



Set up your filming studio

Setting up your filming studio correctly is essential to helping your students have good experiences with your courses. Students need to be able to see and hear your video without distractions like buzzes, pops, or a shaky camera. The good news is that you don't need a professional studio to create your course. This article teaches you how to set up your filming studio at home.

Before you begin

Keep in mind that you'll have different setups for different types of courses. For screencast videos of, say, coding, you'll record your computer screen. For videos of you teaching directly, you can record yourself as a "talking head" or performing a task (cooking, doing yoga, etc.). You can also use editing software after you film to combine screencasts and footage of you talking.

Select your equipment

Camera and microphone: Try starting with the camera that you have in your computer, but avoid using the built-in microphone. Invest in a good-quality, hands-free microphone that's stable, reduces background noise, and is small enough to be invisible in the video.

Screencast software: If your video is a screencast, then you'll need screencasting software like Quicktime Player, Camstudio, or Jing.

Lighting equipment: At first, try out natural light in your room. If it isn't enough, then try adding lamps and lights that you have at home. If you're still not getting enough light, we recommend a tree-point lighting kit.

Instructors in the instructor community have experience across a wide range of equipment. So feel free to connect with other community members and get their advice.

Set up your audio

- It may sound obvious, but make sure your external microphone is plugged in correctly to your video recording equipment.
- Check the gain in your microphone settings. Gain determines loudness of the audio that comes into the microphone. If the gain is set too high, you might hear an electrical static sound in the recording.
- Check the audio output settings of your microphone. It should be set to stereo instead of mono.
- Speak loudly, clearly, and directly into the microphone. Do not speak too close or far away from the microphone. For best results, maintain a 6–12 inches (about 15–30 centimeters) distance from the microphone.
- Use a pop filter—a physical filter you can attach to your microphone—to avoid a popping sound in your recordings. Such sounds can cause unnatural spikes in your audio.

Set your camera's recording and export settings

Make sure your camera is set to the the right recording and export settings:

- Aspect ratio: This is the proportion of width and height of a frame. The aspect ratio of your

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video needs to be either 4:3 or 16:9.

- **Video resolution:** This represents the quality of the video, which is determined by the number of pixels (p) in the frame. Your video resolution must be 720p or higher. A high definition (HD) video has a resolution of 720p or higher.

Set up your filming environment

Udemy instructors typically use home studios to film their courses. Here, are some best practices for setting up a home studio.

- **Studio room set-up.** Dampen the recording room to help absorb any echo. You can add soundproofing acoustic panels to the room or use simple remedies like putting up blankets, cushions, and couches to avoid picking up any echo in your recordings.
- **Background for screencasting.** Maintain a clean background to avoid any distraction from the actual course content on the screen. Make sure your desktop and tabs are clean and free of non-course related content.
- **Lighting for a “talking head” video.** If you shoot indoors, sit by a window where the light hits you from the front or from the side and not from behind you. The main subject of your video should be clearly visible and well-lit. Avoid shadows in the background or on your face.

Frame your shots

Here are some tips regarding camera placement and movement:

- The subject should be in the middle of the shot, or on the sides, using the rule of thirds. The rule of thirds is a concept in which you separate a frame into nine equal parts by dividing it twice vertically and twice horizontally. Placing a subject along those lines or their intersections creates a more interesting visual.
- If you are creating a “talking head” video, don’t be too far away from the camera or too close. Don’t put the camera too high over your head or too far below your face. Imagine you are having a face-to-face conversation with your students.
- Make sure your camera is steady. Use a tripod or put your camera on a steady surface. Don’t try and hold the camera yourself.

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