

# turn on tune in MAKE RADIO

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"radio blaupunkt" by peetje2.  
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"This American Life" by Morten Wulff. CC BY-NC-SA license.



"DS106 Album Art" by Giulia Forsythe. CC BY-NC-SA license.

## RADIO DOESN'T HAVE TO BE DIFFICULT.

Nor need it be expensive or complicated. With these best practices and the technical guide (see reverse), you and your students can have your own station in no time. To get started, consider the following:

### Decide Format & Structure

A news broadcast, a pair of live DJs introducing prerecorded content, and a weekly sci-fi serial require different kinds of content and different tools, so your first decision should be what kind of show to produce. Your students are more likely to engage if they feel a sense of ownership, so engage them meaningfully in this decision. Other decisions to make include:

- How the show will be distributed
- What recurring content to include
- How long each episode should be

### Station IDs / Bumpers

A "bumper" is a short piece of audio typically played just before or after a programming break, e.g. commercials; over-the-air (OTA) stations are required to identify themselves

twice an hour. Both of these short pieces of audio are great and easy ways to add personality to your radio show. Be creative! (If you're broadcasting OTA, the station will probably have a standard script, e.g. "you are listening to \_\_\_\_.")

### Create Production Teams

Even for relatively short programs, each episode is quite a bit of work, so create production teams to work collaboratively. The group should determine who will be responsible for completing the necessary tasks. For example:

- writing, recording, and editing "canned" content;
- scouting and selecting songs to play;
- creating bumpers and a station ID;

- determining the final order of content;
- serving as the on-air voice and/or DJ.

An added benefit of the team model is that it creates multiple methods of participation. Encourage students to work together and support each other in the various tasks. Not every student may be willing to talk live on the air. Including a variety of content ensures everyone's voice can be present.

### Relax and Have Fun!

Remember, the point is not to create a show with flawless NPR-style production values. Don't get bogged down in the technology! Focus on getting your students to use the language they are learning in new and meaningful ways, and your radio show will be a positive learning experience for all.

# BROADCASTING LIVE IN 3, 2, 1...

## A practical guide to producing a radio show in your language classroom

### Recording

Most students already have access to a device with recording capabilities (laptops, desktops, mobile devices, etc), but that doesn't mean they're familiar with that particular function of their device. It's helpful, at the beginning, to provide a standard toolkit for your students.

**Hardware:** if a student will be using their laptop, an external microphone will provide the best quality audio. For mobile device users, using the earbud/mic combo that came with their device will do the same.

**Software:** for laptop/desktop recording, Audacity remains the best free software option. It's powerful, has a wide community of users, and can be used on Windows, OS X, and Linux. For mobile devices, look for apps that allow you to record to WAV or MP3 at various qualities, give the recorded file a meaningful name, and easily send the recorded file to others.

### Editing

While students should be encouraged to create good recordings that don't require much editing, some small changes (chopping off the beginning and the end of a file, reducing background noise, adjusting volume) are almost always necessary. Audacity is a powerful editor, with a wide array of options for combining, adjusting, and exporting audio. Keep in mind that NPR engineers are highly-paid professionals, and the point is not for your show to sound like theirs!

### Sharing & Organizing

One of the hardest parts of collaborative projects is: how do we organize the dozens of files being created for each particular episode?

Look for a file-sharing service that allows many students to upload their files into a single location, to reorder those files (e.g. by adding a number at the beginning of each filename), and that also allows limited access to the episode content files.

### Music

Using commercially-produced, copyrighted music can be an incredibly complicated undertaking. If you will be broadcasting live on an FCC-licensed radio station, check with your station manager for the rules and regulations involved. If you are creating a podcast, or broadcasting on a community-supported radio station, that doesn't absolve you from responsibility! Instead of using copyrighted music without properly compensating the artists, consider using audio that is available in the public domain, or available under an open license (e.g. Creative Commons).

### Broadcasting

If you're lucky enough to have a radio station on campus, consider asking the station managers about the possibility of your class receiving a timeslot (hopefully at a reasonable hour, e.g. not 3am). If your campus doesn't have a station, you can always release the episodes as a podcast, using a class website to distribute the files, and possibly even applying for inclusion in the iTunes podcast directory. You can also take advantage of DS106 Radio, an open, online-only station that anyone in the world can use to broadcast.

## DIY TOOLKIT

Resources to make radio production easy.

### Hardware

- Smartphones, tablets, etc
- Mobile device earbuds w/ mic
- Laptop or desktop
- [Blue Yeti](#) external mic
- [Sony ICD-AX412](#) recorder

### Android Apps

- [Easy Voice Recorder](#)
- [Hi-Q](#)
- [Smart Voice Recorder](#)

### iOS Apps

- [Audio Memos](#)
- Voice Memos (built-in)
- [Voice Recorder Pro](#)

### Other Software

- [Audacity](#)
- [NiceCast](#)
- [RadioCast](#)

### File Sharing

- [DropBox](#) / [DROPiTOMe](#)
- [Google Drive](#)

### Reviews

- [B&H Photo Video](#)
- [Lifehacker](#)
- [The Wirecutter](#)

### Further Inspiration

- [Creating Radio in the Language Classroom](#)
- [What is DS106 Radio?](#)
- [DS106 Radio Assignments](#)
- [How to ... DS106 Radio](#)
- [Radio Ambulante](#)
- [Welcome to Nightvale](#)
- [Creative Commons Search](#)
- [Archive.org Community Audio](#)

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