EVERYONE · 6 MINUTE READ

Podcasts and audio with AI: from documents to episodes

> AI can turn approved documents into listenable briefings and episodes; write or check the script first, verify every claim, get consent for real voices and say the voices are AI.

What it is

Several AI tools can turn a report or set of notes into a spoken summary or a short "podcast" where one or two AI voices discuss it. Others read a script aloud, translate speech, or clean up a laptop recording.

The voices sound natural, which is both the benefit and the risk. The hosts are not reading your document: an AI has written a new script from it, and that script can drop a caveat, mix up figures or add something not in the source.

Think of a colleague who reads your report and explains it on the phone. Quick and easy to follow, but you would check their numbers before they repeat them to the whole company.

The main tools, as their makers describe them. As of November 2026; check the maker's page.

Tool	What it does	Good for
Gemini Notebook (Google, formerly NotebookLM) Audio Overviews	Spoken overview of a notebook's sources: two-host deep dive, short single-voice brief, critique or debate	Briefings from approved documents
ElevenLabs Studio (GenFM, text to speech, dubbing)	Writes an editable podcast script from a document; reads scripts aloud; dubs speech into other languages	Scripted episodes, narration, translations
Microsoft 365 Copilot in Word	Creates an audio overview of a document	Long documents, in tools you may already have
Descript	Edit audio and video by editing the transcript; AI voices and translation	Editing recorded interviews
Adobe Podcast	Browser recording and editing; Enhance Speech removes noise and echo; Mic Check reviews your set-up	Better sound on real recordings

For Gemini Notebook and ElevenLabs in depth, see guides 37 and 38; this guide covers the workflow around any of them.

Why it matters

- Audio reaches people who rarely read long reports, while they travel or walk.
- It helps accessibility for people with visual impairments or reading difficulties.
- Translation and dubbing bring one message to teams in several languages.
- AI voices make errors sound authoritative, so checking matters more, not less.
- A voice is part of someone's identity; cloning it without consent can cause real harm.

How to do it

1. **Choose** one checked document and an approved tool. No confidential or personal data unless that tool is cleared for it.
2. **Get** the script before the audio. Where the tool shows an editable script, read it; otherwise transcribe the result.
3. **Check** every claim against the source: figures, names, dates, policies, promises. Note what is missing as well as what is wrong.
4. **Fix** the script, or regenerate with a narrower instruction, until it matches.

5. **Get** written consent before using any real person's voice; otherwise use stock AI voices.
6. **Disclose** at the start and in the description that the voices are AI, and name the source.
7. **Clear** music and effects: only tracks you hold a licence for, or that the tool provides for that use.
8. **Review** the final audio with a named person who signs it off before sharing.

Example

Before: a finance team emails a twelve-page quarterly report; few managers read past page two.

After: a team member asks an approved tool for a short audio briefing of the approved report. The script has two problems: a cost figure rounded misleadingly and a missing risk note. They correct it and add this opening:

```
This is an AI-voiced summary of the [quarter] report from [team].
The voices are AI-generated. The full report is at [link].
Checked by [name] on [date].
```

The head of finance listens and approves. The audio sits on the intranet next to the report, not instead of it.

Common mistakes

- **Trusting the hosts.** Fix: check the transcript against the source, every number.
- **Cloning without consent.** Fix: use stock voices unless the person agreed in writing to that use.
- **Hiding that it is AI.** Fix: say so plainly at the start.
- **Using any music.** Fix: check the licence for every track and effect.
- **Dropping the document.** Fix: link the audio to the source so people can check details.

Try it this week

1. Pick a short public or made-up document (2 minutes).
2. Ask an approved tool for a brief audio summary (3 minutes).
3. Write down every factual claim you hear (5 minutes).
4. Check each against the document and count the misses (5 minutes).

Going further

- Use focus instructions ("only the risks section, for new managers") to keep scripts narrow and checkable.
- Have a fluent colleague review each translated or dubbed language before release.
- Keep script, source, consent record and sign-off together for each episode.
- Give a regular internal podcast an owner and fixed instructions, like a tool behind a button (see guide 12), and measure listens, not episodes made (see guide 28).

Key words

- **Audio overview**: a spoken summary an AI writes and voices from your documents.
- **Text to speech**: turning written text into audio with a synthetic voice.
- **Voice clone**: an AI voice made to sound like a real person; needs their consent.
- **Dubbing**: putting speech into another language over the original recording.
- **Disclosure**: telling listeners plainly that the voices are AI-generated.

Sources

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