Interview Recording Guide

First things first

- We will use *OBS Ninja* to record remote discussions and interviews
- You will not have to do any editing. Your task is to record the sources (video/audio of you and the guest) and then send them to Robs. He will edit the final video.

CONTENTS

- REQUIREMENTS
- STEP BY STEP
- MOBILE DEVICES
- TROUBLESHOOTING / FAQ
- GOOD LIGHT
- GOOD SOUND
- BACKGROUND
- CAMERA POSITION

Requirements (for both, you and your guest)

1. **Use Google Chrome** (it might work on other Chromium-based browsers but it is best tested on Chrome)
2. **Use Ethernet**, not on Wifi
3. If on a laptop, **plug it in** to avoid any CPU throttling
4. **USE HEADPHONES** (!)
5. If possible, use a **decent microphone** with wind protection ('Poppschutz')
6. Avoid **background noise** sources (air condition, fans, fridge, dishwasher, cell phone)
7. If all else fails, the guest can use a mobile device. In that case, please refer to MOBILE DEVICES below

USE HEADPHONES*

* or earphones, both you and your guest

Cheatsheet - Quick and Dirty

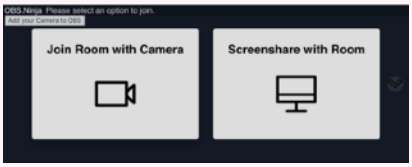
1. Invitation link: `https://obs.ninja/?r=c3nrec&aec=0&q=1&pw=PWD` (change PWD)
2. You and guest join the room
3. Open the control center `https://obs.ninja/?director=c3nrec&pw=PWD`
4. Record the session (you: local, guest: remote, unless they are on a mobile device) and get the guest's recorded .webm file
5. Test if recording went well (in VLC or Chrome)
6. Transfer the files to Robs

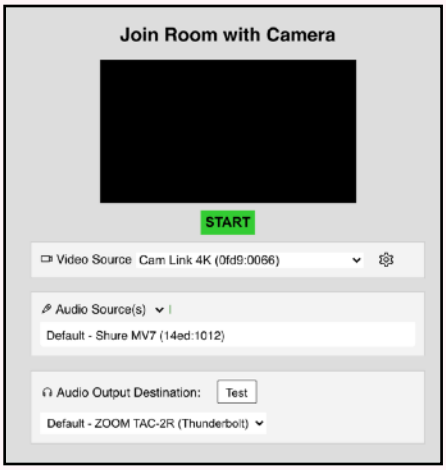
Details below ⬇ (make sure you **practice** this before doing your first real interview)

STEP BY STEP

✉ STEP 1: Create an invitation link and send it to the guest

1. Template: `https://obs.ninja/?r=c3nrec&aec=0&pw=PWD`
2. **Replace PWD** with a short password of your choice, a-z, 0-9 are allowed. Doesn't have to be secure, it will mostly help make the room unique. Open in Chrome.
3. **Send the link to your guest** and ask them to
   a. Join Room with Camera
   b. Select **Video Source** aka *webcam*.
   c. Select **Audio Source** aka *microphone*. The green audio meter should move.
   d. Select **Audio Output** aka *headphones*. The 'Test' button will play a short sound through the selected device.
   e. Press START

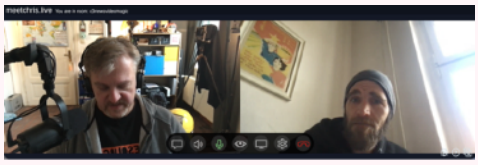




🔑 STEP 2: Join the room

Join the room using the exact same link that you sent to your guest.

Choose camera, microphone and headphones, click START.

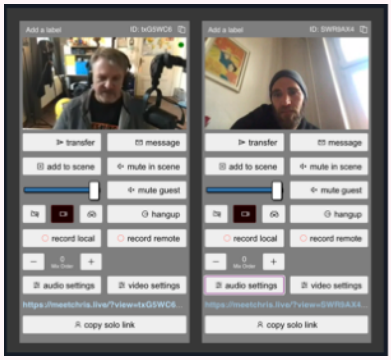


You should now both see and hear each other. If not, see TROUBLESHOOTING below.

NOTE: Audio and video quality in the recordings will typically be better than the quality you see and hear in this room.

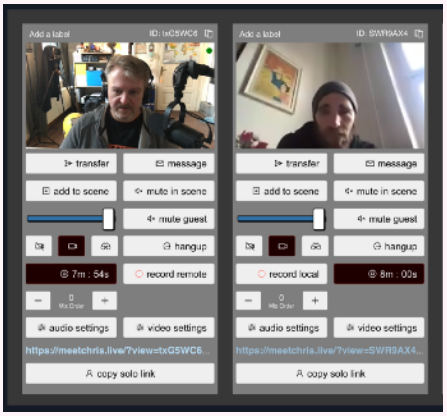
⚙ STEP 3: Open the control center in a second Chrome tab

You will start/stop the recording in the control center

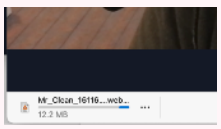


1. In Chrome go to `https://obs.ninja/?director=c3nrec&pw=PWD`
2. Replace PWD with the above password
3. You will see small live video of you and your guest
4. Resist the temptation to play with all the buttons
5. Click on *Add a label* at the left top of the guest and give them a name. Also give yourself a name. This will be later used for the recording file name.

🎙 STEP 4: Record the session



1. Record your own video: click ***record local*** under your video tile
2. Record the guest video: click ***record remote*** under their video tile. Depending on the browser used by the guest, they might be prompted to allow saving a file. Instruct them to allow and save the file.
3. When asked "What bitrate would you like to record at?" **enter 2000**
4. After the recording has started, to help synchronize the videos, please do a countdown and both clap on zero ("*5 4 3 2 1 CLAP*")
5. Do your interview
6. After the session is finished, click the black recording buttons again to stop recording
7. Depending on browser it is possible that the guest is asked to save the file
8. Have the guest send you their recorded file, for example via wetransfer.com



During recording, your guest might see an ongoing file save in their browser. This is normal.

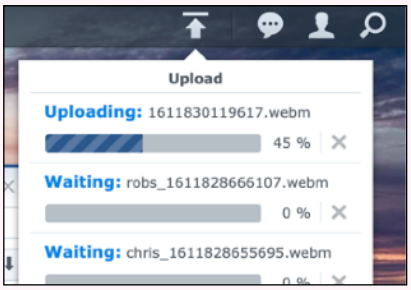
STEP 5: Test if the recording was successful

The recorded file will have the extension .webm. This format can be played back in VLC or directly by dragging it onto an empty Chrome browser tab.

If recording was successful, the video should be smooth (high enough frame rate) and the sound shouldn't sound strange (buzzy, robot-like) but normal.

Low sound volume can typically be fixed later and shouldn't be an issue. Also don't worry about the size of the video. In VLC it might even change. That's expected.

STEP 6: Upload files to Robs



- To make it easier for Robs, **rename the files** to include your and your guest's name, example:
  `chris_interview1.webm`
  `robs_interview1.webm`
- Go to http://quickconnect.to/c3newscloud
- Username: c3news, ask Robs for the password
- Click on "File Station"
- Click 'Create Folder' and create a new folder with a speaking name
- Select 'Upload' > 'Upload - Skip'
- Select the files to upload, then wait for the upload to finish

SPECIAL CASE: MOBILE DEVICES

While a laptop on ethernet is preferred, a guest might have to use a mobile device. In that case, a few things will be different:

- The mobile video will be at a super low frame rate in the room, down to 1fps or lower. This is normal to save resources on the device and will not influence the recording frame rate.
- Make sure the device is charged and preferably powered.
- The device should not rest on the desk (nostril & double chin perspective) but at eye-height
- **You can not *record remote*** on mobile devices, instead choose ***record local***. The file will then be recorded and saved on **your** system instead of theirs.

Also: no vertical video please. Have the guest rotate their device to the side.

TROUBLESHOOTING / FAQ

Device selection issues? Are you on Chrome? Is your guest on Chrome or on a Chromium-based browser?

Choppy connection? For a smoother connection, try to avoid Wifi. If you record your own video locally and the guest video remotely both recordings should still be fine though.

Can't see or hear the other side? Refresh the browser, join again.

Still can't see or hear each other? Check if you're using the same password everywhere

Guest video is only 1 frame per second? With guests on iOS, slow frame rate in the room is normal. The recording should still be smooth.

In STEP 5, is the size of the video changing? Don't worry about it, that's expected.

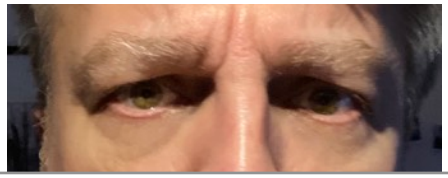
If nothing else helps, REBOOT

LIGHT: Make yourself look good

When recording, watch out for the direction of light. Bigger light sources are more flattering. During daytime, try facing a window when recording.

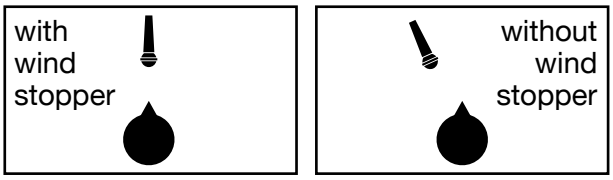
side-lit ✗ face too dark on one side, too bright on the other	**back-lit** ✗ not enough light on the face	**front-lit** ✓ **bigger light source** entire face is lit, no hard shadows
***X* small light source** ✗ creates hard shadows	***X* small light source & odd light direction** ✗ nope	***X* errr.. nope** ✗

Check the eyes for **catchlights**. Ideally both eyes should have some bright light reflexes in them. If you can't see catchlights, your light sources are too far up or too far to the side.

no catchlights in the eyes ✗ looks dead	**catchlights** ✓ looks alive
	

AUDIO: Make yourself SOUND good

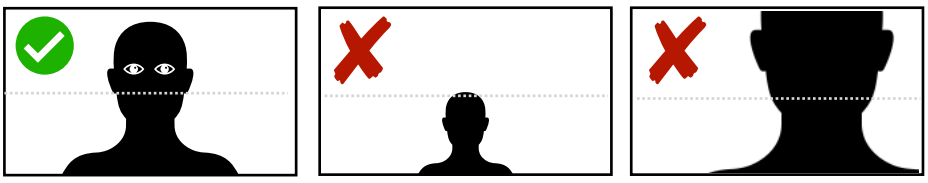
- Try to keep the microphone **no further than 20cm** from your mouth
- Use a **wind stopper** ('Poppschutz') if possible. It will prevent plosives ("**P**e**PP**er, **P**enguin, **p**ick") and vadering. A foam wind stopper is perfect.
- If you don't have a wind stopper, move the mic slightly to the side



- No recording in the bathroom! (hard surfaces increase echo)
- A great sounding recording place has **clutter, bookshelves, carpet, curtains**, e.g. a mix of hard and soft and uneven surfaces
- Sitting in front of an open wardrobe can help, but isn't usually necessary if you keep close enough to the microphone
- First best option: dedicated microphone, close to mouth, wind stopper (foam etc.)
- Gaming headsets generally work, but they tend to make your voice tinny / harsh sounding
- Keep background noise to a minimum (air condition, fan, dishwasher, kids, mobile phones)

VIDEO BACKGROUND: Remove distractions

- Turn around and look behind you. This is what your camera will see
- Try to avoid distractions in the background or make them part of your personality
- If you know how to properly use and light a green screen, that is an option too

CAMERA POSITION & FRAMING

- Try to get the camera to **eye-height** or slightly above
- Nobody wants to look into your nostrils from below
- If you're recording with a laptop webcam, try to **raise the laptop** using books, boxes, etc.
- Put yourself into the center of the frame with your eyes above the middle line
- Leave a bit of space above your head