

Recording Presentations

Many of the skills which make for an effective in-person presentation also apply to recorded presentations. However, there are some meaningful differences: some communication tools are less effective on video, some are more effective, and still others are unique to this format. Here are a few tips to help you get started with your next project!

Structuring Your Presentation

- Create a roadmap or outline: Take the time to organize your talking points so that they flow logically. You may also find it useful to write a full manuscript if your presentation is more formal, lengthy, or requires a strict narrative structure.
- Much like the audience for an in-person speech, your virtual audience will find signposts helpful. Explain the structure of your speech in your introduction, and connect each new point you make to the main ideas you introduced earlier.
- For more specific structuring information, see [“Structure, Conversational Style & Oral Source Citation”](#) and [“Oral v. Written Style.”](#)

Technical Setup

- Reduce background noise by recording in an environment that is quiet and distraction-free. You may need to record some practice takes to test your microphone’s sensitivity.
- Consider angles, framing, and lighting:
 - A higher camera angle—one that shoots down at or level with your face—is generally more effective than a lower angle.
 - Ensure both your face and shoulders are in frame. If you anticipate using visual aids (a whiteboard, props, etc.), a wider shot might be necessary.
 - Light yourself from the front or side, *not* from the back. If the light source is behind you, the camera will adjust its focus and exposure to the light rather than to your face.
- Choose a subdued, distraction-free background — you want the audience to focus on what you’re saying rather than what’s behind you. As an alternative, you might also consider using a simple virtual background.
- [Technology Services](#) has a range of equipment available for checkout, including cameras and microphones.

Delivery on Camera (or for the Microphone)

- Bookend your speaking with a few seconds of silence. It will serve as a cue to your audience that it’s time to listen and will make editing the recording easier.

- Look into the camera, not at the monitor. The audience will be more engaged if it appears you're making eye contact. You may find it helpful to put something near the camera, like a sticky note, to remind yourself to look there.
- Use facial expressiveness and gestures to emphasize content, but be sure your gestures are in frame.
- Enunciate: You want the microphone to pick up every word you say.
- Vary the pace of your speech and inflection of your voice, just as you would in a face-to-face conversation, but make sure you are always intelligible. Many people speak more quickly when they are nervous — if you find yourself feeling anxious, take a moment and slow down.
- For further explanation on delivery, see the [“Audio-based Communication Guide”](#) and [“Quick Tips for Improving Your Virtual Presentation.”](#)

Editing Pre-Recorded Audio/Video

- Text/background colors with high contrast (black on white, white on black, white on dark blue) are typically easier to read.
- Your computer's basic video editing software should suffice for simple clip trimming and transitions. If you need more advanced video and audio editing capabilities, there are a number of free applications available online (Audacity, WeVideo, etc.).
- Identify how much editing will be appropriate, if necessary at all. More informal presentations will require less editing while academic or professional presentations may require more to be effective.
- Do not feel the need to over-edit. Breaths, laughs, and filler words are normal components of oral communication; only remove things that will help your audience better understand or follow your presentation.