

PODCAST LAUNCH KIT

Plan, record and launch your first show in 30 days

30-day checklist | Recording setup | 52 episode ideas | 12-week calendar

BENCHFORM | 25 printable pages + editable templates

PREVIEW: 3 of 25 pages. The full kit includes all 25 pages plus editable DOCX templates.

PLAN

30-Day Launch Checklist

Days 1-15: plan and set up



Start date: _____ Launch date: _____

DAY 1	**Pick your niche** Write a one-sentence show promise on the Show Concept worksheet.	☐
DAY 2	**Picture your listener** Describe one ideal listener and 3 places they already hang out.	☐
DAY 3	**Study the shelf** Listen to 5 shows in your niche. Note what they do well and what is missing.	☐
DAY 4	**Choose your format** Decide on solo, co-host or interview, episode length and release day.	☐
DAY 5	**Brainstorm names** List 20 names. Check that the name and social handles are free.	☐
DAY 6	**Lock the name** Pick one name and write a 1-2 sentence show description.	☐
DAY 7	**Set up your space** Treat your room and run the clap test (Recording Setup, page 7).	☐
DAY 8	**Test your levels** Set gain, record 2 minutes, and check your peaks (page 8).	☐
DAY 9	**Pick your tools** Choose recording and editing software. Learn cut, fade and normalize.	☐
DAY 10	**Choose a podcast host** Compare plans, storage limits and stats. Create your show (unpublished).	☐
DAY 11	**Make cover art** Square 3000 x 3000 px, JPG or PNG, RGB. Big title, readable when tiny.	☐
DAY 12	**Record intro and outro** Keep the intro under 30 seconds. Say who the show is for.	☐
DAY 13	**Plan 10 episodes** Use the 52 Episode Ideas pages. Put them on the 12-week calendar.	☐
DAY 14	**Outline episodes 1-3** Fill in an Episode Planning Template for each one.	☐
DAY 15	**Invite guests** Send 5 invitations with the outreach templates (if you do interviews).	☐

PREVIEW
Podcast Launch Kit | Benchform

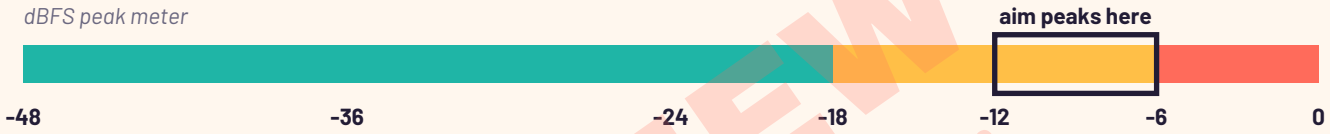
PREVIEW: 3 of 25 pages. The full kit includes all 25 pages plus editable DOCX templates.

Recording Setup Checklist

Part 2: gain staging and loudness targets

Gain staging (set it once per session)

- [ ] Start with the gain knob (or input level) all the way down.
- [ ] Speak at your real "show voice", not a quiet "one, two" check.
- [ ] Raise gain until your loudest words peak around -12 to -6 dBFS.
- [ ] Laugh or say your most excited line. If the meter hits red (0 dBFS), lower the gain 3 dB.
- [ ] Record at 24-bit, 44.1 or 48 kHz if your gear allows it.
- [ ] Record 20 seconds and look: no flat-topped waveforms means no clipping.
- [ ] Leave the gain alone for the rest of the session.



Loudness targets for delivery

What	Target	Note
Stereo episode	**-16 LUFS integrated**	about +/- 1 LU
Mono episode	**-19 LUFS integrated**	common convention
True peak (both)	**no higher than -1 dBTP**	after limiting
Recording peaks	**-12 to -6 dBFS**	while recording

- LUFS and LKFS mean the same thing: loudness measured with the ITU-R BS.1770 method. 1 LU = 1 dB.
- Why -19 for mono? A mono file played on two speakers sounds about 3 dB louder than its meter reading, so mono targets sit 3 LU lower. It is a convention, not a platform rule.
- Set the loudness last: edit, then apply a true-peak limiter at -1 dBTP, then normalize to your target and measure the exported file.
- Some guidance (AES TD1008) suggests -18 LUFS for speech. -16 LUFS stereo matches a major podcast directory's published recommendation, which is why this kit uses it.

Export settings for spoken word

Format	Sample rate	Bit rate
Mono MP3/AAC	44.1 or 48 kHz	64-128 kbps
Stereo MP3/AAC	44.1 or 48 kHz	128-256 kbps

PREVIEW
Podcast Launch Kit | Benchform

PREVIEW: 3 of 25 pages. The full kit includes all 25 pages plus editable DOCX templates.