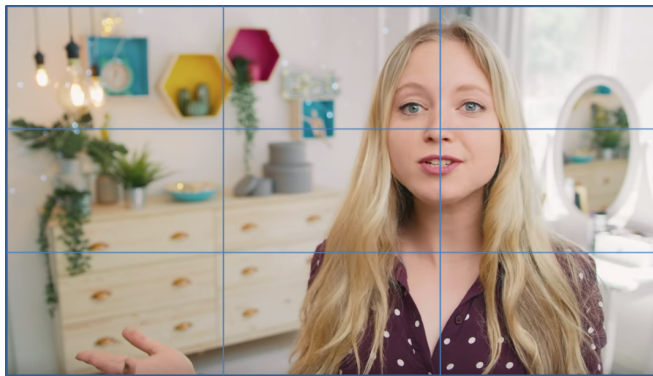# Recording a Video 101

When recording for a group video - or even a solo one! - it's important to make sure you have the right set-up to ensure the best possible quality.

Let's take a look at what we should be thinking of visually when setting up a shot for a video:

- ✓ Subject 2/3rds to one side - eyes drawn to subject, room for on-screen info. **NOTE:** for singing it is best to be centred
- ✓ Head near to, but not cut off at the top, shot from the shoulders/waist up
- ✓ Simple clean background or suitable virtual background
- ✓ Smart, appropriate attire that doesn't blend into the background
- ✓ Camera focused on subject
- ✓ Good lighting, no shadow on face

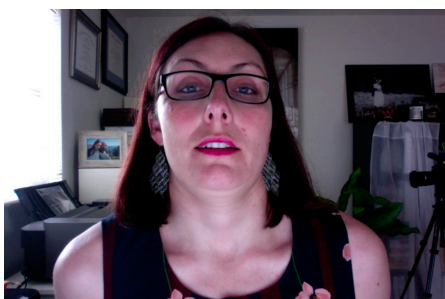Below are some examples of bad video shots and things you need to look out for during set-up.
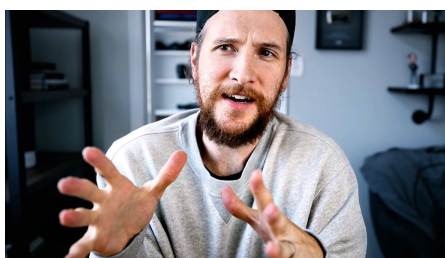
Issue

Top of head cut off, subject filling up full screen

Solution

Zoom and move the camera out, or move further back from camera to give yourself more space

Issue

Bad camera angle from under the chin, common issue when self-recording with a webcam or phone

Solution

Have the camera at eye level, not above or below

Issue

Camera focused on background, not subject

Solution

Make sure your background is simple and your is camera focused on you and not someone/something behind you

Issue

Bad lighting, unable to see subject

Solution

Face the strongest source of light either head on or at a 45º angle to your right or left; do not have it behind you.

Now let's think about the audio quality, which depends a lot on the environment around you.

Ideally you should:

- ✓ Be in a quiet room where you won't be interrupted
- ✓ Have windows closed to avoid noise from outside
- ✓ Turn phones off, or on silent
- ✓ Turn off electricals not in use. These can hum which produces white noise that cameras and microphones can pick up and cover up your voice
- ✓ Close unnecessary applications when recording on a computer. These can not only interrupt a recording with notifications, but can also cause your computer to run hotter and thus the fan to run louder

Now you have your perfect set-up, what can you do during the recording to improve it?

- ✓ Do a test recording first! Then you can be sure there's no buzzing/white noise that your camera or microphone is picking up
- ✓ Leave a small gap of silence of at least 3 seconds at the start of your recording and at the end. This is called the Buffer Space and means videos can be faded in and out without cutting your voice off
- ✓ Speak clearly and at a steady, consistent level. Don't worry if you make a mistake! Just pause for a moment and repeat the line, as the mistake can be edited out
- ✓ Try to keep your eyes on the camera, put something behind or on top of the camera to focus on if that helps. This will make sure you're talking directly to the audience