

# CSB/SJU Smartphone and Tablet Video Capture Cheat Sheet

## Preparation

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### Go in with a plan

- It's best to have a script or outline of the points you want to hit before recording. Less is more with video dialogue and good organization will help you deliver an effective message.

### Find a quiet, undisturbed location

- Avoid noisy environments and backgrounds that contain moving or distracting elements.

## Technical Tips

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### Capture video horizontally in landscape orientation

- Don't capture video vertically in portrait orientation unless your platform specifically calls for it. When in doubt, capture horizontally enabling full-screen video on YouTube, TVs/monitors and projectors.

### Tap to focus and adjust exposure

- To ensure your subject is fully in focus, simply tap your screen.
- Adjust the exposure (overall brightness) as desired, typically by tapping/dragging it up and down.

### Natural light is best

- Aim for daylight outside in the shade or indoors using window light. Whenever possible, avoid direct sunlight and artificial indoor lighting. "Golden hour" in the early morning or late evening are good too.
- When indoors, turn off all of the lights and position your subject looking at a window. Ideally frame your subject with a clean, simple background behind them. Avoid capturing your subject with a window in the background, which typically turns them into a dark silhouette.

### Frame up your subject and consider composition

- Make sure nothing is "sticking out" of your subject's head. When framing the composition, choose your head-room and lead room accordingly. More about both of those in the [first 3 minutes of this video](#).
- Read more about [video composition here](#).

### Stabilize the camera

- Use a tripod whenever possible. If you don't have one, simply lean the camera against a pile of books.
- When hand-holding is necessary, hold still and position the camera in close to your chest.

### Avoid using front-facing cameras

- You may need to enlist an assistant, but it pays to use the rear-facing cameras on the back of tablets and smartphones whenever possible—the video quality is typically much higher.

### Pause for lead-in and hold your shot

- Capture 3-5 seconds of extra video at the start and end of your shots. Having extra leeway is helpful in post for editing. Reaching for the button to stop recording early can even incorporate camera shake into the video.

## Optional Equipment

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- Smartphone [Stand](#) or [Tripod](#)
- [Smartphone Lavalier Microphone](#) (for interviews)
- [Smartphone Condenser Microphone](#) (versatile at a distance)