

**GUIDANCE FOR SPEAKERS**

Thank you for agreeing to speak at a u3a meeting.

We realise that you may not need this guidance but not everyone is experienced at presenting with a microphone to a large group, and so have created the guidance below to support you in making sure that everyone can hear you during your talk, read any slides you wish to show and gain the most benefit from your presentation.

Please take a moment to read through these notes.

**SOUND**

1. Please **do use a microphone**. This is important even if you have a loud voice because people with hearing aids switch to a loop system which is activated through the microphone. We can offer clip-on or headset microphones (both good if you are presenting with slides) and lectern microphones.
2. Speak distinctly and try not to speak too fast. Do not let your voice drop at the end of sentences. The hall is large with echoes, so it is important to speak slowly.
3. **Do allow time for a sound check**. Someone will stand at the back of the room to check you can be heard clearly. Meetings start at 2pm but it is really helpful if you can arrive around 1.30pm to allow time for any issues to be resolved.
4. Positioning is key:
* Too close to the microphone, and sound will boom.
* Too far from the microphone, and the level of voice pickup will be too low.

**Clip-on (Lavalier/lapel) microphone**

* Clip the microphone onto your clothing at about breast pocket level and keep it about 30cm/12 inches from your mouth so as not to create overload and distortion.
* The transmitter pack can be attached to a belt or put in a pocket.
* Make sure you know where the on / off switch is and check that the microphone is ‘on’ before you start speaking and ‘off’ when you’ve finished.

**Headset microphone**

* The headset is flexible and can be adjusted to sit comfortably on your head.
* Point the microphone towards your mouth and keep the microphone element about 3 - 8 cm/1 - 3 inches away from your mouth.
* Make sure the microphone isn’t directly in front of your mouth or directly below your nose to avoid noise from breathing, and cracking noises from the moisture drops which come naturally from the mouth when speaking.
* The transmitter pack can be attached to a belt or put in a pocket.

**Lectern microphones**

* The optimum speaking position is central between the two microphones and about two widths of the hand back from them.
* Adjust the microphone to the appropriate height and angle - it should be aimed at your head, not your chest or shoulder.
* Remain facing forward and try not to turn your head away or your voice will be lost.
* Minimise hand gestures as these can create distracting popping noises.

**PRESENTATIONS**

* The venue has a large, fixed screen for displaying presentations.
* If you want to use a PowerPoint presentation, the easiest way is to bring it on a **memory stick** that can be plugged into the venue’s laptop, which also provides a ‘clicker’ for moving slides on.
* If you need to show a video, that should also be on the USB stick. Access to the internet can be arranged but it is not always stable connection.
* NOTE If you use your own laptop it must have a VGA output (not HDMI) and separate audio lead. All files must be on the laptop as internet access cannot be relied upon.
* Audience members can be seated up to 25 metres or yards from the screen, so busy slides packed with lots of small text are extremely hard to read.
* For text, a minimum font size of 54 is recommended, with 60 offering good readabilty.
* A helpful rule of thumb for slides is the 5/5/5 rule - use at most:
	+ 5 words on a single line.
	+ 5 lines of text on a single slide.
	+ 5 slides that apply the first two rules in a row.

**DISPLAY MATERIALS**

* Please let the Programme Organiser know in advance if you need a table to display any material supporting your presentation, e.g. leaflets.

*Last updated November 2023*