

So you want to make a podcast

Do you want to try podcasting? Maybe you have a good idea, and you've even been working through topics for the first few episodes. Having that big idea and a plan for a podcast is arguably the most important step in the process, but there are certainly many more steps to get it off the ground. So what's next?

LISTEN TO PODCASTS!

I want to check in with you here and make sure you're familiar with other podcasts. If you're thinking of creating your own, start listening to podcasts with a creator's ear (as opposed to a listener's ear). Take note of podcast anatomies such as intros, outros and how they are produced. If there is music, are the samples long or short? Is there background audio, other than music, like environmental sounds? Does the speaker introduce themselves and are there other co-podcasters they discuss with or interview? How long are your favorite podcasts, generally? Are there podcasts with topics similar to your idea? How will you differentiate from those? Listening to podcasts is the fastest way to gather insight into what podcasting is and how it's done.

If you're going to invest time into your own podcast, consider listening to podcasts for podcasters, and learn from those who are sharing their experience. [The Audacity to Podcast](#) is a valuable podcasting resource. You will also find [the Podcasting Manual, by Blubrry](#), a helpful guide to getting started.

PLAN YOUR FIRST FEW EPISODES

Prepare to record by drafting an outline or a script, or by storyboarding your first episode in a manner that is most useful for you. Plan the structure for your podcast. Do you want an introduction for every episode? Are there sounds, songs or other audio samples you need to gather for the episode, and do they require copyright clearance? Will your episodes involve guests? There are many details to consider, but don't let them hinder your progress. There's plenty of time to refine your process, and you will inevitably identify what needs more refinement as you gain experience. It's wise to have a plan, but don't overthink things.

RECORD AND EDIT

This is where the real work begins. Select your recording equipment and plan your recording environment.

Recording equipment can range in quality anywhere from the mobile phone you carry around with you every day, to a professional-level microphone and mixing board. Of course, quality will vary depending on what equipment you have access to. The type of podcast you're recording and your budget will most directly inform the equipment you use.

YOUR PODCAST WEBSITE

Podcasts often have accompanying websites where listeners can find show notes, additional details regarding episodes, and information about the podcaster (you). In addition, your audio media must be loaded to a web server before it can be published to your podcast. Note that it is wise to load your audio files on a server separate from your website. Listeners downloading your audio files can dramatically slow down the performance of your website if they are on the same server.

Remember those podcasts you're listening to? Visit their websites to get a sense for how they are managing the public-facing side of podcasting. There are many paid platforms out there for podcasts, or you can also host your podcast website on WordPress. This requires a bit more technical mastery, but as UAF staff and faculty, it is something eCampus can support you in setting up.

SETTLE IN AND RECORD MORE EPISODES

Podcasting is a mechanism for syndicating regularly-published content, more than a collection of recordings. Avoid podfade by implementing weekly, monthly, or seasonal publishing schedules.

Finally, don't forget to market your podcast. Getting the word out and building a following takes time. It is worth becoming intimately familiar with how Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Stitcher rank podcasts. Each platform ranks traffic differently and popularity rankings vary as a result.

Resources

[Blubrry's Podcasting Manual](#)
[Podcasting with WordPress Using PowerPress](#)
[The Audacity to Podcast podcast](#)
[Find free or open audio and imagery for your podcast](#)
UAF's own Rob Prince [has a podcast for Dark Winter Nights](#)