



Beyond The Record

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GUIDE

Free Practice Audio, From Dictation to Real Testimony

Dictation at speed, full trials, sworn congressional testimony, and the stuff you put on when you just need to get on your machine. All of it free, all of it public.

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WHAT THIS COVERS

- How to find free dictation at any speed on YouTube
- Full trials, free, hours of them
- Sworn congressional testimony, which behaves like an examination
- What to put on when you just need the hours

There is no shortage of practice material online. What there is a shortage of is any sense of which of it is worth your hours. Everyone in school has had the experience of practicing diligently for something that turned out to be nothing like the job.

This is a short, honest list, organized by what each type of material is good for. Everything on it is free and public, and it works anywhere, at any speed.

Straight dictation

Start here when you are building speed. Clean audio, controlled pace, made for practice.

The most useful thing to know is that you do not need anyone's curated list. YouTube has dictation at nearly every speed, and the search is simple. Type the speed and the format: 140 wpm dictation, 200 wpm 4-voice dictation, 180 wpm literary. Swap 2v or 4v depending on what you need. You will get more results than you can work through, all free, at whatever speed you are on this week rather than the one a playlist happens to be at.

Match the search to what you are training for. If you are testing on four-voice, practice four-voice. And search a notch above wherever you are stuck, not at it.

A few playlists worth starting with:

Playlist one: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLfRBIfOQaxhbsFTydCW_7Lgj6Z6betHq3

Playlist two: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLj_Ng7mfsxb9rWbBGlcPZT3N9RVH1Ct3c

Playlist three: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLIAtHIFKyBvzboQiNiONWguDisezv-bl>

Platinum Steno

Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@PlatinumSteno/playlists>

Not true four-voice, so do not rely on it for test prep. But there is a lot of it, it is free, and it is good company during the long stretches of school when you are just putting in hours.

Real proceedings

At some point you need material that behaves like the job rather than like a recording. People who talk over each other, trail off, correct themselves, and do not care that you are trying to write it.

Croaker Queen

Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@croakerqueen7288>

Full trials, hours of them, free. This is the one worth clearing your schedule for. One reporter credits the Jodi Arias trial alone with taking her from 120 to qualifier in six months. Real testimony at real speed with real interruptions does something clean dictation cannot.

Federal Case Video Archive

Archive: <https://www.uscourts.gov/court-records/access-court-proceedings/remote-public-access-proceedings/cameras-courts/case-video-archive>

The federal courts ran a camera pilot in 14 district courts from 2011 to 2015, and the recordings are still posted. You can filter by court, subject matter, and procedural posture, which means you can go straight to jury trials rather than scrolling. Genuine federal district court proceedings, free.

C-SPAN congressional hearings

Video library: <https://www.c-span.org/congress/>

Underrated and probably the closest free material to an examination. Witnesses under oath, hostile questioning, people who evade and get interrupted for it, constant speaker changes, and names and acronyms you have never heard before. Decades of it, searchable. If you want practice that punishes you for not having a good job dictionary, this is it.

Your own state's courts

Most states now stream or archive something. California posts Supreme Court and all six Courts of Appeal oral arguments with archives. Ohio's Supreme Court archive is searchable by keyword and date. Check your own state's court website, since you will also be hearing the names, codes, and local practice you will actually encounter.

California: <https://newsroom.courts.ca.gov/webcasts>

Ohio: <https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/opinions-cases/supreme-court-video/>

One honest caveat on appellate material. Oral argument is two prepared attorneys and a panel of judges. It is fast and dense, but it is not testimony, and nobody is being evasive.

Speeches and single-voice material

American Rhetoric

Site: <https://www.americanrhetoric.com>

Famous speeches, political addresses, and movie speeches. Particularly good if you are a history buff and want practice that does not feel like practice. The variety of speakers and cadences is the point.

Audiobooks

LibriVox (free, public domain): <https://librivox.org>

Sustained single-voice material at a steady pace, which is good for building endurance rather than reaction speed. You can go for an hour without stopping, which you cannot really do with dictation files.

Interview podcasts

Worth knowing about because the structure is closer to a deposition than people expect. Two people, question and answer, one person doing most of the talking, tangents, and the occasional overlap. Any long-form interview show works. Pick a topic you are passionate about.

The stuff that just gets you on the machine

Some days the goal is not targeted practice. It is sitting down and writing for an hour, because the hours are what actually build the skill.

Write to your favorite show. Write to a movie you have seen fifty times. Write to whatever is on. It is terrible for accuracy work. It is not supposed to be the practice that makes you better on paper. It is the practice that keeps you practicing.

Published transcripts

Transcripts are easy to overlook as practice material. Court opinions, public filings, and published hearing transcripts can all be read aloud, or you can practice on your machine from the written

text.

The real advantage is that you have the answer key. You can check your work against what was actually said, get used to seeing the punctuation and transcript, and many of these are publicly available.

A few things worth knowing

- Practicing above your speed builds different muscles than practicing at your speed. You need both
- Real audio is uncomfortable at first because it is messy. That discomfort is the actual training
- Mix the types. Dictation for speed, real proceedings for reality, audiobooks for endurance, anything at all on the days you do not want to
- If something is not working for you after a few weeks, stop using it. There is no prize for loyalty to a playlist

Coming next

A separate guide on preparing for the California CSR, covering where to find real past exams and which prep courses are worth the money. If you want to know when it goes up, join the list.

Beyond the Record has no affiliation with and receives nothing from any of the resources listed here. Pricing and availability change. We list them because people in this profession have used them and said they helped.

Links last verified: October 6, 2026. If you find one that has moved or stopped working, or you have something that belongs on this list, email beyondtherecord@durossgroup.com.

Have practice material that got you through school? We would like to add it. Send it over.

Free resources, webinars, and community.

Beyond the Record is the free educational arm of The DuRoss Group. Join the list and we'll let you know when new guides and webinar recordings go up. No cost, no catch.

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