

Module 8

Taking Images & Making Videos

Taking Product Images.

To take Product images, you need;

A good camera or smartphone.

Lots of good even natural tone light.

A background, white or another color – depending on the colors of your products.

Or a place to stage your product in a natural situation – where it would commonly be used.

- and a Product.



That's about all – Simple!! - should be easy! – but it's just a little more complicated.

Etsy buyers don't expect the sterile 'white only' background that is used on other sites.

If that does suit your product, that's fine – use a large paper or cardboard sheet behind it.

Hold the background up with masking tape or similar and take your photo with plenty of white space around it – you can crop down the image later if there is too much white space.

You can find inexpensive lightboxes on line, which are great for smallish items - but they don't fit every item.

Many Etsy sellers prefer to stage their item on a table, on a person, on the wall or door, in a hand, in the garden or kitchen, wherever it would usually be used or seen.

This shows the customer what it will look like when they use it and also gives a size to the item which is much more useful than just telling the dimensions.

(You still need to say the dimensions in the listing details)

If using a staged background – make sure that it is really obvious what your item is,

- don't add accessories that look as if they might be part of the product.

- don't add an item or background that may confuse the buyer – if they think "I can't tell what I am looking at here!" they will leave.

- don't partly hide the item with other things,

- make sure there are no shadows on top of the item.

Make sure your item stands out against the background – make sure it is a good contrasting color.

Use a large bright white object – a piece of cardboard or white foam packing - to reflect light into dark areas if shadows are a problem – but some background shadowing is good to show the 3 dimensionality of it and make it look real, and stand-out from the background

Set your camera (or phone) to the maximum resolution – the storage should also be at a maximum resolution. You can delete it when you have finished so you won't use up all your storage capacity.

Etsy want 2000px on the shortest side of the image, and a resolution of at least 72PPI and a max file size of 1MB and approximately square.

A larger and higher resolution picture is fine – but watch the file size.

A smaller image will be accepted by Etsy, they only show a low image size warning until you have “published the listing” but make sure any low size images are still clearly visible on the listing.



The item should be a comfortable size within the image – but not fill it completely.

You can enlarge the image for the thumbnail which is shown on the results page, but you can't reduce it.

So if your item completely fills the uploaded image, some may be cut-off when it is shown in the thumbnail.

Your first (main) image has to get the attention of the customer at very first glance. If they can't see it because ...

- it is too cluttered,
- or is the same color as the background,
- or is dark, or dull,

then their brain probably won't even register it, as they scan the results for something they “like”.

If it is not obvious and eye-catching in that first one tenth of a second, they won't even look at your listing.

You can add some essential explanatory text but keep it to a minimum.

Your second image should just show the item itself on a plain background – by now they know what they are looking at and just want a closer look. A nice clear well-lit item is all you need and they will then know exactly what they are getting – use the next few images to show top, sides, back, and then perhaps a few more “in situ” ideas to show what it may look like for them when they are using it.

Also include any close-ups for details that are not fully visible in the whole item image.

You can add more explanatory text in the 2nd and subsequent pictures too,

Show different colors or other variations as well – you might be able to show a few variations on the one image.

Make a collage of two or four close-up details on the one image.

DO USE ALL TEN IMAGES if you can – any extra info, or ideas, the customer can get from pictures is best.

Some phones allow you to crop images and add text to your images, many storeholders have Photoshop or similar to create or edit their images.

You can use Photoshop or similar to lighten, darken or increase the contrast (make the shadows darker without making the whole picture darker) which makes the image show up better.

Sometimes a little bit of a “dropshadow” in a plain image lifts it from the background and brings it to life.

Add a photo that shows how the item will be packed for postage - if that could be a concern, if you want - anything which answers a possible customer question is good.

The more info you can present in pictures for the customer, the better.

A picture really is worth a thousand words, and many customers don't get as far as the item description – especially when they are looking on their phone.

Anything that you can point out in the images that will solve an objection is good -

such as * is it big/small enough? * what will it look like on...? * will that break/crush in the post? * would Grandma love it?

If you can overcome objections - with image or text on image - before they even get to the description, it's already half sold.

If you can cover the major questions in the images, then the fewer "messages" you will have to respond to and the less likely they are to move onto another store.

Adding Videos to your Listing - AND to your Storefront.

Why would you want to add a video?

Whether it's the general shopfront video or a listing video, buyers seem to trust the product and the seller more if there is a (reasonably good) video – it builds a connection between seller and buyer, it proves that you are a real person, it demonstrates that you have the item in stock and they often understand more about the item – especially if you can show some of the production, or the item in use.

You have to plan what you want in your video.

Do you just want to show the item as it is?

Do you want the item to turn? If so turn it slowly.

Do you want it on/with a model or other prop?

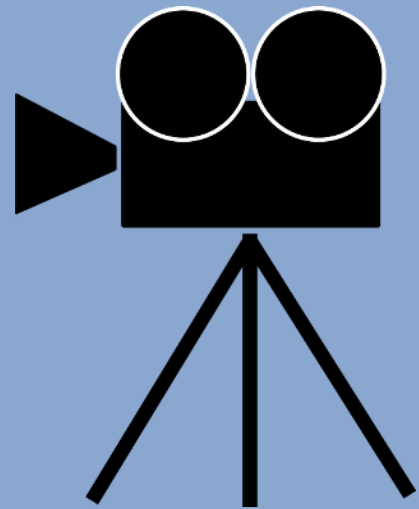
Do you want it plain or more “in situ”?

Do you want to show various uses?

Do you want to show your production processes?

Do you want to show this one item? Or some of the variations?

Or a range of your other items? – You may need to caption it if you show more than one item.



A Listing Video can be up to 15 seconds long. It will repeat, so if your video is not 15 seconds long it will be fine.

It will not play sound, so you don't need to worry about voices or script or music.

You must have good lighting – nothing is worse than a brown dark video where you really can't see the product properly – you will actually lose trust.

Light your item from top and sides – a bit of shadow at the back is fine but all details should be well lit. Try moving the lights around to see which looks best or use a reflective or bright surface to add light to dark areas.

Don't just look and think it will be OK – take a test video and see what it really looks like.

If you don't have any lighting equipment then moving it outside into bright daylight (but not direct sun) should be good enough. Often a really well lit room is good too.

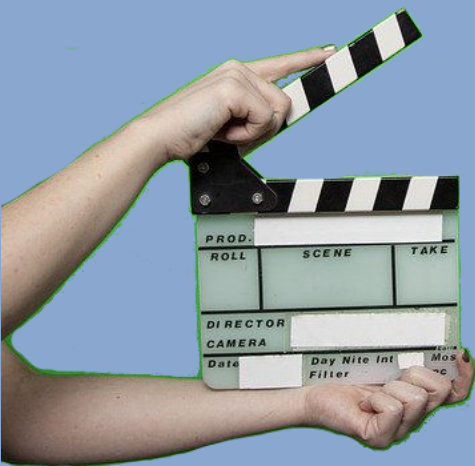
Use a Tripod or some firm base for you camera or phone. Move the object rather than the camera unless you are REALLY good at moving the camera smoothly (most people aren't).

Many items can be turned on a rotating tray / 'lazy susan' or similar – but you may need a second person to help with that if you don't have your camera secured on a tripod.

Any backgrounds should be as plain as possible – preferably in a pale contrasting color to show off all the item details properly.

You can include a prop to show sizes or usage but do not clutter the view.

You can only upload the videos - to your store or listing - on the website (not on the mobile app) but they will show on both.



Depending on your product some people find that holding the phone sideways when recording works better for their videos.

Camera settings – see record options - Best size 1080p at 30fps

Most phones allow you to edit the start and end points.

Many will allow you to crop for height and change the aspect ratio of the picture but you shouldn't need to do that if you set the size before starting.

Link for Etsy's Instructions - <https://www.etsy.com/seller-handbook/article/how-to-take-listing-videos-with-your/821069114343>

Store Front Videos –

These show when your customers visit your store and scroll all the way to the bottom of the page.

Some store holders think videos are great, a wonderful way to showcase their product or processes.

Other store holders would prefer not to show their processes and just use the still images in that section with no video at all – it's entirely up to you.

– But a bad video won't help at all, so this should NOT be a 'quick & dirty' addition.

Where to upload the Store Front Video.

Look at your store in the public view (on Left hand side – down to Sales Channels – Etsy YourShop Name.)

Scroll right down to the bottom beyond all the first page listings, and past any reviews you may have, then below Updates you will come to an “about shopname” section.

Here you can add some store front photos and a video.

The Store Front video can be quite long – but they suggest not longer than 10minutes and that it should really be shorter.

I would suggest that many buyers will get bored after a few minutes, so unless you have something absolutely entrancing to say and show, then keep it shorter than that – it’s surprising what you can fit into 2 or 3 minutes if you think about it.

Something this long will need to be planned out.

Do you just want to say “hello”?

Do you want to show how and where you make your items?

Think about what you want to show or say.

The order you want that done in.

Can you do it all in one ‘take’ or do you have a way to edit and join sections?

There are free editors on the internet – some are easy enough to use – others need a bit of practice.

You CAN have sound, so you can talk about your processes and products – you can also have background music. You could even add caption notes.

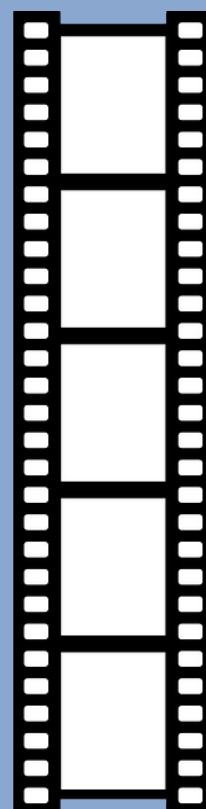
Etsy have links to sources of background music on their shop video info page.

<https://help.etsy.com/hc/en-gb/articles/360000337707?segment=selling>

Do you want to show actual working processes – or a slideshow of process steps?

Do you want to show a slideshow of many products - but make sure that all these products will always be available in your store – or keep updating this video.

Or some other ideas entirely? – Whatever you choose for your store will be right for you.



I have found it often takes a few tries to make a good Store-front video.

it is much more important that this is good quality and tells a good story, than a single listing video, because it is about selling yourself and your store rather than just showing a single item.

So do one, have a critical look at it – is this what I want my customers to see? (it might be up for years)

Learn from what can be improved, and your 2nd try will probably be much better.

So start with the “this is my learning video” attitude, expect to do a 2nd (or even a 3rd try) and you will end up with a much better result.

Of course - any video you make, for your store-front or for individual listings can – and perhaps should – be shared on your Social Media pages, & Pinterest etc.

Next

Module 10

Connecting to Social Media