**How to film a vlog**

A vlog may seem simple to create at first, but there can be a lot of unforeseeable hurdles during production.

Some professional YouTubers vlog daily. This takes a huge amount of production time and media management. If you’re just starting out, don’t overwhelm yourself with pressure. Go at your own pace. A vlog is a window into your personal life that you share with an audience, so take your time and have fun with it.

**What equipment do you need to film a vlog?**

You don’t need expensive gear to create a vlog. You likely already have the basic tools to get started on your vlogging journey.

The essential tool is, of course, **a camera**. So long as the camera can record video footage, it is all you need to get started.

You don’t need to break the bank. Any camera will do, but try and get the best quality footage possible in every situation you are shooting.

One of the most accessible cameras now is the one on your smartphone. The front facing camera on contemporary smartphones is on par with mid-tier digital cameras now. It’s a perfect tool to film your first vlog with.

I have written a previous article on [top tips to record professional footage from a smartphone](https://digitalcommunications.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/2016/03/23/8-tips-on-recording-professional-video-with-a-smartphone/).

**A microphone** can improve your spoken footage a lot. This can be a wearable lavalier microphone, or you can simply use the microphone that comes with your smartphone’s headphones. This is not essential, but can help for outdoor filming, especially when it is windy!

**What footage to film for a vlog**

There is a lot more to capturing footage for your vlog than just going out and filming every single aspect of your day.

To shoot an interesting vlog when first starting out, you’re going to have to plan a story or a journey for your vlog. Treat it as a very short film.

Are you attending an event? Are you going on a trip? Is there something special about your day that would be engaging to a complete stranger?

Bring the viewer along on the journey – don’t let them just be a passenger, keep them engaged with the video by talking directly to them.

**Filming yourself in public**

When in a public setting, it is instinctively awkward to talk to yourself. It’s even more awkward when you then point a camera at yourself and start talking.

Don’t be afraid to pick up the camera and capture your footage. After a few times, it will become second nature to you. Believe in what you’re doing and do it for the final footage!

**Shoot plenty of B-roll footage**

A secret ingredient to a high-quality vlog is b-roll footage. This is essentially filler video footage that you have captured throughout your production. The type of footage you may see in a montage.

Make it cinematic. Be creative. Try different filming techniques. Try a timelapse. Try a slow-motion shot. Film that cute cat that just walked by. Trust me, it’ll come in handy later when editing.

**How to edit a vlog**

I have written a previous post on [essential steps for editing your videos](https://digitalcommunications.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/2016/03/30/7-essential-steps-for-editing-professional-videos/). This includes what software you should use, organising your files, and trimming your takes.

Here are some vlog-specific editing tips:

**Getting to know your footage**

Before you even begin the edit and trimming process, the first step to editing a vlog or any short film is getting to know your footage.

Bring all your footage into your software. Scrub through all of it to see what you’ve shot so you can familiarise yourself with your footage.

**Chronological order**

Most vlogs are structured chronologically. The way you shoot is the way you edit. You begin at the start of your day and finish at the end of your day.

Drop all your footage you have selected for your vlog into the timeline of your project in chronological order. Then all you need to do is cut it all up.

**The cutting room floor**

Now that all your footage is in the timeline, remove all the parts you don’t want in your vlog. This may be any dud takes, word fumbles, out-of-focus shots, all of that.

You are taking all the footage you have shot and fitting it into a five to ten-minute window.

Stick to your story plan. Take out any content that does not fit your story.

**Finding the hook**

When editing your footage, be on the lookout for a 10 to 15-second section that is the most exciting and interesting part of your video.

This could be a key sentence, an amazing activity, or an emotional or funny moment.

This is the heart of the video, the hook that will keep your audience engaged.

You can drop this hook at the start of your vlog to make the viewers want to keep watching to find out the full context.

**Exporting your vlog**

You’ve filmed your video, and you’ve gone to great technical lengths to edit it. Now you need to get your film from the editing suite to the web. Rendering a video for web can be often over-looked and rushed, but there are some essential phrases and terminology you must be aware of to make sure your video is in the best condition possible.

I have written a previous post on [rendering video content for web,](https://digitalcommunications.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/2016/04/06/rendering-and-exporting-video-for-web/) and a lot of those tips still apply.

The top tip, however, is to match your render settings to your source material. You want your vlog to look as high quality as possible, so matching the render settings with the raw footage is the best way to do this.

Keep your frame rate the same as your source.

Keep your resolution the same as your source.

**Final top tips**

In summary, here are the essential tips you should keep in mind when creating a vlog:

* Make the first 15 seconds matter.
* Audience attention span is short. Keep your content engaging.
* Talk to your audience.
* Don’t be scared to talk to the camera.
* Don’t be scared of what you sound or look like on film. Your audience won’t see your insecurities.
* Be yourself.