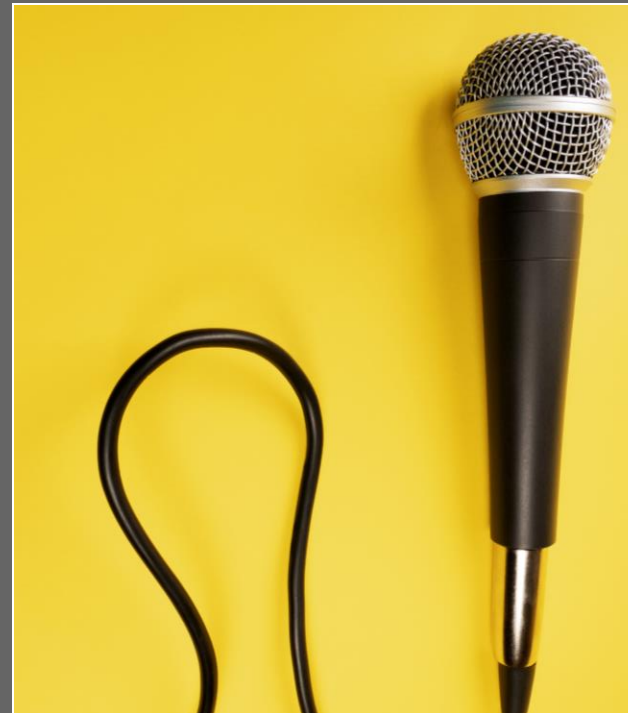


# Recording your own sound

Getting the sound for your teaching, just right.

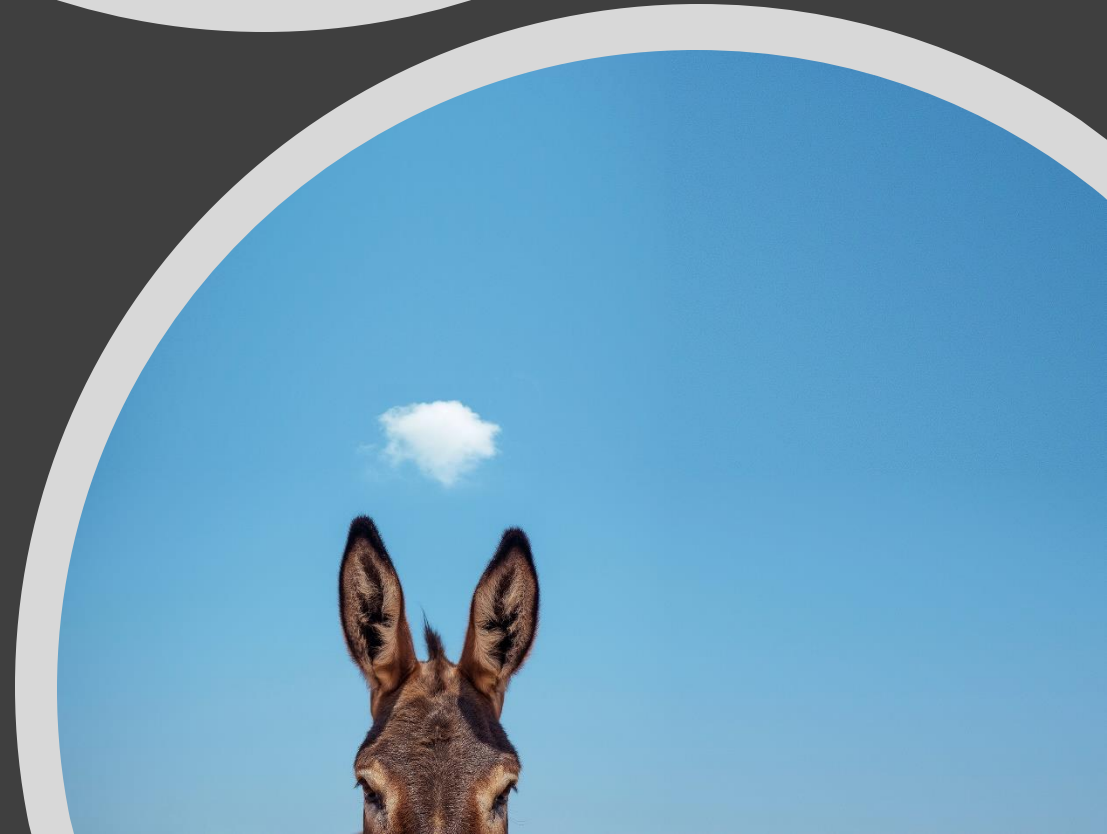
Here you will find some practical advice on recording your own sound. This advice works for any recording equipment you might be using, whether it's a professional studio mic or the one headset that came with your smart device.



# All Ears

Your goal here is to get a better result, not a perfect result.

You will have heard some fantastic orators throughout your life, perhaps people like James Earl Jones "Obi-Wan never told you what happened to your father.", Stephen Fry, Dr King. Don't let that dissuade you from using your voice -instrument and the recording tools, the best you can to achieve an acceptable result that is uniquely yours, don't let the elusive goal of perfection distract you from doing your job as a teacher, a job you know well.



# Why is good audio important?

Good sound you might not notice, but bad sound will be distracting and potentially hinder the message you are trying to convey.

Sound is a major part of our communication and is sometimes even more important than what something looks like.



# Mic technique – placement

Most microphones are directional and will need you to be speaking in front of them.

To be heard clearly keep a small distance between you and the microphone and don't wander off mic.





# Exceptions

- Sometimes certain situations call for a different mic set up.
- Speaking slightly "off mic" or having it at a slight angle can help reduce the effects of plosives.



# Stop the "pop"

One of a microphone's worst enemies is a sudden gush of wind or a "plosive" (the harsh consonant sounds like "P" and "K") from the speaker.

In studios, sound engineers use a pop filter (fine material or metal mesh) to eliminate this problem, but you can also simply use a pencil or hold your finger up to your lips while speaking.

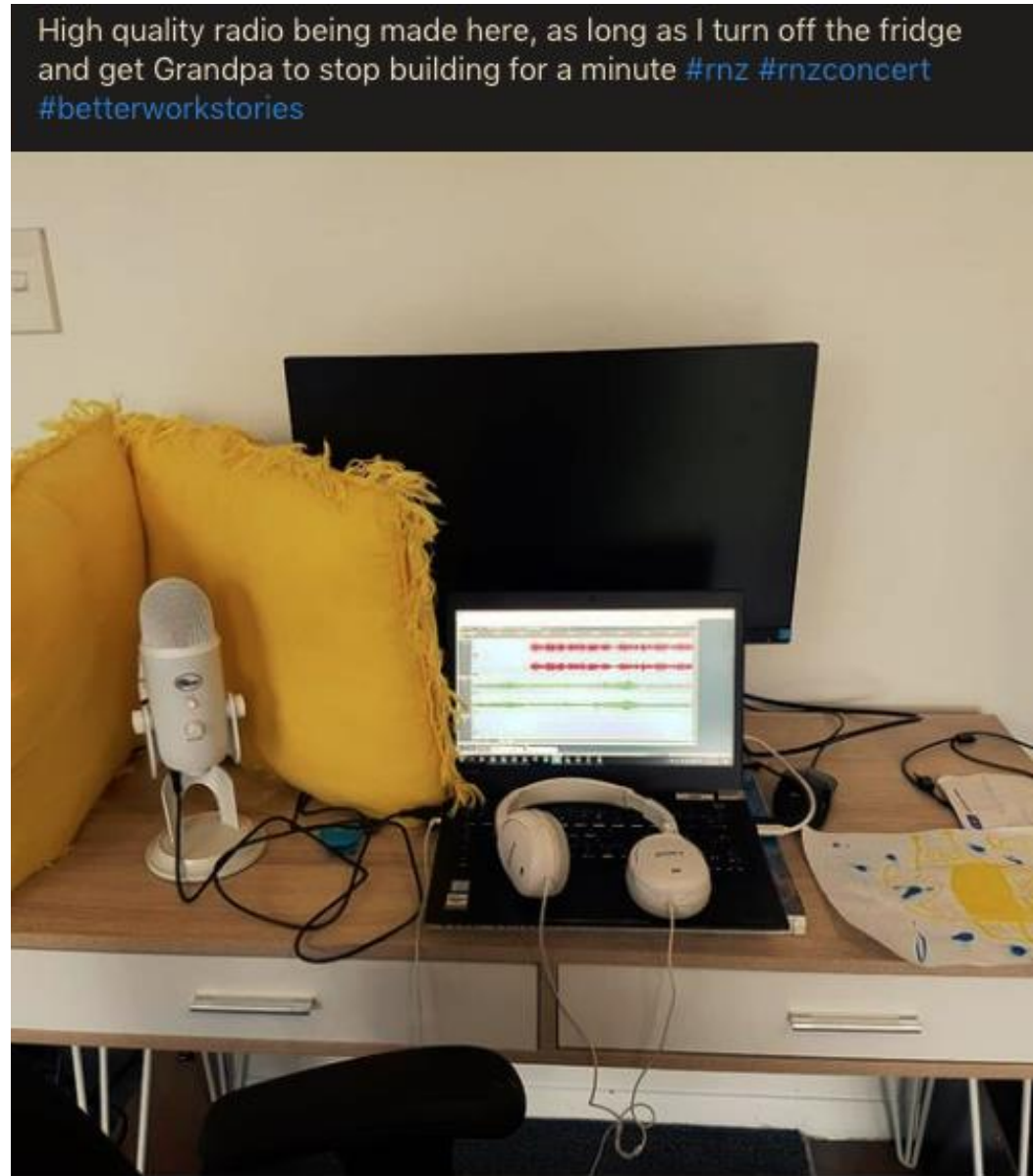


# Acoustics: Choose your space

- Have you ever heard a strange echo in a completely empty room?

An enemy of sound recording are hard, flat surfaces such as walls and uncarpeted floors. Sound waves interfere with each other when they bounce off parallel surfaces, so it's good to be in a room with furniture or soft drapes that “absorb” the sound.

- If recording yourself in a medium to large space, try recording with a soft curtain or pillow behind you and/or behind the mic.







# Hands off!

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- Try not to touch the microphone while recording. Even the lightest knock can be picked up by the microphone and make a loud, unwanted noise in your recording!
- If you have to hold your microphone have a light grip to stay comfortable for longer periods of time and try not to move or tap your fingers while recording.





# Use your ears

- Make sure you monitor your sound during your session using headphones (but don't have the volume up too loud otherwise you'll hear that in your recording too!).
- If you can't monitor during recording, then do a quick test record before you start to make sure it sounds as you expect it to.

# Setting the recording level

- When you can use manual as opposed to automatic consider doing so, to give yourself more control and consistency.
- Set level as high as possible (without clipping into the red) but lower than electrical mic noise (sounds like white noise or "static") or environmental background noises.





# You're the voice!

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- Keep your pace (making direction notes for pauses in your teleprompter or script can help).
- Emphasize important words.
- Intonation, the rise and fall of your voice while speaking keeps listeners engaged.
- Microphones and recording equipment aren't as instantly adaptable as the human ear and brain. To get a consistent result, keep your voice to a narrow range of volume. You want your loudest projection of your voice to be less than peeking (going into the red), low is still audible, middle is normal level of voice loudness.

# Break the rules

- Rules are meant to be learnt then adapted. Use this information to add value to what you are doing. Listen back to recordings you've done in the past. Take time to reflect on areas you could improve on.