VSA Technical Video Recommendations

What to Use to Shoot and Upload Videos

Most modern camera phones and some tablets are capable of shooting high-enough quality audio and video for your submission. In some cases, the lighting and/or audio quality may need to be adjusted when using mobile devices, so if you're shooting with your phone, be sure to take some test footage before beginning your actual videos.

It is not necessary nor recommended that students hire a professional videographer to shoot these videos. A family member, friend, co-worker or mentor with a steady hand (or – even better – a tripod) will be capable of producing high-enough quality video for VSA's purposes.

You are also welcome to use a video camera or standard photographic camera. Most modern photo cameras have good-to-excellent video capabilities. Just be sure that the internal microphone on your device is sufficient to record good quality audio in the environment where you'll be shooting. If it's not, you can either upgrade your audio equipment (buying or borrowing a device-friendly 'shotgun mic') or change the shooting location to somewhere more conducive.

Once you have captured the video on a hard drive, you are welcome (but not required) to edit the beginning and end points of each video using free and user-friendly editing software (Windows MovieMaker, iMovie, etc.). Do not make any internal edits to the footage – just clip the beginning and end points if you do any editing at all. Some mobile devices have the capability of doing this type of light editing on the device – sometimes it may be easier to transfer the video files to a computer to edit. Again – editing is not required.

How to Transfer Video Files from a Mobile Device:

- iPhone: https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT201302
- Android: https://support.google.com/nexus/answer/2840804?hl=en
- Video camera or camera: follow your camera instructions (usually involves inserting your camera's memory card into your computer and copying/pasting the video files to your computer hard drive).

How to Upload Files to YouTube:

- https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/57407?hl=en

Most mobile devices and camera/video cameras will shoot in video formats that are easily recognized by YouTube when uploading. If you haven't done so previously, it is recommended that you shoot test footage on the device you will be using and attempt to upload the footage to your YouTube channel to ensure compatibility.

By default, all YouTube channels allow users to upload videos up to 15 minutes in duration. In the event you would like to upload something longer, instructions for how to raise the duration limit on your account can be found here: https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/71673?hl=en.

Video Creation Tips

- Take some test footage in the real environment in which you'll be shooting so that you can watch and listen to it in order to ensure that both the video and audio quality is high enough quality.
- When possible, use a tripod or fixed camera position to ensure camera stability.
- If possible, try and enlist a friend to 'man' the camera, even if it's a static (unmoving) shot on a tripod. This will ensure that someone is available to monitor the camera in the event of battery failure, full hard drive, a jostled camera, etc.
- Make sure your camera's hard drive has enough storage to capture all of the necessary footage prior to shooting.
- Make sure your camera has enough battery power to last as long as you're filming.
- Make sure your audio is audible. Even when you feel like you're speaking quite loudly, ambient noise, the direction of the camera's microphone, or your proximity to the camera can make hearing you quite difficult. Without good audio, many videos become very limited in terms of their usefulness both to you and others.
- If you're shooting outdoors, be especially aware of ambient noise (birds, traffic, people talking, dogs barking, etc). Many modern built-in microphones are sensitive to the filming environment, and if they 'hear' primarily ambient noise, they will feature that noise more prominently even though that's not what it sounds like to your ears.
- Stay in the frame. If your camera is in a set position, be aware of where the limits of the camera frame are and try to stay within those limits. If necessary, it can be helpful to mark areas on the ground that designate which areas are off-camera.