

The Pro Tools Edit Toolbar



The edit toolbar gives access to most of the editing modes and tools used in Pro Tools. It also gives access to some MIDI and sync functions as well. We will take a look at what each of these buttons do.

1. Edit Mode Buttons:



There are four different edit modes available that change the way the timeline operates in the edit window. You can cycle through the different modes by hitting **F1**, **F2**, **F3**, and **F4**.

Slip mode (F2).

When in slip mode, you are able to move waveforms freely backwards and forward through the timeline. You can overlap different regions and move stereo tracks in and out of phase with each other.

Shuffle Mode (F1).

In slip mode you can overlap different regions without changing the timing of the session. Shuffle mode works almost the same way as slip, but when you move one region over the other it will move the adjacent regions forwards in time thus changing the timing of the whole session. It will also automatically place regions right against each other when they are moved.

Grid Mode.

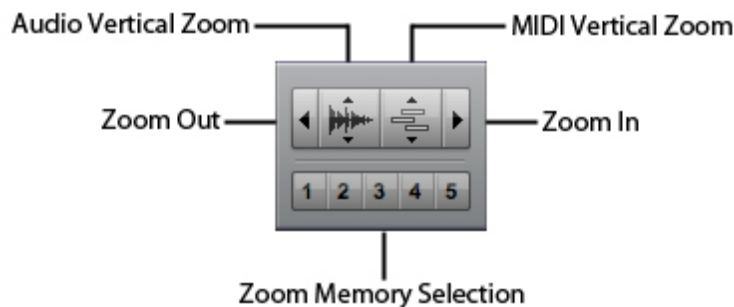
Grid mode is quite possibly the most useful edit mode in the program. This is especially true

when using Pro Tools for electronic music production and when recording live music to a click track. This mode is based on a musical tempo system. You can change the grid to operate within every musical division of time, such as, whole note, half note, quarter note and so on. You can also change the way the grid operates based on a predetermined conductor track that allows for tempo and meter changes. Additionally, you can change the way the grid operates by changing it to view time in divisions of samples instead of bars and beats.

Spot Mode.

Spot mode is based on a dialog system that is very useful when regions are synced to a time clock source such as video or other time locked audio. When you attempt to move a waveform in spot mode, the spot dialog window will appear and give you access to the timebase of the region which you can type in new values for. This is definitely the hardest way to edit in Pro Tools, but it is also the most accurate.

2. View Selection:



Zoom In / Out:

These buttons enlarge the waveform view horizontally. You can also do this by holding **COMMAND** + [(or)].

Audio Vertical Zoom:

These buttons increase the vertical size of the waveforms within regions. This makes it easier to see the overall peaks of a particularly quiet waveform. However, by zooming waveforms vertically it might appear that the waveform is peaking. This is not the case, the waveform is just zoomed in too much within the region boundaries. This is why it is important to monitor peaks with the LED meter and not rely too much on the waveform display. You can access this on the keyboard by holding **COMMAND** + **OPTION** + [(or)]

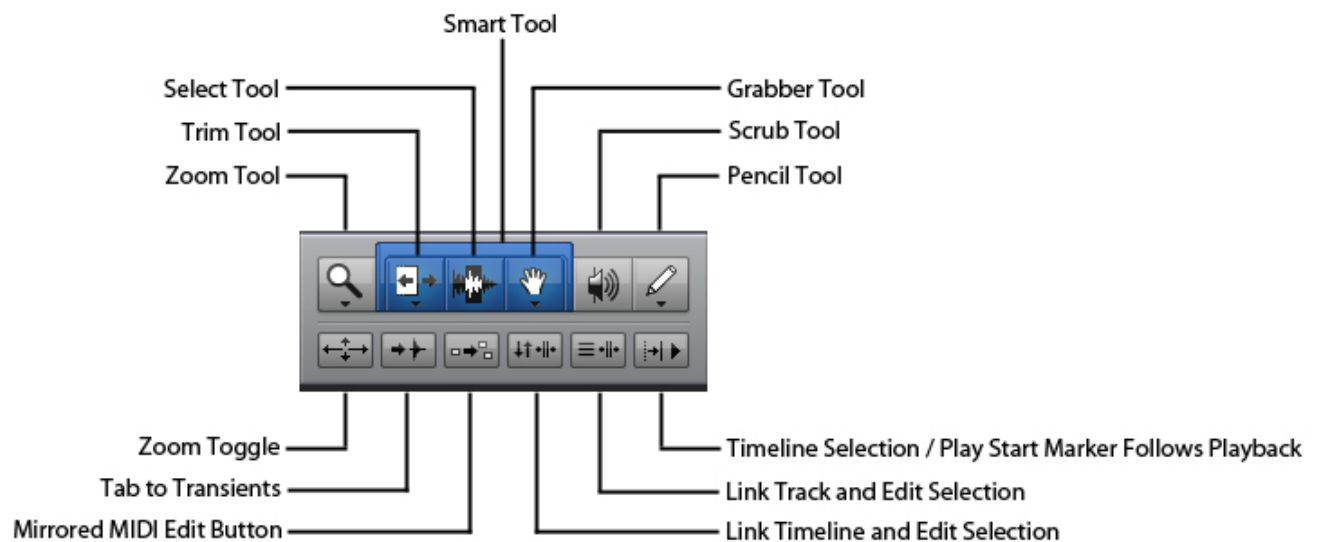
MIDI Vertical Zoom:

This works on the same principle as the audio vertical zoom buttons but it only applies to MIDI and instrument tracks. You can access this on the keyboard by holding **COMMAND** + **SHIFT** + [(or)]

Zoom Memory Selection:

You may like a way a particular region display is zoomed to your taste. By **COMMAND** clicking these numerical buttons you can save and quickly recall that zoom setting for later use.

3. Edit Tool Selection:



Zoom Tool (F5):

The zoom tool does what you would expect. When you click once anywhere in the region view window it will zoom one increment. Click again and it will continue to zoom. **OPTION** click will fill the entire window with your zoom selection. And double clicking the zoom tool will bring the whole session within the window.

Trim Tool (F6):

This tool can be extremely helpful, or extremely detrimental to editing. You use it by hovering over the beginning or end of a region and dragging it to the desired trim length. The trouble comes when you just click with the trim tool, as it will trim your selection by where you clicked it. If you become careless with this, you might lose track of your edits.

Select Tool (F7):

I call this tool the edit tool most of the time since its primary function is to separate regions. Click anywhere in the region view window and the cursor will fall into place. By hitting **COMMAND + E** you will split the region into separate edits. By double clicking a region you will select it in its entirety. And by dragging the cursor, you can highlight a selection and edit if desired.

Grabber Tool (F8):

This is also called the hand tool since it looks like one. This is the primary selection tool in the edit window. You can grab a region and move it anywhere in the timeline. **OPTION** dragging a region will copy it.

Scrub Tool (F9):

The scrub tool is handy especially if you are dealing with a lot of loops and samples within a session. It is basically a preview function. Clicking on a region with this tool will make just the audio within that region play over the speakers. Its primary use is just to recall what a particular region will sound like without playing the entire session.

Pencil Tool (F10):

The pencil tool (while sometimes underused) is one of the most powerful tools in the program. It serves a great many purposes from drawing automation data to editing midi notes to even drawing audio waveforms from scratch.

Smart Tool (F7+F8+F9):

The smart tool essentially groups the trim, selector, and grabber tools together. By highlighting different portions of a region you gain the three different functions without having to cycle through the tools all of the time. Some people like it, some people don't. I feel, if you get used to using it you can edit much faster than normal. The smart tool also has some hidden functions. By hovering over the top corners of regions you can create quick fades and by holding **OPTION** and hovering between regions, you can create quick cross fades.

Zoom Toggle:

This will zoom an edit selection to the width of the Edit window. Hitting it again will take you back to the previous zoom setting.

Tab to Transients:

This sometimes understated function can be quite powerful and speed things up, especially if you are editing drums. If this button is turned on, selecting a point in a region and hitting **TAB** will bring the cursor to the beginning of the next available transient in the waveform. This allows you to edit in time relatively easily without causing too much damage. It is not exact however, and can sometimes miss a transient or two.

Mirrored MIDI Edit Button:

The Mirrored MIDI Editing option allows you to edit a single MIDI region that's been copied (or looped) to other parts of a song, and have your edits reflected in all the copied regions.

Link Timeline and edit selection:

Turning on this button will allow the timeline cursor to snap to wherever you put the selection cursor. Highlighting a region will likewise make a timeline selection and you can loop play and record within it.

Link Track and Edit Selection:

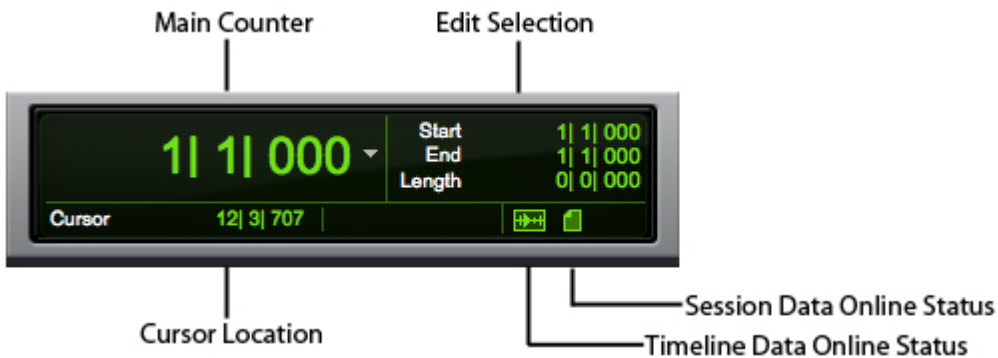
When this option is enabled, wherever you click in a specific region its corresponding track in the mix and edit window will also be selected.

Timeline Selection / Play Start Marker Follows Playback:

When this is enabled the play marker will follow along until the edge of the edit window and

then the next screen of audio will appear and so on and so fourth. When it is turned off the play marker will disappear off screen until stop is pressed.

4. Main And Sub Counter Display:



Main Counter:

Displays the current position of the play marker in bars and beats, minutes and seconds or SMPTE time code.

Cursor Location:

Just like the main counter except it follows only the timeline selection.

Edit Selection:

Shows the current position of the selection in the edit window.

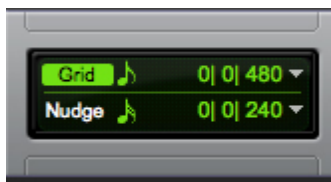
Timeline Data Online Status:

Used to indicate if the timeline is locked to an external clock source.

Session Data Online Status:

Used to indicate if the session is locked to an external clock source.

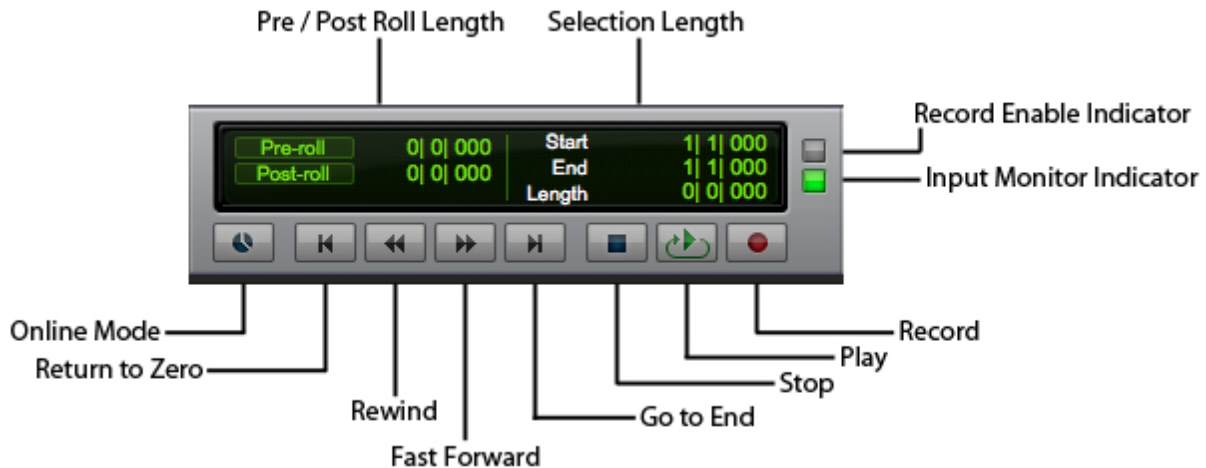
5. Edit Mode Resolution:



When editing in grid mode you can specify by what increments you edit by in this window. You can choose bars and beats or samples. The nudge resolution works the same, but it is not

dependant on whether or not the session is in grid mode. It can operate by independently sliding regions in increments chosen in this drop down. The shortcut to nudge is **COMMA**, to nudge back or **PERIOD**, to nudge forward.

6.Transport and Punch In Controls:



Pre / Post Roll Length:

When doing a quick punch in it is sometimes hard to tell how much lead time an performer needs to “feel” the punch. In this window you can physically set how much lead time is given in bars and beats or time.

Selection Length:

Indicates the length and position of an edit window selection.

Online Mode:

Toggles the external clock sync on and off.

Return To Zero (ENTER):

Puts the play cursor at the beginning of the session.

Rewind:

Plays the session in reverse.

Fast Forward:

Plays the session forwards at an accelerated rate.

Go to End (OPTION + ENTER):

Puts the play marker at the end of the last or longest region in the session.

Stop / Play (SPACEBAR):

Accelerates and decelerates the play marker.

Record (COMMAND + SPACEBAR):

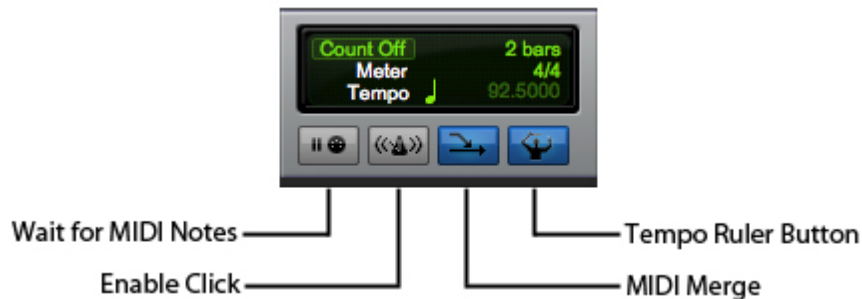
Clicking the record button will prime whatever tracks are record armed to record, but it will not start recording until play is pressed.

Record Enable Indicator:

Shows if any tracks are set to record arm.

Input Monitor Indicator:

Shows if any tracks are in input only monitoring mode.

7.Midi Tempo Controls:**Wait for MIDI Notes:**

If this option is enabled, playback will not initiate until a MIDI note message is received.

Enable Click;

Turns the Click instrument on and off during playback. The click is interesting because you must instantiate it in an insert on an instrument track to use it. They did this so other click enabled plug-ins could be used that might sound different.

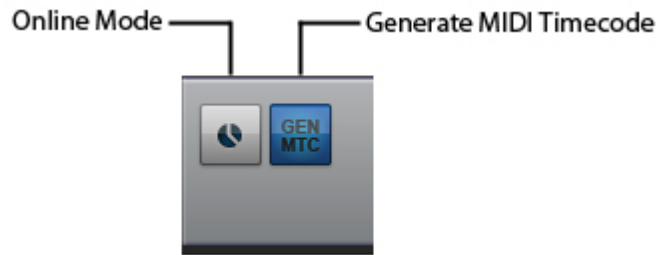
MIDI Merge:

Might as well be called MIDI overdub. If this option is not enabled, recording over a midi region will replace the previous region. However, if MIDI merge is enabled recording over a MIDI region will only add the new performance on top of the old one.

Tempo Ruler Button:

Otherwise known as the conductor. This option tells pro tools to be governed by a tempo map that can be created. If his option is turned off then the tempo and time signature are automatically freed up in the MIDI tempo window and can be freely assigned.

8.Sync Controls:



Online Mode:

Sets Pro Tools to follow an external clocking source.

Generate MIDI Timecode:

Pro Tools normally generates SMPTE time code, but by hitting this button, MIDI time code will also be transmitted simultaneously over a MIDI cable.