

Interview Recording Guide v1.5 2021-12

First things first

- We will use VDO 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 an editor. They 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 in the power 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 do this from a mobile device. In that case, please refer to MOBILE DEVICES below



Cheatsheet - Quick and Dirty

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

STEP BY STEP

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

- 1. Template: https://vdo.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, but it will make your 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

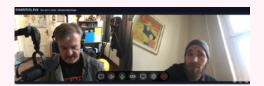




STEP 2: Join the room

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.

Make sure both your and your guest's link don't have a a spush=.. parameter in the URL, this will be added automatically by the system and is unique to the participant

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

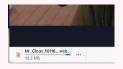
You will start/stop the recording in the control center

- In Chrome go to https://vdo.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 *Additional controls,* then click **record local** under your own video
- 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 both black recording buttons 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

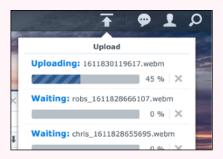
The recorded file will have the extension .webm. This format can be played back in VLC or by dragging it onto an empty Chrome browser tab.

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

Low sound volume can be fixed later and shouldn't be an issue. Also don't worry about video dimensions. In VLC you might even see the video change size. That is expected.

STEP 6: Upload files to the editor

- To make it easier for the editor, rename the files to include your and your guest's name, example: chris_interview1.webm quest1_interview1.webm
- Upload the files to the [tbd] folder on the c3news team nextcloud



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 guest's mobile video might show at a super low frame rate on your screen, down to 1fps or lower. This is normal to save resources on the mobile device and will not affect the recording frame rate.
- Make sure the quest's device is charged and preferably powered.
- The device should not rest on the desk (nostril & double chin perspective) but at eyeheight (a stack of books helps)
- 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.



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 on the screen is normal. The recording should still be smooth.

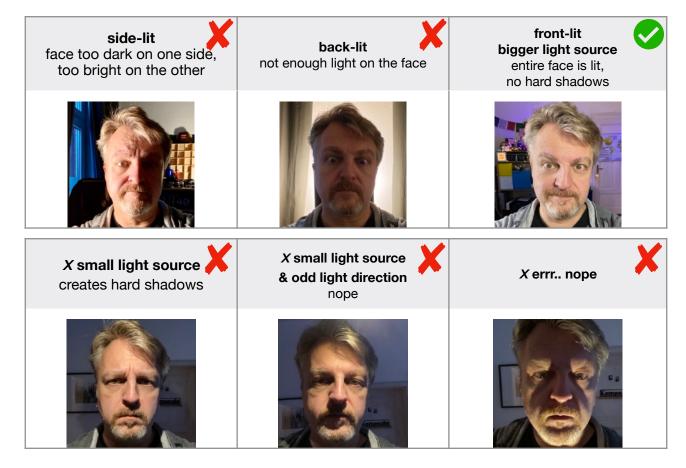
In STEP 5, is the size of the video changing Don't worry about it, that's expected.

Remote recording doesn't start on guest's browser Seems like you found a rare bug. Workaround: stop remote recording and start it again. After remote recording is started, verify with the guest that they see an ongoing file save at the bottom of their browser.

Emergency DECT: 5545 (chris)

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.

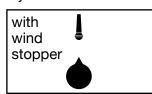


Check the eyes for catchlights. Ideally both eyes should have some bright light reflexes in them. If you can't see catchlights, your light sources are too far up or too far to the side.



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 ("PePPer, Penguin, pick") and vadering. A foam wind stopper is perfect.
- If you don't have a wind stopper, move the mic slightly to the side





If you hear an echo of your own voice coming back from the guest, ask them to lower their headphone volume

- 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





