

Getting the best sound for your recordings

Equipment

- Headphones – to monitor/playback recording.
- Microphone – either a headset microphone or external (USB) microphone works best.

Directional microphones pick up sound from a specific area and are designed to minimise background noise. They are likely to be more useful for your basic media recording.

An omnidirectional microphone will pick up sound equally from all directions and may be better for interviews and recordings with more than one person.

- In-built laptop/computer microphones will often reduce the overall quality of your recording. Consider using your hands-free mobile phone headphones/microphone.

Set-up your microphone

Go to Settings > System > Sound > Input (**Windows**) or System Preferences > Sound > Input (**Apple**) and make sure the headset or external microphone is selected as your main sound input. This can also be achieved within the software you are using to make your recording, usually within the **Audio Device Input** options.

Monitor sound input levels by checking that the live feedback meter does not reach the red line of the monitor, but is as high up on the green levels as possible.

You can increase or decrease input volume by adjusting the input levels within either the Systems volume setting or volume setting within the software you are using.

Position your microphone so it is unobstructed and directly in your line of voice.

Environment

Choose a space with as little noise as possible. Before you begin recording, listen to your surroundings. We often filter out sounds we're used to and the less background noise the better.

- **In offices** - listen out for air conditioning units, hand dryers, doors opening and closing, telephones, street traffic and roadworks, photocopiers and appliances etc.
- **In homes** – listen for family members, pets, fridges, TVs and radios, traffic and neighbours.
- Your computer may have a fan, so try to reduce the number of programs running in the background to reduce computer usage.

Remember, the microphone will pick up every noise you make. Unconscious actions like clicking a pen, tapping on the table, shuffling paper, moving or adjusting clothing will affect the quality of your recording. Try to avoid all of these where possible.

Consider what furnishings are in the space you choose. For basic recordings:

- Carpet, furniture and fabrics will absorb sound reflections and minimize reverberations or echo and generally **improve** overall sound quality.
- Hollow spaces, wooden/plastic material, high ceilings and less furniture will increase echo and generally **reduce** overall quality.

Post production editing

Simple post-production editing includes removing unwanted periods of conversation, background noises, shortening content and general editing. This can be completed using Canvas Studio video editor, OpenShot or Hit Film Express 3. See our [guide on editing your multimedia](#) for more information.

More complicated editing includes mastering sound levels so volume and frequency are consistent and removing hums or other audio interference. This can be completed using licenced Adobe software including Premiere and Audition, but may be more difficult for beginners.

More information

For more information and resources, please visit the University of Liverpool's [Centre for Innovation in Education website](#).

Alternatively, email using: CIE@liverpool.ac.uk.



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