



FILM ARTS
EQUIPMENT GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Students within the School of Film Arts need to buy or have access to a DSLR/Mirrorless camera with video capabilities. These cameras are the most affordable option compared to other video-only cameras. We recommend looking at options between the following reputable brands: Canon, Sony, Panasonic or Black Magic Design.

For FV100 major students who are unsure of where to position themselves, we have options at hand and available in the Gear Room. The first option is to buy your own camera once you know you want to major in Film and Television. The second option is to use the rental agreement setup specifically for OW students, where you will get a discounted rental rate from gear houses in our list.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

Most video recording cameras record low quality audio. For the purpose of the course and creating good quality film / video content, you will need to record on a separate audio recorder and a microphone.

Don't buy a cheap microphone - rather use the sound equipment available at the school and make an informed decision on which microphone system to buy later. Don't buy any equipment to move the camera yet (tracks, sliders, stabilisers, etc.) rather spend your initial capital on lenses and a good, sturdy tripod.

USING THIS BUYING GUIDE

The basic kit is numbered from 1 - 6.

On the last page, you will find an empty form with numbers and headings. Fill out the form with the corresponding equipment and price that you have chosen to see what the final price will be. You need to choose at least one option from every number listed, making up your kit.

In addition, you should have a lens pen and UV filter as part of your kit. ND filters are a must when filming on a DSLR/Mirrorless camera. Equipment prices fluctuate during each year, make sure to do your own research about costing and availability of models.



BASIC CAMERA KIT INCLUDES:

1. 1 x Camera Body, Camera Battery, Battery charger.
2. 1 x Lens
3. 1 x Memory card
4. 1 x Memory card reader
5. 1 x Tripod
6. 1 x Camera Bag (optional, but recommended)

MUST HAVE ACCESSORIES:

1 x UV filter

The UV filter is a clear, screw-on filter that protects your lens from general bumps and bashes. It is cheaper to replace a scratched filter than an entire lens. If the lens is scratched, you will have to replace the lens at greater cost. UV filters also reduce haziness created by ultraviolet lights. When buying a UV filter take your lens with you, or make sure of the correct size before buying online.

Suggested UV filter brands: Kenko, Hoya, NiSi, Zeiss.



1 x Variable ND filter

A Neutral Density filter helps reduce the amount of light entering the lens and is used when shooting outside where it is difficult to control the effects of sunlight.



1 x Lens pen

This is to keep your lenses clean.
Dirty lenses = dirty unusable footage.



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GENERAL EQUIPMENT BUYING TIPS:

- *Use this guide as a starting point and do research before doing any purchases.*
- *Buying a store-assembled camera bundle may seem like an easy solution, but you are letting sales people and not filmmakers make decisions for you. They are only looking for a sale.*
- *Camera bundles usually don't come with everything you may need and the lenses on the lower end DSLR camera bundles are generally of bad quality.*
- *Buy the camera body separately and add better quality lenses.*
- *One decent high quality lens is worth much more than 100 bad lenses.*
- *Your lenses will outlast your camera so rather invest in better quality lenses for the future.*
- *When buying lenses for your camera, make sure you buy lenses that fit the specific mount type and sensor type of the camera body.*
- *Fixed focal length lenses are better for video than zoom lenses, and provide higher quality images at a lower price.*
- *Buy an extra battery if you can afford it so you always have one available, while the other one is charging.*
- *Buy two, good quality memory cards if possible.*
- *Buy a camera bag that will suit your needs now and in the future.*
- *Negotiate to have the lens filter and lens pen included for free.*
- *Ask for a student discount. Take your student card and registration along when you go to purchase the gear.*
- *Make sure the prices you get quoted on include VAT.*
- *Always stay informed on newer models coming out so you are making informed decisions when purchasing a camera.*
- *Be aware of scammers when looking at buying used cameras.*

CAMERA KIT LIST



1. CAMERA BODY, CAMERA BATTERY, BATTERY CHARGER

The following camera bodies all have the basic requirements for shooting video at a resolution of 1920 x 1080 at 25 frames per second. We suggest you buy the camera body separately - bundled camera packages mostly come with EF-S lenses, which can't be used on higher end cameras. This means when you upgrade to a higher full-frame camera later, it won't fit and you will need to buy new lenses. Doing additional research about mount types, sensor sizes, and lens fittings will be beneficial.

When buying a camera body, one camera battery and battery charger will be included.

1.1 CAMERAS

The camera options listed below have been selected as entry to mid-level camera options. If you are on a tight budget, you can always look at purchasing a second hand camera body, either online or through a trusted retailer. Be aware when buying cameras online through unknown sources - there may be some cheap options out there but be vigilant towards scams. Below you can find two trusted resellers of used or refurbished camera equipment.

<https://www.outdoorphoto.co.za/second-hand-cameras>

<https://www.ormsdirect.co.za/used-gear>

SONY CAMERAS

SONY South Africa offers a 10% discount to all students nationwide. When buying a Sony camera, make sure to take your student card or proof of registration along with you to qualify for this discount.

SONY ZV-E10 ii Mirrorless Camera

**Cropped sensor*



SONY a6700 Mirrorless Camera

**Cropped sensor*



SONY FX30

**Cropped sensor*



SONY A7s iii

**Full frame sensor*



SONY A7 iv

**Full frame sensor*



SONY FX2

**Full frame sensor*



SONY FX3

**Full frame sensor*



CANON CAMERAS

CANON EOS 5D Mark IV

**Full frame sensor*



CANON EOS R8

**Full frame sensor*



CANON EOS R10

**Cropped sensor*



CANON EOS R6 Mark II

**Full frame sensor*



SONY FX3

**Full frame sensor*



CANON CAMERAS

CANON EOS 5D Mark IV

**Full frame sensor*



CANON EOS R8

**Full frame sensor*



CANON EOS R10

**Cropped sensor*



CANON EOS R6 Mark II

**Full frame sensor*



CANON EOS R6 Mark III

**Full frame sensor*



CANON EOS RP

**Full frame sensor*



BLACKMAGIC CAMERAS

POCKET CINEMA CAMERA 4K

**4/3"-Sized HDR Sensor*



POCKET CINEMA CAMERA 6K

**Super35 sensor*



FUJI CAMERAS

FUJI X T5

**APS-C sensor*



FUJI X-H2S

**APS-C sensor*



NIKON CAMERAS

Nikon ZR Cinema Camera

**Full Frame sensor*



Nikon Z5 II Mirrorless Camera

**Full Frame sensor*





2. LENSES

- 📷 The rule of thumb is to buy your lenses separately.
- 📷 When buying Canon lenses, stick to EF lenses - don't buy EF-S or EF-M lenses. EF lenses can work on both the full-frame and APS-C sensor size cameras, EF-S can't.
- 📷 Preferably, you want a set of fast prime / fixed focal length lenses. Fast lenses allow you to shoot in low light situations as well as giving you very nice shallow depth of field.
- 📷 Samyang / Rokinon make great sets of affordable cinema lenses. You can find some here: <https://cinephototools.co.za/>
- 📷 Prime lenses can't zoom but what makes them great is that it gives you higher optical quality at lower cost because the lens has fewer moving parts.
- 📷 Stay away from cheap zoom lenses. The optical quality is very low on entry level zoom lenses. Lenses with IS (Image Stabilization) are also favourable, especially on telephoto lenses.
- 📷 If you put most lenses on a APS-C size sensor camera they will have a crop factor of x 1.6 because of the smaller sensor size. This means a 35mm lens used on an APS-C size sensor camera will give 56mm focal length. Keep this in mind when choosing lenses. We have recommended lenses specifically to work with this in mind.
- 📷 A good range of lenses includes a 35mm, 50mm and 80mm lenses. First master the basics, then you can invest in a longer range telephoto lens.

2.1 UNDERSTANDING CAMERA MOUNT TYPES

1. DSLR Camera Mounts

Digital Single-Lens Reflex (DSLR) cameras use larger mounts designed for full-frame or APS-C sensors. These cameras use mirrors and optical viewfinders.

Common DSLR Mounts:

- Canon EF & EF-S: EF for full-frame and APS-C DSLRs; EF-S for APS-C bodies only.
- Nikon F-Mount: Long-running mount used in full-frame (FX) and crop-sensor (DX) DSLRs.

Good For:

- Students on a budget

2. Mirrorless Camera Mounts

Mirrorless cameras are smaller and lighter due to the absence of a mirror box. They allow more flexible lens adapting due to shorter flange distances.

Common Mirrorless Mounts:

- Canon RF: For Canon's full-frame and APS-C mirrorless line (R-series).
- Sony E-Mount: Versatile, with strong third-party support.
- Nikon Z-Mount: Sharp native lenses and excellent light transmission.
- Micro Four Thirds (MFT): Used by Panasonic, Olympus, and Blackmagic Pocket Cinema Cameras.

Good For:

- Hybrid shooters
- Compact systems
- Adapting vintage/DSLR lenses

3. Cinema Camera Mounts

Cinema cameras prioritize video quality and modularity. Mounts vary more by brand.

Common Cinema Mounts:

- PL Mount: Industry standard on ARRI, RED, etc. Very robust.
- EF Mount: Used on Canon Cinema Cameras and RED. Familiar and affordable.
- RF Mount: Found on Canon R5C and similar models.
- E-Mount: Used on Sony FX-series cinema cameras.
- L-Mount: On Panasonic S-series and cinema models.
- MFT Mount: On compact cinema cameras like Blackmagic Pocket 4K.

Good For:

- Students focused on cinematography
- Industry-standard workflows
- Long-term rigs

Quick Tips for lenses.

- Adapters are your friend: Mirrorless cameras can adapt DSLR or vintage lenses.
- Think ecosystem: Choose mounts with affordable lenses and long-term potential.
- Futureproofing: Consider mounts supported by cinema-style bodies.
- Budget wisely: Invest in good lenses as they matter more than camera bodies.

2.2 MEDIUM LENGTH LENS OPTIONS

TAMRON 45mm f/1.8 Prime Lens



CANON EF 50mm f/1.8 STM Lens



CANON 85mm f/1.8 USM Lens



TAMRON 35mm f/2.8 Di III OSD



SONY FE 50mm f/1.4 GM Lens



TAMRON 35mm f/2.8 Di III OSD



2.3 TELEPHOTO LENS OPTION

CANON EF 70-200mm f/2.8 L USM



NIKON AF-S 70-200mm f/2.8G ED VR II



CANON EF 70-200mm f/2.8 L USM



2.4 WIDE LENS OPTION

SIGMA 14-24mm f/2.8 DG HSM



CANON EF 11-24mm f/4L USM



CANON EF-S 10-18mm f/4.5-5.6 IS



SONY FE 16-35mm f/2.8 GM



3. MEDIA STORAGE - MEMORY CARDS

- ☉ *Check your chosen camera model for media requirements, these are only guidelines.
- ☉ When shooting high quality video, you will need fast memory cards with enough space.
- ☉ Most APS-C size sensor cameras use SD cards.*
- ☉ The full-frame cameras generally shoot on SD,CF or XD cards.*
- ☉ SD cards have a speed classification on them. Make sure to get a Class 10 (or higher) SD card so the card is fast enough to shoot high quality video.
- ☉ For 4K upward shooting, you will need a faster card with more space available.
- ☉ CF cards also have a speed classification on them. Make sure you get a CF card faster than x350. Look in the range of x450 upwards for a good CF card speed, depending on camera.
- ☉ 32 GB cards will roughly give you 45 minutes when shooting at 1920 x 1080.
- ☉ Only buy well-known, trusted brands – they will normally adhere to standards for speed classifications.

3.1 SDHC & SDXC CARDS

Sony 64GB SDHC G-Series Tough UHS-II U3 300MB/s Memory Card



Lexar 64GB Professional 2000x 300MB/s SDXC UHS-II Memory Card



3.2 CF CARDS

SanDisk 800x 32GB Extreme CF Memory Card (120MB/s)



SanDisk 1067x 64GB Extreme Pro CF Memory Card (160MB/s)



4. CARD READER

SanDisk ImageMate Pro USB-C Multi-Card Reader/Writer



SanDisk Professional PRO-READER CFast Card Reader



5. TRIPOD OPTIONS

- ☪ Choose a sturdy tripod. This will be a long term investment.
- ☪ Stay away from plastic tripods, they are flimsy and tend to break easily.
- ☪ A video tripod with a fluid head is ideal and recommended.
- ☪ Smaller DSLR cameras can fit on a photo tripod, but these are not designed for the demands of shooting video.
- ☪ Ask the retailer about good tripod options for use in filmmaking.

Benro KH25N Aluminium Tripod



Manfrotto MK190X3-2W Aluminium 3-Section Tripod with 2-Way head



*Manfrotto 502 Fluid Video Head & 546GB Aluminium Twin Leg Tripod



***Best option for long term purchase.**



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6. CAMERA BAG

- 📷 You will need a quality, padded bag to protect your equipment.
- 📷 Buy a camera bag with future gear purchases in mind. Over time you will buy more accessories and you will need additional space in your bag.
- 📷 Think what else you need to take along: a laptop, hard drives, sound equipment, etc.
- 📷 Trusted brands are LOWE PRO, EVOC, TARMAC, PELICAN CASE and KATA.
- 📷 There are many possibilities, for storage, but don't skimp on this. You spend a lot on camera gear, so it makes sense to keep it safe and dry. A good quality camera bag or case will last you many years. Check out these websites to get an idea of your options:

<https://www.ormsdirect.co.za/photo/camera-bags/backpacks>

<https://www.outdoorphoto.co.za/bags-cases-and-protection/camera-bags/backpacks>

AUDIO SOLUTIONS

DSLR cameras record extremely low quality audio, so it does become necessary to consider external solutions for recording usable audio. Open Window does have audio recorders for students to use, as well as Shotgun Microphones and Lavalier Mics, but if one is interested in investing in an audio solution to accompany your camera setup, here are two good options to consider:

Zoom H5 Portable Digital Audio Recorder



Zoom H6 Portable Digital Audio Recorder



BUILD YOUR KIT HERE

ITEM	YOUR CHOICE GOES HERE	PRICE
1. Camera Body, Battery, Charger		
Your Camera:		
2. Camera Lens		
Your Lens 1:		
Your Lens 2: (optional)		
Your Lens 3: (optional)		
3. Your Memory Card		
SD Card 1:		
SD Card 2: (optional)		
CF Card 1:		
CF Card 2: (optional)		
4. Card Reader		
Your card reader:		
5. Tripod		
Your Tripod:		
6. Camera Bag		
Your camera bag choice:		
Must-have accessories		
1 x UV Filter		
1 x Lens Pen		
TOTAL		