

A Quick Video Creation Guide



Center for Instructional & Learning Technologies

Videos are an effective way of conveying ideas and messages in a visual format for an online audience. Recent innovations in smartphone technologies and video editing software have made video creation accessible to millions of people around the world. In this guide we will discuss various strategies of video creation from shooting footage, editing footage, and exporting your final video project to social media sites such as YouTube and Vimeo.

Cameras

Choosing the right camera primarily depends on what you have at your disposal. There are many affordable high definition camcorders on the market, many of which can be purchased for under the \$100 price point. Camcorders 16:9 widescreen aspect ratio and typically allow you to choose between a high definition and standard definition recording modes. Recording in high definition allows for more visual clarity, while shooting in standard definition allows for extended recordings in a lower resolution.



In this day and age, it is fairly common for people to carry around a video recording device in the form of a smartphone. Most smartphones have two shooting modes; **landscape** and **portrait**. Activating each mode is usually done automatically by sensors in your smartphone. If your smartphone senses that your phone is being held vertically it will shoot video in **portrait mode**. If it senses you're holding the horizontally it will switch to **landscape mode**. It is highly recommended to always shoot your videos in **landscape mode**, as it uses a 16:9 aspect ratio that will encompass more of the screen on a video player.



Example of Landscape



Example of Portrait

One of the biggest problems people have when shooting video is keeping the camera steady. For this reason alone, it is highly recommended that you employ the use of a tripod. A tripod is a camera stand that allows the camera to be placed in a stable, stationary position while video footage is being recorded. The vast majority of consumer camcorders use a universal tripod

mount, this mount is a screw thread and is located underneath the camera. There are two types of tripods; **floor standing** and **table top**.



Floor Standing Tripod Table Top Tripod

Tripods are also available for the majority of smartphone devices. If you're using a smartphone to shoot your video make sure that the tripod you purchase is compatible with your device as the mounting brackets will vary in size depending on the make and model of your smartphone.



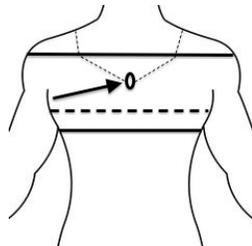
Examples of Tripods Designed for Smartphone Devices

Using an External Microphone

Good, clear audio is just as important if not more so than the image quality of your video. The majority of cameras and smartphone devices use an internal microphone to capture sound when shooting video. Typically, these internal microphones are of poor quality and have trouble picking up sound that is coming from a distance greater than 10 feet away. For this reason, it is highly recommended that you not rely on your camera's built in microphone and opt to use an external lapel mic whenever possible. A lapel mic is a small microphone that clips onto your shirt and plugs into your camera's external microphone input. For best results, try placing the lapel mic slightly above the center of your chest bone.



Lapel Mic and optimal placement



Framing Up Your Shots

Properly framing up your shot is important in terms of creating visual context and focus for your video. In this section we will discuss a few commonly used framing techniques used in capturing interview style footage.

The **medium shot** is the most commonly used shot for shooting interview footage. This shot gives the audience the feeling that they are sitting alongside the subject in the video. This allows the viewer a close enough vantage point to see the subject, but far enough away to stay oriented in the surroundings, so that they know where the scene is taking place. A good medium shot in an interview setting usually frames the subject from the waist up to above two to three inches above the subject's head.



Example of Medium Shot

The **close-up shot** is used to tightly frame up a person or object. It is typically used as a device to capture facial body language and is commonly used in conjunction with the medium shot. Close-up shots frame the subject from the below of the chest or shoulders to the top of the subject's head. Be careful not to over use close-up shots as it can disorientate the audience in regards to the scene or context.



Example of Close-Up Shot

The last shot we will cover is the **long shot**. This shot is typically used as an establishing shot and will capture the subject's entire body from the floor to six inches or more above the head. Long shots are great for creating visual context for the audience, but is best used for the beginning and/or end of the video.



Example of Long Shot

Video Editing Software



In this section we will discuss the two most common types of non-linear video editing software for both PC and Mac. Most PC computers come bundled with **Microsoft Movie Maker**, while the majority of newer Mac computers come packaged with **iMovie**. Both video editing software offer a user-friendly interface for quick, video creation. It's easy to be overwhelmed when it comes to video editing. That's why it's important to keep it simple. Video editing consists of three tasks; importing media, editing media, and exporting media. Included in this guide are some links to instructional videos on how to use the latest versions of these two commonly used video editing software.

Windows Movie Maker

- <https://vimeo.com/178081986>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iTl7ueJ1ZQ0>

iMovie

- <https://vimeo.com/178082740>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UviYzKGFm4g>

Exporting Videos



The last topic we will cover in this guide is how to export your finished video to an **MP4** or **QuickTime** (.MOV) file as well as social media sites such as YouTube. Both Microsoft Movie Maker and iMovie have the ability to export your finished video to your computer's hard drive in the form of a MP4 file (PC) or a QuickTime file (Mac). These two types of video formats are the most commonly used due to their compatibility between PC and Mac formats as well as various internet browsers and video players.

Microsoft Movie Maker and iMovie give the user the ability to export finished projects directly to social media sites such as YouTube (see the posted instructional videos for each software to learn how). It is also possible to upload a video file directly from your computer's hard drive to YouTube via the internet. Follow the link to watch a short instructional video explaining how this process is done.

Uploading to YouTube

- <https://vimeo.com/178053693>