



8 Top Tips for Recording Interviews

(So You Get Clear, Accurate Transcripts Every Time)

Whether you're new to recording interviews or have struggled with poor-quality transcripts in the past, small changes in how you record can make a significant difference.

Based on over 15 years of professional transcription experience, these practical tips will help you capture clear, usable audio — and get the best possible results from your transcripts.

1. Test your equipment properly

Before you begin:

- Run a short test recording
- Check all speakers are clearly picked up
- Ensure microphones are positioned correctly
- Confirm batteries are charged and cables secure

👉 A quick test can prevent hours of unusable audio.

2. Start with clear introductions

At the beginning of the recording:

- Ask each participant to introduce themselves
- Spell names if needed
- Encourage clear, steady speech

Where possible, allow slightly longer introductions — this helps transcribers recognise voices more easily throughout the recording.

👉 Tip: Refer to speakers by name during the session to maintain clarity.

3. Avoid people speaking over one another

Overlapping speech is one of the most common causes of unclear audio.

If this happens:

- Pause briefly
- Ask speakers to repeat their points one at a time

👉 Even the best audio can become difficult to interpret when voices overlap.

4. Minimise background noise

Background noise can quickly interfere with recording quality.

Where possible:

Ask participants to silence mobile phones (including vibration)

Turn off unnecessary equipment (fans, air conditioning, etc.)

Avoid noisy environments where possible

Pause if there are sudden loud interruptions (traffic, sirens, etc.)

👉 If something disrupts the audio, it's always better to pause and repeat.

5. Make sure everyone can be heard

People speak at different volumes and speeds.

If needed:

Prompt quieter speakers to speak up

Position them closer to the microphone

Pause and adjust seating if required

👉 It's better to address this early than lose important content.

6. Provide key terminology in advance

If your discussion includes:

Specialist terms

Industry jargon

Unusual names or acronyms

Provide a short list alongside your audio — or ask participants to spell terms during the recording.

👉 This helps ensure accuracy and reduces the need for guesswork.

7. Plan for breaks

Long recordings can affect focus and audio quality.



For longer sessions:

Schedule short breaks (every 45–60 minutes)

Pause the recording clearly

Ensure everyone returns to the same position

👉 A short break can improve clarity and concentration for everyone involved.

8. Check your recording as you go

During the session:

Keep an eye on recording indicators

Periodically confirm audio is still being captured

Double-check the recording has resumed after any pauses

👉 Small checks can prevent major issues later.

💡 A final note

Good audio is the foundation of a reliable transcript.

Even with the best tools, unclear recordings can lead to gaps, delays, or inaccuracies — particularly where multiple speakers, accents, or technical content are involved.

Taking a little extra care at the recording stage makes a significant difference to the final result.

🤝 Need support?

If you'd like advice on your recording setup — or need accurate, confidential transcription for your interviews, meetings, or research — we're always happy to help.

www.outsource-typing.com

Outsource Typing | UK-based, human-led transcription specialists