

10 Video Tips for the

Shoestring Budget

Relax using these
Money-Saving Tips
to Help You
Create Your
Next
AMAZING
Video!



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Welcome!

There's a myth going around about video that I'd like to dispel.

It goes something like this...

"It takes a lot of money and time to produce videos that someone will want to watch. To engage an audience, you need expensive equipment and you need a degree from a film school."



Whoever believes this has probably never watched the popular TV show, "America's Funniest Home Videos"— a show that's been entertaining audiences for 25 years using humorous **amateur** video.

Or maybe (and this one is hard to believe) they haven't watched any of the millions of videos created by amateur video makers available on YouTube®.

The truth is amateur video is a huge category in itself, with its own creators, fan base and even corporate sponsors.

The line between what is amateur and what is professional has become significantly blurred over the past few decades.

With all the inexpensive and easy-to-use video-making tools now available, it's sometimes hard to distinguish if the video you're

watching was created by a pro with years of media experience or by your neighbor's kid on his home computer.

So, the good news for you is that with all these advances, the intimidation factor in creating your own video has come *way* down.

In fact, creating your own videos can be surprisingly fun!

The purpose of **10 Video Tips for the Shoestring Budget** is to give you some inexpensive, quick tips you can start using today to help make your videos.

Tips like...

- ✓ Where to find FREE music for your videos (See Tip #4).
- ✓ Why buying stock footage for as little as \$5 a clip can actually SAVE you money (See Tip #3).
- ✓ How to create your own teleprompter using a laptop and a mouse (See Tip #5).

So, let's get going... keep reading, learning and making those videos!

Cheers!

Elizabeth

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P.S. Interested in getting more FREE video tips? Go to GroovyVideos.com, sign up for our newsletter and subscribe to us on [YouTube](#).

Video Tip #1: Start with video tools you already own.

You may not realize it, but you probably already own some video-making tools, either obvious ones or items you can repurpose for a project.

For example, you might decide to use your laptop to make a how-to video.

That's exactly what Michelle Phan did in 2007 when she started posting makeup tutorial videos to her YouTube channel. She used her MacBook Pro, filmed in her living room and used table lamps to light her videos.

Phan became a YouTube celebrity and now has over 6 million channel subscribers and her own makeup line. She's long since graduated to more advanced production techniques for her videos.

However, the point is she started with a very small setup and used what she had available to her. Her focus was on producing good content loaded with valuable information for her audience.

In the end, good content will win more fans than mediocre content produced with the latest and flashiest tools.

Here are some other video tools you might already have at your disposal:

- **Video camera on your phone:** You can capture amazingly good footage with smart phones.

Example:

For his 2013 Oscar-winning documentary, "*Searching for Sugar Man*," director Malik Bendjelloul used his iPhone and a \$2 app

to shoot some of his footage after running out of money to complete his movie.

- **Video editing software on your computer:** Most computers have video editing software already installed. Windows Movie Maker and iMovie for the Mac both have basic video editing features. If you're just getting started with video, these programs are easy to learn and might fit your needs for quite some time.
- **Repurpose household objects:** There's a category of videos on YouTube showing how to create video equipment using common objects. Pretty much the whole gamut is covered. . . everything from DIY lighting projects, to creating your own tripod, to making your own green screen.

Here are some titles that caught my eye:

- ✓ Make a water bottle tripod for \$2
- ✓ How to build a shoulder rig out of PVC pipe
- ✓ How to make your own camera table dolly for under \$30



I got into the DIY craze when I realized I needed to use a teleprompter for one of my videos. The hefty price tag of up to \$2,000 was a drawback, so I decided to see if I could use my laptop to simulate a teleprompter. This led to some successful experimentation.

Interested in finding out what I did? See Video Tip #5 for details.

Video Tip #2: Browse Creative Commons licensed videos for free footage you can use.

A Creative Commons (CC) license allows people who have created a copyrighted work to share that work with others. The CC license enables the creator to distribute their copyrighted work free of charge to the public.

The creator decides what kind of use they will allow for their work by designating a specific CC license.

People who use CC-licensed video footage must be careful to use the footage in the way the creator allows in the license. For example, some creators allow you to use their footage for non-commercial uses only. Other CC licenses allow you to edit the video and use it in your own video as long as you credit the creator appropriately.

Check out the Creative Commons site for details on license types and where to find CC-licensed works: <http://creativecommons.org/>

Once you start your search for Creative Commons video, you might feel like a kid in a candy store hunting for just the right clip. Vimeo has a good user interface that simplifies finding CC-licensed videos on their site: <http://vimeo.com/creativecommons>



Video Tip #3: Purchase inexpensive stock video for your project.



You may encounter a time when there is simply no way for you to capture on your own the exact footage you want for a video project. Maybe getting the shot would mean expensive travel. It might require equipment or skills you don't possess.

Maybe you've searched Creative Commons footage and didn't come up with anything that would work for your project. Or, perhaps you prefer to use footage where you don't need to give an attribution credit.

For these cases, online stock video companies might be the solution to your problem. You'll find short clips (most of them under a minute) on a huge variety of topics.

There's a wide range of pricing for stock footage. There's good footage for under \$50 a clip. I've seen some outstanding special effects footage priced in the \$10 to \$20 range.

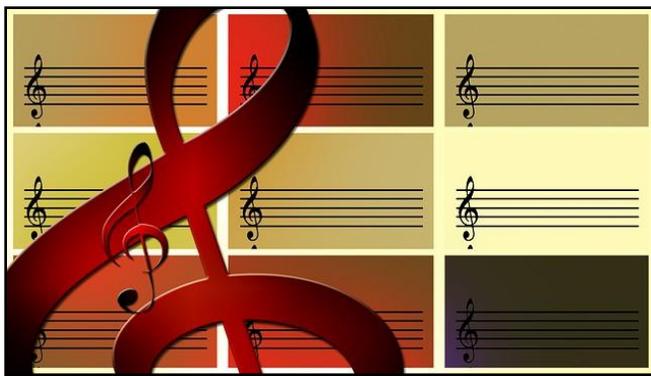
When purchasing stock video, make sure you understand what rights you are purchasing and how you are allowed to use the footage. You can also make some cash by signing up with stock video companies to sell your original video clips.

Pond5 is a popular stock footage company. Be sure to check out their free clip of the week: <http://www.pond5.com/>

Video Tip #4: Enhance your video using FREE music, sound effects and audio editing software.

Most video editing software packages include audio editing features that will allow you to import additional audio tracks and enhance your video's sound. This is important because great audio brings your audience into the video, helps narrate your story and keeps your audience watching throughout the entire video.

If you're looking for a free program for recording and editing sounds, then check out [Audacity](#). You can use this open-source, cross platform program to record and edit your audio files, and then import



those files into your video editing software.

As we mentioned in Tip #2, copyrighted work licensed through Creative Commons (CC) can be a valuable source of content for your videos.

However, you need to be careful when adding CC-licensed music or sound effects to your videos. CC-licensed music is free for some uses, but not all. Familiarize yourself with the rules by checking out [Legal Music for Videos](#).

If you have a YouTube account, then you have access to free music through the YouTube Audio Library. The Audio Library has hundreds of music tracks you can use license- and royalty-free in your video projects. To see the full list of music tracks, go to the Creation Tools section of your channel's Video Manager.

Video Tip #5: Camera shy? This teleprompter solution helps you sound and feel like a newscaster.

Now here's a tip I use to get over my stage fright of being on camera.

I've found that it's much easier to read a script on camera rather than relying on memory and spontaneity to get me through the video taping process.

One way to accomplish this is to write a script of what you want to say and load it into a teleprompter. You've probably seen teleprompters used by newscasters and politicians giving speeches.

The problem is that teleprompters can be expensive, requiring both specialized hardware and software.

I started thinking about the problem and realized I could simulate the effect of a teleprompter

by using my laptop, a wireless mouse and Microsoft Word. It's easy to do and virtually free if you already have access to a laptop and wireless mouse. There are more steps to the process than I can include in this short report, so I've included the below link to a complete article and YouTube video:

<http://www.groovyvideos.com/free-teleprompter.html>



Video Tip #6: Use an affordable external microphone to get better audio.

If you're using the internal microphone on your video camera, you may have noticed the sound quality is frequently mediocre to poor.

The microphones on consumer-grade video cameras generally produce low quality sound because they're "omnidirectional." This means they record sound in all directions, not just the sound source you're attempting to record.

If you're in a noisy environment, you might end up recording sound you hadn't intended to that drowns out the sound you really wanted to record.

The solution to having more control over which sound you record and the quality of that sound is to use an external microphone.

While you could easily spend hundreds of dollars on an external microphone, it's not necessary. You can achieve good quality and a vast improvement over your camera's internal microphone by purchasing a lavalier microphone for around \$30.

A lavalier microphone attaches directly to the input on a video camera. It has a long cord and a clip at the other end that you attach to your clothing. You've probably seen people being interviewed on TV wearing a lavalier microphone clipped to their shirt.

Our go-to lav mic is the Audio Technica ATR35s, which you can usually find on Amazon for around \$25-\$30.

Video Tip #7: A little lighting goes a long way.

Lighting kits can range in price from around \$100 to the more expensive kits that professionals use costing in the thousands of dollars.

If you're not ready to make an investment, but want to improve the lighting quality of your next video, here are some easy tips:



- ✓ **Experiment with your video camera's built-in light settings:** Most new cameras come with an auto-mode light setting and an override setting, which lets you make adjustments manually. Take some test footage to familiarize yourself with these settings. The more you learn about how your specific camera reacts to different lighting situations, the better you'll be able to use all of its settings to your advantage.
- ✓ **Use light sources you have on hand:** For indoor shooting, improve the lighting conditions by turning on lights, positioning lamps and opening blinds to let in natural light.
- ✓ **Position your subject carefully:** If you're filming a subject in front of a large light source, such as a window, he/she will appear in a darkened silhouette in the final footage. Instead, switch places with your subject so that you're in front of the light and your subject is facing the light.

Video Tip #8: Create a YouTube account and use their free services.

We've already talked about the free music you'll get with your YouTube account (see Tip #4).

There are other compelling reasons why you should consider signing up for a YouTube account and/or maximizing use of your account if you already have one. Here are a few:

- ✓ Unlimited, free video uploads.
- ✓ Create your own channel to share your videos. YouTube includes channel-branding features to help you build a community of viewers for your content.
- ✓ Easily embed your YouTube videos onto your website. Studies show videos increase website traffic and visitor time on sites.
- ✓ Allow others to share your YouTube videos, thereby spreading your content to people who might not otherwise see it.
- ✓ Access to a huge potential audience—each month, over 1 billion people visit YouTube.
- ✓ Become a YouTube Partner and earn money from your videos. According to YouTube, "Thousands of channels are making six figures a year."



Video Tip #9: Get free TV airtime for your videos at your local public access cable channel.



If you've created a video you'd like to share with your community, then you just might be able to get **free airtime** on a local cable TV channel to broadcast your program.

Now there are a few caveats to this tip. First, you'll need to live in a U.S. community that has a public access channel.

To find out if your community has a public access channel, check out this [Wikipedia article](#).

If your community does have a channel, you'll need to find out if they broadcast programs produced by local residents. Some access channels only broadcast government meetings and/or educational programming.

If your channel accepts community-produced content, then you'll need to ensure your video meets their broadcast guidelines. In general, the guidelines stipulate that your video is non-commercial in nature (that is, it doesn't try to sell a product or service). Be sure to contact your channel for their guidelines.

I've used my local public access channel to broadcast a talk show I hosted, a nature video I filmed and an entertainment video I produced. How-to videos are also a good format for public access TV.

Having my videos on TV boosted my confidence in my abilities and gave my work some local exposure. Plus, it's actually a lot of fun!

Video Tip #10: Subscribe to free information sites.



I've often found that getting the right information at the right time can make the difference between a successful project and a flop.

LinkedIn is a good source for discussion groups where you can post a question regarding a video project or read video

production articles members have written. There are over 600 groups listed under "Video Production." Find a group that fits your interests, request membership and participate thoughtfully (no spamming your products or services, please!).

Speaking of subscribing, I hope you've enjoyed this free report and will subscribe to the [Groovy Videos newsletter](#), where you'll receive monthly updates and useful tidbits on video marketing, how to make money with your videos and YouTube video production.

Here are other sites I suggest you check out and subscribe to:

- ✓ [Carl Gitchel Communications](#): Carl's series of FREE podcast tutorials will get you started on the path to audio and video marketing success!
- ✓ [Desktop Documentaries](#): This site is a treasure-trove of information on how to make, fund and distribute documentaries from script to screen.