



Tips for Zoom Calls and Recorded Videos

How to record yourself:

You do not need fancy equipment to be part of a virtual event or to record a video! Simply use your computer, phone, or tablet, but **make sure you are recording in horizontal/landscape mode**.

Tips for recording:

- Record using a built-in or clip-on webcam on a laptop or desktop computer, and with software that captures audio and video simultaneously
 - You can also record with a tablet or smartphone, but it should be on a stand or grip for a stable camera view and the video needs to be recorded in horizontal/landscape mode rather than portrait mode
- Record in landscape orientation, with a 16:9 aspect ratio (this should be standard, but if your software gives you options, choose that)
- You should be centered in frame, with your entire head and shoulders in view; camera should be angled straight on so you are neither looking up or down too much
- Make sure there's appropriate lighting—natural is best
 - If too dark, place a lamp on other side of camera, diffuse by hanging a curtain or fabric
 - If too bright, move away from light source, or move it to the side
- Place yourself in front of a plain background—no windows, beds, TVs, excessive decorations, distracting movement (animals/people)
 - This doesn't have to be a completely blank wall, but whatever might be behind you (bookcase, art) shouldn't be overly busy/cluttered or have adult content
 - If you must record in an open space, ensure no pets or people move through the background during your video
- As best as you can, avoid all background noise—record in a very quiet space (e.g. a closed room with some furniture to reduce echo), no music or construction or dogs barking or other people talking nearby.
 - Please do not wear headsets or headphones. While they can help with cutting down background noise, they can also count as a visual distraction. They often have poor microphone quality as well. For this sort of a video it's best to just find a quiet time to record.

Recording software:

Any computer: Zoom (<https://zoom.us/>) Accounts are free. You can schedule a meeting with yourself and use the record function to capture your audio and video, and export a final file. This is an app that many of us are likely quite familiar with by now.

If on a Mac: Quicktime should be installed on your computer. Follow the guidelines here:

<https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT208721>

If on a PC: SnagIt has free trials available here: <https://www.techsmith.com/screen-capture.html>

If on a tablet/phone: use the video function of your camera app.

Script Ideas:

If you are creating an author or illustrator video start by giving your name and the title of your book.

Otherwise, there really aren't rules! This video is your chance to pitch your book to librarians, educators, and readers across the country. You can talk about:

- Where the idea for your book came from
- Why you wrote the book
- What challenges you faced while writing the book
- What your process is
- How you did your research
- Give a tour of your writing area
- Include possible writing prompts
- Include a brief reading from the book
- Whatever you think will make people say, "I need to get that book!"