



VIDEO SELF-RECORDING TIPS

When using a smartphone or tablet

Shoot with your camera **horizontal** so that your screen looks like a widescreen TV. Try to hold it steady. The closer you are to the phone, the less shaky the video will appear, and your audio will be better too.

If you plan to use a laptop or desktop

Most laptops and desktops have a video camera included in the operating system. Windows 10 has a Camera app, and Macs have Photo Booth. These tend to be user friendly, so don't be intimidated. Do a couple of practice takes, and you'll get comfortable with the program.

Note: The wonderful thing about using your laptop or desktop is the ability to read your notes or script directly from the screen of your device, so they're right in front of you. Just be cautious about maintaining eye contact with the camera for your message, and use only quick glances at the screen when referencing.

You'll need a good background

Shoot outside facing the sun so that the light brightens up your shot and isn't behind you. If you shoot inside, use a room that's well-lit with lots of natural sunlight or lighting. Make sure the background isn't cluttered.

Avoid noise

Choose a quiet room and shut down all programs and devices that make sounds. Don't forget about pets or children that could cause an interruption. Speak directly into the microphone if possible and stand as close to it as possible to get the best audio. Note: You can buy inexpensive lavalier microphones (\$10) that pin to your shirt and plug into your phone or tablet.

Frame up the shot

Put your computer's video camera at eye level. You may need to raise your laptop by placing it on a stack of books. Looking down at the camera will make your chin and neck look disproportionate to your face. Frame yourself in the middle of the screen so that there is not too much space above your head (headroom). **Make sure you are looking directly at the camera**, not at some other part of the computer screen. Don't forget to smile!

Dress for the camera

The best clothing option for on-camera is a solid-color long-sleeve shirt, sweater or jacket. Choose a primary color instead of patterns or prints. Jewel tones and pastels are better than white for the camera. Don't wear jewelry that moves and makes noise.

Give Yourself a Few Seconds Before and After Speaking

Once you hit record, take breath, focus and then begin speaking. There is no rush to begin speaking the minute you start recording. When you are finished speaking, hold your gaze at the camera for at least 5 seconds, then turn off your recording. Both of these techniques will also give the person editing your video room to cut out your self-recording moves and create a clean edit of your finished product.