



STEPS TO FILMMAKING ON YOUR PHONE



DUBLIN
SMARTPHONE
FILM FESTIVAL

ITS **VERY** EXCITING

Right now you have in your hand, a powerful storytelling device. Never before has filmmaking been more accessible to everyone than it is right now. Expensive technology is no longer a barrier to creating a film. The phone you have in your hand gives you the ability to write, shoot, edit, score and market your film.

But hold up, don't just grab your phone and start shooting. There are still some things to consider before pressing record to make sure you are making the best quality film possible with your Smartphone.

Below are 10 steps to consider before pressing record.


SOME EQUIPMENT TO GET YOU STARTED

1. TRIPOD & SMARTPHONE HOLDER

A small tripod(any kind) and a simple mount to keep your phone steady while you film

2. MICROPHONE (FOR SMARTPHONES)

A good quality microphone like a directional microphone depending on your content





STEP 1 - PREPARE

Draft a script or storyboard covering the key elements you want to capture in your film.

STEP 2 - FLIGHT MODE

Switch on flight mode before you start filming. This will prevent any calls or interruptions once you start filming. You don't want to lose a take because of a call. Flight mode can be found in the settings.



STEP 3 - MOUNT YOUR PHONE

Secure your phone in the horizontal position on your tripod or whatever your alternative is.

If it suits your story use the front facing camera as this is better quality. Your selfie camera is of course an option but only if it suits the style of story you are telling.

STEP 4 - CLEAN YOUR LENS

Be sure to keep the camera lens on the front of your phone to remove any smudges. You can use a microfiber cloth or Q-tip. You might not be able to notice these smudges until the image is blown up on a bigger screen.



STEP 5 - MICROPHONE

Wire up microphone. If you are shooting an Interview connect your microphone (Lavalier) by connecting it to your phone and subject (interview);

- Place microphone above sternum and below the neck
- Ensure clothing or facial hair is not touching/rubbing against the microphone.
- Directional microphone for wider shots or dramatic scenes.

If you are outdoors and using a directional microphone;

- Use a deadcat on the microphone
- Remember not to film into the wind to avoid wind noise.



STEP 6 - PHONE SET UP

Before pressing record be sure to follow the below steps;

- Free up storage space
- The amount of storage will vary depending on the phone but general rule is 1.3GB per 10min. Depending on the resolution, 1080p 2-2.5MBPS, 4K is 5-7MBPS
- Make space by backing up some photos/videos/ files before recording
- Make sure the video size is set at 1920x1080p
- Frame rate for Europe is normally 24fps for cinematic effect.



STEP 7 - FRAME YOUR SHOT

Set the phone in the horizontal position and make sure the shot is level.

Make sure the shot is as horizontal as possible (provided this is the look you want)

If you are interviewing someone be sure interview should be just off centre. You can use the onscreen grid if your phone has this option.

Check the lighting, make sure it is not too harsh and you are not experiencing a dark flicker on the screen.





STEP 8 - EXPOSURE

Most phone cameras tend to auto-adjust exposure settings. When you open the camera on your phone, it normally defaults to auto exposure. It looks at the shot and guesses what you want to focus on and then adjusts for that. This is fine for day to day but not ideal if you are lighting a film scene.

Auto exposure lock here is important, it means you can select an area on the screen to lock it to so no matter what happens the exposure will not adjust.

Tap on the area you want to lock until the AE/AF lock appears (IOS) or exposure lock on screen (Android).



STEP 9 - TEST TAKE

Happy with your setup?

Do a test recording to make sure the video looks good and the audio sounds great. Once you are satisfied you can start recording your scene.



STEP 10 - ACTION

Make sure the exposure and focus is locked.

Be aware of environment changes between takes (light, background). Ensure subject maintains eye contact (interview).

Monitor background noise changes (car horns etc).

Wait at least 5 seconds after you press record before the subject starts speaking.

Wait at least 5 seconds after the subject finishes speaking to stop recording.