

Creation Gear and Tools

Home Studio

Consider setting up your own studio. It doesn't have to be much, but an environment where you can stage shots, control the audio and lighting, and have a professional background is going to improve the look and quality of your content. It doesn't even need to break the budget, though you can invest in substantial tools if you want.

Cameras

First, you need a camera. As we mentioned before, a smartphone's camera may be all you need, and even a smartphone camera is incredibly advanced with great quality. If you want to upgrade, pick up a webcam that can attach right to your computer. For professional-grade video, consider investing in a digital SLR camera with video capabilities.

Tripods and Stabilizers

You want to make sure you can stabilize your camera, and frame the shot you want. A stack of books might be working right now, but it would be better to let a professional tripod do the work for you. Use it on a desktop for seated interviews, or raise it for standing videos. If you're out and about creating content, pick up a tripod with adjustable legs that can wrap around objects and hold your camera steady.

Lighting

Next, you want to make sure you have the right lighting, as a poorly-lit video can mark you as an amateur. If you're going to mostly be shooting live video or tutorials with one person, a ring light will be perfect. If you're going to be shooting either photography or video at a distance, consider investing in some studio lights or LED panels.

Sound

Similarly, you want to make sure that your sound quality is sharp. The microphone on your smartphone may be enough for now, but if you want to increase your sound quality and crispness, and your flexibility, invest in either a lav mic that clips to someone's lapel, or a shotgun mic. Many come with the ability to plug directly into your phone or computer.

Background

Next, think about your background. You may have a blank wall that's working right now, but think about getting a backdrop or two for when you need a solid background in order to focus on the subject.

Shooting Stills

Are you going to be taking photos or objects or products? In addition to your camera and tripod, you'll need something to create a white background to shoot against, which could be as simple as some white poster board, or a professional white sweep background. Use some foam core to bounce lighting back onto the shadowed side of your object. You can also invest in a light box.

Podcast Studio

Setting up a podcast studio? Your microphones are going to need to be your focus, and the more investment you're willing to make, the higher quality audio you're going to get. Make sure you have a good set of headphones as well, typically ones that cover your ears to reduce outside noise. Depending on your set-up, you may also want a boom arm to extend your mic, a pop filter, and a way to dampen room sound, like installing some foam tiles around the walls.

Details

When you're setting up your studio, don't forget to pay attention to power sources. If you don't have enough outlets, you may need a power strip or two, and some extension cords. Additionally, make sure you have the cables you need, whether they be power, audio, or USB. Finally, don't forget that you'll need a strong Wifi connection as well.

Out-and-About

Don't forget to make the most of being out-and-about to capture or create content as well. If you only have your smartphone, at least have a stabilizer with you to reduce movements as you film. Or get in the habit of carrying a bag with your digital camera, tripod, and mics. Don't forget a portable battery or two!

Apps and Software

Now that you have the gear, you'll need the apps and software to create your high-quality content. In-app editing tools will only get you so far, so use the following resources to increase your creativity and unique draw.

Canva

Start with Canva, an incredibly accessible graphic design tool with a wide range of templates and projects. Their homepage challenges you to "Design anything," and you really can: Instagram posts, Facebook covers, Pinterest pins, as well as logos, infographics, posters, and more. And most of their design tools are free.

Adobe Spark

Adobe Spark is another tool that can help you create professional, engaging posts for social media. It specializes in helping you create social graphics, or photos or images with text, short videos, and webpages. Like Canva, it's both web-based and mobile, so you can create at your desk or on the go.

Adobe Photoshop, Premiere, InDesign, and Illustrator

Speaking of Adobe, if you want professional tools to create quality content, the Adobe Creative Cloud will have what you need. Edit your photography with Photoshop and edit your videos with Adobe Premiere, both available on desktop and in app forms. You can also use InDesign to create publications, infographics, and ebooks for your website, and use Illustrator to design logos and graphics.

Other Film Editing Software

In addition to Adobe Premiere for video editing is Final Cut Pro, if you want to go with more professional tools. Mac also comes with iMovie, and Windows comes with Windows Movie Maker if you want to ease into video editing with free tools.

Facebook Small Business Tools

Facebook also offers a suite of creative tools for businesses, including A Color Story, a photo enhancement app; Mojo, which can turn images into animations; Quik, a video editing app; and StoryBoost, that offers templates for Facebook and Instagram Stories creation.

Podcasting Software

If you're starting a podcast, make sure to have a Skype account first to record distance interviews. Audacity is a free tool you can use to edit your podcasts, and Mac users can also use GarageBand. For more professional editing tools, go with Avid Pro Tools or Adobe Audition.

Loom

Loom is a free screen capture tool that will allow you to film your screen motions as it records a video of you speaking in the corner. Use it if you want to show a tutorial of a product, or a walk-through of a service you offer.

Powtoon

Powtoon is another tool to help you create animated videos which you can use as explainers, tutorials, or promotion.

Stock Photos

For social media content, it's always best to use photos that you've captured yourself, but there's always a time when you need some stock photos or footage. There are a number of stock photo sites you can tap, including [Shutterstock](#) and [iStock](#). [Unsplash](#) is a relatively new yet quite extensive library of free stock photos.

Stock Music

Looking for music to go with your videos? Licensing can be tricky, so check out sites like [PremiumBeat](#) and [Musicbed](#) for quality stock music.

These are just a few of the array of resources you have available to you these days — and many of them for free — in order to help you create high-quality, eye-catching content. Don't forget that many of these tools have templates as well, to give you new, innovative ideas to try as you iterate and improve upon your social media content.