

Capturing Emotions, Telling Stories – Producing Videos with the Smartphone



CrossGeneration Media

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WEBINAR

“The best camera is the one you have”
“PRACTICE!”



Samsung Inc.

Before anything else...

Clean your Lens!

Your phone lives in your pockets and gets shoved around a lot.
Always make sure the lens is free of smudges.

and

note you can also operate horizontally!



Samsung Inc.

Why is this a good Photo?



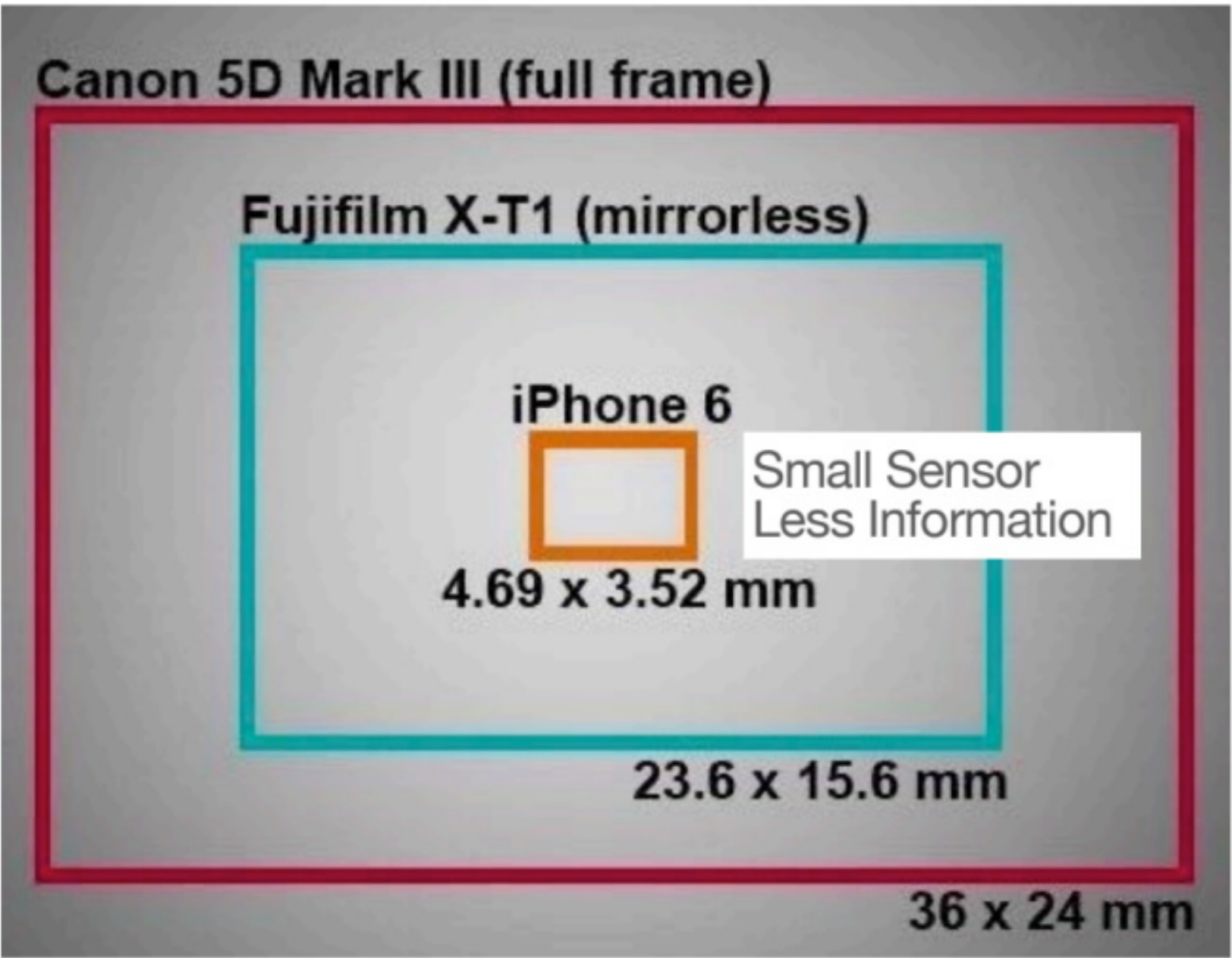
It is close, simple and pleasing!

- Colors are less important than contrast.
- Center of attention is clear but off-center.
- You feel a connection to the subject.
- Important elements are big, you are close.
- **Most importantly: Good lighting!**

Learn to use what you have and carefully observe your surroundings. Build a relationship and stay in contact with what or who is in front of your lens.



Differences to a 'real' Camera



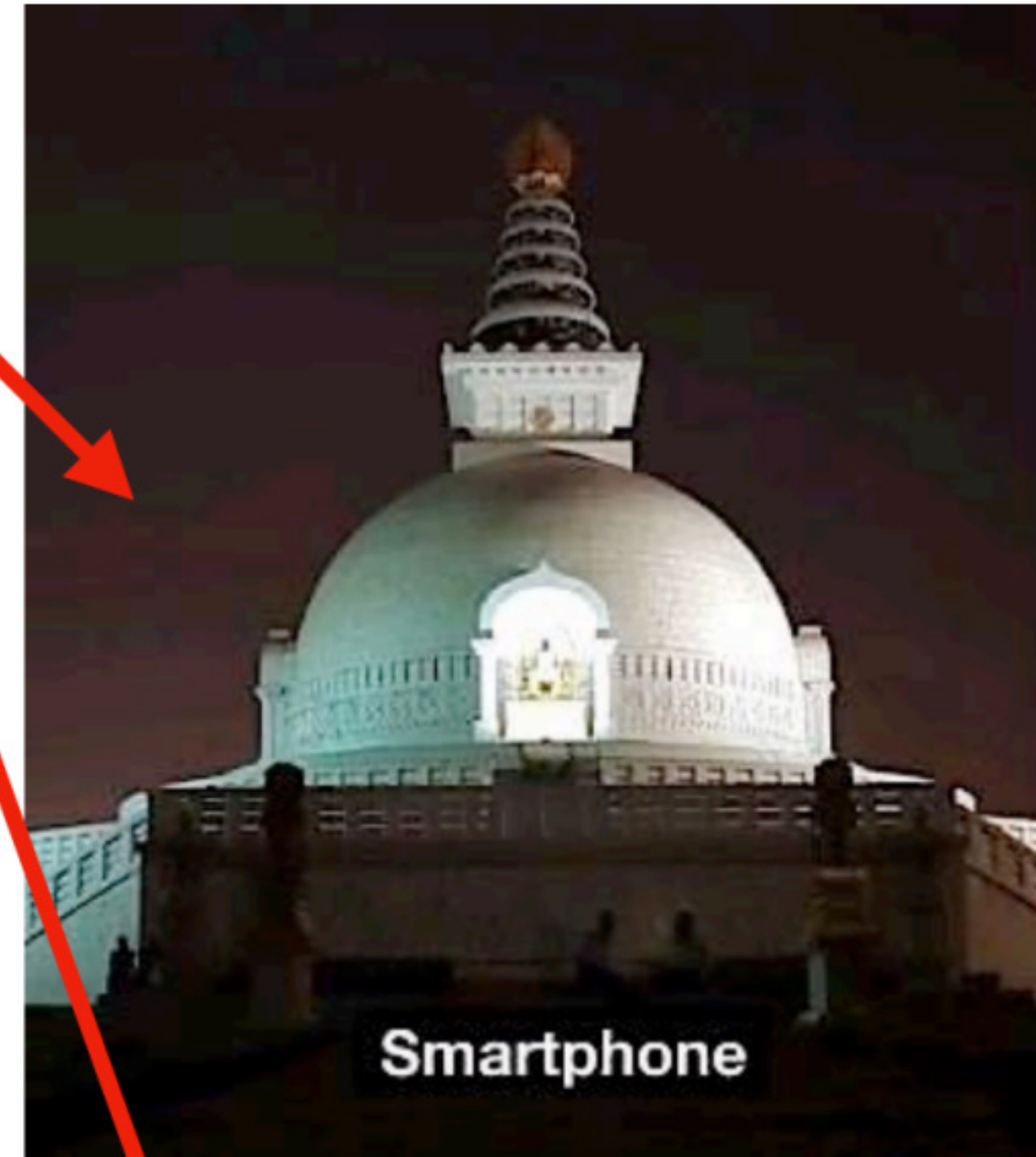
Limitations of Smartphones

Small sensor is bad in both, low-light and high-contrast.
Phones **can** make up for it with software.

- Avoid taking pictures against strong light
- Avoid taking pictures in dark environments
→ *use available light or bring your own*



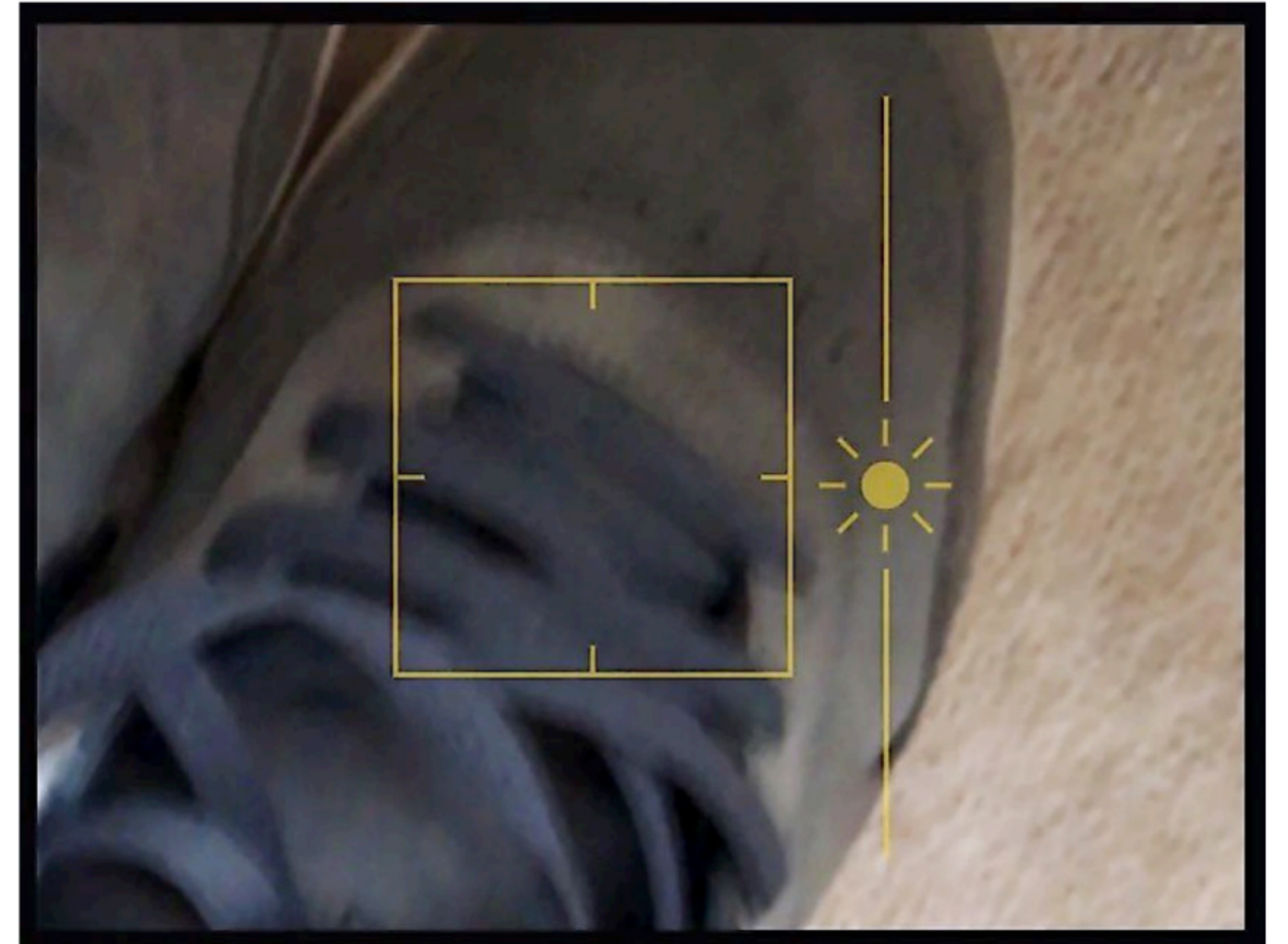
Heavy image noise in dark areas and loss of detail.
Worse: auto de-noising algorithms of phones.



Use the Touch Screen

On iPhones (might be different for other brands)

- Tap once to focus on a spot and set its exposure (a face or important object).
- Tap once and slide vertically to adjust general exposure (not only for that particular spot).
- Tap and hold to lock both, focus and exposure. No change during camera movement.



Modern phones feature face detection & tracking to keep people in focus even when they move.

Try 'Night Mode' if available and you have a tripod.



If your Android phone does not have a good Camera app, here is a cheap professional one: MANUAL DSLR PRO

Top 3 Camera Phones

Lens Choices
(kind of)

Where are the microphones?



Apple Inc.

iPhone 11 and later



Samsung Inc.

Samsung Galaxy S20 and later



Xiaomi Inc.

Xiaomi Redmi 11 and later

Special Mention: Hybrid

Some camera/lens manufacturers collaborate with phone brands (e.g. Zeiss with Sony) and add lens systems with different, **fixed parameters**:

Wide, Standard, Tele

Switching instead of Zooming and no control over Aperture (you need to use software adjustments instead).

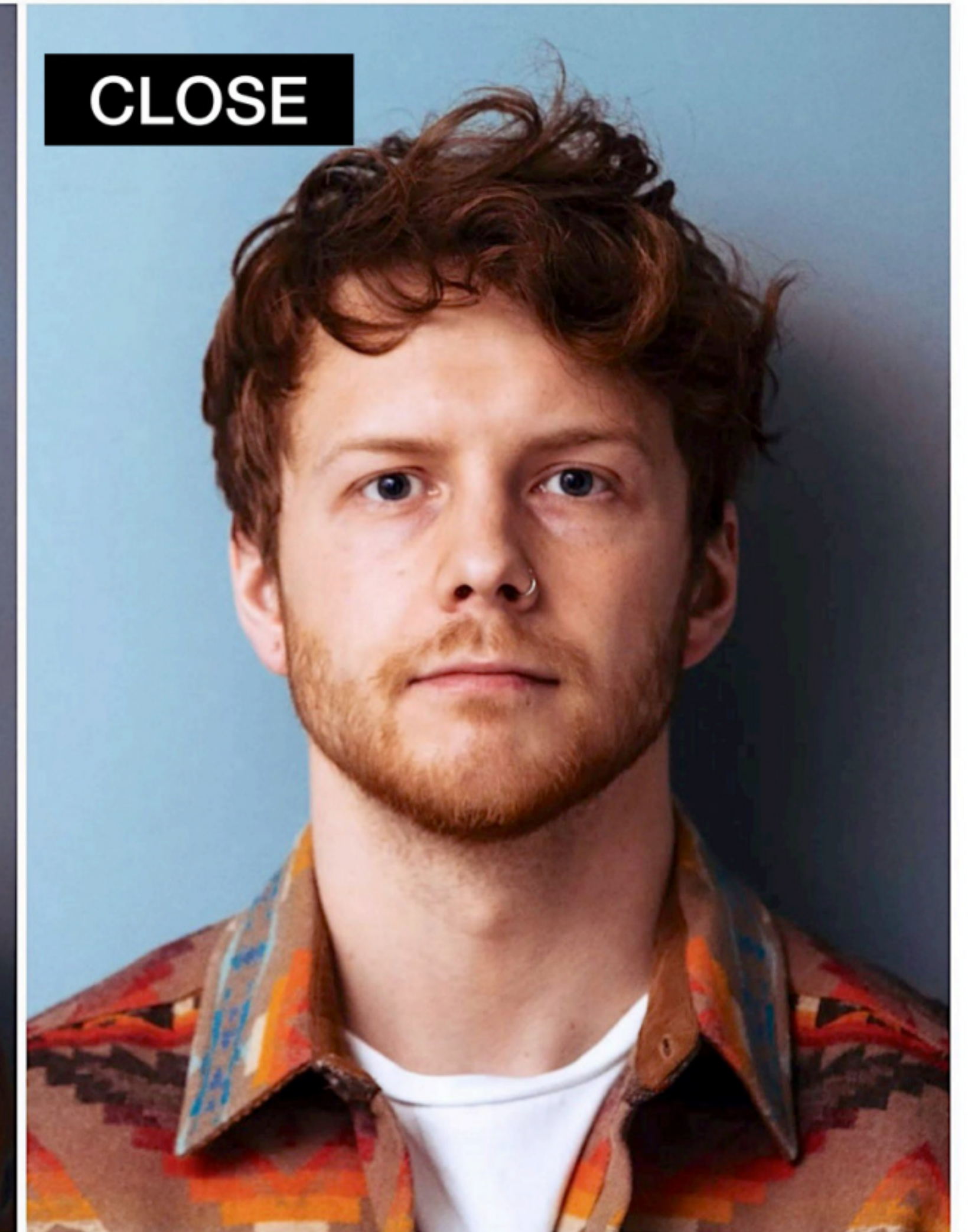
OnePlus 10 and later

OnePlus Inc.



Know your Optics

There is a reason for 'portrait' tele lenses.
Use 'wide' for crowds and spaces only.



You are too close, lens distorts.
Step back and use a 'tighter' lens if available.

Aperture controls Depth ('Bokeh')

And of course how much light comes in. Its value is **fixed for phones**.

You want a low f-stop value for the aperture (also better low-light).
Choose a smartphone with f/1.7 (less is better) for example.



Internal Audio is usually bad



Rode Inc.

Where are the microphones?

Think 'Movie Magic' for your videos.
It only counts what the audience sees in the end.

Amazon Studios (Promotional)



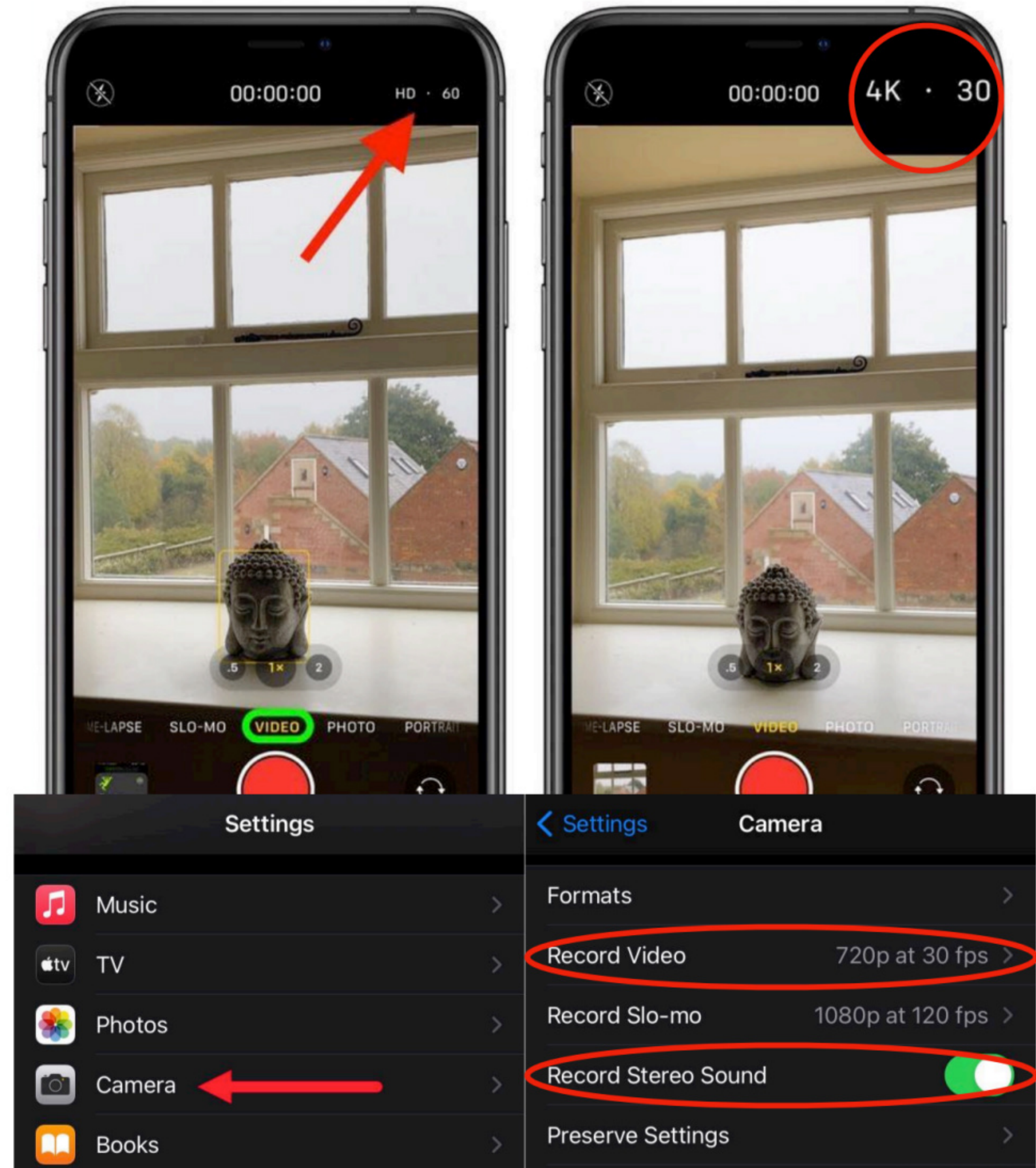
Best Accessories



Rules of Thumb

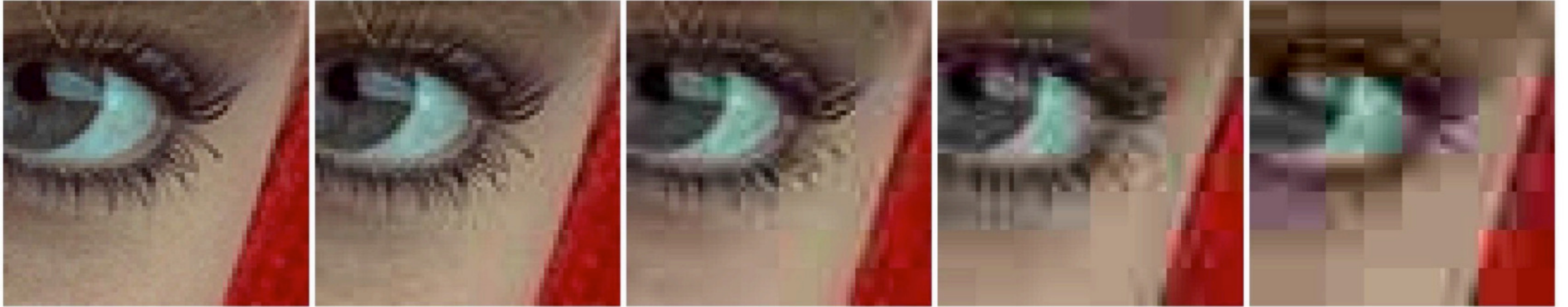
- Use the best capture format and resolution available. Also use **stereo**.
- Avoid digital Zoom (switch lenses or come closer to the subject).
- If dark, rest the phone on a flat surface or use a **tripod**.
- Switch off HDR and AUTO FPS (low-light).
- Use an **external Microphone** for interviews or other important speech.
- Use a small LED **head light** if you can.

On iPhones (might be different for other brands)



Videos on the Internet: Compression

Once you upload something to social media (especially on mobile data), insufficient camera sensors for video really show. Know your content.



Every time you export/upload as 'lossy' quality deteriorates.

MDPI/Kodak

- Avoid numerous steps of transcoding/re-compression (choose better formats).
- Use devices with good image processors and non-destructive editing software.
- Upload the best and biggest file possible (it degrades after having been processed).

You already capture 'lossy'

But you save a lot of disk space (and performance needed).

Camera

Record Video

720p HD at 30 fps

1080p HD at 30 fps

1080p HD at 60 fps

4K at 24 fps

4K at 30 fps

4K at 60 fps

QuickTake video will always record with 1080p HD at 30 fps.

A minute of video will be approximately:

- 40 MB with 720p HD at 30 fps (space saver)
- 60 MB with 1080p HD at 30 fps (default)
- 90 MB with 1080p HD at 60 fps (smoother)
- 135 MB with 4K at 24 fps (film style)
- 170 MB with 4K at 30 fps (higher resolution)
- 400 MB with 4K at 60 fps (higher resolution, smoother)

HDR Video

OFF

Record up to 30 fps video in 10-bit high dynamic range including Dolby Vision.

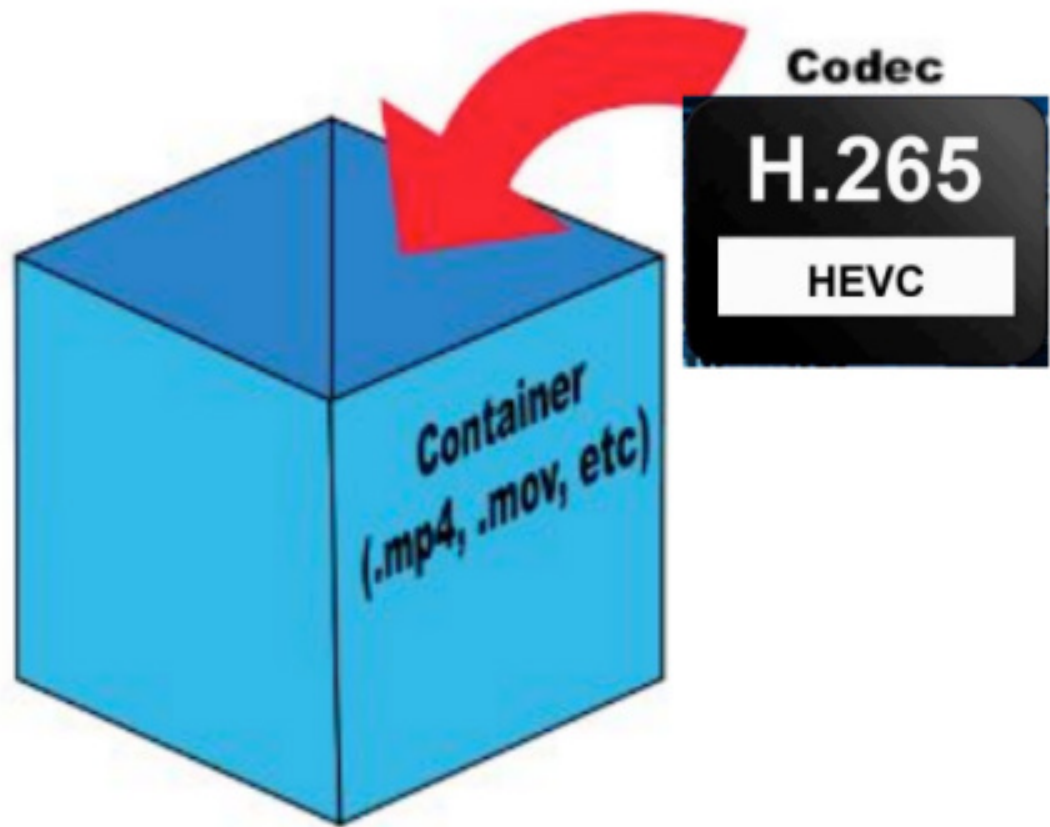
Auto FPS

OFF

Auto 30 fps

Automatically reduce the frame rate to improve low light video and to optimize file size.

On iPhones (might be different for other brands)



- Smaller File Size
- Better Quality
- Needs **strong** Hardware

Settings Camera

Formats

High Efficiency

Most Compatible

H.264

MPEG-4/AVC

H.265

HEVC

H.264 at 60 Mbps

H.265 at 100 Mbps

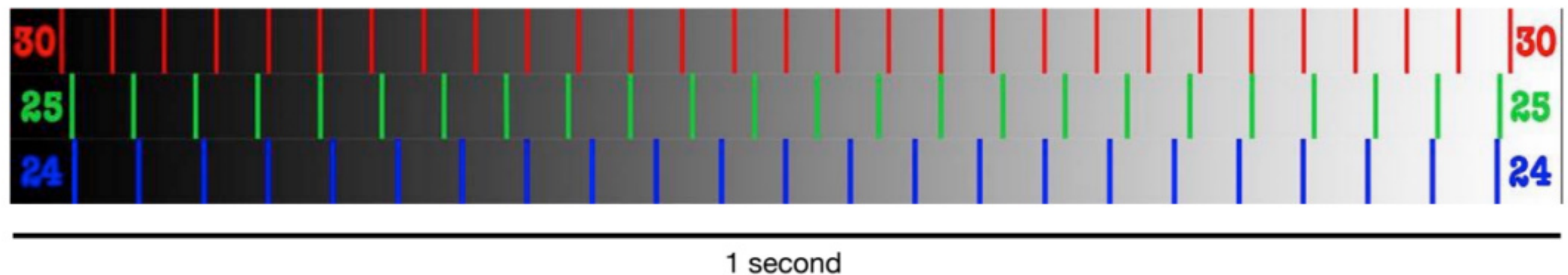
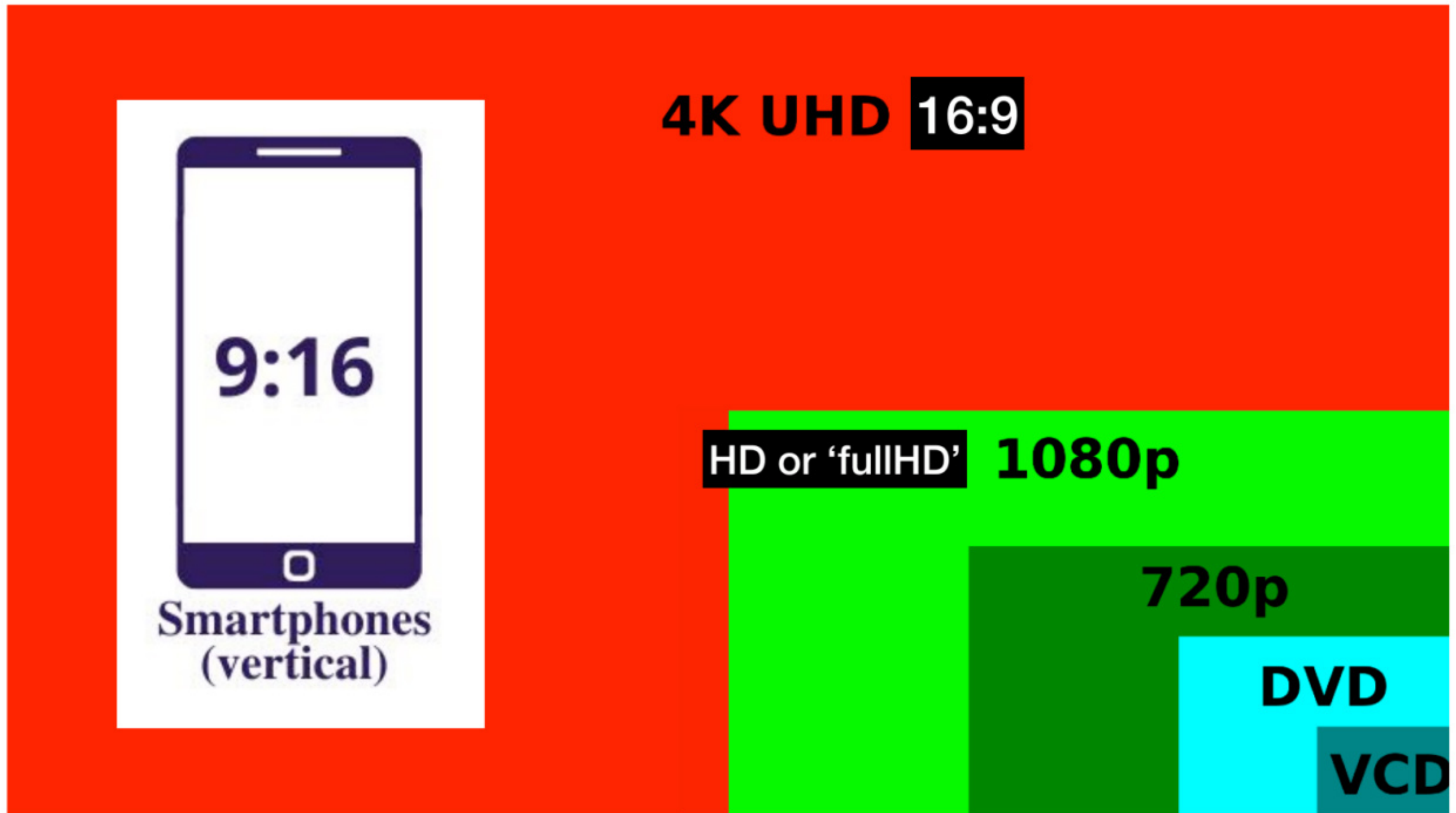
00:45 / 03:57

1080p

Frame Rates and Resolutions

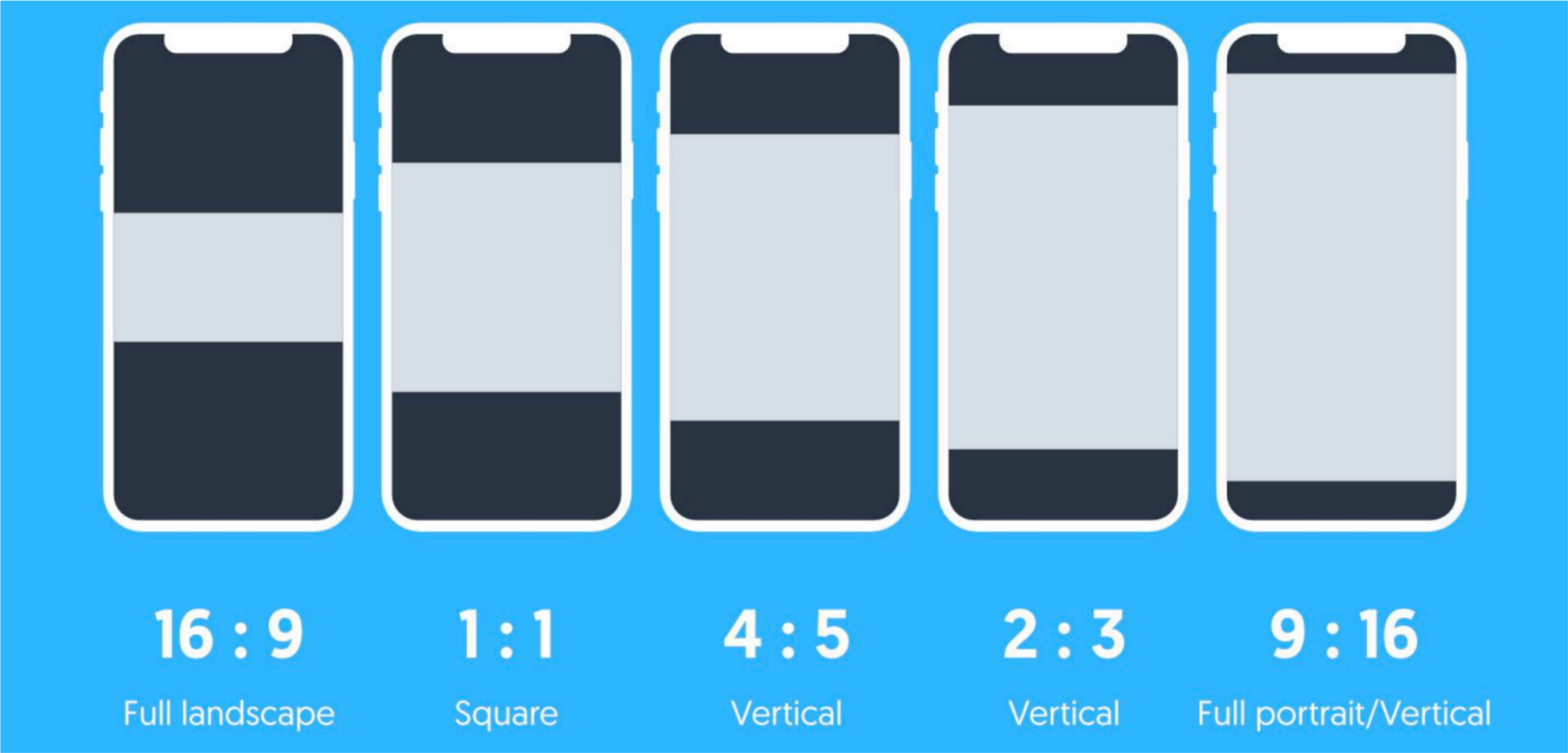
- 4K offers more details but needs more storage space and stronger hardware.
- HD is usually the required **standard**. Only some live streams are 720p.
- Stick to **30 FPS** for anything related to computer and WEB. It looks 'sharper' than 24/25.
- **Don't mix/change frame rates.**

4K can be cropped to HD in **post** to achieve 200% zoom.



Know your Social Media

Standard video mode is usually 16:9 (sensor dimensions).
Platforms (on any device) like to use their own **crop ratios** (also for video).



Values change from time to time. Stay informed.



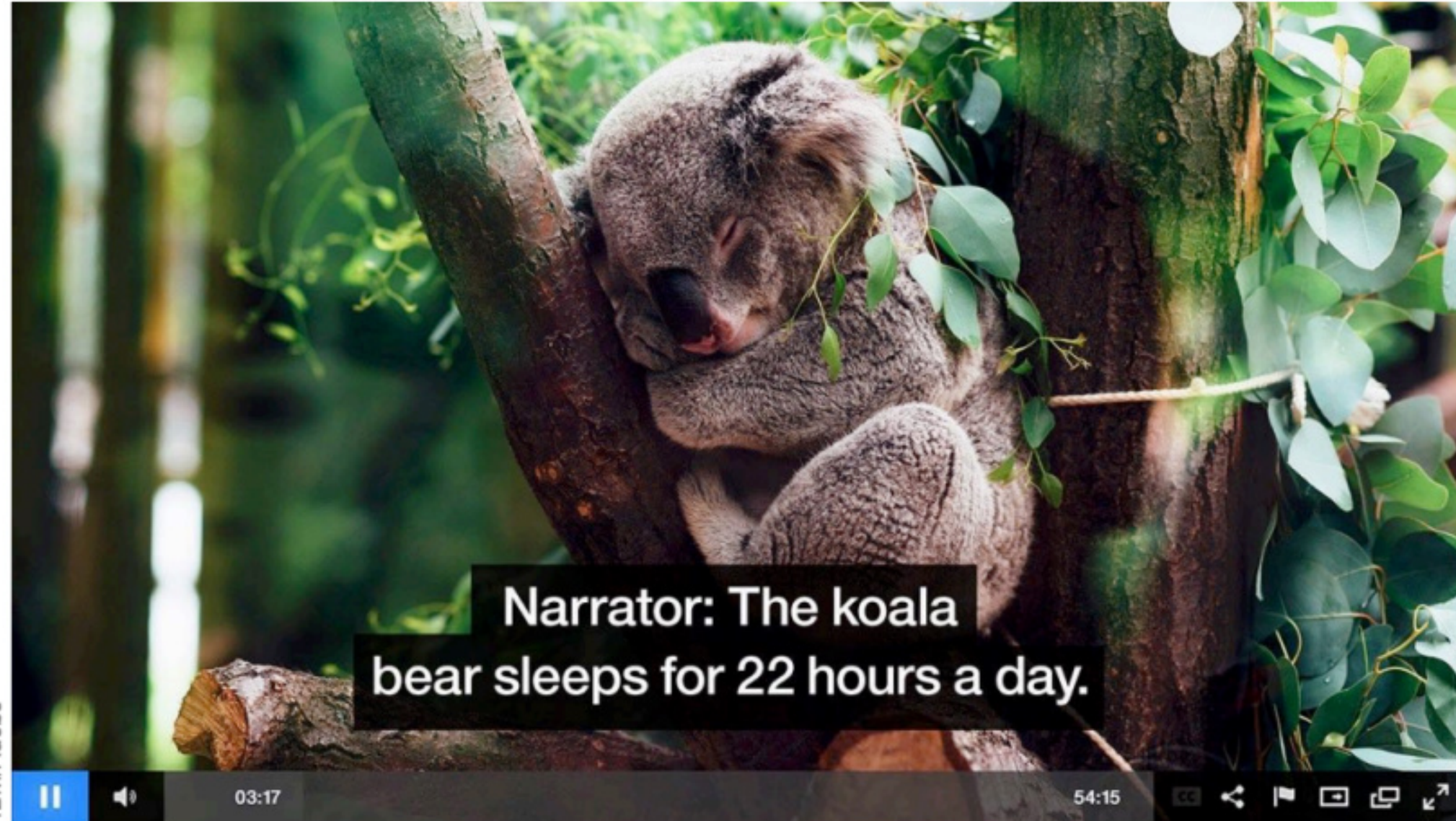
Editorial, Direction and Storytelling

You are the 'maker' and responsible. It's not all about collecting random shots.

Always pretend to be your own audience: Would you understand what's going on?

- What is the goal of a video? It must be something a photo and short text cannot provide: Prepare a Script.
- You are lucky when people are still watching after one minute. Keep videos short and clear, start with a strong and engaging intro or element: Create an **invitation**.
- Give clear information and create a flow: What is really necessary for the story? **What** is the story? **Who** is involved and why? **Where** does it take place?
- **People forget facts** but not emotions. How did something make them feel? Was there an immediate human **connection**?
- Work with and **encourage your protagonists**. Most don't like being in front of a camera, make them forget it and instead talk to YOU – show interest!
- Looking & talking right into the camera can be very powerful if you give the space.
- **Keep text inserts to a minimum** but name people and their profession.
- What about voice over instead of text?
- Be **careful with music** but do use it.
- WHO is your audience? What do YOU want THEM to know? Enter a relationship.
- Use **narration** from your protagonists, connect them to your 'message' or event.
- Look for images that 'matter' and are clear also on small screens.

Importance of Subtitles & Captions

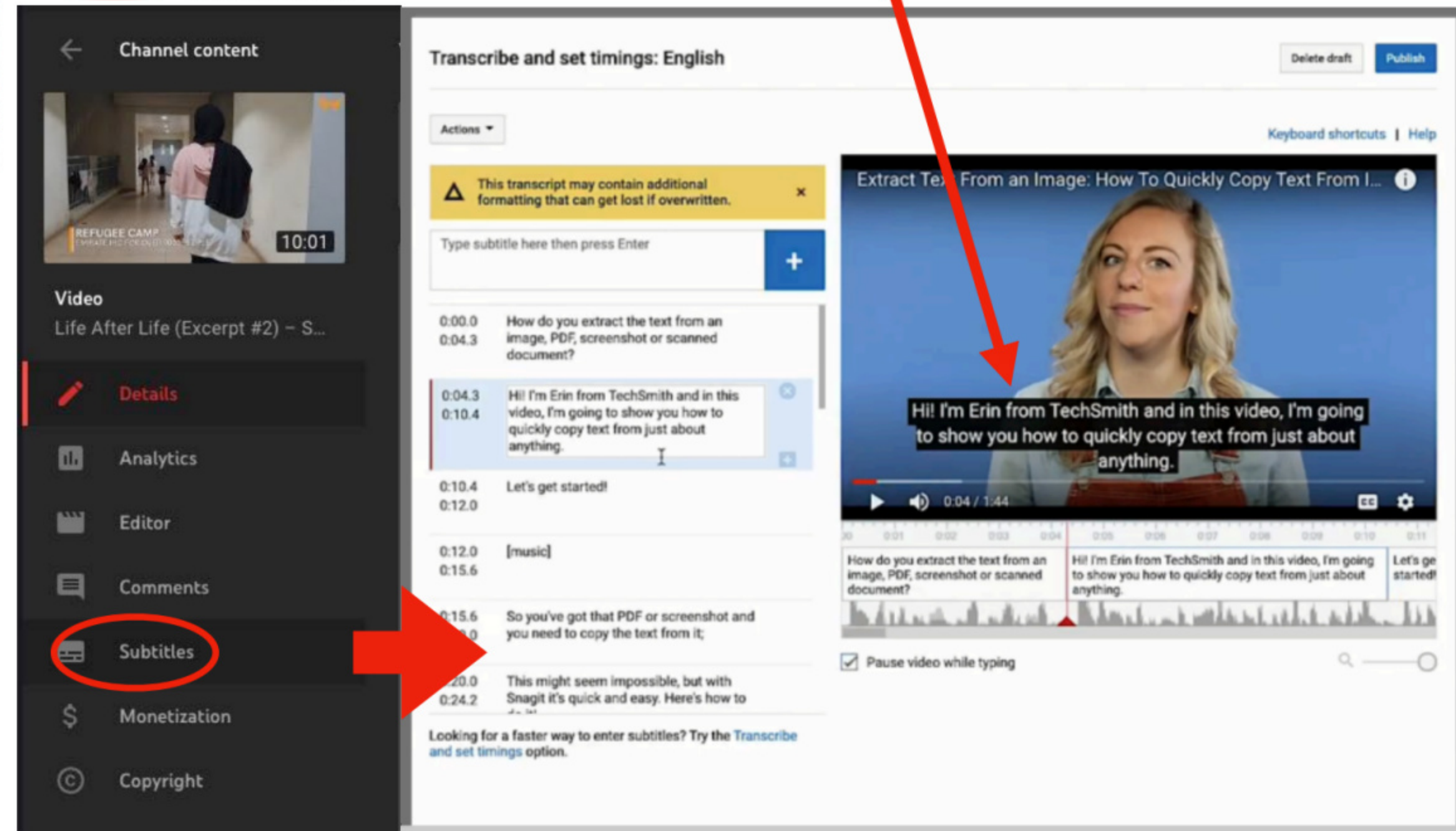


- Soft-coded means 'optional'.
- People might watch muted.
- People might not understand the dialect or language.
- People might be deaf or hearing-impaired.

- Use AI, edit/change, publish
- Download .SRT, upload to other platforms or apps.

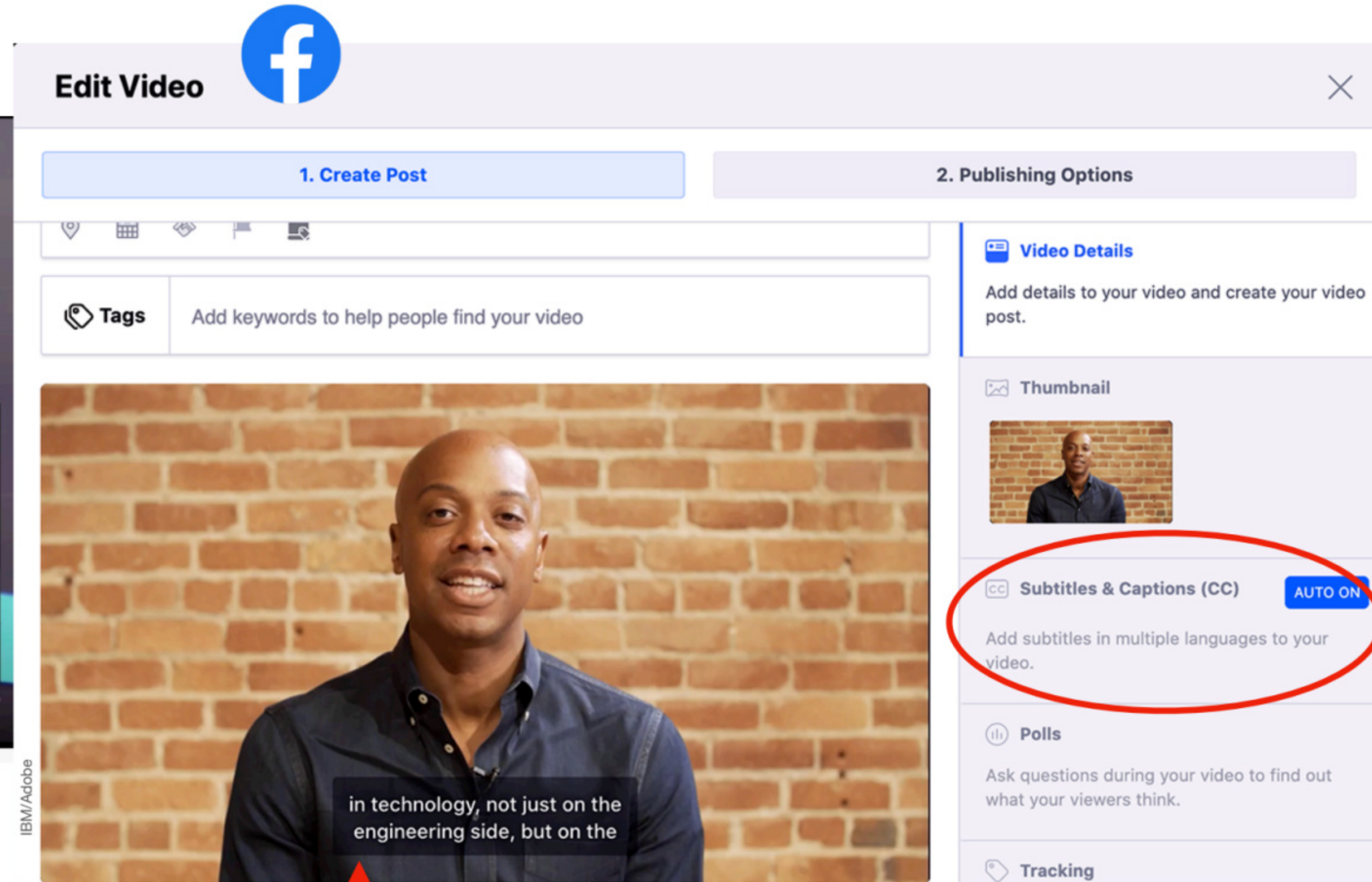
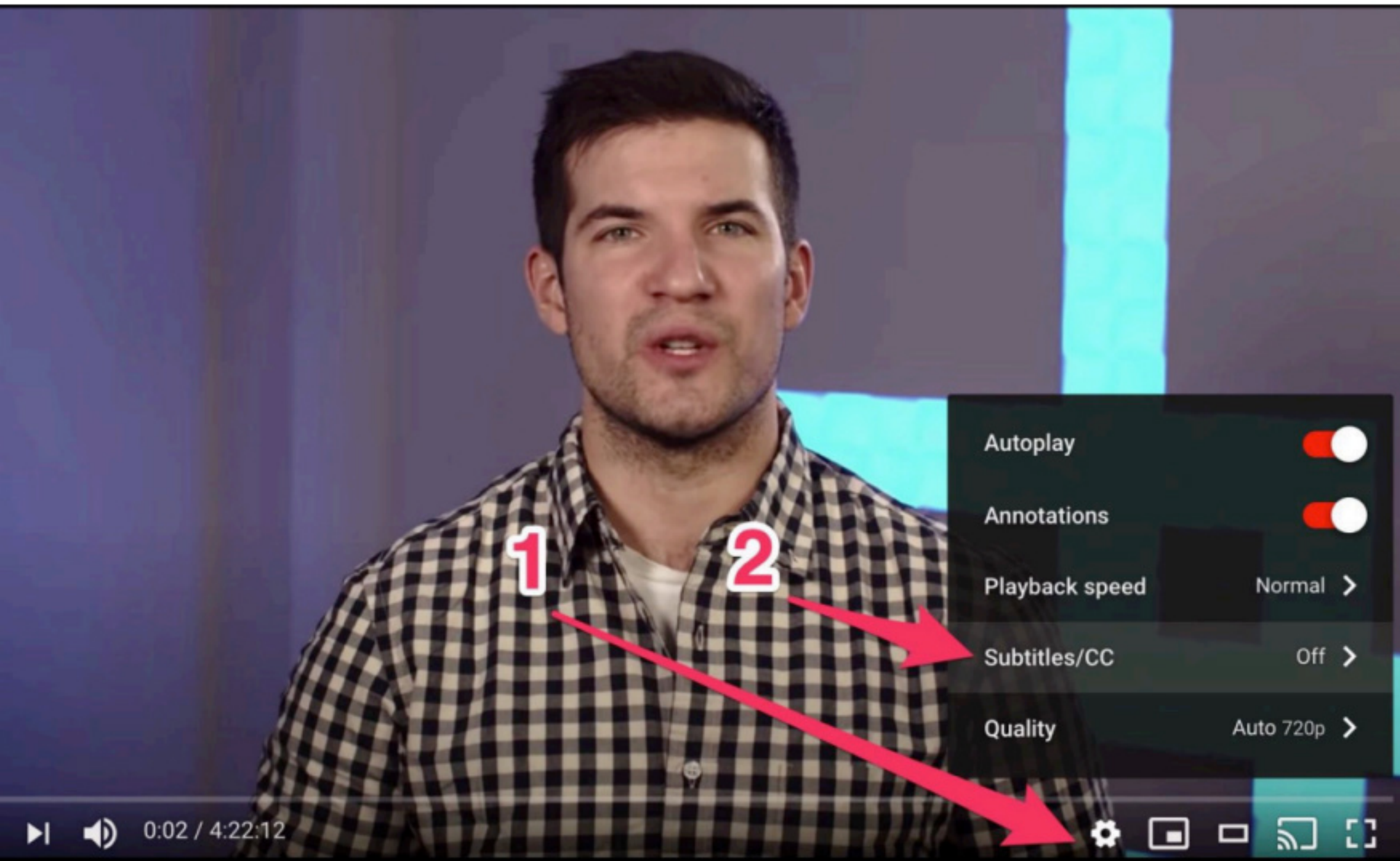


Too long, too much information, messy.



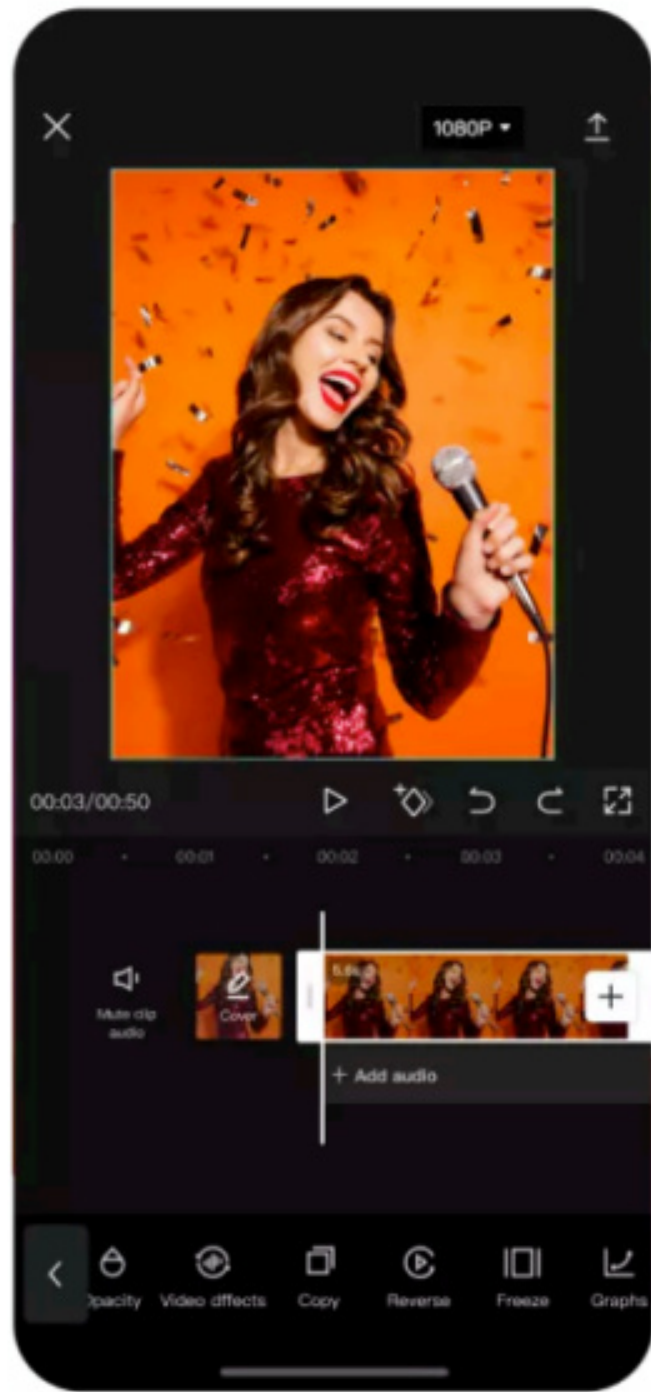
Subtitles are essential Information only

Captions are helpful and 'nice' (although mandatory by law in some regions).
Make sure they neither block any text inserts or are too long. **Keep it brief & clear.**



Ideal length and size (2 lines maximum, 42 characters per line)

Appendix: Video Editing App (free)



CapCut - Video Editor

Video maker with music

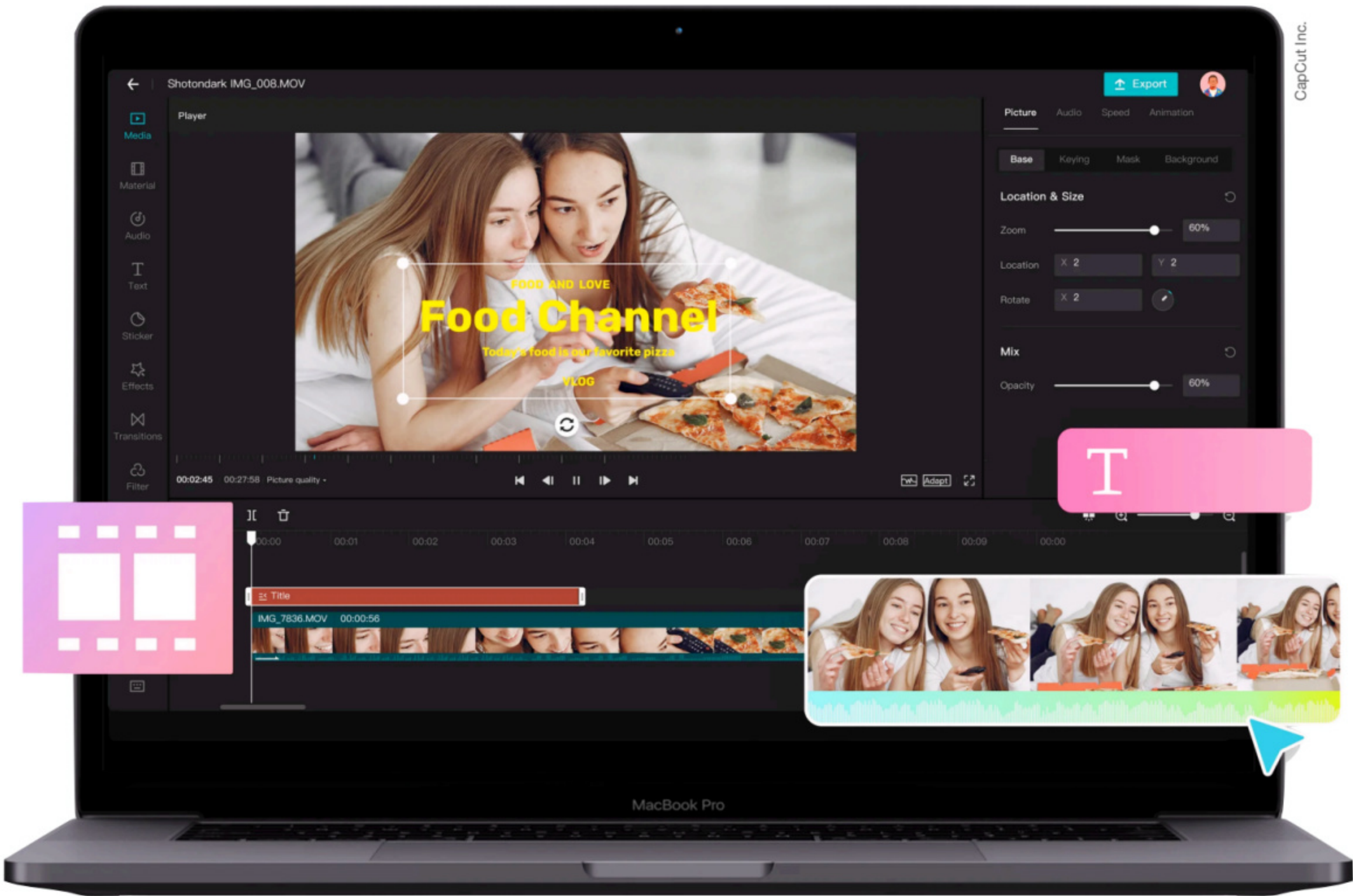
Bytedance Pte. Ltd

#4 in Photo & Video

★★★★★ 4.5 • 146 Ratings

Free · Offers In-App Purchases

[View in Mac App Store](#)



CapCut Inc.

Available everywhere, even in the browser.

CapCut helps with Subtitles & Captions

AI requires internet connection.



Type voice-overs (AI)

Text-to-speech

CapCut's text-to-speech feature supports different languages and a variety of voice effects.



Transcribe speech (AI)

Create auto captions

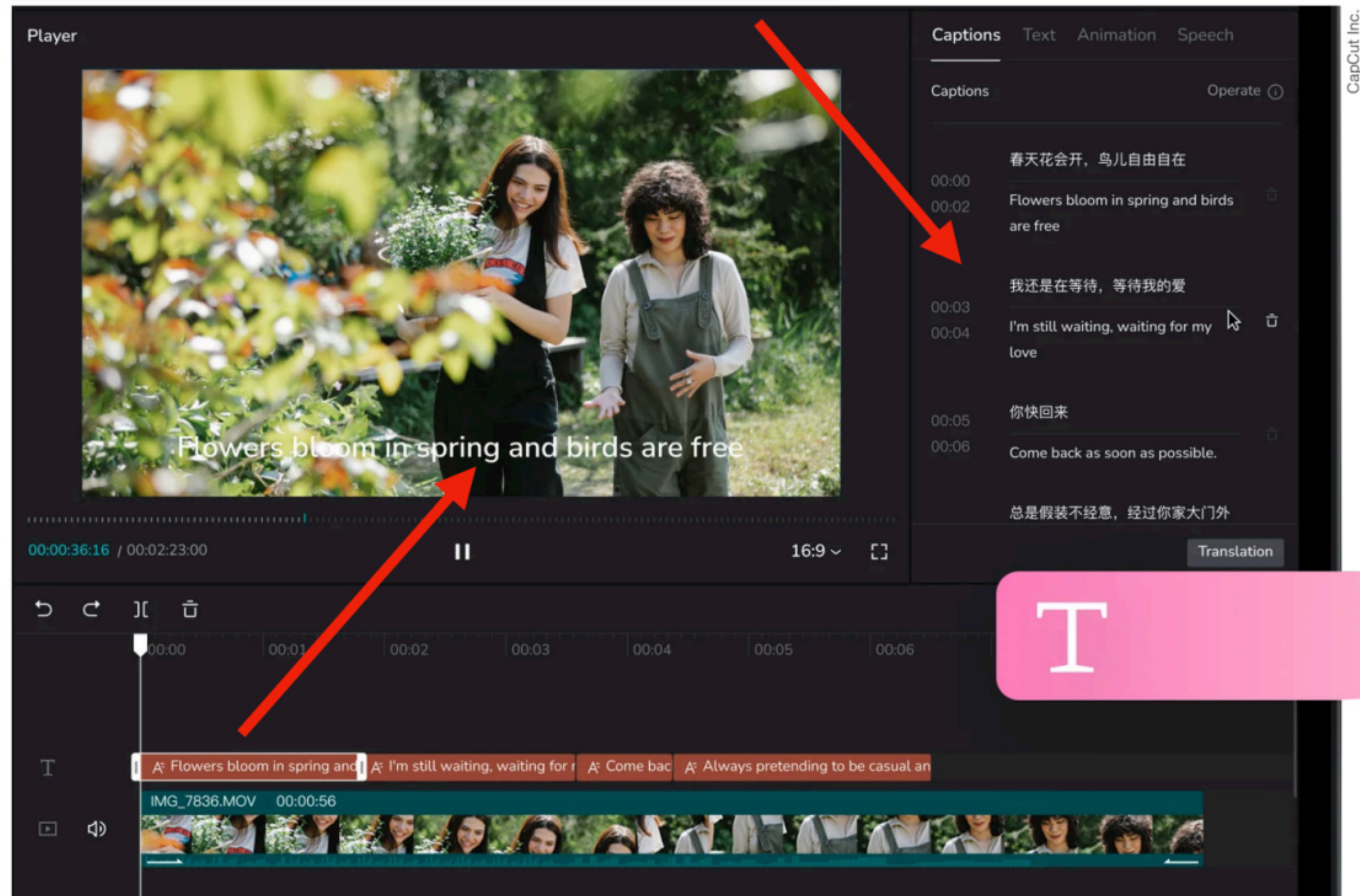
CapCut can create auto captions in 93 languages with just one click.

You can export **hard-coded** subtitles this way.
Alternative and in-browser only:



KAPWING <https://www.kapwing.com/subtitles>

Import SRT or translate/transcribe directly



Appendix: Copyright & Personal Rights

The very least you should know about **publishing media online**.

Beware that these rules usually vary a lot depending on your region.

- When you **take** a *relevant* video, you automatically hold **copyright** to it.

Unless you do not have (written) permission/confirmation to take the image of, either all the clearly visible people, or the place/space where you are or which you are showing.

Vice versa are you not allowed to 'just use' someone else's creative work for public/commercial purposes unless you have written permission. Often and easily happens with audiovisual content.

- When a video of YOU is taken, you also hold **personal rights** to it.
- Let everybody know you are recording and what will happen to the material. Where will it be shown? *The internet is forever*.

e.g. In the European Union there are very clear and strict guidelines (called **GDPR**) on personal rights which make a public release of media with people (and minors!) in it difficult. Notify everybody in advance and make sure it's clear to also the audience for example, not only presenters.

One last thing...

Video Stills are inferior to Photos

They lack resolution, especially under 4K. Don't use them for printing.

**Come up with an engaging Thumbnail.
It is why people click on Videos.**



Philip Bloom



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BOOK US



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