



Heart of America Council

How to film events on your phone

Quick guide for parents & volunteers (UGC footage)

Thank you for helping us capture great Scouting moments!

How to shoot (the basics)

1. Hold your phone vertical

- Always film **upright (portrait/vertical / 9:16)**
- This works best for Instagram, Facebook and YouTube shorts

Avoid: horizontal (sideways) video

2. Shoot at least 15 seconds per clip

- Let each clip run **at least 15 seconds**
 - Longer is fine; don't stop too abruptly
 - Hold steady for a moment **before and after the action**
-

3. Keep the action close & clear

- Film **close-ups or mid-shots** when possible
- Make sure the **main subject is centered and easy to see**
- Avoid filming from far away—details get lost

Tip: if you can clearly see faces and actions on your screen, you're doing it right

4. Use your phone's default camera settings

- Most modern smartphones are perfect as-is
- Resolution: **1080p or 4k** (default is fine)
- Frame rate: **30 fps**
- HDR: leave **on if it's already on**

Avoid:

- Digital zoom (it makes footage grainy)
 - Constant zooming in and out
-

Lighting & environment

- Try to keep the **light in front of your subject**, not behind them
 - Be careful with **harsh sunlight** or strong backlighting
 - Avoid filming while moving quickly from **indoors to outdoors**
 - Watch what's in the background (signs, people, distractions)
-

Audio tips

- Keep natural audio on—smiles, cheers and reactions matter

- Loud environments are OK
- **Please don't talk while filming** and avoid side conversations near the microphone
- Background music is OK if it's already part of the event

What to film

All moments are welcome, including:

- Activities in progress
- Reactions and smiles
- Group moments
- Small details (hands working, patches, tools, crafts)

If it feels like a great Scouting moment, film it!

Brand & safety notes

- Logos, uniforms and signage are OK
- **Please avoid filming any "inappropriate" signage**
- Be aware of what's happening around you

Privacy & permissions

- Participant release forms will be provided by Scouting if video is selected
- No need to blur faces if a release is completed

Social media safe zones (important)

To make sure nothing gets cut off:

- Keep important action and faces **centered**
- Avoid placing key visuals near the **top or bottom edges**
- On vertical video, leave space for captions and buttons

Best practice:

Keep all important content within the **middle 80% of the screen**

If you only remember 3 things:

1. **Vertical video**
2. **At least 15 seconds**
3. **Get close—make subjects easy to see**

Thank you for helping tell the Scouting story 🧡

Be sure to send your submissions to socialmedia307@scouting.org