

BASIC GUIDE FOR SELF-FILMING

I. GENERAL TIPS

✓ Dos

A. Before Recording

- **Remove any clutter**, distracting items and personal items from your surroundings that do not contribute to your telling of the story.
- Ensure your appearance connects with the character. Does your wardrobe clash with your chosen background?
- Record in the highest **resolution** possible (e.g 1080 pixels on iPhones)
- Mark your spot (e.g. with a piece of tape) to indicate where the character will be placed. Rehearse beforehand to see how far you can lean or move, to not cut off parts of yourself.
- Do a short take or **test run** first to check that framing, focus & audio levels are good prior to attempting a full run.

B. During Recording

- Do focus on completing your take without getting distracted or interrupted

C. After Recording

- Check your playback to be sure you can see and hear the footage clearly.

✗ Don'ts

- Don't frame yourself too tight. Remember to record in landscape, and think about how framing a shot is able to help tell your story. Be careful not to crop off parts of yourself unless it helps you tell a story.

✓ Remember

- There are lots of available content on YouTube for you to learn more about framing and composition that could help make your video stand out!

II. CAMERA

✓ Dos

- Place your phone/recording device somewhere **stable** and at **eye level**. If using a laptop, prop it higher if necessary to avoid looking down at the camera.
- Use a tripod/phone holder if possible to avoid shaking of camera. If you have to shoot handheld, keep your phone close to your body, rest your elbows on a nearby object and use your body to absorb bounces and shakes.
- **Clean the camera lens** before shooting.
- If using phone to record, use the **rear/back camera** as it tends to be of better specifications.
- Ensure the frame has sufficient space around the face in case cropping is required
- Ensure there is no glare or reflection on your face or glasses from the phone or laptop screen
- Record a **test video** to ensure subject is not blurry, and the framing works.

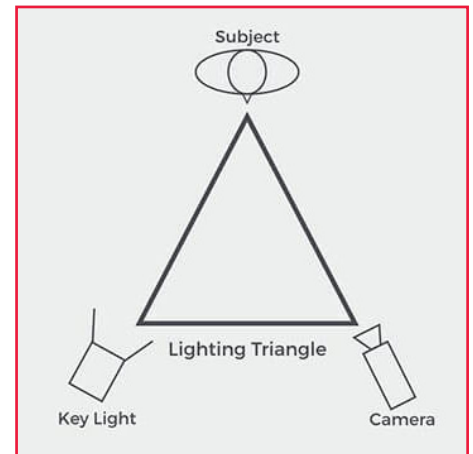
✗ Don'ts

- Don't use the zoom function to avoid pixelation. If there is a need to, move the camera closer instead.

III. LIGHTING

✓ Dos

- Have good **front lighting** to illuminate your face. If your lighting source is behind, add a front light.
- For soft or flat light, try to balance two light sources on either side of the camera - but only if you have the resources!
- For harsh light with more shadow and depth to subject, try a lighting triangle placement (creating a triangle with the camera, light and subject - refer to diagram on the right).



✗ Don'ts

- Don't have the sun shining directly behind the subject, as this creates a silhouette on the subject
- Avoid overhead lighting, as this will cast unflattering shadows on subject's face



Photo Source and References:

<https://wave.video/blog/12-simple-tips-for-making-your-videos-look-more-professional/>

<https://www.londoncorporatemediaco.uk/backlit-video-subjects/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJak_mdXlOw

IV. SOUND

✓ Dos

- Find a **quiet space** to film in, as far as possible.
- Ensure phones and noise-making devices are set to silent or airplane mode before shooting to avoid notification sounds, vibration noises etc.
- If possible, switch off any fans & close windows, as wind will contribute to distortion
- Place microphone close to you for clear audio
- If possible, use an external microphone linked up to phone / recording device (e.g. a lavalier mic)
- **Record a test run** to ensure that your volume of your audio is sufficient
- Audio distortion also happens when the microphone is too near and when you're speaking too loudly.
- If background music must be used, generally keep it to the beginning and end of the recording at a minimal volume. It should help in enhancing the mood and atmosphere of the story, and not to distract.

✗ Don'ts

- Don't mumble, enunciate your words clearly
- Don't select background music that is distracting or that may overpower your speech.