



Follow this pre-recording checklist to eliminate 95% of the mistakes people make during podcast interviews.

Pre-Recording Checklist

Check these off **1 hour** before your interview

- ☐ **Recording software**
Check that the [recording software](#) you're using is installed and up to date.
- ☐ **Restart your computer**
Ensure your computer is performing at its best during the interview.
- ☐ **Microphone**
Record a test to make sure your microphone is recording properly.
- ☐ **Headphones**
Have your headphones ready to prevent echoes and sound bleed.
- ☐ **Recording space**
Find a room with [soft surfaces](#) like rugs, curtains, and furniture. Make sure you won't be interrupted and have a strong internet connection.
- ☐ **Get a drink**
Get a drink in case your mouth dries out during the interview. **Avoid** drinks with caffeine, dairy, or carbonation since they aren't good for vocals.
- ☐ **Silence notifications**
This helps you focus on the interview and prevents notifications from interrupting the recording.
- ☐ **Check for unwanted noise**
Check for things that could cause noise during the recording, like puffy jackets, large jewelry, fans, or loud air conditioning.
- ☐ **Be on time & have fun!**
Double-check the timezone and be on time to ensure you have enough time for the full interview.

Podcast Guest Preparation

Here are some helpful tips to make you the perfect podcast guest!

EQUIPMENT & SOFTWARE

Microphone

Setting up a microphone is the #1 thing you can do to improve your audio quality. Using the microphone built into your laptop can create an echo or muffled sound.

Here are our recommendations from best to worst:

1. **Dedicated microphone:** If you have it, use a dedicated microphone. A USB microphone that plugs directly into your computer is an easy way to have professional-sounding audio.

Here are our favorite [microphones for under \\$100](#).



2. **Wired headsets with a microphone:** Many wired headsets and headphones have a microphone built-in. Examples include:
 - [Apple Earbuds](#)
 - [Gaming headset](#)



3. **Wireless headphones:** These microphones work well, but Bluetooth connection can be finicky. They may cause a delay in audio or the sound to drop in & out while you are speaking.

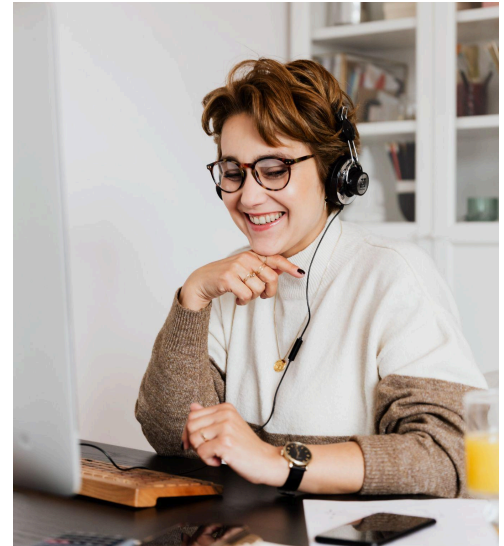


Headphones

Wearing headphones will prevent a lot of issues, though the specific style or brand isn't that important.

Why headphones matter:

- Headphones allow you to self-monitor and tell if you're speaking too loudly or move too far from the microphone
- Headphones eliminate mic bleed so you don't get an echo of the other person's voice on your recording
- Headphones help you hear the interviewer clearly and stay focused on the interview



Recording Software

Ask the interviewer what recording software they're going to use. Some recording software like Zoom or Microsoft Teams must be downloaded before the interview, while others only work on Google Chrome.

Set up the software and try to record a short file to make sure everything is set up before the interview.

Popular remote recording software:



[Riverside Tutorial](#)



[Zoom Tutorial](#)



[SquadCast Tutorial](#)



Tip

On The day of recording, double-check that the recording software is up to date & restart your computer to make sure everything runs smoothly.

ENVIRONMENT

Recording Space

Selecting the proper environment for an interview is crucial to a successful recording.

✓ GOOD ENVIRONMENT	⚠ BAD ENVIRONMENT
Bedroom Home Office Clothing Closet Blanket Fort Couch Cushion Fortress	Bathroom Kitchen Busy Living Area Public Places Car Parked on Noisy Street

Find a quiet space with soft surfaces that is free of distractions.

Curtains, rugs, and upholstery will help absorb sound. Large rooms with hardwood or tile floors and high ceilings create lots of echo.



Tip

Believe it or not, a walk-in closet is next best to a professional recording studio!

Noises & Distractions

Distracting noises can hurt your interview. Avoid as many of these noises as possible:

- **Air Conditioning & Fans**

If possible, turn off fans and your heat/cooling system before recording. These all create noise that is hard to edit out of an interview.

- **Clothing & Jewelry**

Avoid clothing or jewelry that makes noise when you move, such as a wind-breaker track jacket, clinking bracelets, or jingling earrings/necklaces.

- **Silence Notifications**

Silence all notifications on your computer & mobile device by putting them on Do Not Disturb mode. This makes sure the "ding" of a new message doesn't make its

way into your audio and it helps keep you focused on the conversation.

- **Outside Noise**

Move away from windows if you live near a noisy road or it's lawn day for you or your neighbor.

- **Fidgeting**

Be mindful when recording that you don't tap on the table or make noise while you're talking. Remove items you may absentmindedly play with, such as a clicking pen or a case that snaps open/close.

- **Children & Pets**

It's best to record when you're alone, but if you can't, ask people in your house not to interrupt you. Give the kids a quiet activity to do, like putting a movie on and giving them snacks.

Pets can make a lot of background noise just by walking around in the room with you. It's best to put them outside your recording space.



If you hear a loud noise while speaking, pause and then resume speaking when it is quiet again. This will help the host when they edit the interview later.

INTERVIEW TIPS

Research

An easy way to prepare for a podcast interview is to listen to a couple of episodes of the podcast you'll be guesting on.

- Get a feel for the style & tone of the podcast
 - Is it relaxed & conversational?
 - Is it deep, with hard-hitting questions?
 - Does the host allow explicit language?
- Why were you asked to be a guest?
 - How does your experience connect with the podcast topic?
 - Are you there to educate, entertain, or inspire?

- Do the episodes have recurring segments or questions that they ask every guest?



Ask the host for a list of questions they plan to ask you during the interview. This will help you think of stories to tell or research a topic more in-depth so you feel confident.

Get a Drink

Between nerves and talking for long periods of time, your mouth can quickly become dry during a podcast recording. It's important to hydrate on the day of the interview and make sure you have a drink handy during the recording.

Recommended beverages are water and herbal tea, which are good to sip throughout the interview.



Avoid drinks with caffeine, dairy, and carbonation, as they are bad for vocals & can worsen dryness, create phlegm in your throat, and make you burp!

Be On Time

To start off on the right foot, be on time & ready to go for your interview.

- If the host is in another location, double-check the time zone.
 - Recording remotely means that you can connect with anyone, anywhere. But that also opens up the possibility of mixing up time zones. So make sure you have the correct interview time for your timezone.
- Showing up a few minutes early is not only respectful to the podcast host but also ensures that the interview isn't rushed.
- Tech problems happen. Being on time/early can help lessen the stress when they do.
- Use the Pre-Recording Checklist on the day of the interview.



Podcast Hosting Made Easy
buzzsprout.com