

CREATE YOUR OWN PROFESSIONAL AUDIOBOOKS WITH MINIMAL EQUIPMENT

with Tobi Doyle (and Schitt's Creek)



Handouts can be found at: <https://askigw.com/audiobook-narration-handouts/>

MY NARRATOR EXPERIENCE



- Since 2015, I've narrated over 50 audiobooks for Audible through ACX.com.
 - I narrated a bunch of Leigh Michaels, and those convinced me to write romance. 😊
- I use four different narrator names, depending on the title.
- I've recently gone back to narrate my back list and I'm publishing those wide. (We'll talk about that, later.)





HOW
MINIMAL?

~\$60

Assuming you will narrate your book yourself:

- Computer – Hopefully you own or have access to one
- Headphones – you probably own some, but \$40-100
- Microphone - **\$45** (Affiliate link: <https://amzn.to/4jpDAF9>)
- Internet Access – for uploading files
- Descript Computer Program – plans start at **\$12/month**

WHAT'S THE
MOST
IMPORTANT
PIECE OF
EQUIPMENT?

- The voice!



DO YOU HAVE A QUIET PLACE?



Sound echoes off hard surfaces. Inside a closet works well. Interior room of your living space = less outside noise. You can use soundproofing foam to help.

MY DESK

*WITH A
COMFY QUIET
CHAIR

* MIC ~ 8-12"
FROM MY
MOUTH



Another option is to reserve
or rent a sound proof room

- Library
- University/School
- Music Store/School
- Professional Recording Studio



DO YOU HAVE TIME?

- Every 10,000 words is about 1 hour of audiobook.
- Using Descript, it takes about 2.5 to 3 hours per 10,000 words.
 - 1 hour for the original narration.
 - 1-2 hours of editing 10,000 words.
- Using Adobe Audition, it would take me 4-5 hours for every 10,000 words.



WHERE TO UPLOAD YOUR AUDIOBOOK

- Voices.inaudio.com – allows you to upload in one place and will distribute to 38 others, including Audible.
- Straight to Audible, either exclusively or wide.
- READ THE CONTRACTS CAREFULLY!



PREP WORK



- Listen to audiobooks in your genre.
- Know the material and the characters.
- I assign “actors” to each character to help me make them sound differently.
- Narrators are voice ACTORS. Be emotive when needed.
- YouTube has FREE tutorials, and lots of fun accents to explore, if you need to!
- Main characters should have a vocal range most similar to your own.
- Download Descript. (You can try the trial version first)

web.descript.com

The screenshot shows the web interface of Descript. At the top, there is a search bar for projects and a language selector set to 'EN'. Below the search bar, there are buttons for 'Record' and 'New Project'. The main content area is titled 'Projects' and has tabs for 'Recent', 'Owned by me', and 'Shared with me'. A table lists various audio projects with columns for Name, Duration, Owner, Created, and Last Viewed. The projects listed include 'Chapter 1: Too Sweet to Die', 'Distant Creepy Dog Howling-1', '1 Intro Too Sweet to Die', 'Sideways ad', 'tasks', 'Kiss bang boom ad', 'SW for 99 cents', 'Ch1 How I Almost Stopped the Inauguration audiobook', 'Sample - How I Tried to Stop the Ina...but Brought the Second Coming', 'Chapter 3: Too Sweet to Die', 'sideways outro', and 'Chapter 2: Too Sweet to Die'. A sidebar on the left contains navigation options like 'Projects', 'Quick recordings', 'Learn Descript', 'AI speakers', 'Templates', and 'Workspaces'. A QR code is located in the bottom left corner of the interface.

Name	Duration	Owner	Created	Last Viewed
Chapter 1: Too Sweet to Die	23:05	E Me	9/10/2024	Tuesday
Distant Creepy Dog Howling-1	00:05	E Me	Tuesday	Tuesday
1 Intro Too Sweet to Die	00:08	E Me	9/10/2024	Tuesday
Sideways ad	00:20	E Me	11/17/2024	Tuesday
tasks	00:05	E Me	January 14	Tuesday
Kiss bang boom ad	00:12	E Me	11/27/2024	Tuesday
SW for 99 cents	00:06	E Me	12/13/2024	Tuesday
Ch1 How I Almost Stopped the Inauguration audiobook	07:25	E Me	Saturday	Tuesday
Sample - How I Tried to Stop the Ina...but Brought the Second Coming	04:49	E Me	Sunday	Tuesday
Chapter 3: Too Sweet to Die	25:12	E Me	Tuesday	Tuesday
sideways outro	00:25	E Me	11/4/2024	Monday
Chapter 2: Too Sweet to Die	19:24	E Me	Monday	Monday



Tobi created two videos which can be found at: AskIGW.com/Audiobook-narration-Handouts

REALLY
HOPING I
CAN SHARE
MY SCREEN
HERE!

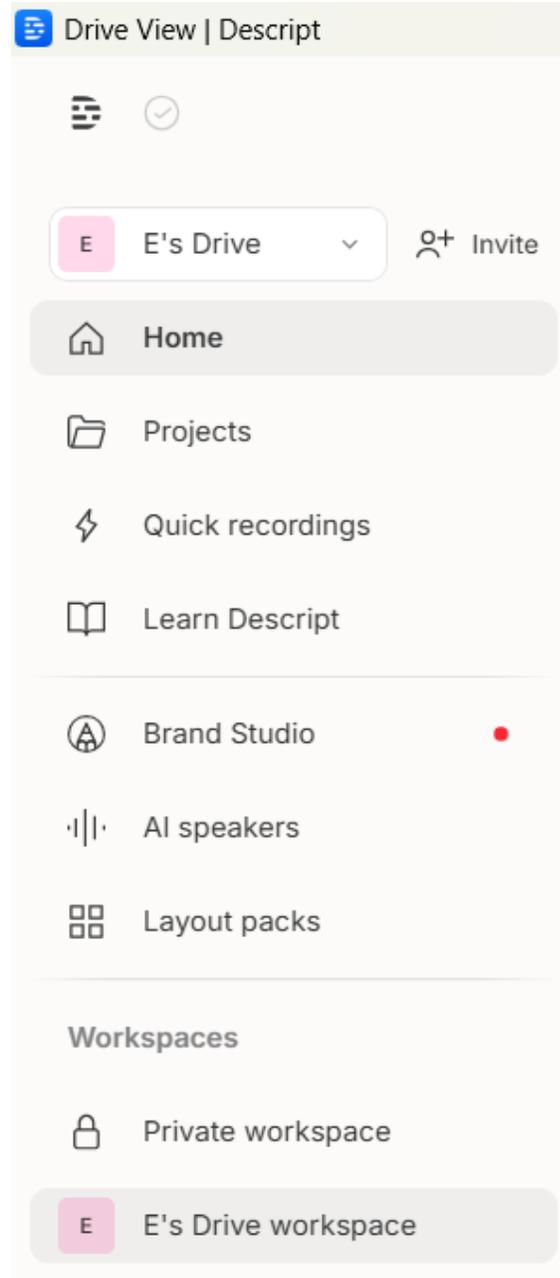


DESCRIPT SCREEN INSTRUCTIONS

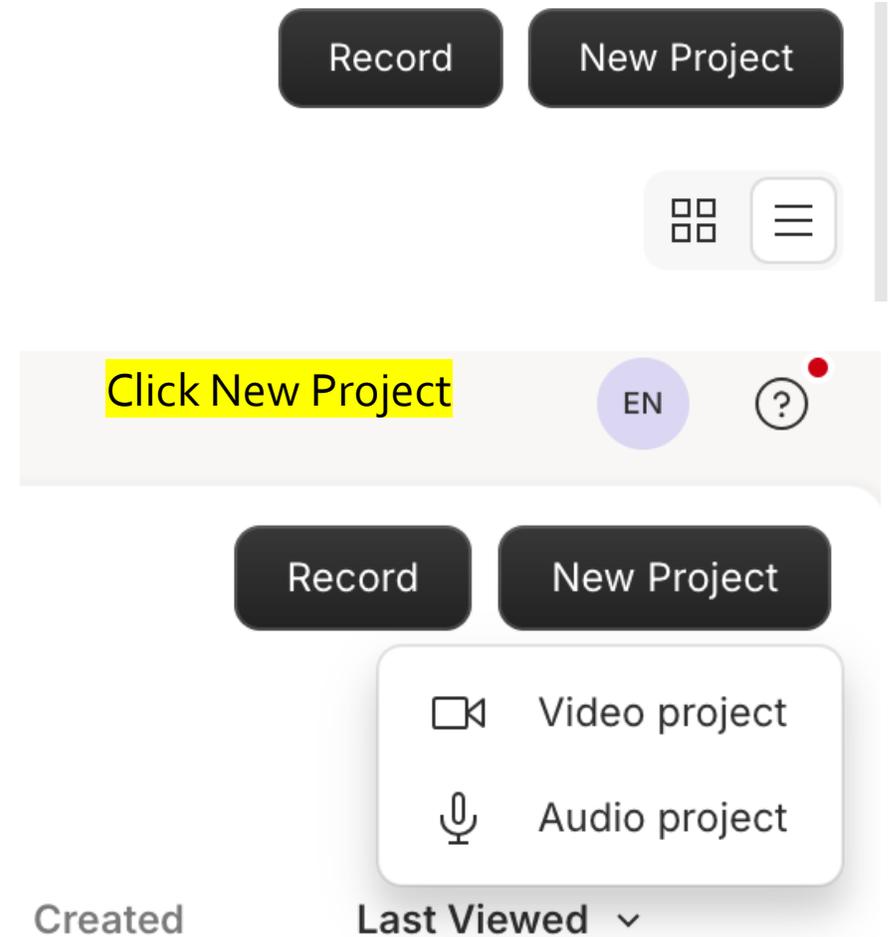
WEB.DESCRPT.COM



Left Side



Right Side



Name your creation



Upload file

Click to browse
or drag & drop [supported files](#) here

 Paste a video link from YouTube 

 Write AI speech

 Upload from mobile

 Record

 Import from Zoom

Paste from clipboard or press Enter to continue with an empty script



Camera



Screen



Audio only



Record with others

-AUDIO ONLY
-PICK THE
MICROPHONE
-HIT RECORD
-START TALKING

Untitled Project

Export

Project

AI Tools

Properties

Elements

Captions

Media

Default - External Microphone (Realtek(R) A...

Communications - External Microphone (Re...

Microphone Array (Intel® Smart Sound Tec...

External Microphone (Realtek(R) Audio)

No microphone

No camera

Default - Micro...

No screen shared

Record

Underlord

RECORDING – USING THE INTERFACE – AND TAKES

Audiobook Narration Example: Mary Had a Little Lamb

Add speaker

Mary had a little limb. Its fleece was white as snow and everywhere that Mary went and everywhere that Mary went, the lamb was sure to go.

☰ 0:18.7 / 0:20.1

● Record ▶ 1x □ Split

00 · · · · 0:02 · · · · 0:04 · · · · 0:06 · · · · 0:08 · · · · 0:10 · · · · 0:12 · · · · 0:14 · · · · 0:16 · · · · 0:18 · · · ·

1.0s Mary had a little limb ... Its fleece was white as snow ... and everywhere that went 1.0s and everywhere that IV went the lan was su t 3.0s



“MEERY”
“LIMB”

- Re-record into file.
- Cut and Paste the same word.
- Use the AI to replace the word using your voice.



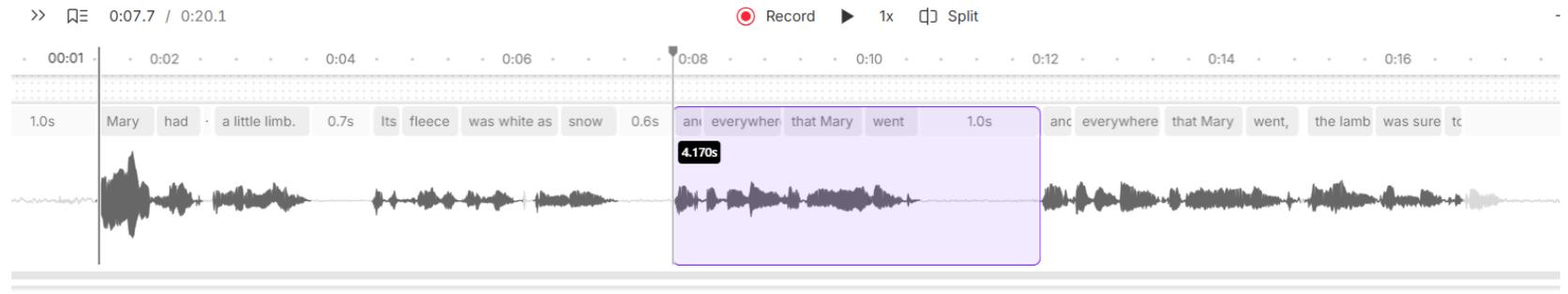
CUTTING OUT TAKES



Audiobook Narration Example: Mary Had a Little Lamb

Add speaker

Mary had a little limb. Its fleece was white as snow and everywhere that Mary went and everywhere that Mary went, the lamb was sure to go.



02:44.8 / 25:12.7



BREATH SOUNDS, ETC.



- Listen to audiobooks and notice breath sounds and timing.
- Try not to breath heavily into the microphone.
- Mouth sounds – popping and clicking – usually means you need water.

EDITING – SOUND FIX



Write

← Script 🔊 S ...

Project

Duration

🔄 1x ⏱ 0:04.1

AI Tools

Audio 98.9% 🔊 ...

Properties

Audio effects +

Elements

Elements

Captions

Media

- Studio Sound File
- Dynamics >
- EQ >
- Creative >
- Reverb

Audio effects +

Studio Sound 🔊 🔧

Elements

Studio Sound ? ✕

Intensity 75%

🗑 Remove

EXPORT YOUR CHAPTERS



27w | 20.2s

e Lamb

that

Pick your destination
Get your file faster with the default "Describe (web link)," formerly called Publish. For advanced settings and batch exports, choose "Local export."

Export [X]

Audio | Timeline | Transcript | Subtitles

 Audiobook Narration Example: Mary Had a Little Lamb

 0:20

Destination:

Export options:

Format:

Advanced [v]



FORMAT TO ACX STANDARDS

Volume is between -23dB and -18dB RMS

Each file needs to fall between the specific volume range of -23dB and -18dB RMS for consistent volume.

Root Mean Square (RMS) is a way to measure the average value of an audio signal. By keeping all files within this range, listeners won't have to constantly adjust the volume of their playback device.

Peak levels are less than -3dB

Each file must have peak values no higher than -3dB to avoid distortion. By leaving this headroom you'll reduce the possibility of distortion, which can seriously reduce the quality of the listening experience. This headroom is also needed to ensure the files are successfully encoded.

Noise floor is less than -60dB RMS

Each file must have a noise floor no higher than -60dB RMS to avoid background noise distractions.

Keep room tone less than 5 seconds

Each file must have no more than 5 seconds of room tone at the beginning and end. We recommend at least 1 second for an ideal listening experience.

File format is 192 kbps or higher CBR

<https://help.acx.com/s/article/what-are-the-acx-audio-submission-requirements>



FORMAT TO ACX STANDARDS

Export ✕

Audio Timeline Transcript Subtitles

 Audiobook Narration Example: Mary Had a Little Lamb
🕒 0:20

Destination ↓ Local export ↓

Export options ↓ Current composition ↓

Format ↓ MP3 audio (.mp3) ↓

Advanced ^

Channels Mono Stereo

Sample rate 44100 48000

Audio bitrate 128 kbps ↓

Normalize volume -24 LUFS ↓

Metadata 🔧

Export



<https://help.acx.com/s/article/what-are-the-acx-audio-submission-requirements>

METADATA

Export [X]

Audio | Timeline | Transcript | Subtitles

 Audiobook Narration Example: Mary Had a Little Lamb

🕒 0:20

Metadata [X]

Destination

Export options

Format

Advanced

Channels

Sample rate

Audio bitrate

Normalize volume

Metadata

Show title

Episode title

Description

Artwork

Include markers as chapters

Export



AUDIOBOOK COVER

- 2400 x 2400 pixels
- jpg file
- less than 512 KB



AMAZING TUTORIALS AVAILABLE

The screenshot shows the Descript website interface. At the top, there's a search bar for projects and a language selector set to 'EN'. The main heading is 'Welcome to Descript', followed by the tagline 'Get started with our AI-powered, text-based video editor.' Below this, there are six tutorial cards arranged in a 2x3 grid. Each card features a video thumbnail with a duration and a title. The first row includes 'Suggested for you' (3m 40s), 'New' (4m 20s), and 'New' (3m 50s). The second row includes 'New' (4m 30s), 'Video' (4m), and 'Video' (4m). The titles and descriptions for each card are: 'Make your first video' (Record and edit a video with titles, b-roll, transitions, and more.), 'Make an audio podcast' (Learn to do everything you need to do to create, publish, and promote a podcast.), 'How to make a video podcast' (Getting your podcast on YouTube starts (and ends) right here.), 'Make clips & highlights' (Learn how to repurpose or create content for social media.), 'Create a highlight reel' (Make a highlight reel with just one click using Descript's AI editing assistant, Underlord.), and 'Repurpose your webinar' (Quickly turn webinars and online recordings into clips for social media.).

Welcome to Descript

Get started with our AI-powered, text-based video editor.

- Suggested for you** Video • 3m 40s
- New** Video • 4m 20s
- New** Video • 3m 50s
- New** Video • 4m 30s
- Video** • 4m
- Video** • 4m

Make your first video
Record and edit a video with titles, b-roll, transitions, and more.

Make an audio podcast
Learn to do everything you need to do to create, publish, and promote a podcast.

How to make a video podcast
Getting your podcast on YouTube starts (and ends) right here.

Make clips & highlights
Learn how to repurpose or create content for social media.

Create a highlight reel
Make a highlight reel with just one click using Descript's AI editing assistant, Underlord.

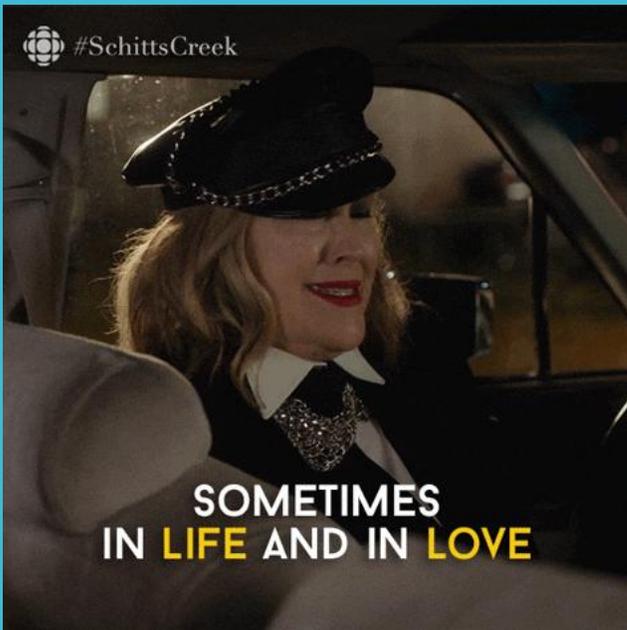
Repurpose your webinar
Quickly turn webinars and online recordings into clips for social media.

- <https://www.youtube.com/@Descript>

YOU'VE GOT
AUDIOBOOK
FILES,
NOW WHAT?



UPLOADING TO FINDAWAY –



- create an account at voices.inaudio.com

NOTE: I'm not affiliated with FindawayVoices or Descript. I researched the best way to get my audiobook out wide in Feb. 2024. FindawayVoices had the highest royalties and best terms. I don't know if that's changed since then.

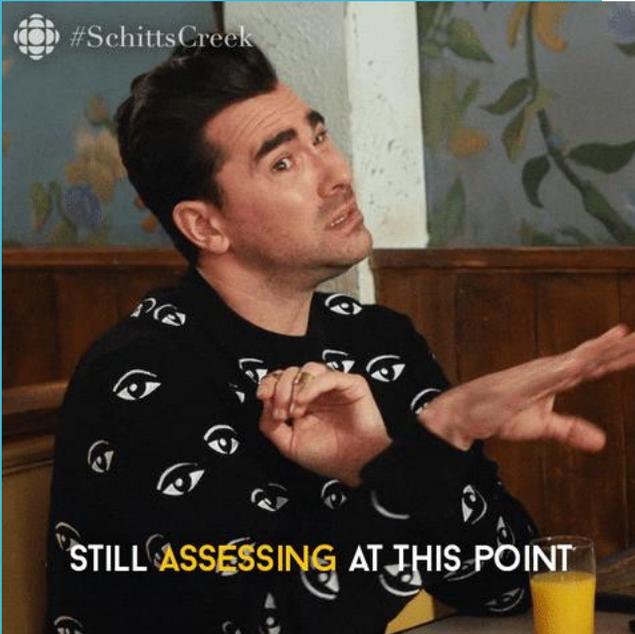
LET'S
BEGIN

Too Sweet to Die

[Metadata](#) [Distribution](#) [Audio](#) [Overview](#) [Redemption Codes](#)

Metadata

Make any changes to your metadata and save below. After changes are saved, you must press publish to submit them to retailers.



Primary Metadata

[Edit >](#)



Title *
Too Sweet to Die

Subtitle
Not Set

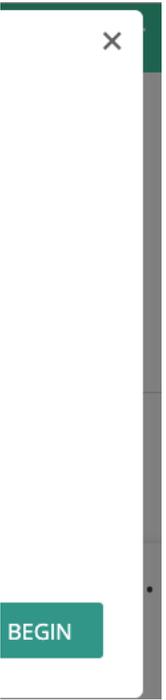
Series Name
Not Set

Series Entry
Not Set

Publisher *
Not Set

Authors *
Not Set

Narrators *
Not Set



READ AND
FILL OUT
ALL THE
METADATA
SECTIONS!

Metadata [Distribution](#) [Audio](#) [Overview](#) [Redemption Codes](#)

Metadata

Make any changes to your metadata and save below. After changes are saved, you must press publish to submit them to retailers.

Primary Metadata [Edit](#)

	Title* Too Sweet to Die	
	Subtitle Not Set	
Series Name Not Set	Series Entry Not Set	
Publisher* Not Set	Authors* Not Set	Narrators* Not Set
Supplemental Material What's New? N/A		
Description What's New? Not Set		

Additional Metadata [Edit](#)

Abridgement* Unabridged	Language* Not Set	Keywords Not Set	Awards Not Set
-----------------------------------	-----------------------------	----------------------------	--------------------------

Classification [Edit](#)

Fiction/Non-Fiction* Not Set	Age Level* Not Set
Primary BISAC* Not Set	Additional BISAC Not Set

ISBN Information [Edit](#)

After publishing your project, ISBNs can not be updated. Have questions? Read our [ISBN FAQ](#), or [contact Customer Experience](#).

ISBN Retail Not Set	ISBN Library Not Set
-------------------------------	--------------------------------

Important Dates [Edit](#)

Street Date What's New? Not Set	Release Date What's New? Not Set
---	--

Copyright [Edit](#)

Copyright Date What's New? Not Set	Copyright Statement What's New? Not Set	Production Copyright Date What's New? Not Set	Production Copyright Statement What's New? Not Set
--	---	---	--

Set Price [Edit](#)

Retail List Price What's New? Not Set	Library List Price What's New? <small>Cost Per Checkout Pricing</small> Not Set
---	---



DISTRIBUTION



Too Sweet to Die

[Metadata](#) [↔ Distribution](#) [🔊 Audio](#) [📄 Overview](#) [📁 Redemption Codes](#)

Distribution

You now have access to the world's largest network of audiobook sellers, reaching listeners through retail, library, and education distribution channels globally.

Please be sure that you've selected the options you want. Changes can take up to **30 days** to go into effect.

CONFIRM SELECTIONS

FYI: if you choose to submit to Audible, and you're ready for it to go to Quality Control, a box will pop up asking for an Amazon link to your title.

UPLOAD
FILES
—
DRAG &
DROP
OR CLICK
+

Too Sweet to Die

[Metadata](#) [Distribution](#) [Audio](#) [Overview](#) [Redemption Codes](#)

Add Audio Files

DIGITAL VOICE NARRATION

You're uploading human narration.

Upload audio files that are MP3 or FLAC formats, 192 kbps or higher, and 44.1 kHz. Please see our [audio requirements](#) for more details.

Chapter names will be sent to partners. [Chapter Naming Best Practices](#)



Reminder! How you order your files is how your audiobook will play. Findaway Voices will publish your audiobook in the order arranged here.

Total Runtime: 00:00:00

Opening Credits *

Important Tips: This must include the Title, Author, and Narrator names. Please state them exactly as they appear in your metadata and on your cover art. Keep it under 3 minutes.



Click or drag to add MP3 or FLAC Files.

LISTEN TO YOUR FILES



- Sometimes they don't upload correctly...or it could just be my internet in West Virginia.

Body Matter *

Important Tips: *This is the heart of the book. Some common examples are: Chapters, Parts, Epilogues, and Afterwords. Each file must be shorter than 120 minutes.*

2	☰	Chapter 1	(KissBangBoom ch 1.mp3)	+	⏸	💬	📄	🗑
3	☰	Chapter 2	(KissBangBoom ch 2.mp3)	+	▶	💬	📄	🗑
4	☰	Chapter 3	(KissBangBoom ch 3.mp3)	+	▶	💬	📄	🗑
5	☰	Chapter 4	(KissBangBoom ch 4.mp3)	+	▶	💬	📄	🗑
6	☰	Chapter 5	(KissBangBoom ch 5.mp3)	+	▶	💬	📄	🗑
7	☰	Chapter 6	(KissBangBoom ch 6.mp3)	+	▶	💬	📄	🗑
8	☰	Chapter 7	(KissBangBoom ch 7.mp3)	+	▶	💬	📄	🗑
9	☰	Chapter 8	(KissBangBoom ch 8.mp3)	+	▶	💬	📄	🗑

← Chapter 1 00:00:08 00:07:53 ×

SETTING PRICES

- They have recommendations
- Check Amazon/Audible
- Do what feels right for you



GENERATE CODES FOR FREE AUDIOBOOKS

Kiss Bang Boom - The Abridged Version

Metadata ↔ Distribution 🎧 Audio 📄 Overview 📦 Redemption Codes

Redemption Codes



Important Details on the Redemption Codes for Spotify

- **NEW:** Use redemption codes for ALC's (advanced listening copies) or promotional opportunities - they are redeemable even before your published audiobook's official release date!
- Redemption codes are redeemable on Spotify at authors-direct.com/spotify.
- Previously generated Authors Direct Codes can now be redeemed [here](#) and listening will take place in the Spotify app.
- You must be distributing to Spotify to generate and use redemption codes.

GENERATE CODES

IT TAKES A
FEW DAYS
TO PASS QC
AND THEN
YOU'LL GET
YOUR LINKS.



MORE STUFF DESCRIPT CAN DO

- Videos and Podcasting!
- They have really great tutorials in the “Learn Descript” Section on the left hand side of the main screen.
- They constantly update the program.



STUFF TOBI USES

- Maono Microphone - \$45 Affiliate link: <https://amzn.to/4jpDAF9>



- Headphones - I used my normal earbuds, but then bought used Sennheiser HD 380 pro years ago and they're no longer for sale. DO NOT USE HEADPHONES WITH BASS ASSIST. You need the unaltered sound. Regular headphones are probably fine, especially with Descript.

- Sound Proof Foam - \$40 <https://amzn.to/3Wvox3c> I use 2 now, just behind the microphone.



QUESTIONS?

- Don't be afraid to email me with questions if you have them later!
- AskIGW@gmail.com
- AskIGW.com – sign up for our newsletter!
- StoryMagicCards.com
- Join us for IGW GenreCon 2026,
 - July 25-26, Huntington WV

