

RECORDING AUDIO WITH A SMARTPHONE

What makes a smartphone so smart?

A smartphone has the capacity to connect with the internet, take photos and video, connect with computers, download applications, email, write notes and record audio.

Examples of smartphones available:

iPhone, the latest Nokia, Blackberry, Samsung, Sony phones, and phones with the android operating system.

You can use your smartphone as an audio recording device to:

- Record your family stories
- Add spoken word to your slideshows – great alternative to video - can be a lot more intimate, and easier to control
- Capture a moment in sound

How to record audio on a smartphone:

Identify where the microphone is positioned on your smartphone. For most smartphones the mic is on the bottom of the phone. Remember to point this end of the phone towards the subject or sound you are recording.



Many smartphone platforms come with audio recording apps, e.g.:

iPhone: Voice memo

Blackberry: Voice Recorder

Nokia: Voice Recorder

Getting a better sound:

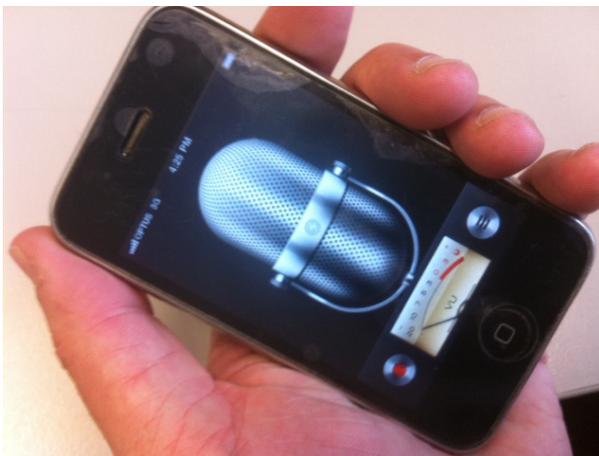
- Get a better sound by adding a microphone to your smartphone.
- Don't have a mic - don't panic! Get up close to your subject.



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Audio recording apps for smartphones:

Download an audio recording app to your phone. These apps are designed to make recording easier and more controlled.



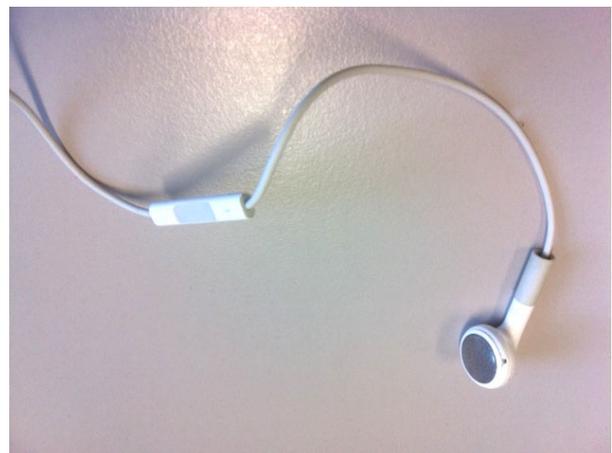
Tips for recording audio:

- Close down all other apps on your phone. Because of radio waves the input might get noisy. Turn on airplane-mode before you start.
IPHONE TIP: Close down all other apps by holding menu button down. Press the X on opened apps to close down.
- Make sure you've tested your smartphone and audio recording apps and are familiar with how to get the best recording.
- Charge your phone and bring the adaptor just in case. Don't forget your headphones.

- Location. Think about a place where your interviewee will feel comfortable, where you won't be interrupted and where there won't be too much other sound. A café can be a bad place to record an interview (too much sound) and even parks can be noisier than you think.

Avoid windy areas: especially if you are using the internal smartphone mic. Use your parked car as a mobile insulated audio booth.

- Record 1-2 minutes of pure background sound (atmos) – no talking. This is invaluable later on when you come to edit.
- Place the mic end of your smartphone close to your subject.
- For recording your own voice: Some smartphone headphones have built in mics like the iPhone headphone. Useful for recording your voice while on the move.



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- Check your levels. Record the person talking and make sure your levels are moderate, not high.



This usually means around the -12db mark – but the most important thing is to make sure you're not going in the red zone. If you can't see anything happening, then there won't be any sound. Play it back to check it's all there and everything is working fine.

Exporting the recorded audio from your phone and onto your computer:

Make sure you install the software that came with your smartphone.

- Connect your smartphone to your computer using a USB connection. Depending on the brand of phone, it should appear like a flash drive on your desktop. Simply click on the drive to find the audio files contained within.
- Synch your smartphone to your computer. iPhones need to be synched with iTunes software. In iTunes your audio will appear in your playlist under Voice Memo.
- Email your audio as an attachment. Check the size before your email, as the audio could be too big.

- Do you have 3G connection? Upload your audio to an online audio host or social media site. Eg Soundcloud.
- Some smartphones can connect to computers via Bluetooth. Make sure you have bluetooth on your phone and your computer is switched on.

Now you have recorded Audio, what next?

Import your audio into an editing program on your computer.

Free software available includes: Audacity, Garageband and Windows Movie Maker. Or you can edit your audio using an audio editing app on your phone.