

Video Production Guide for Hackathons

Welcome to our simple guide for creating demo videos for hackathon submissions! This guide will help you record an effective demo of your project without needing advanced video production skills.

Important: It's About Your Demo, Not Video Production Values

Production quality does not affect your judging score. Judges are looking for impressive working demos and innovative solutions, not professional video editing or cinematography. A simple screen recording with clear audio explaining your project is all you need to succeed.

Recording Methods

Method 1: Mac OS X - QuickTime Screen Recording (Recommended for Mac Users)

QuickTime Player comes pre-installed on all Mac computers and is perfect for recording your demo.

Steps:

1. Open QuickTime Player (found in Applications folder)
2. Go to File ☒ New Screen Recording (or press Cmd+Ctrl+N)
3. Click the dropdown arrow next to the record button to select:
 - Microphone: Choose your built-in microphone or external mic
 - Show Mouse Clicks: Enable this to help viewers follow your actions
1. Click the red record button
2. Choose to record the entire screen or drag to select a specific area
3. Click "Start Recording"
4. Run through your demo while speaking clearly about the features
5. Press the Stop button in the menu bar when finished
6. Save your recording (File ☒ Save)

Tips:

- Close unnecessary applications to avoid distractions
- Test your audio levels beforehand
- Keep your demo focused on key features (aim for 2-3 minutes)

Method 2: Windows - OBS Studio or Camtasia

For Windows users, we recommend OBS Studio (free) or Camtasia (paid).

OBS Studio (Free Option):

Steps:

1. Download and install OBS Studio from obsproject.com
2. Create a new Scene
3. Add a Display Capture source to record your screen

4. Add an Audio Input Capture source for your microphone
5. Click “Start Recording”
6. Run your demo while narrating
7. Click “Stop Recording” when finished
8. Find your video in the default recording folder

Camtasia (Paid Option):

Steps:

1. Open Camtasia
2. Click “Record the screen”
3. Select the area you want to record
4. Enable microphone recording
5. Click the Record button
6. Demonstrate your project features
7. Press F10 or click Stop when done
8. Save and export your video

Method 3: Zoom or Google Meet Recording

This method works well if you’re comfortable presenting as if you’re in a meeting.

Zoom Recording:

Steps:

1. Start a new Zoom meeting
2. Join the meeting from your computer
3. Click “Record” ☒ “Record on this Computer”
4. Share your screen showing your demo
5. Walk through your project while speaking
6. Stop the recording when finished
7. Zoom will automatically save the video file

Google Meet Recording:

Steps:

1. Start a new Google Meet call
2. Click the three dots ☒ “Record meeting”
3. Present your screen (click “Present now”)
4. Choose “A window” or “Your entire screen”
5. Demonstrate your project while narrating
6. Stop presenting and end recording
7. The recording will be saved to Google Drive

Note: Recording features may require certain Google Workspace plans.

Method 4: Mobile Phone Recording

If you don't have access to screen recording software, you can use your phone as a backup option.

Steps:

1. Position your phone to clearly capture your computer screen
2. Ensure good lighting (avoid glare and shadows)
3. Start recording on your phone
4. Run through your demo on your computer while narrating clearly
5. Keep the phone steady (use a stand or prop if available)
6. Stop recording when finished

Tips:

- Record in horizontal/landscape mode
- Get close enough to see details but show the full screen
- Speak clearly since phone microphones may be farther away

What to Include in Your Demo Video

- Project Overview: Brief explanation of what your project does (30 seconds)
- Key Features: Show 3-5 main features of your working demo (1-2 minutes)
- Technology Highlights: Mention interesting tech stack or sponsor tools you used
- Team Member Contributions: Quick mention of who did what
- Next Steps: What you'd build next if you had more time (optional)

YouTube Upload Instructions

Once you've created your video, you need to upload it to YouTube for submission.

Steps:

1. Go to youtube.com and sign in to your Google account
2. Click the Create button (+) in the top right
3. Select "Upload video"
4. Choose your video file and wait for upload
5. Add a title like "[Hackathon Name] - [Your Project Name] Demo"
6. Write a brief description mentioning it's a hackathon submission
7. For visibility, choose either:
 - Unlisted: Video won't appear in search but can be accessed via direct link (recommended)
 - Public: Anyone can find and watch your video
1. Click "Publish"
2. Copy the YouTube URL to submit with your hackathon entry

Conclusion

Remember, the goal is to clearly demonstrate your working project and explain what makes it special. Keep your video:

- Short and focused (2-4 minutes maximum)
- Clear and audible (test your microphone first)
- Demonstrative (show actual functionality, not just slides)
- Concise (cover key points without excessive detail)

Your innovative solution and working demo are what matter to judges, not production values. Focus on clearly communicating your project's value and functionality, and you'll create an effective submission video.

Good luck with your hackathon!