

Sharing audiobooks as a family

Audiobooks can be the key to unlocking your child's love of reading, with exciting voices and sound effects bringing stories to life. One of the best things about audiobooks is that you can listen to them almost anytime and anywhere as a family – whether you're in the car or the kitchen, during bath time or bedtime. In the days of tablets, smartphones and smart speakers, listening to digital stories is easier than ever before.

The benefits of sharing audiobooks at home

Audiobooks can give children access to a wider range of stories than they can read for themselves. This can help them learn new words or how to pronounce unfamiliar words.

Many audiobooks are read by well-known actors and celebrities, which can be really exciting for kids!

Audiobooks can be particularly good for less keen or confident readers, giving them the chance to get more absorbed in a story than they might when struggling to read a text.

Audiobooks can be a great way to share stories together as a family, particularly for parents who are less confident reading aloud to their kids.

Research shows that listening to audiobooks can boost children's reading skills, reading enjoyment, mental wellbeing and emotional intelligence.

Discover the world of audiobooks

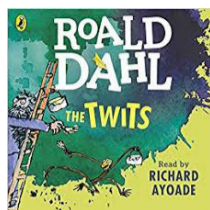
Head to your local library. They might have physical CDs you can borrow and may also offer access to audiobooks through apps such as **Libby** or **BorrowBox**. Similarly, your child's school may have a school library system that includes free access to audiobooks.

Sample or buy audiobooks. You can download audiobook apps and audiobooks on to a phone, tablet or computer from websites such as **Audible**, **Google Play** or **iTunes**. Some are free or have free sample chapters, while others are paid for. For example, you can find great **Ladybird stories** from £3.99 on the iTunes store, while older children might enjoy the **Roald Dahl audio app**, with the first chapter free to try.

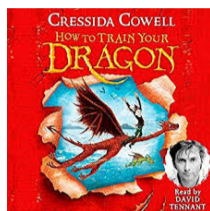
Smart stories. If you have a smart speaker or voice-controlled assistant (e.g. Alexa, Apple HomePod or Google Home) why not ask it for a story? Ask Alexa for **CBeebies** stories or **The Magic Door** to take you to an audio adventure game. Google Home offers free audio stories via the StoryCastle app from HarperCollins.



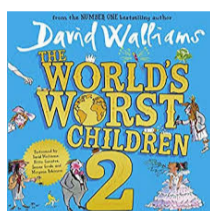
Great audiobooks to try at home



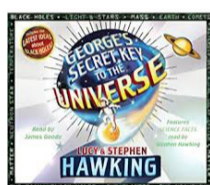
The Twits by Roald Dahl, narrated by Richard Ayoade (Penguin Random House)



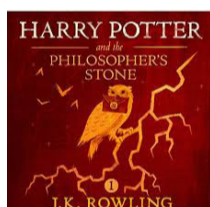
How to Train Your Dragon by Cressida Cowell, narrated by David Tennant (Hachette Children's Books)



The World's Worst Children 2 by David Walliams, narrated by David Walliams, Morgana Robinson, Nitin Ganatra and James Goode (HarperCollins)



George's Secret Key to the Universe by Lucy and Stephen Hawking, narrated by James Goode (Penguin Random House)



Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone by J.K. Rowling, narrated by Stephen Fry (Pottermore Publishing)



Create your own family audiobook!



Once you've listened to a few audiobooks together, why not try recording your own as a family? It's easy – most phones and tablets include a basic sound recording feature to get you started.

Write your own story together as a family or read one of your favourite books aloud. If you're feeling brave, you can try some silly voices and sound effects too!



As well as enjoying listening back to the recordings yourselves, you could send the audio files to family members (such as grandparents or relations living far away) who will love to hear the children's voices, and how well they can read!



Visit www.wordsforlife.org.uk for more activities, ideas and inspiration for how you can bring stories to life at home.