STRETCHLEARN · WORKBOOK

Video Podcast Production — Workbook

This workbook turns the Video Podcast Production course into action with hands-on exercises, fill-in worksheets, and ready-to-use checklists for each module. Work through each section as you finish the matching lessons. By the end you will have a documented studio setup, a verified recording routine, an editing and clipping system, and a published episode across YouTube and audio feeds.

Studio Setup and Signal Flow

Lay out your room, position cameras and lights, and map every audio and video signal so recordings are reliable from the first take.

Exercise: First-Reflection and Background Walkthrough

Sit in your host chair and have a partner slide a mirror along each side wall while you watch. Mark every spot where you can see your own mouth in the mirror — these are the first reflection points to treat. Then photograph your background from the exact camera position and critique it.

• Where are the first reflection points on each side wall, and what will you put there?

• Looking at the camera-position photo, what reads as a distraction in the background that you can remove or move?

• How much separation is there between the talent and the back wall, and can you add depth?

• Which one practical light or object would most improve the look of the set?

Worksheet: Studio Layout Plan

Complete this plan before buying or moving any gear. Fill in every field so your setup is intentional and repeatable.

Room dimensions (length x width)

Floor treatment (rug / carpet / bare)

First reflection point treatment — left wall

First reflection point treatment — right wall

Back wall treatment behind talent

Distance from talent to back wall (meters)

Number of cameras (1 / 2 / 3)

Background layers (furniture / plant / light / shelf)

Practical light source in background

Chair angle and floor-tape marks recorded (yes / no)

Checklist: Studio Build Checklist

[ ] Hard floor covered with a thick rug
[ ] First reflection points on side walls treated with panels or soft furnishings
[ ] Wall behind talent and wall behind camera both treated
[ ] Talent seated 1.5 to 2 meters in front of the back wall
[ ] Background built in layers with at least one practical light
[ ] Chairs angled toward each other at roughly 30 degrees and matched in height
[ ] Chair and table positions marked on the floor with tape
[ ] Key, fill, and rim lights set per person at matched 5600K color temperature
[ ] All cameras set to identical resolution, frame rate, shutter, and fixed white balance

Worksheet: Signal Flow Diagram Sheet

Write out the complete path of every audio and video signal in your studio, from the person to the final recorded file, so you can verify capture before every session.

Microphone 1 !’ cable type !’ interface/mixer !’ recorded to (device + track)

Microphone 2 !’ cable type !’ interface/mixer !’ recorded to (device + track)

Camera 1 !’ records internally to (card) !’ optional feed to (switcher)

Camera 2 !’ records internally to (card) !’ optional feed to (switcher)

Camera 3 !’ records internally to (card) !’ optional feed to (switcher)

Program/backup feed !’ computer software !’ recorded to (file)

Primary audio recording location

Backup audio recording location

Remote guest recording method and storage

Capturing Broadcast-Quality Audio and Video

Dial in microphones and levels, run matched multi-camera capture, and prepare remote guests so every recording is clean and easy to assemble.

Exercise: Gain Staging and Loudness Test

With the talent speaking at real performance volume, set input gain until normal speech peaks near minus 12 dBFS and the loudest moments stay under minus 6 dBFS. Record a two-minute test, then measure the integrated loudness with a free meter such as Youlean Loudness Meter and note how far it sits from minus 16 LUFS.

• What gain setting put conversational speech near minus 12 dBFS for each microphone?

• Did any loud moment clip or exceed minus 6 dBFS, and what did you adjust?

• What integrated LUFS did the raw test measure, and how much correction will mastering need?

• Does either microphone need a preamp booster such as a Cloudlifter to reach a clean level?

Worksheet: Recording Format and Camera Match Sheet

Lock these settings before every recording and confirm every camera matches. Fill in your tested values so each session is identical.

Audio sample rate and bit depth (target 48 kHz / 24-bit)

Audio peak target (dBFS)

Resolution (1080p / 4K)

Frame rate (24 / 30 / 60 fps)

Shutter speed (double the frame rate)

White balance fixed value (Kelvin)

Picture profile (standard / log)

Aperture for singles

Sync method (waveform / clap / timecode)

Power source per camera (battery / mains)

Checklist: Pre-Record Verification Checklist

[ ] Every audio track armed and showing meter movement when the person speaks
[ ] Every camera confirmed recording with a visible timecode or record indicator
[ ] All cameras set to identical resolution, frame rate, shutter, white balance, and profile
[ ] Primary and backup audio recordings both confirmed running

[ ] Slate recorded — episode name spoken and a single clap for sync
[ ] 30-second test recorded and played back on all devices
[ ] Battery level and card space confirmed on every device with margin for full session
[ ] Notifications silenced and noise sources (AC, fans, phones) addressed

Checklist: Remote Guest Prep Checklist

[ ] Recording platform set to record each participant locally, not just the streamed call
[ ] Guest instructed to wear headphones to prevent echo and feedback
[ ] Guest advised to use a wired internet connection and close other applications
[ ] Guest seated facing a window or lamp in a quiet, soft room
[ ] Best available microphone confirmed (external mic or wired earbuds over laptop mic)
[ ] Tech check completed before the scheduled recording time
[ ] Upload or recording health indicator watched throughout the session
[ ] Guest reminded not to close the browser tab until the local file finishes uploading

Editing the Episode

Assemble the multi-camera timeline, clean and balance the audio, and finish with consistent color, captions, and correct export settings.

Exercise: Multi-Cam Assembly and First Cut

Import all cameras plus your clean multitrack audio into your chosen editor, synchronize them into a multi-camera clip using audio waveform sync, and replace the scratch audio with your master tracks. Then cut the first five minutes, defaulting to the speaker and using the wide shot for laughter and reactions.

• Did waveform sync align cleanly, or did the clap slate save you when it did not?

• Where did cutting to the wide two-shot feel most natural in the conversation?

• Did you catch yourself cutting too often? Where would letting one angle play longer have been better?

• Which filler words, false starts, or tangents did you remove, and did the meaning stay honest?

Worksheet: Audio Processing Chain Sheet

Record the settings you land on for each step of the audio chain so you can reproduce a consistent sound on every episode.

Noise reduction tool and strength

De-plosive / de-ess settings

High-pass filter frequency (target around 80 Hz)

EQ moves for voice 1

EQ moves for voice 2

Compression ratio and threshold

Gain match between host and guest

Final loudness target — audio feed (target around minus 16 LUFS)

Final loudness target — YouTube (target around minus 14 LUFS)

True peak ceiling (target at or below minus 1 dBTP)

Checklist: Finishing and Export Checklist

[ ] All cameras color-matched with neutral white balance and a consistent subtle grade
[ ] Opening title card and per-speaker lower thirds added
[ ] Captions generated and proofread for names and technical terms
[ ] Audio mastered to loudness target with true peak under minus 1 dBTP
[ ] Long version exported as MP4 H.264 or H.265 at recording resolution with high bitrate
[ ] Audio version exported as MP3 or AAC mastered to podcast loudness
[ ] Full export watched back to confirm sync, audio, and caption accuracy
[ ] Separate 9 by 16 source identified or reserved for short clips

Clipping, Distribution, and Growth

Turn one recording into many clips, publish correctly to YouTube and audio feeds, and build the consistency and feedback habits that grow a show.

Exercise: Cut Five Clips From One Episode

Watch your episode and timestamp every moment that made you laugh, lean in, or learn something. Run it through an AI clipping tool such as Opus Clip or Riverside Magic Clips, then select and finish five clips: trim each to a tight hook-to-payoff, reframe to vertical 9 by 16 with the speaker tracked, and burn in proofread captions.

• Which moment had the strongest hook in its first two seconds, and why did it grab you?

• Did each clip make sense on its own without the rest of the episode?

• Where did the auto-reframe lose the active speaker, and how did you correct it?

• Which single clip do you predict will perform best, and on which platform?

Worksheet: Episode Distribution Sheet

Complete this sheet for every episode so the YouTube and audio versions both ship with correct specs and metadata.

Episode number and title

YouTube title (curiosity-driving, topic or guest idea)

Custom thumbnail concept (face + few large words)

YouTube chapters with timestamps

Corrected caption file attached (yes / no)

Podcast host used (Buzzsprout / Transistor / Captivate / other)

Audio export format and bitrate (e.g. MP3 128 kbps)

Cover art confirmed 3000 x 3000 px square

Show notes with timestamps and guest links written

Number of short clips produced and platforms posted to

Checklist: Publishing Checklist

[ ] Audio version exported and mastered to roughly minus 16 LUFS
[ ] Episode uploaded to podcast host and present in the RSS feed
[ ] RSS feed submitted to Apple Podcasts and Spotify (first episode only, then automatic)
[ ] Cover art is exactly 3000 by 3000 pixels and readable as a small thumbnail
[ ] YouTube upload has a specific title and a custom thumbnail with a clear face
[ ] YouTube description includes chapters, show notes, and the audio version link
[ ] Corrected caption file uploaded to YouTube rather than raw auto-captions
[ ] Five or more short clips posted with platform-specific hooks and captions
[ ] Episode added to the relevant YouTube playlist

Exercise: Build Your Production System and Review Loop

Write a one-page checklist for each phase of your show — pre-production, recording, editing, clipping, and publishing. Then publish three episodes on a fixed weekly schedule. After each one, log one technical fix and one content win, and check the retention or view-duration graph for where attention dropped.

• Which phase of your system is the biggest bottleneck, and how could you template or batch it?

• What recurring technical issue showed up across the three episodes that you must fix?

• Where in each episode did viewers or listeners drop off, and what pattern caused it?

• Which thumbnail or hook earned the best click-through, and what will you copy next time?

Your Action Plan

1. Lay out your studio this week using the layout plan — treat the floor, first reflection points, and both key walls
2. Set up matched cameras and a per-person three-point lighting rig, then mark all positions with floor tape
3. Draw your full signal flow diagram and run the pre-record verification routine on a short test recording
4. Set microphone gain so speech peaks near minus 12 dBFS and confirm a clean primary plus backup audio recording
5. Record one full test episode with a co-host, including a clap slate, and confirm every file is present and playable afterward
6. Run a remote guest tech check using a local-recording platform such as Riverside before your first real interview
7. Assemble the test episode in one editor, cut the multicam, run the audio chain, and master to loudness spec
8. Cut five vertical clips from the episode with burned-in captions and post them to YouTube Shorts, TikTok, and Reels
9. Set up a podcast host, generate your RSS feed, and submit it once to Apple Podcasts and Spotify
10. Publish three episodes on a fixed weekly schedule and log one technical fix plus one content

win after each