

Spoken Word/ “Podcasting”

Countless “how-to” articles have been written on *podcasting*, which is essentially a current trend in spoken word distribution, but few offer many tips on how to properly record the human voice. Below are some suggestions:

1. Keep the microphone 6 –12” from your mouth.

Generally, keep the microphone as close as possible to your mouth to avoid picking up unwanted room reflections and reverberation. Do not get too close either. *Proximity effect*, which is an increase in low frequency response that occurs as you get closer to a directional microphone, can cause your voice to sound “muddy” or overly bassy.

2. Aim the microphone toward your mouth from below or above.

This placement minimizes “popping” caused by plosive consonants (e.g. “p” or “t”).

3. Use an external pop filter.

Though most microphones have some sort of built-in windscreen, an additional filter will provide extra insurance against “p” pops. The pop filter can also serve as a reference to help you maintain a consistent distance from the microphone. (See Image 1.)

4. Keep the microphone away from reflective surfaces.

Reflections caused by hard surfaces, such as tabletops or music stands, can adversely affect the sound quality captured by the microphone. (See the section “*Phase relationships and interference effects*” page 30.)

5. Speak directly into the microphone.

High frequencies are very directional, and if you turn your head away from the microphone, the sound captured by the microphone will get noticeably duller.



Image 1: Example of an external pop filter