

Home Recording Quality Playbook

Purpose:

This playbook is designed to be used before every recording session. Its job is simple: remove guesswork and ensure your vocals are clean, controlled, and mix-ready – even on a budget.

How to Use This Playbook

- Complete this once per session, not once per song
- Tick every item before hitting record
- If something fails, fix it before recording

Skipping steps here creates problems later that plugins cannot fix.

Phase 1: Mic Technique Setup

Goal: Capture stable, controlled vocals with minimal tonal issues.

- Mouth-to-mic distance set (10–15cm)
- Mic angled slightly off-axis (not directly on mouth)
- Pop filter in place
- Body position locked (standing or seated, not shifting)
- Test loud and quiet lines without peaking

Session Note:

What part of delivery causes volume spikes or tone changes?

Phase 2: Room Control Check

Goal: Eliminate early reflections and room echo.

- No bare wall directly behind mic
- Soft material behind vocalist (duvet, mattress, curtain)
- Soft material beside mic if available
- Recording position not in a corner
- Floor reflections reduced (rug, blanket, carpet)
- Background noise eliminated (fans, traffic, devices)

Session Note:

What reflections or noises were hardest to control?

Phase 3: Performance Consistency Prep

Goal: Deliver even, controllable takes that mix easily.

- Posture consistent across takes
- Breathing controlled between lines
- Volume controlled without shouting
- Energy maintained without leaning into mic
- Warm-up completed before recording

Session Note:

Where does consistency usually break down?

Phase 4: Recording Settings Verification

Goal: Prevent technical issues that ruin takes.

- Input gain set (no clipping on loudest parts)
- Sample rate confirmed
- Buffer size appropriate for recording
- Headphone bleed checked
- Test recording reviewed before full takes

Session Note:

Any technical issues noticed during testing?

Phase 5: Take Evaluation (After Recording)

Goal: Decide if re-recording is needed now, not during mixing.

- No audible room echo
- Volume consistent across bars
- Tone stable from start to finish
- No distortion or clipping
- Performance energy consistent

If two or more items fail, re-record immediately.

Session Summary

What worked well this session?

What needs adjustment next session?

Reminder

Clean recordings reduce mixing time.

Better technique beats better gear.

Consistency compounds over sessions.

Use this playbook until these checks become automatic.