



# HOME RECORDING GUIDE



# FOX TRACKS MUSIC

- MICROPHONES
- EQUIPMENT & GEAR ROUNDUP
- RECORDING TIPS



## WELCOME

Before we dive into things, let's get acquainted. Fox Tracks Music is an online recording studio. As a team we've recorded for countless artists and produced original music for brands like Sirius XM, Adult Swim and Sphero without stepping foot into a traditional recording studio.



## WHY WE MADE THIS GUIDE

Our mission is to help artists save time and stay creative during music production. Not only is setting up a studio at home empowering, it will also foster better music and more creativity. Having instant access to an your own studio means you can lay down tracks as soon as inspiration strikes. It's important to us that artists continue to create and to put their music into the world.

## THE RECORDING STUDIO

As the technology continues to get better and cheaper, the distance between what you can do at home and what you can do in the studio continues to shrink. Plus, there are some often overlooked benefits to recording at home; lower cost, instant recording access, mobile and remote recording, and the freedom to take your time and going at your own pace to make your song exactly what you want.

## QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, CHORDS

We are super easy to get a hold of and love talking music, whether that's recording, mixing, or music theory. Reach out any time at [foxtracksmusic@gmail.com](mailto:foxtracksmusic@gmail.com) and we'll reply.

**AND NOW... A QUICK STORY.**

## THE FLIGHTLESS BIRD

Let's say you're just hanging out at home on a Sunday afternoon. You just finished writing what you think might be your next favorite song. The chorus feels great, and the lyrics basically wrote themselves.

Everything is flowing, and you know people are going to love it. That's all great... But now what?? You want to share this song with the world, but all you have is this piece of paper and whatever is in your head.

**This is where most songs stop.**

If you don't have access to a studio, your only option here is to maybe toss it into the Voice Memo graveyard with hundreds of other ideas and songs that could have been.

You put your guitar away, set your lyrics down on your desk, and go into the kitchen to have a snack. A song that should have been released into the world will sit in the virtual ethers for the rest of eternity.

**A better option? Home recording.**

## ARTISTS THAT RECORD AT HOME

### CHARLIE PUTH

Records and produces from home. You can tell from his Instagram videos and choice to wear 'inside clothes'. Oh, also the guitar line in 'Attention' is recorded one note at a time on an iPhone mic. Yes, really.

### JACOB COLLIER

Discovered by Quincy Jones via a YouTube Video he recorded at home. Now has multiple Grammy Awards from albums he recorded all in one room.

### BILLIE EILISH

Produced a little album at home with her brother Phinneas sitting on her bed holding an AT2020 Mic in her hand. They won Record of the Year, Album of the Year, Song of the Year, Best New Artist, and Best Pop Vocal Album and they recorded everything at home.



## **STEP. 1** **THE ROOM**

### **IT'S TIME TO RECORD AT HOME**

A good recording starts before the mic, and even before the instrument. Having a good room to record in is key to getting a clean sound. There are two goals here:

**#1 Eliminate or reduce background noise**

**#2 Make the room sound 'pleasant'.**

If you want your recordings to sound great, you need to make your recording space a comfortable and quiet acoustic environment.

**Let's dive in.**

## A QUIET PLACE

John Krasinski would be proud. To record, you need to be somewhere with little to no background noise. You can get picky about this, but at least find a calm room in your house where nobody is cooking or watching sports or making noise outside your window. It doesn't need to be perfect. In fact, I know a very successful voice over actor who records his vocals in hotel closets while he's on the road!

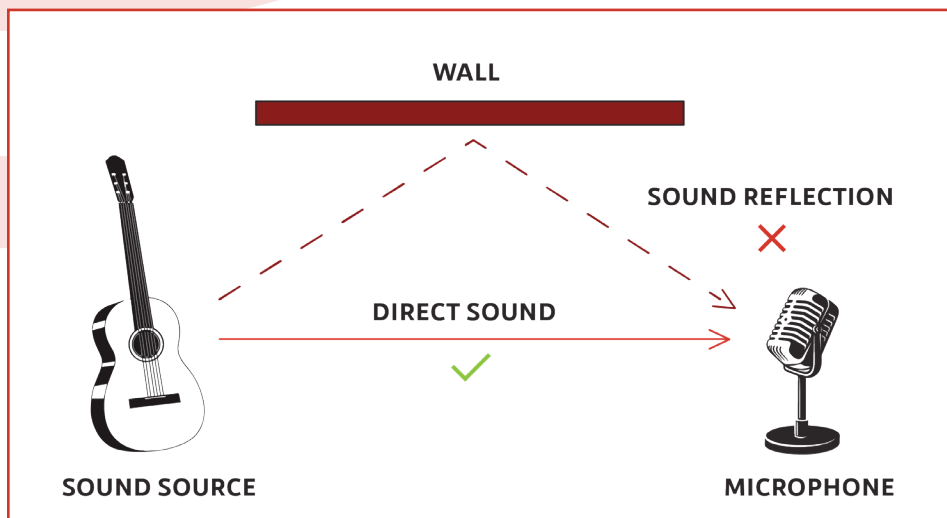
**Try to stay away from windows and electronics (and turn off your phone!)**

## TREAT YO' SELF (AND YOUR ROOM)

A good room tone is simpler than it sounds and simply involves making your room something that is complementary to what you're recording.

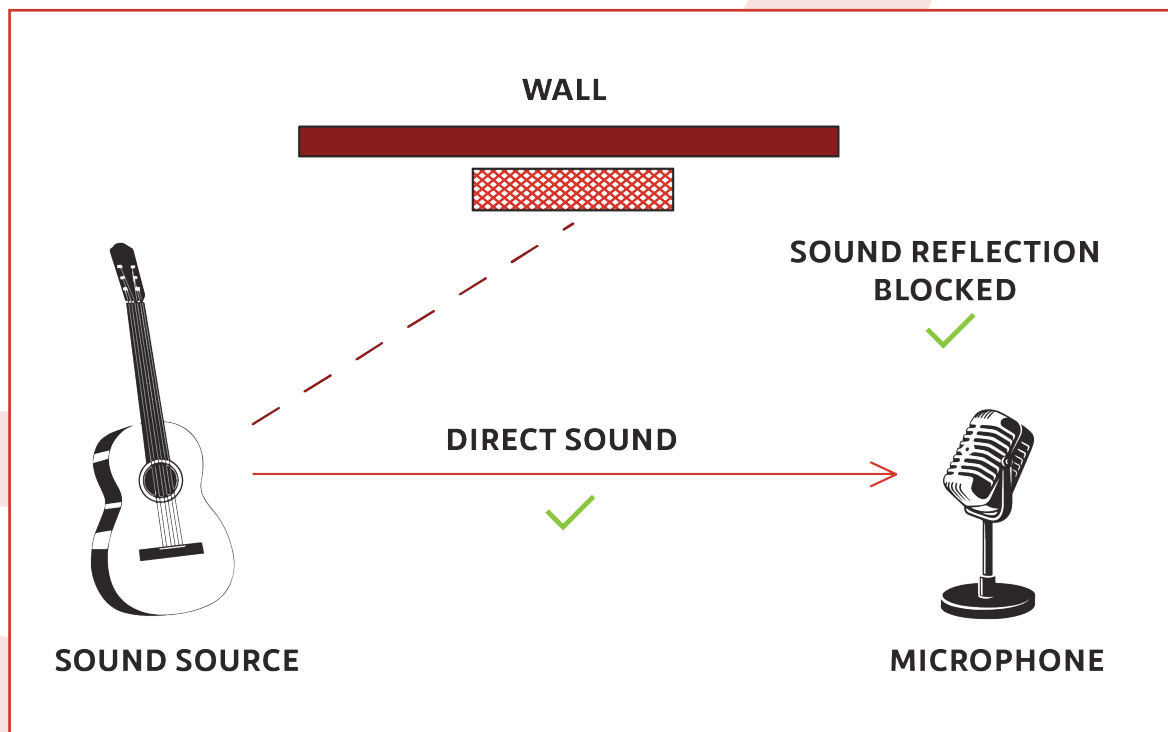
## WALLS

Chances are, the room you're recording in has walls. Walls are great, but they also love to bounce sound around like Venus and Serena in the Italian Open. Sounds that bounce around a room are called **reflections** and they sound like weird flutters or echo in a recording. Blank surfaces like glass, wood, and concrete are especially reflective and remember, whatever you hear, the mic hears.



## THE SOLUTION? ROOM TREATMENT.

The goal here is to reduce any unwanted sound reflections from walls or surfaces in the room. Think of every wall in the room as a mirror. The more things you can put around the room or on the walls to obstruct the bouncing of sounds the better. Bookshelves are awesome, Couches are awesome, and you can even make DIY sound panels for super cheap!



"Don't forget - Billie Eilish recorded her last album sitting on her bed. That seemed to have worked and now she is the winner of several Grammys!"





## **STEP. 2** **MICROPHONE**

**Now that your room is set up, the next step is to buy your first microphone!**

Your songs are about to become immortalized. You should celebrate! A microphone takes sound waves and converts them into an electrical signal that can be recorded or amplified.

There are plenty of options out there, so the best way to make a smart purchase decision is to be educated on the different types of mics and when you should use them.

## TWO TYPES OF MICROPHONES

### DYNAMIC MICROPHONES

Dynamic mics record dynamic sounds. Or in other words, if it's loud (dynamic), you're going to need a dynamic microphone to handle the volume of that instrument. A dynamic mic actually has a weighted coil inside of it that allows it to better resist and record incoming sound waves. This means it can take a lot of volume, but might miss some of the more delicate sounds.

#### THINGS TO RECORD WITH A DYNAMIC MIC:

Drums / Guitar and Bass Amps / Horn Sections / Loud Vocals

### CONDENSER MICROPHONES

Condenser microphones pick up sound in a different way. With no coil, condenser microphones use electricity and what's called a 'backplate' to record incoming sounds. Condenser mics are great for quieter sounds, and should never be used to record louder instruments because they will overload the microphone and the recording will sound...crunchy.

#### THINGS TO RECORD WITH A CONDENSER MIC:

Vocals / Acoustic Guitar / Strings / Piano

Presenting...

## THE SUPER-DUPER-MEGA-AWESOME MIC LIST

(Click the name of the mic for a link)

### **AUDIO TECHNICA 2020 // CONDENSER // \$99**

The same mic that Billie Eilish used to record her vocals on Bad Guy. This is a great mic for vocals and for acoustic guitar and piano.

### **SHURE SM57 // DYNAMIC // \$99**

They call this mic the 'hammer' because it will always get the job done. Also you could probably use this thing as an actual hammer. They are super rugged. Use this on your voice, snare drum, or guitar amp.. The perfect 'desert island mic' for many reasons.

### **SHURE SM58 // DYNAMIC // \$99**

The world's go-to vocal mic. Chances are if you've sung on stage you've used one of these. Great option if your priority is vocals and getting a close clean recording with little to no room sound. Can also work on instruments!

### **RODE NT1 // CONDENSER // \$269**

A gorgeous microphone. Great for studio vocals and acoustic guitar as well as piano and other acoustic instruments.

### **SHURE SM7B // DYNAMIC // \$399**

The same mic that's been used by Logic, Justin Timberlake, and Michael Jackson. One of the best vocal and broadcast mics out there and also great on amps. Nice warm tone.

**IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT WHICH  
MIC TO BUY, GIVE US A SHOUT!**

[foxtracksmusic@gmail.com](mailto:foxtracksmusic@gmail.com)



## STEP. 3 AUDIO INTERFACE

**THE FUTURE IS HERE! MEET THE BOX THAT IS TAKING THE MUSIC INDUSTRY BY STORM!**

An audio interface allows you to capture audio from your instrument or voice, through your microphone, and to your computer. It's basically a mini recording studio.

Audio interfaces convert the electrical signal from a microphone to digital information that your computer can understand. Most interfaces simply connect via USB and you're ready.

*If you're a singer/songwriter who plays an instrument you will probably need no more than two microphones to record yourself. If you're a drummer we've added some 8 input options below that will get you recording in no time.*

## RECOMMENDED INTERFACES

### **SCARLETT 2i2 // \$159 (2 INPUTS)**

Focusrite makes this stellar interface. 2 inputs and 2 outputs for you to record and monitor.

### **MOTU M2 // \$169 (2 INPUTS)**

Motu is also a great brand to check out for high-quality budget audio recording. The M2 has USB-C connectivity and an LCD screen on the interface for checking your levels.

### **UA APOLLO TWIN MKII // \$1,099 (2 INPUTS)**

Well that escalated quickly. We're including this interface because it comes with a bunch of UA plugins which are highly regarded as some of the best in the industry and the sound quality is fantastic.

### **TASCAM US-16X08 // \$369 (8 INPUTS)**

A great option if you need more inputs. Tascam has some great preamps and this interface won't break the bank.

### **PRESONUS STUDIO 1810C // \$419 (8 INPUTS)**

Another great interface with plenty of inputs. This is a good step up and it uses USB C which can be handy for mac users. Great bang for your buck.

**NEED HELP? EMAIL US!**

**[foxtracksmusic@gmail.com](mailto:foxtracksmusic@gmail.com)**



## **STEP. 4** **YOUR DAW**

### **AH YES... THE DAW.**

Now you too can have the power to record the same exact vocal line 27 times in a row because that second 'S' wasn't "S-ey" enough. You are your own recording engineer now. (Don't get yourself fired!)

Your DAW is the computer program that you'll use to record yourself. It stands for Digital Audio Workstation. The good news is almost any DAW will do! You just need to like it, learn it, and get comfortable with it.

This is what you'll be using to monitor recording levels, record multiple tracks on your song, and export "stems" for mixing or collaboration.

## RECOMMENDED DAWs

**Audacity** works just fine if you want something free and simple and plan to send your tracks to a producer. Not super awesome for editing but neither is having nothing.

If you have a Mac, you're already set to go with **Garageband**. Good luck have fun!  
(No seriously, Garageband is great. If you want to upgrade from there you can move to **Logic**.)

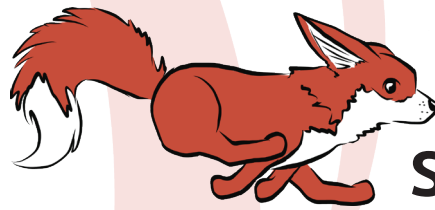
**Pro Tools** is what industry professionals use in studios. Great for mixing, great for editing, and is very powerful. It's what we use for recording.

For Windows Users, you can go with **Cubase**, **Studio One**, or Pro Tools.

There's also **FL Studio** and **Ableton** on both Mac and PC which are especially great for making beats and electronic music. Ableton has really impressed us with the most recent updates.

**WE HAVE AND USE ALL OF THESE SO  
IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, REACH OUT!**

**foxtracksmusic@gmail.com**



## STEP. 5 MONITORING

### WOW. YOU DID IT!

That wasn't so bad was it? The last step is to get a pair of headphones to plug into your interface. This will let you record your parts and listen to audio from your computer at the same time.

Speakers won't work for recording because you don't want any sounds to come back through the microphone. Headphones isolate the sound so your mic can't hear it. With headphones, you can set up a metronome in your DAW or layer instruments or vocals on top of previous recordings. Record 10 of you! Nobody can stop you!

You can use almost any headphones. We like these [Monoprice Headphones](#) for a quick and easy solution. If you want to get into mixing your recordings, you should also look into getting some studio monitors. These are what is traditionally used for mixing and your Netflix will sound 10x better to boot. Otherwise, [open-back headphones](#) can be used for mixing as well.

# HOME RECORDING CHECKLIST

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## I HAVE:

- A QUIET AND PLEASANT SOUNDING ROOM
- AN AUDIO INTERFACE THAT SUITS MY NEEDS
- A MICROPHONE TO RECORD MY INSTRUMENT
- A COMPUTER
- A DAW
- A MONITORING SET UP

## CONGRATS!

You're now ready to record your songs at home. If you have any questions please reach out. We hope you enjoy it as much as we do! Your songs deserve it.

### QUESTIONS? EMAIL US

[foxtracksmusic@gmail.com](mailto:foxtracksmusic@gmail.com)

# ULTIMATE GEAR ROUNDUP

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(with clickable links)

## ROOM TREATMENT:

[Kaotica Eyeball](#) (for vocals)

[Acoustic Treatment Kit](#) (you can build this yourself or use furniture)

## AUDIO INTERFACES:

[Scarlett 2i2](#) (\$159)

[Motu M2](#) (\$169)

[UA Apollo Twin MKII](#) // \$1,099

[Tascam US-16x08](#) // \$369

[PreSonus Studio 1810c](#) // \$419

## DAWs:

[Audacity](#)

[Garageband](#) (Mac only)

[Logic](#) (Mac only)

[Pro Tools](#)

[Cubase](#)

[Studio One](#)

## MICROPHONES:

[Audio Technica 2020](#) (\$99)

[Shure SM57](#) (\$99)

[Shure SM58](#) (\$99)

[Rode NT1](#) (\$269)

[Shure SM7B](#) (\$399)

+

[Mic Cable](#) (\$13)

[Mic Stand](#) (\$29)

## HEADPHONES:

[Monoprice](#) (\$16)

## BONUS:

Standalone Recording (no computer needed)

[iZotope Spire Standalone Recording Device](#) (\$299)

[Zoom H4N](#) (\$299)



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MUSIC**