



VIRTUAL ON-CAMERA LAB



EQUIPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

If you already have a setup that works for you, fantastic. However, if you're looking to update your gear, below is a list of some of our favorites that we've worked with and can recommend. The goal is to help you create a controlled at home studio environment that you can easily rely on. We want to help you focus on your performance...because at the end of the day, that's what counts.

*Here are a few user friendly options that won't break the bank.**

SOUND/MICROPHONES

MICS FOR YOUR SMARTPHONE

STAFF PICK

[BOYA BY-M1 Lav Mic](#) \$19.95

Pros: Budget friendly, long cord (almost 20 feet), easy to use, works great with smartphone.

Cons: Only for self tape, can't be used for live auditions, callbacks, or any live video conferencing.

[Rode smartLav+](#) \$79

Pros: Easy to use, crisp sound

Cons: Shorter cord (about 4ft), less budget friendly

NOTES FROM STAFF

- These mics are only compatible for self-taping. Please note that these will not work for livestreaming/video conferencing.
- Here's a [Lightning Headphone Jack Adapter](#) if you have an iPhone. You will need this for both lavs.

MIC FOR YOUR COMPUTER

[Blue Snowball](#) \$54.99

Pros: Great value for the price, USB mic (plugs right in). Works with live video conferencing.

Cons: You have to be close to it, not a lot of freedom to move around. Would mainly recommend this as a desktop mic, for someone who will be sitting in front of their computer.

NOTE FROM STAFF

- The Blue Snowball paired with the Boya BY-M1 Lav is a budget friendly option that should cover all your bases.

MICS FOR YOUR DSLR

[Deity D3 Pro](#) \$199

Pros: Easy to mount/use, provides clean audio with a high signal-to-noise ratio, great specs for price, can plug directly into smartphone

Cons: Doesn't come with TRS adapter (which would only be an issue with a few cameras), needs to be close to camera (since it's plugged into camera jack)

[Rode VideoMic](#) \$149

Pros: Easy to mount/use, records directly into camera, budget friendly

Cons: Has a higher noise floor, needs to be close to camera (since it's plugged into camera jack). Additionally, this doesn't work with smartphones.

FROM THE LAB

In our Los Angeles OCL Lab, we used the RØDE NTG3. It's a great option, if you have the money, studio space, and a camera with XLR inputs. We also suggest the more budget friendly, RØDE NTG2.

*Other Boom mics used on set: Sennheiser 416, MKHH 60, Sennheiser G4

LIGHTING

[Neewer Ring Light Kit: 18"](#) \$81.99

Pros: Compact and produces a lot of light (clearly lights the face), great for travel. Dimmable, bi color, easy set up, includes accessories.

Cons: Doesn't create the perfect studio set up on its own. We recommend buying an additional LED panel for base setup. Can reflect a "ring" in the eyes, something to be aware of.

STAFF PICK

[Neewer 660 LED Bi-Color 2 Light Kit](#) \$175.99

Pros: Budget friendly, the LED lights remain cool, great specs - CRI 96+. Dimmable Bi-color 3200-5600K.

Cons: *If using softboxes*, this requires additional adapters to tilt lights. Softboxes are not required but are great for creating pleasant soft even light.

[Limostudio 700 w](#) \$65.75

Pros: Great value for the price, looks great on camera

Cons: Only comes with daylight bulbs (6500K), lights will get hot, takes up a lot of space, more time for setup (will have to purchase new bulbs over time).

FROM THE LAB

In our Los Angeles OCL Lab, we used the [Aputure Light Storm COB 120d](#) kit with softboxes for our key and fill. For our hair light, we used the [Nanlite Forza 60 LED Monolight BACKDROP](#).

BACKDROP

STAFF PICK

[Fovitec Kit](#) \$74.95

Pros: Price, collapsible, double sided

Cons: Not easy to collapse, takes a little effort to mount on stand

NOTE FROM STAFF

- We only recommend the Blue/Gray option.

STAFF PICK

Smartphones

We understand most of you will be recording self tapes on your phones. Today's phone cameras (Google Pixel, iPhones and the Samsung Galaxy S10) will give you excellent results. Buying a pricey camera should be the last of your worries, which is why we have this category last.

NOTE FROM STAFF

- If you don't already have a tripod adapter, get one. Below are a few options.

SMARTPHONE TRIPOD ADAPTER

[UBeeSize Smartphone Tripod Mount with Wireless Remote](#) \$9.99

[Jansite Smartphone Tripod Mount with Wireless Remote](#) \$9.95

SMARTPHONE FLEXIBLE ARM DESKTOP ADAPTER

[Gooseneck Phone Holder and Mount](#) \$14.99

VLOGGING CAMS

Here are a few cameras that are 'vlogging' cams. This also makes them ideal for self tapes. They are easy to set up, autofocus, flip the screen to see yourself, and you can record these on your own at a moment's notice.

[Sony Alpha a6400 Mirrorless Camera](#) \$1,000

[Canon PowerShot G7X Mark III](#) \$750

[Canon EOS M50 Mirrorless](#) \$600

WEBCAM

If your only option is your built-in webcam or a plug-in usb webcam, we recommend a plug-in webcam.

[Logitech C922 Pro Stream Webcam 1080P Camera](#) \$150

Pros: Budget friendly, great image quality if set up correctly, no need for a tripod, doesn't require batteries

Cons: Image settings can be finicky, hard to find (out of stock everywhere), lacks dynamic range

FROM THE LAB

[Canon XA11](#): This camcorder plugs right into the wall, so you don't have to worry about the battery dying during a take. Great autofocus and can even be used as a webcam. Bit rate can be set to a low, manageable file size that doesn't need to be compressed for uploading to casting sites.

*We're also fans of the [Blackmagic Design Pocket Cinema Camera 4K](#), [Sony Alpha a7S II](#) and [Canon 5D Mark III](#). These are high quality cameras and can be used for livestreams. If you have the time and money to invest in these, have at it, though these are more than what's necessary.

*These staff recommendations are our suggestions only. The SAG-AFTRA Foundation is not affiliated with or sponsored by any of these companies or products, and receives no monetary compensation or fee for purchases.