

10 keys to a successful Facebook video

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- 1) Shoot in landscape mode:** Turn your phone to the side when you record. If you shoot with the phone in the normal vertical position, video editing software and Facebook will shrink it to fit into a landscape rectangle, resulting in the “black bars of death” and squinting viewers.
- 2) Take multiple clips to get the perfect one:** It’s always good to get more than one clip of something similar. Some clips may turn out fuzzy, some clips may not inspire as much emotion, some clips may be too far away. Get a variety of different shots of the same thing, if possible, so you can use the best footage in editing.
- 3) Leave space on background for text:** Adding text to a video is easy using free editing software, as long as your video’s background isn’t too busy. It’s good to have a blank wall behind the subject, and you can also use the ground. Position the shot to leave enough room for text you might need. If the background is too busy, it will require advanced editing skills to alter the text to be more visible
- 4) Keep clip length and overall length as short as possible:** Because there is so much competition for attention on social media, if individual clips last longer than necessary to convey a message, or if the entire video is too long, viewership will be quickly lost. Clips should be long enough to convey a message or for viewers to read the text on the screen. Put yourself in the shoes of your viewer: As soon as you feel a clip dragging on, so will they, so adjust clip length accordingly
- 5) Get in touch with your emotions:** When working on a story or editing, ask yourself, “Does this affect me emotionally?” “Would this compel ME to hit the like or share button?” Also select music that matches the emotion you’re trying to convey with the video
- 6) An immediate hook that makes people want to watch:** The average video watch time is only about 10 seconds, so put your strongest visuals and message at the beginning. You can even foreshadow the ending, such as “Soldier reunited with lost dog” before starting the story from the beginning. This will cause a fast reaction and also compel viewers to watch longer.
- 7) Use text in the video, especially at the beginning:** Most videos play muted, so you ideally want to also use text to describe what is going on in the video. Now This is a Facebook page that does this effectively.
- 8) Watch other successful pages to learn:** Get familiar with popular pages like Now This, UpWorthy, The Dodo, and others to see how they structure their videos and what sorts of stories are effective, and try modeling your videos that way. You can also look at the most successful pages of organizations similar to yours to get ideas.
- 9) When uploading to Facebook, choose the best thumbnail image:** After you upload your video to Facebook and before scheduling, click the arrows to scroll through the image that will show when the video is paused. When followers scroll down their news feeds, some have their settings to play videos automatically. Others will need to click on the video. If you select your best thumbnail image, these followers will be more likely to click the play button.
- 10) Complement your video with a solid write-up:** Just like your video, the post that goes with it should also be concise, emotion-provoking, and hook viewers in.

Free video editing programs

Windows: Windows Movie Maker

Tutorial and how to download: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5brIIURuL8>

Mac: iMovie

Tutorial: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UviYzKGFm4g>

Lighting

The best light is a bright cloudy day, light shade, and bright indoor lighting. Avoid harsh sun, patchy sunlight, and dim indoor lighting. Position your subject with their face towards the light source if possible.

Finding help

Volunteers can make fantastic videos for your organization. If you can find someone who already has some video editing experience, or who is willing to learn, they can be a great asset. Reach out to your volunteer force to see if anyone is interested!

Free Music Resources

<http://freemusicarchive.org/>

<http://www.purple-planet.com/>

<http://www.bensound.com/>