



## Lights, Camera, Action



### Your Checklist

- ✓ Computer desktop is clean and ready
- ✓ Background noise is minimal
- ✓ Camera shot is framed correctly
- ✓ What you wear compliments the background
- ✓ Lighting is even and “natural”
- ✓ Microphone audio level is acceptable

While not everyone can afford a production crew and professional videography, there are a number of easy steps to take to improve the quality of your lecture capture. This guide provides you with some quick tips regarding “setting the stage” for your lecture capture.

### Is this how your camera shot looks?



## Preparing the Desktop

The **desktop** of your computer is the primary stage for traditional lecture capture as well as screen sharing for web-conferencing and can either be focused on slides (PowerPoint/Keynote) or on the activity on your screen (documents, webpages, slides, etc.)

Considerations: Cleanup is especially necessary if you will be navigating between applications such as webpages and documents. Your cleanup process should consider all things that might be distracting to viewers or may be considered unprofessional, inappropriate or offensive.

### What to do...

**Clean up the desktop (too many icons):** Right click on an open space on the desktop, select View, uncheck Show desktop icons. (repeat to show again)

**Turn off notifications:** Click to open the system tray, right click on Outlook or other application that provides notifications, open settings to turn off notifications.

**Change desktop background:** Right click on desktop, select personalize and select new background OR locate a picture that is appropriate and large enough, right click on it and select “set as desktop background”.

**Cueing programs and documents:** To enable cohesiveness, pre-open webpages, programs and documents for quick access and switching.

**Shortcut keys:** when using multiple programs or documents, take advantage of Windows+Tab to quickly switch between items you wish to show. Note any application specific shortcuts such as Function key options (F8 record, F9 pause, F10 stop)

### Clean up!





## Video: What will they see?

There are 3 areas to consider for your video:

- Lighting
- Background
- Focal point (in this case you)

**Lighting** affects everything. Consider how the room is lit around you and how you appear in that light. Bright windows can create a contrast that is unfavorable and bright computer monitors close to your face can wash out any natural skin tone.

Your chosen **background** is also important. Does your background provide a good contrast for your skin tone? Does the background look cluttered or have pictures that might be distracting? In some cases, a simple solid color sheet can help.

**You** are the **focal point** of your video. How do you look on camera (camera angles? View of nostrils?)? Is the light even on your face? Is what you are wearing “busy” (checkered patterns, stripes, floral prints)? Designs that look nice in person may display poorly on camera and may be distracting and affect the quality of the video seen by viewers. Solid colors that are not too dark or too light and contrast well with both your background and skin tone usually work well.

### Tips to be well lit

Identify the time of day that the room you will be recording in is best lit. Consider weather changes and how this may affect natural lighting in the room.

If lighting is questionable but your location options are limited, experiment with lamps (including different bulb types) to provide better lighting. To help evenly distribute the light, try using white paper, posterboards and even shiny car shades to reflect light up or from the opposite side of your lamp or strongest light.

## Sound: What will they hear?

### Tips to be framed and natural

The most missed opportunity we observe is people not taking the time to test what the video shot looks like. They then record and are disappointed by the results but have spent too much time to re-record.

Do a dry run where you actually record. If you don't present naturally sitting, consider elevating your webcam and computer setup using a box where you can stand and present. When standing, pay close attention to where you stand, movement and how tight your video shot is or is not.

What is picked up by your microphone is very important. If using a laptop internal mic, consider noise that may be picked up from the keyboard or mice. If you are using a webcam, test using the built-in mic on the camera or another external mic.

Consider background noise, particularly time of day noise that might impact your recording such as end of school/work day if recording at home.