

## Media-Making Resources: Audio Slideshows

### INTRODUCTION

The guidelines below will help you take photographs, record audio and edit your media into a slideshow. There are many tools and techniques you can use, depending on the purpose of your slideshow and the desired effects. The websites below contain good information and tutorials to get you started.

- Audacity Educast Series from KQED Education  
<http://blogs.kqed.org/education/2011/11/03/audacity-educast-series/>
- Audacity audio editing tutorial from Knight Digital Media Center (KDMC)  
<http://multimedia.journalism.berkeley.edu/tutorials/audacity/>
- Audio Slideshow tutorial from KQED Education  
<http://blogs.kqed.org/education/2012/12/11/pd-module-1-narrated-slideshows-for-science-education-self-paced/>
- “GarageBand—Basic Editing” audio editing tutorial from KDMC  
<http://multimedia.journalism.berkeley.edu/tutorials/garageband-basic-editing/>
- iMovie '11 Educast Series from KQED Education  
<http://blogs.kqed.org/education/2012/04/02/imovie-11-educast-series/>
- “How to Use iMovie for the iPad” video tutorial from KQED Education  
<http://blogs.kqed.org/education/2013/08/27/how-to-use-imovie-for-ipad/>
- Narrated Slideshows for Science Education online module from KQED Education  
<http://education.kqed.org/edspace/2012/12/11/pd-module-1-narrated-slideshows-for-science-education-self-paced/>
- “Podcasting” tutorial from KDMC  
<http://multimedia.journalism.berkeley.edu/tutorials/podcasting/>
- “Record Your Own Radio Documentary” tutorial from SoundPortraits.org  
[http://www.soundportraits.org/education/how\\_to\\_record/](http://www.soundportraits.org/education/how_to_record/)
- “Shout-Out: A Kid’s Guide to Recording Stories” from Transom  
<http://transom.org/2013/katie-davis-kids-guide-recording/>
- SoundSlides slideshow authoring program tutorial from KDMC  
<http://multimedia.journalism.berkeley.edu/tutorials/using-soundslides/>
- “Standups and Voice-Overs” tutorial from KDMC  
<http://multimedia.journalism.berkeley.edu/tutorials/standups/>
- Windows Live Movie Maker Educast Series from KQED Education  
<http://blogs.kqed.org/education/2013/05/30/windows-live-movie-maker-video-educast-series/>
- Windows Movie Maker Educast Series from KQED Education  
<http://blogs.kqed.org/education/2012/07/16/windows-movie-maker-educast-series/>

## TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS

If you don't have a background in photography, taking good pictures can be intimidating. But keep a few things in mind and you'll find that it isn't that hard. You don't need a fancy camera, either. An inexpensive point-and-shoot camera or cell phone (at least four megapixels) will do the trick. Here are some tips that will help you take good still images.

### **Lighting**

Movie and photography industry professionals always say, "Lighting is everything." There's a reason for that. Most video and still cameras are designed to work best when there is a good light source. In most cases, the more you have, the better. Identify the main source of light and make sure your subject is facing it, not in front of it.

### **Framing**

Put your subject to one side or the other of the frame to keep the image visually interesting. If you're taking a picture of a person, leave a little extra room above their head in the frame.

### **Establishing Shots**

Shoot the room or environment from a distance to establish for your audience where the scene is taking place and who's in it.

### **Interview Subject**

Take several pictures of the person talking, especially if he or she is changing locations.

### **Close-ups**

Get closer! If the interviewee is talking about an object in the room or area, take several pictures of it up close.

### **Action**

If you're covering live action in the field (for example, a shark being released), take as many pictures as possible of the different stages of the process. These can be pieced together much like video.

### **Surroundings**

Take pictures of the environment, including the landscape and things like signs or scientific equipment. These pictures will help the audience get a feel for where the story takes place.

### **Marquee Picture**

Take a close-up shot of the main subject of the story.

### **Behind-the-Scenes Shot**

If possible, show the reporter or crew in action.

### **Emotional Context**

What's at stake? What is the mood? Take pictures that capture the mood.

## RECORDING AUDIO

These tips will help you record clear, compelling sound for your project.

### **Narrating a Slideshow**

- *Speak to the Images*  
Explain to the audience what they're looking at and why.
- *Tell, Don't Read*  
If you write a script, write it in a conversational voice. Think about how you'd talk about your subject to a friend. It helps to have someone sit across from you while you record.

- *Emphasize and Underline*  
Pick out important words or phrases in your script to emphasize. Avoid talking in a monotone.

## In the Field

- *Location Sounds*  
Is there background sound like the buzz of a fluorescent light, people talking or engine noise? Maybe it's the hum of the machine or the chirping of the birds you're reporting on. Use a background noise if it adds to the story and gives it a sense of place. If it's distracting, try recording in a different location.
- *Room Tone*  
After your interview, stay in the same location and record 30 seconds to one minute of background noise, even if the location is quiet. You'll mix this sound under different voices to help smooth the transitions from one speaker to another.
- *Microphone*  
Place the microphone at an angle about six inches from the subject's mouth. This helps eliminate the sharp pop of words that start with "p." If the background is noisy, you may need to put the microphone closer. Put your back to the wind to block the microphone from the noise. Make sure that hair, clothes and other things don't brush against the microphone.
- *Control the Sound*  
Move to another location if the background noise is too distracting. If you get interrupted, ask if you can rerecord that portion. Ask your interviewee to remove any noisy jewelry for the interview.

## EDITING AUDIO

### Prepare

If you have audio from several sources, open the audio files and listen to them. Note the quotes or sounds you want to use in your piece and write down the locations in the recordings so you can more easily find them later.

### Interviews

You'll probably want to arrange audio from different interviews in your piece, but remember that it's unethical to change what someone says or take words out of context to make it sound like they're saying something other than what they actually said. These tips will help your interviewees sound conversational.

- Leave some audio room around the speaker's voice. You may want to delete points where they stumble or say "um," but don't cut off their breaths.
- Avoid "upcuts." Don't clip off the ends of words or cut a sentence in the middle.

## MIXING AUDIO

Use one track to arrange your interviews and narration and open another track to arrange the ambient noise you'll use, such as waves crashing or equipment beeping. Highlight, copy and paste the audio from your original recordings into the tracks of your new project. These tips will help you produce high-quality audio.

- Avoid unnecessary spaces. Make the audio as seamless as possible.
- Use room tone or ambient noise to bridge the sounds of two cuts together. If two cuts have different background noises, your listener will notice.
- Use your audio program tools to adjust volume or fade in or out. If you want ambient sound in the background, make it quieter so you can hear the speaker. You can also cross-fade (fade a new cut up and the ending cut down) to make a transition smoother.

## SLIDESHOW TIPS

- First finalize your audio track and then pull the finished product into your slideshow as an mp3 file.
- Pay attention to the pacing and flow of the images—about five to seven seconds per image. If they're too brief, the audience can't see them. If they're too long, the audience will get bored
- Transitions can change the timing of your images. Don't adjust your timing until after you've added the transitions.

## SAMPLE AUDIO SLIDESHOWS FROM KQED QUEST

Web Extra: "Visit to the Farallon Islands"

<http://science.kqed.org/quest/slideshow/web-extra-visit-to-the-farallon-islands-audio-slideshow/>

"Acidic Seas"

<http://science.kqed.org/quest/video/acidic-seas/>

"Tracking Urban Lions"

<http://science.kqed.org/quest/video/tracking-urban-lions/>

## ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

This resource is a component of the Media-Making Toolkit for Science Education, developed by KQED Education. The Toolkit includes instructions, worksheets and rubrics to assist educators in implementing media-making projects with students.

For a complete listing of the resources in KQED's Media-Making Toolkit, please visit [www.kqed.org/education](http://www.kqed.org/education).