

FIELD RECORDING TIPS

Before You Head Out:

1. **Know Your Equipment!** - How it works, what connects where?, does it need batteries?, what kind?, how to use it. Read the manual at least once all the way through if at all possible.
2. **Do An Inventory** – Make sure you have everything you need, and extra supplies for unexpected opportunities and situations.
3. **Test Everything** before you head out to gather sound, images, etc. – Replace broken cables, replace dead batteries, swap out faulty memory cards, discs, etc.
4. **Pack Extra Recording Media and Batteries** – More than you think you will need. Sometimes things just die, so it's always good to have a backup. You also might get an additional assignment while out.
5. **Bring A Notebook and Pen** – If all else fails, you'll have something to bring back to salvage your story. It's also good for jotting down ideas for equipment to pack next time. ☺

While Out Recording:

1. **ALWAYS RECORD AMBIENCE / NAT SOUND!!!** – At least 1 solid minute for each location you go to. If you're shooting video, always record cutaway footage.
2. **Watch Your Levels.** – This is the most important part of the recording process.
3. **Wear Your Headphones.** – Not earbuds!! You're listening for quality, and to make sure you're getting what you want. The only way to know is to listen.
4. **Check Battery Levels** on a regular basis. – A good time to change batteries is just before your next question, not halfway through the interviewee's answer.
5. **Check Remaining Time on Media** – The same rule as batteries applies. You don't want to get caught running out of time at a crucial moment.
6. **Have Interviewee Spell and Pronounce Their Name.** – You'll always get it right if you have it recorded in their own voice.
7. **Check Your Recording Before You Leave the Scene.** - The best time to solve problems or re-do part of the interview is right then and there.

Professional Audio Recording in 3 Simple Steps

1. **Set Recording Levels**
2. **Adjust Volume of Headphones**
3. **Use Proper Microphone Techniques**

When You Get Back:

1. **Check Your Gear Once More** before putting it away. – If you borrowed equipment, you want to make sure the right person knows if things need to be repaired/replaced.
2. **Repack Equipment The Same Way.** – It's easier to find things if everything has its place in your bag, and you return them to that place. It's also easier to do an inventory to make sure nothing is lost. Some people find putting a printed inventory list in the bag to be very helpful.
3. **Remove Batteries from all Equipment.** – They can drain faster if left in.