

DO-IT-YOURSELF COURSE VIDEOS

Here is some of the gear professors are using to make short videos that supplement lectures online. You'll need a few of these tools to make your own:

Screen-capture software: Several low-cost software programs are available to create video clips of what's happening on a user's computer screen. Professors can walk through a problem in a graphing-calculator program, for instance, and record what they are doing to show students. Examples of the software are iShowU or Snapz Pro (both for the Mac) or Camtasia Studio (for the PC).

USB microphone: Many computers these days have built-in microphones, but you'll get better-quality sound if you use a headset microphone that connects to a computer's USB port (Logitech is one company that makes them, and they work on Macs and PC's).

Camera: Some professors use a camcorder to film their videos, and just about any digital camera will do. And many computers now come with built-in Webcams if you're ready for your close-up.

Editing software: Simple editing programs like QuickTime Pro or iMovie (for the Mac) or Windows Movie Maker (for PC's) work for many videos, though some professors use Final Cut Pro (for the Mac) for more-advanced projects.