



Everything's done online these days. Even interviews...

The possibility of being invited to a video interview is on the rise, and this will either fill you with fear of the unknown, relief that you won't have to leave the comfort of your house, or maybe even a bit of both.

A video interview will have a large amount of similarities to a regular face-to-face interview, but here are some specific video interview tips to help you get started:

Prepare your surroundings

Make sure you choose a quiet space for the interview, and tidy the area so it looks presentable. It's always good to have a clear, uncluttered space to help you to concentrate on the task at hand, and to remind you that you're in a formal situation.

Also, get rid of any potentially embarrassing or offensive belongings lying around. Your interviewer will be able to see more than you think, and the smallest distraction in the background that you thought wasn't in view could give too much away about your personal life, or reflect badly on you.

Note: It's OK to like cats, but it's not OK to have your entire room with cats roaming around when you are about to do a video interview.

Look the part

Ultimately, a video interview is supposed to follow the same rules and format as a face-to-face interview, so it's a good idea to wear the same outfit you'd wear if you were going to the workplace. Being professionally dressed will also put you in the right mind-set, and stop you from falling into an overly comfortable 'I'm at home in bed' state.

Since you'll be sat down, and expectedly, only viewable from the waist up, it might be tempting to wear interview-appropriate clothes on top and some kind of pyjamas on the bottom. But, as comfy as it sounds, we don't recommend you do this.

What if you have to get up? Or the cat decides that now is the time for his amateur acrobatics, involving him jumping on the table and knocking the camera focus downwards? Yeah, you know it could happen.

Avoid any potential interruptions

Call a babysitter, switch off your phone, and tell your friends you're out, and so on.

Awkward interruptions that interfere with the smooth running of your interview are best avoided as much as possible. You want an interviewer to see you're serious about their role, so show you're prepared.

Always turn off the TV, music, and close other programmes on your computer. You might really need to catch up on your Netflix binge watching that you often use as 'background noise', but now is not the time.

And finally, ensure those you live with are aware. The last thing you want is someone screaming your name at the top of their voice, asking if you'd rather have Chinese or Indian for dinner. It's a tough choice, we get it. But one to be discussed *after* the interview.

Look at the camera, not the screen

Eye contact is important in any kind of interview, but video interviews make it a lot harder to follow, because, where do you look?

Focus on looking directly at the camera not yourself, at least for the most-part of the interview.

Also, remember to smile.

Remember: body language is still a thing

Although you're not in the same room as your interviewer physically, body language remains important. Sit up straight, look attentive and enthusiastic.

Be aware of the limitations in sound quality and volume in this situation – you want your interviewer to hear you clearly. Don't cover your mouth, remain conscious of your hand-to-face gestures, and try and keep your hands at bay in a safe place, AKA your knees.

Sure, use hand movements to emphasise a point if it feels natural, but don't overdo it. You also shouldn't force it just because you don't know what to do with your hands.

Top tip: Hold a pen to occupy your hands if that stops the random arm flailing.

Practice

Having a video interview trial run is not only important for gaging the best body language and practicing your answers, but also to test your equipment. Because let's face it, technology isn't always the most trustworthy of things, and you never know when it might decide to malfunction.

Check the best angle for your webcam, the best height of your chair, and the speed of your connection. Because no one can pull off the blurry, constantly freezing, pixelated look without looking like part of a bad 80s arcade game.