



Audio File Quality Standards

v2.0

Our goal, through collaborative effort of the global Church, is to create accurate, high-quality, audio recording of Biblical content with listening appeal and usability that will last a lifetime. The following are audio file standards for unfoldingWord audio creation and publishing.

Format Standard

Recording

- WAV, 44.1kHz, 16-bit, mono

door43 upload and/or archiving

- WAV, 44.1kHz, 16-bit, mono (universal standard/full quality)
- FLAC, 44.1kHz, 16-bit, mono (please contact us regarding marker cue requirements)
- MP3, 44.1kHz, 256kbps or 128kbps, mono (low quality)(please contact us regarding marker cue requirements)

Distribution

- MP3, 44.1kHz, 128kbps, mono (high quality download)
- MP3, 44.1kHz, 64kbps, mono (mid quality download)
- MP3, 22kHz, 32kbps, mono (low quality download)

Technical Characteristics

- Normalize to -3dB
- Noise floor below -45 dB.
- 1 second of silence at the beginning of file.
- 1 second of silence at the end of file.
- Soft or no compression processing.
- No extreme silencing between phrases.

Style Characteristics

The style standards below identify the best practices for creating audio content with excellent flexibility for use in a wide variety of listening settings including personal, family, church, radio broadcast, etc. These standards also provide best longevity for value across generations, future versatility and consistency with the most common style preferences requested for audio content.

- Use single voice narration style with natural inflection, rhythm and nuance.
- Narrator(s) must be native speaker of language and culturally accepted for conveying Biblical content.
- Avoid unnecessary or excessive changing of narrators within a recording. Too many changes can be distracting to the listener. Changing of narrator voices should not occur during a single chapter or story.
- No sound effects, background music, dramatization, multi-voice acting of story characters, theatrical-style voicing, etc.

Listening Characteristics

- Speed of narration should be moderate, comfortable and easy to follow.
- Voice must be clear and sound natural.
- No echo or reverb (Use adequate acoustical treatment during recording).
- No distracting, unnatural background noises (clicking of computer mouse, conversations in next room, etc).
- Any editing or processing applied in the breaks between phrases or sentences must be non-detectable for the listener and maintain the natural sound and flow of the whole audio file.
- If Effects Processing is applied, such as Silence, Expander, Noise Gate or Noise Reduction, the impact must be non-detectable by the end-user (no awkward pulsating or vacuum void).
unfoldingWord Audio Engineering encourages proper recording technique rather than heavy reliance on these effects, which are too often used in excess and without knowledge or wisdom about the impacts, potentially causing irreversible degradation to the audio quality.

Checking Characteristics

A minimum of 1 native speaker of the language must be present during the recording, editing and final listening of the recording. This person is to provide:

- needed support and encouragement to the voice asset
- accuracy checking in the areas of text reading, word pronunciation and reading style.

Editing Characteristics

- Complete all needed editing of files in collaboration with checker (native speaker of language).
- Set appropriate pausing or silencing between OBS slides or Bible chapters for natural reading flow. Length of pause will vary depending on the language and speed of narration.
- Cue Markers are placed in audio at all frame changes in OBS and at important section transitions in other types of content.