

FRETLESS STUDIOS

STUDIO PREPARATION CHECKLIST

STUDIO PREP:

BEFORE CONTACTING THE STUDIO:

- ☐ Is the song ready to record?
- ☐ Does the song have a purpose and does it serve its purpose?
- ☐ Have you recorded a practice and listened back to make any critiques?
- ☐ Have you practiced without mistakes 5 times in a row?
- ☐ Have you practiced with metronome?
- ☐ Have you explored at least 3 different routes for improv (different scale, technique, way of thinking, etc)?
- ☐ Is your solo fully written out based on above?
- ☐ Is the song well thought-out and intentional at every point for all parts?
- ☐ Does the songwriting have good contrast in instrumentation, sections/arrangement, etc?
- ☐ What are the three most important things you want achieved out of this session, and did you let the engineer and bandmates know?
- ☐ Do you have reference tracks for what you want your project to sound like?

- ☐ Do your bandmates know their part as much as you know yours?
- ☐ Is the tempo set in stone?
- ☐ Can you record a scratch track with a metronome at home?
- ☐ Can you record a demo to help you, your bandmates, and the engineer?
- ☐ If capable, can piano parts be recorded as MIDI at home and sent to the engineer for recording day?
- ☐ MIDI tempo mapped the song?
- ☐ Give the engineer the titles of all the songs with their tempo?
- ☐ If you're bringing samples/beats to the session, are they cleared to use legally?
- ☐ Are the samples/beats at least .wav at 44.1kHz sample rate and 16 bit depth?
- ☐ Need to rent a piece of equipment?
- ☐ Need to hire a session player?
- ☐ Is the cover art planned out? Photo or video content for the release?
Post release? Pre-release?
- ☐ Are you able to cover the project fully financially?
- ☐ Have you collected your bandmate's share of the total project cost and not just as promised?

Vocalists:

- ☐ Is your schedule clear of any singing gigs the week before the session and during?

- ☐ Have you written your harmonies beforehand?
- ☐ Have you practiced your written harmonies?

NIGHT BEFORE/LEAVING FOR THE STUDIO:

- ☐ Are you well rested/in a good place to record the best performance you can?
- ☐ Does everyone know when and where to be?
- ☐ Does anyone need to leave early and is that taken into account?
- ☐ If taking the session files for mixing/mastering elsewhere, do you have a usb/hard drive capable of holding the sessions? (Probably around 10-15GB per song to be safe)
- ☐ Do you know what the day/week will look like in terms of order/etc?
- ☐ Plan for breakfast/lunch/dinner/breaks?
- ☐ Strings changed the night before and stretched out?
- ☐ Bring an extra pack of strings incase the new strings break?
- ☐ Are your drum heads relatively new?
- ☐ Are you wearing quiet clothing? (no rattling, scrapping, jingling sounds)?
- ☐ Are you bringing a notepad and pencil for notes on takes or miscellaneous?
- ☐ Are you bringing a source of (quiet) entertainment like listening to music or watching a tv show (both with headphones) while others are recording?

- ☐ Do you have a checklist marked off for all the gear you are bringing and need?

Vocalists:

- ☐ Is your schedule clear of any singing gigs the week before the session and during?
- ☐ Are you bringing lyrics before the session starts for you and the engineer?
- ☐ Do you have a warm drink like warm water or tea with honey to soothe your throat? (nothing that will make your mouth and throat sticky!)
- ☐ Have you avoided smoking and drinking prior to session?

TIPS TO KEEP IN MIND:

Try not to change settings between takes (volume, treble knob on amp, tone knob on guitar, etc) unless the engineer knows/gives the go ahead. This allows the engineer to stay organized and be able to edit takes while making it seem like a natural one take!