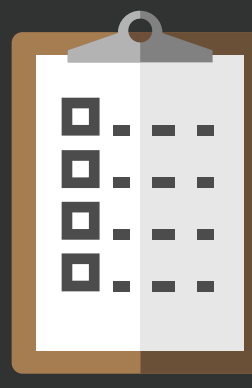


# BETTER VIDEOS: THE ULTIMATE TIP SHEET

You know you need to do more video. Here are 50 tips to help you do it right.

## Preparation



### 1. Plan your video.

Crucial! Save time + money.

### 2. Practice a video workflow.

What process works for you? Checklists help.



### 3. Know your goal.

Get clear on your video's purpose.

### 4. Learn about your audience.

Design for them.

### 5. Write a script.

You'll get clarity and consistency.



### 6. Storyboard.

Stick figures are fine.



### 7. Gather assets upfront.

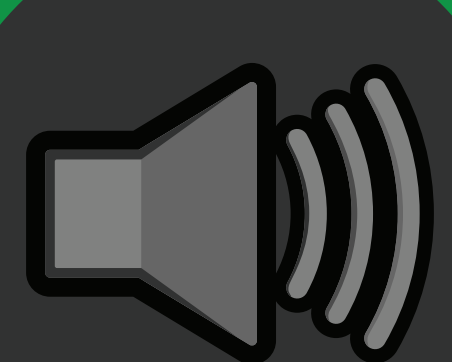
Where are those logos?

### 8. Get feedback.

Not from your mom. Critical is best.



## Audio



### About voice recording



### 9. Record voiceovers first.

Match the video to it later.

### 10. Use your voice.

It's great, really. Trust us.



### 11. Drink water,

so your voice sounds its best.

And don't record hungry.

### 12. Pause, then clap twice after mistakes.

Audio spikes show where to edit.



### About microphones

### 13. Get a good mic.

When the audio is bad, it all seems bad.



### 14. Use a pop filter.

Avoid 'plosives' (popping sounds).

### 15. Check the mic.

Too close? Too far? Any background noise?



### 16. Test audio input levels.

Too hot = distorts. Too low = hard to hear.

### 17. Set the mood with music.

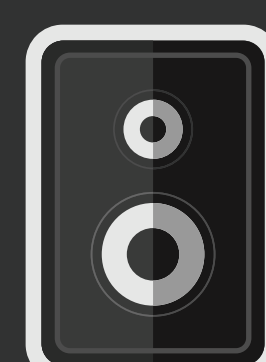
Loud enough to hear, but not overpowering.



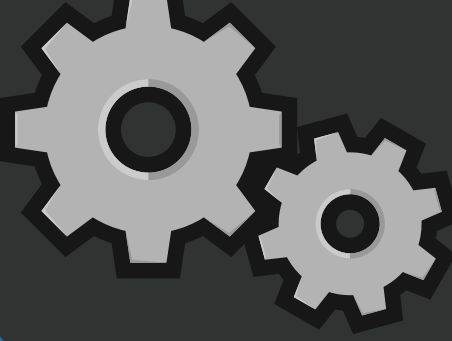
### 18. Test playback.

How's it sound through headphones?

Desk speakers?



## Production



### About shooting



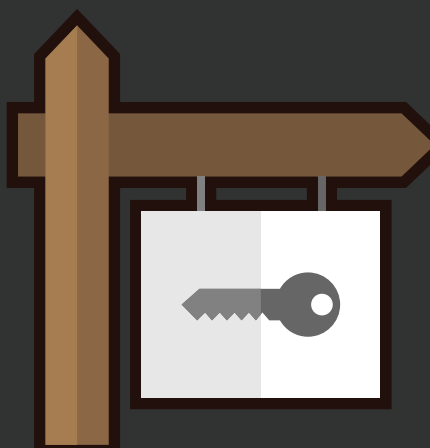
### 19. Remove 'shine' from faces.

Rice paper works great.

### 20. Hide wires & mics under clothes.

### 21. Use lights.

Remove shadows. Make talent look their best.

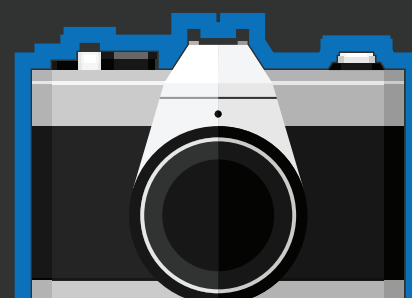


### 22. Rent gear.

Test what you like.

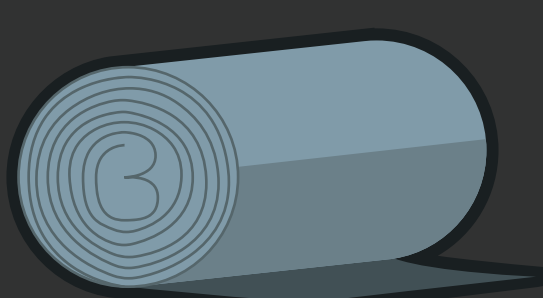
### 23. Use the rule of thirds.

Position subjects in the outer thirds of your shot. Don't always center.



### 24. Record two cameras at once.

Different angles = more options.



### 25. Shoot B-Roll.

You'll need a lot.

### 26. Get your camera closer than you think.



### 27. Avoid digital zoom.

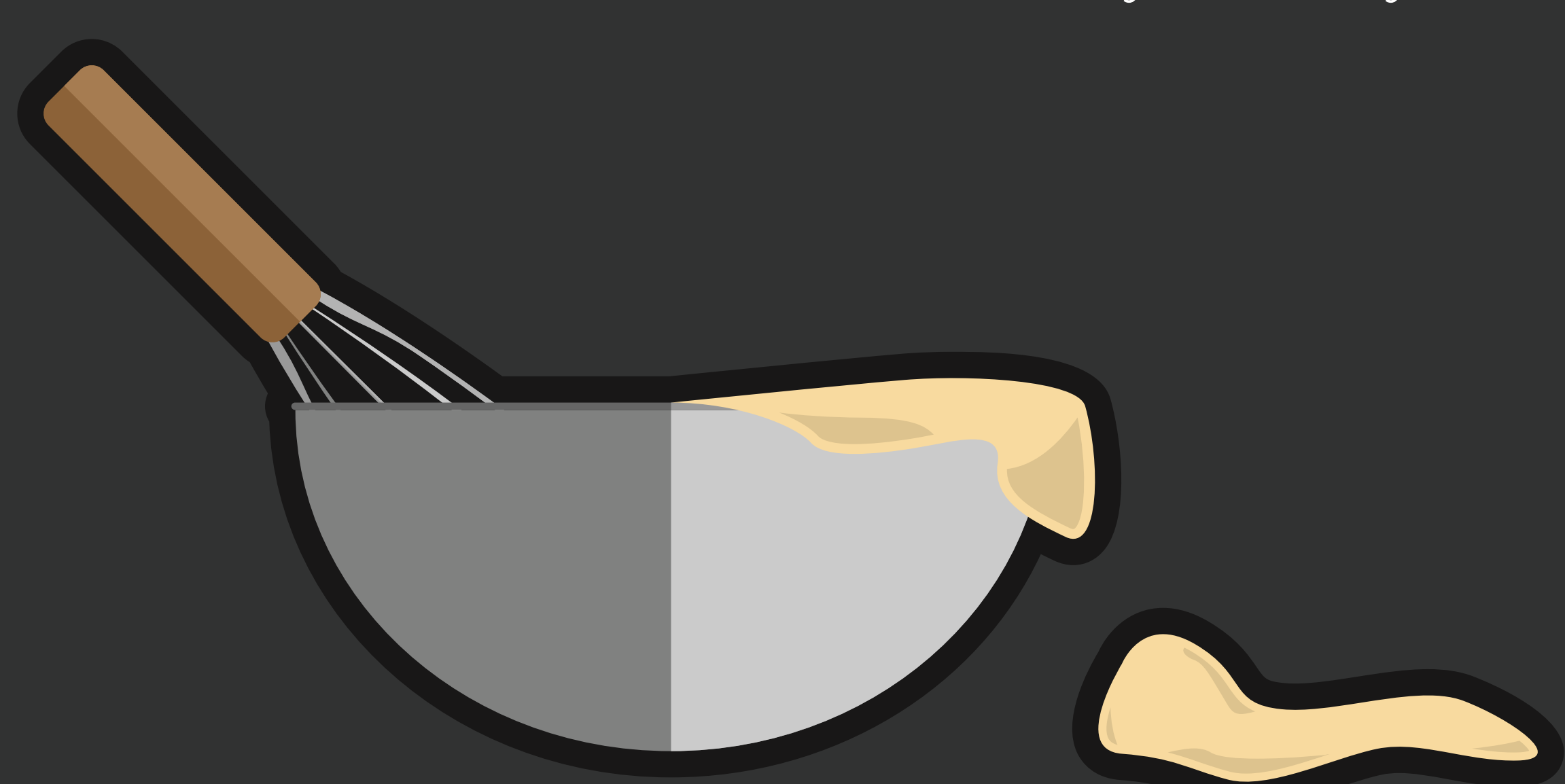
It looks pixelated. Optical zoom is best.

### 28. Keep clips short (except interviews).

They're easier to edit.

### 29. Mix things up.

Different angles, scenes, close shots, etc., to tell your story.



### About color and text

### 30. Add annotations & text.

Draw attention and keep things interesting.



### 31. Color correct.

Or don't.



### 32. Don't frame heads in a floating box

(Except for sign language interpreters).

Cut back and forth instead.

### 33. Use color design.

Background, clothing, etc. help tell your story.

### 34. Use blocks of text sparingly.

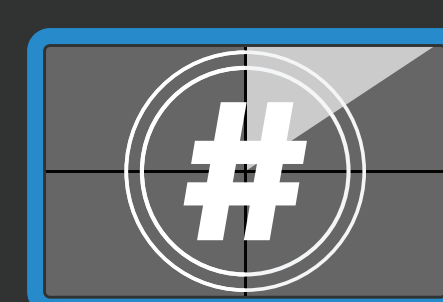
Watching and reading is tough to do.



### About transitions

### 35. Use simple transitions,

like cut, dissolve, and fade to black.



### 36. Add 'wacky' transitions with purpose.

E.g., a clock wipe to show time passing.

### About green screen

### 37. Green screen is cool

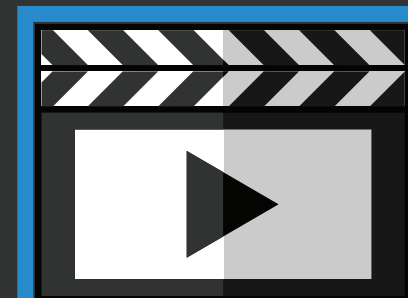
only if it looks good (No shadows, green color partially removed, etc.)

### 38. Don't just replace your background.

Add interaction, get creative.

### 39. Speed up or slow down clips.

Bring clarity, or show processes quickly.

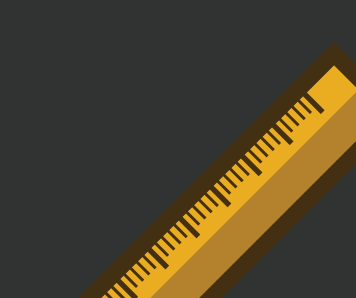


### 40. Caption!

For SEO, accessibility, and watching with the sound off.

### 41. Recording at the right size.

Where's your video going? Optimize for those dimensions.



## Screencasting



### About clean recording



### 42. Create a clean desktop

profile for recording.

So personal info isn't there.

### 43. Only show necessary programs.

Hide or close anything else.

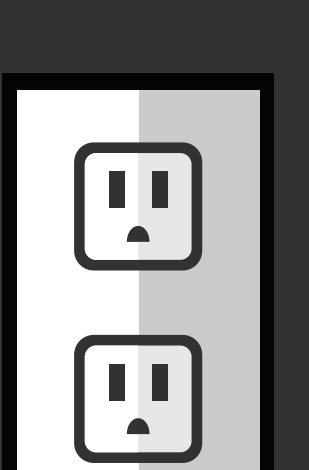


### 44. Hide toolbars, bookmarks,

& other browser stuff.

### 45. Turn off notifications

when recording.



### 46. Plug in your laptop.

Mid-presentation is a bad time

to lose power.

### About cursors

### 47. Slow the cursor down.

Make sure they see your movements.



### 48. Mark your cursor location

when you pause.

Put a sticky note on your screen. Your cursor won't 'jump' when you resume recording.

### 49. Don't point & circle.

Your cursor is not a laser pointer.



### 50. Make your cursor bigger.

