

Recording Tips

Feeling nervous?

Don't be! Just think about a story you'd like to tell a certain person or a group of friends. Write it down like a letter, or make a list of what you'd like to say. Think about recording your story tomorrow, and set some time aside to record your story.

Practice speaking clearly. You don't have to be louder than your regular phone voice; talk at your regular volume and speed. If you've written most of your story down, read through it a few times so that you're a bit more comfortable.

Speak normally. Pretend that the person you are telling the story to is sitting in front of you. Look at a photo, talk to a teddy bear - even your dog or cat.

Log in to your account through www.RememberedVoices.com or **1-888-9-HEAR-ME** (1-888-943-2763). Follow the prompts and start speaking your story.

Prepare yourself

You've lived an eventful life. Consider your first day at school, your favorite meal, how you chose a certain place for vacation, what you've seen in person. Don't think that these events are trivial; the little things that you remember, and the way you reminisce, are very personal. Talk as if you were talking over the phone to your best friend.

- Describe; mention the colors, textures, smells, and sensations
- Personalize; express your thoughts, reactions, and impressions
- Focus; don't allow yourself to be distracted from the information you are recalling or creating
- Enjoy; talk about something you really love, to someone who genuinely wants to listen

You can also turn any experience in to a story. Consider the events leading up to a revelation or a life changing decision. Listen to the ways that good storytellers draw their audience in by emphasizing some points and leaving out others. You don't even have to follow the formula of a traditional plot with conflict and resolution.

Prepare your environment

Although you may have become accustomed to the sound of passing cars, air conditioners, and squeaky chairs, the microphones in your phone and your computer have a difficult time discerning the sounds you think are important. If you've ever seen a radio DJ or a singer in their recording booth, you'll notice that they've covered their walls with sound absorbing surfaces (plus they have an impressive specialty microphone that further cleans up the sound signal). You don't need to go to these lengths; you can make very good quality voice recordings by following these basic steps.

- Check your phone or microphone to make sure the mute button is not clicked
- Record in a closed room; close windows and drapes
- Turn off all unnecessary electronics, and remove any ticking clocks
- If you are using a landline, cell phone, or speaker phone, speak in your normal "phone voice"
- If you are using a desktop computer, set your microphone far from your hard drive
- Speak directly in to the microphone. Always face the microphone
- Avoid heavy breathing and loud exhalations
- Adjust your speaking volume as needed; adjust record volume, if possible
- More volume does not a better recording make! You will overpower the microphone's ability to capture and convert sound

- Speak too quietly, and the microphone won't pick your voice out of the surrounding room sound
- If you move around, be quiet. Microphones can pick up shuffling paper, drumming fingers, and the swish of corduroy (even a hungry belly!)

You will find circumstances where the desire to create a recording hits you far away from your personal recording area. Don't let that stop you - try to find a quiet area where you can record, and adjust your voice volume accordingly.

Do you feel self conscious?

If you feel like you're in the spotlight, try a group recording. Invite your family and friends over for a meal, and set your phone or computer microphone in a central location that will pick up everyone's contribution. Decide what you'd like to talk about, and start recording. The group conversation will help you relax and dispel your stage fright. Assign someone to keep an eye on the volume settings and time - the maximum recording length is one hour.

Pre-record yourself

You can also create a recording on your computer with sound editing software, and upload it later to the Remembered Voices web site. This will allow you to clean up the sound and edit your recording - especially if you have long pauses or interruptions while you record.

Relax!

Once you get going, you'll find it easy to tell your story. Your recordings will become warm, comforting, and realistic snapshots of your personality through the tone and tempo of your voice.