

A quick guide to getting the best possible recording from your phone or iPad

Whilst phones don't have the best microphones (we don't normally need them to!) there are some things we can do to get the best quality sound from them

The first thing to check is where the microphone on your phone is located. Usually, you'll find this at the bottom of the phone but some phones have a microphone located next to the camera too. The better quality microphone is almost always the one at the bottom of the handset as this is the one closest to your mouth when you're making a call. You may find that the user guide for your phone includes a diagram showing where the various components are located so if you still have this give it a check. If in doubt though, assume that the microphone is at the bottom of the handset. (But if you're using an iPad for your recording the microphone is at the top of the device!)

Now you know (or have made a good guess) where the microphone is you should try to remove anything that might be obstructing it. If your phone is in a case and you're able to remove the case this might be a good idea.

Phones are designed to receive incoming calls, texts and messages and all of these tend to make a noise to let you know they've arrived! We'd recommend that for the period in which you're recording you turn off alerts, possibly put your phone into airplane mode as any incoming alerts during your recording will be heard and spoil the audio file. Especially consider turning off vibration mode as this will really ruin your recording!



Ok, so now your phone is free of anything that might block or muffle the sound you can start to think about recording. You're going to point the phone microphone at the source of your recording, in this case, yourself! We recommend that you do not hold the phone. Lay it flat on a table in front of you, don't sit too far away and try not to kick the table as this will cause vibrations that will be heard on your recording. Click record and speak clearly towards the phone.

Another measure to help with the quality and clarity of the recording will be to eliminate background noise as much as possible. If you can find a nice quiet corner or better still a quiet private room you will reduce the risk of interruption or of background noises bleeding into your main recording. You may also find that your subject feels able to open up and be themselves a little more in a private space.

As you record, stay as still as possible. Particularly try to make sure the phone doesn't move as this could result in the sound being picked up by your microphone.

Your recording app can also play a role in helping to enhance the quality of your recording. All apps have different settings and controls that you can play with to improve recording quality.

There are so many different types of handset and software available and clearly, we can't cover all phone models and apps here but we suspect many of you will be making your recordings on an iPhone of some description so here are some thoughts for you.



If you're using the built-in voice memo app on iOS (the iPhone operating system software which you'll also find on an iPad) look for the icon to the left or something like it. This includes a number of settings that you can tweak to improve your recording quality.



In settings on your iPhone or iPad (look for the grey icon like this one) Select voice memos > audio quality and then change the quality to lossless. This means your software will not try to compress or reduce the size and quality of the voice files you collect and it should result in the best possible sound quality available to you.



I'd recommend you try a test recording first and listen back to the quality of it before making your main recording. Perhaps record yourself speaking and listen back to make sure the recording is clear and legible. We're very happy to work with whatever audio quality you give us but clearly, the best possible recording you can get will really help us to create a piece that makes you sound as professional as possible.

Here's a quick checklist you may find useful to run through before starting to record:

- If your phone is in a case that may cover or block the microphone, please consider removing it to make the recording
- Change your recording settings to ensure your app is recording in the best possible quality before you start
- Turn your phone to airplane mode to ensure that you're not interrupted by incoming call alerts as you record
- Try to find a quiet place to record so that you cut down background noise
- Stay as still as possible during the recording
- Point the bottom of your phone (the end with the microphone!) at your subject (you!) as you record