

The reel-first filming guide

Shoot once, post for a month.

How to film photos and video on your phone so they make good reels. With a shot list for bars, restaurants, tours, bands and dance schools.



Ten things that make footage easy to turn into reels

Most of this works whether or not you ever use ReelTempo. None of it needs a better camera than the phone in your pocket.

- 01 Film for the phone screen
- 02 The ten second rule
- 03 Use the light
- 04 Get a mix of shots
- 05 Let the people move, keep the phone still
- 06 Sound
- 07 Photos count too
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- 09 A shot list for your kind of business
- 10 A month of footage in one hour

THE SHORT VERSION

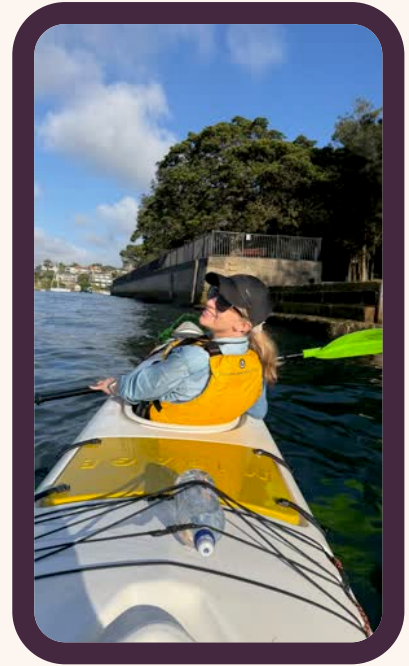
Film upright. Hold still. Short clips. Face the light. Wide, close, detail, face, reaction. Ask first.

01

Film for the phone screen

Reels are watched upright on a phone. Hold your phone upright when you film. A sideways clip loses most of its picture when it is cropped to fit, and the people in it end up cut in half.

Keep the important part of the shot in the middle. The top and bottom of a reel are covered by the account name, the caption and the buttons.



02

The ten second rule

Take short clips, about five to fifteen seconds each. Hold the shot still for the whole clip. Start filming a moment before the thing happens, and keep going a moment after it ends.

Short clips are quicker to look through, and a clip with a clean start and end is easy to cut cleanly. One long recording is fine too, as long as it holds still on the good moments.

TRY THIS

Count "one, two" before the action and "one, two" after it. That is your lead in and your lead out.

03

Use the light

Stand with the light behind you or to the side, so faces are lit. Near a window, face the window. Outside, early morning and late afternoon give the softest light.

Don't film straight into bright lights, a stage spotlight or the sun. The phone darkens everything else to cope, and faces go black. Tap on a face to set the exposure.

DULL DAY?

Get closer. Close shots of people and things hold up much better in flat light than wide views do.

04

Get a mix of shots

A reel needs a few different kinds of shot. Each time you film, try to get one of each:

Wide

the whole place

Close

one person or
thing

Detail

hands, a glass, a
paddle

Face

someone enjoying
it

Reaction

a laugh, a cheer

Five shots like these, a few seconds each, are already enough for one short reel.

05

Let the people move, keep the phone still

Movement should come from the scene, not the camera. Hold the phone with both hands, tuck your elbows in, or lean on a wall or a railing. If you need to follow something, walk slowly instead of swinging the phone around.

Shaky footage is the most common reason a clip can't be used.

06

Sound

Don't worry if the room is noisy. ReelTempo's reels don't keep a clip's own sound. If you want a sound on a reel, add one in Instagram or Facebook when you post it, from the sounds your account is allowed to use.

07

Photos count too

A sharp, well lit photo can go in a reel as a slow moving shot. Take photos of plates, the view, the crowd and the room when it is set up. Upright photos work best.

08

Ask permission

Ask people before you film them for your business's social media, and make it easy to say no.

A LINE THAT WORKS

"We're filming a bit for our Instagram tonight. Is it OK if you're in it? No problem if not."

- Say it at the start: at the door, at the briefing, before the first song.
- Keep anyone who says no out of the shot, or don't use the clips they are in.
- Take extra care with children.
- Follow the rules of any place you work in, such as a park or a venue.

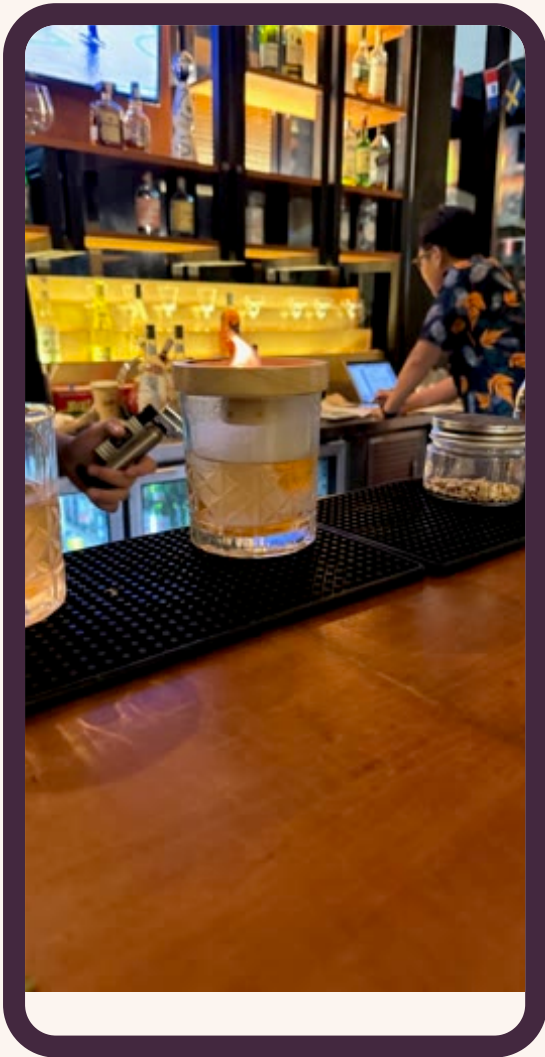
BEFORE YOU POST, NOT AFTER

Any tool that makes reels from your footage, ReelTempo included, needs footage you are allowed to use.

09

SHOT LIST

Bar



- ☐ The room filling up, wide, from the door
- ☐ A drink being poured or made, close
- ☐ Glasses meeting in a cheers
- ☐ The band or DJ, and the crowd watching them
- ☐ Staff laughing behind the bar

WHEN

The first hour of your busiest night, when the light is still good and the room is filling.

09

SHOT LIST

Restaurant



- ☐ The kitchen at work: flames, chopping, plating
- ☐ A plate going down on the table, from above
- ☐ Diners' first bite and their reaction
- ☐ The room set up before opening, wide
- ☐ Something only you have: the view, the courtyard, the oven

WHEN

Plating for the first table of service, and the room just before the doors open.

09

SHOT LIST

Tour



- ☐ The meeting point and the group arriving
- ☐ The first push off, the first step, the bus pulling out
- ☐ The guide pointing something out
- ☐ The view at the furthest point, wide and held still
- ☐ Guests' faces, and the group photo at the end

WHEN

Early morning or late afternoon tours, for the softest light. Ask at the briefing.

09

SHOT LIST

Band



- ☐ Setting up and the soundcheck
- ☐ Close on hands: strings, keys, sticks
- ☐ The crowd from the stage, and the stage from the crowd
- ☐ The song people sing along to
- ☐ Packing up at the end of the night

WHEN

Give a friend your phone for two songs: one early, one big one near the end.

09

SHOT LIST

Dance school



☐ The room before the lesson starts, and people arriving

☐ The teacher showing one move slowly

☐ Feet on the floor, close

☐ A couple getting a move right, and their faces when they do

☐ The whole floor dancing, wide

WHEN

The last ten minutes of a lesson, when everyone has the move and is smiling.

10

A month of footage in one hour

Pick one busy, good looking hour each week, such as a full night, a sunrise tour or a gig. Work through your shot list in that hour. Back the clips up the same day and delete the blurry ones and any that show people who said no.

Week 1

One hour, one
shot list

Week 2

One hour, one
shot list

Week 3

One hour, one
shot list

Week 4

One hour, one
shot list

Four of those hours gives you enough footage for a reel or two every week for a month.

The same day, every time

☐

Back up the clips

☐

Delete the blurry and the dark ones

☐

Delete any that show people who said no

☐

Keep the rest together, so they are easy to find

Try it with your own footage, free

Add the clips you already have, from your laptop or phone. ReelTempo finds the moments worth using, cuts a reel, puts words on screen and writes the caption. You check every reel on your laptop or phone, and nothing goes out until you approve it.

Try ReelTempo free

No credit card required. reeltempo.social

What ReelTempo doesn't do

It doesn't film for you. It can't fix footage that is too shaky or too dark to see. It doesn't check who has agreed to be filmed; that is up to you. It never adds people or scenes you didn't film.