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Qualifications



VLOGGING

STARTER KIT

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WELCOME TO OUR VLOGGING STARTER KIT

Since YouTube's rise to world domination in the mid-00s, vlogging has become one of the most popular types of content available online. With a huge variety of videos that cover everything from gaming to politics and everything in-between, there's a whole world of wormholes to get lost in. Famous YouTubers like PewDiePie and Zoella have amassed huge followings and consequently been able to monetise their videos, making remarkable careers for themselves along the way.

We want to take the accessibility of making a vlog and create opportunities for you to get recognised for your content creation. That's why we're launching an unprecedented series of grades in vlogging, from debut to 8, under the banner of Creative Qualifications from RSL Awards.

We have applied the same pedagogy of progressive mastery that has been used to learn musical instruments for over 100 years in order to build a framework around the art of vlogging. After all, the first Rockschool grades were designed to reward and benchmark popular musical instruments where no framework had previously existed. Now we're once again helping to formalise the informal and equip you with the skills you need to get industry-ready, pursue a fun hobby, or simply make great content!

In the early stages of our syllabus you'll learn about subject areas such as mobile video apps, identifying video hardware, connectivity, mobile technology, mobile camera basics, and more before moving on to more advanced topics in the later grades.

You don't have to be an expert to start a vlog, but we're hoping that by the end of this guide you should have a good idea of how you can take your first steps into the wonderful world of vlogging.

HAPPY VLOGGING!



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STEP 1



TYPES OF VLOGS

WHAT'S OUT THERE ALREADY?

Before you get started, it's important to familiarise yourself with the content that's currently available online. If you have a great idea that you can't wait to get up and running then check out videos that explore similar topics. It's not a problem if you don't – have a look around and see if anything inspires you or gets you thinking.

YouTube obviously has a huge range of video content, so we recommend starting there. It's the biggest social network in the world, and its search engine only comes second to Google when it comes to searches by users online.

Remember to stay alert when doing your research. YouTube's algorithms constantly recommend you content that you may be interested in to keep you on the site. Keep returning to the search bar to stay focused rather than clicking on recommended videos

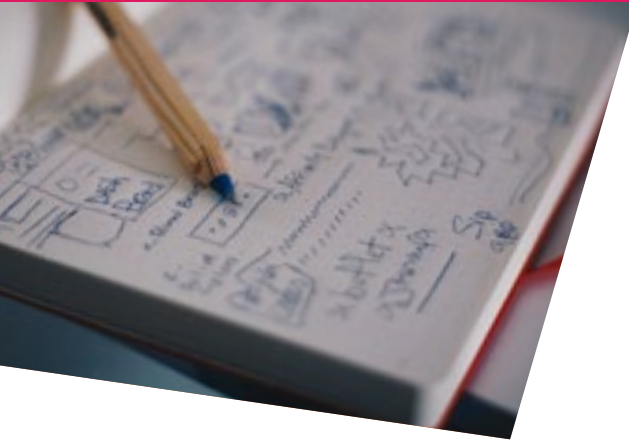
so that you maintain your online autonomy and keep YouTube guessing. We've all watched one innocent video of a cat sitting in a bucket only to fall down a rabbit hole and emerge three hours later, dazed and confused, after watching the best epic fails of 2013!

Once you're up to speed on what other vloggers are currently doing, you'll be in a better position to really make the most of your vlog concept and emphasise what makes it unique. No one's expecting you to completely reinvent the vlog format (though by all means go for it!), but it's always good to have refreshing content that conveys a unique perspective rather than a piece of work that tries and fails to imitate an existing model.

Having said that, if you do see particular aspects of a vlog that you like, make a note of them and see if you can incorporate something similar into your own. You should be like a magpie on the hunt for small shiny things that you can fit into your own content output!



STEP 2



AUDIENCE

You're undoubtedly in charge of your vlog, but it's crucial to consider your audience and their needs so that you can create content that successfully resonates with a particular group of people.

WHAT'S YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE?

Depending on your subject matter, your target audience may well be similar to you. Try and consider an audience persona. That means creating an imaginary profile for what you think would be your typical viewer. Consider their age, interests, and hobbies. When you're creating your content, stop to think "would our audience persona like this?". Give them a name if you fancy – our audience persona is called Norton. We think you'd like him.

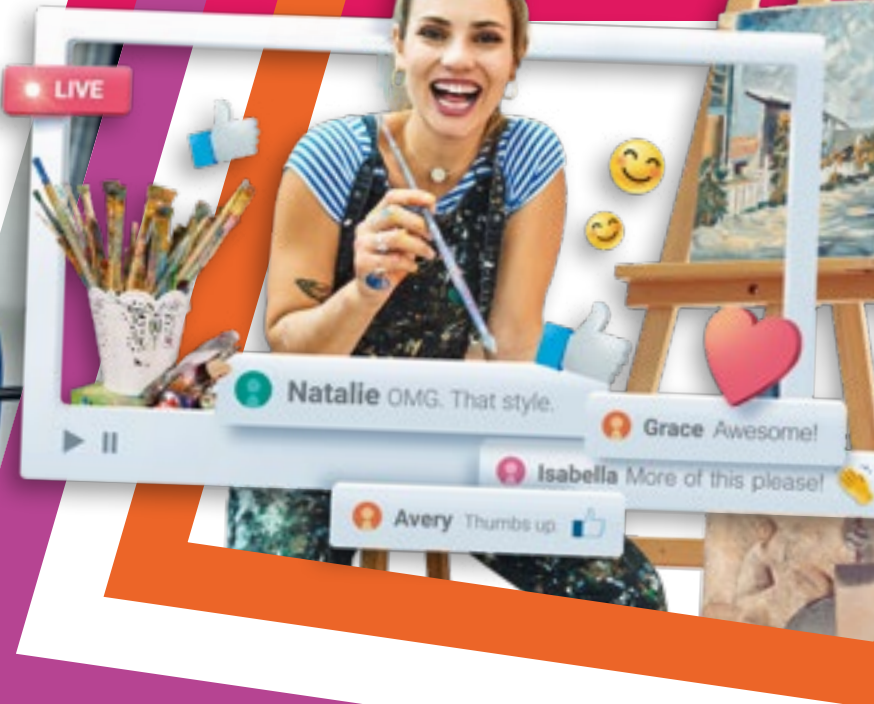
HOW LONG SHOULD IT BE?

How long is a piece of string? Well it's double the amount from the end to the centre, but when it comes to vlogging we recommend keeping things succinct when you're starting out. With RSL's Vlogging Grades, you will build up to generating 5 minutes worth of content by around Grade 3.





STEP 3



SCRIPTING

It really is true that anyone can be a vlogger. With the right mindset and the right bits of tech, the sky really is the limit for anyone looking to dip their toes (or whole foot!) into vlogging.

However, good vlogging isn't always as simple as picking up a camera and pressing record – it is a real skill to make it look that easy! Behind the scenes, there's a little more planning involved to make sure the videos are engaging for your audience.

There are, of course, many different approaches to planning. You could imagine this as though there were a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is no planning at all, and 10 is methodical madness.

You don't want to be a 10 where the vlog could feel extremely wooden, scripted and unnatural. One of the reasons that vlogs are so well-loved is that audiences

like to watch content where they can see themselves reflected – “normal” life, if you will. If your vlog is planned down to the second, there is the danger that your viewers won't be able to see the real you - just a cardboard cut-out version.

You also don't want to sit too close to 1, where there is no structure or format, where your sentences drift off into a ramble, and where you could be looking at a vlog series that is a little boring to watch.

If you can master the art of being yourself whilst still maintaining some structure, then you should be well on the road to screen-success! Think about what topics you want to cover in your vlogs, and whether you want to include family and friends. Whatever you choose to do, make sure it reflects your true self as the number one priority.



STEP 4



RECORDING

Okay, let's get technical. Vlogging is one of the most accessible ways to create content, meaning almost anyone can do it. However, there are still certain ways of doing things that will help you optimise your content so it's technically sound. We've got a selection of our top tips below!

THE OPENING SEGMENT

Once you've done your aforementioned research, you will probably notice that many successful vloggers open their videos with some kind of introduction to get things started. Sometimes this might be a preview of what's to come in the rest of the video, an animated intro, or a short, spoken clip. This is a great way to engage viewers right from the off and give them a taste of what's to come.

LIGHTING

Not all of us have a budget to spend on fancy lights, but this isn't an issue! Something as simple as sitting in front of a light window will really make the difference to your finished video. Natural light can be your best friend, ensuring that your shots are well-lit and your content remains high quality. If there's a particular room in your house with outstanding natural light, then make sure to shoot your videos in there! You can shoot outside for even better natural light, but this means you're more likely to have background noise that may distract your audience.

REC



STEP 4



RECORDING (CONTINUED)

SOUND

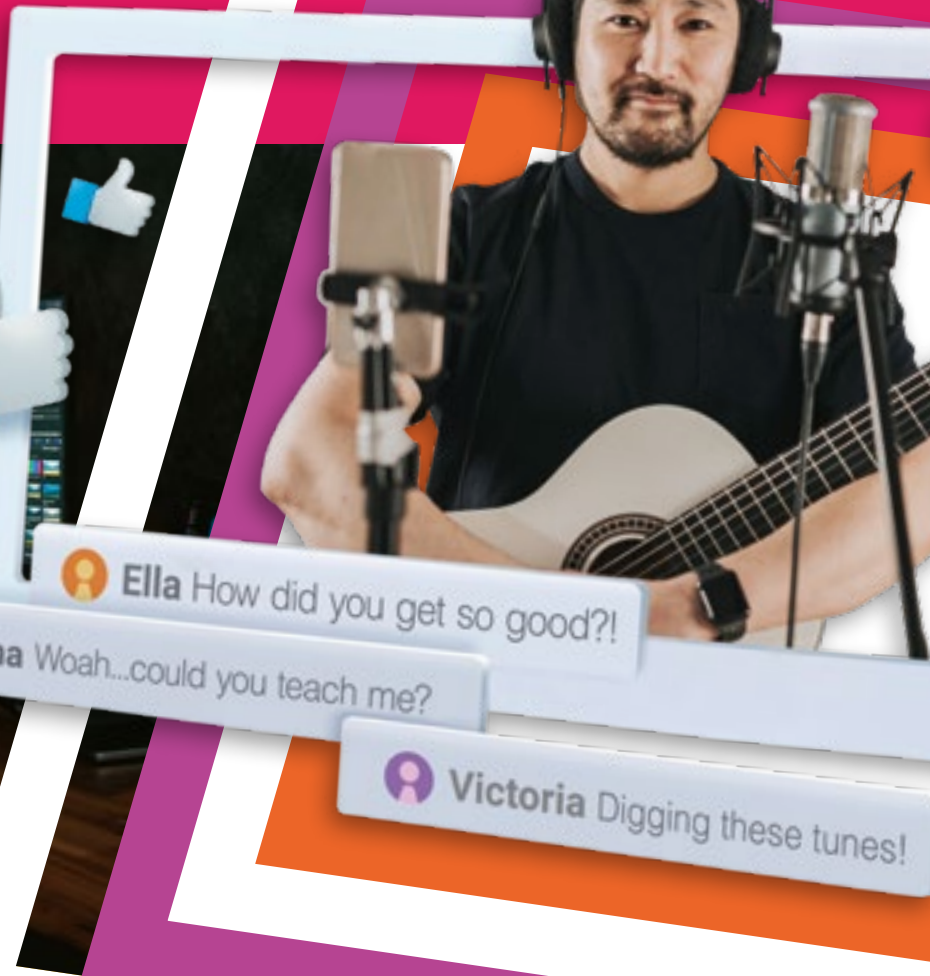
It might sound obvious, but make sure you have some decent audio quality when you start filming your clips. Record your vlog in a quiet space that's free from washing machines, noisy siblings, and the TV. If your budget does stretch to it, a microphone that plugs into your camera will give you the best sound. Always remember to make a video that you yourself would enjoy watching!

SURROUNDINGS

When it comes to backgrounds, simplicity is great to ensure your audience is focused on you and what you're saying. A simple white background offers minimal distractions and can help with lighting too. However, you may feel that a more cluttered background that features bits and bobs relating to your content will offer a more entertaining experience for your viewers. If you're an ardent Arsenal fan discussing the week's football, you might want to fill your background with shirts and posters of your favourite players. If you're discussing the best way to make a linguine that hits the spot, why not have some ingredients in the background to help people know you're serious about your food!



STEP 5



EDITING

There are plenty of options when you come to edit your vlog, and the good news is that lots of them are free and still produce a good end product. Editing is a crucial stage in the process and one that you should take your time with to really make sure you get it right.

WHAT SOFTWARE CAN I USE?

Windows Movie Maker is included in Windows Essentials and gives you the chance to trim and edit your video in a straightforward way. iMovie allows you to add text to a video or a voice over, animations and picture in picture. You can change the speed of a particular portion of the video and there are many preset animations for your video. Best of all, a lot of editing softwares have the convenient option to share straight to social networks or email when you're done. Easy-peasy!

EXPERIMENT

It's a good idea to play around with the tools available to you when you're first starting out to see what works and what doesn't. Some transitions might make your content look slick and professional, while others may leave it looking tacky and crass. A longer vlog may give you the chance to explore a topic in detail, but a shorter video might be more digestible for your audience. There are no right answers at this stage. Experiment with effects and form to see what suits your content.



STEP 5



EDITING (CONTINUED)

CHOOSE APPROPRIATE MUSIC

The right kind of music can also help give your vlog a professional feel. Whether it's background music or sounds to accompany your introduction, make sure the audio you're using leaves you in the clear when it comes to copyright. SoundCloud has lots of songs that can be used for free, with some musicians asking that you leave them a credit and a link pointing back to their page in the video description. It's best to check with the artist out of politeness either way!

WRITING THINGS DOWN

Go through the clips and make notes of the moments you want to edit out so you can easily find them when you go back. This will save you a lot of hours of watching your own face (though if you want to be a professional vlogger then you better get used to that!).

PICK THE BEST BITS

Pick the best bits. You don't need to use every second of footage you've collected if some of it is a little boring or doesn't quite work within the video. Just select your highlights and most entertaining clips to make the final cut!



STEP 6



RELEASING YOUR VLOG

If you've got this far, then you have our permission to give yourself a pat on the back. Often, the hardest part about taking on a new project is just getting started. You've recorded and edited an entire vlog, and now it's time to deliver it into the world! It's time to build your little corner of the internet, brick by brick (or follower by follower!).

Here are some things you will want to remember:

1 SCHEDULE

You will definitely want to decide on an upload schedule. Whatever that is, whether you are planning on being a full time vlogging-phenomenon, or this is your secret side-hustle, you will need to create a regular program that works for you. Don't forget that this is KEY for building your audience and engagement. Surrender to the algorithms!





STEP 6



RELEASING YOUR VLOG (CONTINUED)

2 TITLE & THUMBNAIL

Don't underestimate the power of these two things. Whilst naming your vlog and selecting a thumbnail image may seem like an afterthought, they are important elements for how people will find your video, and whether they will click on it. You could have recorded the best vlog in the world, but if people can't find it then you're fighting a losing battle.

a) Your title needs to be short and catchy, but perfectly descriptive of what your vlog is about. Remember, YouTube is a sea of videos, an ocean of content, and you want your vlog to stand out amongst the rest. Don't forget to use keywords in your title that potential new audience members will search for. Oh, and try to refrain from using 'clickbait' titles... audiences are NOT a fan of that shady tactic!

b) The thumbnail also plays a huge role in getting viewers to click and watch your content. You can use a still-frame from your video, or create a new image, but whichever you choose, make sure it sparks curiosity and reflects the message of the video.

3 PROMOTION

The final hurdle. You've uploaded your video and now you just want people to watch, watch, watch! You probably don't need us to tell you that social media is your friend here. Get the word out that your video has gone live by telling friends and family, and start building that loyal audience. Remember that to grow your audience you can also collaborate with other YouTubers and brands, engage with your audience on other platforms, and reply to comments. Good luck! .



STEP 7

BECOMING A VLOG-EXPERT

You should now feel armed with the knowledge you need to crack on with your vlogging-ventures! It's time to climb the ladder of success with RSL's Vlogging grades.

Technology is advancing at such a rate that we want you to be ahead of the game. This is the first qualification in the world that will get you the recognition and reward that you deserve for your digital endeavours, and with content creation rapidly

becoming a huge area of employment, it's a great idea to get started now. It is estimated that 65% of learners today will work in jobs that currently do not exist. It's crazy out there in the tech industry!

Most importantly, vlogging is an incredibly fun way of expressing yourself and your imagination. Each creator is unique, each video is one-of-a-kind and there is space for us all to experience the creative freedom that the digital world offers.

GOOD LUCK

VISIT THE RSL WEBSITE AND GET STARTED TODAY!





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Vlogging is so much more than a quick piece to camera. Vloggers and online personalities have become so popular due to the communities they've built around their content.

With Creative Qualifications: Vlogging you will progressively master the art of vlogging, from creatively treating your productions to a high professional standard, to learning how to tailor your content for your audience and distribution channel. Create, inspire, influence.

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