

CUE SHEETS

Cue sheets are what presenters use to introduce the feature, item, package or interview about to be broadcast. A cue sheet contains important information about the item, including a scripted introduction which has been written and which the presenter reads out.

The scripted text on the cue sheet should:

- attract the listener's attention
- set the scene for the item, introducing it and making listeners curious
- distinguish (if necessary) between news, opinion, feature, satire, etc.
- be written so that it is easy to read aloud, and uncomplicated to listen to

A cue sheet should include:

- the title/description of the item
- which programme it is for
- the duration
- the scripted introduction
- any information for the end of the item
- the "in" and "out" words of the tape if the item is pre-recorded
- any special notes or instructions about the item.

When writing a cue sheet:

- Keep it simple and don't make it too long. A clear concise cue will sound much better to the listener than a long involved ramble.
- Always type a cue sheet, never hand write it: a presenter may have difficulty reading a written cue. Use large type and double spacing.
- Set out your cue sheet properly (see following example) with title, reporter's name, transmission date at the top, followed by the cue text (introduction), 'in' words of the tape, 'out' words and duration of the tape, then back anno (announcement)
- Remember that the cue and back anno are written to be read out loud. What sounds perfectly acceptable inside your head can sound wrong when read out loud. So always check this!

Also note:

- The presenter may need to read you cue sight unseen in an emergency, so it is important that it is clearly set out.
- A back anno should give the name of the last voice on the tape and any relevant extra information, or repeat important information, such as dates, helpline numbers or venues.

Remember:

A badly written cue, or one that is badly read because it's poorly set out, will get your tape off to a poor start. It's worth spending time getting it right!

Cue Sheet Template

STATION NAME

SUBJECT/REPORTER DATE OF BROADCAST PROGRAMME

GENRE (factual report, personal opinion/commentary, interview, satire, etc.)

BODY OF CUE

Ideally about 4 short paragraphs

Paragraph: 1: set up/hook (perhaps an association that leads to the topic)

2: detail/information/explanation

3: more detail

4: introduce package and reporter

IN: First words heard on the package

OUT: Last words heard on the package

DUR: Total duration (time) of the whole package in minutes (‘) and seconds (‘‘)

BACK-ANNO: Follow up comments from the programme presenter

Cue Sheet Example

SOUND FM

SQUIDS IN/WENDY JONES 05/9/05 THE MORNING SHOW

GENRE news feature (on local opening)

Cue: As the summer months draw to a close – perhaps its time to pack away the buckets and spades. But not in Roker. It's going to be summer all year round in Sunderland's sunny suburb - all this winter it'll be sand, sea and southern-fried squid for Roker's lucky residents.

Is everyone going mad north of Wearmouth? Well, never one to resist sun, sand and squid, Wendy Jones went to find out.

In 'After a serious summer of sunbathing

Out 'from 20,000 leagues under the sea (music[ends] 8")

Dur 3' 20"

BACK ANNO

And if you would like to experience the 'Summer Squids In' attraction on Roker sea front - it opens to the public on September the 14th.