

Podcast Hosting Resources

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Please note that the Digital Media Lab and Tacoma Public Library do not specifically endorse any particular one of the 3rd party services listed below. As with most digital media, the distribution, syndication, and management of one's content typically requires a paid subscription to one of the many hosting services available. Monthly plans range from \$12-19/month. It helps to read independent reviews of these providers in blogs and other sites that serve the podcasting community (see <https://www.buzzsprout.com/blog/best-podcasting-blogs>).

For the Do-It-Yourselfer there's a completely free, no-strings-attached podcast distribution methodology that involves self-hosting your podcast on a web domain utilizing the Really Simple Syndication (RSS) protocol. Doing so requires some HTML coding knowledge and web design/management skills along with a registered web domain to store, manage, and maintain your podcast source file(s). More information on doing so can be found at <https://blog.lime.link/how-to-self-host-your-podcast/>.

<https://podcasters.apple.com/>

Useful for a producer for whom Apple/Mac/iOS is their native OS. Their support page offers articles, tutorials, and guides that will help you learn the basics, get support, understand your analytics, and promote your show.

<https://rss.com/>

Offers educational and not-for-profit discounts to organizations that produce educational and/or public service-related content.

<https://podcasters.spotify.com/>

A well-known music distribution company that offers support and analytics of who's listening to your show.

<https://anchor.fm/>

A subsidiary of Spotify, touted as one of the easiest, free podcast hosting sites available.

Top 7 "free" sites according to [Podcastinsights.com](https://podcastinsights.com). Be advised there are usually some strings attached such as limited time offers or possibly the insertion of paid advertising as part of the delivery of your podcast:

[Buzzsprout](#)

[Captivate](#)

[Transistor](#)

[Castos](#)

[Podbean](#)

[Simplecast](#)

[Resonate](#)

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Podcast distributors

Many of the above hosting sites offer, as part of their subscription plan, distribution to the major podcast distributors shown below. These entities “push” your programming to mobile devices utilizing such platforms as Android or iOS. For those who are self-hosting, all you need to register your podcast is to go to their respective website and submit your podcast information such as the title, episode description and the domain by which your podcast is hosted (along with its specific RSS data-feed):

[Spotify](#)

[Pocket Casts](#)

[Google Podcasts](#)

[Overcast](#)

[Apple Podcasts](#)

[Breaker](#)

[Castbox](#)

Register Your Podcast Name

In the same way you want to protect your content with a copyright notification in the metadata of your sound file, you also want to make sure your catchy new podcast title isn't already in use by someone else. The following website explains how to check this and register your own podcast name so that you can legally stop others from using it themselves:

<https://www.wikihow.com/Register-a-Podcast-Name>

Podcast Production in 10 Basic Steps

1. Decide on your program format. Podcasts can exist in a great variety of forms, some of which are described at the latter part of this document.
2. Decide on the *subject* and *title* of your podcast.
3. Scrutinize your narrative: where are you starting from? How is conflict identified and resolved? Should the podcast unfold as a series of shows, or a one-off? Careful planning of the podcast's narrative ensures an appreciative audience and a concise listening experience.
4. Schedule your interview(s) and prepare your recording space: a room well-adorned with curtains, drapes, blankets or anything else that'll prevent unwanted echoes of the walls is preferred. Set up a comfortable space for your guests and be mindful of exterior sounds that might interfere with your recording such as pets, children and lawn-maintenance equipment.

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5. Develop a colorful graphic representation of your podcast. Typical dimensions for most podcast graphics are 1,400 X 1,400 pixels, rendered @ 72 pixels-per-inch. Keep it simple and avoid clutter.
6. Consider a unique sound effect or musical treatment (jingle) to brand your show at the very beginning and ending of your podcast. Many times this can be a simple process of finding a friend or relative who can play a musical instrument and recording a 15-30 second snippet of their playing.
7. Write out your introduction and practice reading it frequently. Record as many takes as necessary for that “perfect” one that captures and holds the listener’s attention.
8. Record your program
9. Edit your program: Some programs require very little, others require hours of meticulous care. Open-source software such as Audacity allow for the removal of unexpected noises or unwanted content from your podcast.
10. Create an “outro” or call to action that provides listeners with a sense of closure to your podcast. Particularly if your content yields strong emotions, it is good to offer to your listeners a way to channel their emotions and feelings constructively.

Some ideas for your first podcast. Consider:

- A recorded Interview with someone
- Storytelling: “Once upon a time...”
- How-to do something in a sequence of steps
- Topical conversation - a chat or commentary on news or current affairs
- Recurring Information and Public affairs-type programming
 - E.g. What’s new this week in the community?
- Artistic performance critique or the review of a film, song or other theatrical experience

Interviews

One of the simplest forms of a podcast as it doesn’t require as much pre-planning. Interviews conducted via Zoom or other networking platform are often recorded and those audio recordings are readily downloadable for use in your podcast. Since an interview can sometimes get sidetracked and spontaneous, this style of podcast sometimes requires a bit of careful editing after-the-interview. Good questions to ask in preparing for an interview:

- Who am I going to interview?
- Why am I interviewing this person?
- What’s the subject of the interview?
- What do I hope the interview reveals?

Storytelling

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Storytelling is one of the most perfect formats for podcasters as it evokes the listener's imagination and emotions with none other than the oratory of a great narrator. Be mindful if the story you are telling is in the form of a published work: it is likely subject to copyright and therefore cannot be used. Rather, form the story from your own imagination and make it a one-of-a-kind listening experience. Many storytellers draw from the key components of the *seven-sentence story*:

The Seven Sentence Story

Once upon a time...

And every day...

Until one day...

And because of this...

And because of that...

Until finally...

And ever since that day...

What's Established?

Setting, time/place, tone of narrative

Rhythm, pacing, expectation, engagement

Introduction of conflict or a pivot in the story

Its impact on characters, setting and pacing

Tension, tension and more tension

Climax or most intense part of the story

Resolution and moral of the story

How-to

A how-to podcast offers you the chance to share the process of something you're really good at already. It can be formed in a manner similar to an essay with an intro, topic, supporting paragraphs, and a conclusion or call to action.

- Select a topic that can be explained verbally (without images)
- Outline the specific steps in the process
- Create transitions that offer clear markers for your listening audience
- E.g. "Now that we've gathered each of our ingredients it's time to preheat the oven, roll out the dough and prepare the crust."
- Conclude with an encouraging statement: "You too can make the perfect pizza crust with just a little bit of careful preparation".

Panel Discussion

Many popular podcasts feature 3 or more individuals contributing to the content as a panel of experts. Moderating and controlling the content can be a challenge so choose your panelists wisely and inform them of your goals and the program's narrative or intended outcome.

Discussions involving controversial topics can have unanticipated outcomes if the guests are not willing to adhere to clearly-stated norms of behavior and proper etiquette.

Artist/Performance/Book Review

One of the simple forms you can produce if you're working alone. Find a great movie, attend a show or demo some sort of commercial product (preferably one that makes recordable sounds) and give it a complete analysis. Be mindful of copyright laws regarding the use of another artist's music or intellectual property. Obtain written permission from the artist or publishing company if you intend to use any excerpts of this work in your program. Even if your podcast doesn't earn any money, the use of another person's work is considered a violation of copyright law.

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