GUIDE · SOCIAL MEDIA

Film Professional Content on Your Phone

Five short lessons on light, framing, sound, talking to camera and editing, so the videos you film on your phone between shoots still look the part.

From the IROcreative studio · 7 Nov 2026 · 5 lessons · 25 min · www.irocreative.com.au/resources/film-content-on-your-phone

You don't need a camera crew for everything. The phone in your pocket films better video than most cameras did ten years ago. What separates content that looks professional from content that looks like a holiday clip is almost never the gear. It's light, framing, sound and a few editing habits.

These are the rules we follow on our own client shoots, cut down to what works with just a phone. Each lesson ends with a five-minute exercise.

What you need: your phone, a cheap tripod or phone clamp (about $30), and ideally a clip-on wireless microphone ($50 to $150). That's it.

Lesson 1: light (the biggest difference)

Bad light is the number one reason phone videos look cheap. Good light is free.

- **Face the window.** Stand facing a big window with daylight coming in, and put the phone between you and the window. Soft daylight on your face is the most flattering light there is.
- **Never stand with a window behind you.** The phone exposes for the bright window and you become a silhouette.
- **Turn off overhead lights when you can.** Downlights put shadows under your eyes and mix colours (yellow bulbs plus blue daylight look muddy).
- **Outside, find open shade.** The shady side of a building or under a verandah, not direct midday sun, which makes people squint and throws hard shadows.
- **Lock the exposure.** On iPhone, tap and hold on your face until "AE/AF Lock" appears, then drag the sun icon down slightly. On Android, tap your face and use the brightness slider. This stops the picture flickering brighter and darker as you move.

Exercise: film the same five-second clip in three spots in your business. Watch them back side by side. You'll find one spot that's clearly best; that's your filming spot from now on.

Lesson 2: framing and the three shots every post needs

- **Film vertical (9:16)** for Reels, TikTok and Stories. Hold the phone upright or mount it upright on the tripod.
- **Use the back camera** when you can. It's much sharper than the selfie camera. Flip the screen or use a mirror to check framing.
- **Clean the lens.** Phones live in pockets. A smudged lens makes everything look hazy. Wipe it on your shirt before every session.
- **Eye level, not below.** Put the phone at your eye height. Filming from below (phone on the desk, looking up) is unflattering for everyone.
- **Leave room at the top and bottom.** Instagram covers the bottom fifth of a Reel with the caption and the right side with buttons. Keep faces and text in the middle.
- **Turn on the grid** (Settings → Camera → Grid on iPhone) and put eyes on the top line.

Every post needs three kinds of shot. Film all three and editing gets easy:

Shot	What it shows	Example for a cafe	Example for a trade
Wide	Where we are	The whole counter and room	The whole site or room
Medium	Who's doing it	The barista at the machine	The tradie at work
Close	The detail	Milk pouring into the cup	The tile edge, the finished join

Rule: film every shot for at least five seconds and hold the phone still. Movement looks professional when it's slow and smooth; shaky looks amateur. If in doubt, keep the phone still and let the subject move.

Exercise: film a wide, a medium and a close of one thing you do every day. That's a 15-second Reel already.

Lesson 3: sound that doesn't sound like a phone

People forgive average video. They scroll past bad sound.

- **Use a clip-on wireless mic** for anything where you talk. It plugs into the phone and clips to your collar. It's the single best $100 you'll spend on content.
- **No mic? Get close.** Within an arm's length of the phone, in a quiet room. Phone mics pick up the room, so distance sounds echoey.
- **Kill the background noise.** Turn off music, the coffee grinder, the air con if you can. Film before opening or after close.
- **Soft rooms sound better.** Rooms with carpet, curtains and furniture sound warmer than tiled, empty rooms.
- **Record five seconds of silence** at the start. Editing apps use it to remove background hiss.

Exercise: record the same sentence three ways: phone on a tripod two metres away, phone in your hand at arm's length, and with a mic. Listen on headphones. The difference will convince you.

Lesson 4: talking to camera without freezing

- **Look at the lens, not the screen.** Looking at yourself on screen reads as looking away. Put a small sticker next to the lens if it helps.
- **Talk to one person.** Picture your favourite customer and explain it to them, like you would at the counter. "Hey everyone" sounds like a presentation.
- **Start with the point.** Your first sentence should be the most interesting thing you'll say. No "Hi, I'm Sam from…" first; put your name on screen instead.
- **Use dot points, not a script.** Three dot points on a sticky note beside the lens. Reading a full script sounds like reading.
- **Film in short chunks.** One sentence or idea at a time. If you trip over a word, pause, and say the sentence again from the start. You'll cut the mistakes out later.
- **Energy up 20%.** The camera flattens people. What feels slightly too enthusiastic looks normal on screen.

Exercise: answer the question customers ask you most, in under 30 seconds, three times in a row. The third take is almost always the best.

Lesson 5: editing in CapCut in 10 minutes

CapCut (free) is the easiest editor for phone content. The same steps work in Instagram's own Edits app.

1. **Import your clips** in the order the video should play.
2. **Cut the start of every clip** to the moment something happens. The first second of the video has to show or say something worth watching.
3. **Remove the gaps.** Delete pauses, "umms" and mistakes. CapCut's "Remove silences" does most of it automatically.
4. **Add captions.** Tap Text → Auto captions. Most people watch with the sound off. Fix any wrong words, then make the text big, high-contrast and in the middle of the screen.
5. **Add a title for the first 2 seconds** that says what the video is about ("3 things to check before you hire a builder").
6. **Music low, or none.** If you're talking, music should sit well under your voice. For Instagram, adding a trending sound inside the Instagram app (at low volume) can help reach.
7. **Export at 1080p, 30fps.** Higher settings make bigger files without looking better on a phone.

Keep it short. Most local business Reels work best between 7 and 30 seconds. If it can be shorter, make it shorter.

Exercise: edit the clips from Lesson 2 into one Reel with captions and a title. Time yourself. Under 10 minutes is the goal; it gets faster every time.

Your phone filming checklist

Stick this next to your filming spot:

- [ ] Lens wiped
- [ ] Facing the window (or in open shade)
- [ ] Phone vertical, at eye level, on a tripod
- [ ] Exposure locked on the face
- [ ] Mic on and tested
- [ ] Background noise off
- [ ] Wide, medium and close shots of everything
- [ ] Every clip held for 5 seconds

Ready to make a week of videos in one sitting? Follow our one-hour content batch. And when you want the big shoots done for you, every IROcreative social media plan includes a monthly on-site shoot.

Want it done *for you*?

IROcreative builds and looks after websites and social media for Perth service businesses, on one monthly subscription.
irocreative.com.au/get-online · hello@irocreative.com.au · East Victoria Park, Perth