

# 7 Tips for Creating Videos

## 1 Strategy

### What's your purpose?

Who is your audience? Have a clear goal of what you want to achieve for the video. Videos being shared to public audiences should be verified by the Office of Public Information and Publications.

## 2 Light

### Is this my best angle?

What does the space look like? Can you see everything or is it dark and shaded? What is behind the person who is talking? Is the room messy? Is there an ugly trash can right behind them? Is there a tree seemingly growing out of their head?

## 3 Sound

### Silence is golden.

How noisy is the immediate area? Can you hear cars honking or sirens? Is there music coming from a nearby event? Is someone talking in the room where you're recording?

## 4 Equipment

### It's all in your pocket.

Adjust your phone settings, set on airplane mode and use a microphone if possible.

## 5 Stabilize

### Don't rock the boat.

Use a small tripod, hand-held stabilizer or prop your phone with books to keep the image steady. Film vertically for social media stories, horizontally for everything else.

## 6 Edit

### Lipstick on a pig

Small adjustments turn rough video into a more professional-looking product. iMovie, Premiere Pro and Premiere Rush are all options.

## 7 Publish

### It's showtime!

Make the video accessible with captions in VidGrid. Publicly displayed videos should go on UT's official YouTube channel and be verified by the Office of Public Information and Publications.

## GUIDELINES FOR POSTING VIDEOS

### Departments/Offices/Administrators:

- **Internally Shared Videos:** Videos for internal purposes only being sent to students, faculty or staff can be added to your VidGrid account, require captions and should pass accessibility standards.
- **Externally Shared Videos:** Videos that are made publicly available, linked on social media or shared to a broader audience will be hosted on a playlist on UT's main YouTube channel, which is managed by the Office of Public Information and Publications. Departments should **not** create their own YouTube channels.
  - Send [publicinfo@ut.edu](mailto:publicinfo@ut.edu) a link to download your video via a file-sharing service such as Dropbox. Public Information will then upload your video to YouTube, edit captions and send you a link to share with your audience.
  - Public Information has the right to decline your video if it does not meet minimum acceptable standards for UT's brand and image. You are not expected to produce professional-quality videos, but shaky or blurry footage, poor audio or other obvious faults could result in your content being declined. **Professional freelance videographers are available for hire. For additional information on freelancers, email [publicinfo@ut.edu](mailto:publicinfo@ut.edu).**

### Faculty/Instructors of Online Courses:

- You will host your videos on your VidGrid account, caption them and share a link to your content on your courses in Blackboard. If you feel it is necessary, you can create a personal YouTube channel to host your course videos, but it should not include UT-branded content.

## TIPS FOR CREATING SUCCESSFUL VIDEOS WITH YOUR PHONE

### Setting Up

1. Whenever possible, **film your video with a phone rather than a webcam**. Only use a webcam if it can shoot in HD.
2. When filming on your phone, put it in airplane mode to avoid interruptions.
3. Vertical videos should only be used for social media story formats, such as Facebook/Instagram stories that disappear after 24 hours. For all other uses, shoot your videos horizontally. (Put your phone on its side to film in landscape mode.)
4. If you have a tripod, use it! If not, place a stack of books on each side of the phone to hold it in place without covering the camera.
  - Put the camera at about eye level so you are not looking up or down as you record.
  - Here are some [DIY iPhone tripods](#) you can try making at home.
5. While the front camera ("selfie side") is useful for seeing yourself while you record, use the back camera when possible for better quality.
  - On an iPhone, you can film up to 4K (high quality) video on the back camera. **Click Settings → Camera → Record Video**. Recommended settings are either 1080p at 30 fps or 4K at 30fps.
  - 4K files are larger, so make sure you have space on your phone if you plan to film in 4K.

6. AE/AF Lock will help you stay in focus and keep the exposure steady.
  - In your camera app, before you start recording, press and hold the spot you want to focus on. You will see a box pop up around the subject, and the top of your screen will say “AE/AF Lock.” This feature keeps the camera’s focus locked on the area it is recording. Don’t move around while talking or you will go out of focus. To remove AE/AF Lock, press and hold the spot you were focusing on and the AE/AF Lock icon at the top of the screen will disappear.
7. Audio
  - Camera microphones aren’t great, but they get the job done. To automatically get better audio with an iPhone, **Click Settings → Voice Memos → Audio Quality**. Change it from “compressed” to “lossless.”
  - Test your audio! Figure out how loudly/softly to speak before you start recording.
8. Lighting
  - Use a light source so your audience can see you. This can be a desk lamp, floor lamp or light from a window.
  - Avoid backlighting, which is when the light source is behind you. Instead, try to put the light at a 45-degree angle to your face. You may also want to put it directly in front of you, as long as this doesn’t cause you to squint. Learn [more tips on lighting for your video](#).

## Filming

1. Look into the camera when filming yourself. You are talking directly to the viewers.
2. Avoid moving around too much. Do not use a swivel chair. If you are standing, do not sway back and forth. This could cause you to move out of your locked focus area, and it’s distracting to viewers.
3. Speak calmly and clearly, and keep a steady pace throughout the video.
4. Have a script or outline of what you plan to say in front of you, so you can reference it as needed.
5. Record your video in one take, unless you have the skills and software to edit it.

## Editing

1. If you have followed the instructions above, you should not need to edit your video. When you are done recording, simply save the video (likely as an mp4) and upload it.
2. If you decide to edit your video, Apple users should utilize iMovie on either your phone or your Mac. There are many iMovie tutorials available online.
3. Premiere Pro and Premiere Rush are professional-level editing platforms. If you are skilled with these programs, use them.
4. Videos must meet accessibility requirements by law. Public Information will ensure that any videos uploaded to UT’s YouTube channel have closed captioning. Internal videos should be captioned automatically with VidGrid, and then edited to ensure accuracy. Faculty members should have a written script prepared for students with auditory impairments if they cannot provide closed captioning. Faculty are advised to consult with the academic technology accessibility specialist in Information Technology and Security.

## Tips for Social Media

- Pick your format.** Vertical videos should be used for social media story formats, such as Facebook and Instagram stories that disappear after 24 hours. They fill the frame of the phone. Horizontal videos are best used on YouTube, Facebook feeds and Instagram feeds.

INSTAGRAM STORIES  
REELS AND IGTV  
(vertical)



INSTAGRAM FEED  
(horizontal)



FACEBOOK STORIES  
(vertical)



FACEBOOK FEED  
(horizontal)



- Pick your captioning app.** Captioning your videos is required, gives people an option to follow the story without turning on the sound and is easy with these suggested apps:

[KAPWING](#) (for Android) or [MIXCAPTIONS](#) (for iOS)



- (Optional) Pick your tools.** Two easy tools to improve the quality of your videos are a ring light (for brighter and more even lighting) and stabilizer, such as [DJI Osmo](#):

