

# FILMING TIPS AND GUIDELINES FOR MOBILE PHONE RECORDING

You can record professional-quality video using your phone. We can help you do that.  
There are two videos to accompany this guide:

How to film with a Phone  
<https://youtu.be/dLp9KqTWTbU>

Lights for Home Filming  
[https://youtu.be/srolkAm\\_Ey4](https://youtu.be/srolkAm_Ey4)



# 1. PREPRODUCTION

Set the video quality of your phone to the highest possible setting.

For iPhone, go to Settings> Camera> Record Video> choose 4k at 30fps (1080p HD at 30 fps if a high upload speed is not possible) and also enable 'Lock Camera'

Go to Settings> Camera> Formats> and choose 'High Efficiency'.

On Android phones, these settings are usually inside the main camera app, either tucked behind the settings gear wheel, or accessible via a toggle button. Choose UHD 30fps quality (or FHD / 1920x1080 30fps if a high upload speed is not possible).

If you have an option for optical image stabilisation, please enable it.

Make sure you have enough free space on your phone - at least 3-4 GB available:

- On iPhone, go to Settings/General/iPhone Storage.
- On Android, open the Settings App, go to Device Maintenance and tap 'Storage'

# 2. HOLDING THE PHONE FOR FILMING

There are, of course, a number of ways to do this.

**If you have someone that can hold the phone/ operate the camera:**

- Tuck your elbows into your side as you hold your phone out in front of you. Use both hands.
- Remember that the camera on your phone is typically not right in the centre, so be careful about inadvertently covering the lens.
- You should also cup your other hand so that the microphone at the base of the phone has the best chance of picking up your voice (More on sound on section 5)
- You can also use a selfie stick, if you have one, for stability.

**If you are filming solo:**

- It is essential to find a way to rig your phone so that it remains in place during filming.
- If you don't have someone to hold the phone for you, there are ways you can make your own home-made support.
- There are many simple 'hacks' to making this work, from leaning the phone against household items like books to wedging it against cushions, depending on your framing choice.

## 3. FRAMING AND LIGHT

Framing, or composition, is subjective depending on how you wish your performance to be portrayed. There are factors that are not subjective and must be considered.

### **Light:**

Light not only defines your subjects but also sets the mood or evokes emotion. Experiment with light and be aware of where your main light source is. For instance, noon sunlight on a cloudless day creates unflattering shadows on your subject's face, while an overcast or cloudy day produces a softer, more pleasant-looking light.

The most important factor with light is to avoid having a window or light source behind your subject as you will look "silhouetted". Try to make sure the light source is either facing you directly or slightly to the side of centre (depending on how you wish the composition to look)

### **Simple things to consider about framing:**

- Direct address to camera can be powerful, but does it tell your story best?
- Consider addressing an imaginary point a few inches away from the edge of the phone.
- Think about your background and what you may (or may not) want the world to see of your home.
- Remember, just because you need to stay at home, it doesn't mean you can't be imaginative with your location.

## 4. COSTUME

- Keep clothing simple, do not wear any bold logos or loud graphic T-shirts.
- It is best to avoid black garments or anything that is bright white.
- Try to avoid shirts with small stripes.
- Please don't wear anything the same colour as the background colour.

# 5. SOUND

Good quality audio is essential for powerful video. The good news is that the microphones on smartphones have improved in recent years.

However, the closer you are to the phone, the clearer the sound is.

As described above, when holding the phone you should also cup your other hand so that the microphone at the base of the phone has the best chance of picking up your voice.

As a phone only has a small microphone at the bottom, it means that the further you are away, the quieter you will sound.

## Simple things to consider about sound:

- Try to reduce as much background noise as possible. The biggest culprits for background noise:  
Washing machines, open windows and doors, TV and radio (even from the room next to you), other people, pets.
- Most of us live in built-up areas, so it's difficult to avoid vehicle noise, and the sounds of other people speaking and interacting. Plan the timing of your video for when the least noise is expected.
- Filming in a closed room is also a solution but try and make sure there is no echo.
- If you have other people in your home, ask them to be quiet and patient while you record.

- If you have a microphone, or a way to record the audio separately to the video to a better quality than a phone could, we would recommend that you do this:
- If you have a second phone, you can use its voice recording app to record your voice. You can hide it out of shot or put it in a pocket - if you have a pocket.
- If there is more than one actor, hide the phone between you.
- Don't forget to press record before you start recording the video.
- Please make sure you verbally name each 'take' to camera so we can sync easily.
- We have some technology to make your recording sound a little better, but please make it as easy as possible by preparing for your recording as best you can.



# FILMING TIPS FOR WHEN YOU'RE READY TO BEGIN

**1.** Clean the lens on the back of your phone.

**2.** Make sure your battery is fully charged.

**3.** Ensure your phone has at least 3 or 4GB of available storage.

**4.** Put your phone in airplane/flight mode to stop any interruptions.

**5.** Check your framing. Zoom with your feet, not the camera.

**6.** You need to tap (and hold) on the screen to tell the phone where to focus on your subject. (AF/AE LOCK will appear on screen) - Check the image is good for you, or repeat step 6.

**7.** Press record, and also on your other device if you are recording sound separately.

**8.** State the title and take number and wait a further few seconds before beginning – This will give you time to recompose and be ready to perform.

**9.** When you've finished performing, hold yourself in place for a few seconds before relaxing – this will give us space to add a fade out or a transition.

**10.** Then, and only then, should you stop recording.

**11.** Don't worry if it doesn't go how you want first time around. As long as you have enough available storage, you can record as many times as you need. You can also save any out-takes for sharing with us once your piece has been 'broadcast'.