

Podcasts

A Podcast is a digital audio file made available on the Internet that you can listen to at any time you want. It features one or more people in a talk show format talking about every topic under the sun. Ten years ago they were a novelty with only a handful of people doing it, now they are a mainstream with over 2 million Podcasts with over 48 million episodes. They're a great way to pass the time or learn something new, whether you're commuting, working, walking, gym, or relaxing. Frequency is on demand with new episodes released daily, weekly, monthly, or all episodes at one time. Episodes can be received by subscribers automatically to a phone, tablet, smart speakers, or PC.

Some Podcasts have millions of listeners while others have less than ten. Podcasts started back in the days of the iPod as an alternative to listening to music. Streaming apps and Podcasting services provide a convenient and integrated way to manage a personal consumption queue across many Podcast sources and playback devices. Podcasts can be created for between \$0-\$1,000,000, all you need is device (PC, phone, tablet), software, and a mike to get started. They can be any length from several minutes to multiple hours. Unlike music, most Podcasts are free.

How to Listen to a Podcast

You can use any device from PC/Mac, phone, tablet, or smart device. Similar to music, you can stream Podcasts to your device with an Ethernet connection, WiFi connection or using your phones data plan. If you have a limited phone data plan, no WiFi, or no phone connection you will want to download the Podcasts to your device to take them with you. I have a 1 GB phone plan, so I download what I listen to on my phone and it does not use any of my data plan.

Top software ways to listen:

1. Google Podcasts – Standard on your Android device, available for Apple iOS, and works on most Browsers and devices. It is what I personally use. No Ads. If a Podcast is not on listed in its library, you can add the RSS feed.
2. Apple Podcasts – Only available for Apple iPhone/iPad devices. No Ads. Announced July 2021 Apple Podcasts Subscriptions with ad-free listening, early access to episodes, and support for favorite creators.
3. Spotify – One app that combines music and Podcasts. Has some exclusive Podcasts. Free version with ads (no download), \$10 month ad-free.
4. Browser - Chrome, Safari or Microsoft Edge from a computer, phone, or tablet. This solution provides very few features.

There are thousands of Podcast apps with a few of the most popular listed below:

- Downcast - Great app for organizing. It also has iCloud sync so you can pick up where you left off. Includes iPad, Apple Watch, and CarPlay support.
- Overcast - Smart Speed, Voice Boost, Playlist filtering, and reordering. Discovery through your Twitter followers.
- Pocket Casts - Great UI, Trim silence, Variable speed, Volume boost, Chapter navigation, Apple Watch controls, and Sync option to other devices.
- Stitcher Radio - Manage your Podcasts
- Stitcher - Its layout is also one of the sleekest and most straightforward across Podcast apps
- TuneIn - Popular with radio and Podcasts.

Podcast Player Features to Consider:

- Ad-free listening – Instead of imbedded Audio or on screen ads. A Podcast may still have their own ads.
- Sync subscriptions, history, queue, or play without losing your place on multiple devices.
- Subscribe to new episodes – With or without notifications. No cost to subscribe.
- Mark an episode as played.
- Stream Podcast – Requires an Ethernet, WiFi or phone data connection to a website.
- Download Podcast - Offline listening. Uses memory on device to store. Manual or Automatic download.
- Remove/delete completed episodes either after playing or because of age.
- Ratings and reviews.
- Recommendations of similar content.
- Track activity – Show listening history.
- Closed-captions – Transcription of audio track that displays text on the screen.
- Favorites Playlist/Queue – Organize your play order.
- Control speed 0.5x to 3.5x.
- Trim silence – Skip quiet pauses.
- Show time left in an episode.
- Fast-forward X seconds, Rewind X seconds, Chapter navigation.

- Sleep timer.
- Voice/Volume boost.
- Apple Watch controls.
- Cast the audio to devices with Apple AirPlay or Google Cast.
- Early access – Usually a cost.

What I use to Listen - Google Podcast

I use Google Podcasts that is the standard installed Podcast player on most Android devices and can be installed on Apple iOS devices and from a browser in Windows. This keeps your Android, iOS, Google Assistant devices, and Windows/Mac devices in sync for what you are subscribed to and history of what you have listened to. My Amazon Alexa can play any Podcast, but there is not currently a Google Podcast “Skill” to sync info.

I do not listen on my PC, but it could be used. In your Browser go to “Google Podcast”: <https://Podcasts.google.com/>. It shows my subscriptions with the current episodes. Playback is basic. Can search for Podcasts. Not many other features.

I listen most often on my phone using the Google Podcast App. Major tabs:

- Home – Shows my Podcast subscriptions and the latest episodes. Each episode has a description, shows length with play button, button to add to my queue, and download to my device button.
- Explore – Search Podcasts. Popular & trending, top Podcasts, categories, and suggested.
- Activity – Your queue, Downloads, History, and Subscriptions.
- Bottom Play Control – Show current Podcast with play or pause button. When you select the control, you can skip back or forward, set sleep timer, mark as played, share, set speed, and more.

Google Podcast settings:

- Trim silence – Skip quiet pauses
- Auto-download: Settings for downloading new episodes.
- Remove completed episodes: Set when removed—after 24 hours, after 7 days, or never.
- Remove unfinished episodes: Set when they should be removed—after 30 days, after 90 days, or never.
- New episodes from your subscriptions: Turn off notifications for specific Podcasts.
- Explore section: Turn off if you don’t wish to see what Google Podcasts thinks you might like.
- Playback section: Turn off Auto play if you don’t want queued episodes to play automatically, one after the other.

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Some of Tom Kreuzer’s Subscriptions:

- Stuff You Should Know “SYSK” - Hosted by Josh Clark and Chuck Bryant, both writers at the web site How Stuff Works. Covers topics like champagne, chaos theory, LSD, El Nino, true crime and Rosa Parks. Daily episodes.
- Crisco, Dez, & Ryan After Hours – From KS95 radio morning show in the Twin Cities. Daily episodes.
- Garage Logic – Hosted by Joe Soucheray, Chris Reuvers, Kenny Olson, Matt Michalski, John Heidt, and Patrick Reusse. Daily episodes. Includes Monday Night Sports Talk every week.
- The Perfect Scam – Stories of people who find themselves the target of a scam from AARP. Weekly episodes.

With over 2 million Podcasts, there is something for everyone.

- Murder Squad – Dig deep into unsolved murders, unidentified remains and missing person cases. Weekly episodes.
- Get Sleepy - Relax and fall asleep. Combination of sleep meditation and calming story.
- DogCastRadio – Profile dog breeds, interviews with dog owners, breeders and others connected with dogs. Training tips from professional dog trainers, from the basic to the impressive party piece trick.
- Wait Wait... Don't Tell Me! – NPR NPR's weekly current events quiz. Have a laugh and test your news knowledge while figuring out what's real and what we've made up. From Jim Homan.
- Renegades: Born in the USA - Conversations between President Barack Obama and Bruce Springsteen about their lives, music, and enduring love of America—despite all its challenges. From Paula Tuebo Munkelwitz.
- 50 most popular Podcasts: <https://www.edisonresearch.com/the-top-50-most-listened-to-u-s-Podcasts-of-2020/>
- 96 favorite Podcasts in 8 categories from PC Mag: <https://www.pcmag.com/news/the-best-Podcasts>

Additional Links and Information

Questions or comments can be sent to TCKreuzer@gmail.com