

Ed Rush's  
**HOME STUDIO GEAR LIST**



**TOPGUN**

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# General Studio Instructions

Your studio represents you and your brand

## So it should look GOOD

The days of blankly staring into your computer camera are over. So are the days of having a background full of junk. You used to be able to do that back in the day, but the times have changed. Today, Zoom is the **primary** lead engagement and customer converting device, so you might as well look good on it.

There are 4 Parts to a Great Studio.

We'll cover each in turn.

You can just remember the acronym: **S - L - A - C**



**S** Set



**L** Lights



**A** Audio



**C** Camera

# S Creating a Beautiful Set

Your studio set represents you and your brand. So you might as well take the time to make it look great. The good news is you probably have a space in your home or office that will work as a solid backdrop.

## First, you want a background that creates some depth

A few years ago, my studio was nothing more than a wall. As you can see from the screen - shot below, the plain background (left) didn't offer any depth compared to the one on the right. (The jacket wasn't doing me any favors either).

### BEFORE



#### Notes

- Dark, unlit background
- Uneven lighting
- Jacket from the '60s

### AFTER



#### Notes

- Even lighting back and front
- Clearly saying something very important.

## Second, your set should be clean

I know this goes without saying, but your studio background shouldn't be cluttered with books, papers, trash, and nick-nacks. Everything back there should be there on purpose. It's your brand for crying out loud and you can be sure as you get more popular, people will start taking screenshots and inspecting every trinket behind your head. (You'd be surprised at the comments I get about the smallest details in my studio).

**Here are some downright awful examples from people who should frankly know better:**



Like Rep. Beto O'Rourke doing an accidental impression of a POW in a Taliban prison bunker.



Here is Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge himself, who (despite having a near-unlimited budget) still manages to look cheap...



And finally, here is Billionaire Twitter founder Jack Dorsey doing his best impersonation of a homeless person.

**A simple thought to all of the sets above: DON'T.**

You need to look like a pro...because you are.

## Third, avoid having windows in your background

The problem with windows is the un-controllable light coming in from the background. Your camera just doesn't know what to do with that light and is left with two choices:

1. Make your face dark and focus on the window.
2. Or make your face light and make the background look like the 2nd Coming.

! Take my advice and avoid windows altogether.

**NOTE:** I have an office with a lot of windows and ALL of them have blackout curtains installed. None are in the background. It's just too hard to control natural light.

## **Forth, I know your pet is amazing. Just keep them out of the shot**

If you have a cat, dog, or otherwise, **keep them out of the shot**. I know it feels right to have your cute tabby front and center (and you may get a nice reaction at first), but your cat stretching in the window behind you is more likely to lose you more deals than it gets you.

Finally, one question I get a lot...

### **What about green screen backgrounds?**

It's so easy, right? Just turn on your camera and put yourself orbiting in space, on the moon, or in Kim Kardashian's living room. But take my advice and avoid green screen backgrounds.

First, unless your lights are right and your background is actually green, it's likely to give you a fuzzy halo. And who wants a fuzzy halo?

No one...that's who.

Second, your actual office or home will look a lot nicer and more authentic than one of Zoom's green screens.

Third, although you may think having a background image of The Brady Bunch or Breaking Bad is lighthearted, but your customers are not going to take you seriously...and worse, they'll probably never tell you.

# L Lighting

Lighting can make or break a set. And, in my opinion, it's worth spending a few bucks to illuminate your beautiful face and set you apart from the rest.

**The problem is:** good lighting can be tricky at best.

So start with this in mind. Most people put light on their face and that's all. If you do that, you've only covered one of three important steps.

## I recommend lighting three things:

### 1 Light your background

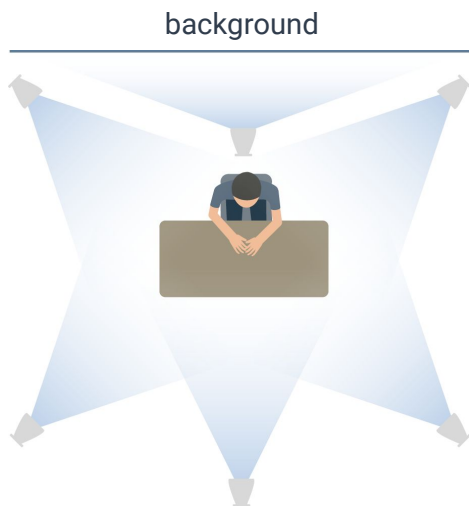
As you can see from the before and after above (and in the **video**), my set has 4 dedicated lights for the background. My set has a lot of books that tend to cast shadows. So multiple lights are important to "fill" the set.

### 2 Light your face

The best way to think about this is in 45-degree increments. You want the front of your face and both sides lit evenly. That way, you won't cast unnecessary shadows.

### 3 Light the back of your head

This helps you pop out of the background and make a 2-dimensional shot look 3-dimensional.



See my video here for a full walk through of my lights.

Finally, color is important and it's also specific to each person. The lights in my studio are **HERE**. They have the option to adjust for "cooler" or "hotter" intensity and I like that kind of customization. Too cool and you'll be pale as a ghost. And no one wants to look like a ghost. Too "hot" and you'll look like an **Orange on a Toothpick**. You'll have to play around with the settings, but once you dial it in, you're good.

# Lighting Recommendations

## Good Light Option

A simple ring light located right behind your camera is a good place to start if you are on a budget.

≈ \$50



Raya Bendie-Brite Folding USB Bi-Color LED Ring Light (10")

## Better Light Option

A step up is to get a 3-light set of GVM 560AS and put one in front of you and the other two at 45 degree angles pointed at your face. This will give you ample illumination and eliminate any shadows.

≈ \$300



GVM 560AS Bi-Color LED Studio Video 3-Panel Light Kit



## Best Light Option

The best option is to buy TWO sets of GVM 560AS lights (for a total of 6). Point 3 at you and 3 at your background.



**TWO sets of**  
**GVM 560AS Bi-Color LED Studio**  
**Video 3-Panel Light Kits**

Then, get a set of 2 backlights like the ones below and mount them high and behind you and point them both at your head.

≈ \$700



**Bescor LED-70 Daylight Studio 2-Light Kit**

# A

## Audio

Quality sound is the single most important thing you want in your studio. That's because if you have good audio quality (but poor video quality), people will still listen. But if your audio is off, they'll leave in milliseconds.

There are a jillion options when it comes to sound and I am no expert. I have, however, taken a long journey to good sound, so here are a few ideas.

**First, your mic style should reflect your teaching style.** I move around a lot in my studio and I change sets regularly mid-show, so I needed a mic that could travel, hence the wireless lavalier lapel mic.

But when doing interviews, I'm pretty much in the same spot, so that's when I switch to a much higher quality (and more expensive) condenser mic.

Whatever you choose, make sure to do this one thing: move your microphone OFF your desk. That's because your mic will pick up every time you put your hands on your desk or typing on a keyboard.

# Audio Gear Recommendations

**Good Audio Option**

≈ \$130



Blue Yeti USB Microphone (Blackout)

**Better Audio Option**

**With USB Sound Board**

≈ \$520



Saramonic UwMic9 2-Person Camera-Mount Wireless Omni Lavalier Microphone System (514 to 596 MHz)



Behringer XENYX Q802USB Premium 8-Input 2-Bus Mixer

**Best Audio Option**



Shure SM7B Dynamic Vocal  
Microphone and Cloudlifter Kit

≈ \$1160



Rode RODECaster Pro  
Podcast Production Studio

# C

## Cameras

Now is the time for you to look GREAT. And a quality camera can do just that.

In the camera world, you get what you pay for. So if you're buying a \$20 webcam, you're going to get a \$20 shot. If you're using a \$700 DSLR camera, you're going to look a lot better.

That said, everyone has their own budget, and even for me, I used a pretty simple HD webcam for my first 80 live shows.

My basic recommendation is to start with a simple webcam that can handle 1080P and work up.

# Camera Recommendations

## Good

Any inexpensive webcam is a good place to start. Just make sure it can stream at 1080P like the [Logitech C920s HD Pro Webcam](#)

≈ \$70



[Logitech C920s HD Pro Webcam](#)

## Better

A good step up is a fully HD webcam like the [Logitech BRIO Ultra HD Pro Webcam](#)

≈ \$200



[Logitech BRIO Ultra HD Pro Webcam](#)

## Best

I just recently upgraded my studio to the Sony ZV-1 Digital Camera

If you end up going in that direction, you'll also need an Elgato Cam Link 4K to connect it via USB for streaming.

≈ \$925



Sony ZV-1 Digital Camera



Elgato Cam Link 4K

## Important Note:

Even a great camera will look awful if you put it in the wrong place. That's where a quality tripod comes in handy. I recommend that you place the camera just above your eyeline. That will ensure you look up into the camera and it keeps you from looking like Jabba the Hut.

See below:

### CAMERA BELOW EYELINE



#### Notes

- Makes you look like jabba the hut

### CAMERA ABOVE EYELINE



#### Notes

- Makes you look **not** like jabba the hut

## Here is my favorite tripod.

Additionally, practice looking into the camera lens when you are speaking. Too many people stare at the Zoom screen when they are talking as though people live inside their monitor or something.

≈ \$80



[AmazonBasics-70-Inch-Pistol-Grip-Tripod](#)



# Gear Recommendations Summary

## Lighting Recommendations



[Raya Bendie-Brite Folding USB Bi-Color LED Ring Light \(10"\)](#)



[GVM 560AS Bi-Color LED Studio Video 3-Panel Light Kit](#)



**TWO sets of**  
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## Audio Gear Recommendations



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[Rode RODECaster Pro Podcast Production Studio](#)



[Shure SM7B Dynamic Vocal Microphone and Cloudlifter Kit](#)

# Camera Recommendations



[Logitech C920s HD Pro Webcam](#)



[Logitech BRIO Ultra HD Pro Webcam](#)



[Sony ZV-1 Digital Camera](#)



[Elgato Cam Link 4K](#)

# Tripod Recommendations



[AmazonBasics-70-Inch-Pistol-Grip-Tripod](#)

# How to Get The Help You Need NOW

Every Tuesday and Thursday, I go LIVE on YouTube to share the latest strategies, tips, and tactics to make more and get more done.

Come join me Right Here on the [EdTalks LIVE Channel](#) and be sure to say hello in chat so i can introduce you to our community.

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