

When you open a NEW session in Pro Tools, *what gets created??*

A folder is created which contains a number of files and additional folders, but most people have no interest in what is created. These folders contain each and every piece of the puzzle which makes up your session, from fade files to session backups, everything is organized in a very efficient way.

The name of the first folder created will be based on the name of your session. This acts as the 'master' folder and holds everything to do with your session.

Here's what is created and what the purpose is:

FILES:

Session File: Each and every session will have a core 'Session File' with the extension '.ptx' (Versions of Pro Tools prior to version 10 will have the extension '.ptf', this file should be regarded as the brain behind the session.

Despite being deceptively small in size, this single file has a lot of work on its hands, every region placement, automation breakpoint, track height, track name... You get the idea, is stored within this file.

The folders which we will look at next act as an organized storage system for everything which the session file will call up into the session.

WaveCache File: The WaveCache file is another one of those files that gets a lot less credit than it deserves. Often overlooked, this file stores all of the data calculations related to the session and helps to load the session quickly.

If you delete the wavecache file, Pro Tools will regenerate the file, although this will take a little time when loading the session.

FOLDERS:

Audio Files Folder: As you will have probably guessed, this is where all recorded and imported audio is contained, this folder will also contain any audio which you may have processed such as regions which have had an audio suite plug-in effect applied to them, or a region with committed elastic audio changes.

Region Groups Folder: As you will have hopefully read, region group information is stored within the session '.ptf' file, it is only when they are exported that a new file is created with the extension '.rgrp', these region group files hold a reference to the audio files and their placement within the group. When exporting a region group it will, by default, be placed within this folder unless otherwise changed.

Video Files Folder: There is a little more thought required when working with video files within your session in terms of how it is stored, video files can be rather large which means you may not have enough storage space to duplicate it into your session, most commonly Pro Tools will

reference the session to wherever the video file is stored on your computer, however when it comes to fully backing up projects you will need to have the video file included. Whenever a video file is copied and stored within the session it will be located in this folder and all session references to the video file will be changed to this new location at the same time.

MIDI Files Folder: MIDI information can be sent directly out of Pro Tools into other programs for finer score adjustments (like Finale). When this process is performed, the exported MIDI file is stored within this folder for safe keeping.

Session Files Backups: BACKUPS!! ALWAYS open current work and do “save-as.” Hopefully you know of and make full use of the ‘Auto Backup’ function within Pro Tools. This feature will save an updated version of your session based on time increments setup within the **Operation** section of your **Preferences**.

Each and every session backup will be saved within this folder with the extension ‘.bak00.ptx’ and will increase numerically as the number of backups increase. Default is 10 most recent, every 5 minutes; this can be changed to your preference.

