
GUIDE TO “DO IT YOURSELF” VIDEO

WILEY

EDUCATION
SERVICES



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HOW TO DO "DO IT YOURSELF" VIDEO... YOURSELF!

So, you're looking to engage your students and increase your presence as an instructor in your online course. There's a great way to do both of those things: making a self-recorded video!

"But wait," you say. "I'm not a professional film crew. In fact, I'm not any sort of crew at all. I'm just one person! How can I make a video that looks and sounds good all by myself?"

Glad you asked! This simple guide will take you step-by-step through the DIY video process, so you'll know just what to do.





01

FINDING THE RIGHT SETTING

01 FINDING THE RIGHT SETTING

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

Before you ever hit record, you need to figure out where to set up your camera. Try to find a quiet, private room without a lot of outside noise from air conditioners or loud students. Make sure the room is big enough for you to set up, but not so big that there's an echo.



01, cont. FINDING THE RIGHT SETTING

SET THE STAGE

Another thing to consider is how the room will look on video. Blank white walls are boring and make videos look flat. Plus, your online learners might think you live in an endless void, which is rather unsettling! To avoid all that, look for rooms with colorful, interesting backgrounds. Pictures, shelves, and potted plants can add texture and character. Sure, nobody is going to remember the cool fern behind you, but it will give your video a nice sense of place.



01, cont. FINDING THE RIGHT SETTING

SPEAKING OF PLACE...

Classrooms, libraries, and professor's offices are all good settings because they make the online learner feel more connected to the campus. However, if you'd feel more comfortable in a controlled environment designed specifically for video, you could see if your school has any broadcast studio space available for faculty to use. Either way, you may want to reserve a room ahead of time so you're not scrambling for a decent space.





02

GETTING DRESSED

02 GETTING DRESSED

Okay, you probably already know how to get dressed. But on recording day, you need to be careful about the outfit you choose. Some clothes look better on camera than others.



02, cont. GETTING DRESSED

Here are some tips for finding the right look:

WEAR A SOLID, BRIGHTLY COLORED SHIRT.

Royal blue is a filmmaker's favorite, and it looks good on every skin tone!

AVOID WHITE OR PASTELS.

That is, unless you plan on wearing a jacket or sweater over your white or pastel shirt.



02, cont. GETTING DRESSED

Here are some tips for finding the right look:

AVOID SMALL PATTERNS.

They can be distracting and make the viewer a bit dizzy.

AVOID CHUNKY JEWELRY.

Like small patterns, chunky jewelry can be visually distracting. Unlike small patterns, it can also make noise while you talk.



03

LIGHTING

(SO WE CAN SEE YOU)

03 LIGHTING (SO WE CAN SEE YOU)

You probably don't have a professional lighting kit, but that's okay! There are still plenty of ways to make your video look good, even if it won't win any awards for cinematography.



03, cont. LIGHTING (SO WE CAN SEE YOU)

AVOID FILMING IN FRONT OF A WINDOW.

Natural sunlight is much brighter than your average light bulb. If a bunch of sunlight is pouring in through the window behind you, your camera will overcompensate and turn you into a silhouette.



03, cont. LIGHTING (SO WE CAN SEE YOU)

IF POSSIBLE, DON'T COMBINE LIGHT SOURCES.

For example, daylight and fluorescent bulbs give off different colors. Daylight is more blue, while fluorescent light is green. Common household tungsten light bulbs, meanwhile, emit an orange tint. When you mix lighting, it can distort your color and make you look funky.



03, cont. LIGHTING (SO WE CAN SEE YOU)

DON'T SIT DIRECTLY UNDERNEATH THE LIGHT.

And if your room has focused overhead lighting fixtures (like track lighting), don't sit directly underneath the light. It can create too much contrast on your face and make shadows appear under your eyes.

A bit creepy, no?



04

AUDIO

(SO WE CAN HEAR YOU)

04 AUDIO (SO WE CAN HEAR YOU)

So, you're dressed well and we can see your face. Great! But if the student can't hear you, they'll only learn how good you look in blue. Which is important info, but maybe not relevant to the course.

Hopefully your room is nice and quiet, but if there's anything whirring or buzzing, try to record as far away from the whirry, buzzy thing as you can.



04, cont. AUDIO (SO WE CAN HEAR YOU)

To make sure your voice rises above any sort of whirring or buzzing, use a microphone. Most earbuds come with a built-in microphone, and while it won't give you movie-quality sound, you'll probably sound a lot better than you would without it.

If you think you'll be recording a lot of video, it might be worth it to invest in an external mic. You can find pretty good mics online for cheap.



04, cont. AUDIO (SO WE CAN HEAR YOU)

If you don't have a mic, remember that zooming the camera doesn't zoom the audio. The farther you are from the camera, the more it will sound like you're whispering at someone from across a gymnasium. In other words, it'll be hard to hear you!

FUN FACT: wireless earbuds are a great option if you need some distance between you and the camera.



05

PLACING THE CAMERA — AND YOURSELF

05 PLACING THE CAMERA — AND YOURSELF

You're almost ready! Now you just need to find the best place to put your camera / webcam / smartphone, and your star (you!).

First of all, don't stand directly in front of a wall. Try positioning yourself at an angle and use the wall to add depth to your background.



05, cont. PLACING THE CAMERA — AND YOURSELF

If you're able to stand, we recommend it! Most people are more comfortable on camera when they're standing, and find it more natural to use their hands while speaking.

If you'd prefer to sit, go with a stationary chair. This helps avoid nervous swaying or rolling, and gives you the stability to sit up nice and tall and confident.



05, cont. PLACING THE CAMERA — AND YOURSELF

Once you've found a nice spot for yourself, set the camera up so that it's at eye level. That way, students will feel like you're actually talking to them. After all, they're usually sitting in chairs, not down on the floor or up on the ceiling.

Oh, and eye level makes for a much more flattering picture. Unless, of course, you consider the inside of your nose to be your most attractive feature!





06

IT'S SHOWTIME!

06 IT'S SHOWTIME!

Aaaaand ACTION!

Oops, sorry, didn't give you a chance to rehearse! Before you hit record, read the script out loud a few times, ideally in front of a mirror. If you don't have a script, go over your bullet points and do a few practice runs to make sure you're ready to go.

Either way, the goal is for everything to feel natural. Don't be afraid to make changes on the fly and add your personality if things feel a bit dry!



06, cont. IT'S SHOWTIME!

As you rehearse, try to speak at a normal, conversational pace. No need to rush! But also: no need to go SUPER slow! Find a happy medium so that you're comfortable and students will be able to understand you.

Okay, ready? Aaaaaaand (for real this time) ACTION!

