



Getting the best from a phone recording for your IAP audition

Audio:

- This should be obvious, but put your phone on Do Not Disturb or Airplane mode to avoid sounds and vibrations from notifications!
- If you have a case on your phone, make sure it's not blocking any of the microphone ports, or remove the case.
- The room you are in makes all the difference! Choose a quiet room, preferably one with carpet, drapes, and other soft furnishings that will help dampen reflections and avoid that 'hollow' sound.
- Hang up a couple of big blankets if possible to further deaden your space.
- Make sure there's nothing in the room that creates noise or sound. Mics pick up *EVERYTHING*, even quiet sounds you might not think of. Fans, pet fountains, fridges, even a laptop fan can be picked up by a sensitive phone mic. Try and eliminate as many of these as possible from the space you'll be recording in. If you have a noisy furnace/radiator/vents, see if it can be turned off while you record your audition.
- For vocal recordings, get your phone as close to the source as you can, while still fitting yourself inside the frame of the video. The closer the microphone is to you, the better your overall sound will be! (Singers, watch for distortion as mentioned below!)
- If you are doing an instrumental (or loud voice) performance, consider the volume of your instrument. Louder instruments should be further from the phone to avoid distorting the recording by overloading the mic (I'm looking at YOU horn players and percussionists!). *In this case having lots of 'soft things' in your room will be even more critical!* If you find you're getting distortion in your recordings, even at a practical distance, you might need to use a third party app that allows you to control the recording level. Dolby On is a great option for iOS and Android devices, but there are others.
- String players will want to put a little more distance between themselves and the microphone as well, this will help give you a more balanced sound. Again, having lots of absorbent blankets and soft things in the room with you will help to smooth things out when you're at a distance.

- Optionally - Although the newest smartphones can have quite good microphones, a dedicated external microphone will make a WORLD of difference to the quality of your recordings. It's probably the single most effective thing you can do to improve your sound. Even a cheap one will allow you to get closer to the source (you/your instrument) while allowing your phone to be far enough away to capture yourself in the video frame. A few examples:
 - <https://amzn.to/3pM6SCc> - An inexpensive but great miniature mic from amazon
 - <https://www.shure.com/en-MEA/products/microphones/mv88> - A higher quality stereo microphone from Shure for iOS and Android
 - <http://www.rote.com/microphones/smartlav-plus> - A good quality lavalier mic compatible with almost all phones and tablets
 - <https://amzn.to/390oVyu> - A directional mic that attaches to your phone, useful when you need the device to be further away from you for the video.

Video:

- *Always shoot video in landscape mode!* This makes for easier, more natural viewing, and will ensure your video fills the screen when it's played back.
- Try to find a background that's clear and not distracting. A blank wall, drapes or curtains would be best. Avoid mirrors.
- Make sure to double check your framing so that you capture everything you intend to capture!
- Lighting is key! At a minimum you will want to choose a room with lots of bright, non-directional light.
- Always be sure to keep the majority of the light source(s) in front of you. Avoid bright backlighting such as windows.
- Avoid too much lighting from below your head height or you're gonna have a bad time.
- Consider adding a desk lamp or freestanding lamp to direct additional light at yourself. It will look best if it is positioned above your head height, slightly off to one side, and roughly as far back as your camera.
- Pro Tip: If you want to experiment with lighting the way the pros do, you could try the classic 3 point light setup shown below! 3 floor or desk lamps is all you need!

Three-Point Lighting

