Rev Transcription Style Guide v3.3

Welcome to the Transcription Style Guide! The following is the definitive guide for transcription at Rev. This guide also explains our *grading system*, our way for you to get constructive feedback on your completed transcripts.

We trust you to deliver high-quality work. Our customers—teachers, business owners, students, and everything in between—rely on your accurate and timely transcription as a crucial part of their daily work.

Updated July 7, 2017

Important additions in v3.2 are labeled as **NEW**. *Please review all pages to make sure you are using the most recent rules and best practices.*

There are two categories of rules—Accuracy and Formatting.

1. **Accuracy -** Are you correctly hearing and transcribing *what* words were said and *who* said them?
2. **Formatting -** Are you correctly communicating those words and notations in a way that is easily readable and digestible?

Both categories have **major errors*** and **minor errors**. Errors may lead to a lowered grade that will impact your Revver metrics. Take special care in proofing your work before submission.

* Major errors are the most common reasons that customers return files to Rev to be re-done.

A grade consists of scores on two dimensions: **Accuracy** and **Formatting.**

5 - Excellent	**Near perfect** – May contain a few errors that do not alter the meaning of the original audio.
4 - Good	**Customer ready** – Errors are more frequent or noticeable but do not change the meaning of the original audio.
3 - Fair	**Near customer ready** – Errors are present that would lead to customer confusion. This includes wrong words, additions or omissions that change the meaning of the original audio.
2 - Poor	**Not customer ready** – Transcript reflects severe carelessness or lack of understanding of the style guide.
1 - Very Poor	**Unusable** – Transcript is a poor representation of the original audio, verbatim was not used when requested, or the transcript is incomplete or content is omitted.*
One or more major errors may result in a 1 - 4. One or more minor errors may result in a 2 - 5.	

* If you submit incomplete work, your pay for the job will be removed and your account may be closed after Support review.

	Major Errors	Minor Errors
Accuracy	Precision	Spelling
	Wrong Words	Inaudibles
	Addition / Omission of Content	
	Verbatim	
Formatting	Dictation	Rev default style (non-verbatim)
	Notation tags (inaudible / crosstalk)	Punctuation / Symbols
	Provided speaker labels	Inferred speaker labels
Handling missing audio / foreign language		

Always transcribe exactly what is said, excluding speech disfluencies in non-verbatim files. Although spoken word is not always grammatically correct, your transcription must preserve the integrity of the original speech. Please do not write what you think the speaker meant to say.

1. **Never paraphrase or omit words**
2. **Never substitute words**
3. **Never rearrange the order of speech**
4. **Never correct or edit a speaker's grammar**
    a. Never change spoken contractions (e.g. do not � don't or don't ➽ do not)
    b. Never change formal speech into an informal contraction (e.g. going to ➽ gonna)
    c. EXCEPTION: Changing **informal contractions*** into formal speech is optional in non-verbatim jobs (e.g. gonna ➽ going to). If you do, please be consistent in your corrections throughout your transcript.

NEW
5. **EXCEPTION: Correct egregious phonetic and pronunciation errors that inhibit readability or understanding**
    a. Example: if a speaker pronounces "refrigerator, washer and dryer" as "refrigurator, washar and dryear", please use the correct word and spelling based on your context of the audio.

* **Informal contractions** are short forms of words that people use while speaking casually (e.g. ain't, gonna, gotta, kinda, 'cause (instead of cuz/coz/cos), wanna)

Always use *context clues* to write down the correct word or phrase. If you are unsure of a word or phrase, complete thorough research or ask for a second opinion on the forum.

Examples
"there" vs "their" vs "they're" "you're" vs "your" "its" vs "it's"	Always use the appropriate word, paying special attention to homophones.
"aerospace" vs "arrow space" "Botox" vs "boat ox"	Always use context clues to write down the appropriate word. This is especially important for proper nouns or industry terminology.
"looked" vs "loved" "kissed" vs "killed"	Take your time while transcribing—a changed word could result in a drastic change in the meaning of a sentence.

Addition of Content is transcribing content that is not present in the audio. Never paraphrase or write what you think the speaker meant to say. This is a major error that changes the meaning and integrity of a transcript.

Omission of Content is leaving words or phrases out of a transcript. You should never paraphrase or omit words *unless* they are filler words in a non-verbatim transcript. It is always better to use an inaudible tag instead of guessing or skipping content.

NEW

Always capture all conversations (e.g. off topic, crew chatter) with as much diligence as the rest of the audio. We do not judge relevance. All discernible speech should be captured, with the exception of simultaneous background audio that is clearly unrelated to the main discussion (e.g. a conversation at another restaurant table or a TV playing in the background during an interview).

Some customers request verbatim transcripts. In verbatim files, you must transcribe exactly what you hear, including filler words, stutters and repetitions. Example

NEW

1. **Include only the following non-speech speaker sounds.**
    a.   (laughs) or (laughing)
    b.   Mm-hmm (affirmative) or Mm-mm (negative)
    c.   Uh-huh (affirmative) or Uh-uh (negative)

NEW

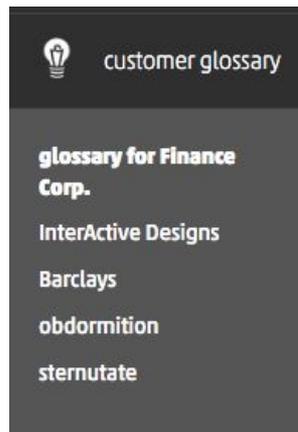2. **Exclude other non-speech speaker sounds**, such as (coughs) or (sneezes).
3. **Always use parens for non-speech speaker sounds.** Do not use your own notation (e.g. [laughs] or **laughs**)
4. **Exclude background atmospheric and non-mouth sounds** (e.g. clapping, paper rustling, dog barks, car honks)
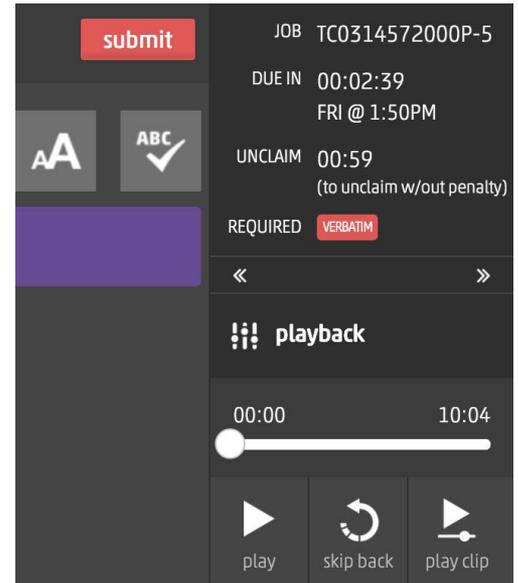
If you've claimed a verbatim job, it will be noted in the upper right menu of the Editor.

1. Use U.S. spelling at all times, even if the speaker has a non-American accent.
2. Always research words, phrases and proper nouns (names, companies, titles, etc.) you are unfamiliar with.
3. Always research the proper capitalization of terms, even if you are familiar with the spelling (e.g. iPhone, UCLA, SaaS)
4. Some customers provide a glossary that can be found in the left-hand menu of the editor—please refer to the glossary while transcribing.

customer glossary

glossary for Finance Corp.

InterActive Designs

Barclays

obdormition

sternutate

Tip: Use our built-in spelling and grammar check by *right clicking* on underlined or highlighted words.

Speaker 1

I love to use Instargram! my friends and I share our photos.
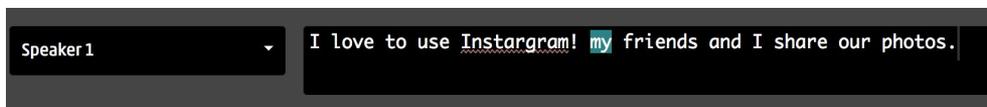
An inaudible tag should be used when unintelligible or inaudible word(s) are spoken. This may happen due to difficult audio quality, a sound (such as a car horn) obscuring the main speaker, or recording issues. An inaudible should never be used in place of research.

How many inaudibles is too many? If you are using an excessive number of inaudibles in a transcript (to the point where the transcript would be unusable to the client), unclaim and report the file so the Support team can reach out to the client to see how to proceed.

Speaker 1 ▼   I was going to the park [inaudible 00:00:05] forgot my picnic basket.

Tip: Inaudibles can be solved with help from Lend an Ear. You can share your audio file and helpful Revvers will listen in and try to hear the missing word(s).

Occasionally customers dictate instructions to format the transcription while they are speaking. These instructions should be followed when possible but never transcribed.

1. Follow customer requests for spoken directions such as *new paragraph*, *comma*, *period* or *bullet point* (use a dash). Do not type out the instruction.
2. As Rev does not support text formatting in the Editor, ignore requests such as bold, italics, underline or strikethrough.

Read complete guidelines and instructions in our help center article.

If you encounter difficult audio, use one of the four **notation tags** below. Do not create and use a notation tag not listed below.

[inaudible hh:mm:ss]	Use when unintelligible or inaudible words are stated. Equivalent to a "blank" in medical transcription.
[crosstalk hh:mm:ss]	Use when multiple people speaking over each other causes any one of the speakers to become unintelligible. Continue to transcribe what is discernable. Example
[foreign language hh:mm:ss]	For any non-English portions of audio, please indicate where they begin with a timestamp and either the name of the language (if known) or simply 'foreign language'. Do not transcribe non-English audio. If a translator is speaking on a respondent's behalf, there is no need to denote [foreign language hh:mm:ss] every time that the respondent speaks. Example
[phonetic hh:mm:ss]	When you are unable to research a definitive spelling of a proper noun or industry terminology, include your attempted spelling in brackets with a timestamp. This allows a customer to easily double check the audio during review. Only use the phonetic tag for the first instance of the word and be consistent with your attempted spelling in later usages. Do not use this tag when you are unsure of what was spoken.

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[inaudible 00:01:23] is an inaudible tag.

[crosstalk 00:01:23] is a crosstalk tag.

[foreign language 00:00:00] is a foreign language tag.

[Spanish 00:01:23] is also an acceptable foreign language tag if
you are sure about the language.

Professor [Ching Liao Su 00:01:23] is a correct use of the
phonetic tag, where the name cannot be definitively researched.

[Max Plank 00:01:23] is an incorrect use of the phonetic tag.
This name should be researched.

[people 00:01:23] is an incorrect use of the phonetic tag. It
should not be used to guess at a word.
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**inaudible** is an incorrect tag. Please do not use your own
notation.

(inaudible 00:04:56) is an incorrect tag. Please do not use your own
notation.

[unintelligible 00:04:56] is an incorrect notation tag. It is not
one of the four Rev approved tags.

[inaudible] is an incorrect tag. All notation tags must include a
timestamp.

[inaudible 0:4:56] is an incorrect tag. All notation tags must
follow the hh:mm:ss format.
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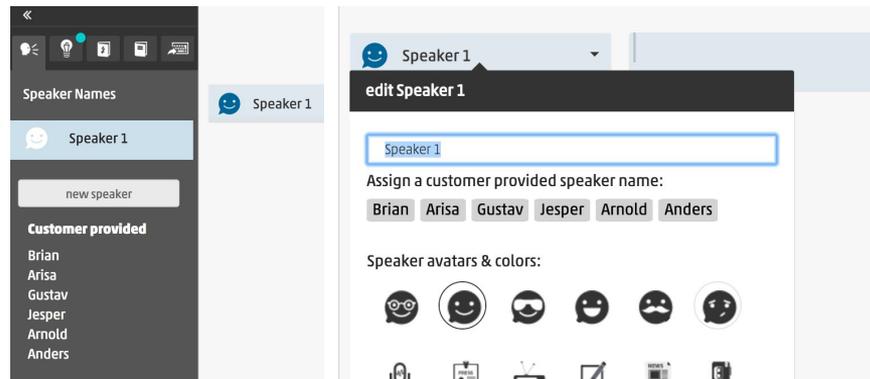
If a customer has provided speaker labels, you must use them if:

1) the speaker is identified in the audio (e.g. "My name is Arnold")
2) you can infer who is speaking if another speaker introduces the name (e.g. "What do you think, Gustav?")
3) there is only one speaker and one name is provided
4) you can use process of elimination to assign the correct speaker names (e.g. one male name and one female name match up with one male speaker and one female speaker)

If you cannot assign the provided speaker labels, follow the rules outlined in Inferred Speaker Labels.

If speaker labels are provided by the customer, you will see them in the left-hand menu *or* when you edit a speaker.

If a customer has not provided speaker labels, use the following guidelines.

- Use the context in the transcript to infer accurate speaker names. Make a reasonable effort to assign a unique label using the rules below.
- Never create your own descriptive speaker labels (e.g. "Blue shirt guy" or "Annoying child"). This is extremely unprofessional and will result in a 1 in Formatting.
- *NEW*   If speakers are not identified by name in the audio/video AND labels are not provided, do not research and use speaker names (even if personal information is revealed such that you could identify the speaker). This is for client privacy.
    - EXCEPTION: If the speaker is a well-known public figure, it is acceptable but not required to identify them.

If		Then use
The customer has *not* provided speaker names	**and a speaker is not identified**	Speaker + number (e.g. Speaker 1, Speaker 2) or role/title without a number (e.g. Interviewer, Doctor).
	but a speaker is identified	As much of the speaker name as is revealed within the transcript. (e.g. Sarah, John Smith, Professor Lee). *If the name is longer than 15 characters, please abbreviate the last name's initial (e.g. Benedict C.).*
There are too many speakers to consistently track who says what (e.g. classroom discussion, focus group)		1) If you are able to distinguish the total number of speakers, use Speaker 1, Speaker 2, etc. 2) Your best judgment in choosing appropriate group identifiers (e.g. Students, Audience, Camera Crew, Male, Female). 3) *Do not use a number* (e.g. Male 1, Student 5) as you cannot know for sure how many speakers there are.

In default style (non-verbatim) projects you should lightly edit for readability. You should not change the structure or meaning of the speech.

Exclude the following:
- **Interjections or signs of active listening** (e.g. Mm-hmm (affirmative), Okay, Yeah) unless they are in direct response to a question
- **Filler words** (*ums, uhs, and you know, like, etc.)* Example
- **False starts / self-corrections** that are later reworded, unless they provide additional context (see Example 3 and 4 below)
- **Stutters**
- **Audible non-speech sounds** such as (laughs)

Do not exclude:
- **Intentional words spoken** (e.g. *"probably" "just" "that" "really", "I think", "well"*) even if the sentence "sounds fine" without
- **Explicit content or profanity**

	Example 1	Example 2	Example 3: Leave the false start in default style because it provides context as to who called	Example 4: Remove the false start in default style because "My mom" is introduced later
Default style (non-verbatim)	I think we should go to the movies tonight because of the discount.	I called her yesterday and she was sleeping. Probably, she was just really tired.	My mom was … I forgot to tell you, she called me yesterday.	I forgot to tell you, my mom called me yesterday.
Verbatim	And so, um, I guess … I think we should go to the, the m- m- movies tonight 'cause of the discount (laughs).	I like, you know, called her like yesterday and, um, like she was, like, sleeping. Probably, she was just like, really tired.	My mom was (laughs) … I forgot to tell you, she called me yesterday.	My mom … I forgot to tell you, my mom called me yesterday.

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	Guidelines	Example

NEW
 Terminal punctuation (. ? !)
	- Statements of any length should always end in one of the following:
	    - terminal punctuation if the thought was completed
	    - ellipses if the speaker trails off or pauses
	    - a hyphen if the speaker is interrupted by another speaker
		Speaker 1: I went to the park.
		 Speaker 2: I love parks but … what about-
		 Speaker 3: I love the outdoors too!

Commas	- In verbatim transcripts: Use to offset non-essential speech or filler words. - Do not use in excess to the point where it inhibits readability.	I, uh, was going to go to the store, but decided not to.
Ellipses	- Use to indicate a speaker has trailed off or paused significantly in the middle of a statement. - Use ellipses if the same speaker cuts herself off and changes direction. *Do not* use a hyphen if a speaker cuts herself off. **NEW** - Treat an ellipsis like a word with a space before and after. - Capitalize the word after an ellipsis <u>if it starts a new sentence</u>. **NEW**	Speaker 1: She called- Speaker 2: Really? Speaker 1: … to tell me that … well, she was worried I had not heard about the coming storm. I had been in the … Hang on a minute, I have to let the dog out.
Hyphens	- Use to indicate abrupt interruptions and cutoffs of one speaker by another speaker. - Use to indicate a stutter in verbatim jobs without a comma after the hyphen. - * For full word stutters, a hyphen *or* comma is acceptable. For example, "… for her to call, call me." is also acceptable. **NEW**	Speaker 1: I couldn't wait- Speaker 2: W- wait for what? Speaker 1: … for her to call- call me.*
Parentheses	- In verbatim transcripts only: use for audible non-speech speaker sounds (e.g. (laughing)) - In non-verbatim and verbatim jobs: Never transcribe song lyrics. Label them as (singing)	Speaker 1: If we could get it done (laughs) we'd be home by now! What do you think? Speaker 2: Mm-hmm (affirmative).
Quotation Marks	- Use when a quote is directly stated or implied. - Do not edit or paraphrase the quote, even if it is quoted incorrectly (e.g. a famous quote or religious passage). - In a non-verbatim transcript the quote should be transcribed in the non-verbatim style. **NEW**	Then I told him, "I don't think I can," and he said, "Okay then."

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	Guidelines	Example

NEW
Time
	- **Use your best judgment to use conventions that improve the readability and consistency of the transcript.** Below is an <u>incomplete</u> list of suggestions - not hard and fast rules:
	   - If the speaker says "nine" and it is implied that it is a time of day, write as 9:00
	   - If the speaker says "nine o'clock", write as nine o'clock or 9:00
	   - If the speaker says "nine thirty", write 9:30
	   - If the speaker says "nine thirty AM", write 9:30 a.m. *or* 9:30 A.M. *or* 9:30 AM
	   - Write out phrases as spoken - do not convert into a numerical time (e.g. do not convert "half past one" into 1:30 PM)
		Should I come at 9:00 or 9:05 p.m.? He'll stop by at half past one instead of noon.

Numbers	- For numbers under 10, write the number (e.g. "eight"). For numbers 10 and above, use numerals.
	   - It is OK to break this rule *if* it improves readability or consistency (e.g. in a list of items)
	
	- **Use your best judgment to use numerical conventions that improve the readability and consistency of the transcript.** Below is an <u>incomplete</u> list of suggestions - not hard and fast rules:
	   - **Days/Time:** A.D. 1066, the 1980s, the '90s, February 1st
	   - **Percentages:** 4%, 15.93%
	   - **Proper nouns:** Article III of the Constitution, Genesis 1:1
	   - **Money:** 10 cents, $84, fifty billion dollars, $1 billion, $10,567.45
	   - **Measurement:** eight inches, 10' x 4', 223 pounds, 6'4"
		Our company turns 25 today, and we can't wait to see what the next five years bring!
		
		I brought 3 baskets, 12 lawn chairs, and 4 board games for the picnic.
		
		Sarah bought two pies and four dozen cookies.

If		Then
There is no English dialogue	**But there is foreign language content**	Unclaim the project as "Foreign language".
	But there are some noises or inaudible sounds	Unclaim the project as "Missing audio".
	But there is singing	Unclaim the project as "Missing audio".
There is any English dialogue (regardless of file length or percentage of audio with English dialogue)		Transcribe what you hear, using your best judgment to indicate large silences as (silence). This is to help the customer know that there was silence and not omitted or missing content.
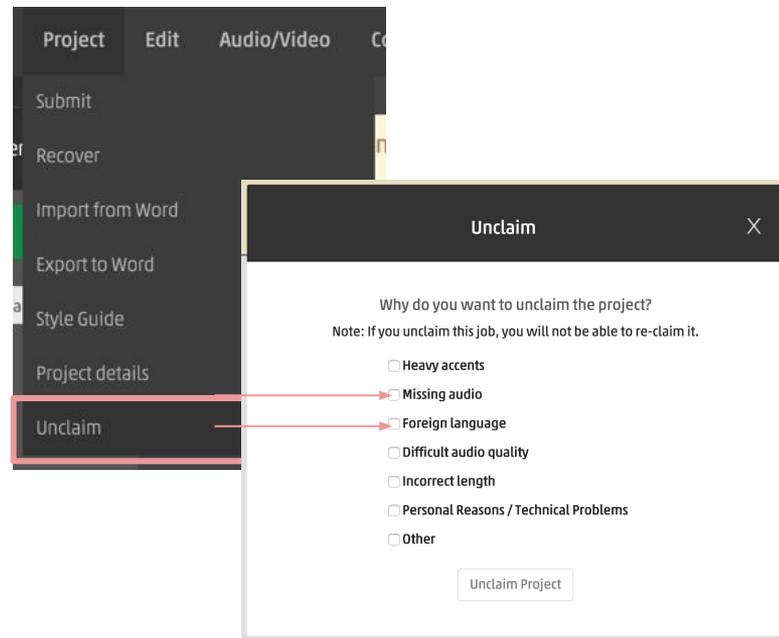
If you submit a project that has no English dialogue captured, the project will be graded as incomplete and given a score of 1/1.