**How to Estimate a Video Script Length for Audio Voiceover  
  
Are you working on a project that will include audio voiceover?**  
Here’s how to estimate how long the voiceover will be, based on the number of words in your script:  
Choose a text you’ve written that’s similar in nature to what you’ll be recording  
Set a time for one minute  
Read the text aloud, at a comfortable pace, until the timer goes off  
Select the last word you read all the way back up to the first word  
Determine the word count for the selection (using the word count available in most word processors)  
Now you know your average WPM = words per minute.  
If your project has time limits, you can use your WPM to estimate target script length:  
WPM x minimum minutes = minimum word count for your script  
WPM x maximum minutes = maximum word count for your script  
For example:  
– project has a maximum of 5 minutes  
– you speak at 120 wpm  
– your script should be under 600 words

**Average Words Per Page**To estimate page count, figure out how many words per page you tend to write, using your draft or another document similar to the one you’ll be recording.As a general example, a document with:  
single-spaced lines  
1″ margins  
Cambria 12pt font  
Typically has between 500-700 words per page, depending on paragraph length and use of dialogue.  
**Averages Speaking Rates**Here are some averages speaking rates by professionals, to help you put your WPM into context:Lectures and presentations: 100-120 wpm  
Audio books: 150-160 wpm  
Talk radio and podcasts: 160 wpm  
Auctioneers (almost too fast to hear): 250 wpm

Given that your audio voiceover is likely to accompany visuals the viewer also has to pay attention; your WPM should probably be in the range of lectures and presentations or lower.

**Average Conversation & Reading Rates**

More average rates to put your WPM into context:

Casual, in-person conversation: 120-180 wpm  
Reading speed for non-specialized material: 250-350 wpm

**How long does it take to read 800 words out loud?  
Reading Time by Word Counts**  
Word Count Slow (125 wpm) Average (300 wpm)

600 words 5 minutes 2.0 minutes

750 words 6 minutes 2.5 minutes

800 words 6 minutes 2.7 minutes