LA COUNTY LIBRARY

Activity Idea

How To Start a Podcast
Recommended for Adults

A podcasts is an episodic series of files containing digital information (such as audio, video, PDF, etc.) that are subscribed to, delivered via RSS feed (don't worry if you don't know what that means), and either downloaded or streamed from the internet. The word "podcast" comes from the blending of two words: iPod and Broadcast. That particular combination of words took root because at the outset of podcasting most people listened to them on their iPods. Podcasting took a few years to catch on; it was first conceptualized in 2004 by Adam Curry and David Winer and by 2008, Edison Research found that 37% of Americans had at least heard of podcasts, a number that jumped to 43% by the following year. In 2013, Apple announced that there were 1 billion podcast subscribers! Today, there are over 750,000 active podcasts. That number may sound intimidating but with proper planning, sending your unique voice and story to the world can be as simple as 1-2-3!

The podcast planning process can be summarized in the following main steps:
- Choose a topic, define an audience, and goals,
- Determine the format and production timeline,
- Acquire necessary equipment and tools, choose a hosting site

The early steps are the most critical phases of the planning process; it is important to select a topic about which you are passionate and knowledgeable and to seek out existing podcasts on that topic. It is also helpful to consider the audience in terms of what goals you wish to accomplish for that group. The needs and desires of the audience may also help determine many of the formatting, editing, and marketing decisions that will be made later in the process. Once the initial planning is underway, the bare minimum equipment you'll need consists of a computer or mobile phone with internet access, a USB microphone, and recording/editing software. For more extensive information on the planning process, recommended equipment, and tips to make your podcast successful, check out the resources below!

Books/Audiobooks:
Podcasting for Beginners by George J. Lewyn and Martin C. Glover on Hoopla
https://tinyurl.com/y7gxnhum
Takes listeners through the entire podcast journey, from defining what podcasts are and how they work, to monetizing a podcast and establishing a dedicated fan base.

So You Want to Start a Podcast by Kristen Meinzer on OverDrive https://tinyurl.com/y7c8xmyb
A comprehensive step-by-step guide for beginners on how to start a podcast, covering topics ranging from hosting and guest booking to marketing.

Podcast: The Ultimate Guide to Podcasting by George J. Lewyn on Hoopla
https://tinyurl.com/yc5jbccm
Teaches listeners about podcast essentials such as choosing a niche topic, planning podcast episodes, and recording and editing like a professional.

Profitable Podcasting by Stephen Woessner on Hoopla https://tinyurl.com/yb52m2a9
Based on the author's personal journey of success in podcasting, this eBook guides readers through a detailed formula for developing a profitable podcast.

Free Online Courses:
Producing Podcasts on Lynda https://tinyurl.com/ydg6tpzz
A 2-hour course that covers topics from planning your podcast to marketing the result, with purchasing equipment and finding a host, among other things, in between.

Producing Professional Podcasts on Lynda https://tinyurl.com/y8nhf7g7
A more in-depth 5-hour class giving extensive insight on everything you need to know to become a podcast pro.

Blogging and Podcasting for Beginners on Gale https://tinyurl.com/y9mcbkyz
A 6-week instructor-led course which uses hands-on exercises to show students how to plan, record, edit, and publish both audio and video podcasts.

Useful Websites:
NPR.org*:* "Starting Your Podcast: A Guide for Students" https://tinyurl.com/y9gszr9m
Created for the "Student Podcast Challenge," this resource is good for anyone who wants to start podcasting right away with what they have on-hand.

Blogging.com*:* "How to Start a Podcast" (updated 01/20) https://tinyurl.com/yb9oa2pf
A neat guide on the basics of podcasting with convenient links to equipment and hosting sites.

How Stuff Works*:* "How Podcasting Works" https://tinyurl.com/ybx3dnfs
An overview of podcasting, including its history, with a few links to additional websites and recommended software as well as a section on video casting.

Get Started!
Take the first step by downloading some free sound-editing software, try:
- Audacity (audacityteam.org),
- ocenaudio (ocenaudio.com), and/or
- GarageBand for Mac (apple.com/mac/garageband)