

## Writing for radio is **CLEAR, CONCISE, and CONVERSATIONAL.**

- **Use short, simple sentences**
  - Radio writing must be clear and concise: you can't rewind when you're listening to the radio.
  - One idea per sentence.
  - If you run out of breath, your sentence is too long.
- **Use the words you use when you talk**
  - Good radio is conversational. You want to sound like you're talking to a friend.
  - Write it the way you say it. Do you say "therefore" in casual conversation? Do you call a fire a "blaze?" No, no you don't.
    - ❌ He experienced nasal congestion.
    - ✔ He had a stuffy nose.
  - Avoid jargon and confusing or hard-to-pronounce words.
  - Stuck? Talk your first draft into a smartphone or recorder, and then transcribe it.
- **Avoid long strings of numbers— they're hard for a listener to understand**
  - ❌ 1,764,253 people came to the event.
  - ✔ The football stadium was packed.
- **Be specific and avoid cliches**
  - Avoid cliches, rhetorical questions, and other fillers.
  - Transitions should add new information. Every word moves the story forward.
  - Be exact in your language. Make each word count.
- **Pay attention to rhythm**
  - Vary sentence length— some longer, some shorter.
  - Variation helps hold listener attention.

## Voicing Quick Tips

*“Voicing” or “tracking” is when you record your narration in a studio.*

- **Writing:** The key to good voicing is good writing. Read your copy out loud as you’re editing. Underline the words you want to emphasize. Draw a line in the places where you want to pause.
- **Talk like you’re talking to a friend:** Imagine you’re talking to a friend at the dinner table. That’s how you want to sound when you voice. Imagine a specific person in your mind, or bring a friend into the recording studio with you.
- **Keep sentences short and words simple:** Change hard-to-pronounce words and shorten long sentences as you encounter them.
- **Breathe:** Don’t forget to BREATHE! It’s OK if your listeners hear you breathe. Mark your breaths in your script with a slash. If you’re struggling to breathe, consider shortening your sentences.
- **Stand up:** Standing up while recording will allow you to breathe easier and give the read more energy.
- **Get comfortable with your script and loosen up:** Read your script aloud in a few silly voices to get comfortable with the script, get your energy up, and explore the range of your voice.
- **Project:** Have energy behind your voice. You want to sound like you’re talking, not reading.
- **Pausing and pacing:** Vary your pacing. You can keep the listener’s attention by speeding up, slowing down, or pausing at appropriate moments.
- **Diction:** Enunciate your words. You don’t need to overdo it, but you do need to make sure your listeners can understand every word.
- **Context and tone:** Match the tone of what you’re talking about. If your piece is funny, let yourself laugh. If it’s sad, let yourself express some emotion. Make people feel what you’re talking about.
- **Personality:** Let your personality come through in your voice. Keep us awake and engaged.
- **Practice:** Practice, practice, practice reading your script before you voice.