NIGEL CAMP · FREE RESOURCES

2026 EDITION

№ 01

A PRACTICAL REFERENCE

Social Media Video *Formats.*

Aspect ratios, durations and resolutions for every major platform. Kept current, kept honest.

A guide by **Nigel Camp**

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START HERE

The four *aspect ratios* you actually need.

Modern social platforms are mobile-first and vertical-first, but a working video producer still needs to understand the full set. Here's the working vocabulary: what each ratio is, what it's for, and the pixel dimensions you should be exporting at.

9:16

vertical

1080 × 1920 px

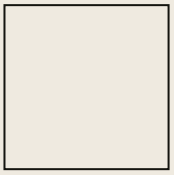
REELS · SHORTS
STORIES · TIKTOK

4:5

portrait

1080 × 1350 px

INSTAGRAM FEED
FACEBOOK FEED



1:1

square

1080 × 1080 px

LINKEDIN · X
CROSS-PLATFORM

16:9

widescreen

1920 × 1080 px

YOUTUBE · LINKEDIN
WEBINARS

> THE PRODUCTION RULE
>
> Shoot wide, frame for vertical. If you compose your master at 9:16 with a 4:5 safe area in the centre, one shoot delivers cleanly to every platform in this guide. It's the single most useful habit you can adopt.

Instagram.

Mobile-first, vertical-dominant. Reels carry the algorithm.

PRIMARY

Reels

9:16 vertical

RESOLUTION	1080 × 1920
LENGTH	90 sec
SWEET SPOT	15–30 sec

FEED

Feed Video

4:5 portrait

RESOLUTION	1080 × 1350
LENGTH	60 min
ALSO FITS	1:1, 1.91:1

STORIES

Stories

9:16 vertical

RESOLUTION	1080 × 1920
PER SLIDE	60 sec
SAFE ZONE	±250 px

FIELD NOTE

The profile grid now crops to 3:4. Frame your action in the centre 4:5 area and your Reel will preview cleanly on the grid as well as full-screen, with no reshoot or awkward cropping.

TikTok.

Strict vertical only. Retention beats length, every time.

ALL CONTENT

Vertical Video

9:16 vertical

RESOLUTION	1080 × 1920
MAX UPLOAD	60 min
IN-APP RECORD	10 min
SWEET SPOT	15–30 sec
FORMAT	MP4 / MOV
FRAME RATE	30 / 60 fps

ALSO SUPPORTED

Square *1:1*

1080 × 1080 px

Allowed but de-prioritised by the algorithm. Most users see black bars top and bottom on mobile devices.

ALSO SUPPORTED

Landscape *16:9*

1920 × 1080 px

Plays sideways on most mobile devices. Avoid unless cross-posting from elsewhere, as engagement drops sharply.

FIELD NOTE

TikTok's algorithm rewards completion rate above all else. A 12-second video watched twice through outperforms a 60-second video abandoned at 20 seconds. Plan your hook for the first second, not the first three.

YouTube.

Two engines: long-form 16:9 and Shorts 9:16. Different rules for each.

LONG-FORM

Standard Video

16:9 widescreen

RESOLUTION	1920 × 1080
MAX QUALITY	3840 × 2160 (4K)
MAX LENGTH	12 hours
SWEET SPOT	8–12 min
FORMAT	MP4 / MOV

SHORT-FORM

Shorts

9:16 vertical

RESOLUTION	1080 × 1920
MAX LENGTH	3 min
SWEET SPOT	15–45 sec
TOP SAFE ZONE	180 px
BOTTOM SAFE	390 px

> **FIELD NOTE**
>
> Anything wider than square uploads as a regular video, not a Short, even if it's only 30 seconds long. If you want Shorts placement, the file must be at least as tall as it is wide. Export at exactly 1080 × 1920.

Facebook.

The widest format range, but Reels are pulling rank in 2026.

PRIMARY

Reels

9:16 vertical

RESOLUTION	1080 × 1920
MAX LENGTH	90 sec
TOP SAFE	14% / 250 px
BOTTOM SAFE	35% / 670 px

FEED

Feed Video

4:5 or 1:1

RESOLUTION	1080 × 1350
MAX LENGTH	240 min
SWEET SPOT	30 sec – 2 min

STORIES

Stories

9:16 vertical

RESOLUTION	1080 × 1920
PER SLIDE	60 sec
TOTAL CAP	2 min

FIELD NOTE

Facebook's older guidance still says square video wins for sound-off viewing, but that wisdom is out of date. Reels-first algorithms now favour 9:16 across mobile feeds. Cross-post your Reel to Facebook directly; don't reformat to square.

LinkedIn.

Professional context. Landscape still wins on desktop.

PRIMARY

Landscape

16:9 widescreen

RESOLUTION	1920 × 1080
MAX LENGTH	10 min
SWEET SPOT	30 sec – 2 min

SQUARE

Square Video

1:1 square

RESOLUTION	1080 × 1080
MAX LENGTH	10 min
BEST FOR	Mobile feed

VERTICAL

Vertical Video

9:16 vertical

RESOLUTION	1080 × 1920
MAX LENGTH	10 min
BEST FOR	Mobile-only

FIELD NOTE

LinkedIn skews heavily toward desktop viewing during business hours. If your audience is B2B decision-makers, default to 16:9 landscape. It reads as "professional video" rather than "repurposed Reel". Save vertical for behind-the-scenes and event content.

X.

Formerly Twitter. Landscape native. Don't expect viral video reach.

PRIMARY

Landscape

16:9 widescreen

RESOLUTION	1920 × 1080
MAX LENGTH	2 min 20 sec
PREMIUM USERS	3 hours

SQUARE

Square

1:1 square

RESOLUTION	1080 × 1080
MAX LENGTH	2 min 20 sec
BEST FOR	Cross-post

VERTICAL

Vertical

9:16 vertical

RESOLUTION	1080 × 1920
MAX LENGTH	2 min 20 sec
NOTE	Letterboxed

FIELD NOTE

X's video player still defaults to landscape on desktop, and vertical content gets letterboxed in feed previews. Native 16:9 or 1:1 displays cleanly across both web and mobile clients. Vertical only makes sense for cross-posted Reels.

Threads.

Meta's text-first network, but video is rising fast.

PRIMARY

Square

1:1 or 4:5

RESOLUTION	1080 × 1080
MAX LENGTH	5 min
BEST FOR	Organic feed

VERTICAL

Vertical

9:16 vertical

RESOLUTION	1080 × 1920
MAX LENGTH	5 min
BEST FOR	Reels reposts

LANDSCAPE

Landscape

16:9 widescreen

RESOLUTION	1920 × 1080
MAX LENGTH	5 min
NOTE	Auto-cropped

FIELD NOTE

Threads is still finding its visual identity. Square and 4:5 currently outperform vertical for organic reach. The platform reads more like Twitter than Instagram, despite the Meta plumbing. Test both formats with your audience before committing.

CHEAT SHEET

The whole guide, on *one page.*

By *aspect ratio.*

9:16 Vertical	**1080 × 1920**
4:5 Portrait	**1080 × 1350**
1:1 Square	**1080 × 1080**
16:9 Landscape	**1920 × 1080**
1.91:1 Wide	**1200 × 628**

Primary format by platform.

Instagram	**9:16 / 4:5**
TikTok	**9:16**
YouTube	**16:9 / 9:16**
Facebook	**9:16 / 4:5**
LinkedIn	**16:9**
X	**16:9**
Threads	**1:1 / 4:5**

Ideal video lengths.

Reels / Shorts	**15–30 sec**
TikTok	**15–30 sec**
Stories	**7–15 sec**
Feed (IG/FB)	**30 sec – 2 min**
LinkedIn	**30 sec – 2 min**
YouTube long	**8–12 min**
X video	**≤ 2 min 20 sec**

Universal export settings.

Codec	**H.264**
Audio	**AAC, 128 kbps+**
Frame rate	**30 / 60 fps**
Bitrate	**15–20 Mbps**
Container	**MP4 / MOV**
Colour	**Rec. 709**

Need a hand getting it right?

From talking-head interviews and brand stories to multi-platform campaigns, I produce video that meets the spec, hits the brief, and looks the part on every screen it lands on.

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