

Making a podcast @ Maastricht University Library

Making your own podcast. It does not actually sound that difficult, does it? It is indeed not difficult, if you know what to look for. We have summarized the most important tips & tricks for you in a short guide: how to start your own podcast.

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Creating your podcast: step by step

1. Create the concept and determine a subject

You have at least an idea of what you want to talk about in your podcast. Put your thoughts into words and come up with a concept. Write a short description for your podcast that gives potential new listeners a direct idea of what to expect. This forces you to think about it for yourself and determine your goal. The subject you talk about should really be a subject of which you have a lot of knowledge. Expert knowledge and/or years of experience are required. On the other hand, you can talk about current world events in your podcast.

Perhaps these considerations lead to a catchy name for your podcast: they are often unusual, but striking.

Tip: It helps to create some kind of framework for your episode, so that you have an outline of what you are going to talk about on paper. If possible, with questions to interview someone, with pieces of information and correct sources if you want to cite them or at least the order of the topics you want to talk about. That will prevent "uuuuh" or an incoherent story. It is not necessary to write an entire script and read it out, that takes away the spontaneity, but improvising completely (even if you are an expert) does not always work either.

2. Use high quality equipment

A podcast is primarily about the content, but it must also be pleasant to listen to. Therefore, the most important equipment is a high-quality microphone to record your podcast.

The second important part is the recording software. This allows you to edit a podcast, trim the recording, adjust the volume afterwards and in a best-case scenario record interview partners directly via Skype and the like. Our recommendations: Audacity, GarageBand (iOS), and Hindenburg Journalist.

The correct equipment is available in the podcast studio of Maastricht University Library. See a list of the available equipment further on in this manual.

3. Use a cover and intro for recognisability

A podcast is mainly about listening. Keep in mind though: when you search for a podcast, beautifully designed covers quickly catch the eye. So think about how you want to visually present and promote your podcast. You could also enlist the help of a graphic designer.

The intro is the introduction to all your podcast episodes. It provides continuity and immediately grabs the listeners. Music that fits the theme, a few sentences that welcome the listener and summarize what your podcast is about in general: that is all you need.

Tip: You can download royalty-free music on websites such as www.bensound.com.

Tip: An easy to use tool for graphic design is www.canva.com.

4. Make a trial recording

Before you really get started, test your setting! Familiarize yourself with the technique and listen to how the recording sounds. Is there too much reverb? Are you too far away from the microphone? To reduce the reverberation, you should sit in a furnished room, but without environmental noise. No joke: some podcasters set up recording nooks in pantry rooms or even spacious closets.

5. Choose a platform to publish your podcast

You have several options for distributing your podcast. First and foremost, you need to choose a podcast host, who will automatically publish the episodes on different platforms. This is done by means of an RSS feed, through which the current podcast episode is always available on Spotify, TuneIn and other such platforms. Hosts that generate this RSS feed for you and automatically distribute it to the various platforms at the touch of a button include SoundCloud, Libsyn and Podigee.

6. Fire up the microphone and go!

Well-prepared? Then you can finally start: go ahead and record your first podcast episode. This will usually cover a specific topic but can also serve as an introduction to yourself and your podcast. Keep chatting, touch your listeners with your enthusiasm, and look ahead to the next episodes.

For future episodes, it's a good idea to plan how often you want to release new episodes, when you plan the topics ahead of time, and whether you might write short scripts for each episode so you don't get lost while recording.

Source: <https://magazine.teufelaudio.nl/je-eigen-podcast-maken-hoe-doe-je-dat/> (April 2022)

Source: <https://communities.surf.nl/media-education/artikel/de-kracht-van-podcasts-in-het-onderwijs-highlights-uit-het-webinar-van> (May 2022)

For more information about creating podcasts see also:

<https://www.smartpassiveincome.com/guide/how-to-start-a-podcast-tutorial-pat-flynn/> / (June 2022)

<https://training.npr.org/2017/01/31/the-ear-training-guide-for-audio-producers/>

Use and book the podcast studio and equipment

1. Book the podcast studio

Pre-booking of the room and equipment is mandatory. You can book the podcast studio through the [UM Resource Booker](#). This can be done up to 3 weeks in advance. Prior to your chosen time slot, pick up the key at the Library Information Desk. There you can get directions to the location of the podcast studio.

UM staff and lecturers: If the studio needs to be reserved more than 3 weeks in advance, please send a request to reservations-ub@maastrichtuniversity.nl. Clearly state the date, time, and your name. Sign up at the information desk to receive instructions and the key.

2. Using the studio: house rules

- A) It is mandatory to stick to the recommended and already set settings when using the podcast equipment. If you want to make any changes to these settings, please consult with the library first.

<https://library.maastrichtuniversity.nl/contact/>

You can find more information about equipment settings below.

- B) If you would like publicity for your podcast, send a request via <https://library.maastrichtuniversity.nl/contact/>.
- C) Please leave the room tidy and switch off the equipment after use. Return the key to the Information Desk. Please handle the equipment and space with care. **You are liable for any damage.**
- D) Save the recordings directly to your own device after use. Empty the SD card belonging to the equipment. This way you **prevent abuse by others!** Also think about where you will publish your recordings. Check the Library Website for more information about safely handling your data.

The Equipment



Zoom H6 audio recorder (6 channels), 2 built-in microphones, 4 XLR inputs for external microphones, line-in, Sandisk SDXC 128GB memory card storage for audio recordings.



Rode PodMic. Speech-optimized large diaphragm microphones (4x)
CA-PRO XLR male - XLR female 1.5 meter cables (4x)

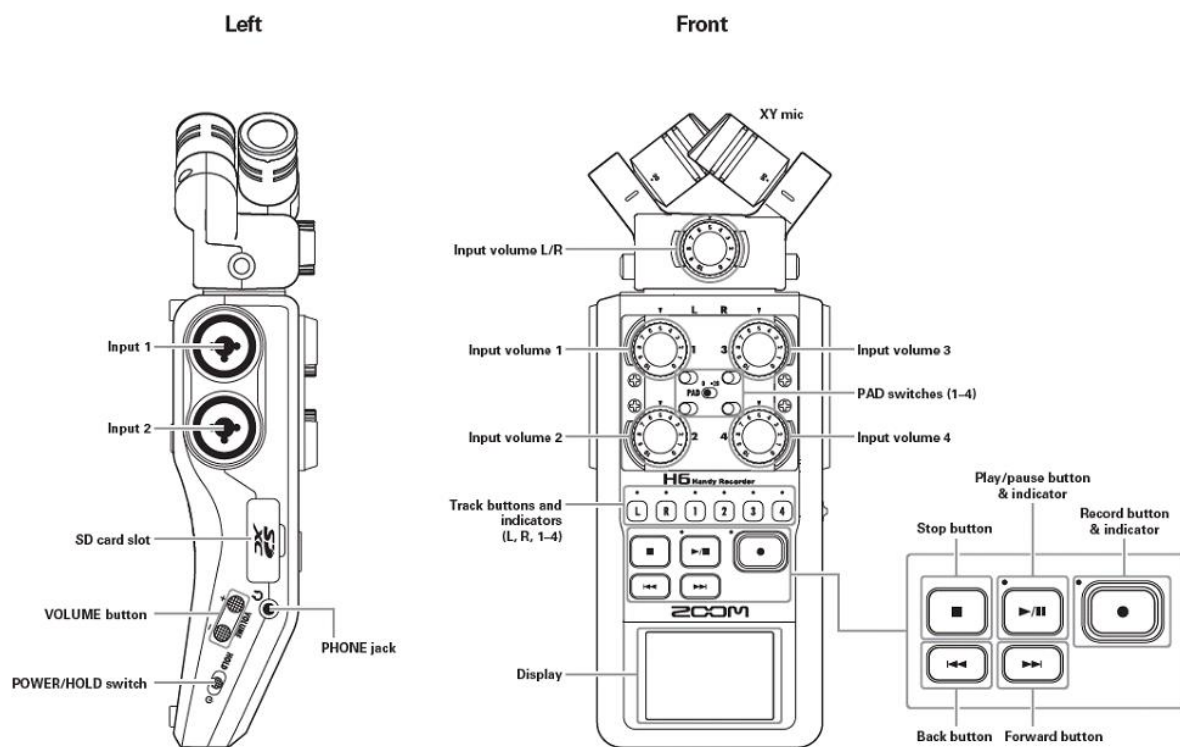


K&M table tripod with heavy foot (2.5 kg). Black. Height adjustable 217-247mm. (4x)
CA-PRO XLR male - XLR female 1.5 meter (4x).



Beyer Dynamic DT240 Pro hoofdtelefoon monitoring opname.

Recommended equipment settings for recording your podcast

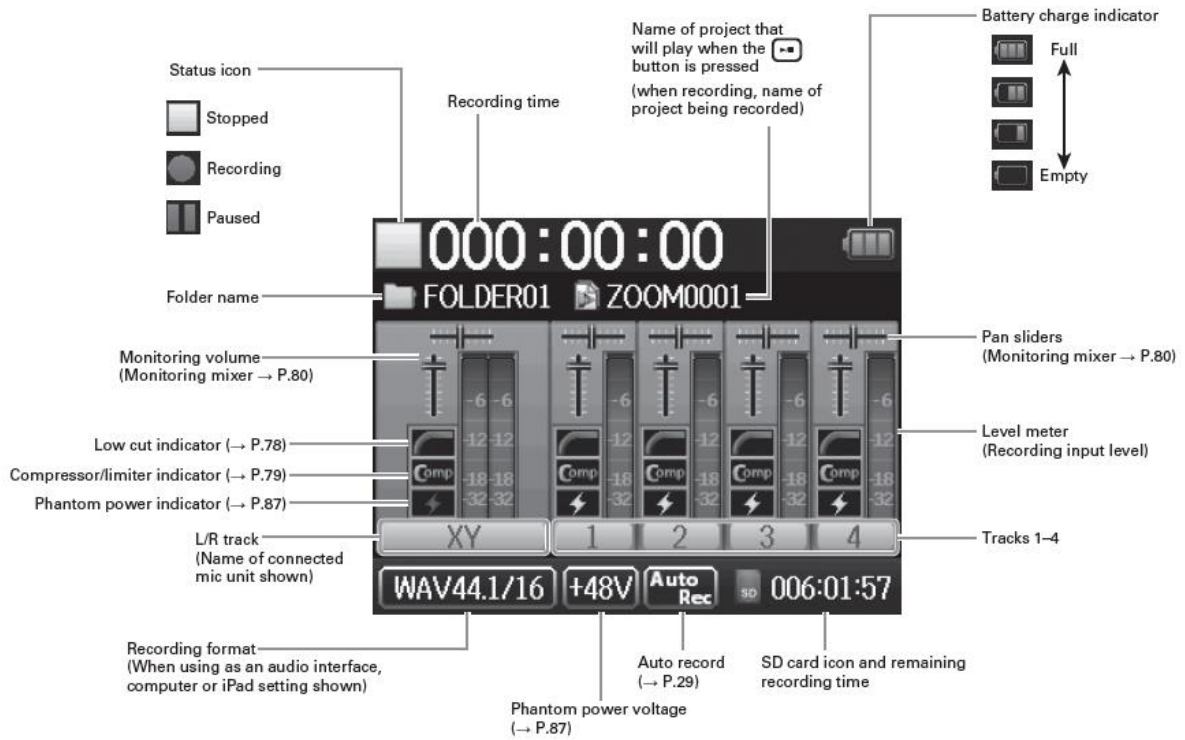


You can connect up to four XLR microphones to the Zoom H6 Handy Recorder. Included is an XY mic, which will make your recordings sound more natural. The Zoom H6 will record each track separately in uncompressed WAV format. You can enable or disable each track by pressing the track buttons, L+R and 1 – 4. The indicator of the selected track button lights red when enabled.

Make sure you disable the tracks you do not use to prevent interference. If you press track button 2 while pressing and holding track button 1, tracks 1/2 will become a stereo track (stereo link). Tracks 3/4 can be made into a stereo track in the same way. Stereo links can also be deactivated in the same way. The L/R track stereo link, however, cannot be deactivated.

You can find more information in the hardcopy manual supplied with the equipment. When you finish recording, use the supplied SD-card reader to copy your recordings to your personal device. You can format the SD-card using the Zoom H6 or your laptop.

Each track has a dial to control input volume. They are usually set at seven or eight, depending on the voice of the speaker and background noise. Try to set them as low as possible to prevent any unwanted (background) noises in your recordings. Mind the level meters on screen, adjust so that the peak level stays around -12dB .



Listen to your (test) recordings using the headphones, connected to the phone jack. Make sure everything is loud and clear without any interference before you start.

