

Expert Tips for Looking Good on Camera

- ✓ Camera
- ✓ Positioning
- ✓ Lighting
- ✓ Audio
- ✓ Environment



Camera

Camera quality is becoming more and more important, not only in the context of video interviews, but also in everyday life; it could make sense to invest a little extra on a more professional webcam setup over a cheaper video webcam.

Your choice of a camera will be influenced by your personal preferences, and budget.

Many new laptop computers come with a decent built-in webcam, but unfortunately, they have a lot of limitations. Mobility is a big one: the angle between your face and your laptop display is not ideal for creating a flattering or attentive look, and there's not much you can do about it when the webcam is fixed inside of a laptop screen.

An external USB webcam offers more flexibility along with other improvements that help you look and sound your best on screen.

Most external USB webcams will have settings where you can adjust the brightness, zoom, white balance and other visuals to create a bright and balanced image.

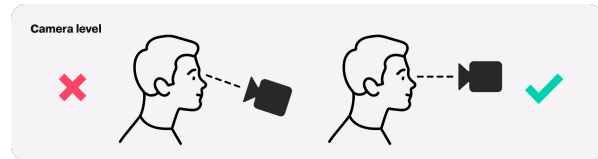


Camera Position

The first thing you should think about whenever you are on video is camera placement.

Position your camera just above eye level, angled slightly downward for the best angle. The camera should not be any higher than your hairline.

Your camera should be around 2ft (60cm) from your face, this is the rule of thumb for most cameras.



External Webcam

Place the webcam on a stack of books, a box, tripod or webcam grip behind your monitor. You will want the webcam to be just above your eye-line, almost directly in front of your forehead and then tilt downwards.

Built-In Webcam

Like the advice above, place your laptop on top of something (books, a standing desk, etc.) to get the webcam to the level of your forehead.



Lighting

Lighting is fundamental to looking great on camera, and looking bright and sharp conveys professionalism and can even increase *your* confidence.

Natural Light

If you're lucky enough to have a natural light source, like a big window, great! Natural light is typically soft and will illuminate you and nicely. Though for most, artificial lighting is the solution to looking great on camera.

Light from the front

Remove any bright light sources directly behind where you sit, try to avoid having windows or bright lights the background of your set-up.

Type of lighting

There are many types of lighting suitable to video conferencing, and a quick search on Google or Amazon will take you to the most popular lighting used for video conferencing.

Ring lights are popular because they cast soft and even light, reducing shadows on the face, minimizing blemishes and illuminating the eyes. Cube and LED panel lighting is also very popular delivering similar results.

White balance

Most lights come with the ability to change the white balance to either increase the warmup or cool down the lighting. Find the balance using the settings or control for your lights to create a natural look that isn't too orange, or blue.



Audio

Video conferencing is fast becoming the number one tool for communication and collaboration. Audio issues can completely negate the benefits of video conferencing, it is vital that a suitable audio solution is in place for it to be a successful and efficient call.

Background noise

Background noise is one of the main issues with video conferencing. The rustling of papers, clicking of pens and even sound leakage from other meetings rooms can be picked up on the other end of the call and cause dissatisfaction to those listening in. To resolve this, there are specific types of microphones available that are designed to pick up only intended audio whilst rejecting unwanted ambient noises including; fans, computers, pen clicking and noises from adjacent rooms.

Microphones

There's a huge number of microphones available on the market, and your environment will largely dictate your best choice.

Microphones can cut down unnecessary background noise and provide clarity of audio during video conferencing and will have a noticeable impact on the audio quality.

Good microphone placement will also ensure crisp and clear sound.



Environment

Background

Even though you've made yourself the center of attention in your webcam video, you still need to be cognizant of what's behind you. Your audience will notice everything, and it can distract their attention.

Try to keep the background simple by avoiding anything that looks busy or cluttered. Think about noises, dogs barking, traffic, doors opening and closing and try to keep to a minimum, or block with the means available to you.

Wi-Fi

Video calls help us communicate best with our coworkers, but when they lag, they can be more frustrating than useful. No one likes to be on either end of a video call that freezes. Or when the audio cuts in and out. Or when the video doesn't load at all.

To make sure that your Wi-Fi is video-conference-ready, you need:

- Fast Wi-Fi speeds
- A solid Wi-Fi signal
- A reliable internet connection
- A secure Wi-Fi network



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