

ARTIST GUIDE:
CREATING
SHORT FILMS
FOR SOCIAL
MEDIA
AND
WEBSITES



WITH KIND PERMISSION OF



INTRODUCTION

Video is a great way to profile your work and to help the viewer make a connection with you. People love to buy work from artists they feel they know, and video is a good way to start that engagement. You can convey quite a lot in a short time, show a range of work, talk about your creative process and show yourself working.

Video is good for social media; it encourages people to share and increases engagement. It also improves your search engine optimisation; in other words, it helps you to appear on the first page when someone searches on Google or any of the other search engines.

You can use videos on social media, on your website, load them to YouTube to share, and include them in your e-newsletter. You might also want to have a video running when your studio is open to visitors so they can see more about how you create your work.

KIT

You can use your phone, tablet or camera to make videos. This guide focusses on smartphone filmmaking, but the principals are the same whatever you're using.

If you're using a smartphone or connected device, it's quick and easy to share videos and other content that you've created, and the quality from most phones is good.

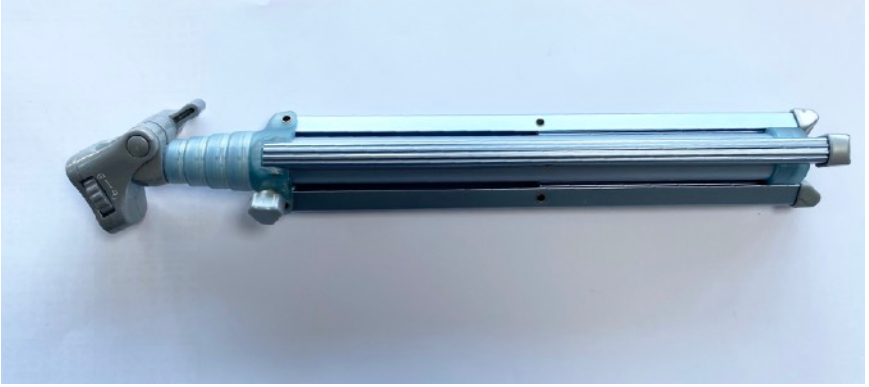
If you already have a smartphone, you don't need to buy any additional equipment, but there are a few relatively inexpensive things that will help you to do a better job.

Tripods

A tripod is the easiest way to hold your phone or camera to create steady shots, particularly if you're filming yourself. If you don't have a tripod, you could place your phone on a shelf, or attach it to a bottle for stability.



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An inexpensive, light tripod is perfectly adequate to use with a phone, unless you think you're likely to be using it on rough ground, in windy conditions or with lots of people around. To use a tripod with your phone, you'll also need to get a small adapter which mounts on the tripod and attaches to the phone. Joby make an inexpensive one. Brands including Shoulderpod, Neewer and Sevenoaks make more robust mounts, some with a cold-shoe which you can use to attach lights or a mic. You can also use some of these as a grip to make it easier to keep your phone steady if you're filming handheld.



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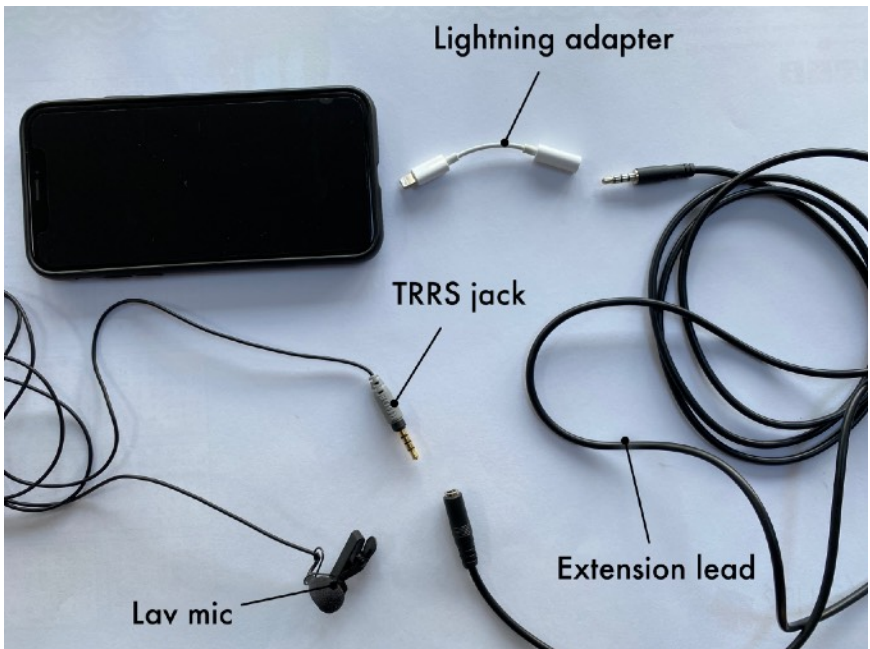
Gimbals are stabilisers which are more expensive than the simple grips, and take some practice but are an excellent way to get steady handheld shots. You can purchase these from DJI, Zhiyun, Neewer and other companies.

If you don't have a grip or gimbal and you're filming handheld, hold your phone in one hand and use the other to steady it. Keep your arms close to your body for stability.

Microphones

Good sound is really important for videos, and even an inexpensive microphone can make a big difference. You can plug a mic into most smartphones using the headphone jack or with an adapter eg a lightning adapter if you have an iPhone.

The jack on the mic you're using needs to be a TRRS, which stands for Tip Ring Ring Sleeve and refers to the contacts. TRRS has three bands.

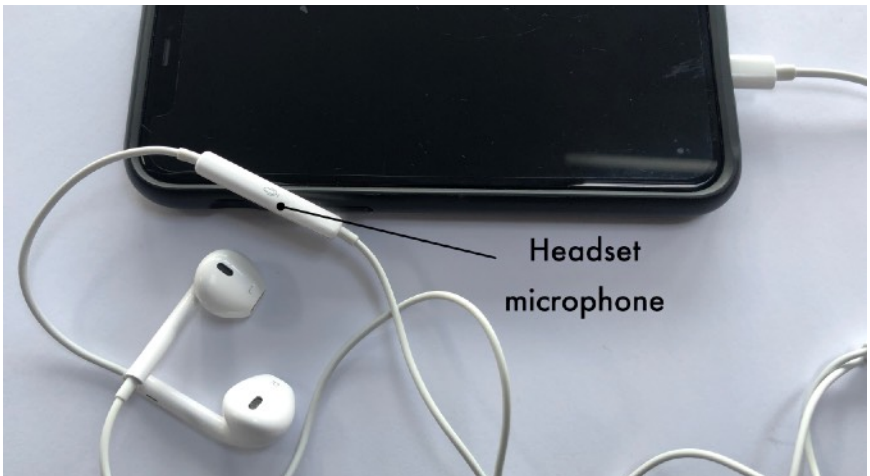


A lapel or lavalier microphone is ideal for recording speech. They tend to have a short lead, so an extension is also a good idea, giving you the flexibility to move further away from the phone. A shotgun mic is directional and useful for recording when the sound source is further away.



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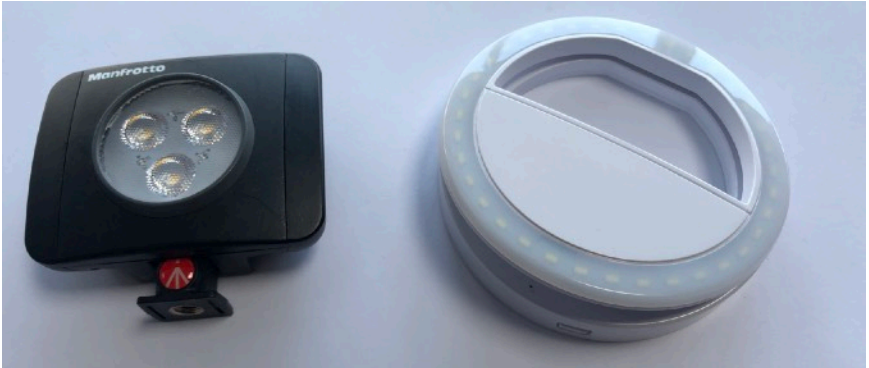
If there's background noise or if you're outside and it's at all windy, you'll really notice the difference in the quality of the sound you can record with a mic. If you don't have a mic, you can improve sound quality by using your smartphone headset. These have a mic for making phone calls and you can improve the sound quality by using this.



If you're purchasing a mic, Røde, Boya and Sennheiser are amongst the brands available for use with Smartphones.

Lights

If you're filming indoors, try to position yourself near a source of natural light. If it's not very bright, you might want to purchase lights. Lume Cube, Manfrotto and other companies make small lights which you can mount on a tripod or onto some smartphone grips. You can also purchase very inexpensive ring lights which clip onto a phone.



Other kit

There are lots of other things you can add to your kit. A couple of things to consider are an external battery pack if you're likely to be filming for long periods of time, and additional lenses such as wide angle or telephoto.



PLANNING

The Story

What's the story you want to tell? Why are you making the video? Think about what others may find interesting, and what might capture their attention.

Audience

Who is your audience? What's their level of interest? It's helpful to have your audience in mind when you're making a video. It will also help you decide where's best to share the video.

Platforms

Where will the video appear? This will also help you to decide on the best format – landscape, portrait or square? Films are traditionally landscape format like a cinema, TV or computer screen. If films are online, more and more people are watching them on a phone without turning it round, so portrait and square films are popular. Recommended formats for different social media platforms change regularly, so it's worth checking what's best before you film.

As well as format, it's worth considering sound. Many people watching videos online don't turn the sound on, so it's a good idea to add captions. This is also good practice for accessibility. For more information about accessibility, see our Welcome Guide. Different platforms accept different lengths of videos, so that's also useful to check before you start.

Call to Action

What do you want people to do when they've seen the video? It could be you want them to visit your studio, it might be to encourage them to buy your work. Remember to include important information about your call to action.

TELLING YOUR STORY

Before you start filming, have a think about what you want to show and what you want to say.

- How can you best show yourself and your work?
- What is there to film? Can you show yourself working? What are the most visually interesting parts of your working process? Would a time lapse work well?
- Where can you film? Do you work in your studio? Do you collect materials outside?
- Will you talk to camera about your work, or will you explain as you go along, giving a commentary about what you're doing? Don't learn lines in advance unless that's something you're really good at – it will sound much less natural.
- Will there be music over the top? Recorded or downloaded?
- For Open Studios promotion, we recommend videos which are no more than 3 minutes and are without music.

BEFORE YOU START!

- Clean the lens. We tend to stuff our phones in bags and pockets and the lens can get dirty easily, so give it a good clean with a soft lens cloth before you start.
- Put your phone into airplane mode and set it to 'do not disturb', otherwise if someone calls or sends you a message, it will interrupt the filming.
- Check you have enough storage on your phone. Video can take up a lot of space.
- If you're filming outside, turn the brightness up so you can see the screen well.
- Connect your microphone.

GETTING THE SHOTS

Which camera?

If you're filming yourself, you can flip the camera round to use the front camera or 'selfie mode', but note that for most phones, the front camera doesn't give such good quality images as the back camera.

Check the light

Try to keep the bright light behind you while you're filming. Make sure you focus on the subject. For most phones, you do this by touching the image of the subject on the screen. This often also sets the exposure. It's worth spending some time practising this in advance.

You could put your phone on a tripod and leave it there to record what's happening, and that's a good way to start, but your video will look more interesting if you get some different shots.

Here's a good shot sequence to try:

- A wide shot or 'establishing shot' sets the scene, so people can see your whole studio, for example.
- Hands – a close-up of what you're doing.
- Face – a shot of your face as you're working.
- A medium shot to show yourself.
- Over the shoulder – the view over your shoulder to link together the two previous shots and put them in context.
- A creative shot – if you're filming with your phone, you can put it in places where you couldn't easily get an ordinary camera. You might be able to put it inside the artwork you're creating, for example. You could place the camera low down, or high up to get an alternative view.

Record plenty of different shots, but don't record too much; this will make it harder to edit. Make sure you record each of your shots for at least 10 seconds.

Moving your phone while recording (panning, tilting or zooming) generally doesn't work so well with a mobile phone, so if you want to get in closer, for example, stop filming, move towards the subject and then film again.

If you're filming yourself talking to camera, make sure you look right at the camera lens. You can put a sticky note on the phone so you can easily see where it is. Place the camera on a level with your eyeline. Check your background looks right, and make sure there are no objects apparently popping out of your head.



FILMING APPS

If you'd like a bit more control while you're filming, there are some apps available. Some are free, others paid for, and prices vary. Here are some examples:

Filmic Pro for [iOS](#) and [Android](#) is one of the most powerful filming apps, giving you control over focus, exposure, audio levels and white balance. There's lots of information and tutorials available via the FilmicPro website.

Lapse it for [iOS](#) and [Android](#) is a time lapse and stop motion app with options to film at high resolution.

EDITING

Once you have all your film, it's time to edit it. You can do this on your phone or tablet using a range of apps. If you're just starting out, Quik, Animoto and Apple Clips will do a lot of the editing for you by automatically selecting video highlights. PicPlayPost is another simple app to create videos for social media. If you want a bit more control, VN and Kinemaster are more advanced and offer lots of features. LumaFusion is one of the most advanced apps and offers many of the features of desktop video editing software.

If you'd rather edit on your computer, you can use one of the paid-for applications such as Adobe Premiere Pro or Final Cut Pro, or one of a number of free editing applications.

Some apps come with their own copyright-free music. If you're adding music yourself, make sure you have the appropriate copyright permissions.

Quik for [iOS](#) or [Android](#) can pretty much do the editing for you. You upload your videos and it will create a simple video by automatically selecting the highlights and putting them together with free music from the app or your own music. It will also let you do some manual editing.

Animoto for [iOS](#) and [Android](#) is another app which allows you to easily create a video or slideshow using stills and video with pre-set styles and music from the app or you can add your own music.

PicPlayPost for [iOS](#) or [Android](#) is another simple app which you can use to create videos, slideshows and video collages.

Apple Clips for [iOS](#) allows you to create simple multi-clip videos and includes special effects and text.

VN is available for [iOS](#) and [Android](#) as well as for [Mac](#) and [Windows](#). It's easy to use and offers lots of flexibility with manual editing options.

KineMaster for [iOS](#) and [Android](#) is an advanced multi-track video editing app. It also lets you add captions, titles and logos.

Luma Fusion is an advanced multi-track editing tool for [iOS](#). It offers many of the features of desktop editing packages.

[Adobe Premiere Pro](#) and [Final Cut Pro](#) are advanced editing applications for desktop

[Adobe Premiere Rush](#) is available for mobile and desktop video editing, and you can start editing a project on your phone and then finish on the desktop.

Captions

Otter is a free app for [iOS](#) and [Android](#) which you can use to transcribe your captions – it listens to the voice and produces the text for you. You can correct any errors that it makes.

You can use [Vont for iOS](#) to add captions and other text to your video.

[AutoCap for Android](#) will transcribe your voice and you can use it to add captions.