Before you press record, *ask and agree.*

For recording a parent's or grandparent's stories with care: a checklist, a family agreement to fill in together, and a log for each session.

Before the first recording

Recording someone's life story is an act of trust. Have a short, plain conversation first.

- [ ] **Say why you want to record.**
  "I want to keep your stories in your voice, for me and for the kids."
- [ ] **Agree on who will hear it.**
  Just you, your siblings, the grandchildren, or the wider family.
- [ ] **Agree on where the files will live.**
  A shared family folder, a private archive, your own phone.
- [ ] **Explain what they can change.**
  They can skip any question, take a break or stop at any time, and ask you later to delete something or keep it within the family.
- [ ] **Talk about the other people in the stories.**
  Stories often involve people who are still living. Some may be better kept within the immediate family.

At the start of every recording

- [ ] **Say the date, both names and the place.**
  The file then describes itself, even if its label is lost.
- [ ] **Ask "Is it all right if I record this?" and wait for a spoken yes.**
- [ ] **Ask again on every phone or video call.**
  Rules on recording calls differ by country and by state, and some places require everyone on the call to agree. The simplest habit is to ask out loud and record the answer.

After the recording

- [ ] **Write any wishes down next to the file.**
  A passage to keep private, or to hold back until a later date, travels with the recording.
- [ ] **Offer them their own copy.**
  It is their story first.
- [ ] **Keep the original untouched, and store a second copy somewhere else.**
- [ ] **Ask again before sharing beyond the family.**
  For an archive, a museum or a public website, a short signed release makes their permission clear.

Our family recording agreement

Fill this in together before the first session, and keep it with the recordings.

Telling the stories

Recording

Date

Sessions planned how many, how often

What we will talk about

Who may listen

- [ ] Only the person recording
- [ ] Immediate family
- [ ] The wider family
- [ ] Someone else, named below

Where the recordings will be kept

Anything to keep private, or to hold back until a later date

Their own copy given on

Reviewed together on

Name and initials of the person telling the stories

Name and initials of the person recording

A family agreement, not a legal release

This sheet records what your family agreed. It is not a legal release and not legal advice. If a recording may go to an archive, a museum or a public website, use a signed release, on that organization's own form if it has one.

Session log

One row per session, filled in the same day while names and details are fresh. Ask how to spell unusual names before you leave.

Date and place	People present	Themes covered	Names and places mentioned, with rough times	File name

Name each file so it sorts by date: the year, month and day, then who and what. Keep the original untouched as the master.

Made by Henedo, a private family memory and digital legacy service. More guides at henedo.com/blog/.