

# BlogTalkRadio Quick Tips

## Ten Tips for Preparing for Your BlogTalkRadio Show

This edition of BlogTalkRadio Quick Tips is designed to give hosts advice on creating and sharing their shows.

### Tip #1: Before scheduling your show, choose the right title, description, and keywords.

The first thing you'll need to do when getting ready for your show is schedule an episode. Scheduling your episode will create a page that includes all the important details for your upcoming episode: date, time, topic and so on. An effective title, description and keyword tags can help you attract listeners.

**Here are some quick Dos and Don'ts when creating your title, description and keywords:**

#### Do

- Try to limit the number of words in your title to six words or less.
- Keep your titles and descriptions focused and interesting.
- Have a great guest? Use their name in the episode title (i.e. Michael Jordan interviewed by John Smith).
- Make sure all the essential information is covered in the description.
- Use keywords that aptly describe what you're broadcasting about and that your listeners are likely to use to search for your content. In addition to including these keywords in the tags fields, you should include them in your title and description.
- Use spell check.

#### Don't

- Use the same title, description and keywords for every episode.
- Use all caps.
- Use the same keywords for every tag.
- Use profanity.

#### Example

##### Title:

Bad: WATERING PLANTS    Good: Gardening Tips: Keeping Indoor Plants Alive

##### Descriptions

Bad: We talk about watering your plants.

Good: Have trouble keeping your house plants alive? Tune in to learn how to turn your brown thumb into a green thumb. Our guest, Mildred Greenhouse, will provide helpful indoor gardening tips about soil, feeding your plants, and ideal watering schedules for orchids, flowers, and trees.

##### Keywords

Bad: plants, plants, plants, more plants, trees

Good: Mildred Greenhouse, indoor plants, watering plants, soil nutrients, feeding plants

## Tip #2: Consistency counts when deciding on an episode date and time.

When building a listener base, it's important to establish a consistent schedule for your show. Try to keep it on the same day of the week (or days, if you have episodes more than once a week) and at the same time each week so your audience knows when to expect it and can build it into their routine.

**Need more tips on show scheduling?** View our screencast on [how to schedule your show](#) for more tips and tricks.

## Tip #3: Create an intro for your show

If you don't have one already, recording a great introduction can help you create a more professional and engaging show right from the start. A fun intro can pull your listeners in and keep them tuned in longer.

**So how do you create an introduction?** There are a few different ways. You can engage a professional announcer to create one for you. Or if you're looking to save money, you can easily make your own intro using BlogTalkRadio. Here's how to make your own: First, write a script and select and upload your background music. Set your background music at 25%-50% and do a test run speaking over it. You may need to experiment a bit to find out which level works best with your voice. Next, schedule a episode to record your intro. When you are done recording, download the file to your computer and re-upload it as a start-up audio file. (Here's a screencast on [how to upload audio files.](#))

## Tip #4: Create an outline for your show.

To ensure your show flows smoothly—and to avoid dead air—it's great idea to decide on a format for your show and to draft a show outline prior to going live.

A helpful exercise for getting format ideas for your show is to listen to other shows on BlogTalkRadio. Jot down what you like and dislike about each one, and that can serve as a great starting point for building your format.

Here is a sample show format for a 30-minute guest interview:

- I. Intro Start-Up Audio: 30 seconds
- II. Introduction of Guest: 1 – 2 minutes
- III. Guest Interview: 15 minutes
- IV. Music/Message Break: 1 minute
- V. Guest Q&A – with live callers: 10 minutes
- VI. Show Conclusion: 2 minutes
- VII. Outro Music: 30 seconds

Creating a detailed outline prior to each episode will ensure both you (and your co-host, if you have one) have great talking points. If conducting an interview, consider alternating asking questions. And remember to prepare a great introduction for your guests ahead of time.

## Tip #5: Prepare for your guest.

The two most important things to consider related to interviewing guests on your show are:

### How will they call in?

Be sure to discuss with the guest how they will be brought onto the show. There are two options:

**For Hosts using our Free services:** The guest can dial in to the listener line and then be brought live onto the show using the switchboard. If you select this option, be sure to provide guests with the Listener Number, ask them to dial in at a specific time, and find out what number they will be dialing in from, as this will make it easier to identify their call on the switchboard.

**For Premium Hosts:** You can dial out to your guests directly from the switchboard using the outdial feature. To learn how to use view our [screencast on outdialing](#). Learn more about [Premium Services](#).

### What will you talk about?

Set yourself up for a successful interview by doing research on your guest and preparing an intro and questions for your guest prior to the show. It is also a good idea to ask guests if there are any topics they want to cover before the show.

## Tip #6: Get your audio files queued up and ready to go.

In addition to the show intro, playing audio files (i.e., music, pre-taped interviews and/or sound effects) during your show can add depth and excitement to your broadcast. They can break up the talk and provide great transitions. Here are a few technical tips to remember: to avoid distortion, it's not recommended to set the volume higher than 150% when uploading files. When playing audio files, all callers can still be heard if they're speaking, so it's best to mute the host and callers when playing files. Playing your sound files during your test show (see Tip #7) can be a great way to make sure that all files are sounding the way you want them.

## Tip #7: Conduct a test show.

Conducting a test show prior to the live event can be a great way to work out the kinks prior to your live event. To schedule a test show, simply log in and schedule a show for the time you need. When choosing maturity, choose "Test" or "Private" so that it will not broadcast to the masses. When you call in to do the test, use the exact dial-in option you're planning to use for the show. If possible, include any guests in your test show as well. Test the audio files you are planning to use, test voice clarity from the telephones or headsets that are being used, and then listen to the playback after the archive is finished. Then you can take care of any adjustments before your scheduled show.

## Tip #8: Choose a quiet space to broadcast.

Find a quiet place to host your show where people will not accidentally interrupt you— dogs won't be barking, telephones won't be ringing, and so on.

### Tip #9: Dial-in 15 minutes prior to your show.

It's good practice for you, your co-host and your guests to call in 15 minutes prior to your show. This will provide time to review the show outline, launch the chat room, and get settled before going live.

### Tip #10: Optimize your show's sound quality.

Here are some quick Dos and Don'ts when it comes to sound quality:

#### Do

- Call in to your show using one of the following options:
  - 1) **For hosts with a free account**, the best way to dial in to your show is using a landline.
  - 2) **For premium hosts**, there are two options for dialing into your show that will optimize sound quality: a landline or Skype.
- When connecting via landline, use a high-quality phone and to speak clearly and directly into the handset.
- When dialing in via Skype, use a high-quality headset plugged directly into your computer. Using a headset with Skype also frees up your hands to manage the chatroom and switchboard. And be sure you are using a hardwired Internet (rather than a wireless) connection and that you have closed out of all applications except for Skype and the BlogTalkRadio switchboard. For additional tips on how to host your show with Skype, [view our Skype screencast](#). Learn more about [Premium Services](#).
- As mentioned in Tip #7, we recommend you schedule and host a test episode to check equipment and audio files for optimal sound output.

#### Don't

- Use a speaker phone. This can cause annoying echoes and feedback.
- Use a cell phone. This can effect quality and lead to dropped calls.
- Use Skype with a wireless connection. This can compromise audio quality and lead to dropped calls.
- Conference multiple people in with Skype (on the host line). This can cause degradation in sound output. Again, test for optimal sound.

**Bonus tip:** If you are looking to further optimize your audio quality when dialing in using a phone, consider investing in a [JK Audio Box](#). This is what the BlogTalkRadio staff uses to conduct broadcasts.

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We hope you found the above tips helpful! Good luck on your show and should you need additional help feel free to [contact us](#).