

NoTours Tutorial

1. Introduction

noTours consists in two pieces of software:

1. A Player application for Android capable of running a soundwalk. You can download it here: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=free.notours.org>
2. A Browser based editor: the [noTours Editor](#). Take into account that IT DOES NOT WORK under INTERNET EXPLORER ([why?](#))

2. Installing noTours app in your smartphone.

The app can be easily installed from [Google Play](#) or from a licensed copy by your institution.

3. Starting the application

If you succeed installing the application, a new icon pointing to noTours will be visible in your device's menu.



Open noTours app by clicking on the icon and noTours will start automatically. First, a splash image of the project is appearing with noTours logos and credits/introduction sounds.

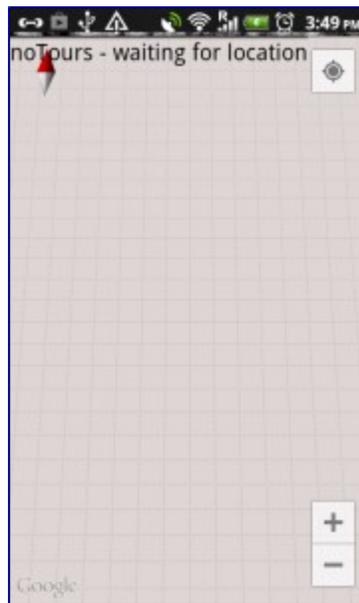


You will see a list of all your downloaded projects. At least you will have one called noToursDemo, that is a demo example showing the main features of noTours. Choose one:



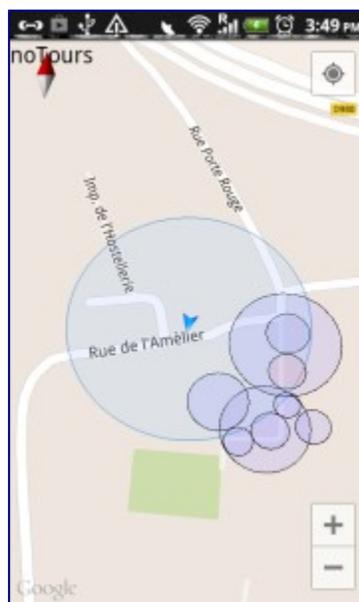
4. Walking

The noTours app will try to locate you with the GPS. Usually this process takes from some seconds to a few minutes long depending on if you are connecting at a location closer to the last GPS fix or even depending on your actual location in the world. Usually, it will take less than 30 seconds for getting a GPS connection.



What is particular (and critical) with GPS (and not only in particular with noTours) is the fact of not having not a good sight of the sky over you. That means that if you are among high buildings covering almost all the sky you will never have a reliable good connection. Then, try to work in spaces with the biggest open sky available.

Once you are connected you will discover your location in the world. It is showed with a rounded marker or a blue arrow in the middle of the screen. If you have an available Internet connection you will see a google map. If not, it will appear just as a grid on a gray background giving you a relative reference to the place you are. Additionally the application draws the areas with sounds that you have designed in your noTous Editor. They will appear in different colours: soundpoint (blue), soundpoint with speaker (green) or soundscape (red).



noTours follows your location in the map, updating your actual position every second (or less) with the finest precision available. Every time you are entering an area with sound the app will play the audio file that you chose in the editor. When you leave the area the sound will stop. This is the simplest use of noTours, but there are many other features to use that you will discover in the editing section of this tutorial.

We always recommend trying to forget that you are wearing a hardware with the project. Try to put the phone in a pocket or inside your hand bag (you don't usually lose very much precision) and just walk. Then you will be able to enjoy your soundwalk in a more natural way.

5. Creating your own soundwalks

noTours Editor is hosted in www.editor.notours.org. For starting editing your soundwalks go to the Editor's website and create a new user. Every user has an entry in a database so you will be able to store your soundwalks in our server and load or modify them later.

All the Editor is a browser oriented application. It makes use of Google Map API, PHP and java scripts. You don't need to install anything in your computer. Go to our [editor](#) and start designing your soundwalks. It is available in three languages: English, Spanish, Catalan, French, Finish, Greek and Galizian (easily you can create a new language if you want to [contact us](#)).

It is quite important that before editing for the first time you are sure of understanding the particularities of noTours Editor. Here the most important:

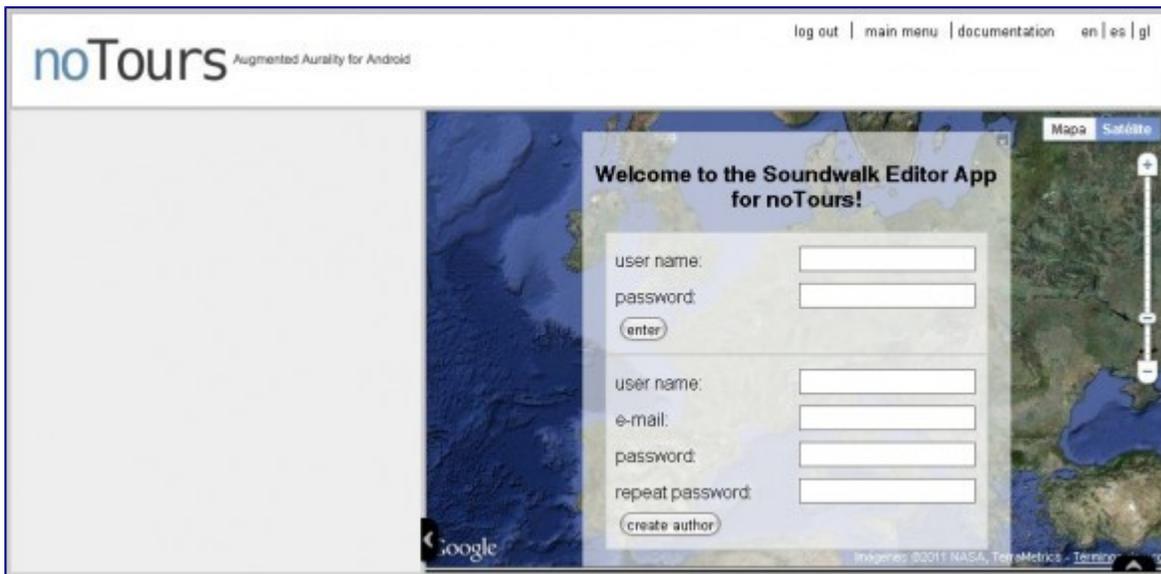
- **You don't have to upload any file to our servers.** How is possible to play your audios later? noTours projects can be quite big, with hundreds of files and, with files in mp3 or wav format with a considerable size. Imagine that you have to upload GBs of files... boring and time consuming. For this reason, noTours reads all audios from a local path in your phone. This means that **you have to copy manually all audio files expected to be used to a specific location in your sdcard** (the location is explained later in this tutorial).

The opposite way of working (uploading your files to a central server and streaming in real time all needed audios) is not realistic for two reasons:

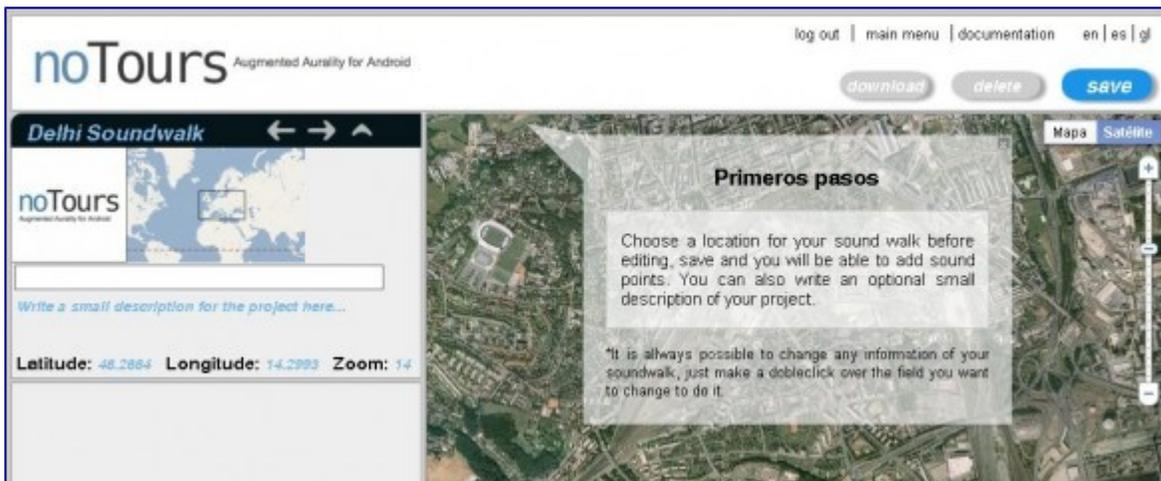
- You won't like to experience cuts in your audio walk due to slow Internet connections or coverage. This happens quite often in today's Internet providers.
- You will normally use many files at the same time because with noTours you can mix multiple layers of sounds. Parallel streaming of files will even make the first reason more realistic.

Steps for creating a soundwalk:

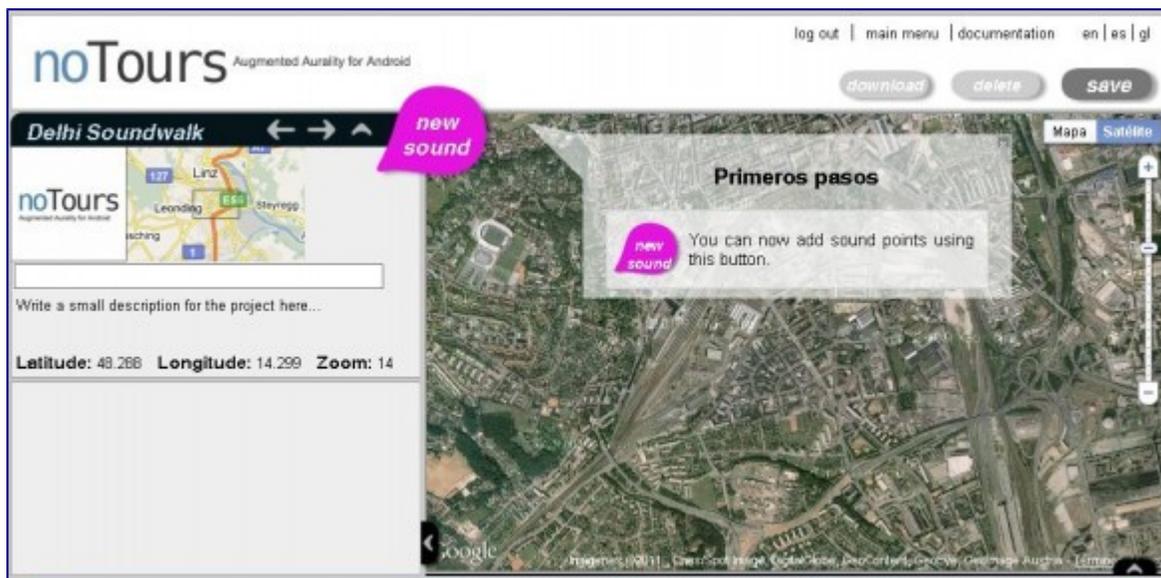
Create your user and type a name for your soundwalk.



The next step is choosing a location for your soundwalk. Move the map to the place in the world you can to geolocalize sounds. You can also give a small description to the project and change the title. Choose the zoom you want for the project and click on Save if you want to start editing the map.

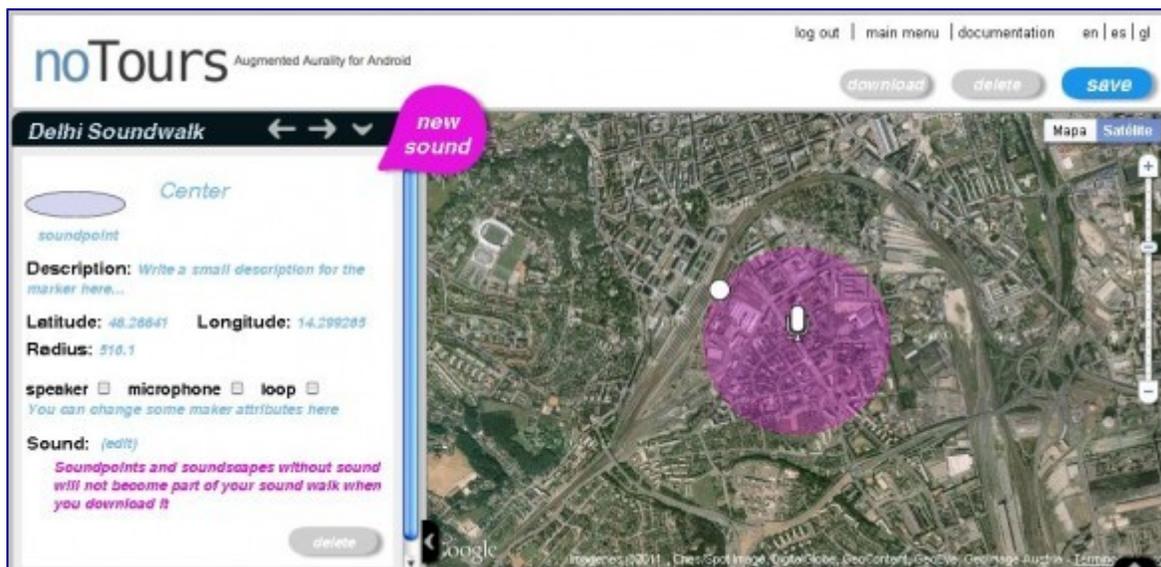


This is the moment for adding sounds to your location. First click on Add New Sound.



You will see that an area in magenta appears is drawn in the center of the map. Automatically a new entry is created in the left bar with the parameters of that sound. Now you can:

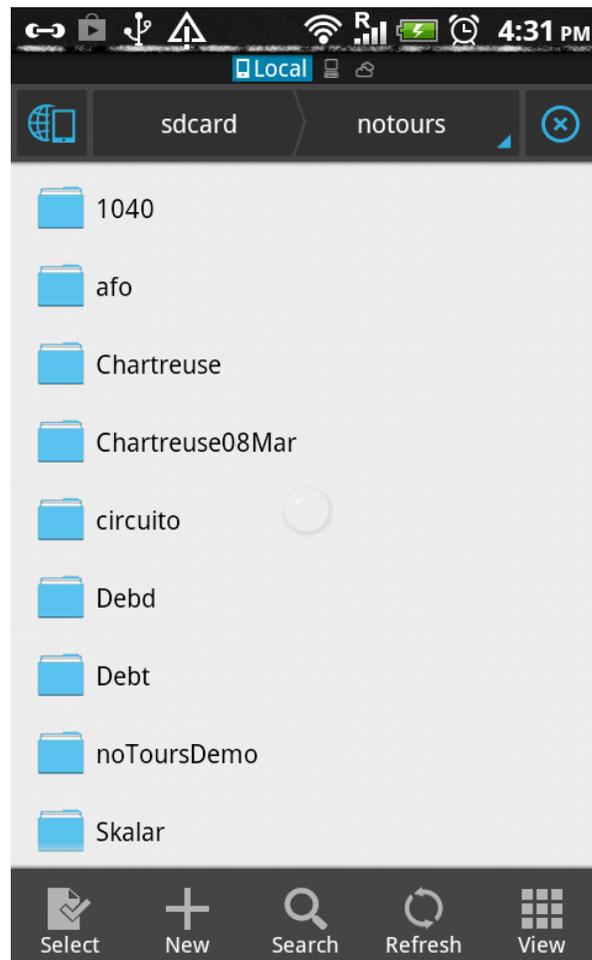
- Move the position of the sound dragging the icon that is situated in the center of the circle.
- Change the radius of your circles: click on the white circle and move it.
- Edit the properties of a sound:
 - Give a name to your sound
 - Give a short description
 - Choose if you want a soundpoint or a soundscape
 - Edit some attributes for playing the sound
 - Type the sound file name without paths; e.g. hello.mp3 or hello.wav. Only mp3 and wav are allowed.



When you have finished editing a sound you can add another sound. The application will automatically save your changes.

Ok, now you have finished editing your soundwalk. For sending it to you phone follow the next steps:

- Click on “download” for getting a .zip file with all your project
- Unzip your project in your computer
- Connect your smartphone to the computer and allow copying files to the device.
- Browse your SD Card (or your External Storage Directory) and you will see (if the app is installed and you have run it once) that there is a folder called “notours”. Then path of this folder is then something like /sdcard/notours
- Copy the contents of your project (your .zip) to this folder in the device and extract it. You will have a file called soundscape.rss and a folder /sdcard/notours/your_project
- This is the moment of **managing your audio contents**. Copy to the folder “/sdcard/notours/your_project/sound” **all the audio files that you are using in your project**. These files have to have **the same name and extension as you have specified in the editor**. If not you will probably listen a big silence at an area with some mistake related to this topic.

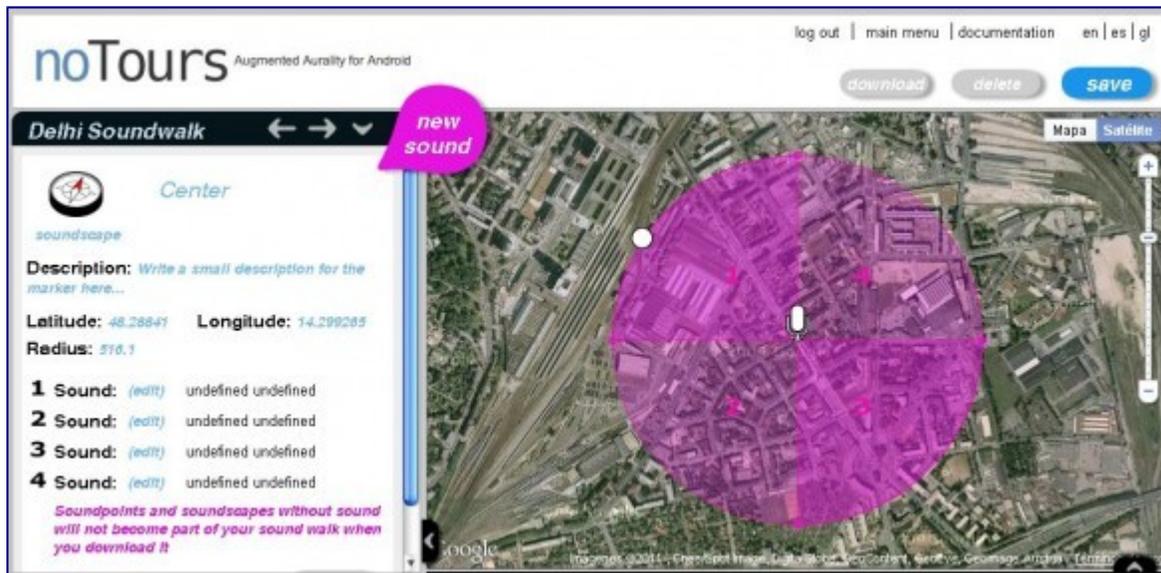


Everytime you want to update your soundwalk in the editor, just overwrite your old “soundscape.rss”.

5.1. Soundpoints and Soundscapes

noTours have in this version two different primitives that can be chosen double clicking on the label "Soundpoint":

- Soundpoints: a circular area with one sound.
- Soundscapes: a circular area containing four sounds. The hardware application knows your orientation at every moment because it can read the values of an internal sensor. Depending on your orientation noTours will play a different sound with a particular volume, in a way that they will be fading in and out for morphing to the other sounds imitating a natural soundscape. You can edit the angles where each sound will be played.



For changing the soundscape angles click on the end of lines separating the areas. Each area is labelled with an area for later having the opportunity of choosing the sound files without errors.

5.2. Attributes

Attributes are some particular effects that can be applied to the sounds. They are only applicable to the soundpoints and not to the soundscapes.

In the formular you can specify the attributes in the next screen:

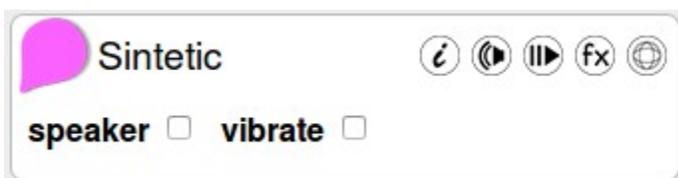


The available effects are:

- Loop – Play One Time: clicking on the loop symbol you can select the mode of playing the sound when you are inside of the area.
- Fade In/Out: activate them for applying a 3 seconds fade to your sounds when entering or leaving
- The symbol at the rightest side of the blue line specifies the behavior when leaving the area. Choose “Stop” (the black rectangle) for simply stopping the sound, “Pause” for making possible to playback the sound at the exact time that you left it the next time you enter in the area, of “Play” for not stopping or pausing.

5.3 Effects

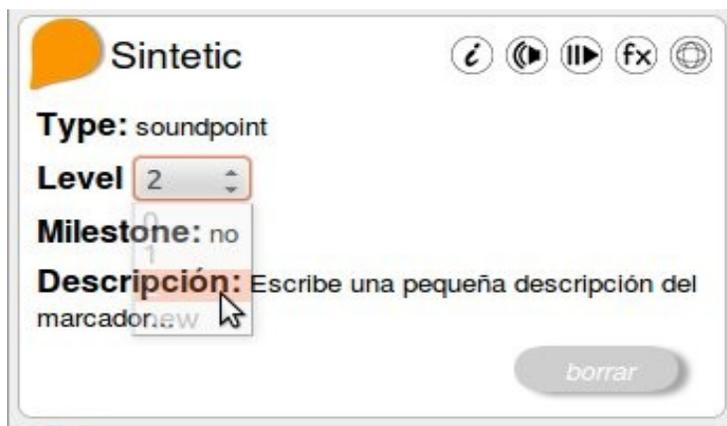
- Speaker: this is an attribute affecting the volume of the sound. It varies with the distance to the center of the circle. It will be zero at the perimeter and maximum at the center.
- Vibrate: you can trigger a small vibration in the phone when entering the area.



5.4 Levels

noTours has version 2.0.2 a new feature that consist in the use of level. That means that you can create walks that are evolving with your audience actions. The best metaphor for explaining it is imagining a videogame where you can enter different levels when opening a gate. Each of noTours levels is a scene of the videogame and the gates we have called them “milestones”.

For specifying the level of a specific circle you have to go the first tab of each form:



Choose the level or create a new one, and specify if it is a milestone for jumping to a new level or not.

It is important to have the next rules in consideration:

- The level 0 is always present and it will be always played. It can be thought as an ambient layer.
- Every level has a different color.
- When the soundwalk starts the walk starts in level 0, so the sounds of level 0 and 1 will be shown and played.
- For creating a milestone for jumping to a specific level, you need to have at least one circle of that level already created. That means that at the beginning, you need to create a circle of level “2” for having a milestone in level “1”.

6. More help, questions, comments or bugs advice

Please, contact us through your personal noTours contact form or through the general one [here](#).

7. Troubleshooting

- I don't see an area or some when I run the app but they exist in my project at the editor
- + Probably you have not specified any audio file at that area, so directly the editor does not include it in the project when you download it. This is why it doesn't exist for the app. Solve it typing the audio file in your area.

- I cannot hear any sound at some area.
- + Real audio file in your audio card doesn't exist or have a different name from the typed in the editor.

- I hear a noise at some area.
- + The format of that audio file doesn't match the specifications of your mobile phone. Use maximum stereo 44100 and 16 bits for wav and stereo 320kbps for mp3.