

PRACTICAL FILMMAKING

Filmmaking Beginners Kit



**Essential tools to make
your film with little money**



Camera

Let's start with the basics.

The significant debate when starting out is what camera to buy. There's no need to run out and buy or rent an expensive camera. Instead, let's start with your **smartphone**, which can produce a good-quality image to get you started on this filmmaking path. But we're not just shooting with a basic cellphone. You can add a camera app and other accessories to enhance what would otherwise be a less-than-stellar look. The most current ISO comes with many camera features, as do Android models. So let's put a stop to window shopping and continue.



Cinema App

The next step is to enhance your cellphone experience to become more cinematic without breaking the bank, and that's where filmmaking apps come in. There are several apps available on the market, but the two most popular ones are **Filmic Pro** and Mavis Pro Camera.

Filmic Pro transforms any cellphone into a cinema camera, offering manual control over various camera settings such as focus, exposure, shutter speed, stabilization, and aspect ratio. The list goes on. However, it comes at a higher cost with a yearly subscription model.

Filmic Pro



Filmic Pro is an Apple-related app, but it is also compatible with many Android devices, such as Google, Samsung, LG, Xiaomi, Sony, Huawei, Asus, and OnePlus 5T devices, but not the OnePlus five or X models.

Mavis Pro Camera app delivers much of what Filmic Pro offers. However, through reviews, Mavis Pro's cons include a more complicated interface compared to its competitor above. The price is where Mavis Pro has an advantage, coming in at a lower price point as an In-App purchase.

Mavis Pro camera



With the lower price point comes the con of a more challenging interface on Mavis Pro compared to the Filmic Pro app. There are other options available, but these two apps come highly rated. It's always recommended to check for yourself and see which one works best for you.

Camera support

ULANZI ST-06 Camera Hot Shoe Phone Holder

This smartphone camera support features a Hot Shoe Mount with two threaded tripod screws that can be used for all tripods and many other types of equipment. **NEEWER** offers a comparable model with adjustable angles for positioning. The price range for such tripods is low, but you can opt for a pricier model if desired.



Tripod

Ensure a steady shot by securing your camera support onto a tripod. It can be easily locked into position, and you can adjust it to take horizontal or vertical shots. A simple and affordable lightweight camera mount is all you need to complete this setup. You can easily find a variety of tripods on Amazon in the \$20-\$30 price range. I recommend purchasing at least two; one for your camera and the other for your light setup. Some mounts come equipped with a universal smartphone holder, saving you the trouble of buying a separate holder.



Gimble

(A step beyond a tripod)

One of the biggest problems with amateur shots is camera shake. Although tripods can provide stability, they may not be sufficient for capturing shots that require more than a pan or tilt. That's where a gimbal comes in - it's the perfect tool for creating smooth handheld shots with greater movement than a tripod. Using a gimbal can add a unique and professional feel to your footage. Luckily, they won't break the bank, with models available for under \$200. We highly recommend the DJI OSMO 5 model, but be sure to check compatibility with your phone, as there are several models available.



Light

Aputure Amaran MC RGBWW Mini On Camera Video Light

Despite its palm-sized design, it offers a color temperature range of 3200-5600K, multiple color variations, and various lighting effects, such as Paparazzi, fireworks, and emergency vehicle lights. The price range for this light is around \$140-\$150. Moreover, it can be easily mounted on any threaded tripod and comes with a magnetic back to attach to a metal surface. While other companies, including GVM, offer comparable versions, this light is a keeper that can complement future upgrades to your kit. Remember, lighting is crucial in enhancing the visual appeal of your shoot.



Reflector

Now that you have a key light, it's time to add some fill with a basic photography reflector kit.

These versatile kits come in a variety of sizes, such as 24" and 36", as well as price ranges, from \$14 to \$60. Some kits even include a stand. Play around with changing the light direction to get the desired effect. You can buy reflectors individually or opt for a kit that offers a selection of colors, such as white, silver, and gold, to create a warm light effect. This accessory is a perfect complement to your light setup and can help take your shots to the next level.



Lenses

(Not essential but gives you some options)

There are numerous smartphone lenses available on the market, but many cheap lens kits fail to live up to their claims due to heavy edge distortion. Fortunately, there are still great options to choose from.

MOMENT, for instance, is highly regarded and more affordable than high-end **Beastgrip** or **Freewell** smartphone lens accessories. Each MOMENT lens costs between \$100 to \$119. Another excellent option is the **Apexel** 4K HD Mobile Phone 5-in-1, priced at \$60 at B&H. This lens is compatible with iPhone XS Max, XR, X, 8, 7, and 6 Plus, as well as Samsung phones, and is a step up from the Xenvo Pro.



MOMENT lenses



APEXEL lenses

Lenses

XENVO PRO-KIT (much cheaper) will give you some slight distortion on the camera edges. But at least offer a variety of lens options for fun. \$88 Amazon

As for what variety of lenses to start with, I recommend a **wide-angle**, a **macro**, and a **tele**(photo) lens.

Others like Fisheye, sparkle, or even anamorphic seem unnecessary for beginners.



XENVO PRO kit



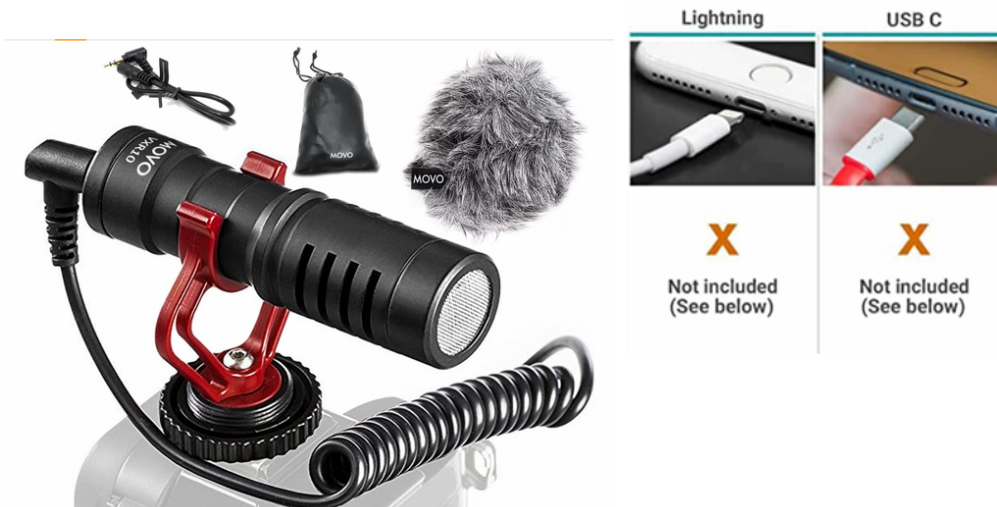
Clapboard

While we may not be Hollywood, a clapboard can be a handy tool for syncing your sound with your video during editing and keeping track of your scene numbers and takes. This is especially useful if you are recording sound separately. There's no need to spend much money on a clapboard, but I recommend getting one with a dry-erase marker option for added convenience.



Sound recording

Sound is a critical component in any video, and so is the microphone that captures it. The **MOVO VXR10** shotgun microphone is a perfect starting point due to its small size and portability. It plugs directly into your phone with the appropriate adapter, **Lightning** for iPhone or **USB-C** for Android. Please note that neither adapter is included with the mic. The microphone can be mounted onto your smartphone for easy use. As your gear budget increases, consider upgrading to a digital recording device to improve the recording range. For now, this microphone is an excellent option to get started.



Lightning

USB C



Not included
(See below)



Not included
(See below)

Editing/Sound +

After equipping yourself with the necessary gear for shooting and recording sound, it's time to dive into post-production, and this is where things get exciting. The best part? The all-encompassing post-production software, **Davinci Resolve**, is available for **FREE!** Yes, you read that right - there are no hidden costs or follow-up fees. Davinci Resolve provides everything from video editing to sound design, titles, coloring, and effects. While the Studio version may cost \$300 US, the free version offers more than enough features to get you started.



Music **Royalty-free**

<http://incompetech.com/>

<http://audiojungle.net/>

<http://ccmixter.org/>

<http://jamendo.com/>

<http://museopen.org/>

http://soundcloud.com/fm_freemusic

<http://bensound.com/>

<http://cctrax.com/>

<http://audionautix.com/>

<http://freemusicarchive.org/>



Sound Royalty-free **FX**

Royalty-free Sound Fx libraries

<http://freesound.org/>

<http://soundbible.com/>

<http://99sounds.org/>

<http://sonniss.com/>



Stock footage

Stock Footage libraries can seem out of reach, but a few will offer some free shots.

Check out these **Royalty-free stock footage sites**.

NOTE: some sites are not entirely FREE, so make sure you're separating the Free from the paid.

<http://www.dareful.com/>

<http://lifeofvids.com/>

<http://mixkit.co/free-stock-video/>

<http://mazwai.com/>

<http://www.pexels.com/videos/>

<http://pixabay.com/videos/>

<http://www.videezy.com/>

<http://www.videvo.net/>

<http://www.vidsplay.com/>

<http://coverr.co/>



Where to Buy

Filmic or Mavis can be found under Apps on your smartphone.

Software like Davinci Resolve on the Internet.

Most items on this list can be purchased at:

<https://www.amazon.com/>

<https://www.amazon.ca/>

The other option I recommend is B&H Photography out of New York. They offer excellent deals, and shipping is free in Canada if your purchase is over \$100.00

<https://www.bhphotovideo.com/>

Great lights

<https://www.aputure.com/>

Good lights and great prices

<https://gvmled.com/>

Canadian option for gear not always cheapest

<https://www.vistek.ca/>

Last word

Now that you have a solid game plan, it's time to start shooting, editing, and making films. Whether they are short films, music videos, or anything in between, each experience will help you grow and improve your skills. Embrace your failures and learn from your mistakes; they'll be the stepping stones to your success.

You'll gain confidence and enhance your abilities by taking action and experimenting. With more experience, you may find yourself upgrading your gear, such as a digital sound recorder, lights, or a camera. But remember, the most crucial element in filmmaking is not the gear but the creator's vision and creativity. Working with what you have and making the most of it is far more essential than dreaming of having the ideal tools.

Best of luck on your path

PRACTICAL FILMMAKING

