So, you’ve decided to record your own lectures!

Here are a few tips for successful lecture and audio recording in the comfort of your own home or office.

# **EQUIPMENT**

Use a microphone. Having the mic close to your mouth reduces background noise. A built-in computer microphone is not ideal because other environmental noises will compete with your voice. Although there is a wide range of audio equipment options, from simple headsets to entire studio setups, there are affordable and easy-to-use choices that will give you good results. For most home recording, you can go with a headset that includes its own attached mic.

[Here’s a headset](https://www.amazon.com/Sennheiser-PC-USB-Headset-line/dp/B005HWEZGG/ref=sr_1_4?ie=UTF8&qid=1515676880&sr=8-4&keywords=sennheiser+PC+7+usb+headset) our team recommends. It is affordable (under $40) and, in our experience, really good at eliminating plosives, which is a sound with a lot of air pressure coming out of the mouth (the “puh” in a p for example). Most mics have trouble with this and distort the sound. If you are shopping for a mic or headset, research how it handles this.

# SOFTWARE

Drexel IT will activate Camtasia, a powerful lecture recording and editing application, on your computer once you pass the Camtasia Proficiency Quiz for which you can prepare by viewing the hour-long series of [Camtasia training modules](http://drexel.edu/it/services/workshops/web-based/cam-cross-platform/).

Alternatively, you can use [Audacity](https://www.audacityteam.org/), a free open source digital audio editor and recording application. See instructions for [recording](https://manual.audacityteam.org/man/usb_recording.html) and for [exporting the file](https://manual.audacityteam.org/man/file_menu_export.html#exportaudio).

# SETUP

Go to the place where you plan to record, close your eyes and listen. What do you hear? Air conditioner, dishwasher, street noise? Turn off or muffle all the noisemakers you can. Put pets in another room. Close your windows. Before you begin recording, silence all cell phones and put a note on your door that you are recording.

Best practice is to record from a written script to keep lectures pointed and concise.

# DURING RECORDING

To further overcome background noise, record 5-15 seconds of silence before talking. That “silence” will record any background noise that will be in the audio file. This piece can later be used during the editing process to “cancel out” and remove the background noise.

Remember to keep your lecture thoroughly evergreen, that is, fresh and lasting. Emphasize your core content, avoiding references to term week numbers, seasons/holidays, current news, pop fads, etc. You could always add an additional quick podcast to each course section that is particular and transitory, but for your meticulously planned, recorded, edited and packaged lecture, you will want to shoot for a longer shelf life. You’ll thank yourself later if you decide to rearrange course material or repurpose your video for another class.

Consider creating a separate recording file for each slide, so it’s easy to synchronize the audio with the slides.

# EXPORT FORMATS

Once you have recorded your lecture, you are not quite finished yet. Editing the Audacity file is impracticable. So, you will want to export your audio to a more workable file format for final editing. The preferred exported format is a .wav file, which is the highest quality audio file and the optimal format for editing. The second-best format is MP3.

# ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AND TRAINING

Drexel IT offers a wealth of [training opportunities](http://drexel.edu/it/services/workshops/) that will help you develop your course.