REAPER 201

It is not essential, but a mouse with a scroll wheel is very beneficial when navigating REAPER.

Download & Install:
- REAPER – www.reaper.fm/download.php   **[DO NOT RUN YET]**
- Download the REAPER User Guide PDF
- SWS/S&M EXTENSIONS – http://www.sws-extension.org
- (Optional, but useful to have.) ReaPack – https://reapack.com/

Some REAPER users also like to install Voxengo SPAN – http://www.voxengo.com/product/span/
To quote the website: "SPAN is a free real-time "fast Fourier transform" audio spectrum analyzer AU, AAX and VST plugin for professional music and audio production applications."
Easy to install on a Mac, but it is a real PITA to install and configure for REAPER on a PC.

BTW – Purchase a license. **$60** is bargain for a DAW this powerful. It is good for 2 Major Update Cycles.

Launch REAPER
REAPER will ask you to select an Audio Device on its maiden launch. Click [Yes].
That takes you to the REAPER Preferences window. There are TONS of Preferences to investigate and set. We will come back to them later.

Import License Key
If you purchased a license, now is the time to import it from the Help menu
Help: About REAPER [Ctrl+F1]
On the Purchase tab – click [Import license key…]

Installation Videos
For the best step by step REAPER Installation instruction on both Mac & PC, go to
Steven Gonzales's **REAPER for Voice Talent** YouTube chanel.
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCr3CiKNwyxK3cCr0Uy0mZ2Q/videos

Main parts of The Default Screen
- Menu Bar – Mostly the same stock menus as any other program.
- Tool Bar – It is possible to have up to 17 different tool bars and configurations.
- Ruler – The default setting is **Measures.Beats**. Change this to **Minutes.Seconds** or **Seconds**.
- Track Control Panel (TCP) – Open a track for recording. 99 are possible tracks at a time.
- Work Area – Where the waveform appears while recording and for playback.
- Transport Bar – Record and Play/Pause/Stop buttons and other information.
- Mixer Control Panel (MCP) – Master Mixer and Mixer representation of the TCP.

The First thing to do is to **Save the Default Configuration** from REAPER Preferences for reference.

The Default Configuration can be re-installed at any time.
Startup settings
Opens project(s) on startup:

- Last active project
- Last project tabs [default]
- New project (ignore default template)
- New project
- Prompt

Stripping REAPER Down Specifically for VO Recording and Production.
REAPER is loaded with Redundancy. There are several ways to perform some tasks.
Tool Bar buttons – Menu selections [keyboard shortcuts] – Actions & Custom Actions
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HCSHEDmk50I&t=1339s

Eliminate the MCP – The **Mixer Control Panel** is redundant. **Except for the Master Mixer**.
Moving the **Master Mixer** to the Right or Left of the screen leaves more work space.
The **Transport Bar** placement defaults to the bottom. It can be placed anywhere on the screen.

Tool Bar – Eliminate Un-Needed and Non-Relevant Tools. Add Useful Tools. Arrange Tool Buttons.
- Un-Needed Tools – from the Default screen
  - Metronome – Music Tempo
  - Grid – Beats and Measures
  - Snap – Leave Snap [On]
  - Locking – Locks Items and Track Controls.
- Tools to Add – commonly used processes and procedures
  - Alternate Primary and Secondary Editing Software Programs
  - Preferences
  - File Information
  - Continuous Scroll Toggle
  - Save As:
  - Render Project
  - Normalize

Grid – Turn it [Off]. It is not needed for VO. **Options: Snap/grid > Show grid [Alt+G]**
Snap – Either [On] or [Off]. There is a benefit to leaving it [On].
Ruler – Right-click and select [Minutes.Seconds] or [Seconds].
Transport Bar –
- Right-click the Red [Play] button and select [Record mode: time selection auto punch]
- The Transport Bar can also be placed anywhere on the screen.
- Eliminate un-needed features by de-selecting:
  - Show playrate control
  - Time signature and BPM (in certain Reaper Themes)

Open and Arm a Track – (Automatically Arm a New Track in REAPER Preferences)
- Three ways:
  - Double-Click in the TCP space
  - Select: **Track: Insert new track**
  - **[Ctrl+T]**
- Record Armed – by Clicking on the Red button
- Track Monitoring [OFF] – that speaker icon.
- Name the Track – Double-Click next to the Red button. Type in a name. Press [Enter]
- Set Input to Mono

Track Control Features – All can be configured in one way or another.
- Volume Control Knob – Dial next to Track Name. (Should be kept on 0dB.)
- [Route] – Configure Tracks to Control other Tracks
- Pan Knob – Left & Right (Should be kept on Center.)
- [M] – Mute the Track
- [S] – Solo the Track (Mutes all other Tracks)
- [FX] – Add Processing Effects.
  - No Processing FX – Button is Ghosted
  - Processing FX on track but not armed – Button is Red
  - Processing FX on track and armed – Button is Green
- [Phase] – Not really needed for VO
- [Trim] – Different Track Automations
- [Input] – Set to Mono.
- [Record Monitoring] – 3 Settings
  - Off (Default) – No sound will come from computer while recording.
  - On – Listen to active recording in real time. Latency issue.
  - Auto – Same as On.
- [Input FX] – Add Processing FX on Input Recording. Not recommended.
- Track Number – Folders (masters and children)
- VU Meter – Shows Input Recording Levels

Track Height can be changed/re-sized by Left-dragging the bottom.
The Track Control window can be repositioned/re-sized by Left-dragging the Right Edge

Adding Processing FX to a Track – Many processing FX included. Can also install 3rd party FX.
- Click the ghosted FX button – FX Track # window appears
- Click [Add] or Double-Click in the white space above left
- Add FX to Track # – Listing of available Processing FX
- Basic **FX Stack** to include (in order and included with REAPER)
  - VST ReaFir (FFT EQ+Dynamics Processor) (Cockos) – Noise Reduction
  - VST ReaEQ (Cockos) – Equalization
  - VST ReaComp (Cockos) – Compression
  - JS: Event Horizon Limiter/Clipper – Limiter

Cockos VSTs (Virtual Studio Technology) and JS FX are included with REAPER.

Settings and Parameters need to be set for the individual.
The Settings can be labeled and made a Default for each time that effect is opened.

VST & VST3 Plugins
REAPER can use Free or Purchased VST & VST3 Plugins (Waves, iZotope, Plugin Alliance, etc.)
Preferences: VST – REAPER needs to know where to find them.

Project Settings – **File: Project settings…[Alt+Enter]**
- Project Settings tab
  - Timebase for items/envelopes/markers: [Time]
  - Timebase for tempo/time signature envelope: [Time]
- Media tab
  - Type "media" in the first box. (or whatever you want to call it)
  - Type in a Secondary recording path if desired
  - [Save as default project settings]

Media Explorer – View it on screen or not. Can docked anywhere.

Customize Menus/Toolbars
- Create a Custom Menu Set
- Rename menu items
- If you don't like it, you can always revert back to the default.

Save the Project as a Template – Once all settings are made.

Export Your Default VO Configuration

Global Settings – Settings that remain the same each time REAPER is launched. May be changed to suit the individual.

Ripple Editing [Alt+P] – Three states
- Disabled – Off
- Per Track – Only selected track or tracks.
- All Tracks

Options: Layouts > – Configure how things will look on the screen. All are initially set to the default.
- Transport >
- Master Mixer Panel >
- Track Panel >

Finding and Changing Keyboard Shortcuts from the Actions Menu

Themes – https://stash.reaper.fm/tag/Themes

REAPER can be made to look and act differently than the Default and/or like other popular DAWs. Themes come with a **.ReaperThemeZip** suffix. There is no need to Un-Zip the file. Just Double-click the file and it loads automatically. REAPER can always be reset to the Default from **Opitions: Themes >**

Popular and Favorite Themes
- Default_Commala_5_light.ReaperThemeZip
- Default_Commala_5.ReaperThemeZip
- IMPERIAL 24.ReaperThemeZip
- Default 50. Nitpicky Edition.ReaperThemeZip
- ProTools12.ReaperThemeZip

Theme Development Tweak/Configuration Window – Found in the Actions menu. (I placed it in the Options menu for quicker access.)
- Change certain screen feature colors
- Change fonts and font size and font color
- Change the opacity of certain screen features
- Save to Theme
- Load a different Theme

Actions & Custom Actions
- Everything in REAPER is an **Action**.
- All **Actions** are available from the **Actions Menu**.
- **Actions** can be assigned **Keyboard Shortcuts**.
- **Actions** can be combined to create **Custom Actions** and assigned **Keyboard Shortcuts**.
- **Custom Actions** can include other **Custom Actions** and assigned **Keyboard Shortcuts**.

Fun Stuff
- Red Record Ruler
- Track Icons
- Track Colors
- Item Colors
- Colors – Options: Theme Development: Show theme tweak/configuration window

Videos and Forum

Very, very helpful. Watch Kenny Gioia's videos. Many answers can be found in the Forum.

Join the REAPER Voiceover User Group on facebook.

https://www.facebook.com/groups/reaper.vo.user.group/

Other Helpful YouTube Videos

Booth Junkie – Mike DelGaudio
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHHf1h8k7MA6-AG8FXjnQSw

Elijah Lucian
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcsvbCZZnaqHkQjVTezapJg

Home Brew Audio
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEoaZXqy26HigFAmAuO7vCA

Jeff Emtman
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0atmuhIWYlXCl2pl0j5-2Q

REAPER Mania – Kenny Gioia
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCq297H7Ca98HlB5mVFHGSsQ

REAPER TV
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMUHt6JzCMsdtvkaJpU3KXw

The REAPER Blog
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC39aOXMqg48qpzEz1l_-7tQ

Tooshka
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMw5E5zHYIwhot0ixKgL9vA

Dana Tucker
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_qaN2Qq3V97pV6OnEiyU8Q

Rob van Hees (subtitled)
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXqiupf_CxzlArTHt-ziI9Q

Steven Gonzales VoiceOvers
https://www.youtube.com/user/stevengonzalesvo/videos