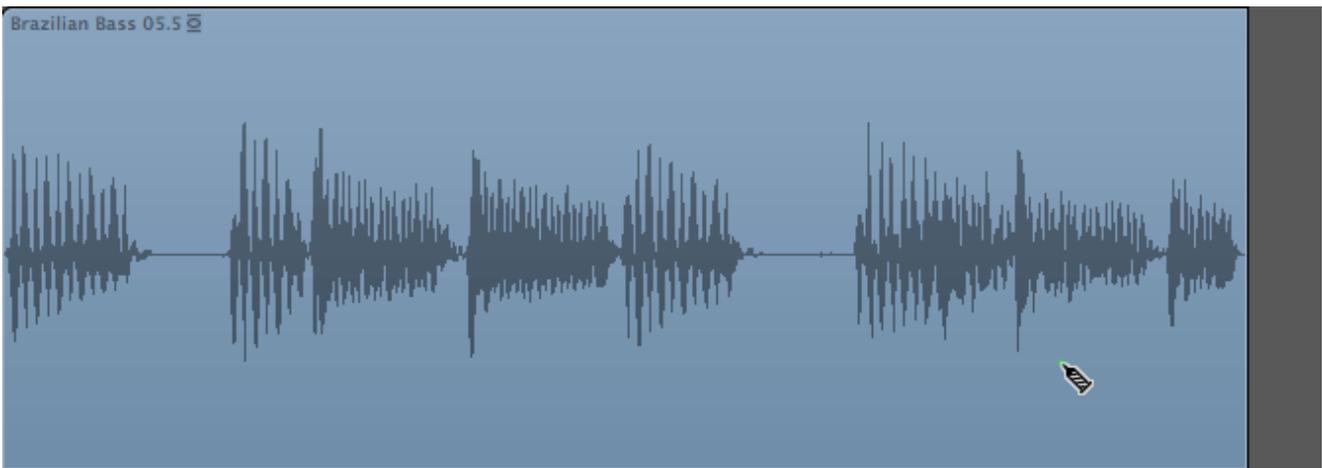

(Left: Crossfade selection. Right: Crossfade as applied by Logic Pro.)

Merging Regions

One quick way to merge adjoining regions is to Glue them together. Select the Glue tool, then select the adjoining regions that you wish to merge (you can do this selection first).
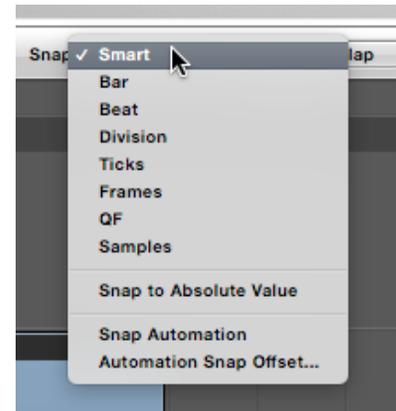

Then simply click on any of the selected regions with the Glue tool and they will merge.
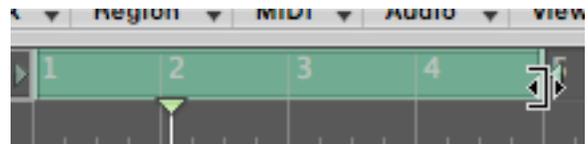
The Grid and Snapping

Logic Pro defaults to Smart Snapping which snaps to the nearest bar, beat, sub-beat, etc., depending upon the zoom level and the current Bar ruler division value. In most cases this will allow you to move a region as precisely as you need. If you need more precision, you can zoom in and the snapping will occur at a higher resolution. Another option is to hold the Control key while you move the region for a finer resolution or hold down Control and Shift for an even finer resolution than the Control key alone.

Cycle

Cycling repeats a selected part of the song. To turn Cycle mode on and off you can either press the C key, click the Cycle button in the Transport bar, or click the gray locators stripe in the top part of the Bar ruler. The green part of the Bar will continuously repeat when you Play. You can adjust both ends of the cycle by dragging the ends of the locators stripe, and you can move the locators stripe by dragging it from the middle.

If you have a particular region that you want to cycle, select that region in the Arrange area and click the Set Locators button in the Toolbar. The cycle region will move directly above that region.

Markers

The simplest way to create a marker is to move the playhead where you would like to place the marker, and press Control-K. This will create a marker that starts at the playhead and extends to the end of the track, or to the next marker if you've already created one. Double-click anywhere on the marker to select the text and rename it, and press Option-C to open the Colors palette to choose a color for the marker.

Naming and Coloring Regions

To name a region, select the Text tool and click on the region. Type in a name and press Return. To color a region, select the region, press Option-C to open the Colors palette, and click on the desired color.