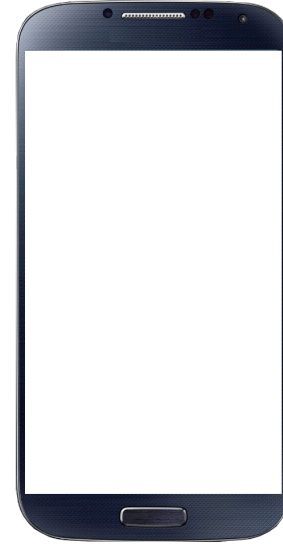


Using cameras at home - Exposure Focus and Colour

Getting your video, just right.

Here you will find some practical advice on setting up your camera. This advice works for all sorts of cameras: webcams, smartphone cameras and video cameras.



Eyes on the ball



- Your goal here is to get a better result, not a perfect result. Keep that in mind, video is only a medium, don't let the finer points of great cinema distract you from doing your job as a teacher, a job you know well.

Why use video of yourself while teaching?

A question you should ask yourself is "Will video add value for my students?"

Imagine you are only teaching via a telephone to students and then you had the chance to add video. Among many things video offers you the ability to be personable, expressive and add emphasis. This adds layers of information that ride above voice or text alone, expression and body language is a powerful part of communication.

Exposure - Shine a little light

Exposure is what your camera does to get a bright enough image.

A good level of light on your face helps the camera render good colour and brightness and lets the camera focus on your face. This ultimately is less distracting for your students.

Consider this:

Your camera is most likely auto.

Your camera is working hard to make you look good so you should try to help the camera do its job.

There are two main things your camera needs:

1. Light in front of you
2. Similar coloured light sources

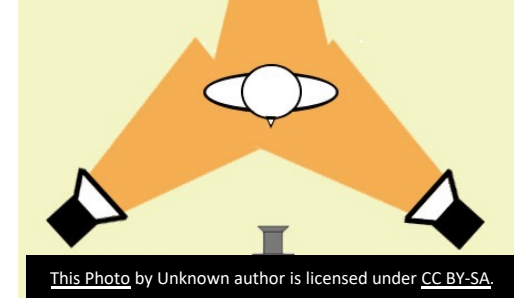


Exposure – position of light

- Your face is like a mirror ball – make sure the brightest source of light is in front of your face or at 45 degrees to each side of your face.
- You could use window light – this looks great but changes by the minute.
- You can use the light that comes from the lights in your room – turn the lights on.
- You can find some lamps and put them beside the camera at 45 degrees to your face. Tip: use the same bulbs in the same room – use warm bulbs with warm bulbs or cool bulbs with cool bulbs, don't mix.



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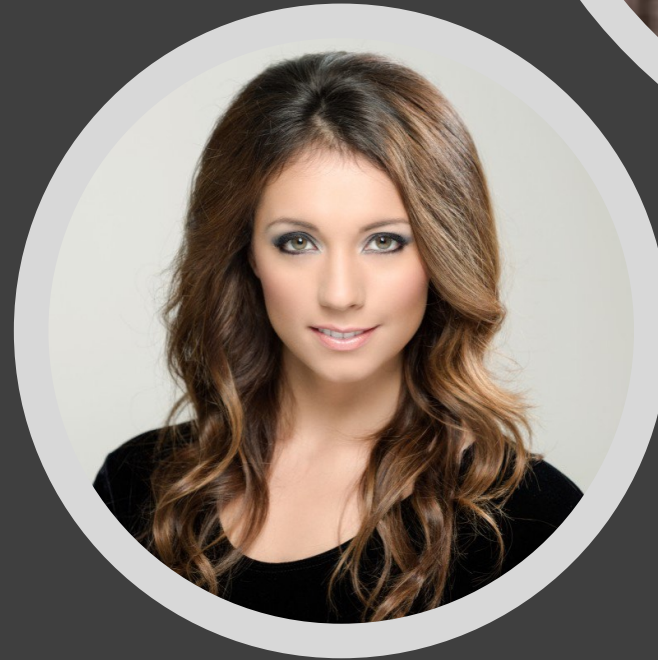
Exposure - close the drapes

Cameras need some light just to help expose. If you have a bright object behind you and the camera is auto, it will try to "guess" what to expose properly. This may put you in the dark. Make sure your face is the most illuminated thing in frame.

Tip: this also helps the camera to focus on you – otherwise it can "hunt" for what to focus on. This is a distraction.



Make sure the background is less intense than face



Flat front light or 2 lights
45 degrees, some backlight



Backlight, no front light

Exposure – Colour and Hz of light matters

- If you are using natural sunlight in front of your face, then make sure you turn off warm (yellow) bulbs in the room. This does not mix well with daylight.
- Make sure the bulbs match, daylight bulbs with daylight and Warm Bulbs, LEDs or CFLs matched with each other.
- If you have a flicker on your camera you can go into settings and change the hertz from 60Hz to 50Hz to match your bulbs Hz NZ is 50HZ. US is 60 Hz.

Break the rules

- Rules are meant to be learnt then adapted. Use this information to add value to what you are doing. If you want to try a few different Lighting approaches, have a play and test out what works for you. Take time to reflect on areas you could improve on.