How to Start a Podcast

Education and Communications · about 14 minutes · 2026-11-08

Plan, record, publish and grow a podcast without overspending on gear — from show concept to a feed that works in every app.

Things you will need

- Computer with internet connection
- Podcast microphone (USB or XLR)
- Audio interface (if using XLR microphone)
- Closed-back headphones
- Microphone boom arm and shock mount
- Pop filter
- Acoustic treatment (blankets, foam panels, or vocal booth)
- Podcast recording software (Audacity, Adobe Audition, or Riverside)
- Podcast hosting platform (Buzzsprout, Anchor, or Transistor)
- Royalty-free intro/outro music
- Podcast cover art (1400x1400 pixels minimum)
- Podcast name and branding concept
- Content calendar for episode planning
- Social media accounts for promotion
- Royalty-free music license or subscription

Planning Your Podcast

1. **Define Your Podcast Concept**
   Start by clarifying what your podcast will be about and what makes it unique.
2. **Plan Your Content Strategy**
   Map out your first 10-15 episode ideas in a content calendar.
3. **Choose a Name and Branding**
   Pick a memorable, searchable podcast name that reflects your concept.
4. **Research Your Target Audience**
   Understand exactly who you want to reach before you start recording.

Gathering Equipment

5. **Choose Your Microphone**
   Your microphone is the most important piece of podcasting equipment — bad audio kills a podcast faster than anything else.
6. **Set Up Your Podcast Goals**
   Define measurable goals for your first three months — downloads per episode, subscriber count, and engagement rate.
7. **Select Your Audio Interface**
   If you choose an XLR microphone, you need an audio interface to connect it to your computer.

8. **Pick Your Headphones**

   Closed-back headphones are essential for podcasting — they prevent sound from your headphones bleeding into your microphone.

9. **Set Up Your Recording Space**

   Create a dedicated recording area with controlled acoustics.

10. **Choose Recording Software**

    Select a DAW (digital audio workstation) to record and edit your podcast.

11. **Plan Your First Episodes**

    Outline your first 3-5 episodes before you start recording.

12. **Gather Accessories**

    Beyond the essentials, a few accessories improve your podcast quality.

Creating Content

13. **Record Your First Episode**

    Do a 5-minute test recording before your first real episode to check audio levels, microphone position, and background noise.

14. **Add Music and Sound Effects**

    Add an intro/outro music track and sound effects to give your podcast a professional feel.

15. **Edit Your Audio**

    Edit your recording to remove mistakes, long pauses, and background noise.

16. **Write Your Episode Script**

    Create an outline or script for each episode to keep your content focused and on-topic.

17. **Write Your Episode Descriptions**

    Write compelling episode descriptions that include your primary keywords, a summary of the content, and any guest information.

18. **Create Your Podcast Cover Art**

    Design a square cover art (minimum 1400x1400 pixels) that clearly communicates your podcast's purpose.

Publishing and Distribution

19. **Choose a Podcast Host**

    Select a podcast hosting platform to store your audio files and generate your RSS feed.

20. **Master Your Final Audio**

    Apply final audio processing before publishing.

21. **Create Your RSS Feed**

    Your podcast host generates an RSS feed automatically, but verify it is correct before submitting to directories.

22. **Promote on Social Media**

    Share your episodes across all social platforms to maximize reach.

23. **Upload Your First Episode**

    Upload your first episode to your podcast host and schedule it for release.

24. Submit to Podcast Directories

Submit your podcast to major directories so listeners can find and subscribe.

Growing Your Audience

25. Guest on Other Podcasts

Appearing as a guest on other podcasts is one of the fastest ways to reach a new audience.

26. Engage With Your Listeners

Build a community around your podcast by engaging with your listeners.

27. Monetize Your Podcast

Once you have a consistent audience, explore monetization options.

28. Utilize SEO for Podcasts

Optimize your podcast for search engines to increase discoverability.

Sources

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   https://podcasters.apple.com/
2. Spotify for Podcasters
   https://podcasters.spotify.com/
3. Podcast Index
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4. RSS 2.0 Specification
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5. Audacity Manual
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6. EBU R 128 Loudness Recommendation
   https://tech.ebu.ch/publications/r128
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Written as a checklist from https://www.howcompass.com/how-to/Start-a-Podcast. Corrections: https://www.howcompass.com/corrections