

Top 10 Tips for Creating Quality Video

These tips will help you create high-quality videos that also engage learners and promote understanding.

Be clear about the goal or purpose of the video.

State the goal in simple language at the beginning of the video.

Title your video based on its goal or purpose.

Start with a transcript.

Organize your thoughts and create a transcript so that your delivery is smooth, and the video is no longer than it needs to be.

Use the transcript to [create the closed captioning for your video](#). Captions give your video an educational boost by providing the content in an additional format and is essential for students who are deaf and hard of hearing. English language learners often benefit from closed captions. And many students learning at home may not always find a quiet place to study - if they can't hear the video, they can use the captions.

Be concise.

Keep your video to 10 minutes max. Why? [Research from MIT](#) indicates that 6 minutes is an optimal length for an instructional video, and in his book, *Brain Rules*, John Medina suggests 10 minutes as the upper limit of learners' attention span for a presentation. Need more time? You have two options:

- Create several shorter videos, each with a descriptive title, and provide them in a "playlist."
- Edit a longer video into short segments separated by title screens. While this doesn't shorten the whole video, breaking it into segments can help with retention.

Make it active.

Insert knowledge checks in your video. Pause at transitions to new topics or concepts and pose a question or encourage reflection and deeper engagement with the content.

Make the video interactive with [EdPuzzle](#) (if you have more time) - remember to check with your school or district tech director, if appropriate.

Mind the background (and sometimes the foreground).

Make sure the background of your video is as plain, simple, and tidy as possible. A busy background competes with your learners' attention.

If you are recording yourself, consider your clothing. Solid colors with more muted tones tend to work best. Avoid clothing with stripes or checkered patterns (they appear to “dance” on video) as well as busy patterns.

Pay attention to the audio.

If possible, plug in an external microphone if your device supports it. Even the headset that comes with your smartphone can greatly improve audio quality. Poor audio quality will not only make it more difficult for learners to hear what you're saying, it can be a distraction. Most devices have a built-in microphone, but it tends to pick up a lot of the ambient audio.

Think about your room's lighting.

Avoid positioning yourself in front of a light source, such as a window or lamp. If light comes from behind, you may appear in silhouette. This will make it more difficult for students to see your facial expressions, which are essential to effective communication. Additionally, students who are deaf and hard of hearing rely on lip reading (in addition to closed captions), and students with light sensitivity may experience discomfort from the harsh lighting.

For best results, make sure the light source is coming from the same direction as the camera or off to the side slightly.

Record in landscape mode on your smartphone.

Hold your phone horizontally (landscape mode) before you start recording. Portrait mode videos will include distracting black bars on the sides when played on a landscape screen (such as a computer monitor).



Portrait Mode



Landscape Mode

Icon by ibrandify | Noun Project

Keep it steady.

Use a tripod or some other method to steady your device or camera (a stack of books or a shelf, for example). Besides being a distraction, shaky video can cause motion sickness.

Use a video platform students know.

YouTube is familiar to many learners, including those who use assistive technology. It also supports closed captioning for accessibility. However, it can be blocked in some districts and you'll need a Google account. Check with your tech director to see if YouTube is a viable option.

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