

# Everything you need to know to become a professional voiceover artist

The world's first and only technique for professional voiceovers

By Steve Hudson  
Creator of the Hudson Voice Technique  
CEO Voicemaster International



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# Introduction



Hello, I'm Steve Hudson.

Some people are told they have a good voice and should be recording voiceovers. That's like saying; you have ten fingers so you should play the piano for the Philharmonic Orchestra.

This is a good time to start in the voiceover business. Voiceover work is a great way to make extra money for those who have the ambition and talent. But you can't expect advertising agencies to pay you thousands of dollars or pounds just because you have a good voice.

The Hudson Voice Technique will teach you the essential techniques you need to become a confident and successful voice-over. It will put you fully in charge of your greatest asset – your voice – so you can start earning money in this lucrative industry.

If you don't have a technique, you will obviously be repeating faults. A producer recently told me that he likes to use untrained voiceovers because they sound 'natural'. People who think this are living in cloud-cuckoo-land because sounding natural is the hardest thing for any actor or voiceover to achieve. Only the very best – Miriam Margolyes, Emma Thompson, Jack Nicholson, Dame Judi Dench, Forest Whitaker, Meryl Streep – and a few more can do this.

Every week, people ask me about how much work there is and how much money they can earn as a voiceover. Once you are trained in the Hudson Voice Technique and practise, your potential as a voiceover is enormous. We will recommend an online casting agent you can join and of course, networking is still an excellent way to find a voiceover job.

The biggest potential is corporate narration. This includes videos for documentaries, sales training, safety training, promotional and induction. Thousands of television commercials are produced every year, not to forget video games, websites and talking books.

**Listen to Beverly and the difference  
the Hudson Voice Technique makes  
in just a few hours**

# How much can you earn recording voiceovers?



How much you earn in this industry depends on whether your work is television, radio, corporate or online. Most television and radio commercials are based on a studio fee plus residuals and these depend on how many regions it is shown in, how much experience you have and the size of the market. Most advertising is run on 13-week cycles.

	UK (£)	USA (\$)	
		Local	National
TV commercial voiceovers and cartoon characters	200–3000	400- 4000	400-15000
European & world-wide TV commercials	200–1500	400	400
Radio commercials	50–200 (if national, this will be over 1000)	300-700	300-2000
TV and radio announcements	50–200 p/h	250	250
Talking books	1000 per day	200 p/h	n/a
Internet	Negotiable	Negotiable	Negotiable
Documentary narration	100–200 p/h	400+	400+
Recorded messages	50–150 p/h	Negotiable	n/a
European and world-wide voiceovers	100–200 per hour	350	350
TV presenters	100 per day 5000 per week	Negotiable	Negotiable
Training films	100–200 p/h	400+	n/a
Jingle singers	500-3000	500-2000	500-5000



# What equipment will you need?

Most voiceovers work from home. All you need is a computer, recording software (which you can get for free) and we can recommend the best value microphone. You will need some form of soundproofing. All you need is a piece of carpet or thick curtain about 2 feet square. When you've finished the course we will give you more advice on this. Main point is: it will not cost you thousands of pounds. You can start at a reasonable budget and once you start earning more, you can invest in more expensive equipment.







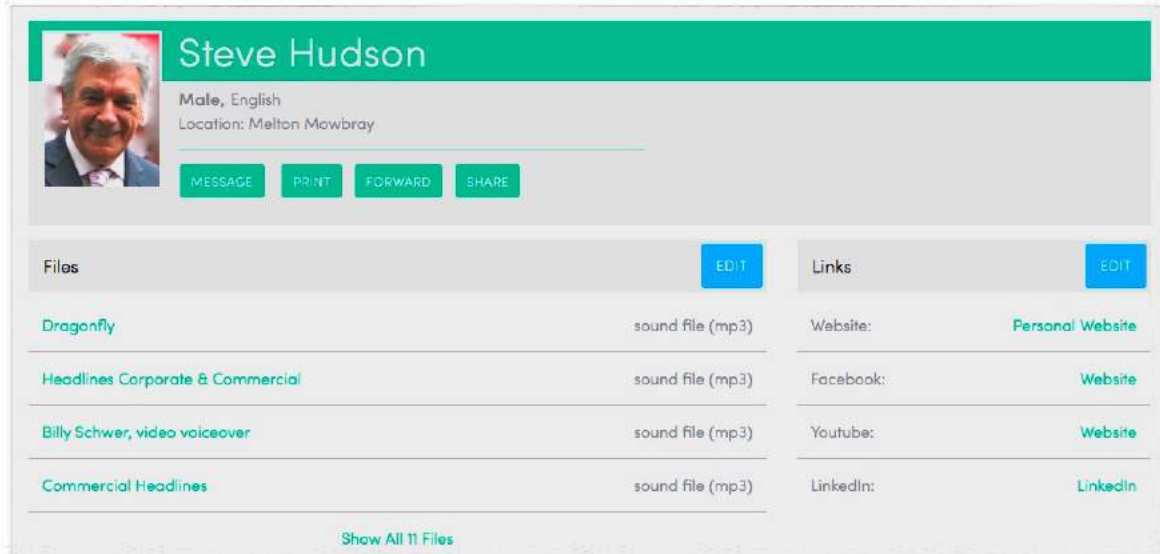
When you have everything in place, you can then record any time and send your work to any studio or radio station in the world.

# But how do you actually get the work?

Thank heavens for modern technology! In order for you to get voiceover work, the best way to go is to join an online agent or two. They have a list of clients who need voiceovers for all types of jobs and in all kinds of languages. Take a look at this snapshot of some jobs currently open.....

Of course, agents charge a fee, but it's not going to break the bank and with one or two jobs, you'll have your money back and start making a profit.

	<b>Vintage Style Voiceover</b> The Video Alchemists Salary: £150 Per Day Location: UK Characters: 1 character · 16 to 99
	<b>Launch Film – £350 per day</b> RD Content Salary: £350 Per Day Location: Holborn Characters: 1 character · Male only · 30 to 40
	<b>Charity Challenge Video – £400 per day</b> cousin brother films Salary: £400 Per Day Location: West Yorkshire Characters: 1 character · 18 to 99
	<b>Bob the Renter – £1,000</b> Mad Cow Films Salary: £1000 Flat Fee Location: London Characters: 1 character · 18 to 99



Once you have created your voiceover demo, you create a profile with an agent and upload your demo. They will send you alerts when a job fitting your voice description comes in. I also recommend you log into your account with the agent every day and look for all the posted jobs because there will always be jobs you can apply for, even if you weren't sent an alert about them.

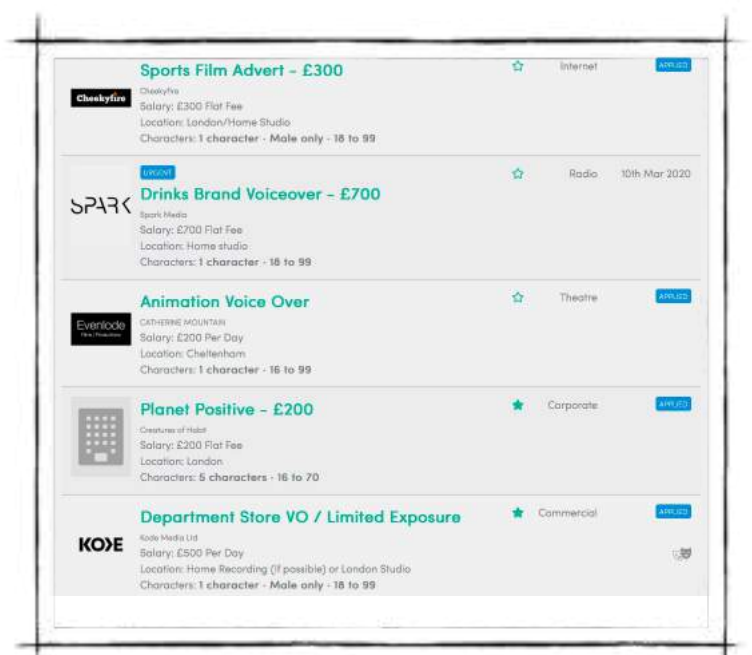
Sometimes you will be asked to record an audio script to submit. It's worth doing this because it gives you a greater chance at landing the job.

In the past week I have applied for 7 jobs, ranging from a charity voiceover for £200 to a corporate narration for £500.

I'm now waiting for the results.

Some time ago I received an audition for an Italian video game. I got the job and was paid £2500.

Last month, I landed a job for £1000 which took me an hour in my home studio.



# Foreign language voiceovers



The United Kingdom (and the USA) exports millions of pounds worth of goods each year. In many cases companies send a video with their product to explain how to assemble, service and repair their product and of course this has to be in the local language. Added to this there are tourist information voiceovers, company reports and of course television and radio commercials in your own country. The potential for foreign voiceovers runs into millions of pounds.

Imagine how many voiceovers are needed by companies who market worldwide. Microsoft uses every language in the world. When Pope John II died, Voicemaster were asked to supply dozens of voiceovers for a documentary about his life.

At Voice Master we have been training people to become voiceover artists in all languages for many years and can help you get into this lucrative market.

Online agencies post all kinds of voiceover jobs in different languages, so if you speak more than one language fluently (or have a certain accent), this will be an added string to your bow.

*Your practical, easy-to-follow Hudson Voice Technique has won me voice over work in two weeks after completing the course! The icing on the cake is that now, I speak slower, clearer and my accent is better.*

*Raghavendra Ashok, voiceover, teacher and author, Bangalore, India*



**Watch the video**

# Voice categories

What sorts of voices are popular? Just listen to TV and radio commercials and you'll hear regional accents, deep voices, light voices, character voices, monkeys selling tea, cats selling cat food and thousands of cartoons. The voice used depends on the product.

Deeper voices usually sell luxury goods, such as perfumes, chocolates and cars, whereas lighter voices usually sell consumables like butter, washing-up liquid and children's products. These are all specialist areas and no one person can do them all.



Female voiceovers are as much in demand as male.

Here's a sample of a number 5 voice by Kathleen Turner voicing Jessica Rabbit in 'Who framed Roger Rabbit'

You don't know how hard it is being a woman looking the way I do.  
I'm not bad, I was just drawn that way.

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)

Some people assume that a deep or sexy voice is enough to qualify as a voiceover. You may have the sexiest voice in the world but with training you will learn to use your No. 5 voice and sound even sexier.

Deep and mellifluous voices are popular but a lighter voice has even more potential because most products require a normal voice, but it must be professional.

## Talking books

Talking books is the biggest growth area in publishing and the potential runs into millions. The largest percentage of talking books are novels, children's books and instructional books on dozens of subjects from sex to medicine.

Talking books require a great deal of experience, but it is something to aim at as you get more work and more confident. Obviously, the biggest selling books like Harry Potter and the Lord of the Rings would be narrated by a well-known actor, but this is the minority of the work; there are still thousands of opportunities for many types of publications needing trained readers.

Many television and radio commercials use music and singers to enhance their image and make the commercials more memorable. Jingle singers can earn a great deal of money. I believe the best way to start is by training to be a voiceover and include a jingle on your voiceover demo.

# Jingle Singers



When you sing, you are telling a story, so the same rules apply.

As a beginner, if you are realistic about your fee, you could be chosen for radio commercials and then move up to television.

The Hudson Voice Technique has been used by Virgin Records to train their singers because whether you are singing or talking, you have to use your voice like a musical instrument and your communication has to be clear.

## Your voiceover demo



I hear stories every week from people who have been given advice by a well-meaning friend, actor, voiceover or producer. Usually the advice is to record a voiceover demo. That really is putting the cart before the horse!

If you have the ambition and determination to become a voiceover, you must make certain that you are trained in a professional technique, then you can record your voiceover demo.

Most recording studios will offer you second hand scripts. Second hand scripts may not suit your voice category and of course, they will have been used many times before. Your voiceover demo is

your only contact with a producer and you don't want to sound like everyone else, so don't select the biggest brand names because you'll probably end up in the waste paper basket!

Remember, you are on the first rung of the ladder and you have to get it right! Your voiceover demo should be the right length and you have to know if you are in a category. Every actor and voiceover needs a professional director/producer. Studios will offer you an engineer who is an expert in sound, but not performance. I've recorded thousands of voiceovers, but that doesn't qualify me as an engineer.

Whatever you do, don't waste your money recording a voiceover demo before you have been trained in a professional technique!



# A good voice alone is not enough

## My most embarrassing moment...

I was doing a stunt job for one of the world's biggest advertising agencies J.Walter Thompson. One day the casting director asked me if I did voiceovers. Up to that point the closest I'd been to doing a voiceover was shouting with fear when crashing a police car, or being hit on the head with a sword when filming on the Golden Hind (not the original – that would make me 237 years old!). So I went to a studio in London's' Covent Garden.



The television commercial was for Dunlop. I had no training, in fact; I didn't know a microphone from a doorknob, but at least I wasn't scared – I should have been! Twenty minutes later I walked from the studio in a daze. It was a disaster!

That was several years ago, and since then I have earned a small fortune, travelled all over the world and enjoyed every minute!

I learned a very important lesson that day: if you want to get into a new career, which could be very profitable, you need a technique.

## You have a unique speech pattern - it's your verbal DNA

### Think of it like this:

In the shower – if you are right handed, you probably pick up the soap with your right hand and wash (let's say) your left shoulder first. You never think: This is boring, I've been doing it this way for years... today, it's going to be left hand, right knee. Well, in the same way, we develop a speech pattern.

A speech pattern starts at about two years of age, when you say your first word. From then on we mimic our parents and learn words, a language, an accent, speed, tone and an intricate way of arranging words in a sentence.

The trouble is that no school, university or college teaches a technique for professional communication. Even stage schools, who teach many excellent techniques, do not teach a specific technique for corporate presentations and voiceovers. Throughout the world and in every language, children are simply taught to string words together.

When we read a script that is written by someone else, it's obviously written in their speech pattern so we are taken out of our comfort zone. To read someone else's speech pattern professionally is called: 'acting' which is why actors train for two years and why you need the Hudson Voice Technique.

Even when you're talking or reading your own script, without a technique, you are still relying on your instinct. It's not fair to expect anyone to make a presentation or record a voiceover without learning a technique.

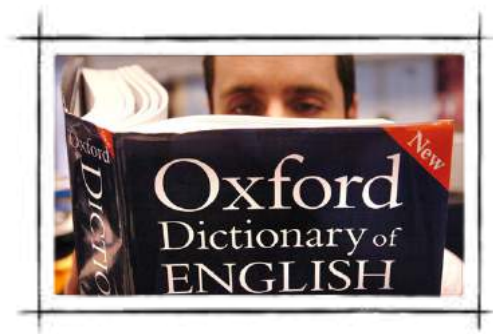
## **The Hudson Voice Technique changes your speech pattern from instinct to technique.**

Of course, anyone can read a script or make a presentation, but without a technique, you have to rely on your instinct and that's not good enough if you want to be professional or successful.

**instinct** /in'stingkt'/ The innate aspect of behaviour that is unlearned. In other words, 'guessing'.

On the other hand, it describes **technique** /tek-neek/ as follows:

- A set of specific rules which determine the degree of excellence.
- The degree of skill or command of fundamentals exhibited in any performance.



## **Survey**

### **What are the most common mistakes made when we speak?**

- **73% Talk too fast** – the listener can't keep up - Learn to slow down the rate of speech
- **81% Run sentences into each other** – the listener gets confused - Learn the 3 golden rules
- **43% Use a rising inflection** – reflects lack of knowledge - Learn to sound positive and confident
- **29% Lack energy** – sounds boring, listener tunes out - Learn to energise when you speak
- **34% Emphasise the wrong words** – you're not getting the message across - Recognise 'Red Flag' Words
- **18% Speak in a monotone** – lose the interest of the audience - Learn the right pitch
- **32% Leave sentences open** – reflects indecision - Learn what to do at the end of a sentence (and I don't include 'stop and breathe!')

# The 7 elements of the Hudson Voice Technique

We all recognise when someone sings out of tune. It's uncomfortable to listen to. The same applies to talking and reading. Your voice is like a musical instrument, it has to be in tune and that means learning a few simple rules.

## **Read and speak slowly.**

73% of people talk too quickly. This makes it difficult for the listener to assimilate and analyse information. It is also irritating to listen to. This element will teach you the secret that Frank Sinatra used so well. You will learn how to slow down the rate of speech.

## **Read and speak with energy and enthusiasm.**

Energy equals enthusiasm and it's contagious. So many people talk without energy and become what I call talking heads, which is frankly boring! You have to learn to use your body correctly and talk more positively.

## **Starting and ending sentences.**

You will learn the three vital things to do at the end of a sentence (and I don't mean stop and breathe). This element will make you sound more confident and authoritative. When you sound more confident your audience will have more confidence in you.

## **Creating blocks of information.**

One of the most important points we need to remember about the process of spoken communication is that apart from clearly separating sentences, we must also recognise and separate individual blocks of information within the sentence. You will learn what a mental comma is and how to use it.

## **Read and speak softly.**

Here you are going to learn to really to control your voice like a musical instrument. There are several tones you can use and at the end of this element you will be able to use them right on cue. You'll also learn how to use your no. 5 voice.

## **Recognise and emphasise 'Red Flag' words and situations.**

In this element you will learn to identify the appropriate words to emphasise and at this stage you will start to learn how to vary your pace, volume, tone and pitch.

## **Words are instructions from the author.**

Now you will learn to use all the elements at the same time. This is sometimes called "The Vincent van Gogh method of communication" because it will be more colourful. Instead of using only the primary colours, you will be able to use every colour and tint on the palette.

# Does this course really deliver?

**Yes it does! Have a look at just a small selection of the reviews we have received over the years...**

This course delivers exactly what it says it will. At the beginning of the course you are asked to record a number of lines to the best of your ability so you can compare it with what you sound like at the end. I was skeptical about how much I was improving during the course... I mean, sure, I learned some good advice but I didn't feel any huge improvement.

Then I recorded the final readings and compared them to my firsts and wow... mind blown!

This course gives basic advice and intriguing explanations for how to improve your voice while reading a script that has monumental results. ...All in all this is a course where the results speak for themselves and I highly suggest it.

Malcolm Tolman



Very comprehensive course! As an author who records my audio books, this course helped me to capture and remain mindful of the nuances of delivery that will make a marked difference in my general communications as well.

Samuel Crumby

I've taken several other voice over courses and even though this course is shorter than the others, it contains a plethora of information that can not be overlooked, It has made me gain more confidence and knowledge to the art of becoming a voice over personality, knowing that I can attack my next project confidently.

A must have for anyone serious about learning how to speak and phrase properly. very very well done.

Cory Shelnick

The course is comprehensive. All of the relevant material [and I might add that it's ALL relevant] is sufficiently and successfully covered. I am tremendously satisfied as I feel that the value received far exceeds the money spent. I've been looking for something like this for more than a year, and I would have gladly paid more than I did. I would definitely recommend. Thank You, Steve!

Jim Allen

I found the course extremely interesting and helpful. The in-depth analysis of the various voice types and the exercises have given me the confidence to go ahead and produce a demo tape to try and break into the voiceover industry.

Cherry Yarrow

For an American audience, I thought this course may seem a bit foreign. But Mr. Hudson breaks down the basics of English-language speech in a universal way. Though this course may be marketed towards voiceover artists, I could see this as an appendage course for public speaking, persuasion, most any verbal communication course.

Mitchell T. Smith

Only just started but so far so good. Some great tips, very well explained. In particular, I like how there are exercises throughout, with an emphasis on practice. Looking forward to progressing with the course!

Update: Finished the course and very impressed. Just listened to the difference between my 'after course' recordings and my 'before course' ones and the improvement is dramatic. Thanks!

Steven Burns

Fantastic course, within the first going over of the course my recording voice has markedly improved. I wanted to improve my voice in order to record my own audio books and I wasn't disappointed, I feel a lot more confident now and am excited to hear what my voice sounds like after the hourly practice recommended by the course creator. If I could give it 6 stars I would!!

L.R. Thomas



Thank you for a fascinating course.

Even though I've been an actor for many years, I had no idea there was so much more to learn about something easily taken for granted - speaking! Your technique has given me more confidence at auditions and will certainly be an advantage in my voiceover career.

Sharon Duce  
Actor, London



Many thanks for all your help on the Voice Master course. At first it felt a bit strange, learning how to read again. However, once we got started, I realised how much I actually took reading out loud for granted or, more importantly, how when we read aloud, we don't do it properly.

Working in the media, my job is all about communication, and thanks to this course, I can do my job with that added confidence. As a floor manager, I often have to coach presenters in reading their own scripts. I am now able to do this more effectively, having learned of the various techniques involved in the Hudson Voice Technique. I also became more aware how many people working in television and radio have not been taught the basics in presentation and delivery of scripts.

I would definitely recommend this course to anyone of any occupation. You don't have to work in television; it can help you in any situation. Not only do you learn the techniques of reading from voice-overs, but you also become aware of your own voice, how you can control it and adapt it to different situations. Whether you are reading the news or dealing with a problematic customer in a shop, the techniques learned on the Voice Master course will certainly help you.



Karen Graham  
Outside Broadcast Floor Manager, BBC

Firstly, thanks very much indeed for yesterday. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and feel that I've already learned an enormous amount. With some dedicated practice I believe I can make some really good progress. Already getting on my girlfriend's nerves last night by asking for a cup of tea...taking a minute to ask!!!

Thanks again for your valuable help.

Nick Morgan, Sky TV



# The Course



Become a qualified professional voiceover artist by learning the 7 Elements of the Hudson Voice Technique for voiceovers.

The online voiceover course consists of 10 video tutorials with scripts for you to print. It will take a approximately 1-2 weeks, 20 minutes a day to complete the course. When you've finished each element, you can put the new learned skills into practice immediately.

## **What you'll learn:**

Control the tone, pace and pitch of your voice and gain confidence in front of a microphone.

By the end of the course you will be able to record TV and radio commercial voiceovers and corporate narration from home to a similar standard as your favourite voiceover or actor.

You will be assessed by Steve Hudson by sending your 'Before' and 'After' recordings via Email. Students are always welcome to contact Steve for help and advice.

## **Are there any course requirements or prerequisites?**

Download and install software Audacity, including the LAME MP3 Encoder.

We will give you instructions if you're not sure how to do this.

## **Who this course is for:**

This course has been created for aspiring voiceover artists. It is also a good refresher for those who are already in the business.

Once you have paid for the course, we give you access with a personalised username and password on our Online Academy.

You will receive your VMI Voiceover Diploma upon completion of the course.



## Online Voiceover Course

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## Secrets of the Black Magic Box Man (Reprint from TV Times)



Steve Hudson started as a trainer with 3M Company and Xerox (London and Washington DC) as International Communications Trainer. Working in Washington, he trained politicians and became Communication Consultant for members of the Senate and many of the Fortune 500 companies. He also gave advice to advertising agencies about selection and training of voiceovers.

He soon realised that most salesmen and politicians were well trained in product knowledge, but many of them were poor communicators. It was obvious they needed a technique to be more positive and persuasive.

In order to find out more about using the voice professionally, he decided to train at the Royal National Theatre in London to become an actor.

During the next few years, he became a successful international voiceover, recording Fuji, Mitsubishi, Guinness, Gallo Wine, Old Spice, Martini,

Superman and many others. He came close to real stardom when Cubby Broccoli was casting for the lead role in James Bond movies; Steve said he lost by an eyebrow (and a few million pounds) to Roger Moore.

Steve Hudson has won a number of awards for production and performance, including Best Radio commercial at the Hollywood Radio and Television Society for 'Sound International'.

Steve has enjoyed working with and interviewing many stars and celebrities, including the multi- talented Miriam Margolyes, Barry Ingham, Frank Sinatra, Roger Moore, the Duke and Duchess of Bedford, Lord Lichfield, David Bailey, Hulk Hogan, Pele and Tracey Ullman.



**[Listen to some of Steve's voiceover work](#)**