



Frequently asked questions

How long does one hour of dictation take to transcribe?

The professional industry standard allows one hour to transcribe 15 minutes of clearly recorded speech for one to one recordings. It is a commonly held misconception that it only takes one hour to transcribe one hour of recorded speech. This is incorrect. We speak much faster than we can type or write. It is generally accepted that we can speak four times faster than we can type and speak seven times faster than we can write.

What other things affect the transcribing time?

- The quality of the recording

This can be affected as much by the recording equipment itself, as by eventual background noise, which obscures the words or the recording volume.

- The clarity of the voices on the audio file

If the speaker's voice is hard to hear because the speaker is holding the voice-recorder too far from the mouth or mumbles, or speaks too fast or too low, our transcribers may not be able to decipher the words.

- The number of people speaking

Some recordings of groups, meetings, or seminars can be affected by the tendency of voices to overlap or by the difficulty in identifying who is speaking at any one time, particularly if the

speakers do not identify themselves. Multiple-participant recordings take longer than one-to-one interviews and will be costed accordingly (*see schedule of rates*).

How to make better recording in order to cut transcribing costs?

- Cut down on background noise

Recording in a noisy environment makes it doubly difficult to decipher any speech. These include airports, restaurants, pubs, cars, buses, planes, trains and conferences - anywhere where there is a degree of background noise.

- Ensure that the speaker is loud enough

If the speaker has a quiet voice, the chances are the resultant recording will be very poor and difficult to hear. If you can't hear the speaker's voice, then the chances are the microphone won't either.

- Turn off voice activation

If you use recorders with a voice activation feature and the speaker is too far away from the microphone or speaks softly, this may not be picked up by the equipment. In some instances, the recording will even switch off in mid-sentence if the sound level goes below the minimum pick up threshold. Prior to beginning a recording, it is in your interests to switch this feature off.

- Regular use of our typing services

The regular use of our transcription service will improve the typing times. As a transcriber becomes familiar with the style of work, voice, or speech of an interviewer/interviewee, the transcription time will rapidly improve. It is our intention, when carrying out contract work for clients, to allocate one transcriber solely for their work. This will help improve the speed and quality of the transcription.

What advice would you give me when using a dictaphone/recorder?

There are quite a number of things you can do to ensure that any recording is clear:

- Record in the quietest environment possible with the least background noise.
- Speak slowly, clearly and loudly enough.
- Begin recording well before you start speaking.
- Spell out names, places, initials, technical or specialised terms or jargon.
- Turn off voice-activation as it can cut off the beginning of any words.
- Ask all speakers at a group meeting to identify themselves as they speak.
- Ensure that each person speaks one at a time and that voices don't overlap.

What's the difference between a verbatim, semi-verbatim and summary transcript?

A verbatim transcript is a word for word conversion of audio to text. This format includes all sentence fillers and false starts. A verbatim transcript is usually considered when there is an analysis of communication (e.g., Depositions).

A semi-verbatim transcript is a word for word conversion that eliminates the sentence fillers and false starts. This type of transcript is usually considered when the bottom line of the sentence is required (e.g., Interviews, Focus Groups, etc.).

A transcript summary is an edited version of the transcript that is edited to present a grammatically correct document. This type of transcript is usually considered when every word is unimportant but the gist of the matter counts (e.g., Meetings, Time Crunches, etc.).

How will my work be transcribed?

Transcribe For You will produce all work in semi-verbatim format unless otherwise requested. This will be produced in a user friendly layout.

How will I get my transcripts back?

There are different ways to get your transcripts back. Our most popular way is through e-mail. This way you can have instant access to your documents. You may also want a printed copy of transcripts and/or a disk sent to you. These are other options of receiving transcripts.