

Step one: Deciding the songs

The most important thing to consider when approaching this whole process is to have all your decisions about what songs you are going to record and why, made before you as much as book a studio. There are three common reasons people record a demo

To send to a record label. To send to a publisher. To send to venues to book gigs

In each of these there are common rules of thumb

Choose a versatile set. Rather than putting songs that sound the same on your demo you should use it as an opportunity to showcase your range both vocally and lyrically.

Put your best song first (self explanatory really) Keep in mind that A&R receive quite a number of demos on a daily basis you should be aiming to grab their attention as soon as possible so no instrumental solos at the beginning of the song!!!!

Step two: Booking the studio

Know in advance what equipment you will need or will be working on. If you are unsure then arrange to have a preliminary meeting with the studio manager, most reputable studios have no problem with this. It doesn't have to look good to sound good. Studios with frappecinno makers and leather sofas will usually have a price that matches. While comfort is important, especially if you have booked a couple a days, the equipment, acoustics and engineers should be top of your priority list. It is always a good idea to ask about past clientele of the studio, have a listen and see if this is what you're looking for. How the end product turns out is up to you. The more the help you can give the engineer, the better he can help to give you the best possible result. It's always a good idea to bring recordings of rehearsals so the engineer has an idea of your sound. Also you should bring in example of other bands / musicians whose productions you like so the engineer knows what direction you want to go in.

Step three: In the studio.

There's an unspoken etiquette to being in a studio, here are a couple of dos and don'ts.

Do:

- turn up on time, it's your money you're wasting if you don't
- tune all instruments (including your voice) before the start of a session

Don't:

- bring all your friends along. avoid having your time in studio turn into a social event. You need to concentrate on getting the best possible results from this opportunity.

Step four. the BEWARE list

Beware of studios trying to keep your master tape. Depending on the type of system used (digital or analog) you will either get your material on tape (analog €250) or dat (digital €25). Most analog studios will rent you space on a tape allowing you up to two weeks to change your mind about your finished mix. Make sure that the studio has no ownership of your tapes; the only instance in which this happens is if you don't pay your final fee.

BAND TIPS: Demo Recording



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Beware of studios looking for royalty points. Under no circumstances should you include a signing away of royalties to a studio. They are legally entitled to nothing other than the agreed payment for studio hire. Get all costs and conditions for both parties in a signed contract before payment and have someone (fmc) look over it before you sign. Do all this in advance of your recording session.

DO NOT SIGN ANYTHING OTHER THAN A HIRE CONTRACT. Some studios have conned artists in to deals they have found impossible to get out of be they publishing or recording. If in doubt about anything you are being asked to sign then ask for time to look over it and show it to someone in the industry (fmc).

While these are actual events it is true to say that for the most part recording studios are staffed with great and talented professionals who will make your time with them as enjoyable and productive as they possibly can.

Demo studios

Recording Studios recommended by Irish bands on Breaking Tunes:

Cork:

Data Recording Studio +353 (0) 857632066

Limerick

Noel Hogan's Studio <http://www.noelhogan.com/>
Sonic Audio Studio sonicaudioirl@gmail.com

Dublin:

K9 Studio's +353 (0) 87 858 0004
A.P. Studios +353 (0)1 44 33 903

Derry:

Blast Furnace +44 2871 377870
Smalltown America +44 2871370442

Pressing Plants: Mid Atlantic Digital : 048 663 29437, Tony Mohan
A to Z: 00 44 181 9030046

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