



**TIPS**  
FOR MEDIA  
INTERVIEWS

**HELP ABC NEWS**  
REFLECT  
MODERN  
AUSTRALIA



## Who is the ABC?

The ABC exists for all Australians.

We pride ourselves on delivering relevant and useful stories and conversations to all Australians across TV, radio and online.

We're an integral part of Australia society and culture – maybe you've heard people call us Aunty.

We are independent and owned by the Australian people according to the [ABC Charter](#).

## Why share your story?

The ABC is proud to be the source of Australian conversations and stories.

Did you know that more than 70% of Australians watch, read or listen to the ABC each week?

We want YOU to be a part of the conversation.

Help your ABC look and sound like modern Australia – diverse, equal and inclusive.

# Haven't done an interview before? Don't worry! You're not the only one.

To help you make a decision about whether you want to do the interview, here are some questions you can ask:

What is the story about?

Why do you want to interview me?

Who else are you interviewing, and why?

Can I do the interview in my first language?

Is there a translator available?

Who will do the interview?

Where can I see the interview?

Is the interview live or pre-recorded?

Where and when do you want to do the interview?

It's ok to say no,  
and it's ok to ask for more time  
to think about it.

Reporters don't provide  
questions in advance, but you can ask  
“what kind of questions can I expect?”



# What to expect if you say YES

## On The Record

This means you are willing to be identified, quoted, photographed, and filmed for the story.



## You can request to be “Off The Record” or “On Background”

**Off The Record:** This means we cannot report anything you say in the interview. If we get the same information from someone else “on the record” we can report what they say.



**On Background:** This means that the information you provide can be used, but you will not be identified in the story.

## Live or Pre-recorded?

LIVE interviews happen in real time:

-  Everything you say is broadcast
-  Everything you say – including your mistakes! – is broadcast

PRE-RECORDED interviews are edited for use:

-  A producer will edit out any mistakes, stumbles or stutters
-  A producer will cut out any answers that won’t be used in their story

# How to prepare for your interview

Your interview is locked in – here are some tips to get you through:

Have a glass of water on hand in case your mouth gets dry.

If you make a mistake or lose your train of thought, it's ok to ask to start your answer again.

Coming to the studio? Arrive at the ABC at least 15 minutes ahead of time to meet the producer and get set up.

Connecting via video call or phone? Make sure you're set up at least 15 minutes ahead of time – a producer will talk you through the best set up for audio and video.

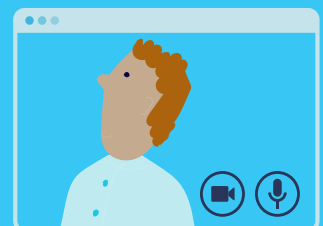
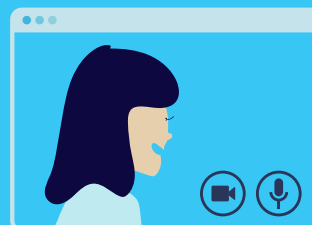
At the end of TV and RADIO interviews, it is common practice for the producer to hang up the call without saying goodbye.

## Social Media

Your interview may be shared on ABC News social media and will be seen by a lot of people. Some of those people may share your views, some may not.

Despite our best efforts to moderate comments and discussions on social media, things can get nasty. Here is some guidance on how to protect yourself:

**[ABC Social Media Safety resources](#)**





## For TV

wear block colours – not patterns

set up in front of a bookshelf or artwork – not a blank wall

make sure the space is quiet and well lit

feel free to dress up, style your hair, and put on makeup

## For Radio

make sure the space is quiet and you won't be disrupted

have some cushions and blankets around you to absorb any echoes

check that you have good reception

## For Online

You may be asked to do the interview by phone or email

You can offer written responses if you feel more comfortable with that



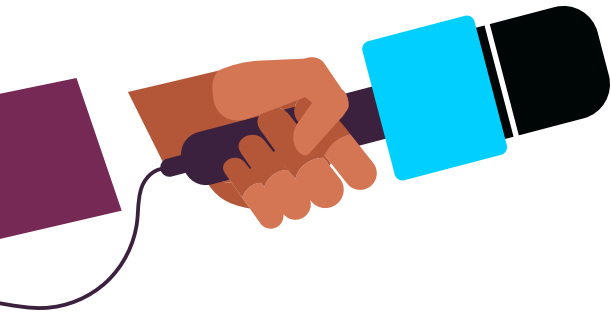


## Opposing views

ABC reporters must comply with a set of [Editorial Policies](#) and follow [Guidance Notes](#) to do this.

This means that you may appear in a story alongside people who hold opposing views to you.

This is not because your views weren't believed by the reporter, it's because ABC News is fair in our reporting – we need to listen to all perspectives.



# Why wasn't I included in the final story or program?

Sometimes, your interview isn't used. This happens a lot in news, and has nothing to do with you and the importance of your views.

Here are some reasons why this may happen:

## We ran out of time

TV and radio programs have a set amount of time for broadcast, so stories may get cut.

## We ran out of space

Articles have word limits so interviews may get cut to fit.

## A different angle

As a reporter is working on a story, sometimes the focus changes as they get more information.

## Breaking news

When a big story breaks, plans go out the window. Interviews can be dropped at a moment's notice because we need to prioritise breaking news.

## The right mix

Reporters and producers have to work very quickly to lock in interviews for their story. Some interviews may be cut because they need to have the right mix of views.