

Tips for Shooting Video with Your Smartphone

If you need to use your smartphone to shoot a video message or demonstration, here are some tips that will improve your results:

1. **Good Lighting Is Key!**

Always shoot in brightly lit areas: the darker the image, the grainier the video. And avoid 'back light' on your subject. If he or she is standing in front of windows or bright lights, then the camera will automatically make your subject darker.

2. **HOLD YOUR PHONE SIDEWAYS—Avoid Vertical Videos!**

Your TV display is horizontal (as are most screens), so shoot your video horizontally as well. If you hold the phone vertical, then the edited video will have 'black bars' on each side to fill the screen.

3. **Get As Close As You Can—No Digital Zooming!**

The closer you are to the subject using the default (1x) zoom setting, the better your picture will look. The digital zoom feature (2x, 3x, etc.) of most smartphone cameras adds digital noise to your image. Increasing the zoom ratio increases the digital noise.

4. **Hold It Steady and Frame It Well!**

Holding the phone still and steady will avoid blur and distortion. Keeping the subject in frame and in focus is always best.

5. **Audio Is As Important As Video—Maybe MORE So!**

A well shot video with poor audio is frustrating to watch. Always try to record in a quiet place. When shooting indoors an empty room is likely to have greater 'echo' or 'bounce' than a room with furniture and rugs. When outside, be wary of wind and noise from traffic, construction, etc. Noise is nearly impossible to 'edit out' later. One trick to get clearer audio is to use another device (microphone, digital audio recorder, second smartphone) to record the audio while shooting the video. The two recordings can be combined later in the editing room.

These tips—along with a little bit of luck—will make your video look fantastic!