



AUDIO RECORDING **CHECKLIST**

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SONG PREPARATION

It is really important to feel comfortable playing the music you want to play and record. It really makes the difference to make your music sound great because it has your touch, groove and tone. You should focus on your musical expression instead of getting a technically perfect take. In order to do this you'll need to know the song by heart and be able to play it confidently, so make sure you practice!



GUITAR

Next let's talk about the guitar, are you sure you're using the right one for the job? If not, then consider borrowing another for the session, or even investing in another guitar for yourself. The sound and playability of the guitar is very important when it comes to recording music so make sure that you use a guitar that sounds good and is comfortable to play.



STRINGS

Strings are also an important factor, choose the appropriate type and gauge for the instrument and the type sound that you want. Also make sure that the guitar's action is set up correctly so that it plays without buzzing. A general rule is to use the heaviest set of strings that are still comfortable enough for you to play. As you may already know, I prefer the .012 to .053 gauge and change strings one to three days before I record so that they will sound their best.



TUNING

Accurate tuning is essential, check the tuning in between every take. Make sure to pluck each string and wait a bit before you tune since it takes some time before reaching the right pitch.



THE ROOM

Another thing to bear in mind is that the sound of an acoustic guitar recording can depend a great deal on the environment in which the instrument is played. You want to get your room to sound as dead or dry as possible to get the best sound. Generally it is good to be in a small room with carpet and filled with items to prevent the reflection of the sound. Ideally, you'll want to have some absorbers and acoustic panels on the walls.

If you don't have acoustic panels, it helps as well to put a mattress, pillows and or blankets against the walls to make the room sound as dry as possible. You can check how dry the room sound is by clapping your hands. Test it out by walking around the room and clapping. You'll want to pay special attention for harsh metallic echoing sounds.

You can find more information about it *here* (*external link*).



DRESS CODE

Anything that has the potential to hit or tap the body of the guitar can ruin an otherwise perfect take.

Common offenders include belt buckles and buttons on a shirt or jacket, but your watch can also sometimes cause problems as well. So make sure that you don't wear anything that could cause irritating noises while recording.



POWER UP

This is an easy but often overlooked factor, make sure the batteries inside the guitar and or microphones are new or at least have enough life left in them to get through the session. Otherwise you could wind up recording with a lower signal which results in poorer sound quality.



BE IN SHAPE

Make sure you stay in shape by preparing yourself mentally to record music. Play the piece before and do some finger exercises to be at your best for the recording music.

At the same time keep in mind that you shouldn't play the song too much, usually the first three takes are the best. The more often you play the song, the weaker it gets.