

blueroom PRODUCTIONS

7718 Bradley Blvd.
Bethesda, MD 20817
Tel: (240)505-5544
Fax: (301)365-4203

info@blueroommusicstudio.com
www.blueroommusicstudio.com

Tips to Prepare for your Recording Session

There are a number of things you can do as a recording artist or as a band to ensure your recording time in the studio is efficient & productive, and your budget is not wasted.

- The most important tip for a successful recording session: be early or on time! If you have a session scheduled for 11 AM, the session will start at 11:00 whether you are there or not! If you are concerned about being late for the start of your session, arrive early so that you have time to warm up.
- You should be *totally prepared* prior to beginning your recording session. Your time & money are valuable, so don't use the studio as a place to rehearse your song, test out new ideas, or record parts just to "see how they sound." If your new idea doesn't fit with the track, you will have wasted several hours of valuable studio time.
- Be thoroughly comfortable with the material you are about to record. Know the structure of the song inside and out. If you are singing on top of an existing instrumental track, know when to begin your verses and choruses. In addition, make sure you have all your necessary sheet music and lyrics organized prior to the session.
- A great studio session requires reliable instruments. Bring plenty of spare drum sticks, drum heads, strings, picks, batteries, etc. If you're a singer, bring plenty of room-temperature water. If you're singing for a longer vocal session, consider bringing green tea or honey. Put new strings on your guitar or new heads on your drum kit – just make sure you don't do it the same day of the session, otherwise you'll have difficulty keeping them in tune.
- If you are concerned about your instrument working properly for the duration of the session, consider renting an instrument. It might be worth it to spend a part of your budget on a high quality instrument. After all, the engineer can only work with what you give him.
- *Rest* before your studio session. It's pointless, and a waste of your time to try to do an 8 hour-recording session if you are tired or sick. The high quality microphones, instruments, and studio equipment Blue Room Productions utilizes are irrelevant if there is not an outstanding musical performance to record. During the session, take breaks often (especially if you are a singer) so you don't over exert yourself. Although you may think 3 or 4 breaks might be a waste of your studio time, it's smarter than fatiguing your vocal chords by doing multiple takes of the same challenging song.
- Realize when it is time to call it a day. Trying to compose, produce, or record music when you're tired (either mentally or physically) can do more harm than good. It's better to know when to wrap early, walk away for the day, and come back for your next session fully refreshed and ready to go.
- Try to make a rough, demo recording of your chosen songs before you arrive to the studio. This could be on a tape recorder, GarageBand, iPhone app, or similar. The purpose is not to get a great quality recording, but instead to allow you to easily pick out any weak parts in the song (sections that drag on-and-on, or need to be developed further) or lyrics that don't quite fit right. If you're performing with other musicians, this allows you to make sure the timing and chemistry of the group is tight. If there is anything that needs to be added, removed, or adjusted in the song, this is your opportunity to do so before you start paying for your recording session.
- Bands and artists can rarely afford enough recording time to record their entire repertoire, so use your rough recordings to select your best material to record. On the other hand, if you are sure you want to record all of your songs, Blue Room Productions has discounted hourly studio rates for our clients who schedule longer block sessions.
- If you can, provide the engineer with your rough recordings prior to the session so he can familiarize himself with the type of sound you're going for. This will save valuable time in your session. Good communication with your engineer is imperative and will help you to achieve the best possible results.
- Blue Room Productions will store all recording sessions for a minimum of 6 months. Otherwise, make sure you bring an external hard drive or USB stick to backup your session!
- Practice with a metronome, or "click-track," especially if you're the drummer. You will be deciding the tempo (speed) of the song, and rehearsing with a metronome will ensure you lay a consistent foundation for your band members to record on top of. Try practicing with a metronome at slow tempos; it is much more challenging to stay in time at a very slow tempo.
- Unless they are providing positive moral (or financial) support during your session, don't drag along friends or family members to your recording session. Their presence will likely end up as a distraction to your concentration. Invite them to your album release party instead.
- Finally... RELAX! Leave your personal problems at the door. The studio is both a place of work to lay down your best ideas as a musician, but simultaneously allows you to experiment and discover qualities or features of your music you might have never known before.