

Remote and Low-Tech Video Recording During COVID-19: A Checklist for Content Creators

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly limits in-person interactions, including professional recording of video and audio messages. Likewise, budgets may not always allow for professional videography. Remote and low-tech video recording is the best option for many organizations and also offers the opportunity for community voices to be heard in a new and exciting way. Follow this checklist to enhance the quality of your remote recordings.

- Confirm your technology ahead of time; options could include camera phone recordings or a web-based conferencing tool (ex. Zoom) with a built-in recording feature
- Choose a quiet location with little to no background noise or distractions. Turn off fans and portable heaters or air conditioners if possible.
- Plan to do at least one practice recording, particularly if you are using the technology for the first time, to ensure you have captured the intended audio and video and that you can access the file of the recording
- Avoid clothing that blends in with the background. For example, if the room is painted yellow, do not wear a yellow or beige shirt. Also avoid clothing with busy patterns or shiny fabrics if possible/culturally appropriate.
- Position the cell phone or laptop at eye level (or slightly above) and on a steady surface; you may need to balance your laptop or cell phone on a stack of books to achieve this. Ensure that you can clearly see your face in the video
- If recording with a cell phone, make sure the cell phone is turned horizontally (landscape) while recording
- Ensure the main source of light is in front of you; this is especially true for windows and other large sources of light

- Pay attention to the background of your video. Avoid a background that is cluttered or may be distracting to those watching your video. Pay attention to titles of the books on any bookshelf in view, and the presence of personal items that may be easily overlooked.
- If possible, sit in a chair that does not have wheels and does not swivel
- Look directly at the camera. If using a phone, this will likely mean looking slightly to the left or right of the screen
- Pause for a moment before you begin to speak and before you end the recording session to ensure your words are not cut off
- Do not memorize your answers or read from a script. The best responses are authentic, genuine, and minimally planned
- Speak clearly and at an appropriate volume so your voice is clearly recorded by the microphone. Most people speak too quickly when they are being recorded; it is best to err on the side of speaking too slowly
- When answering question prompts, rephrase the question at the beginning of your response (ex. "I think it is important to be vaccinated because...")
- If you misspeak or if you are interrupted, you don't need to start over. Just start your answer again from the beginning (or the beginning of your last sentence).