

# Teleprompter Mastery

**TELEPROMPTER TIPS**

**Authors:**

**Krista Kelly**

**James Baker**

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**LESSON 1:**

# How can I master a Teleprompter?

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A teleprompter can either save you a ton of time or be a huge headache to setup properly. Hi, I'm Krista, and I've been manufacturing teleprompters for several years, using them to create killer content on a daily basis. Most of what I learned I had to learn the hard way—before now, there wasn't a good source of training other than obvious (and pointless) advice such as “memorize your lines,” “practice a lot,” and “maintain eye contact.”

I created this guide to help my clients use our products: teleprompter mirrors and the presidential teleprompter. For the rest of you, I'm glad you found this guide. I want to share my teleprompter secrets with you as well, in the hopes you may someday order my products or join my steadily-growing fan base of YouTube subscribers.

Ready? I'm going to cut through the BS and teach you the very best tips and tricks I've learned. I've broken down the course into the best questions I've gotten from clients over the years. Study this guide from start to finish, and tune into our website [TeleprompterMirror.com](https://TeleprompterMirror.com) and our [YouTube channel](#) for additional lessons.



*Presidential Teleprompters in my studio with chroma key green screen*

**Question #1: How do I use a Teleprompter?**

Teleprompters have two different uses: giving speeches and recording videos. When recording videos, the camera will go behind glass, as seen here, and there will be a black shroud blacking off the mirror side to prevent reflections into the camera lens.

A teleprompter allows you to write a detailed script ahead of time and then execute it on location. Planning ahead will give you time to thoroughly think through all the very best ideas and props you have put into your video.

In addition, because you'll be nailing your lines, there will be a lot less useless footage to waste your time later when you go to edit it.

When delivering speeches, lectures, or advertisements, the talent will often expect their script to already be written for them, for example in an advertisement with celebrity you don't want to waste precious time, which you're paying a pretty penny for. It insures that the masterminds funding the advertisement or event will get their money's worth: in other words, their information will be quickly and accurately presented.

Other speech applications include news broadcasts and politics, where a teleprompter gives them something to fall back on (like a security blanket) if they're forgetting their lines or information.

A teleprompter can be extremely helpful when going live, and you don't want to make mistakes or forget crucial information.



*News reporter happily reading lines off a bulky teleprompter.*

**Question #2: What's the black cloth on the back of the mirror for?**

A beamsplitter mirror reflects just like a regular mirror, so when it's mounted in front of a camera, you'll need to black off the reflections of the ceiling. Naturally, if you're using it on stage to deliver a speech, you won't need to be concerned with blacking off the back.

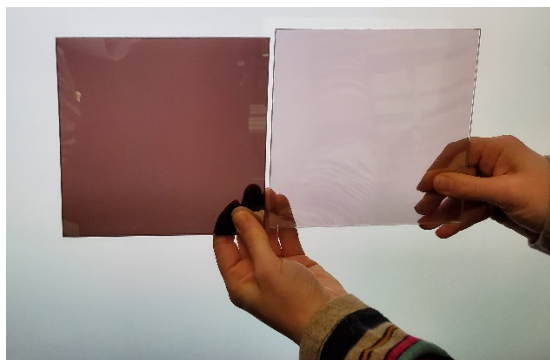
**Insider tip:** Are you building a teleprompter? To save money, you can cut a black sheet or pillow case to fit your mirror and use binder clips around the edge to hold it in place. The cloth can simply drape over the camera to block off the light.



*Black cloth with binder clips*

**Question #3: Why not just use a two way mirror instead of beamsplitter glass?**

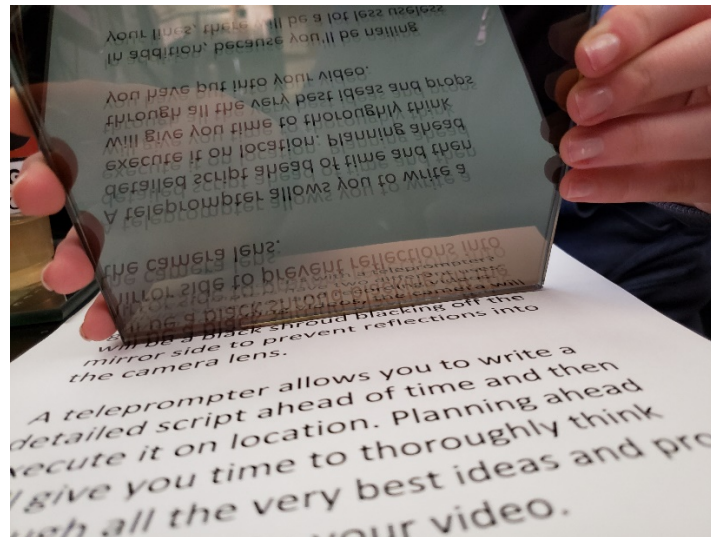
Some people purchase a standard two way mirror and instantly regret it when they realize just how dark it is. Our bread and butter is replacing those mirrors with something that actually works. Optical beamsplitter glass is 7x more transparent, and color neutral (tint free).



*Two way mirror (left) vs teleprompter mirror (right)*

**Question #4: What is the purpose of the antireflective coating on the backside?**

Standard glass creates an unsightly double image (called “ghosting”) which makes it hard to read text. The antireflective backside prevents the double image, making the reflected text crisp and readable.



*Ghosting makes it hard to read off regular glass.*

**Question #5: What color backdrop should I use?**

The most popular backdrops are white, which is all the rage right now, grey, black, and chroma key (usually green). White is ideal for an informational video especially if you're embedding them into a website with white background.



*Blue makes an excellent alternative to green for chroma key*

**Question #6: Should I use humor or read normally?**

Humor is known as a pattern interrupt. The attention span of a typical person is only a few seconds, which is why you'll want to throw in a lot of humor to keep people interested. It's also known as entertainment, which is why a ton of people watch videos in general instead of getting their content from articles. Through humor, I have increased retention time from about 1 minute, which is typical, to 18 minutes and beyond, depending on the length of the video.

**Question #7: What are some other things you can use in your speeches or videos?**

Some of my favorite moves to make great "b roll footage" are: dancing, stories, workout movements, martial arts, and musical instruments. I spend many hours brainstorming and planning with my cameraman, who takes our ideas and turns them into my scripts.

**Question #8: How can I flip my display to a mirror image?**

Use a flipped teleprompter TV, [HDMI MirrorBox](#), Chrome Plugins (Flip This, Dark Reader to make websites show white text on black background, UltraMon software, or CSS code to flip a website. [Teleprompter software](#) is also an option.

**Question #9: What are the best ways to control a teleprompter?**

There are a ton of different input devices on the market--just look on amazon. A couple of my favorites are the Logitech Presenter Remote and a foot pedal.

**Question #10: Can I use a teleprompter for music, guitar tabs, or lyrics?**

We've had a lot of famous musicians order teleprompters so that they don't forget their lyrics or music. We've also had a lot of up-and-coming musicians with home studios use them so they can maintain eye contact with their fans in their videos. It gives them that one extra camera angle--eye contact--which is so much more powerful than sliders, gimbals, or drones.



**Question #11: What would you recommend if I want to use it outside?**

It depends on what you're using it for. If you're recording through it, use our indoor glass and black off the backside with a shroud. If you're delivering a speech with no shroud you'll definitely want a product called outdoor teleprompter glass, which is twice as reflective as a standard beamsplitter mirror.



*Outdoor teleprompter glass is darker to provide more reflection.*



*Standard teleprompter glass (left) vs outdoor glass (right).*

**Question #12: What does your studio space look like? Advantages of your setup?**

I have two opposing backdrops--a black backdrop for vibrant colors to stand out, and green screen, which allows me to edit in any background. Gaffer tape allows me to hang the paper without damaging the walls. I recently added a black backdrop to my ceiling so I don't need a shroud on the backside of the glass.



*A black backdrop provides high contrast for colors and masks black light stands and displays.*



**Question #13: What gear do you use?**

Two 32" Samsung TVs, tv stands, presidential teleprompters with custom sized 18" glass with rounded corners. I have them plugged into my laptop using a HDMI splitter.

**Question #14: How do you write fast scripts?**

I don't use teleprompter software because it always seems to goof up my tempo and ends up costing me a lot of time. I simply use Microsoft Word, because I can easily add all the formatting such as different colors and bullet points. Sometimes I will copy and paste my Word file into a HTML editor, if I want to flip it using my web browser. The rest of the time, I simply display it on my pre-flipped 32" screens.

Between scenes, I audibly speak the subject matter or scene number so I can go back later and quickly organize and label my video files before editing.

**Question #15: What are the biggest mistakes people make when purchasing a teleprompter?**

1. **Buying one that's not portable.** You can have a large, pro level setup such as this one and it will still be extremely portable and fast to setup.
2. **Buying one that's too portable.** Usually they are itty bitty and impossible to read from. It's tempting to purchase a cheap gadget, and many of them are really cute! But I just want something that works. I don't want to be squinting to see a tiny little cell phone when I record my lines.
3. **Buying a teleprompter that tips over.** A lot of the bigger ones have this problem. Which is why I have a separate laptop stand for my 32" display (purchased inexpensively on Amazon), and a separate tripod for my heavy Canon EOS-1DX.
4. **Buying one that only works with iPad.** The biggest problem with iPad is the ability to easily import your scripts into it. I don't like to mess with that--too much work when I just want to get setup with my recording quickly.
5. **Buying a teleprompter with cheap glass.** Not all beamsplitter glass is created equal. Some will tint your recording or reflect your text with a double image.
6. **Not having a dedicated studio space.** Recording with a bad background will make your videos look cheap. Setup of a space usually takes a lot longer than simply setting up a teleprompter.
7. **Using a device that's too small.** Big glass means you can use a big display, allowing a big font you can read effortlessly across the room. When your camera sits further away you can

capture more of your body on camera, and your eyes can read the text without noticeably moving.

8. **Reading off your teleprompter word-for-word.** It is pretty obvious, and you just want to sound natural. Use your teleprompter more as you would cue cards, I often just have bullet points to remind me of everything I want to talk about.
9. **Not recording in 4k.** YouTube seems to reward 4k videos with better rankings, and it looks a lot better on bigger displays such as monitors and TVs. You run the risk of your videos looking like crap when your competitors post similar videos to yours in a higher resolution.
10. **Not recording in 60fps.** If you're not using slow motion, no big deal. Personally, I love using slow motion in my videos.
11. **Bad sound quality.** Background sound can kill a video. I setup my studio in a quiet space to avoid the noise pollution I have at work. I also mute my devices to ensure I'm not interrupted halfway through a scene by beeps and bleeps.
12. **Eyes darting back and forth.** Stand far enough away that you can read without being "detected"
13. **Wasting time.** Don't waste time rehearsing your lines. Unless you're giving a political speech or news broadcast, your teleprompter should be there to remind you of what to say. You don't need to rehearse too much.
14. **Bad voice.** Use your voice as you would an instrument. Using a monotone is like hitting the same note on a piano over and over. Speak with emotion, using highs and lows, and...pauses.
15. **Being boring.** Use action words, different camera angles, make eye contact. Use big body language and active facial expressions. Do whatever it takes to be both informative and entertaining to your audience.
16. **Changing your look too much.** An advantage to keeping your overall look similar to the past is that you can keep reusing your past footage, mixing it with your new footage. You're establishing a brand identity.
17. **Bad sets.** Use props to keep your audience entertained. I spend a lot of time surfing Amazon for awesome outfits and sweet ass things no one has seen before. Some of my favorites are LED clothes, crazy wigs, and a trampoline.
18. **Bad grooming and style.** It took a lot of experimentation to find my best look, and it's still evolving. Working on your personal style with hair and clothing will ensure you look your best.
19. **Low batteries.** Not having all devices charged or insufficient memory available on your recording device can stop you dead in your tracks. A lot of frustration has been caused in the past when I wasn't ready with my recording devices and they stopped working halfway through a shot. I make sure my gimbal, drones, phones, and DSLR are all ready to go the night before a big shoot. My cameraman double checks all the devices just to be sure, an hour or more before we shoot.

20. **Bad device settings.** Make sure your devices are set properly. I double check that everything is set to 4k resolution and my light balance settings are set correctly for a black background to avoid editing nightmares.
21. **Bad lighting.** When filming outside, a bright day can ruin your videos. My best shots are during twilight, where the lighting is indirect and vibrant colors and lights stand out. When filming inside, having an equal light balance from both sides so that half my face isn't shrouded in shadow, and there won't be distracting shadows being cast by every device in the video. Some shadows can be a good thing, but an overpowering light source such as daylight from a window can throw your whole shot off.
22. **Listening to paid reviews about teleprompter products.** I see so many videos on YouTube which have been obviously sponsored by manufacturers. So many of the videos I've seen about teleprompter products are completely contrary to my actual real-life experience using a teleprompter. I wonder if any of them actually use a teleprompter in their everyday recordings, or if they just used one in that one single video to review it.
23. **Bad editing skills.** Put the purpose of your video first, then your introduction, then the meat of your video--the content. Don't let scenes drag on and on with no purpose. Keep it tight, entertaining, light, and informative. Don't use cheesy transitions and effects unless you're trying to be cheesy and funny.
24. **Loud background music.** When you're talking in a video, keep the music minimal to maximize the voice clarity. You can bring the volume back up between spoken scenes.
25. **Hiring talent.** A video can be a lot more engaging by adding additional talent. Find talent who supports your vision and supplements your style.

### **Question #16: Why is Teleprompting so hard?**

Any skill worth having takes time and discipline to master. Performing using a teleprompter is no exception. Learning how to make videos isn't easy.

In fact, many people (such as myself) have struggled with this step at first. If you have some trouble making videos or giving a speech initially, no problem. It's normal. Thankfully, I've made the mistakes for you and detailed them in my mastery course videos and guides, so you don't have to make them and struggle for months as I did.

The key is to make it a study. Try spending a few minutes each day practicing your lines and reviewing the videos and instructions I've made for you. Remember, it doesn't have to be perfect

See you in my next lesson!