# Video Recording Quality Checklist

## Recording Instructor Videos

Creating and posting videos in your course is a great way to reinforce instructor presence and foster a sense of community in the course. While your recordings do not have to be perfect, they should be of good quality.

For good quality video recordings, here are a few things to keep in mind.

### Setting the Scene

### What’s Needed:

### Nothing more than a clean, quiet, distraction-free environment.

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| **To-Do** | **Details** | **Check?** |
| Pick a setting that matches the tone you want to set. | How do you want students to see you? Fun and approachable? Professional and reserved? The answer can drive where you want your recording to take place. Remember, your scene can convey a lot about you! |  |
| De-clutter your environment. | Remember to think about the image that you’re trying to convey. Clean up anything that will be seen in the background that might be distracting. |  |
| Remove background distractions. | Extraneous movements and busy scenes behind you can cause students to lose focus on you and your message. |  |
| Pick a quiet area. | Keeping everything around you virtually silent is critical. Air conditioning, fans, traffic, external chatter, and noisy pets can compete for the viewer’s attention. |  |

### Lighting

### What’s Needed:

### 2 x desk lamps

* 1 x floor lamp

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| **To-Do** | **Details** | **Check?** |
| Place light source 1. | This is sometimes called a key light. This can be something as simple as a lamp with a shade. Example: A desk lamp to the right side of the chair with the focus of the light pointing towards the subject. |  |
| Place light source 2. | This is called a fill light. The light source should be appropriately symmetrical to the key light and less bright. Example: A desk lamp to the left side of the chair. |  |
| Place light source 3. | The back light is sometimes called a “rim” light. This third lamp hovers behind the subject and can be a floor lamp. Example: A floor lamp behind a desk. |  |
| Ensure all lights are not in view of the camera. | Light sources should not be seen in the video. |  |
| Do not record in front of a window. | Backlighting will make it difficult to see you in the video. |  |

### Camera Setup

### What’s Needed:

### A recording device

* Stack of book (or ungraded exam)
* Paper clip

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| **To-Do** | **Details** | **Check?** |
| Use a recording device that has suitable recording quality. | You don’t need a professional video camera. Most modern devices have a camera built in with suitable recording quality. |  |
| Ensure camera angle and distance are appropriate. | Camera angle should be slightly above (but not too far above) your eye line and approximately 2 feet in front of you. |  |
| Ensure camera shot and recording are stable. | Place your recording device on a stack of books or something tall on your desk to achieve a stable recording angle and distance. You can use a paper clip ([see here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SVXwjT_SKI)) or a piece of cardboard to stabilize a phone or tablet. |  |
| Frame video appropriately and shoot in landscape mode. | Always record your video in landscape mode (with the phone or tablet sideways). Make sure you have a bit of space (not too much) above your head. Try to center your head in the video frame and do not cut off any part of your head. |  |

### Wardrobe

### What’s Needed:

### An outfit that exemplifies your message and doesn’t distract

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| **To-Do** | **Details** | **Check?** |
| Select an outfit that conveys the message that you want to send to students and is appropriate. | Just as your scene can convey a lot about you, so can your wardrobe. Make decisions beforehand about how you want your students to perceive you and use that to decide what you wear on camera. |  |
| Select an outfit that contrasts the background appropriately. | If you are recording in a darkly colored office, wear something lighter. If you are recording outside, wear a darker shirt. Think through your setting and avoid wearing a color that is too similar that blends into the background. |  |
| Select an outfit that does not have any stripes or patterns. | Avoid wearing thin stripe or patterns, as they can create an off-putting camera effect. |  |
| Try to refrain from wearing glass or distracting accessories. | If you can, wear contacts and avoid glasses. They can reflect your device’s screen and become a distraction. Dangling earrings can also be a distraction. |  |

### Recording

### What’s Needed:

### A script or outline

* A recording device
* A clock, watch, or timer

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| **To-Do** | **Details** | **Check?** |
| Look at the camera during the recording. | You should place your script or outline close to the camera so that if you glance at it, you are not obviously looking away. Look directly at the camera as much as possible during your video, and remember that the camera and the screen are in different places…focus on the camera, not the screen. |  |
| Stay still during recording. | Speaking with your hands is ok, but limited extraneous body movements will keep you in frame and keep the learner focused on your message. |  |
| Keep your tone conversational. | It’s important to sound natural and unrehearsed. Your video should sound as if you are having a private conversation with the student, one-on-one…and remember to smile! |  |
| Keep the video length short and sweet. | Practice reading your script or outline beforehand while speaking clearly and at an un-rushed race. Research has proven that students can pay attention and absorb shorter videos rather than long ones.  We recommend that no online video exceed 10 - 15 minutes.  If you have more content to cover, stop the recording at an appropriate place and record a second video.  Introduction videos should be approximately 3-5 minutes. |  |

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