

Zoom Video Production Best Practices

(taken from Center for Teaching and Learning at Columbia University)

Once you have identified your learning objectives and goals, you can start to create and build content for your short video. This process may require several iterations of practicing and recording before you have produced an effective video. See our resource on [creating effective education videos](#) for more tips and strategies.

This page takes you through the process of set up, recording your presentation, editing and publishing your video, and other technical considerations. CTL [Learning Designers](#) are available to assist you.

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Storyboarding

Storyboarding serves as a visual template that will help guide you through the recording and editing process. Match your dialogue alongside the visuals you intend to use.

Download:

- [Storyboard Template](#)
- [Example Storyboard](#)

Before You Record

Setting up the room and camera

Room Considerations:

- Make the room as quiet as possible. Turn off anything that produces unwanted sound such as air conditioning, water coolers, or overhead lights that produce a hum; the microphones will pick up those noises.

Screencasts:

- When screencasting use a solid colored image or background on your computer desktop and close any programs not in use. Turn off notifications and remove or hide any icons you wouldn't want visible in your video.

Camera:

- Avoid a cluttered background to ensure that your viewer's attention remains focused on you. You can achieve this by removing any distracting elements or by hanging a fabric or paper backdrop behind you.
- Keep the camera at eye level. A camera placed looking up at your face creates an unflattering image. If using a laptop with a built-in webcam, use books or another level surface to raise the camera up to eye level.



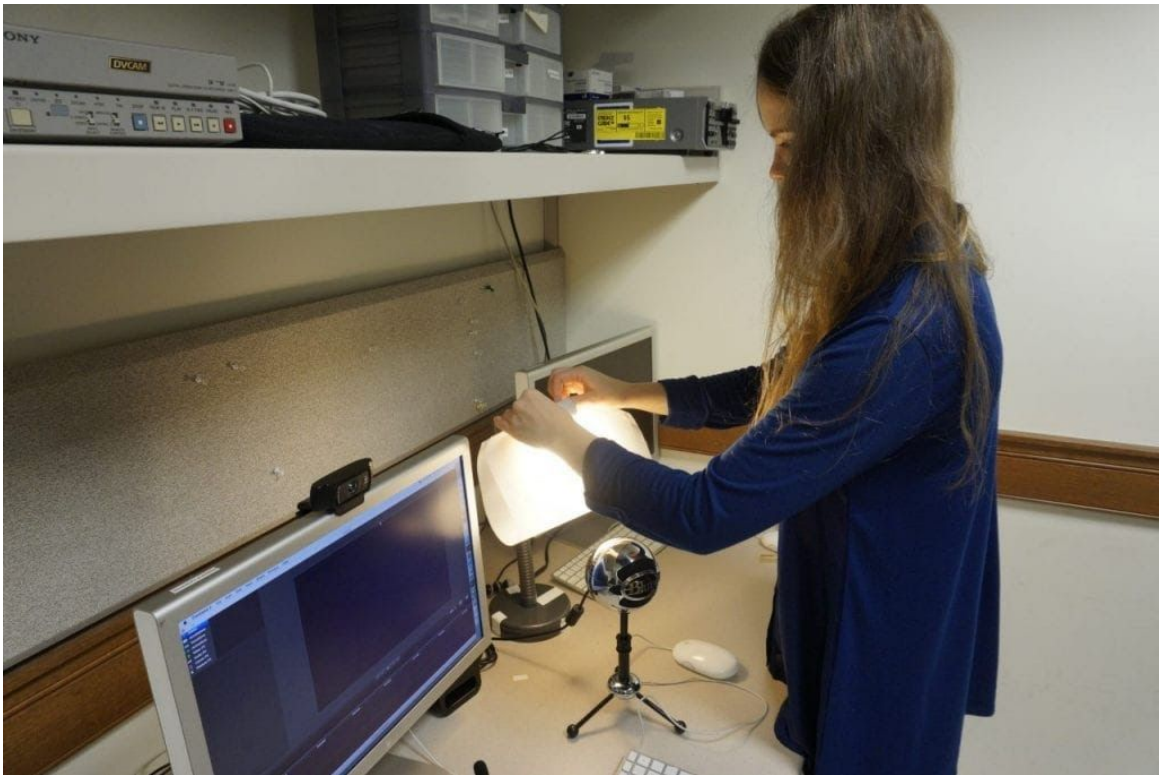




Avoid placing the camera too low, looking up at the face as shown in the top-row images. The bottom row images show the correct placement with the camera at or just above eye level. Note the use of a backdrop as well.

Lighting

- Use soft, evenly balanced light such as a simple desk lamp with soft-white bulb. Consider use of a lamp shade or paper cut-outs to diffuse the light. This will help eliminate any harsh shadows. (Note: Incandescent bulbs get hot! Consider using fluorescent bulbs or LED bulbs instead. A low-cost [LED light panel](#) is also a great option.)



A simple desk lamp (left) with a fluorescent or LED light bulb is a great option for lighting. Use paper cutouts or a lampshade (right) to further diffuse the light.

- DO keep the light source facing you. DO NOT place main light source behind you. Back lighting subjects will be silhouetted and in shadow.





The photo at left features a backlit subject. In the photo at right, the light source is facing the subject.

Audio

- Good quality audio is just as important as the video quality. Consider using a quality USB microphone such as [Blue Snowball](#) or [Yedi](#). No one will watch your video if they're unable to hear or understand you!
- Use a headphone mic when recording audio only and no video. Mute your computer output volume to avoid feedback or echo during the recording.
- Position microphone in front of you at roughly a half arm length away.
- Use speakers or headphones to test your recorded audio levels. Conduct a test before you start recording.



The photo at left shows examples of USB microphones. The photo at right shows the set up for a well-placed microphone.

Recording Your Presentation

- Rehearse your presentation as many times as needed.
- Keep videos around 3 to 6 minutes.
- Speak to the camera—that is your audience!
- Don't be afraid to do multiple takes. If using a screencast software such as Camtasia, you can always pause and restart your recording.
- Once recorded you can edit your video to remove any unwanted sections.

Publishing Your Video

- Consider where you intend to share your video. Will it be private or public?
- Common video platforms include YouTube; Vimeo; Columbia Learning Platforms: CourseWorks (Canvas), Mediathread, and Panopto.

Media File Types

Source files are the media file formats used in the editing application and project development.

- Common camera recording formats: AVCHD (common in video cameras); TREC (Camtasia recorded video)

Export (sharing) files are the media file formats used for sharing and publishing the final video.

- Common formats: M4V, OGG, MP3, M4A
- Editing software programs typically offer sharing presets for many common online video platforms such as YouTube and Vimeo.
- The video can be exported and saved to a cloud service such as Google or locally to the computer or external hard drive.

Explore teaching with do-it-yourself video ideas.

- [Creating Effective Educational Videos](#)
- [Do-It-Yourself Media Production Spaces](#)
- [Tools for Do-It-Yourself Video](#)
- [Video Production Best Practices](#)

Explore teaching with technology.

- [Teaching With Technology](#)
- [Instructional Technology Projects](#)
- [Massive Open Online Courses](#)

The CTL researches and experiments.

The Columbia Center for Teaching and Learning provides an array of resources and tools for instructional activities.

[Overview](#)