



RECORDING

YOUR FAMILIES STORIES WITH

A SMART PHONE

Before you begin Learn how to use your smart phone recording app. On the iPhone, it is the Voice Memo app. Make sure you know where the microphone is on your phone. If you are not familiar with your phone's audio recorder, here is a guide.

<https://www.verizonwireless.com/archive/mobile-living/tech-smarts/how-to-record-audio-smartphone/>

Do a test recording to practice.

Find a quiet location Find a place away from loud conversation, background noise and traffic. Turn TV, radio and cell phones off. Microphones are very sensitive and will pick-up any distracting sounds.

Get comfortable and Close Pick a relaxed location, but one where you can get the microphone end of the smart phone close to the speaker. The corner of a table is often a good place. If holding your phone becomes tiring, put the phone on a stack of books to get it close to the speaker's mouth.

Introduce the recording Begin recording by saying your name, the date and where you are. "This is Sally Jane Smith. It's December 25, 2016 and I'm in my home in Johnsville, NY." Then have the person you're interviewing also introduce themselves. Years from now when someone listens back, this will help them know right away what the recording is about.

Ask warm up questions Sometimes people are a bit timid when they are first being recorded, so ask some easy questions like "Tell me something about where you grew up?" "What games did you play?" "How did you meet grandma?"

Listen Closely The more you listen, the more the person you are interviewing will talk. It's not often that someone gives us our full attention. But when they do, most of us have a lot to say!

Be Curious What are the things you always wanted to know about your family? Did you always wonder why your grandparents moved out west? Why your Dad enlisted in the Marines? Or why your Aunt Mildred is nicknamed "Moo Moo"?

Use open-ended questions These are questions that can't be answered with one word. Instead of "When did you learn to play guitar?" try "Tell me about learning to play guitar." Change "Did you walk miles to school?" to "How did you get to school?"

Save the recording You've just created an important historical record for generations to come. Don't leave it on your phone. Send or upload your recording immediately and save it to a hard drive or the cloud.