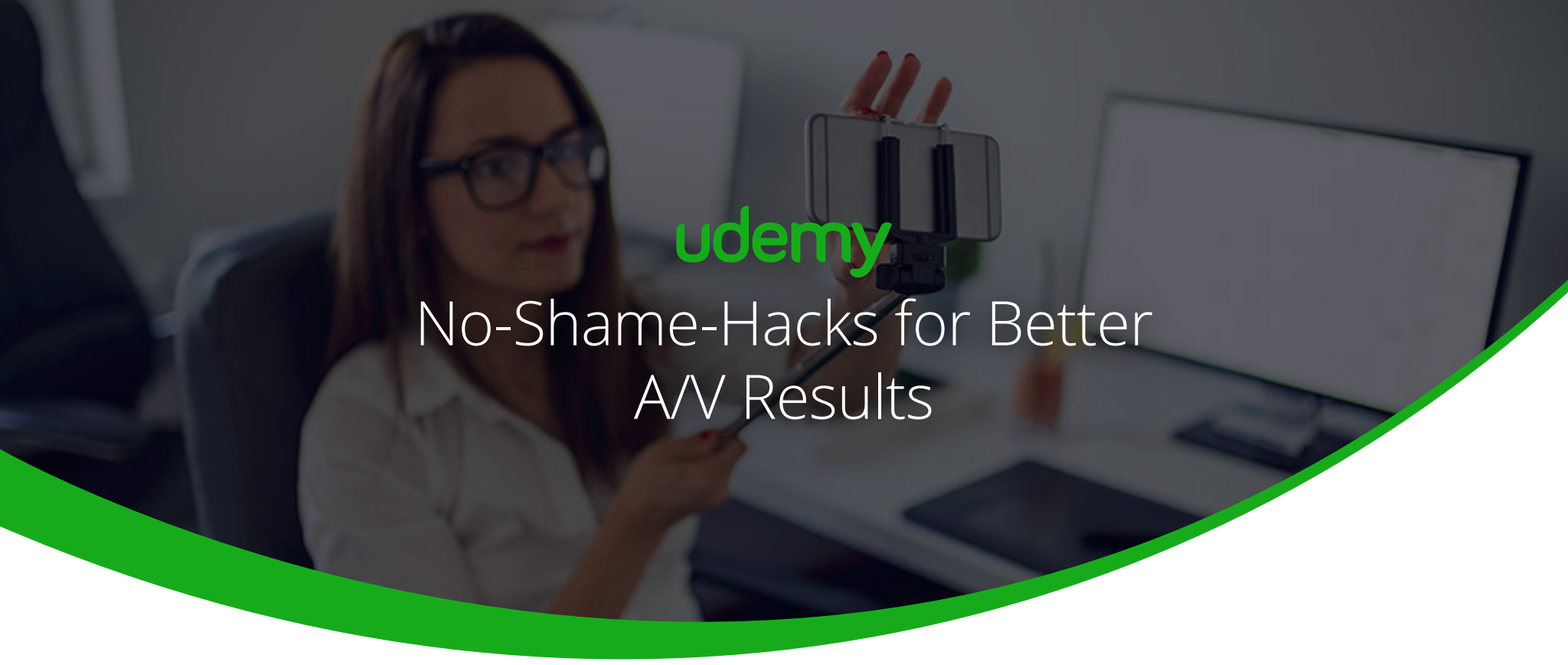


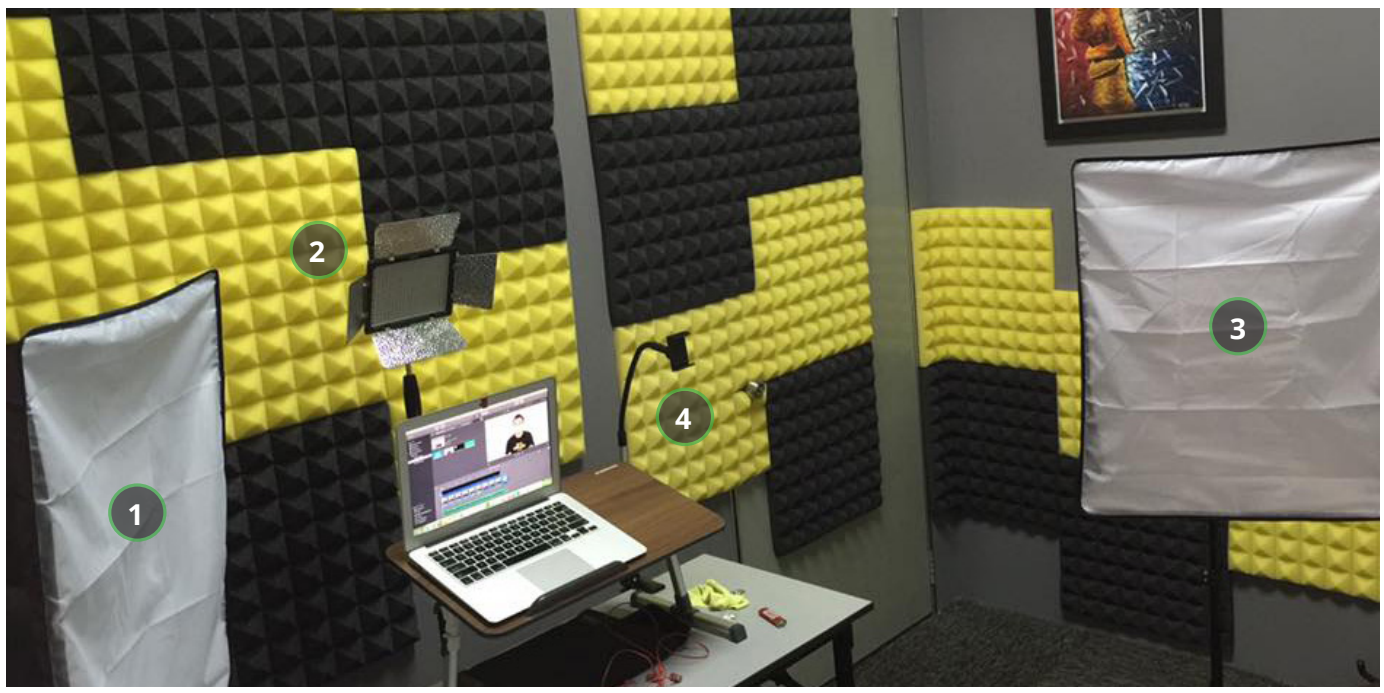
udemy

No-Shame-Hacks for Better A/V Results

Most of our instructors don't have the luxury of having access to a professional studio and expensive equipment. And the good news is: you don't need to! At Udemy, we don't require you to buy expensive equipment to record your videos, but we do require that you have a certain level of quality in your course lectures. This might mean investing in one key piece of equipment like a microphone, or it might mean getting creative with your recording setup. Luckily, thousands of instructors have gone through the same struggles you have, and have found very creative solutions that we're excited to share with you. Try out some of the hacks shown below to see if your current equipment will get the job done.

Hacks for Better Audio Results:

1. Soundproofing your room - Gobala Krishnan



1. Softbox Lighting 2. LED Lighting 3. Softbox Lighting 4. Mobile Cell Holder

Gobala almost gave up on using this small room for recording, the echo was just too bad. But then he found some really affordable wall padding that did the trick. This sort of wall padding is called pyramid acoustic foam. It generally costs only about $3-6 per square, and he didn't even need all of the 24 pieces he bought. Overall, it was money well spent!

2. Bringing in the garden umbrella (and lots of fabrics) - Emese Liliom

1. Garden Umbrella 2. Blanket 3. Lights 4. Pillow
5. Old Bedsheet 6. Cushion 7. Carpet

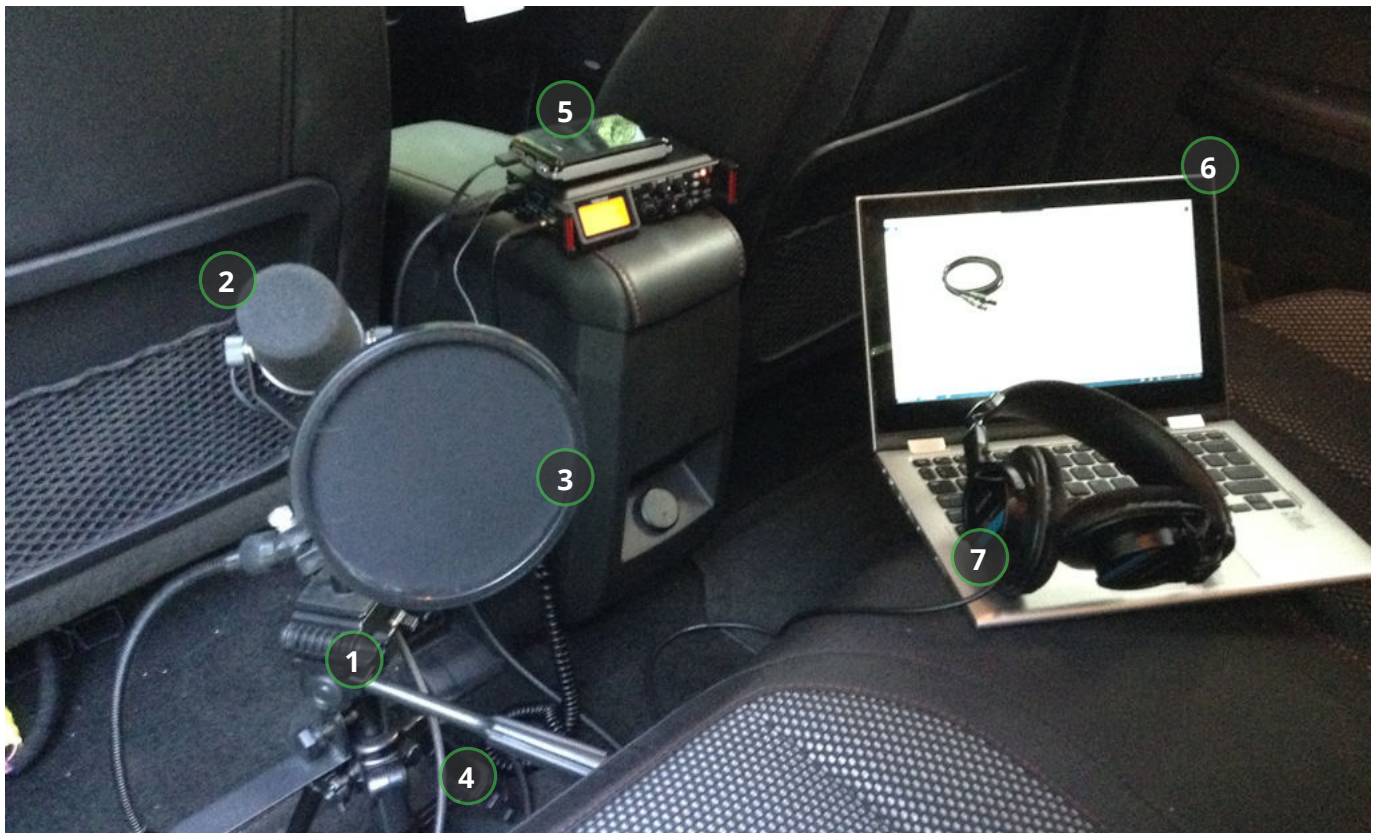
Emese is filming her courses in a former garage which has been changed into an office. So one of the biggest audio issues she's had to deal with is echo. When she explains how to crochet, she's talking directly at the table, which caused sound waves to bounce back and create echo. So she placed a former frottier bedsheet directly on the table. The fluffy surface of the frottier catches the audio waves of her voice, reducing the echo. To maximize the effect, she added fabrics on the floor and around her. Since she can't drill or stick anything to the walls, she brought in a lot of pillows, blankets, sheets and carpets, which she could hang over pieces of furniture or place against the walls or on the floor. And to top it off, she brought in the garden umbrella and created her own hacky little soundproof studio!

3. Alternative recording studio & standing desk - Ardit Sulce

1. Tablet 2. Laptop 3. Microphone with Pop Filter

Ardit found a great hack that helped him improve the audio of his screencast lectures: recording in your closet. The clothes and the shape of the closet reduce echo. Plus it makes for a great standing desk. He can fit 2 screens and his microphone with tripod and pop filter in there - the perfect setup for screencast lectures.

4. Recording in your car - David Power



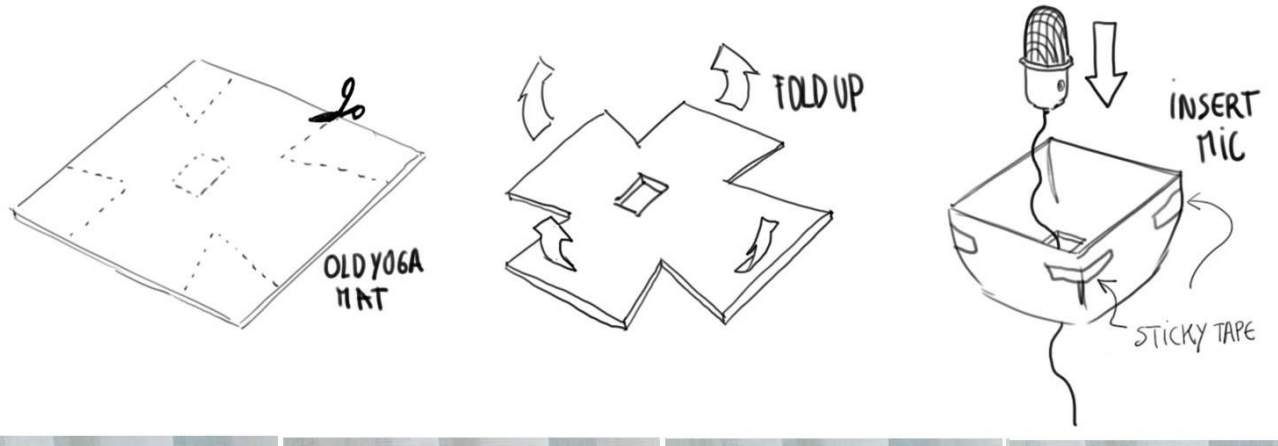
1. Tripod: Velbon EX Macro	2. Microphone: Shure SM7B	3. Pop Filter: Nady MPF-6	4. XLR Cable: Audio- Technica AT8314 10’
5. Recorder: Tascam DR-70Dc	6. Laptop for script	7.Headphones MDR-750	

One of the biggest challenges is capturing audio that doesn’t sound like it’s been recorded in a submarine (i.e. hollow and echo-ey.) A solution that has worked for David is: Record in a car – Yes. You read that correctly. Compared to most of the rooms in our homes, it has:

- **Lots of irregular shapes** – Car interiors have humps and bumps and angular surfaces.
- **Soft, absorptive surfaces** – Car seats are covered in foam and cloth or leather. Floors are covered in carpet and rubber. Roof interiors are usually foam covered in cloth. Sound waves get absorbed by these surfaces rather than reflected.
- **Even the hard surfaces** (i.e. windshields and side windows) aren’t parallel to one another. So when sound waves bounce directly off the glass, they’re directed downward towards a soft, irregularly-shaped surface rather than back towards another window.

All of these characteristics make the interior of a car a very good recording environment. Ideally, record in the back seat. Not only can you slide a front seat forward to give you more legroom but you also put the sound source (i.e. your mouth) further from the front windshield which helps keep audible reflections to a minimum.

5. Yoga for Your Microphone - Marco Vale



Check out this simple echo reduction trick Marco discovered for his Zoom H1 recorder. In order to build this he used an old Yoga mat and cut out a cross shape as seen in the picture above. He then folded up and taped the edges, and placed his microphone into the small hole in the middle. This nice little foam wall helps reduce echo and can be built out of acoustic material for only a few bucks, or for free if you gave up on Yoga and want to recycle your mat.

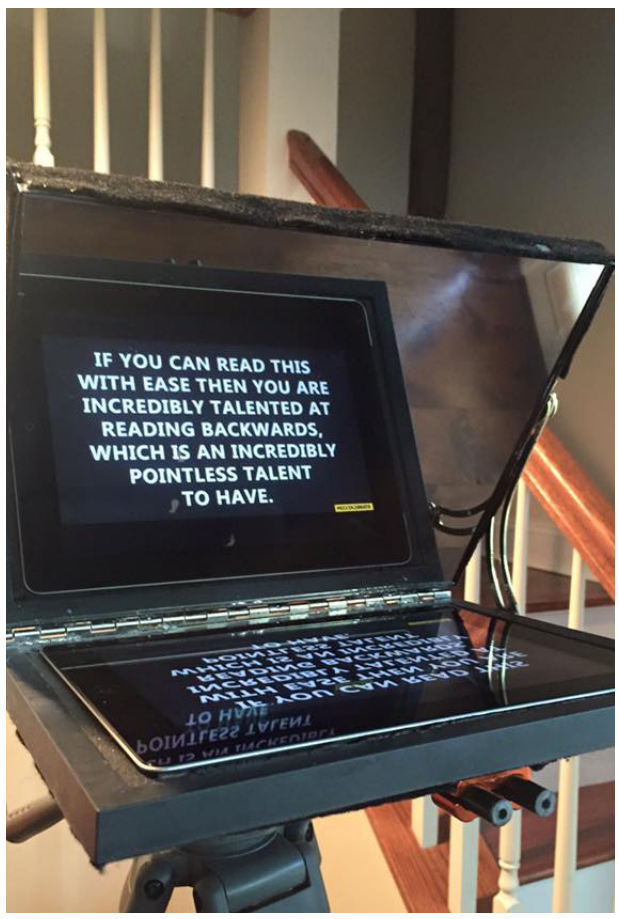
Hacks for Better Video Results:

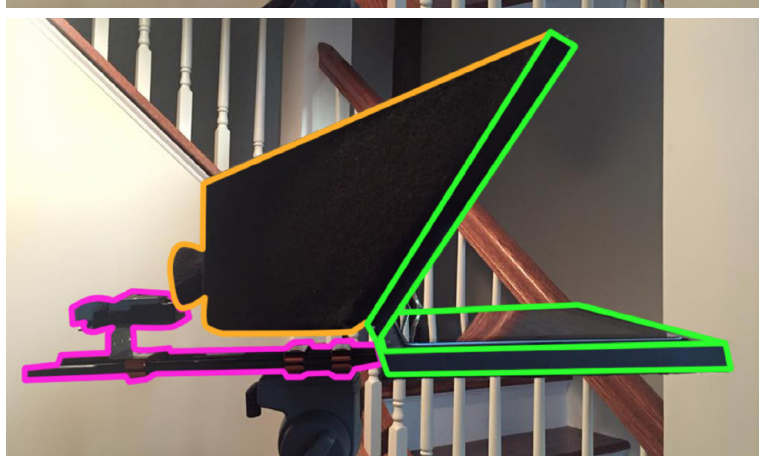
1. Homemade green screen for under $10 - Catherine Kelly

Don’t have a great background in your house, or want to be able to mix it up? Catherine found a solution for you! She built her own green screen out of poster board. It’s versatile and super cheap (she built her green screen for under $10). She uses the free (!) editing software Blender, where you can even map around your body to crop out the rest of your wall, so you don’t need to have the entire frame be green.

Catherine recommends buying the poster board in MATTE GREEN, especially when your skin tone is rather pale. On her first try the camera had a hard time recognizing her skin in front of the background, but getting MATTE GREEN and a photography lighting kit helped fix that issue.

2. Homemade Teleprompter for $50 - Nick Fox





Right before filming a new course, Nick decided to build a teleprompter himself. This made talking head videos a breeze. The total cost for this project was about $50 (granted, he already had an iPad), and the parts he used were:

- 2x 8.5x11 picture frames
- 1x friction lid support
- 2x 8.5x11 craft foam sheets
- Styrene sheeting
- 1x piano hinge
- Foam weather stripping
- Mirrored window tint
- Liquid Nails glue, JB Weld, E6000 or similar

Directions:

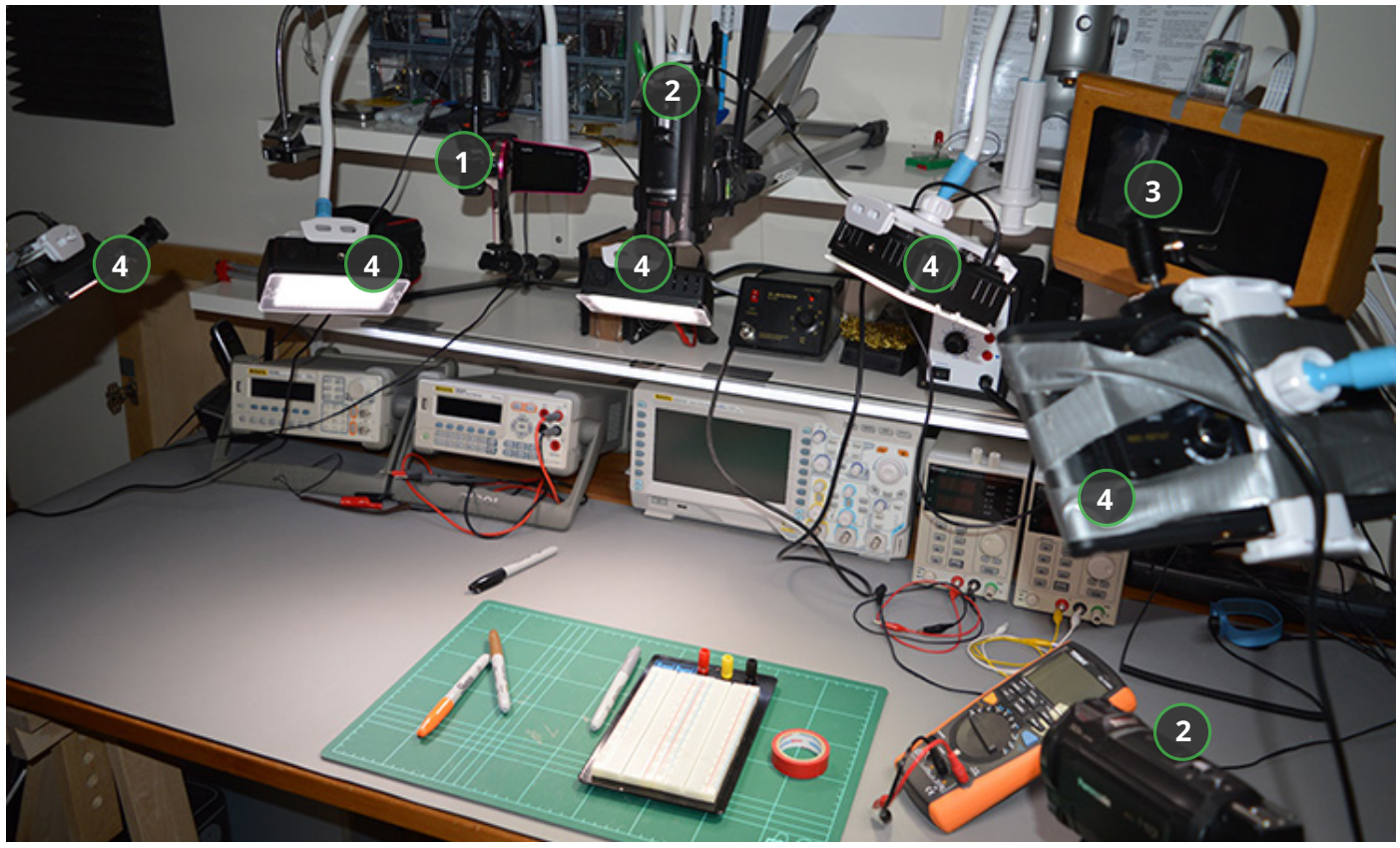
1) Cut the cross bracing out of the picture frames.
2) Cut styrene to fit in the front of one of the frames (replacing the glass), glue it in with liquid nails.
3) Cut one of the craft foam sheets to fit into the styrene-backed frame, to make a soft place for the iPad to go. Glue it in.
4) Fit weather stripping tape to the short ends to prevent the iPad from jostling.
5) Cut the piano hinge to size, then glue it to the long edge of the frames, facing the same direction (styrene on bottom and the open face where glass will go from the other facing down).
6) Once that dries, mount the friction lid support to one side of the whole assembly to hold the two frames open at a good angle.
7) Apply mirrored tint to one of the pieces of glass from the frames, and insert it into the top frame.

The hood was built by using illustrator board on the sides, and THICK craft foam sheets on the top and bottom, all cut into trapezoidal shapes, and covered with cheap black felt. But you could start out by draping a black T-shirt over the lens and picture frame.

Nick's support system is made of fiberglass tent poles for "rails" and spark plug wire holders for the bracket But you can also place the prompter on a table and put the camera on a tripod right behind it.

There are lots of teleprompter apps you can download to use for your script. One that we can recommend is the "Teleprompter Pro" app (on iTunes, or on Google Play Store).

3. Full Homemade Studio - Peter Dalamaris



1. Sanyo Exacty full HD
2. Panasonic -HCV-4770M
3. Bench computer txplo.re/2cExbY1
4. LED lights

1. Brick backdrop
2. Rode Smart Lav+
3. LED lights
4. Panasonic HCV-4770M
5. Parrot Teleprompter with iPhone 4S

Peter does a lot of demonstrations in his courses, so to get this action on screen, he uses three cameras. Two Panasonic cameras cover the workbench from the top and the side, and one Sanyo camera points to his face for opening and closing talking head lectures. He has a Rode lapel microphone because it's less sensitive to background and equipment noise, and he connects it to his phone which he uses as a dedicated audio recorder.

For talking head videos he uses the Parrot Teleprompter and his iPhone 4s with the Teleprompter Pro App. Vinyl sheets with white, gray, or brick patterns serve Peter as backdrop. Instead of using a couple of bright lights that can cause some shadows, Peter prefers to use lots of light points and uses gooseneck holders for flexibility.

For screencast lectures, Peter has a USB iRig HD Microphone with a pop filter. As software he uses iShowU Instant Advanced (Mac only), and he does is editing in Adobe Premiere Pro CC. He's currently taking a Udemy course to learn how to do visual after effects in Adobe After Effects.

Peter says most instructors can get away with a lot less equipment, but he wanted to share it all so that you can piece together your perfect set.