

Self Tape Tips for Actors

“Self-tape” is becoming more popular in lieu of “in-person auditions.” To make sure to stay competitive, we’ve compiled some tips to help ensure your audition will be the best possible quality.

Get ready!

- **Picture perfect wardrobe:** Wear a plain, non-busy, non-black/white shirt. Ideally, the shirt will be slightly darker than your face. Avoid costumes and props unless the audition notice says otherwise.
- **Stay focused:** Find a quiet space with a simple background. Solid, neutral colors will make you stand out. A sheet or plain wall are best.
- **Grab some lamps:** Use two lights if possible, to provide balanced lighting on both sides of your face. Shadows are bad.
- **It’s okay to use your phone:** Brace your phone or use a tripod. Do not hand-hold because the shaking will be distracting.

Let's start filming!

- **Frame it correctly:** If the audition does not ask for a specific type of shot, stick to a “medium close-up.” This means head and shoulders only. If the audition asks for specific shots such as full body; Start on close up shot, then walk backwards for a full body shot, then walk back towards the camera for the medium close-up, then begin your slate and perform the scene. Keep it all in one clip.
- **Line of sight:** Look just off camera. If you have a reader position them to either the left or right of the camera and look at them while taping.
- **Turn the phone:** Record in horizontal mode
- **Support the talent:** Sometimes scripts will call for a “reader” who is simply an off-screen character. The reader should not be loud, but should be enthusiastic enough for the main performer to act off.
- **ACTION... but first, SLATE:** This is a very important step. Once you start recording, let a full second go by before you begin. Start with your “slate”. Say your name, if you are represented add “I’m with ____.” You can also say the role you are auditioning for. If asked for a full body this is where you would include that. Slate your name, step back, turn slowly to the right, back to center then to the left, back to center. Wait a beat and begin your audition. You should look into the lens for this part, but should look at the reader for the main scene.
- **Practice makes perfect!** Do a few takes from start to finish, even if you mess up along the way. Then pick your best one. We all want to see the best take possible. Have fun and do your best!

Finished recording?

- Now you need to send the file to us or to the casting company. This process varies job to job, so please check the audition specifications for your project.