

## Audio Recording Tips

### Before Recording

#### 1 Choose the right recording equipment for your recording environment.

Before the interview, focus group, or meeting, ensure you have the right recording equipment for your environment. There are a variety of different voice recording solutions available, such as digital voice recorders, external microphones, speakerphones, a smartphone, desktop computer, or laptop.

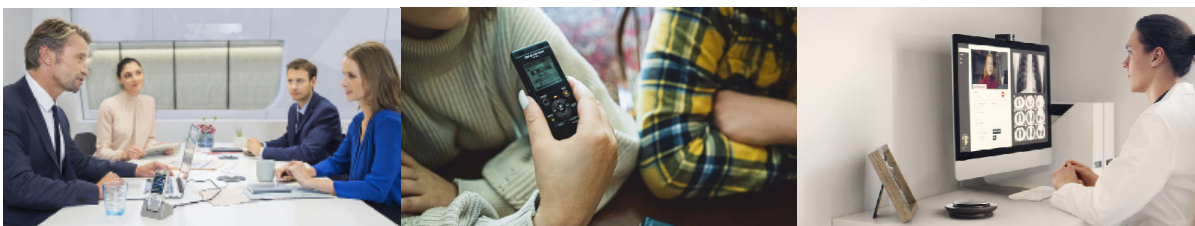
Most smartphones come with excellent internal microphones, but if you are recording an interview over the phone, consider using a [telephone pickup microphone](#) with a digital audio recorder, along with your smartphone.

When recording large groups such as focus groups or business meetings, consider using external [microphones](#) with your digital voice recorder, to ensure all participants' voices are picked up.

For hybrid interviews, where some participants are in the same room as you and some participants are online (i.e. via MS Teams), consider using a speakerphone, such as the [Jabra Speak](#) series. Programs such as Skype, Zoom and Microsoft Teams have a record function within the platform.

You can also record audio using your computer's stereo mix function. For further information, download our Recording Online Calls brochure from the [brochures page](#) on our website.

Our Australian-based products team can provide advice on which recording equipment will best meet your recording needs. Contact the Products Team at [products@pacificttranscription.com.au](mailto:products@pacificttranscription.com.au).



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## Transcription

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### 2 Ensure you have the recording device set to the highest quality setting and you are recording in a suitable format.

For example, many Olympus professional dictation recorders have two different recording modes - "dictation" mode and "conference" mode. To record groups, select "conference" mode.

Some recorders allow you to record in different formats, such as .ds2, .dss, or .wma file formats. The most versatile and friendly formats to record in are .wma, .mp3, and .pcm.

### 3 Find a suitable location to conduct the recording session.

Try to avoid places with a lot of background noise such as general chatter in a public place, a radio playing in an office, clinking cutlery and coffee machine sounds in a cafe, or even a loud air conditioner. Background noise obscures much more than what you would expect.

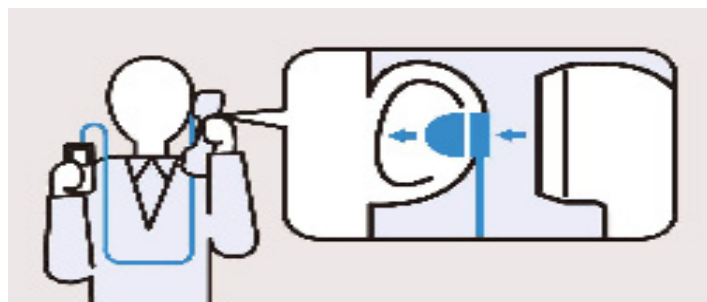
Avoid positioning your recorder on a hard, flat surface when you are recording because these surfaces pick up vibrations and can amplify background noise. Instead, position the device on something soft (such as a cloth or a tea towel) to prevent unintended vibration pickup or amplified incidental noise.

If you are recording in a large, airy room with a small number of people, set up the recording session in one corner of the room, to minimise echo.

### 4 Phone interviews can be recorded using your digital voice recorder and a telephone pick-up microphone.

For phone interviews, consider using either the Olympus or Philips telephone pick-up microphones. When speaking on the telephone, the pick-up microphone will capture both sides of the conversation being recorded by your digital voice recorder.

Plug the telephone pick-up microphone into your digital voice recorder, just as you would any other external microphone.



Pop the telephone pick-up mic earpiece into the ear that you hold the phone to. The telephone pick-up microphone captures both your voice and the voice of your interviewee.



### During Recording

#### 1 Ensure the recording device is equidistant between speakers, including yourself.

Position the recording device equidistant between speakers. A clear recording that successfully captures what was said by all speakers helps the transcriptionist produce a highly accurate final transcript of everything that was said, and by whom.

Once the recorder is in place, avoid moving it. Minimising movement of the recording device once the recording session commences minimises accidental recorder setting changes and/or unintended noise interference.

#### 2 For speaker identification, ask participants to say their name, each time they speak.

At the beginning of the recording session ask each participant to introduce themselves by name.

You can also ask participants to say their name each time they speak during the recording session.

The transcriptionist has more opportunity to distinguish between speakers when each speaker identifies themselves by name.



**Note:** Speaker identification from audio alone is not always possible. If accurate speaker identification is critical, we recommend writing a log that records the speaker order and, if possible, the first couple of words spoken, at each turn.

#### 3 Encourage participants to speak one at a time during the recording session.

Encourage participants to speak one at a time. Overspeaking, where multiple participants speak at the same time or over the top of each other, makes accurate transcription very difficult.

If laughter or side comments begin during the recording, wait for quiet before asking your next question – laughter is notorious for obscuring all other speech.



### **4 Small ambient noises can obscure speech.**

Let participants know that inadvertent sounds such as rustling paper, clicking pens, or drumming fingers on the table can negatively impact recording quality.

Discourage the consumption of food and beverages during the recording session. Instead, let your participants know that refreshments will be available during scheduled breaks. This helps reduce the chances of muffled, indistinguishable speech and other avoidable noise interference being picked up by the recording device during the recording session.

Avoid placing mobile phones and other electrical devices near the recorder. This can cause loud interference on the recording, even when the device is on silent.

Use non-verbal gestures to let speakers know you are listening.

### **5 Be bold - repeat key sentences for clarity.**

If you're afraid that the recording device didn't pick up something due to ambient noise or overspeaking, repeat it at the time for clarification, rather than look over your transcripts and wonder what was said!

### **6 Lastly, it's a good idea to have a spare battery or charging cable on hand, just in case!**

Always have a spare set of batteries on hand to avoid unexpected device failure. Alternatively, use a power adapter and charging cable for your recorder if a power outlet is nearby. If you have a spare recorder as a backup, even better!



### After Recording

#### **1 Specify the transcript style and template you wish to use.**

Sterling Transcription offers a number of transcript styles and templates, including: Intelligent Verbatim and Strict Verbatim transcript styles, and transcript templates such as Standard, NVivo Basic, NVivo Headings Simple, NVivo Headings Questions, and NVivo Synchronised.

Our standard transcript style, known as “intelligent verbatim”, is requested by 95% of our clients. Intelligent verbatim involves slight editing for ease of reading. Other transcript styles and templates are also available, some of which incur surcharges.

Download brochures on example transcripts and styles from the [brochures page](#) on our website. If your requirements fall outside these options, please call our helpful Enquiries Team to discuss further.

#### **2 Provide a vocabulary list of commonly used words and phrases, such as industry-specific acronyms, terminology, and jargon.**

Sending us a vocabulary list gives our transcribers immediate access and insight into the topics being discussed, which facilitates the production of more accurate transcripts.

#### **3 Confirm with us your desired turnaround time and any other transcription requirements.**

We offer a range of turnaround times to suit your individual needs. Confirm with us your turnaround and any other transcription requirements, such as speaker identification or differentiation, transcript style, and template.

This ensures we begin your transcription job knowing exactly what you want, need, and expect.



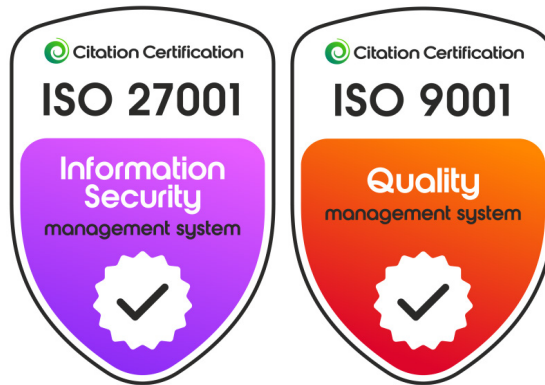
# STERLING Transcription

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## About Sterling Transcription

Sterling Transcription is a client-focused business that delivers a comprehensive suite of exceptional transcription services to clients across the United Kingdom, the rest of Europe, and countries around the globe.

Part of the global Pacific Solutions\* network, Sterling Transcription is proud to be ISO 27001 (Information Security Systems) & ISO 9001 (Quality Systems) certified.



## Contact Us

More Questions?  
Contact our Enquiries Team today.

FREEPHONE 0800 910 1410  
[enquiries@sterlingtranscription.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@sterlingtranscription.co.uk)

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