

# Secrets Revealed - An Industry Experts Guide to Voice Over Success



Karen Ashton

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## The Importance of Voice Overs

By *[Victoria Brighton](#)*

Everyone has heard a voiceover at one time or another. From the voice of Mickey Mouse, to the voice that sells you shampoo or insurance on the radio, voiceovers provide an effective way to evoke emotion or get important information across to an audience. In fact, without voiceover, media wouldn't have the same impact and the entertainment industry would be at a great loss. The importance of voiceover can be seen every day in a variety of techniques.

### What is Voiceover?

Voiceover is a production technique where a voice that is not part of the production is used to speak a particular part. Voiceovers are common in radio, television, film and even theatre. Often, voice actors are hired specifically to perform voiceovers and have no other role in the production.

## Techniques

### *Character Voices*

One of the more popular uses for voiceover is to give a voice or a personality to an animated character. Think about Shrek or any other popular Disney Movie. Each character is actually someone behind the scenes with a microphone making the voice come alive. As animated movies are growing in popularity, well known celebrities are looking for voiceover roles, hoping to add a bit of variety to their acting portfolio.

### *Movie Narration*

Another popular use for voiceover is providing narration to a movie. This type of voiceover is so common in movies, you probably don't even realize it's happening. Generally, the narrator in a movie has intimate details about the characters on the screen and provides insight for the audience as to their thoughts or emotions. In this sense, voiceover is a critical part of many movies and is necessary for keeping the audience informed. Blockbuster hit movies like *Fight Club* and *Shawshank Redemption* use voiceover to provide context.

### *News Reporting and Non-Fiction Television*

Often voiceover is used to report the news. In fact, most television news broadcasts use voiceover as much as live anchors to report news that was taped earlier or segments that were edited beforehand. Other non fiction television that relies on voiceover includes media like the History Channel or the Discovery Channel. Particularly where the focus is educational, voiceover provides a guide for viewers to understand what they are seeing. In addition, game shows have been using voiceover for decades to announce contestants and prizes. Almost everyone is familiar with the popular voiceover from the 1970's who exclaimed "come on down, you're the next contestant on the Price is Right!".

### *Commercial Advertising*

Advertising is another very common use for voiceover. In fact, radio is completely voiceover and actors are never seen. In fact, voiceover is so useful for radio advertisement that certain product manufacturers have signed long term contracts with voiceover actors to "brand" their products. When consumers hear the same, familiar voice representing a product, it builds instant trust and credibility. Even on television, where actors can be seen, it is more likely that a product is featured with

voiceover and without an actor. Besides, a strong voiceover highlights the sale instead of the actor seen with the product.

Voiceover is an important part of our movie and television experience. In many cases, voiceover represents more than just information, but has become part of a product, building trust and credibility with consumers.

Check out a new Premium Voice over Training Course <http://www.mouthymoney.com>

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# Getting Started Doing Voice Overs - 7 Steps to Becoming a Voice Success

By [Peter Kaestner](#)



Remember the last time you were at the airport, hearing those voice overs rushing you to gate B? On your way back from work today, did you listen to those voices trying to sell you auto insurance, or maybe - a soft drink? Back home, as you were watching TV, did you hear that voice announcing the next shows for tonight? Voice overs have become such a natural part of our daily experience. Have you ever wondered who those hidden talents are, behind the scenes? Have you ever wanted to be one of them?

In fact, doing voice overs is an exciting career opportunity which is relatively easy to get started with. If you prefer to be your own boss and earn well, here are 7 steps to get you up to speed:

## **1. Setting the stage**

Doing voice overs professionally would require you to create demos that showcase your work. Recording in a studio would be pricey but you can do it on-the-cheap; Choose a quiet room with no echoes. A carpeted floor would be ideal.

## **2. The right components**

You'll need to get a microphone, so for starters a cheap USB microphone would do. Headphones should go along with it and again there's no need to spend too much. A computer to record your audio and a sound editor are a must. Free software such as Audacity could fit the bill.

### **3. Getting some PR juice**

If it's within your budget, an agency would give you a real boost in the business of voice overs. If not, move on to the next step. Doing research about current actors and voice talents and finding out who represents them is a good starting point. The Hollywood Reporter is a great source of information as well.

### **4. The night before**

A wise thing to do is to sleep well the night before and to refrain from alcohol. Cold water is a no-no during the voice over recording and greasy food shouldn't be consumed beforehand. Just to keep your voice nice and crisp...

### **5. The audition**

Create demos that showcase your voice over work. You can do announcer reads, cartoons and commercials for example. A good idea would be to do a few versions of each read and to improvise a little bit. You can download scripts from voice casting agencies online or you can model existing TV or radio commercials.

### **6. Spreading the voice**

Email your demo to production companies, TV stations, voice casting agencies etc. Sites such as Voices.com and Voice123.com would get you more exposure and job opportunities. For long term success, get your own website to represent you. A small site or a customized WordPress blog would do. You can outsource that cheaply on Rentacoder.com or Digitalpoint.com, to name just a few.

### **7. Rinse and repeat**

It might take time but don't be disheartened - consistency is key here. Even though the market is competitive, there is more opportunity to get your foothold in voice overs then compared to the rest of the acting market!

Now that should get you started, but if you would like more tips on [voice overs](#) visit my website [Voice Overs Jobs](#) for further information and guidance!

Article Source: [http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Peter\\_Kaestner](http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Peter_Kaestner)

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# 5 Tips For the Best Quality Voice Over Recording - No Matter What Microphone You Use

By [Jake Weston](#)



When creating a voice over recording (or voiceover, or voice-over... nobody seems to know for sure), the final product is usually nothing but the voice... all by itself... with nothing else to hide flaws. Yes, sometimes voice overs are accompanied by background music, such as when narrating short videos, or in podcast intros and "outros." But for the most part a voice over recording is just that, the voice.

That being the case, the better the sound quality the more professional the end-result will be. In a perfect world we'd all be rich and everyone could afford large diaphragm condenser mics and excellent analog-to-digital converters for our PC recording studios. But as we know, this is not a perfect world. Most of us will only be able to afford inexpensive gear. That's OK. The techniques I mention in this article will enable you to get the best possible quality out of whatever mic you're using.

So what makes a good quality voiceover? Clearly there is some subjectivity to the matter, but in general the voice should be clear, up-front, easy to understand, have level volume (you can hear the loud parts and the soft parts without pain or straining, respectively), and is as noise-free as possible. Let's start at the beginning of the recording session.

1. Get Close to the Mic- Make sure your mouth is 4-12 inches away from your mic. Experiment with the distance, but what you're going for here is to make sure the voice is recorded as loud as possible without overloading the mic or causing unpleasant sounds like p-pops. Since we're using a pc recording studio for this, it's fairly easy to see if your voice recorded loud enough or too loud. The voice will show up in recording software as wave forms (or "squiggly blobs" as I like to call them) in what looks like a swim lane on your screen. You want the blob to take up as much of the swim lane as possible without ever touching the sides. Experiment with distance from the mic until you achieve this.



2. Record In a Quiet Room- It's almost impossible, especially with a pc recording studio, to have a completely noise-free environment in which to record. But the lower the noisiness, the better. Control what you can. For example, close the door to the room where you record to keep out the household noises. Try to put the mic far enough away from your computer that the fan and drive noise isn't too loud. Sometimes using blankets or mattresses strategically can really help here. Just don't block the computer vents or it could overheat. You might also want to choose a time of day when the neighbors aren't mowing lawns, or construction isn't going on nearby.

3. Reduce The Noise- After It's Recorded Most recording software (including the open-source Audacity) comes with basic sound editing tools such as noise gates and noise reduction. Since there likely WILL be some noise, however little, in the recording (you can't prevent it all), you'll want to employ one or both of the above editing tools. I recommend trying the noise gate first. That will shut out all noise during the silent bits when the voice is not speaking, while allowing all audio (noise included) to pass through when the voice ~~is~~ speaking. If you only have a little hiss or fan noise, this works very well. Just be careful that things don't sound too strange when the gate opens and closes. You can play with the settings to make this sound more natural. Also, if the ambient noise is too loud, it can sound unnatural in the silent bits between speech when it suddenly sounds too quiet in comparison with when the voice was speaking.

If noise gating isn't enough, try a noise reduction tool. But be warned, this can make the audio sound strange if overused. Noise reduction artifacts sound like the voice is under water... kin of "swirly," for lack of a better term. Noise reduction treats all the audio, the speaking AND non-speaking parts. For it to work right, you tell the computer what just noise sounds like by selecting an area (where there is no speech) that is ONLY noise. That way the tool knows what to get rid of. If the noise was not too loud, this works well. But the more noise in the recording, the more "under-water" it will sound after noise reduction. Experiment with this tool's settings to get the best result.

4. Squish the Audio With a Compressor- Audio compression is something else that must be used with caution. It is easy to ruin audio with too much of it. Properly used, running this editing tool with even the audio volume so that the listener can hear the softer, quieter parts AND the loud, exciting parts, without having to constantly turn the volume knob up and down. A compressor will reduce the volume of just the parts that are over a certain loudness level (you choose this level), leaving the quieter



audio alone. This allows you, the audio creator, to increase the overall volume of the voice over without any of it being TOO loud. Remember when I mentioned trying to get as much of the voice in the swim lane as possible without touching the sides? Compression allows you to do this. When audio "touches the sides" it distorts, definitely a bad thing with computer audio. As with the other tools, play with the settings and experiment for the best result.

5. Normalize- The last thing I usually do is apply one more audio editing tool called normalization. All this means is to increase the audio volume right up to the point before the very loudest bit would distort. For example, if there was a yelling bit in the voice over, that part will show up as the "tallest" bit of wave form in the swim lane. so normalizing finds that tallest (loudest) bit and turns everything up until just before the tall part touches the side. This ensures the audio is as loud as possible without distorting.

If you do those 5 things, you should end up with the best voiceover recording possible with any given microphone. The best part is that it won't cost you anything to employ these 5 home recording tips. Give it a try and see if your audio doesn't sound much better afterward. For more home recording tips, visit the Home Brew Audio website. Check out our video tutorials, articles, free downloads, and more. See you there.

Learn to record and produce professional-sounding audio from home. Home music recording or voiceover recording - fun and short video tutorials and informative articles show you how. We'll show you how to start with a \$0-\$5 budget, and then how to improve your studio for a few dollars at a time as your knowledge and confidence increase. If you would like to start doing home recording on computer, visit us here: [www.homebrewaudio.com](http://www.homebrewaudio.com).

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