

A tripod – even a Gorillapod much smaller than this – is essential to film yourself. For more advice on touring videos, visit cyclinguk.org/filming



Photos: Steve Thomas, except for author boxouts

videos (portrait format) I'd suggest shooting in 1080p in any case. For horizontal videos (landscape format) of well-lit scenes, 1080p phone footage is still usually good enough, even for YouTube. If you're shooting something that's important, dimly lit or employs a stabilised camera, your video may benefit from being 4K.

The same resolution numbers on different devices don't mean the video quality will be the same. Phones and action cameras have small sensors and can't produce the same quality 1080p or 4K footage as a high-end mirrorless camera. When phones and action cameras are stabilised, the frame is often clipped into.

Most digital platforms are optimised for 30 frames per second (fps). This frame rate is common for news and sports broadcasting, while 24 or 25fps is associated with movies. A low frame rate allows for more motion blur when combined with a slow shutter speed (see below). Higher frame rates, such as 120fps, can be used for slow motion later.

I prefer to shoot in 24fps although, when viewed on a phone screen, the differences in fps aren't obvious. Shutter speed is more important when it comes to motion blur.

To add more motion blur in daylight, you'll need a variable neutral →



Video chat

Steve Thomas Journalist and photographer



I've been using Insta360 cameras for years now, and they are my go-to for capturing POVs and on-bike selfie shots. There is a learning curve with them, but in my opinion their versatility outstrips regular action cameras.

I also own Canon DSLRs and Fuji mirrorless cameras, which are kept for regular photography. My two older DJI drones are almost never used. For cycling videos, I prefer the simplicity of my iPhone 12 Mini and an Insta360 X4 Air (insta360.com), editing the footage on the phone. For sound, I use a small Røde VideoMic, a Boya wired lavalier mic and an Ulanzi wireless mic. For self-filming, a small tripod (such as a Gorillapod) is best. To trigger the shutter, I use a tiny and very cheap Bluetooth remote.

Lessons I've learned along the way include:

- Always carry a small lens cloth and clean your lens before shooting.
- Use the main, rear phone camera wherever possible as it's usually better quality.
- Avoid digital zoom as it mostly crops into the frame, which lowers the resolution.
- Soft evening and morning light, with the sun behind or to the side, is best. Try to avoid very dark and low light scenes; phones (and action cams) struggle here.
- For off-bike shots, get your breath first and stay steady, with the phone in both hands for horizontal video. Use the screen grid overlay to keep things level, and work with the photographer's rule of thirds if you can. Look for leading lines, such as trails and roads, to draw the viewer in.
- If you stop and set up shots, capture a few different clips. Review them before moving on.
- While many people capture on-bike shots holding a camera, I don't recommend it.



could be a close-up pan shot of the sweet treats in a café, an epic stormy sky, sheep frolicking in a field or simply your muddy shoes.

Video settings

It's not essential to shoot video in 4K resolution (UHD). Many TV broadcasters and leading YouTubers use 1080p (HD). The file sizes are smaller than with 4K, which makes processing, editing and backing up a lot easier. While 4K does offer a crisper and more detailed look, the vast majority of videos are viewed on small screens, not on big 4K monitors.

Social media platforms are optimised for 1080p. For vertical