

How to Make a Video: Part 2

(2) Filming

Step 2: Filming your video (*production*)

2.2 Planning your shots



When planning your shots think about what will be in the background. If there is a huge amount of activity going on, or mess in the background, this could distract from what you are trying to demonstrate or talk about, unless this is deliberate and an important part of your film.

If you have a clear message for policy makers, health or social care providers, you can make this more impactful by talking straight to camera.

Think about where a long shot or a close up would have most impact.

- **Find a quiet area**, which isn't full of people and doesn't have lots of large, bare surfaces (i.e. wooden floors, concrete walls). This is because hard surfaces create echoes. Smaller rooms with soft furnishings, carpet and/or curtains help absorb the echo and your recording will be clearer.
- **Choose a location with plenty of natural light**. Make sure the presenter isn't too dark in shadow or too washed-out in overly powerful light and don't film yourself standing against a window, as you will look like you are in shadow against the bright light behind you.

Below is a sample shot list for an event or conference:

- Event location, grounds
- Signage of the specific event
- Shots of the building in which the event is taking place
- Registration area: delegates and attendee's arriving, picking up their event lanyards/ registering for the event
- Delegates arriving into event rooms / halls and taking their seats
- Speakers preparing to go on stage
- Keynote speakers from the side, for edit options
- Shots of the speaker's hands/ articulations
- Audience listening to speech/ making notes
- Audience from the speakers point of view
- Any posters/ notice boards showing relevant event content/ close ups of marking collateral

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- People in groups in common areas
- People connecting with each other, exchanging ideas, shaking hands, exchanging business cards
- Sequences at exhibition areas, where there are demonstrations/ movement/ interactions
- Anything unique at the event
- Vox pops (asking delegates for quick comments)
- Break-out sessions
- Gender mix (if relevant)
- International mix (if relevant)

Avoid shots of:

- People eating
- People smoking
- People drinking alcohol (unless it is a celebration/ awards event)
- Dark shots of speaker hall audiences
- Any close up shots of overhead projector content – never look good
- Shots of people's feet

2.3 Lighting



You need lighting to make sure that you can see your contributor clearly. Try and choose a spot that has plenty of natural daylight or add artificial light. Poor lighting affects the quality of the film and makes the shots grainy. Too much light or harsh light can make your contributors looked washed-out. (See also 2.1.5)

2.4 Sound



Mobile phones and cameras have built in microphones, but these are limited. If you are too close to the recording device when you speak it can produce a hissing sound, if you are too far away it can be difficult to hear what is being said! **Ideally, you should have the recording device about one metre from the person who is speaking.** Even

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when you are filming inside, the person being filmed will need to face the camera to make sure what they say is picked up clearly.

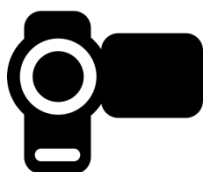
Another thing you will need to consider if you are filming outside is the surrounding noise levels. The microphone on the recording device will pick up all the sounds around where you are filming, as well as the voice of the person being filmed. If you are standing at a distance from the recording device in an area where there is a lot of traffic, or other surrounding noise, the speaker's voice may not be picked up and what they say will be lost.

Before you start filming listen to how much noise there is. If the place you want to film is very noisy, it is advisable to film your shot without speech. These can be used as filler shots and voice over can be added in the editing.

- Test for sound levels when you are doing your rehearsal / test shots

(See also 2.1.4)

2.5 Filming techniques



You don't have to film everything straight on; you could film from above or below, or from the side. Filming a single person from a long way away could represent the feeling of isolation and loneliness (although the microphone will not be able to pick up what the person is saying from that distance). However, you can talk about what it feels like to be isolated, if you are doing the filming or by standing next to the camera, or add it later as a voice over.

- Remember to **hold shots for at least ten seconds**, which is long enough for it to have an impact and makes it easier to edit
- Film for a few seconds before and after someone speaks to ensure you don't lose any of what they say in the editing
- Filming close up can help to emphasise a point. Some cameras will have a zoom lens, but if you are using a device without this facility you can still take a close-up of something by physically moving the camera in closer in, or further away for a longer shot (remembering the tips about sound if you are too close or too far away from the built in microphone!), but make sure you do not re-frame a shot while someone is giving an answer to a question – only adjust the zoom or framing between questions

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- Try not to move the camera around too much or jerk from one thing to another – hold shots steady, or sweep slowly around the room. If the person being filmed is moving about, keep the camera steady as you follow them

See also 4.2 – the more you consider what you are filming the easier it will make editing your film!

2.6 Rehearsal

It's a good idea to make some practice footage and then to play it back, so you and your cameraman or woman feel confident with the equipment and you can test the sound levels and feel comfortable about the way things look.

- Doing some practice filming will also help you, or the person you are filming relax in front of the camera

2.7 Timing



It's amazing how much information you can get across in one minute – think how much you can learn from a 30 second TV advertisement! If people talk for too long it will become difficult to edit out the important messages.

- You don't need to film continuously – you may find it helpful to stop filming between each set of questions or section

It is important to film much more footage than you think you will need, even though much of what you film will not be used in your final edit. It is a good idea to include some 'filler shots', for example if you are showing someone being interviewed, take some shots of the interviewer nodding their head in agreement with a point being made by the person being interviewed, or a close up of the contributors hands gesticulating – making a point. You can also film some general location or mood shots. These can all be used in the editing to break up the visuals, and cover a point where you have removed or edited out some content.

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2.8 Self-recorded video tips

You want to self-record your own video either by yourself or with your colleagues on a hand-held device, such as camera, smartphone or tablet.

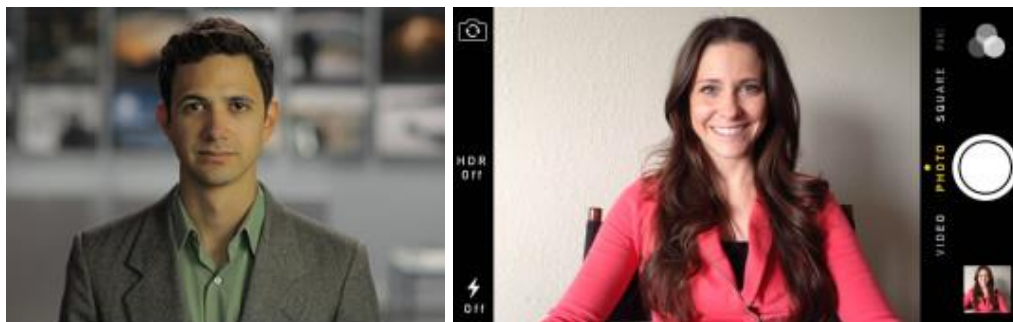
It's really important to record content while holding your device in landscape. One way to remember is your recording device should always mirror the shape of your TV, like this:



- A good interview shot is from the mid-chest up, leaving a bit of headroom at the top, like this:

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- Do not use the zoom or adjust the shot while you are recording
- **Microphones on mobiles and tablets** are usually not very powerful, so make sure you are not too far away, so it records your voice clearly
- If you are filming yourself, **keep the device at eye level and look into the camera lens**. Use both hands to hold it, and tuck your elbows in at the waist to steady the device, and hold at arm's length

Tips for filming good content:

- **Start by introducing yourself:** your name, job title or role and why you are making this recording
- **Speak in short sentences** ('sound-bites') – one or two sentences on each topic should be enough, and is more likely to be used in the final film than a five minute speech!
- **Be relaxed and enthusiastic:** exactly as you would if you were talking to a friend. You should be speaking about something you are really experienced in or excited about, so let that show in your response
- It's important to explain why you feel the way you feel, so phrases like "I feel really passionate about this because...", or, "We need to ensure people understand, so these changes can be made..." will really resonate with people watching
- It really doesn't matter if you stumble or make a mistake: just go back to the start of your answer and say it again until you are happy
- Don't write a script or learn your answers off by heart before-hand. These answers never sound genuine or sincere. We want to hear real and honest opinions from you
- Ask someone to feed you guide questions, if you feel this would help

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- **If someone is filming you:** make sure they hold the device steady – at eye level – using a tripod or on a sturdy, flat surface to avoid the camera from shaking. Look into the camera, not the person holding it
- To make it easier to edit your film, we recommend leaving at least **four to five seconds at the start and finish of each shot** when you are filming. This just makes sure that the camera is ‘turning over’ and you don’t cut off the start or end of a soundbite, which would make it un-useable when you come to edit your content together

See also Filming Checklist in Part Four