



RECORDING & RELEASING RESOURCES

# Pre-Production & Recording Checklist

BY PEPTALK

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## RECORDING & RELEASING



This resource provides a step-by-step checklist to help artists plan and manage the recording process, from pre-production and collaboration through to mixing, mastering, and release.

Written a new tune and ready to record? Work your way through this checklist to make sure you cover everything from pre-production to mastering.

### Pre-production

- If possible, map out the structure of your song (either through voice memo, or as a simple recorded demo).
- Find references of what you want your song to sound like sonically (it's important to try and give examples of what you want it to sound like versus just sharing songs you like).
- Decide instrumentation/style.
- If self producing, decide which DAW (digital audio workstation) you're going to be working out of.
- If collaborating with a producer, confirm budget, timeline, any master points or other agreement details, where you'll be working together and whether you see eye to eye on the vision.
- If you do, organise who, what their fee is, when you'll need them, at what location, and where possible share the vision/parts as soon as you can.
- Make sure you have access to the instruments, session players, microphones & any other equipment you need to complete your recording process.

### Production

- Create parts for different instruments.
- Engineer and record any live instruments (Check out the [Resource: Record Tracking Board Template](#) to make sure you check everything off).
- Use royalty free loops if needed (splice, apple loops, output etc).
- Engineer and record any vocals (lead vocals, backing vocals etc).
- Do you need a clean version of any songs? (Remove explicit vocals, or re-record explicit vocals with replace explicit lyrics.)

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### Post-production

- Edit any recordings (choose best takes, add fades, cut space between parts etc)
- Compile parts from various takes (if applicable)
- Check parts/layers are time aligned
- Check tracks are clearly named (eg. Drums - Percussion - Cow Bell, Drums - Kit - Hi Hat etc)

### Mixing

- If mixing yourself, check out the '[Resource: How to Mix Your Music \(DIY Mixing Guide\)](#)'
- Confirm the format your mix engineer would like to receive stems (ie. 44.1kHz 16 bit or 48kHz 32 bit)
- Create a reference mix to share with your mix engineer. This should be a playlist of songs that is an accurate depiction of what you are looking for in the mix (for example, you might know that the electric guitar is supposed to be loud in the chorus but your mix engineer might not)
- Outline clear parameters on how the stems should be delivered (grouped, wet + dry, individuals) and the number of mix revisions there will be in the process.
- Do you need a clean version? (Remove explicit vocals, or they will need to be re-recorded and replaced).
- Once a final mix has been agreed on, receive and double check all variations sent to you (MP3, WAV, Instrumentals, Clean, etc.)

### Mastering

- If mastering yourself, check out the '[Resource: How to Master Your Music \(DIY Mastering Guide\)](#)'
- If working with a master engineer, clearly agree on what they will be mastering (eg. is it just the final mix, do you want a mastered instrumental or any additional variations?) and how many revisions there will be in the process

Once the master is printed (meaning complete), you can prepare to release your finished song / EP or album.



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