

Step-by-Step Guide: A Mobile Filming How-To

This guide outlines best practices for filming content intended for public delivery.

Steps for Video Production/Filming

1. PREPARATION
2. SET-UP
3. FILMING
4. FINISHING

1. PREPARATION

- Equipment
- Location
- Script/Plan/Notes
- Assistance (*as needed*)

PREP: Equipment

- Camera
 - Smart phone (Android or iPhone)
 - DSLR/Digital HD Camera
- Other Optional Equipment
 - External Mic/Audio
 - Tripod

PREP: Camera

- Charge your batteries fully!
- Check there is space in your device for video files.
- Film in 1080p (located in phone settings → camera)
 - Phones tend to film in 30 or 60 fps (frames per second) – selecting 30 fps is fine; this will also use less storage space.
 - If using a DSLR camera, 30 fps is preferred for consistency with all videos, but other camera frame rates will be accepted. Please include notes with footage.
- Put smartphone in AIRPORT mode and turn off Wifi (so no one calls you when filming).

PREP: Location

- Quiet (listen for traffic, buzzy lights/electric, barking dogs, talking people, etc.)
- Good lighting (balanced, not too much from one side/above/behind, able to see person).
- Privacy (film where you will not be disturbed and can focus for several hours).

PREP: Script/Plan/Notes

- The script and/or lesson plan or core outline of video content is fully complete.
- Steps and notes are detailed (*including what you are doing in each shot*).
- All activity supplies on hand (*ready to go!*).

PREP: Assistance (As Needed)

- Location Set-Up
 - Organize the space and where you will be sitting during filming—it is helpful to have support with moving things around and setting up your on-camera look.
- Filming and Camera support
 - If can be helpful to have someone else press record so you can focus on the activities you are doing on-screen.
- Supporting Privacy & Quiet
 - If you are filming solo but in a space with others, make sure to get others support in giving you the time and space you need to film without interruption

2. SET-UP

- Position Yourself
- Location Tech
- Equipment Set-Up

SET-UP: Position Yourself

- Standing or sitting / how far are you from the camera?
- Background Look
 - Be intentional about design and aesthetic (think creatively about what your background might include; a plant or framed picture, a tapestry, colored wall, or bookshelf. Including these elements can really add to the visual engagement and attention of your viewer as opposed to filming against a flat white wall background or something without texture).
- **Note on clothing**—wearing red or stripes is generally not great for camera (interacts strangely with digital formats and color/textural reading of images).

SET-UP: Location Tech

- Lighting
 - Check that you are not backlit or underlit. You may need to move and rearrange your position.
 - Avoid shadows on faces and objects. Sometimes what may seem like ‘good lighting’ may be too strong or dominant from one side and casts too many shadows. It is best to have more balanced and neutral lighting.
 - **Note:** Natural lighting will change and artificial lighting may be more reliable.
- Sound
 - Listen for:
 - electronic buzzing (light fixtures/appliances)
 - traffic (from open windows)
 - talking or barking sounds, etc.
 - Things you can do are
 - Unplug anything that is making noise
 - close doors/windows to dampen external sounds
 - listen for echo based in the room you film in (change rooms if needed)
 - You want the sound to be clear and easy to hear
- **Location Tip:** Post a “Filming in Progress, Quiet Please/Do not Disturb” sign on the door or area where you are filming. This is good notice for other people, and also helps you formalize your work process.

SET-UP: Equipment

- Position Camera
 - Smartphones are REQUIRED to film in Landscape (horizontal, not vertical).
 - Stabilize with a Tripod or get creative with books, etc. (no handheld camera).
 - Make sure your camera image is in focus and centered (on person/object).
- Test Filming
 - Do a short practice run in your normal speaking voice and play back (listen with headphones so you can hear the audio well.)
 - Listen for buzzing or other noises and check that the lighting and color is good.
 - Adjust as needed if you find any problems with the test footage.

3. FILMING

- Breath/Ground
- Do Several Takes
- Film Close Ups of Activity/Demo

FILMING: Breath / Ground

- Get settled: pause and take a breath and relax before you begin
- Always pause a beat before you start talking after the camera has started recording. Pause a moment after you stop talking, and before you stop recording the video as well. Having that breathing room is important for the editing process.

FILMING: Film Several Takes

- Film your full script/lesson plan several times.
- Save each version for review after filming.
- It is important to do several takes, because the first time is usually a warm up and you get more comfortable in your delivery after a few tries. But, you may start to lose concentration and the first time might be the best, so you want to keep all of the versions (do not delete as you go).
- Watch them later after a pause so you can see them with fresh eyes.

FILMING: Film Close-Ups of Activity/Demo

- Footage of you sitting in front of the camera verbally explaining and maybe demonstrating something is great, but it is always helpful to have another shot from a different angle that is preferably a close up (or farther away, based on the activity), to get a stronger understanding of the content. Diversity in shots is always helpful for visual engagement as well.

4. FINISHING

- Final Review of Footage
- Re-Film Anything Needed
- Don't move your set up in case you need to refilm anything
- Finish and Upload Footage

FINISHING: Final Review of Footage

- Review the multiple takes of the activity/demo that you filmed and make sure you have strong footage that fully demonstrates your plan from start to finish. It's ok if it's broken up into several clips instead of one clip that is the perfect delivery. If this is the case, keep detailed notes with which sections should be used (start and end times, etc.) and in what order.

FINISHING: Re-Film Anything Needed

- When reviewing your footage, if you realize you forgot a main element, or notice a technical issue, refilm what is needed.
- **Note:** If you are re-filming something in a section that you have re-arranged in order to film close-ups, or anything in a specific section has changed based on activity/demo, you should refilm the missing section from start to finish instead of just a small sound bite. When editing together different sections, you always want the background and camera position to be the same for consistency and for a professional look. Once you refilm, watch this footage again to make sure you have fixed any problems you were having.

FINISHING: Finish and Upload

- *IF WORKING WITH A PRODUCTION COMPANY:* Take all finished footage/files upload them online for delivery with any relevant notes for post-production editing.
- *IF YOU ARE EDITING YOUR OWN CONTENT:* Add all finished footage/files to your preferred video editing software on desktop/laptop, edit footage together using your notes, adjust as needed, review-review-review, finalize edits and save your final video locally. If publishing online, upload final video to selected platform (YouTube, Vimeo, Instagram, Facebook, etc).