VIEWS ASL Video Guide

RID receives video submissions on a regular basis; we use these videos in our publications, on our website and on social media channels. We strives to ensure these videos represent the best quality of ASL material in the same way we design and proof any written material produced by RID.

These guidelines apply to all VIEWS video submissions, as well as other general video submissions including application videos, announcements, and instructional films. This document, approved by RID Headquarters, outlines our video submission guidelines. Individuals submitting videos are expected to follow these guidelines to the best of their ability, and collaborate with the RID Communications Department should you find you cannot meet all of the requirements.

Your video is a representation of you! In filming, every detail matters. This includes attire, environment (surroundings/background), appropriate framing and space, and visible lighting. All are crucial when filming ASL. You want to look good for your colleagues, and we want you to look *great* in your work!

Framing

Make sure your video is in landscape (widescreen), and not portrait. We need to be able to see your signing space, do not crop out part of your arms or adjust your signing space in order to fit into a thin, vertical or cropped screen.

Eye Contact

One of the most valued characteristics in ASL is eye contact. Make sure you are looking into the camera and not at yourself on the screen (…though it is tempting!) Looking into the camera is how you make eye contact through video, and allows you to engage with your audience. Without eye contact, you will lose your audience quickly.

Camera Angles

Many people use a laptop camera to record videos, and while the video quality often is good, the camera angle is often not flattering. Keep the camera level with your body. The lens should not be angled up or down, you want to be looking forward. The last thing you want is for your audience to have an awkward perspective of looking up or down at you.

Lighting

Bright or natural light is best, avoid backlight. To do this ensure you are not standing with any light sources behind you. The camera, often set on auto-exposure, will then compensate for the bright light by making the person on camera very dark and difficult to see. The solution is to either move away from the bright light, mask or dim the bright light somehow, or place additional light, in front of you, that is much brighter than the background light. ALWAYS avoid filming under fluorescent lighting, because the lights can cause skin to look green and the lights can cause a strobing or striping effect on video.

Background

We recommend that use a plain, solid background that is free of objects and clutter. Remove objects in the background that are distracting, and could make for an unprofessional-looking video. If you find that you do not have a large enough space to film, find a small area with nothing obstructing the camera view – record yourself in that space yet maintain appropriate visual surroundings for your signing space.

Steady Camera

Your camera must be set up appropriately in a safe and steady position. It is recommended that if you have a camera that you use a tripod, adjusting the zoom and focus accordingly. If you do not have an external camera and are using a laptop camera, make sure it is set up on a desk or a table – somewhere stable that, again, is level with your eyesight. Please do not put the computer on your lap, creating shaky footage.

Clothing and Attire

Attire should be an appropriate color, keeping to solid colors and avoiding patterned tops. A general rule of thumb for videos in ASL is to wear a shirt that is an opposite hue of your skin, i.e. darker skin tones should wear lighter clothing, and lighter skin tones should wear darker clothing. Take the time to pick out a nice top such as a blouse, button up, polo, or sweater – make sure you look your best!

Filming Transitions

Make sure you pause after recording a section where you plan to add a transition, otherwise the transition will cut off your footage. Be sure there are about five seconds of "calmness" before and after each segment, to allow space for editing and transitions. Do not use transitions with movement, such as blurring or spinning into the next segment of your video. Use a black fade that is easy on the eyes and has a clean look. If the transition you use is inappropriately displayed, RID will cut out the transition and add the appropriate one.

Captions and Citations

Be sure to include your citations, references and captioning information. If this information is included in your footage, make sure to put it at the bottom of the screen. Never use moving text, or text that appears in the middle of the screen. If the information displayed is deemed distracting or inappropriately placed, we will ask that it be redone. Lastly, we all share references and information. We encourage everyone to add a slide at the end of your video including all of your references using a black background and white text.

Footage Speed

Please do not speed up or slow down your footage for any reason. It makes the video look unnatural, and we want your natural signing! This also makes it difficult for the audience to understand what is being presented. If footage appears to be sped up or is different from the pace of the raw footage, we will ask for the original file or that it be undone and sent again.

Camera Settings

Short answer for the techies: H.264, 1080p, 30i or 24p, .mp4 or .mov

Long answer for the non-techies: All of our video is now produced in High Definition (HD). This is 1920×1080 pixels. Some cameras are labeled "HD", but only produce 720 lines of resolution. We can work with this, but it may not be up to the same standard as our other video submissions. Also, if a project has different videos from multiple sources, and yours is 720p, then that can create an issue. When you export, if it gives you an option for compression – use H.264. This should export as .mp4. If you are required to choose something else, please choose .mov.

If you are having a hard time following the above paragraph, (we know, it's a lot of information) then just film with the best resolution possible on your camera and we will work with you.

File Transfer

The best way to send us your content is to share it with us using a cloud-based file transfer service, like DropBox or Google Drive. Both services are free. We cannot accept YouTube links. While we can review a submission on Youtube, we are not able to download the video file from an outside user's channel. Ultimately, you must send us a file in order for us to publicize your video through our channels.

If you are an RID committee, council, or volunteer leader, and you prefer to edit the video yourself, then we encourage you to get in touch with us and to receive introduction and conclusion slides. Introduction and conclusion slides should be five seconds in length. Please confirm with us the font to be used on these slides, and where the title, your name and credentials etc. are to be placed.

Conclusion

Studies show first impressions occur in as little as 3 seconds of an interaction. Be sure to *double check* the above guidelines before you submit your video. What do you want your audience's impression to be of you and your video? Is your video clean, sharp and professional? Are you wearing appropriate, solid color clothing? Is the camera level with you? Are you making eye contact with the camera, i.e. your audience? How thorough was the editing, if any? Did you follow all of the above guidelines?

Double check your work and remember, we are here to help. We all want the best result for how you present your content – these guidelines will help you and RID to work together to create an amazing final product. We look forward to working with you and can't wait to see your videos!