

**THE SIX THINGS
YOU CAN DO
RIGHT NOW
TO PREPARE
YOURSELF
TO**

**BECOME *A*
VOICEOVER
*ACTOR***



the

VOICEOVER GURUS

Here are six things you can do right now, to prepare yourself to become a voiceover actor

There are so many things that go into starting a business. The process of crafting the product itself, your voice is just one small part. And without all the necessary "Business Stuff," what you've got is maybe some talent, a nice sounding voice and the guarantee to be asked at parties to "say something" as entertainment.

To give you an idea of the amount of items to consider, there's the study of voiceover, demo creation, marketing, advertising, social media management, branding, website development, technical learning to build a home studio, accounting and bookkeeping setup, registering your business, networking, client relationship management, collections and oh yeah, finding the auditions and actually doing the work! Whew!

It's tough not to feel overwhelmed. Especially if you're very new to the industry as a whole, meaning no Radio background or any type of Acting or Theater education. But being new is OKAY! Everyone had to start somewhere. And if you take it step by step, one day at a time and view this career as a journey and not a destination, you'll be just fine.

Before you go spending any significant amount money on lessons or classes, there are a few things you can do right NOW to help prepare yourself to become a voiceover actor.

1. GET ASSESSED BY A PROPER VOICEOVER COACH

Having a reputable voiceover coach evaluate you on diction or speech issues that may exist is essential. This is the first and foremost thing you should do before contemplating a career in voiceover. Without a professional's ears, you may start with a handicap that could have been addressed and dealt with early on. And learning the craft of voiceover is hard enough, so why make it even harder by feeling your way in the dark? Some coaches will evaluate you for free, and others may charge a one time fee, but getting their opinion will save you a lot of heartaches later on, and you may potentially find a great mentor to guide you through the journey!

2. SCOUT OUT YOUR HOME FOR SOLID RECORDING SPACE

In this era of instant connections via the Internet, you will need to learn how to record yourself and engineer your own sessions, cause there's no time to find a studio anymore since castings move very quickly. It's just the way this business works now. A sound absorbent space is required not only for recording any jobs you may get, but also for your auditions. The sound of your studio could be the deciding factor between hiring you or another talent. So at this early stage of the game, you can start to figure out space in your home where you can achieve a quiet zone. Usually, a closet works well, or a small room where a corner could be padded with acoustic foam. It's preferable if you could utilize an interior room with no exterior walls to the outside world and away from any heating or cooling systems. Basements are another excellent option, so long as you can turn off your climate control system manually for when you are set to record.

3. FIND AN ACTING CLASS OR WORKSHOP IN YOUR AREA

Acting is the basis of all voiceovers, no matter what area of expertise you wind up following, be it commercial work, promos or even on hold messages. Everything involves a persona that you express with a script. So laying the foundation for Voice Acting before you even get into a studio will set you apart from the competition. It's ok if you don't have any prior acting experience, or maybe it's just been awhile since you performed in your high school play. There are a lot of evening workshops or adult education classes for beginners to allow you to dip your toe in the creative waters and valuable first step before diving into this career.

4. SEEK OUT AN IMPROVISATION CLASS OR WORKSHOP IN YOUR AREA THAT YOU CAN PHYSICALLY ATTEND

There are online options, but a physical class is best for your first few times, and they are usually pretty affordable. The art of being able to change emotion and character on the spot is a vital foundation for auditioning and session work since on any given day, you may be asked to perform a number of various personas or characters. Improvisation also has the added challenge of working creatively with and in front of others which helps calm those performance nerves down the line. Personally, I believe Improvisation should be a required step in learning voiceovers because, without the ability to lose yourself with no inhibitions behind the microphone, you'll end up struggling to connect with any scripts.

5. JOIN ONLINE VOICEOVER SOCIAL NETWORKS FOR PEOPLE NEW TO THE BUSINESS, OR THOSE JUST STARTING OUT

Even though the voiceover business is filled with competition, ironically and thankfully, it contains a large warm, supportive community. There are multiple Facebook groups and online communities available, and it is here where the exchange of ideas and what has worked or not worked for others, along with the supportive camaraderie that can help with the learning curve. It's also a great way to make new friends who are in the same boat.

6. START TO GET FAMILIAR WITH THE RECORDING PROCESS.

Download a free version of an editing software program like Audacity and start to familiarize yourself with the basics of recording and editing. It's a great place to practice editing since all the basic elements of recording are used. In addition to this, make a small investment in an affordable USB microphone. There are various models, but the cost will not break your budget and can be used for years to come for other applications, like podcasting, gaming or Skype. Companies like Rode, Blue and Audio Technica, manufacture some great sounding quality first-time microphone, with prices varying from the cool looking Blue Snowball at approximately \$50 to the Apogee MiC for \$229. And the best part is that if you decide to upgrade to a larger microphone later, you can still use the USB microphone you purchased for when you travel. Win-win!

For headphones, you can quickly start with a pair of ear buds or your existing headphones you use when you listen to your music. No need to purchase \$100 headphones just yet since you're just trying to get used to the sound of your own voice after it's recorded.

These are all things you can get to work on RIGHT NOW if you're ready. And these suggestions help to lay a foundation for the learning you'll be doing along the way.