Script 1.1

Hi, this is Karen French in the *How to ...* corner. This week is *How to create a podcast*. In the last section we looked at using podcasts; in this section we're going to look at creating your own podcast. It's not as difficult as you might imagine! And remember, for more information about this, or any of our programmes, visit the website and download one of our many PDFs.

Before you start, the first thing to decide is what your podcast will be about. Whatever you do, make sure the topic is something that interests you personally. Very few people make any money from it, so be sure you'll enjoy the process!

To set up a podcast, you'll need four things, presuming you already have a computer with an internet connection. The first thing is a decent microphone. Now I know you probably already have a mic built in to the computer, but it's unlikely you'll get the quality people expect in a podcast from that. So invest in a mic that has a USB connection. With this, and something interesting planned to talk about, you're ready to get recording! Make your recording and save the audio file on your computer.

So, the next thing you're going to need is some special software that will help you edit your audio file. What do I mean by 'edit'? Well, you'll probably record too much material, some of which you'll want to get rid of, by cutting it away. This is called 'audio editing' and there are lots of programmes that will do this. On a Mac you'll find one called Garageband which comes pre-installed – on there already – and for a PC, you can download many programmes for free – Audacity is a well-known one. As well as cutting bits you don't want, you may want to reorganise the bits you do want. Other things that audio editors can do for you include adding music and sound effects, and removing background 'noise' that might spoil the quality of the listening experience. Finally, your audio file should be in an mp3 format, and most audio editing suites can convert files from one format to another.

OK, so you've recorded your podcast and it sounds brilliant. Job done, right? Well, no, not if you want other people to be able to hear it, that is. As we saw in the last tutorial, podcasts work like blogs, meaning that if someone likes your podcast they can subscribe to it. Then, every time you make a new one, they get the link sent to their computer. In fact, podcasts are blogs, just special blogs that contain audio files. So, the next thing you will need is a blog. There are hundreds of sites for this – two of the most popular are blogger.com and Wordpress. Once you've done that, you can upload your mp3 file to your blog.

And the last thing you're going to need is an RSS feed for your blog. An RSS is what other people need to find and subscribe to your podcast so that every time you upload a new show, they'll hear about it. There are a few sites that can do that for you, such as easypodcast.com. Sites like this can also help you get your podcast listed. Two places people look for podcasts are in media libraries like iTunes, and search engines such as Google. Finally, these sites allow you to add 'tags', or labels, to your podcast, to help people looking for your type of show find you easily.

OK, so there you have it, all you need to start a podcast! Of course, this has been a very brief overview of the process and there's plenty more to learn about each stage, but I hope you feel you have enough to get started. This has been Karen French in the *How to* corner!