



5 Tips for Recording Yourself at Home with a Smartphone

Tip One. Location. While shooting outside may provide a great backdrop, we discourage it because of noise. Try to find a quiet room inside where you will be free of distractions and other people. Check to make sure there is nothing giving off a consistent noise, like a running fan.

Tip Two. Camera Setup. Unless you are specifically asked to record a certain way, make sure the phone is horizontal! This should automatically make the smartphone record in 16x9, the most common widescreen format for video.

The smartphone should be stationary to prevent shaky footage. If you don't have a tripod, place the phone on a stack of books or boxes. Use the selfie camera so you can see your screen as you record.

Tip Three. Position. While you may be used to presenting standing up, self-record while you are sitting down. This ensures that you will not drift out of frame or cause the camera to focus on something else. Position yourself so that you are centered and no more than 3 to 4 feet away from the camera. The smartphone microphone will have a hard time providing clear audio if you are too far away. Just make sure you speak clearly and project when recording.

Once in position, look at your smartphone's screen to make sure the top of the picture is giving you some space above your head. The bottom of the picture should just be below or above your chest. If possible, avoid shooting directly up against a wall. The more depth you can give a shot, the better it will look!

Tip Four. Lighting. For the best lighting, be in front of a window or a lamp so that the light is illuminating your face. If you're in front of a window, you don't need direct sunlight—any light coming in should be fine. Avoid having really bright windows behind you, as this could cause issues with the auto exposure system on the camera.

Tip Five. Recording. Look directly at the screen on your smartphone when you're recording. This gives the appearance that you are addressing your audience directly. Avoid reading off a script, if possible, as it will be very obvious to the audience every time you look down.

Need a script? Try taping it on the wall just behind and above the camera. If your script is multiple pages, stop recording at the end of each page so that you can set up the next one. Just make sure you stop at the end of a paragraph and not the middle of a sentence!

Don't Forget. Do your best to relax and have fun! Don't be afraid to make mistakes—everyone does it, even professional actors. You are in complete control and can do as many takes as you like until you are happy. Just be sure to delete the videos you are not going to use, so that you don't run out of storage space on the smartphone.