

Doing interviews is one of the most popular ways to create podcast episodes.

They can be a bit of a minefield though. There's quite a lot of balls to juggle. From researching and preparing questions, to making sure you've actually hit record.

Fear not though, your days of dropping the ball when it comes to podcast interviews are over.

Simply run through this checklist before, and at the beginning of each interview.

We'll keep you right, so that you can relax and focus on recording a conversation that will bring value to your listeners.

Over time, this stuff will become second nature to you. But if you're ever feeling a little rushed or overwhelmed, this checklist will always be here when you need it!

## Pre-Checks: Tech & Logistics

- 1. Have you confirmed a date and time and location with your guest?
  - Some tools that can help with this are [Doodle](#), [Calendly](#) and [BookLikeaBoss](#)
- 2. Have you packed everything you need?
  - It helps to have a checklist of your own equipment here. Set up to record at home, then write down everything you're using. It'll come in handy!
- 3. Do you need/have fresh batteries?
  - Never opt for a set of half-charged batteries. It's just not worth it.
- 4. Do you have enough room on your memory card?
  - Always a good idea to actually format your digital recorder's memory card in advance of an interview (after you've backed all your files up, of course).

## Pre-Checks: Content

- 1. Have you researched your guest?
  - Try to gather some interesting info from their website, social media channels, and a general Google search.
  - Try to discover at least 1 or 2 non-work related subjects that interest them.
  - Jot down their main social channels, usernames and the product or service they're currently promoting.
- 2. Have you briefed your guest on what you want to talk about?
  - You don't need to send over a list of questions, but it can be useful. At the least, let your guest know what you're looking to get out of the interview. This is more relevant for factual/educational interviews.
- 3. Have you created some main questions you'd like to ask?
  - Jot down 6 or 7 key questions. Not to follow verbatim - you want to listen to

their answers and look for good follow-up questions. But it's good to have a framework of questions to build from.

- Jot down a hobby question, related to the non-work discovery mentioned above. This is a great way to relax an interviewee, break into a conversational mode and draw them away from their usual soundbites.

4. Have you created a list of 'fall-back' questions?

- If, for any reason, the interview should fall a little flat, have some other questions at-hand to liven things up and change track. For some inspiration on this, check out our post on [Great Podcast Interview Questions](#).

5. Have you written the introduction?

- Introduce the guest live, if you can. Mention their main social channels, their current project and a little background. Getting this in at the start relaxes the guest, makes you look pro and, again, removes some of their usual 'soundbite' information, making your interview more unique.

## Sitting Down to Record

1. Have you talked to your guest through the recording process?

- A bit of simple coaching helps, if they're not used to recording. Help pin on their lav mic or talk them through good mic technique and etiquette.

2. Are you wearing headphones to monitor the recording?

- What your headphones hear is what the recorder is recording. This is an essential safety net for quickly spotting and sorting out any problems that might arise.

3. Can you hear both your voices clearly?

- If you can, then the recorder can.

4. Are there any issues with their mic technique?

- Take a moment to reaffirm good mic technique and distance.

5. Are there any issues with the recording environment?

- Does it sound like an echo chamber? Is the background noise drowning out your voices? Are you outdoors in the wind? If there's any issues, moving some where else is infinitely better than trying to 'fix' the recording later.

1. Have you set your gain levels appropriately?

- You want a strong enough signal for both you and your guest, but not too loud or it'll 'clip'. Aim for the level metres to bounce around the -12 region.

2. Have you hit record?

- Don't be \*that\* person. Make sure you've hit record. Then check that you're definitely recording. Then check it again :-)