



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Smartphone Video Production

Tips & Guidelines

The Faculty of Health Sciences

Seven tips for filming video on a smartphone:

1. SHOOT HORIZONTALLY, NOT UPRIGHT

Position your phone so that it's lying horizontally. This will eliminate vertical bars from appearing on the left and right-hand sides of your footage.



2. CAMERA MOVEMENT

Use a tripod or rest your device against something to hold it in place. If you're filming hand-held, hold the device with two hands and lock your elbows against your body. This will provide additional support for the camera and reduce your fatigue if filming for extended periods.



3. COMPOSITION

Review the [Rules of Composition](#)¹ for film & photography. Consider the position of every element that will be onscreen and where you would like your audience to focus their attention.



4. LIGHTING

Consider the position of the camera, subject and surrounding light sources. For smartphones, it's best to film in a well-lit environment. Avoid backlighting (positioning your subject between you and a bright light source), unless you are seeking to film the subject's silhouette.



5. LOCATION

Find a location suitable for the content that you will be filming. If you're recording an interview, avoid filming in a loud space that echoes.



6. RECORD AUDIO ON A SEPARATE DEVICE

Use a second phone to record audio, with this device positioned closer to subject. Remember to clap or make a short loud noise at the start of filming, as this will allow you to synchronise the audio from your secondary phone with the video footage from your primary phone later when editing.



7. PLAN & PREPARE FOR THE SHOOT

Plan what you want to say and how you will capture this by preparing a script and storyboard. When filming, arrive at the location early with enough time to practice, rehearse and re-plan if required.



To see these guidelines in action, please refer to the following video:

[Filming with smart phones: Tips & Guidelines](#)²

¹ See: <https://www.videomaker.com/courses/17553-the-art-of-composition>

² See: <https://vimeo.com/266219506/5152b940a5>