

Tips and Tricks for Desktop Recording

Creating your first video recording may seem intimidating and overwhelming at first. That's why we created these tips and tricks to help you become comfortable with using the TechSmith Relay Desktop Recorder. It may take a few tries, but follow these instructions and you'll be a pro in no time!

What should I record?

When you're first starting out, we highly recommend using pre-made digital content, for your first recording. Perhaps you have a Word Doc or PDF of a class syllabus, or a PowerPoint or interactive whiteboard lesson you could use. We recommend using content you are very familiar and comfortable with. Finally, choose something you could cover within 5 minutes or so, to keep your recording short. Maybe you only summarize your class syllabus, or use an introduction to a new unit.

Basic Recording Tips

- **Clean Up:** The Desktop Recorder records everything on your computer screen. Clean up your browser and desktop by closing or removing nonessential applications, browser toolbars, and desktop icons. A plain background on your desktop is better than busy wallpaper.

**Tip: On many desktops, you can temporarily hide all icons by right clicking on the desktop, hovering over View, and then deselecting Show desktop icons.*
- **Practice, Practice, Practice:** Practice is the key to creating professional videos. It takes practice to move the cursor or smoothly transition through your presentation. We also recommend you practice to get the positioning of the Recorder, Web browser, or application just right. Additionally, some people like to script out what they're going to say prior to recording. This may be beneficial to you, or you may feel more comfortable doing it on the fly.
- **Be Patient:** A one minute video can take two or three minutes to record for an experienced user, while a beginner may need 30 minutes or longer to get it right.

Be patient with yourself. The more you do it, the easier it will become.

- **Avoid Pop-Ups:** If you do not want to record pop-up windows from browsers or other desktop applications (example: email, chat or update notifications), make sure to turn them off prior to recording.
- **Watch the Mouse:** Normal mouse and cursor movement can appear jerky, hesitant, or too fast in the recording. To eliminate some of these issues, practice using the mouse around the screen in a slow, fluid motion.

Audio Recording Tips

- **Use a USB Microphone:** USB microphones use less computer resources and record better audio than an analog microphone connected to your computer's audio card. If you plan on recording while presenting away from your computer, you may want to consider using a wireless lapel microphone to capture audio.

One of the great things about the Desktop Recorder is how it auto adjusts to your voice level, depending upon how close or far you are from your computer.

**Tip: You can purchase a USB microphone for as little as \$5-\$10, or a wireless lapel microphone for as little as \$12-\$30, from a site like Amazon.com.*

- **Practice Using the Microphone:** Experiment with different volume levels and different microphone placement. Six inches from the microphone is usually good to record full tones, not too close that other noises interfere.
- **Record in a Quiet Location:** Any microphone can pick up nearby noises. Most office or classroom areas have a lot of background noise that you may or may not notice. Take a second and listen. What do you hear? Try to find a location or time when your current location is calm and quiet.
- **Use a Script:** A script helps you produce the best audio by allowing you to avoid mistakes or saying 'um' or 'uh'. If you do not want a formal presentation, an outline can also help reduce mistakes and help to keep you focused.



- **Project and Enunciate:** Speak as though you are addressing a small audience in a larger room. Also, pay attention to how fast you are speaking.

The Most Important Tip of All

- **Go easy on yourself!** Remember, this does not have to be perfect and it will take time to get your preferred workflow and routine down. Just do what feels most comfortable to you and you will be fine!