Camera Recording Tips (Webcams, Phones, Tablets)

Live webcam recording

To get the best quality from your GoReact live recording, check these items before recording:

1. Camera quality

See "What cameras work with GoReact?" for more information.

2. Internet connection

Make sure you have 0.5MB/s (500K) or better **upload** speed at www.speedtest.net. We strongly recommend a wired connection on the recording PC. (Use a USB extension or longer network cable to optimally position your camera.)

3. PC readiness

To maximize your PC's recording resources:

- Close other browser windows and open applications
- Minimize USB devices connected (if using a USB-connected webcam)
- Plug in laptops ("Power Save" modes can reduce performance)
- (Note that GoReact will not work well in a virtual desktop environment)

4. Test your video and audio

First and foremost, **check the audio bars** on your record screen to make sure you're getting sufficient sound. Move the record volume slider up/down as appropriate to capture the right level.

You can also check the inputs at the top of the record box to make sure it's using the correct camera and mic.

See the **Recording Tips** below for best practices on setting up your recording environment for optimal video and audio. Create a test video in the same environment (room, recording PC, camera) you'll be using and make 1 or 2 practice recordings to ensure quality.

Offline recording (Mobile device or camera)

If you are recording offline using a phone, tablet, or other camera, you'll want to **minimize your upload time** by recording at an appropriate resolution so as not to create too large a file.   Some specific tips for different recording devices:

iPhone/iPad - Use the GoReact Recorder mobile app available in the iTunes store. You can record directly in the app, or post to GoReact using an existing video on your device.

Android - if you have a "Quality" setting option on your video camera app (most will have it), set it to "High" or "VGA", whichever has a size of either 640x480 or 720x480. If you cannot find that setting, you may want to use an app such as Video Converter from the Play Store (link here) to compress your video after you record it. In that app, you can set it to 480x360 and 800 bitrate, and that will be fine.

Cameras or other devices - set your device to record at a standard or VGA resolution (720x480, 640x480, or 480x360). This will usually create a video of sufficient quality, but small enough for an efficient upload.

No matter what, after changing your settings do a quick test recording to make sure you like the results.

Mobile device orientation note: Be sure to orient your phone/tablet to **landscape** for your recording (so it's wide, not tall), unless you have a really good reason to record in portrait orientation.

Recording tips

First, run through the items above to make sure your recording device is ready. We highly recommend a "test video" before your actual recording to ensure everything is working well.

Then check the following tips for best results!

1. Positioning the camera

For in-class presentations, ensure you're capturing ALL of the presenting space, including any on-screen slides.

For teacher observations, position the camera as best as possible to capture the widest classroom area. However, be sure you can still pick up quality audio. (See "Audio Tips" below.)

For self-recording, be sure your head, shoulders, and elbows are in the picture frame. You should allow a little space above your head, below your elbows and on the sides, so your hands aren't cut off at the ends of the frame when you sign. If you are too far away or too close to the camera, viewing is difficult.

2. Background

If possible, stand in front of a solid, light colored background. Be aware that some cameras do not record bright white backgrounds very well. Remove clutter and make sure there is nothing inappropriate showing.

3. Lighting

Make sure you have adequate lighting. Particularly, try to have more light in front of you than behind you. Otherwise you may be shadowed badly. Household lamps may help if doing self-recording.

4. Clothing & Appearance

Wear contrasting, solid and appropriate clothing. Keep hair away from your face, and lose the gum/candy.

5. Audio

Don't forget to **test your audio**! Test different recording distances from the mic to find the best spot.

For self-recording, be sure to sit an appropriate distance from your camera. (Being too close can result in garbled/poor audio.)

For in-class presentations, be sure the presenters project their voices well and stay turned toward the mic source. You may wish to try a remote mic such as those on our Suggested Equipment List, or any other mic source that can be used by the Flash recorder in GoReact.

For teacher observations, using a camera such as the Logitech Orbit that is designed for room recording will usually be better than a desktop webcam for audio. Alternatively, you can use a remote mic such as those on our Suggested Equipment List, or a mic/camera combo device such as the Swivl. (Note – Swivl is for iOS devices and requires you to upload your video when completed. But it's pretty cool. Teacher audio is great, classroom audio is so-so.)