

PHOTOGRAPHY

/MOBILE

FILMMAKING

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INTRODUCTION

In our world today, recording video can be done effortlessly. A few decades back, nobody would dream of shooting a movie on a phone because the quality of what you'd get would be inferior to what you could capture on pricier devices. Besides needing a camera, these videographers also need a high-end production studio.

But things are changing. For filming videos, you don't need all of that. Today, numerous brands of smartphones can give you the best quality pictures and videos. This is because the technology of today's smartphones has been enhanced. Regardless of if you are a photographer/videographer, you can still shoot a professional-looking short movie or even a full-length feature on your smartphone.

In the last decade, these mobile phones and tablet devices have become sophisticated with advanced features such as better screens, improved batteries, and overall performance at a low cost. These devices have become a DIY gadget that enables you to finish complex professional work in a small form. Gone are the days when you need to have expensive cameras to create a good quality video. Your phone probably has advanced camera lenses and processor power that quickly shoots and edits 4k and High Definition broadcast quality images and videos directly on the device. The majority of the earth's human population now carry a powerful video camera in their pocket - a smartphone. These smartphones are now used everywhere to create videos, from vlogs on YouTube to ads by Apple and short films on Vimeo.

Smartphones have become more important than just their ability to ease communication. It has gotten to the point where some view its mobile creative abilities as the primary purpose rather than communication capabilities. Nowadays, you can make news, documentaries, and even feature films using your smartphone. This is something that many older, expensive video cameras can't even do.

There are lots of reasons for everyone - from pro photographers to amateurs. Everybody is using phones to shoot video projects. Even Hollywood recognized renowned American film director Steven Soderbergh for his project "Unsane," which was entirely shot on an iPhone. This movie was a well-received 2015 film, Tangerine gaining the Audience Award at the Gotham Independent Film Award.

Smartphones tend to improve not only in terms of quality continuously, but they're also highly convenient. You tend to be always ready when you have a phone right in your pocket. You don't have to

fuss with bulky movie lenses; point and shoot. There is no manual F or T stops to deal with, no depth of field or focus headaches, no exposure issues, or the need to lug around a heavy, bulky camera. Your phone is always with you without any heaviness, and you can easily slip it into your hands and capture that million-to-one encounter or shoot that great on-the-spot idea.

Most times, you can't even tell the difference between using cameras and using an iPhone.

So how do you go about it?

Mobile devices are a great way to capture video, but not everyone knows how to make the most of their phone while recording a video. However, with a bit of practice and access to the checklist and tips outlined in this guide, even you - yes, you - can start recording great footage, vlogging, or even recording an indie film or documentary using just your smartphone.

So, now is the time to effectively use that powerhouse of content in your pocket (aka your smartphone) to create stunning videos.

PHOTOGRAPHY/MOBILE FILMING CATALOGUE

Below are the checklist to prepare before you start filming a video with a mobile phone

1. Weather

So you are preparing to shoot your next ad or YouTube video, and you are pretty enthusiastic about it. You should be aware that video production includes many variables that can sometimes create challenges you didn't even realize. This can include dealing with the weather, especially when doing an outdoor video. Dealing with the weather on shoots is a part of making a video. Crossing your fingers and hoping for the best is not the way to handle it. After all, Mother Nature might not be willing to cooperate with your shooting schedule.

Here are a few tips on handling the weather:

- Spend time making research on the location you'll be using. Your research also includes seasonal weather patterns and the time of year you'll use the area. Study the forecast so abrupt changes in the weather won't catch you off guard.
- Prepare well: No doubt, mobile filming isn't as complicated as filming with a video camera, but there's no substitute for being prepared. Your best bet is to over-prepare since you're majorly at the mercy of the weather. Have the right clothes, carry along a phone protector, and have a plan. If you are going with an extra hand, ensure you communicate what you want to achieve at the end of the day.
- You can also reschedule filming for later, especially when complications arise that don't offer smooth filming.

2. Hardware

You do not need a lot of tools to start using your smartphone to make great videos. With the outlined tools below, you'll be well on your way to producing more professional-looking videos.

3. Smart Phone:

Your smartphone's camera is a powerhouse, one of which should be leveraged on. In recent times, these cameras keep getting better and better; most of them are equipped with image stabilization, focus tracking, and the ability to shoot in 4K. Therefore, not only do they take better still photos, but they also record high-quality video. With that in mind, it's worth investing in a good smartphone.

4. External Lenses

Some smartphones already have a built-in ultra-wide lens, which will enhance images in almost every type of low-light scenario. However, getting an external lens attached to the backward camera will help you ensure a wider variety of imagery and looks with cinematic quality. You can zoom in appropriately, so you get a good-looking shot with it.

5. Stabilization

Smartphones today have been enhanced to come with an in-built stabilization that will help minimize or remove shakes from your videos. But regardless of this, you'll still need an extra tool for smooth, cinematic video footage.

6. Audio Recorders

Another great tool you should invest in is a good audio recorder as a video maker. This is an area of video production you absolutely can't skimp on. After capturing all your footage, get good mics to collect quick sound bites or room tones in post-production.

7. Tripods

Keeping your phone attached to a tripod makes mobile filmmaking easier. Most tripods are light, accessible, and flexible such that you can attach your phone to uneven surfaces. Note that you do not need a giant tripod for your smartphone, and no matter what kind of tripod you end up with, make sure you get a cell phone tripod adapter to mount your device properly.

8. Pop Socket

They might look simple, but they help a great deal too. They give you a better grip such that while shooting tricky angles, you'll be able to hold your phone with one hand. An alternative to this is Camera straps. It is a nylon tether wrist strap that attaches to your smartphone's case, making it hard to drop or lose your phone.

9. Extra Power

Although the battery life of smartphones produced nowadays has improved and they keep improving, you still need a portable cell phone charger and power bank with you.

10. Software

You might ask yourself why you would use a separate app to film a video, let alone pay for one. But this software is important regardless of If you're a blogger or otherwise. Although it's quite quick to use a smartphone to film, shooting and sharing videos has never been easy.

However, utilizing these apps will aid in ensuring a smooth production; from the special effects, stop-motion, and the likes, you can record and edit your videos with no heavy equipment or set location. Also, most of these apps are connected to social media so that you can post content quickly and easily. This is more like a plus. From adding effects and filters to simulating sunlight and shadows and remotely controlling your camera through WiFi, these apps will help you solve problems and enhance your videos in new ways.

Most of these apps are free, unlike computer software programs.

There are a lot of apps that let you fine-tune the image quality and control the details like audio levels, focus, exposure, and resolution. But with so many options to choose from, it's hard to know where to begin!

We made this list of some of the best video production apps for you to start producing highly sophisticated videos on the go.

S/NO.	APP	USER	FUNCTION	STATUS	ALTERNATIVE
I.	Adobe Premiere Rush	Android, iOS, Mac, and Windows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Makes/edits videos with no need for an internet connection. - Can transfer clips to their desktops 	Free/Paid	
II.	iMovie	(iOS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Edit video - Simple touch controls tools for editing your clips together before sharing 	Free	PowerDirector Mobile (Android)
III.	Vine	(Android/iOS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make 140 seconds videos 	Free	
IV.	FxGuru: Movie FX Director Power	(Android/iOS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adds Hollywood-style special effects to your clips. Effects like giant robots, werewolves, zombies, earthquakes, meteor strikes, etc. 	Free	
V.	Minecraft Stop-Motion Movie Creator	(Android/iOS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make stop-motion movies with movie characters. 	Free	

VI.	FiLMiC Pro	(Android/iOS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For editing - Perfect for everyone, regardless of if you are a beginner to videography pro - Has features such as slo-mo, time-lapse, all manner of aspect-ratio options, and even a vertical-orientation mode. - Control over the camera color, focus, and brightness - Customizable frame rates, audio meters, manual control, superb image quality, etc. 	Free	Lumafusion ProShot Open Camera Cinema 4K
VII.	Dubsmash	(Android/iOS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An app for creating “lip dub” videos, where you mime along to famous songs and film/TV quotes 	Free	

VIII.	Boomerang	(Android/iOS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shoots 10 photos quickly from your front or rear camera, then turns them into a GIF-like looping clip. 	Free	
IX.	Mobcrush	(Android/iOS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Broadcast your mobile gaming skills direct from your device 	Free	Scriptation
X.	MSQRD	(Android/iOS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shoot and share unsettling videos - Swapping your face with a friend - Broadcasting live on Facebook. 	Free	
XI.	PocketVideo	(Android/iOS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They aimed specifically at “creators” – vloggers pushing videos out to YouTube and other social networks. - Its mix of filters, titles, stickers, and GIFs is a recipe for entertaining videos. 	Free	

XII.	Videorama	(iOS)	- Clip-editing, animated text titles, soundtracks, visual filters, and even special effects (explosions included) social-sharing options.		
XIII.	Quik	(Android/iOS)	- Editing together video clips, photos, and soundtracks, especially with its automatic mode, to do the hard work for you.	Free	
XIV.	Vue	(iOS)	- Create montage videos, complete with digital stickers and filters.	Free	
XV.	VHS Camcorder	(Android/iOS)	- It shoots video, but this app makes it look like 30-year-old crackly home videos, with faithful zoom, date, and dodgy audio features.	Paid	

XVI.	Kinomatic Video Camera	iOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is targeted at talented filmmakers and broadcasters rather than casual users. - Stuffed with pro features, including keeping your lighting settings between shooting sessions. 	Paid	
XVII.	Helios Pro		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Simulates sunlight and shadows at any time, anywhere, and any day from the past or future. - Using two distinct types of Augmented Reality (AR), Helios Pro, you can pinpoint the position of the sun, moon (and now) stars with Helios - Also, it can add augmented reality and light simulation 	Free	Frame.io

			<p>magic into the clip to give you a better idea of what shots will look like at any location in any time frame.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You'll be able to see exactly how light will illuminate an area and shadows falling throughout your shot—all from within the app. 		
XVIII.	Artemis Pro		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can program different cameras regardless of the camera or set of lenses being used. 	Free	

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2016/jul/17/20-best-apps-making-videos>

<https://wistia.com/learn/production/apps-for-shooting-and-editing-video-on-your-phone>

<https://filmlifestyle.com/film-production-apps/>

<https://www.lifewire.com/best-video-recording-apps-for-iphone-and-android-4176172>

11. Crew and Actors

These are the human resources you'll need to aid you in producing the kind of video you want. They differ, and their numbers at the location solely depend on your script. For a self-help video, two to three people are okay, but you've got to have a lot of hands-on experience on the ground for film production. It is recommended that casts and crews be prepped ahead of the BIG day regardless of the nature of the video.

12. Sound

We know the visuals are essential, but everything becomes useless without a good audio sound. Once you start recording, get your microphone close to the sound you want to record to get better sound quality. Some phones already have this; with such, you can pick sounds from all angles equally.

13. Lighting

Unless you have studio lighting, you need to use your common sense here by using the available light - natural sunlight: outside and indoor lighting. Use a well-lit location. If it isn't well-lit naturally, you can also use lamps to light up the subject of your video. During summer, the sun can be used as a key light to shine on your subject, but you have to avoid overexposure and shade (underexposure).

Do not shoot with a window as a background, as your subject will be silhouetted unless this is what is needed in the video.

Key Tips to Also Take Note Of When Shooting

- Landscape

Nothing ruins a great-looking video like having two black vertical bars along both sides of your video. This is often the mistake people are likely to make. They perceive that since such is cool for a photo, selfies, or something, they are just going to post on Instagram; thus, they hold the phone in a profile mode.

Shooting in a landscape is the first thing you must consider when shooting a video. This implies turning your smartphone sideways; this is called landscape mode. The landscape dimension is similar to the dimensions of your 16x9 TV. Now imagine watching YouTube videos or feature films on your smartphone, then you turn it sideways only to find out that the two sidebars are still showing; thus, the displaying images can't fill the whole screen. The vertical black bars on each side of the image are often an immediate signal that it's an amateur video. Imagine what that can do to your reputation, especially as a content creator/ freelancer.

The landscape makes your video seem more artistically pleasing in general; it also makes it more enjoyable to watch when viewed on a widescreen or television. Also, you'll capture more in the actual video.

By all means, avoid this amateur mistake. Never hold your phone vertically while recording. Shoot in the landscape (horizontal) mode. Note that you can record in vertical mode if you're shooting a video to post it as a social media story (Instagram Stories, TikTok, etc.). This is because these platforms are vertically locked, so it will do more justice in that case.

- Framing

It would be best to fill the frame with your subject after ensuring that you're recording in the landscape mode's proper orientation. This will create a more visually interesting scene.

When you go into the camera of most phones, you are likely to still have the option that enables gridlines. So you have vertical and horizontal grids on the screen while shooting. The framing tool that most people use is the "rule of thirds. So, if you enable a 3x3 grid on your camera app, you can line up

the subject with one of the vertical "third" lines or use the horizontal lines to get the horizon line in the desired position. Just play around and see what looks best.

- Zoom

As much as you want to use your phone's zoom feature, please don't. Nothing is worse than digital zoom. Digital zoom doesn't enlarge the picture optically, which means what you get is pixels. However, you should use the zoom feature only if your phone comes with a decent optical zoom or a telephoto lens. Thankfully, we are in an era where many top smartphones come with a lossless or "optical" zoom. But if you don't have a smartphone with optical zoom, you'll need to get closer to your subject. Generally, this is acceptable, especially for tight shots on faces where you want your audience to see those freckles, fine lines, and cheek fuzz.

Other Tips

- Switch your phone to airplane mode

Consider this scenario:

You're moving in for the perfect shot, the actors embrace, and you're capturing a priceless moment — and then your perfect shot is interrupted by an annoying text from a pal who thinks you all should go for takeouts for dinner.

This has happened to most people using their mobiles to record videos. Taking off with Airplane Mode will prevent you from being interrupted by calls and alerts. So, slide into your phone settings and put your phone on airplane mode. This will keep your smartphone a 100-percent dedicated camera for your shoot since all other functions won't work.

- Start with a full battery

This is part of your preparation plan. Recording and storing video files use lots of power, much more than when you are listening to music or watching a movie.

- Check your storage

Alongside the battery, you should also check your storage. Video uses lots of space on your device, so make sure you have enough. Delete unused apps and non-important documents to create more space so you can efficiently produce magic! You can also download the OneDrive or Other available cloud storage apps to give you an abundance of room!

- Keep your hands, or selfies stick stable

If you don't have these, you can also attach your phone to a small water bottle, book, or broom handle to keep it stable.

IDEA CRIB SHEET

This sheet is for beginners - people who don't know how to develop ideas for videos. Below are some of the themes that can be used to film a video:

- First Impression Video

These are more like an introduction video about yourself or the product you are marketing. Just like meeting someone for the first time, these videos are what form the basis of your audience's opinion about you. Once such an opinion is created, it's challenging to change it.

- Rant Video and Get Angry

These are video content where you rant or voice out what's bothering you. In this video, emotions are usually all over the place. Most YouTubers often use their platform to share what's bothering them. This often attracts lots of views and engagement from their online audience.

- Make Product Review Videos

One of the most sought-after categories on youtube is the product review videos. This is because most people love watching visuals more than reading texts - no one has time to read through text-based product reviews. Sometimes, customers also feel that written reviews could be manipulated – this is why they prefer watching a video instead of reading a text-based review.

- Simple Basic Tutorials Like Teaching How To Wear A Socks

Another kind of video content you can do is DIYs, i.e., simple tutorials on basic life necessities like fixing the light, making a bed, cooking a meal, and wearing socks. It may sound simple, but do note that good content requires work regardless of how simple it might seem.

- Read Comments and Answer Questions

You can also create an FAQ video, but you'd be picking out questions from your comment section and providing answers and solutions to them this time. These videos are also catalysts to increase engagement and inform your audience's feedback. To prevent any flops, pick out the questions before the day of the shoot, write out the questions and any additional message you might likely want to pass across.

- Product Comparison

Like product reviews, these videos involve comparing one product with another while giving informed feedback to influence your audience to buy or avoid the product. Before making such a video, you should have consistently used these products and know their features before you can make a confident delivery.

- How to Get Started Videos

"How to get started" videos are one of the most common visual content you'd find on YouTube. Examples of such videos are how to get started with crypto, NFTs, digital marketing, fashion design, etc. These are videos that are done with beginners in mind. They are videos that break down solutions in video recording in a particular sector.

- Gift Ideas for Something

These are recommendation videos in the form of finding the perfect gift options for your viewers. This is done with different budgets and the events where such gifts can be given.

- Transformation Videos

These videos offer the audience the drive and dedication to accomplish something they feel could be challenging—for example, fitness stories where people get to share their accomplishments with the world.

- Reaction Videos

A reaction video is an emotional reaction of people viewing a video clip; it could be their reaction to a series of episodes, film trailers, and music videos. These videos are numerous and widespread on video YouTube.

- Time-lapse

Time-lapse videos are one of the most captivating film genres; these videos are used to capture a period but are played back at a much faster rate. It allows you to speed up the subject of your video to show several hours in real-time. It could be a rising sun, a tumultuous sky, a slow illumination of city life.

They're beautiful and watchable – in one magical sweep, viewers get to see everyday life; from event set-ups, workout sets, etc., these videos are surprisingly simple to create with a mobile phone.

- Storytime Videos

These are short videos highly creative and appealing enough to capture the short attention span of online viewers.

- Do Your Routine Videos

These are routine videos that are meant to be inspirational. They focus on a combination of activities in the proper order and at the right moments. You get to memorialize, in great detail, how you spend your time.

- What I Eat In a Day Videos

You can also create videos to promote intuitive eating and show off strict diets or food challenges. The video is popular on TikTok's # a trending series where social media influencers record the foods they eat in a day in the order that viewers eat them.

- How Much Money Do I Spend?

Quite similar to the #Whatieatinaday trendy series, these videos are made to promote healthy financial habits.

- First-time Experience

These videos are super amazing and generate lots of reactions and engagement. Who would like to miss out on videos that show your first-time experience of skydiving, tasting tacos, or having a tattoo drawn on your cheekbone?

- Challenge Videos

These videos are everywhere: #NoSodaChallenge #30daysGymchallenge #Eatveggieschallenge and lots more. They are done to inspire and support people to do something they might find quite challenging if done alone.

- Talk About a Vlog

You could also do a vlog - the video blog which consists of creating a video of yourself where you talk on a particular subject, such as reporting or reviewing a product or an event. It could be music/movie, travel, and informative/motivational video content in the form of blogs. Talk about the mistake you made, the difficulties you go through, the top book in your niche, etc.

- Take Interviews

You could also try taking on interviews captured visually. Here, you get to connect with someone else who'll answer most of your questions while your audience tags along.

- Life Hacks

These videos help your audience discover some brilliant daily hacks that can help them improve their lives efficiently and smartly. Examples of this are tips and Tricks videos.

- How Someone Did Something

These are called beginners guides, where you get to learn how someone effortlessly did something you found challenging. These videos are often educational and informative.

- Dos and Don'ts Video

These explainer videos help the audience explore new products, learn techniques, further their professional knowledge, pursue new hobbies, and discover DIY approaches.

- News Videos Or Trending Videos

This kind of video can be exciting and challenging at the same time. They are majorly dependent on the hot trendy topics relevant to the world. They are based on world issues, so one trick recommended in getting a case is watching the news and following the world's affairs.

- What's In My Backpack?

You could also explore doing videos where the audience gets to see what goes into your backpack when going for different outings. These are used mainly by travel vloggers, so you can check for these samples before creating yours.

- Live Streams

These are streamed and sent over the Internet in real-time without first being recorded and stored. TV broadcasts, video games, events, etc., can be streamed live.

- Giveaways

The contest, survey, coupon codes, betting pool, and other activities can be done in exchange for gifting to increase interaction and engagement.

- Testimonial Videos

This can sometimes be classified under the product review video. Here, you get to speak about your positive experience using your product.

- Promo Videos

These are videos done primarily to promote a product or service. It includes testimonial videos, teaser videos, new product/team intro videos, short ads, etc.