

Self Tape Basics for Film:

Lighting:

- Natural light is a good cheap resource
 - Your face should be lit by the natural lighting. Don't film with the window in the shot.
- Can accent or augment by trying household lights or purchased lighting equipment
 - Make sure there are no shadows (especially on your face)
 - Make sure there are no "hot spots" like a flashlight pointing at one area

Sound:

- Your voice
 - Do vocal and physical (face) warmups before you begin
 - Don't speak too quietly
 - Don't scream
 - Speak with crisp diction- enunciate your consonants carefully
 - Don't talk too fast/ don't rush
 - Using the mic in your device is fine or use an external mic
 - Make sure to test your sound and listen to it before your final take
- Room Echo: Echo's can be reduced by using material to absorb noise
 - Simply putting up a blanket on the wall can help
 - The more hard surfaces in the room, the more the echo
- Get rid of extra noises
 - Turn off fans
 - Ask house members to be quiet while filming
 - Close windows to decrease outside noises

Camera

- Unless told otherwise, always film with the camera horizontal (landscape), not vertical (portrait)
 - A self tape isn't a "selfie". You want room right and left for movement if needed.
- Movement/hit your mark
 - Take note of or even mark with tape on the floor or wall how far you can move and still be on the screen fully
 - Self tapes should mainly be planted in one spot. Don't move around too much.
- LOOK into the camera – NOT at yourself. You can look at yourself later
- Make sure camera is at eye level.
 - Use a tripod when possible OR
 - Build up a tower of boxes for laptops or cameras
 - Make a "do it yourself" tripod for phones (see

Attire & Makeup

- **What NOT to wear:**
 - Pure reds, whites and blacks: such extremes of pure white and black make it difficult for the camera to balance exposure. Intense reds will bleed and make the surrounding objects (ie your face) appear red. IF SHOOTING GREEN SCREEN FOOTAGE, PLEASE DO NOT WEAR GREEN.
 - Stripes, patterns, logo's, hats.
 - Trying out multiple outfits is a good idea
- **What to wear:**
 - A solid color shirt that doesn't blend in with the background or your skin
 - Contrasting colors: If sweater and shirt, contrasting not blending colors.
- **Makeup:** Film is close up. You should wear a basic corrective makeup but also neutrally accent your lips and eyes. Try not to make your look seem FLAT on film. The curves of your natural face should show.
- **Hair:** Make an effort to look clean and tidy.
- **Jewelry:** Subtle. No "statement pieces".
- **Dress for the part:** If you are filming for a particular role, you can play to that angle, but don't film in full costume. For example, if the role is sexy, lean that direction with makeup and hair and costume, but don't jump in with 2 feet and look like a prostitute. You should still look professional.
- **Glasses:** whenever possible, remove glasses for filming as it can be difficult to see your eyes.

Backgrounds

- Solid color: Blue and grey seem to read the best on film, but use what you have
- DIY Options:
 - Hang a sheet or large paper on a wall
 - Find a wall and remove décor for filming

Editing

- Edit out the moments at the beginning and the end where you hit the start and stop of the film.
 - Ways to not have to edit:
 - Use another person to push the start and stop for you
 - Use a remote control to start and stop
- Flip grid has an editing tool. Most computer and camera apps have editing tools also.

Acting

- Prepare well, including many rehearsals before you start filming
- Do your full character research and preparation and make sure you have made strong choices on how to portray characters faces and voices.
- Memorize any scripts, and practice introduction slates so they are clear and concise
- Relax and focus on giving your best work

- When you mess up – don't let it get into your head. It is just ONE mistake. The great thing with self-tapes is that you can mess up as many times as you want and still film again to find the BEST take.
- If you are getting flustered or frustrated, take a break and come back to it.

Files & How to Send

- 50 mb or less is the standard.
- Most producers/casting agents don't want YouTube – due to the commercials
 - Drop box
 - Google drive
 - Cloud storage
- Naming the file: Full name _ Role (full name, underscore, role)
- Graphics: Title with name & contact info.

Self Tape “How To” Video's for reference:

Go to YouTube and look up your own references on “how to” and what one should look like, or check out the links below.

- [Advanced \(cheap to expensive\)](#)
- [Casting director's perspective](#)
- [Equity \(Shortest & simple\)](#)