

Tips for Recording 4-H Presentations

In some ways, recording your 4-H presentation is like presenting it at your club, county or state event. In other ways, it's a bit different. For example, the 4-H'er controls the scene and is speaking to a camera instead of a room of spectators. There is a lot more that the 4-H'er can control if they plan carefully and set the stage for success. This set of tips are designed to help you do that.

Before Hitting Record

Making the recording is one of the fun parts of creating a virtual presentation. However, preparation and properly setting the stage is critical. There is a lot to do before turning on the camera.

- All of the guides for [Kansas 4-H Presentation Overview](#) apply to virtual presentations and the guides will help you prepare.
- You might want to check out the score sheets posted on the [Communications Page](#) so that you know what the judges will be looking for.
- Setting the scene. Pay careful attention to the surroundings when you get ready to record.
 - Is it a quiet space with no background noise?
 - Will you be able to work without being interrupted?
 - What will the viewer see in the background of your video? It should be clean, neat and uncluttered.
 - Does the location allow for adequate lighting? Be sure to light up your face and the subject of your video. Watch this [video about lighting](#) to learn more.
- Posters and visuals. Consider how to best display your posters and visuals. The key is to think about whether the viewer will be able to clearly see what you want them to see. Do what you can to show things clearly. Be creative.
 - Will the viewer be able to read a poster on the video?
 - Would a graphic edited into your presentation be better?
 - Will the items that you are displaying be easily seen?

Cameras

This is probably the most important piece of equipment that you'll need to record a video presentation. The good news is that you probably already have a device capable of recording video and audio. Here are a few of the more common and available devices that can be used to record your presentation:

Smartphone

- Easy to use and capable of very good quality video and audio. Check out this video with [tips for recording with a phone](#).
- Tips- Always record in landscape mode. The forward-facing camera is usually of better quality than the self-facing camera.

Web Cam

- This is typically an external camera that plugs into a USB port on a computer. Web cams are usually able to provide very good quality video and audio.
 - *Tip*- Web cams are designed for close-up work and would be a good choice if you can set up your video so you will be close to the camera

Digital Camera

- This category includes compact digital cameras, action cameras and DSLR cameras. Most digital cameras are great at recording video and audio and can easily be attached to a tripod.
 - *Tip-* Spend some time learning about the video settings of your camera for best results.

Camcorders

- These are great for recording video and audio because that’s exactly what they are designed to do.

Recording Tips

Regardless of what device you select, there are some common practices that will help your video and audio look terrific:

- Get help. It’s handy to have someone else operate the camera so the 4-H’er can concentrate on the presentation.
- Do a test. Set everything up and try some test recording. Experiment. Try some of the tips listed here and make adjustments so that your recording looks and sounds great.
- Get your camera out of your hands. Try to keep the camera as steady as possible by using a tripod or by positioning the camera on something solid.
- Look at the camera. This will might seem strange at first, but you want the person watching the video to feel like you are speaking directly to him or her.
- Camera settings. Start in automatic mode, but don’t be afraid to experiment. Adjust the settings if you are not getting the results you want. Try searching the internet for tips for your device. There are lots of free tutorials and they can be very helpful.
- Record using the highest quality setting (resolution) you can.
- Make sure you have enough storage on your device. Voice and video recordings usually create big files. If you don’t have enough storage, then try reducing the image quality setting on your device.
- Audio. It is very important that your voice is loud and clear on the recording. If you have access to an external microphone, then give it a try. If not, then you may need to get closer to your recording device. It might also be a good idea to try a different room or setting.
 - Check out some tips at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vc46IG8EC7E>
- Zoom. You can use your computer or phone with Zoom software to record your presentation. This will allow you to easily include graphics such as PowerPoint. Learn more <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nYNOB38ejVI>

What’s Next?

You have successfully recorded your presentation. The video could be submitted directly from your device. Or, you may want copy it to a computer to edit it or submit it. The best way to learn how to do this is simply to conduct an internet search for your device. For example, one might search for “transfer video from Samsung S9 to computer.” Use a similar search for whatever device you used.

[Here’s a good general video that describes how to get photos or video off of a phone.](#)

- *Tip-* “Copy” the video from your phone or camera instead of using the “Move” option. That way, you will have a copy of the video on both your device and your computer. You’ll have a backup.

Your video will load to your computer as a MP4 file. Be sure that you put it in a place where you can find it and change the name of the file. It might be a good idea to include your name. For example, “Billy Miller demo.”