

— THE 500-CHARACTER PITCH KIT

Pitch podcasts the way hosts wish you would.

I host a podcast. I get 3-7 cold pitches a day and delete almost all of them in seconds. This kit is the mechanical minimum of the ones I reply to: the framework, the deletion patterns, the rules, and five fill-in skeletons.

— THE FRAMEWORK: FOUR JOBS, 500 CHARACTERS TOTAL

1. Hook

~100 chars

Prove you know THIS show: an episode, a claim the host made, a gap in the catalog. If your first sentence fits any other show, it is wallpaper, not a hook.

2. Credibility

~120 chars

One claim, checkable in ten seconds of googling. Numbers beat adjectives, and one unflattering number makes the flattering ones believable.

3. Angle

~180 chars

The actual episode: a position plus a promise for the listener. The test: could the host almost write the episode title from your angle alone?

4. Ask

~100 chars

One small question answerable with one word. "Worth a one-page outline?" wins. "Let me know your availability" assigns homework.

a full worked example (fictional; never copy sentences, copy structure)

343 / 500

Your tax-season episode said freelancers overpay; you didn't say by how much. I do the books for 60 freelancers. Last year they overpaid an average of \$3,400 each. I'd walk your listeners through the 4 deductions almost every freelancer skips, using real anonymized returns, and the one "deduction" that triggers audits. Worth a one-page outline?

Notice what is missing: no greeting, no "my name is," no bio, no links, no attachment. Room to spare reads as confidence.

The 7 deletion patterns

Every pitch I have ever deleted died of one of these. Find yours before a host does.

1 The Anywhere Pitch

Nothing in it requires this show to exist. Sent to 200 hosts, and all 200 can smell the 200.

2 The Mirror

The email is about the sender: journey, mission, passion. The only thing the host is buying, an episode, is missing.

3 The Resume

Credentials instead of an angle. "Impressive person exists" is not an episode. One checkable credential attached to one angle beats twelve attached to nothing.

4 The Fog

An angle is in there somewhere, but it needs a second read, and there is no second read. Three topic options equals zero topics.

5 The Overstep

False intimacy and presumption: first name three times, a calendar link on first contact, "bumping this" on a thread that never existed.

6 The Costume

AI or template text in a personal costume: parallel sentences, adjectives in threes, compliments with no object. Plain, specific writing is now proof a human wrote it.

7 The Wrong Room

A competent pitch for the wrong show. Five minutes with the episode list prevents it. No genuine gap for you? That show comes off the list today.

What all seven share

Each one makes the host do the work: of finding the relevance, extracting the angle, imagining the episode. Pitches that get replies arrive with the work already done.

Subject lines, research, follow-ups

Subject lines

under ~50 characters

- **Name the episode, not the request.** "The renewal-email episode you almost did" beats "Podcast guest request" every day of the week.
- **Never:** "Amazing opportunity," "Great guest for your show," fake "Re:" threads, or your own name as the subject.

The 5-minute research method

per show, timed

- **Minutes 1-2:** scan the last 20-30 episode titles. What does the show keep returning to, and what is adjacent but absent? The absence is your territory.
- **Minutes 3-4:** skim ONE episode near your territory for a dodged question, a claim to extend, or a "we should do a whole episode on that."
- **Minute 5:** read how the host describes their own show. Frame your angle for the listener they think they have. Then stop; minute 30 reads as strange, not diligent.

Follow-ups

two, maximum, ever

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|----------------|---|
| Day 5-7 | Reply on your own thread. One or two lines, and one must be NEW: a sharper framing, a fresh result, one link that proves the angle. A contentless "bump" is a nag with manners. |
| Day 14 | Close the loop: "Last note from me on this. If the timing's wrong or the angle's not for the show, no reply needed and no hard feelings." Then go genuinely quiet; the quiet is what makes it credible. |
| Forever | Nothing. Hosts remember the names that would not stop, and hosts talk to each other. |

Before any pitch goes out

the 10-second screen

- Send from **your own address**, not pr@ or bookings@, even if a team drafted it.
- Your one credibility claim must survive **ten seconds of googling**, because it will get exactly that.
- **Zero attachments, one link maximum**, and only if it does work the pitch cannot.

One per show category. Fill the slots, count the characters.

These are skeletons, not scripts: every slot gets YOUR words, fresh, per show. Run the finished draft through the free Pitch Scorer at pitchlite.com/checker.html before sending.

Business shows

mechanisms + numbers

You cover **recurring theme** a lot; nobody's covered **the adjacent gap**. I've **done the thing** **N** times; **result figure + one miss**. I'd break down **mechanism with a number** and where it fails. Want the one-page version?

Health & wellness shows

bounded protocols; state your limits

Your **episode** mentioned **topic** in passing; it's my whole caseload. I'm a **role** for **N people**. Not a **doctor/clinician**, and I'd say so on air. I'd share **narrow protocol**, what the research supports, and what it can't fix. Sources in advance if useful?

Tech shows

explanations with stakes

Your last **N** episodes circled **topic** without going inside it. I run **system at scale** and have been paged for every way it breaks. I'd explain **the misconception**, with **real incident**, and the fix nobody ships because it's boring. Worth a look?

Personal development shows

framework first, story as proof

Listener problem comes up in almost every episode you read questions on. I've coached **N people** through it; about **honest fraction** relapse, and they taught me the model. I'd share **the named, countable framework** and who it fails. Want the worksheet first?

Creator & marketing shows

counter-positioning with receipts

Your last **N** guests all recommended **the tactic**; my data says most **audience** should skip it. I've run **sample size**. **The counter-finding, with a figure**. I'd show when it works, when it backfires, and the boring alternative. Charts ready. Want them?

This kit is the skeleton. The playbook is the muscle.

PitchLite: the full 500-character framework, 20 real pitches from my inbox annotated line by line, 15 category frameworks, the follow-up system and tracking sheet. Written by the host, not a pitch writer.

pitchlite.com

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