

TURN YOUR DOCUMENT INTO USEFUL AUDIO

Make one NotebookLM Audio Overview that keeps your document's meaning intact.

A document can become a spoken discussion without you touching a microphone. The trick is making something useful, not just something that sounds convincing. You'll turn one familiar document into an Audio Overview, check it against the original, and see whether a listener takes away the right idea.

You'll need: A Google account with NotebookLM access; features and usage limits vary by account; One familiar chapter or short report you're authorized to upload, plus the original with page or section references; Headphones and somewhere to keep a few notes; For the listener test, one authorized person who hasn't read the source.

1. Choose what the listener should learn

Pick one useful question. You're making a focused explanation, not an audiobook of everything you know.

1. Name your intended listener and write the question they should be able to answer after listening.
2. Find the original passage that answers it. In one short note, record the document version, page or section, a sound answer, and one wrong conclusion to avoid. Include any distinction that matters, such as forecast versus confirmed orders.
3. Confirm permission to upload the document and check the linked account and data-handling guidance. If permission is unclear, choose a non-sensitive document you own.

These notes are your reference for both the audio instructions and the final check. You won't need another worksheet.

2. Check what NotebookLM received

1. Open notebooklm.google.com, create a notebook, and add only your chosen document. Use the linked source instructions if you need help.
2. Open the imported source and find your key passage. Make sure its wording is readable and complete, including any nearby qualification or table heading.
3. If the original passage already clearly answers your question, skip the chat prompt. If you need help locating or untangling the support, select your source and use the optional prompt below.

4. If you use chat, open its citations and compare the surrounding passages with the original. Correct your Step 1 note only if needed; narrow the question if the document doesn't support an answer.

Use only the selected source. Help [listener] answer: [question]. Identify up to three central claims with supporting citations. Explain the key limitation or distinction a beginner could miss. Separate explicit source statements from your interpretation, and flag missing evidence.

You should now have a readable source and a question it can actually answer. Citations are places to look, not little certificates of truth.

3. Give the audio its job

1. Find Audio Overview in the notebook's Studio area. The linked audio help covers current options; formats and customization controls may differ by account.
2. Where customization instructions are available, fill in the prompt below directly from your Step 1 notes. Don't write a separate set of boundaries.
3. Generate the overview. If customization isn't available, generate without it and use the same notes to check the result.

Help [listener] answer [question] without having read the document. Preserve [must-preserve distinction]. Do not imply [wrong conclusion]. Use source examples only when helpful. Keep forecasts and assumptions separate from established facts. Say when the source leaves something unanswered. Keep the tone practical, not promotional.

The result should be playable audio based on your source. Don't assume notebook chat instructions automatically carry over to audio generation.

4. Listen for meaning, not polish

1. Listen to the entire recording with your original passage and Step 1 notes handy. Compare its answer and important claims with the source, especially names, numbers, dates, and qualifications.
2. Record only discrepancies that need fixing. Add a playback time when it helps you find the problem again; there's no need to catalogue everything the audio gets right.
3. If the audio changes the meaning or adds unsupported claims, revise the customization instructions or narrow the source. Generate a replacement and listen to that version in full before sharing.

Watch for "could" becoming "will." Check claims against the original: the generated conversation isn't new evidence, and faithfully repeating a document doesn't establish that it's true.

5. Try it with a listener

1. Before sharing, confirm publishing rights, audience permissions, and any required disclosure or approval. Upload permission isn't publishing permission.
2. If sharing is allowed, have your listener hear the audio without reading the source. Ask your Step 1 question and compare their answer with that same note.
3. If they reach the wrong conclusion, revise before wider sharing. When sharing the checked version, include a brief companion note with the takeaway, its limitation, and the original page or section.

Without an authorized listener, keep it as a private, source-checked draft rather than calling it beginner-tested.

You're done when...

You're done when the full recording matches the source and your listener's answer preserves the important distinction. Keep the original available for decisions; the audio is an explanation, not a replacement for evidence.

Official setup & help

[Google: Add or discover sources in NotebookLM](#)

[Google: Generate an Audio Overview](#)

[Google: Learn about NotebookLM, access, and data handling](#)