



You don't always need a professional camera to capture great video content. Follow these tips to get the most out of filming with your smartphone:

1. BEFORE YOU FILM

Battery life and storage space

Filming can diminish your battery quickly so make sure it is full before you start. It can also be helpful to bring a portable charger. Videos take up a lot of space so ensure you have enough memory before you begin filming.

Check your video resolution and frame rate

Most smartphones have the option to film in 720p (HD), 1080p (full HD) or 4K. Filming in 4K will give you the highest quality footage but it will take up more space. If you're short on storage, 1080p is a good alternative.

The frame rate sets how many individual frames per second (fps) your video records. Film in 60 fps to get the smoothest footage. If you don't have much storage

space, opt for 30 fps instead.

How to change your resolution and frame rate:

iPhone: open your camera app, switch to video and then look in the top-right corner for your resolution and frame rate settings. Tap to toggle through your options.

Android: the process varies depending on your phone. You should be able to change the resolution and frame rate within the camera app, either by using the icons at the top of the screen or via your camera's settings.

Clean your lens

Make sure to clean your phone's lens before you start filming. Smudges and dirt on the lens can affect the quality of your footage.

2. SET UP THE SHOT

Use the rule of thirds

The rule of thirds is a composition guideline that divides a frame into thirds horizontally and vertically. Position key elements of your shot along the gridlines or at the intersection of two gridlines to create a visually appealing composition.

Enable gridlines on your camera to help you use the rule of thirds:

iPhone: go to the Settings app, click on Camera, then turn on 'Grid'.

Android: the process varies depending on your phone. You should be able to add grid lines within the settings in the camera app.

Lighting

Film in a well-lit space but avoid having a bright light source, such as a window, behind your subject. Angle the person being filmed so the light is shining on their face instead.

Check your background

Before you start filming, it is important to check you are happy with your background. Make sure the backdrop is appropriate and no sensitive information is in view.

3. READY TO FILM

Film horizontally

Filming horizontally (landscape) provides a wider frame and will make your footage look great on larger screens. If you film in high enough quality (i.e. 4K), this shot can be cropped to other sizes too. Footage filmed vertically (portrait) is more limited in its use but may be preferred if the video is for TikTok or Instagram.

Steady your shot and avoid zooming in

Try to keep your phone steady to avoid shaky footage. If possible, use a tripod. Using both hands to hold your phone can also be helpful. To prevent blurry videos, move closer to the subject to create close-ups rather than using your phone's zoom function.

Have fun!

Don't be afraid to experiment with angles and perspectives. Here's a few shots to try:

- Wide shots capture an entire object or person in relation to their surroundings.
- Medium shots show the subject from a medium distance, typically from the waist up.
- Close-ups focus on a specific detail or subject by filling the frame with it.
- Extreme close-ups are more intense and focus on very small details such as the eyes of a subject or a particular part of an object.

4. SAFETY AND CONSENT

When you are filming, you lose your peripheral vision so be aware of any hazards before you start such as uneven surfaces, vehicles and people. Take your time and only film if it is safe to do so. It can also be helpful to have a friend watch your back.

Make sure you have permission to film and if your videos feature any identifiable people, ensure you have obtained their consent by asking them to sign the model consent form.

5. INTERVIEW TIPS

If you are filming an interview, follow these simple tips to help you capture the best footage:

Interview set up

If you are filming indoors, bring the interviewee as far away from any wall as possible to give the shot depth.

Line up the shot so that the interviewee's eyes are a third of the way down the screen. Use the gridlines on your phone's camera to help and a tripod to steady the shot.

Decide whether the interviewee should look directly into the lens or off to the side. Consistency is key; stick to one style per film. If they are looking to the side, place them a third of the way across the screen so they look across the shot.

Always opt for an external microphone for optimal sound quality. Before you start filming, record a quick test video to ensure perfect audio levels.

If an external microphone isn't available, choose a quiet indoor location. Get close to the interviewee by using a medium or a close-up shot to minimise background noise.

The interview

Take some time to build a connection with your interviewee before hitting the record button. A relaxed subject makes for a more engaging interview.

Ask open questions to encourage storytelling and detailed answers. Instead of asking, "Did you enjoy studying at Exeter?" try, "Tell me about your favourite memory from your time at Exeter."

Consider preparing a list of questions in advance to keep the interview on track. Share these with the interviewee beforehand so they can think about their response.

Pay close attention to your interviewee's answers. If you sense that there is more to explore, don't hesitate to ask follow-up questions.

Ask the interviewee to include context in their answers. For instance, if the question is, "What do you love most about Exeter?" suggest they begin with, "What I love most about Exeter is..." This will help when you come to edit the video.

Get some B-roll

B-roll is the additional footage that adds context and interest to your video. Film some B-roll with your interviewee to enrich your edit.

Ensure the B-roll aligns with the video's topic. For example, if your interviewee talks about campus, record footage of them walking around campus for added context.

6. EDITING YOUR VIDEO

Editing tools

To get started, you'll need an editing tool. There's a wide range of options available, both free and paid. Some good choices include iMovie, CapCut and InVideo. While you can edit on your phone using an app, you may find it easier on your computer. Take some time to get familiar with your chosen editor and review their user guide to explore all the editing tools.

Review your footage

Before diving into editing, review all the footage and plan your video. As you go through the clips, make a note of the ones you want to include and where they would best fit in your video's narrative. You can also rename the files with something descriptive to help you organise the clips.

Start editing

Import your footage into your chosen video editor and arrange the clips in the desired order on the timeline. Create a rough cut and play it through to see how the clips flow together. Trim, add or remove clips as needed.

If necessary, perform colour correction to adjust the brightness, contrast, saturation and colour balance. The audio can also be edited by modifying volume levels and reducing the background noise.

Elevate your video by adding music, but ensure you have the right permissions to use it. Many video editors offer free music, or you can purchase tracks online.

Exporting your video

With your editing complete, it's time to export your video. Review the export settings to ensure your video meets the desired resolution and format. After exporting, watch the video to ensure everything looks and sounds great.

Be mindful of the platforms you plan to post your video on. Different platforms have specific requirements. You can find up-to-date specifications for social media [here](#).

Once you're satisfied with the result, your video is ready to be shared on your chosen platforms.

Useful links:

[Use of photography and film](#)

[Image library](#)

[Consent forms](#)



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