

- FREE DOWNLOAD -

# Studio Recording:

# THE Step-by-Step Checklist

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**SIDRAT**  
AUDIO

# Introduction:

**Hi! My name's Dan. Before we get started, I just want to say thank you for downloading this checklist; it's great to see artists taking the first step towards recording their own music!**

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This checklist provides an overview of the 15 essential steps every artist should take in order to produce some great-sounding tracks.

The framework outlined over the following pages will be a huge help to many artists who are new to recording, and who would otherwise have to figure it all out for themselves.

Even if you're an experienced recording artist, there may be a few extra tips you hadn't previously considered, so I hope you find this Checklist useful.

Each step has a brief description, while some go into more detail or provide links to further information.

I have also included my '*Song Structure and Arrangement Sheet*', which is a very handy resource, as it will allow you to quickly map out your track in a visual format, so that every aspect can be seen at a glance.

As I say, this Checklist only provides an overview of this process, and is designed to get you started by pointing you in the right direction.

However, if you would like to see a more detailed description of each step, along with a number of relevant insights, exercises, examples and further resources, I have also created a full-length eBook, just for that purpose.

Every new client of Sidrat Audio will receive a copy of my eBook, '*Studio Recording: 15 Steps to SUCCESS*', at the beginning of their project.

Alternatively, you can purchase the eBook, for just £5, here:

**[audio.sidratstudios.com/  
studio-recording-ebook](http://audio.sidratstudios.com/studio-recording-ebook)**

And, if you decide to book a session with me, I'll be happy to knock that £5 off your quote

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**So, without further ado, let's get you ready to record your music!**

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### Step 1. Select your Tracks for Recording

This is the most important step in the whole recording process. Naturally, you'll want to pick your favourite pieces, but it's also worth considering the opinion of others'.



Do your research and find out which of your tracks other people like, then go with your gut instinct.

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### Step 2. Type up your Lyrics

It's worth giving this some attention, to ensure it's done properly, as it's a very useful tool when it comes to recording.



Make sure they're easy to read and properly formatted, then save a PDF and print out a hard copy.

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### Step 3. Draw up your Song Structure

A simple representation of your song's structure can be a great way for both you and your recording engineer to visualise your track as a whole.



Draw a diagram of your song, showing each section throughout the track, along a timeline measured in bars, using the Song Structure and Arrangement Sheet included at the end of this Checklist (p8).

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### Step 4. Consider your Arrangement

Have you given any thought to the possibility of additional layers that could come together to form the finished track?



Think about what extra instruments and vocals might work with your song, then, using the same Song Structure and Arrangement Sheet, lay out a plan of what comes in on which bar, section by section.

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### Step 5. Familiarise yourself with the Recording process

Below is an itinerary of the process involved in a typical studio recording:

- |                                |                        |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Arrive early                | 7. Vocal Recording     |
| 2. Soundcheck                  | 8. Instrument Overdubs |
| 3. Click Track / Backing Track | 9. Initial Rough Mix   |
| 4. Initial Recording           | 10. Sequencing         |
| 5. Drop-ins                    | 11. Final Rough Mix    |
| 6. Editing and Comping         |                        |



Visit my website for further details:

**[audio.sidratstudios.com/music-production/#recording](http://audio.sidratstudios.com/music-production/#recording)**

Now you have a good understanding of how a typical recording session should proceed, you'll be ready for the next step.

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### Step 6. Plan the Recording Session

Based on what you've learned about the recording process, you can now decide whether the first step will be to load up a backing track, lay down a beat, record an instrument or jump straight to the vocals... and everything that follows.



Using the arrangement you've drawn up on your Song Structure and Arrangement Sheet, produce an efficient and logical plan of what order everything will need to be done during the recording session.

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### Step 7. Gain an insight into the Mixing process

Mixing is an art, as well as a science. There are dozens of approaches, hundreds of techniques and thousands of little tricks you can apply to any given project in order to achieve your desired sound.



It's useful to understand the fundamentals of what mixing is, the kind of tools involved and how the process works. You'll find more information here:

**[audio.sidratstudios.com/music-production/#mixing](http://audio.sidratstudios.com/music-production/#mixing)**

## Step 8. Understand the Proofing process

During the proofing process, you will receive a series of mix proofs to listen to and consider what aspects may need to be addressed:

- Initial Rough Mix** (when all the main recording has been done)
- Final Rough Mix** (once all drop-ins and sequencing is completed)
- Mix Proof #1** (listen and provide your 1st set of amendments)
- Mix Proof #2** (listen again and provide a 2nd set of amendments)
- Mix Proof #3** (final check, then discuss any remaining changes)
- Listening / Mix Session** (we'll fix any last issues together in the studio)
- Final Mix** (provided as mastered and unmastered WAVs and MP3s)



Knowing what to expect from the initial rough mix to the final mix, and the need to have a reliable listening process, will enable you to provide valuable feedback to improve your mix until you're 100% satisfied.

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## Step 9. Discuss your project with the Studio

Now that you have a good understanding of the recording, mixing and proofing processes, and you've prepared your tracks and planned everything out, it's time to get the ball rolling!

Call the studio and talk about what you've got in mind for your project, so that we can work out an accurate quote and a session schedule for the recording and mixing phases.



Call me on: **07967 879 289**.  
...or email me at: **audio@sidratstudios.com**

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## Step 10. Book your Recording session... NOW!

Take some time to study the quote and session schedule you received and, if you're satisfied that everything looks good and you feel confident to proceed, just let me know.



I'll send you an invoice and once you've made your payment, we'll go ahead and book a date and time for your initial recording session.

## Step 11. Provide all Song Details to the Studio

Once you've booked your session, you'll want to send me all the relevant paperwork (both digital and printed) for each of the tracks you intend to record.



Simply email me all your Lyric Sheets, Song Structure & Arrangement Sheets and Recording Plans to:

**[audio@sidratstudios.com](mailto:audio@sidratstudios.com)**

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## Step 12. Check your Instrument

Now that you've set all the wheels in motion, this is a good time to make sure that your instrument (or instruments, if you plan on using more than one) - and your voice, of course - is in good working order.



If anything needs to be fixed, get it sorted ASAP.

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## Step 13. Practice your Performance

Confidence in your performance is key to a great recording session. If you know your tracks like the back of your hand, your performance of them during the recording will benefit immeasurably.

Of course, it would be ideal for you to be well-practiced already, but that may not be possible if, for instance, you want to record a brand new track while it's still fresh.



In that case, I recommend that you play through each track 3 or 4 times every day for at least one week leading up to your recording session. This should put you in good stead for nailing a great performance.

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## **Step 14. Tune your Instrument**

I expect that anyone reading this is already aware of the importance of properly tuning their instrument. Hopefully, you are already in the habit of doing so on a regular basis, or at least every time you play.

If not, it's a good idea to form the habit of tuning up your instrument every time you play, and again after your last practice the day before you head to the studio.

Also, make sure to tune up again when you arrive and then before every take throughout the recording session. This will ensure everything is perfectly in tune throughout the recording.

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## **Step 15. Get a good night's Sleep**

OK, so I understand this might seem a little underwhelming for the final step in the process, but I assure you, it's one of the most important tips in this Checklist.

If you're tired from a late night or hung-over after a night on the town, I guarantee your performance will suffer as a result.

Have an early night before your recording session, so that you can be at your very best while performing your tracks in front of the mic.

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## **Exercise:**

**Complete all 15 steps and you'll ensure that you walk away from a successful studio experience with some great-sounding music!**

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## **Copyright Information:**

Thanks for taking the time to go through this checklist - I hope you have found it useful.

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If you're interested in reading the full eBook, 'Studio Recording: 15 Steps to SUCCESS', every new client will receive a copy free of charge.

Or you can purchase one here:

**[audio.sidratstudios.com/studio-recording-ebook](http://audio.sidratstudios.com/studio-recording-ebook)**

...for just £5, which will be knocked off your quote when you book your first session at Sidrat Audio.

Many thanks,

Dan Hewett (the Author).