

# Submitting a stellar Anchorage Folk Festival video

Audio-Video Guidelines for self-recording your musical submission using a phone or laptop, developed with guidance from Lucy Peckham of Both Ears Sound.

**Submission deadline: December 15, 2020**

## Audio



**Avoid large, empty rooms.** Sound bounces off hard surfaces and can create an echo. Soft surroundings (blankets, pillows, curtains) are all effective ways to absorb an echo.

**Minimize background noise.** Pick a time and location when you can exert the most control over what's happening in the background.

### Microphone tips:

Place microphone near your instrument, but not too near. Test out a few distances (start at 5-6 feet) to find out what works best for you.

Most smartphone microphones produce high-quality audio, but you may get better and more directed sound from an external microphone. There are many reasonably priced choices on the market.

Try to avoid plugging your USB microphone into the device you're using to record video. This helps you place the microphone for ideal audio and best video framing.

If you record using an external audio device at the same time as the video (multi-track), you can sync feeds together in video editing software. You can also record audio with a second iPhone or Android device closer to the performers and then you would sync this during post-processing. (*Anchorage Folk Festival will not do this for you.*)

### Test your equipment before recording.

*Record a few trials. Then watch/listen to be sure it looks and sounds right (ex: if you are a string-band trio make sure that the banjo is NOT the only instrument you hear.)*



### Review your performance before submitting.

*Poor quality video and audio cannot be repaired during mixing. Both Ears Live Sound can remove a plane flying by or the garbage truck clamor, but cannot improve poor audio or video quality, which includes poor mic placement.*

## Video

**Film with horizontal orientation.**

**Secure your camera.** Use a tripod or other device to secure the phone while recording. A laptop camera would be secure, but make sure the orientation is correct (not producing mirrored image).

**Don't zoom.** Place the camera the distance you want it from you or your hands (whatever you want it to focus on). Zooming makes things blurry.

**Set your recording settings to shoot at 24 frames-per-second.** That speed will present you most naturally, as an audience would see you.

**Go for good lighting.** You don't want to get distracted by how sickly you look in bad lighting. Natural light is best.

**Avoid back lighting.** Don't put the subject in front of a window/light source or they will look silhouetted.

**Lock the phone's focus and exposure.** In low light, your phone's camera will hunt for focus. That makes it look less professional. Most phones let you also lock or manually adjust the exposure, too.

**Appear proper-handed.** (e.g. right-handed, if you are). Record using the camera on the back of the phone, not the front (screen-side). The front camera is lower quality and will make you appear mirrored. You could also flip in video editing software **before** submitting. Using a laptop or dedicated webcam should present the correct orientation.



## Resources

**Both Ears Sound**  
**Beginners Guide to Phone Video**  
**Recording yourself: Article 1 • Article 2**

**Questions?** Email us at: [folks@anchoragefolkfestival.org](mailto:folks@anchoragefolkfestival.org)