

Filler and Crutch Words

Filler and crutch words are words used by someone when they are thinking about what they are going to say, such as *um*, *uh*, *like*, and *you know*. At TranscribeMe, we always **remove filler words** such as *uh*, *um*, *mm-hmm*, etc. (unless it is the only response to a direct question). However, **the only crutch words** we remove are *like* and *you know* when they add no meaning to what is said. The difference between a crutch word or meaningful utterance lies in its function in the sentence.

Like

I like to play baseball. (*Verb, keep*)

It happened like five years ago. (*An approximation - can replace with "about" - keep*)

Like I really don't know how you do that. (*Crutch word, remove*)

She doesn't, **like**, go there that often. (*Crutch word, remove*)

You Know

Do you know the way to Santa Fe? (*Subject and verb, keep*)

She really doesn't, **you know**, love him. (*Crutch word, remove*)

Trick question:

I don't like the way she treats him. You know?

Yeah, definitely.

Ah! Asking for agreement. If the person is truly seeking agreement/understanding and the other speaker makes a meaningful response (i.e., not merely feedback), leave it in. This would be equivalent to saying, "Right?"

Other Crutch Phrases

Note that we DO NOT remove any crutch words/phrases other than *like* and *you know*. This means that, no matter how frequently the speaker uses them, we include utterances such as *sort of*, *kind of*, *I mean*, *I guess*, etc. Barring exceptional circumstances, DO NOT offset kind of or sort of with commas.

Said: I was, **like, you know**, kind of wanting to sort of, **you know**, understand, **like**, how to, **you know**, kind of use crutch words, I mean, in transcribing, **like**, because I want to, **like**, do a good job, right? I like transcribing, yeah, **you know**, and want to, **like**, get on, **you know**, kind of a special team. You know what I mean?

Type: I was kind of wanting to sort of understand how to kind of use crutch words, I mean, in transcribing because I want to do a good job, right? I like transcribing, yeah, and want to get on kind of a special team. You know what I mean?

Special Note for QAs and Future QAs

Timestamps are timed at the **first verbal utterance**. If there are false starts or filler words at the beginning of a speaker's line, the timestamp will still be inserted at their first utterance, even if those false starts or filler words are not included in the written transcript.