

14 TIPS To get the most from your recording sessions.

1. Schedule a free preproduction meeting to communicate the sound that you are looking for, and to answer any questions that you might have about the recording process.
2. Know your material. Finalize the arrangement of your songs. Memorize your lyrics. Practice until you can play your part without thinking about it too much. Proper preparation will allow you to capture a much better performance in the recording studio.
3. If possible, record your rehearsals and live gigs. Even a rough 2-track recording will reveal weaknesses in song arrangements, harmonies and instrumental parts. Maybe that new syncopated rhythm part isn't as cool as it sounded in your head!
4. If you plan to use a click track, practice with a metronome or drum machine and determine the tempo (BPM) prior to your session. We do not recommend recording with a click unless your drummer has previous experience playing with one.
5. Have your instruments properly set up and in perfect working condition.
 - Guitars** - Make sure your strings are appropriately stretched and broken in. Amps, cables, and pedals should be hum and crackle free.
 - Drums** - Drums should be properly tuned. Rattle and squeak free.
 - Remember** - *little things that may not be noticeable when playing live can become glaring problems when you are recording.*
6. Bring extra strings, picks, batteries, drum sticks, heads and a cable or two.
7. Be fresh and well rested. It is best not to schedule your session after a loud, late gig.
8. Know when to stop. We have found that sessions longer than 4 or 5 hours tend to become a lot less productive the longer they go. Two shorter sessions will almost always get you better results than one long session. If a song or part isn't working, move on to something else and come back to it. Frustration can really sap your creative energy.
9. Don't use gear that you are not familiar with, even if it is better than what you own. Programming or operational challenges can bring your session to a grinding halt.
10. Be comfortable. Wear layers of clothing that you can adjust if you become too hot or cold during the session. Think comfort over style.
11. Bring whatever snacks and beverages you will need to maintain your energy through the session.
 - Singers - Icy cold drinks can constrict your vocal chords. Hot tea with lemon or honey is best.
12. Tune up frequently. An instrument that is just slightly out of tune can cause major problems when layering on other parts and vocals.
13. Don't assume that you can "fix it in the mix". Get the sound that you want while recording.
14. Determine a band spokesperson before the sessions start. Everyone will likely have a different opinion (or want to hear their part louder) on the mix. Determine who will have the final say.