



Broadcast Interviews in a Time of Quarantine: How To Put Your Best (Virtual) Foot Forward

To help ensure **you're prepared for your next live interview**, GPG consulted with producers, on-air talent and frequent guests from many of the major networks to gain some of their time-tested **tips and tricks when on camera**, and how in the age of at home production, you can make sure that your on-screen visual matches the smarts of your insights.

Before Your Interview

- It's important to recognize that video interviews can be ... tricky.
- **Without the comforts of a studio** and the professionals that make productions happen, **a lot now rests in your hands**. That's why it's critical that you plan ahead and be prepared.
- Invest a few minutes of your time selecting **a quiet, well-lit spot** in your home. If those two places don't happen to be co-located, you may need to consider purchasing additional lighting options (see below).
- **Test your audio and other tech equipment ahead of time** to make sure everything is operating smoothly. Be mindful that without a sound technician standing by, you might experience some audio delays. If you're relying on your computer microphone, speak clearly and slowly since they are less sensitive than other equipment.
- Last thing to keep in mind before you start – **practice, practice, practice**. By practicing, you'll have the opportunity to test your lighting and sound quality, any equipment or other technology you may need.

Setting Up Your Space

The Tech

- Whenever possible, **hardwire your computer** with an ethernet connection to ensure a reliable signal during the entire interview.
- If using Wi-Fi, turn off most of the other devices around you to **save on bandwidth**.
- **Avoid using earbuds or headphones with a mic** during the interview because they can cause a "see and say" delay.

The Shot

- **Elevate your laptop** or camera so it is at eye level.
- Position yourself far enough away from the camera that your face isn't taking up the full shot. Ideally the camera should be about three feet away and no further. Remember the further you go from the camera, the harder it will be for the built-in microphone to pick up your voice.
- If you are using a **smartphone camera**, make sure that the shot has a **horizontal orientation**.

- **Pay attention to what's behind you** and will be on screen – make sure there's nothing above your head that could be seen as sticking out of your head. Avoid using the Zoom green screen, which creates tricky visuals.
- **Pay attention to lighting** and position yourself facing an elevated light, such as a Lume Cube. Make sure there isn't a bright light or window behind you that will create shadows on your face and that there is nothing behind you that the lighting in front of you could reflect on.
- Use natural lighting where possible but be careful the sun isn't directly in your eyes.
- A few words on sound. Whenever possible, **put a rug on the floor** beneath you. Also, if you are sitting at a table or counter with a laptop, **put a beach or bath towel underneath your riser** to help ensure the sound isn't bouncing off the table surface. For who are McGuyvering a **home studio for the long-term**, you can **install a sound buffer on the ceiling above you**, such as a foam mattress topper.
- **See right for a few examples of good at home setups.** For an rolling feed of further examples of dos and don'ts, check out the Twitter account [Room Rater](#).
- If you are looking for a higher quality shot than a laptop camera can offer, there are also **companies that will bring a mobile studio in front of your home** that we would be happy to connect you to.



Appearance & Presence

- Dress the same way as you would if it were in-person – at least from the top up.
- **Wear make-up** – even men should have on powder to reduce shine. And be sure to check your hair in the mirror just before logging on. Here are a few [application tips](#) from a male streamer.
- **Stay focused on the camera lens when talking** instead of looking at yourself on screen, at your notes or around the room.
- **Use hand gestures in the same way you would in person**, but watch out for distracting motions or obstructing the shot. And, remember, **don't touch your face!**
- **Count to 20 before you get up or turn your camera off** after an on-air interview is over. This helps the folks in studio account for any delays in the switch over.



Kicking It Up a Notch: The Tech List

- **Laptop stand options:**
 - [Twelve South's The Curve](#) [Alt [link](#)]
 - [Nexstand](#)
 - A stack of books
 - Two pillar candles
- **Lighting options:**
 - The traditional [Lume Cube](#) for video conferencing
 - Elevate your light using a [Manfrotto tripod](#)
 - Lume Cube's [broadcast kit](#)
 - [Selfie Ring Light + smartphone holder](#)
- **Controlling the sound:**
 - Memory Foam Mattress Topper for [installing on your ceiling or the floor](#)