

Instructable: How to Make a Home Lecture Recording Studio

By Jed Lyons, Professor of Mechanical Engineering | 21 March 2020

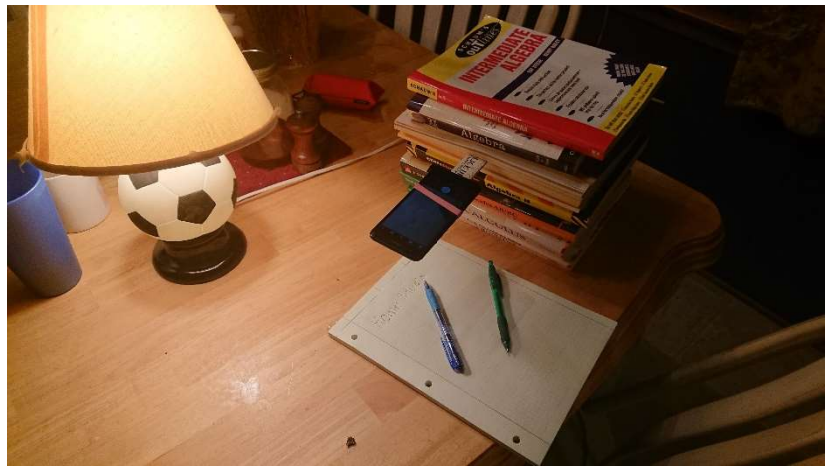
I usually write on the board when I lecture, and rarely use PowerPoint. One reason is that my course content involves a lot of equations and diagrams, and it takes too long for me to create these on a computer. Another is that my students seem to benefit from hearing my explanations as the written content is presented. And it is remotely possible that I'm just too set in my ways.

I tried to use tablets and electronic ink to create online lecture notes, but the results were unsatisfactory. My digital handwriting is hard to read and I found the technology got in the way. So, I made a home studio to record my lectures that enables me to use pen and paper to create my class notes. Thinking that someone else might be in the same boat, I've created this "Instructable" about building and using a simple home lecture recording studio.

Making and Using the Home Studio

Supplies:

- Smartphone
- Ruler
- Stack of books
- Rubber band
- Lamp
- Pad and pens
- Creativity



Process:

1. Use supplies to build a phone stand (like the one shown in the picture)
2. Play with camera height to get page width coverage
3. Record writing and talking
4. Upload the video to your Blackboard Content Collection (it's under "Tools")
5. Link to the uploaded video in your Blackboard course
6. Test it

Troubleshooting and tips:

- One video per topic (shorter is better in case you mess up half-way through)
- You can slide other papers, graphs, and textbooks into the field of view.
- Light colored paper is better than white, but white paper is just fine.
- Verify that your video is a standard format. Mine is MP4. Some phones record in a proprietary format that may need to be converted.
- My camera can switch from landscape to portrait and then the recording is sideways (d'oh!)
- Lighting is important to minimize shadows from stand and hand, and avoid too much glare.
- Takes some getting used to, looking at the camera screen and writing on the pad. When I look mainly at the pad, I tend to start writing off-camera (d'oh!)
- It doesn't have to be perfect.

A result:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=he58yArrKtQ>