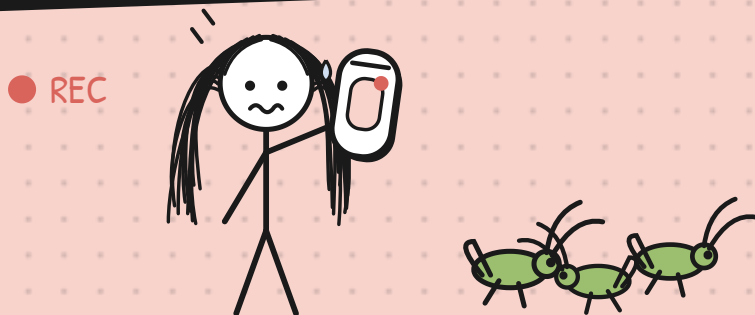


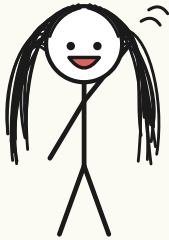
getting on camera

or, as i like to call it,
my weekly humiliation ritual



a starter book for making videos for social,
from someone who was scared of it too.

hi, i'm em



I stopped posting for two years because social media felt unhealthy. Then I started building things I wanted people to see, and it turned out video was the only way anyone was going to see them.

This book is everything I've learned since: the setup, the settings, the numbers, and the part nobody talks about, which is posting something and hearing nothing back.

None of it is expert advice. It's what worked for me, written down while it's still fresh. Take what's useful.

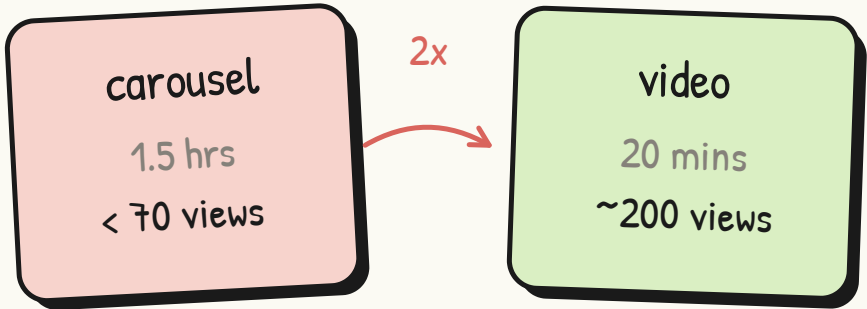
part 1

starting (the cringe part)



01

why i switched to video



Carousels took me about an hour and a half each. They regularly got fewer than 70 views.

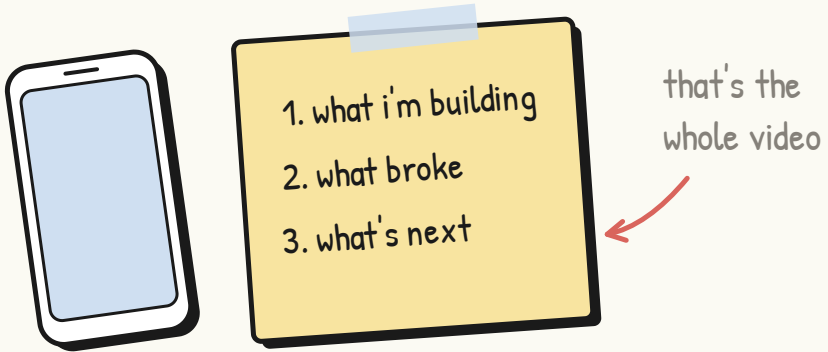
So I did something deeply uncomfortable and got on camera. My views doubled straight away, to around 200 a video. One reel reached 1,200. It wasn't that I got good. Video just gives people a real person to look at.

try this

take the last thing you posted as text or a carousel and say it out loud to your phone in under a minute.

02

your first 20 videos will be bad



When I started, I had a script on a post-it note and rambled into my phone. My first 20 videos were so bad, haha.

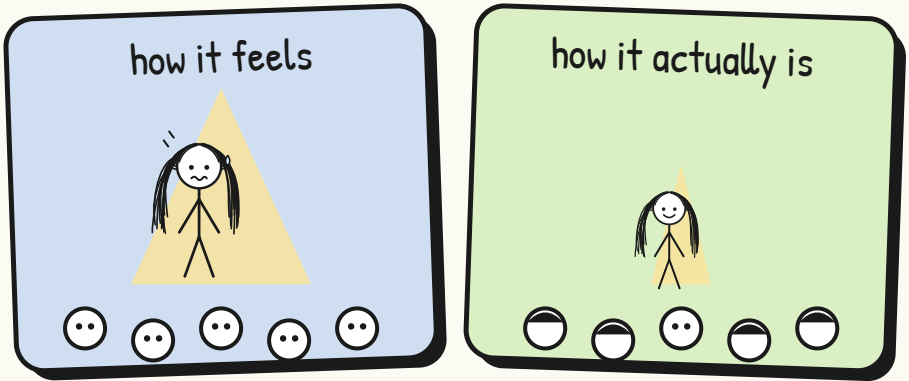
But you have to just do it and get over the cringe feeling. It gets easier, and you stop feeling so bad when a video gets 2 likes.

try this

stick one post-it on your screen with three bullet points. Talk about what you're working on. That's the whole video.

03

the spotlight is smaller than you think



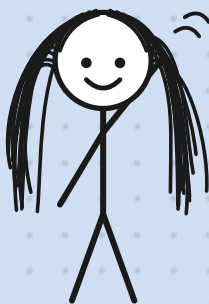
It feels like everyone is watching. They're not. In one study, people wearing an embarrassing t-shirt guessed half the room would notice. About a quarter actually did.

And friends and family? At first I thought about them and it was so stressful. After about the 20th video I just stopped caring as much. (Someone told me to block family and friends on my business account. That might help too.)

try this

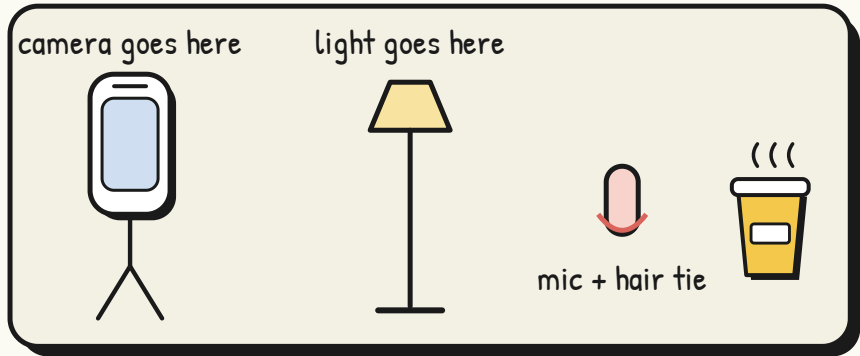
post one video you'd rate a 6 out of 10. Notice that nothing happens.

part 2
filming



04

set up once



A few months ago one video felt like an entire production. Now: camera goes there, light goes there, mic goes on my wrist with a hair tie, apparently.

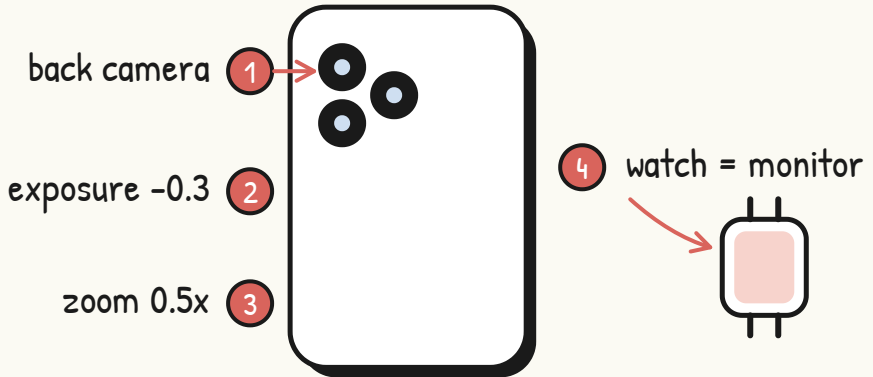
Leave your setup ready. When there's nothing to set up, there's nothing to talk yourself out of.

try this

find one corner where your camera can stay. Mark the spot with tape.

05

flip to the back camera



The one change that made my videos look noticeably more professional: stop using the front camera.

- use the **back camera** (much better sensor)
- lower exposure to about **-0.3**
- zoom out to **0.5x**
- use a **smartwatch as a monitor** so you can still see yourself

The phone was working against me the whole time I used the front camera.

try this

film the same 10 seconds on both cameras and compare.

talk, don't script



Talking naturally instead of reading a script feels like it should be worse. It somehow reads better on camera.

What helps is having ideas ready before you sit down. I keep a backlog so I'm never staring at the camera wondering what to say.

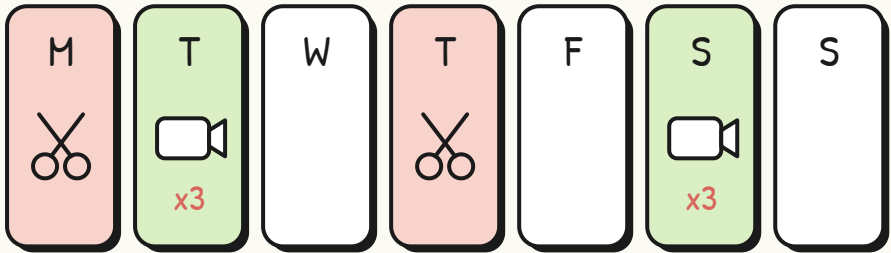
And where do the ideas come from? Step one: leave the apartment. Step two: meet other humans. Step three: come home with fourteen ideas. Sometimes you need to go outside and acquire plot.

try this

start a note called "video ideas" and add one thing today.

07

film when you're chatty, edit when you're not



chatty: film a few

quiet: edit

Making videos after work sometimes means your personality has already clocked out for the day. You sit down and hear yourself giving a mandatory presentation.

So I split it. When I'm feeling chatty, I record a few, usually three in one session. On quieter days, I edit what's already there.

try this

next time you're in a good mood, film two videos instead of one.

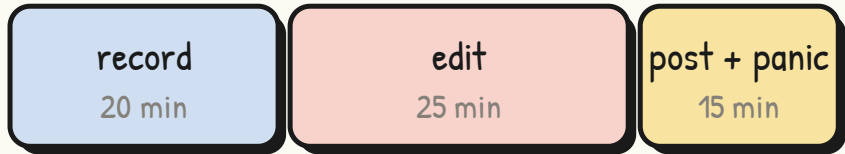
part 3

editing and posting



what one video actually costs

about 1 hour a video



(usually take 6, lots of coffee)



With the script ready: about **20 minutes** to record and **20 to 30 minutes** to edit. About an hour a video, usually on the 6th take and with lots of coffee.

Tools:

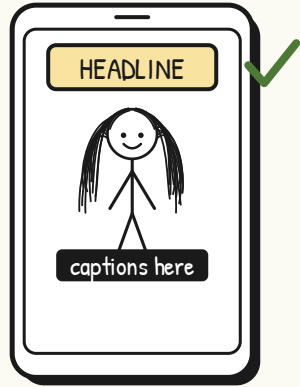
- **CapCut** (paid): best fonts and auto captions
- **Instagram Edits**: free, and good enough

try this

time your next video from opening the camera to posting. Just so you know.

09

headline first



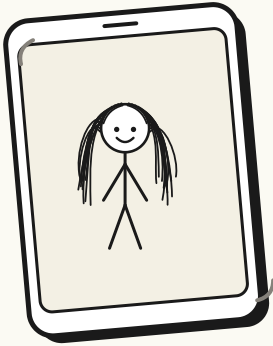
My early videos had subtitles right over my head. Mistake. People look at the headline first, and subtitles over your face fight that.

The rule I use now: a **larger static headline above your head**, and the moving captions **lower, at chest level**.

try this

add one headline to your next video before anything else.

instagram $\neq$ tiktok



instagram · raw



tiktok · clean

They want different things.

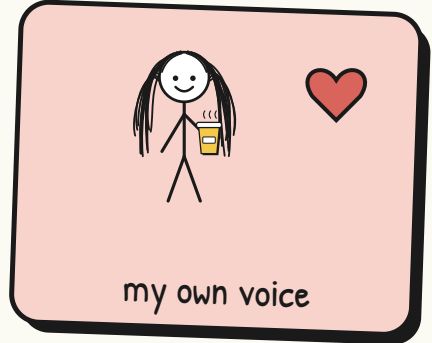
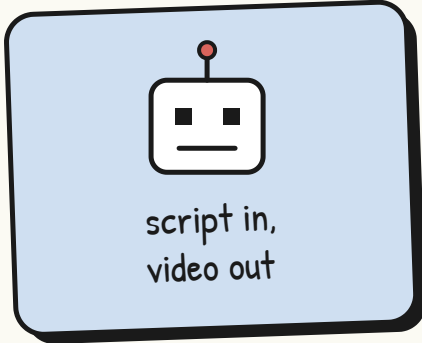
- **Instagram:** raw, messy, slightly off-center. Over-edited videos got skipped about half the time.
- **TikTok:** cleaner, with clear structure. Not too polished.

When I posted my TikTok edit on Instagram, it fell flat. The flashy captions didn't translate.

try this

keep one simple edit for Instagram, and one with bolder captions for TikTok.

keep it human



I once built a whole pipeline: screen recording, an AI voice, auto-burned captions. Script in, video out.

It felt cold. It looked like everything else and felt like nothing.

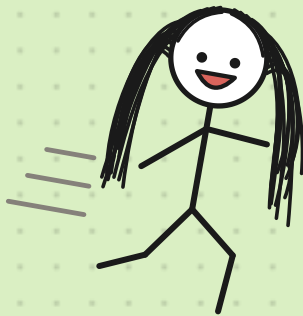
So I dropped the synthetic theatre. No AI voices, no hyper-edited loops. Just my own unpolished voice. It might not hit the retention numbers, but at least it's mine.

try this

say it in your own voice, even if you'd rather not.

part 4

keeping going



12

posting to crickets

learn in
peace



The hardest part isn't recording. It's the silence after.

On video ten I decided to flip it. Low views? Awesome. Now I can learn in peace. If nobody's watching yet, it's the perfect place to make mistakes.

try this

next time a video flops, write down one thing you'd change. That's the whole point of it.

the metrics i actually track

- ☒ made something
- ☒ published it
- ☒ learned something
- ☒ changing next time

I care about metrics. Just not most of the ones the apps show me.

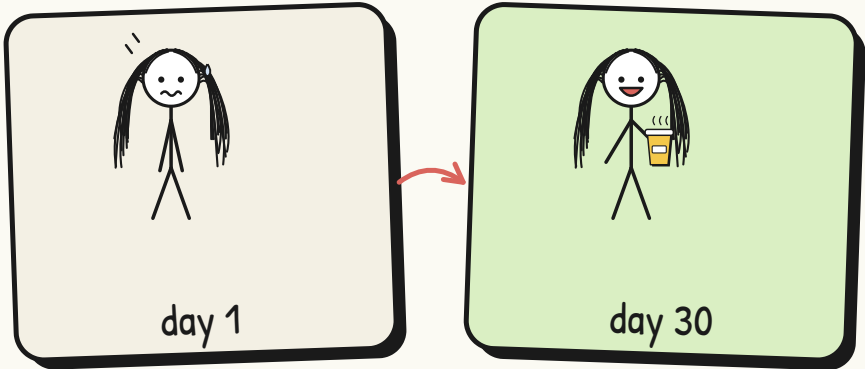
- did I **make** something?
- did I **publish** it?
- what did I **learn**?
- what am I **changing** next time?

Views tell me how people responded. These tell me whether I'm getting better at finishing things.

try this

answer these four after your next post.

what a month of posting got me



I posted consistently for about a month. No, I didn't go viral.

About **25,000 TikTok views**. About **10,000 Instagram impressions**.
Most individual videos did nothing special.

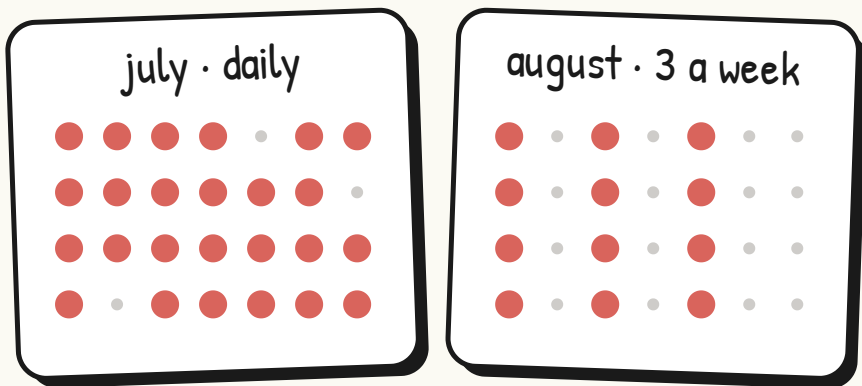
But I stopped being scared of making them. I got faster, less awkward,
and figured out how I like speaking.

Judge your first month by whether month two feels easier.

try this

save your first video. Watch it again on day 30.

daily builds the skill. three a week is a pace



I spent July posting almost every day. In August I made about three a week, and I liked it better.

Posting daily taught me to make videos without making each one an event. Three a week leaves room to live, notice things and come back with something to say.

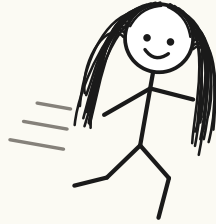
Consistency doesn't always mean every day. Sometimes it just means you keep coming back.

try this

do a two-week daily sprint to learn. Then pick a pace you'd actually keep.

find your cadence

you stop thinking
about every step



Runners have cadence, the rhythm of their steps. As you get better, you stop thinking about every step. You just run.

Videos were the same. At first every one was an event. Where do I stand? What do I do with my hands? Now I just make the video.

That's what consistency is actually good for. Not guaranteeing success. Just making it easier to start.

questions people asked me

"How long does one video take?"

About an hour. 20 minutes recording, 20 to 30 minutes editing. I usually make three in one session.

"Which tools do you use?"

My phone's back camera, a small mic, and CapCut (paid for the fonts and auto captions). Instagram Edits is a good free option.

"What if friends and family judge me?"

I thought about them a lot at first. After about 20 videos I stopped caring as much. You could also block them on your business account.

"Any tips for actually starting?"

Use your phone. Talk about what you're working on. Your first 20 will be bad, and that's fine.

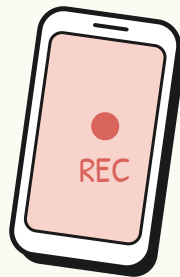
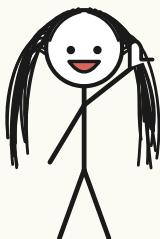
"How do you look so confident?"

About the 6th take, and lots of coffee.

cheat sheet

- 01 switch to video, even if it's just you and your phone
- 02 your first 20 will be bad
- 03 nobody's watching as closely as you think
- 04 set up once, leave it ready
- 05 back camera, -0.3 exposure, 0.5x, watch as a monitor
- 06 talk, don't script. Keep an idea backlog
- 07 film when chatty, edit when quiet
- 08 about an hour a video. CapCut or Instagram Edits
- 09 headline above your head, captions at your chest
- 10 raw for instagram, cleaner for tiktok
- 11 keep your own voice
- 12 low views mean you can learn in peace
- 13 track: made it, posted it, learned, changing
- 14 judge month one by whether month two feels easier
- 15 daily to learn, then a pace you can keep
- 16 find your cadence

that's it



Now go make one. It'll probably be a bit bad. That's the ritual.

More free starter packs at **creativemindhabits.com/starter-packs**. If this helped, send it to someone who keeps saying "I should really start making videos."

em @creativemindhabits