

Tutorial: How to use a Phone as a Document Cam

Overview:

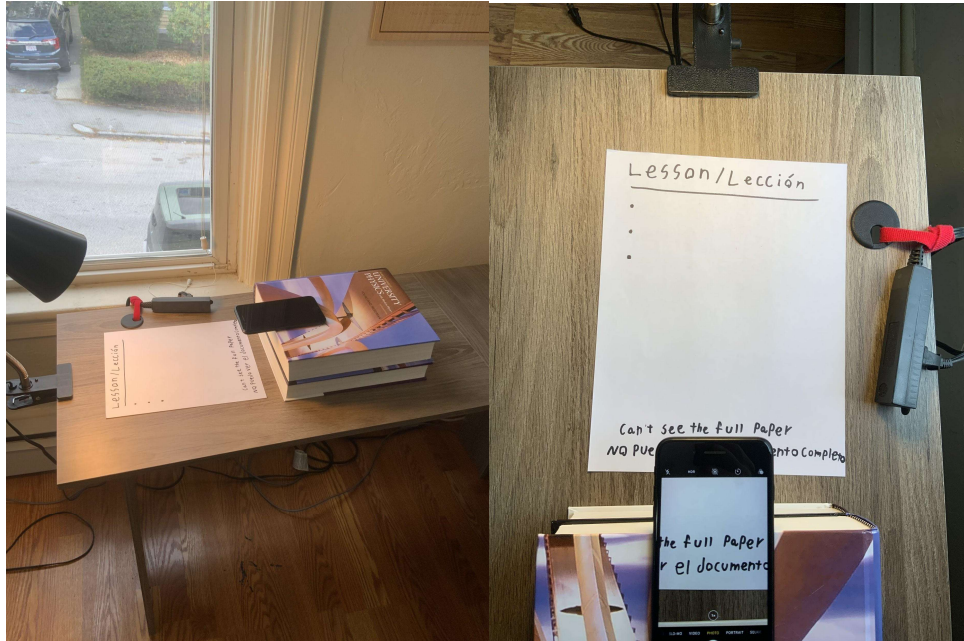
A document camera is a miniature camera on a mounted stand meant for filming a desk space on which an educator can visually write out a lecture. This makes it a very useful tool for creating video lectures and visuals for students without requiring much digital design or video editing skills. However, document cameras can be expensive, and a custom document camera setup can be achieved with other, possibly already owned technology, such as a mobile phone with a built-in camera. This tutorial will teach you how to use a phone with a built-in camera to record videos of hand-written visuals.

Setting up a camera phone as a document cam:

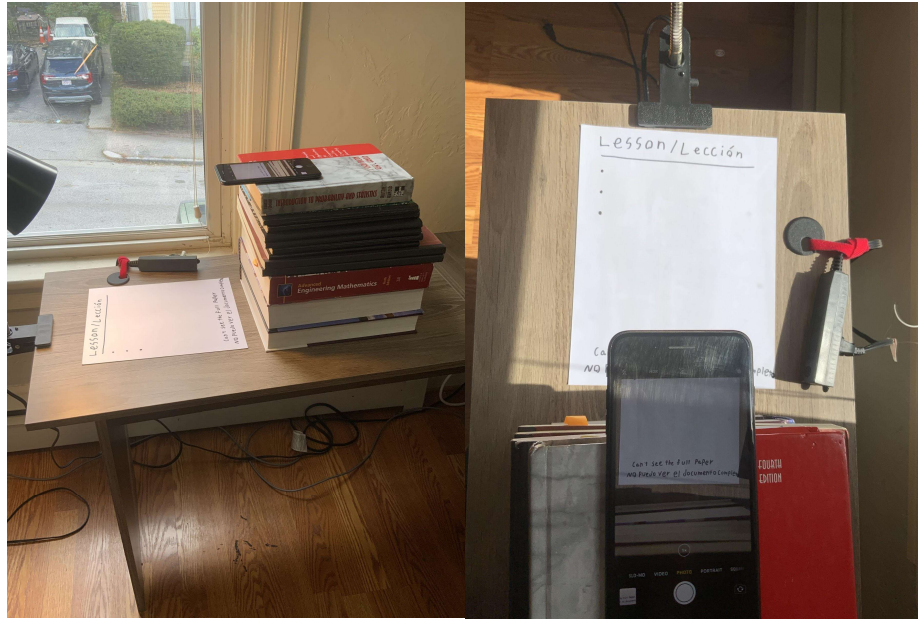
1. First consider the lighting of your setup. While natural lighting from a window outside is definitely bright enough, it can vary with weather and clouds. It is far better to use a lamp to light up your paper for visibility.



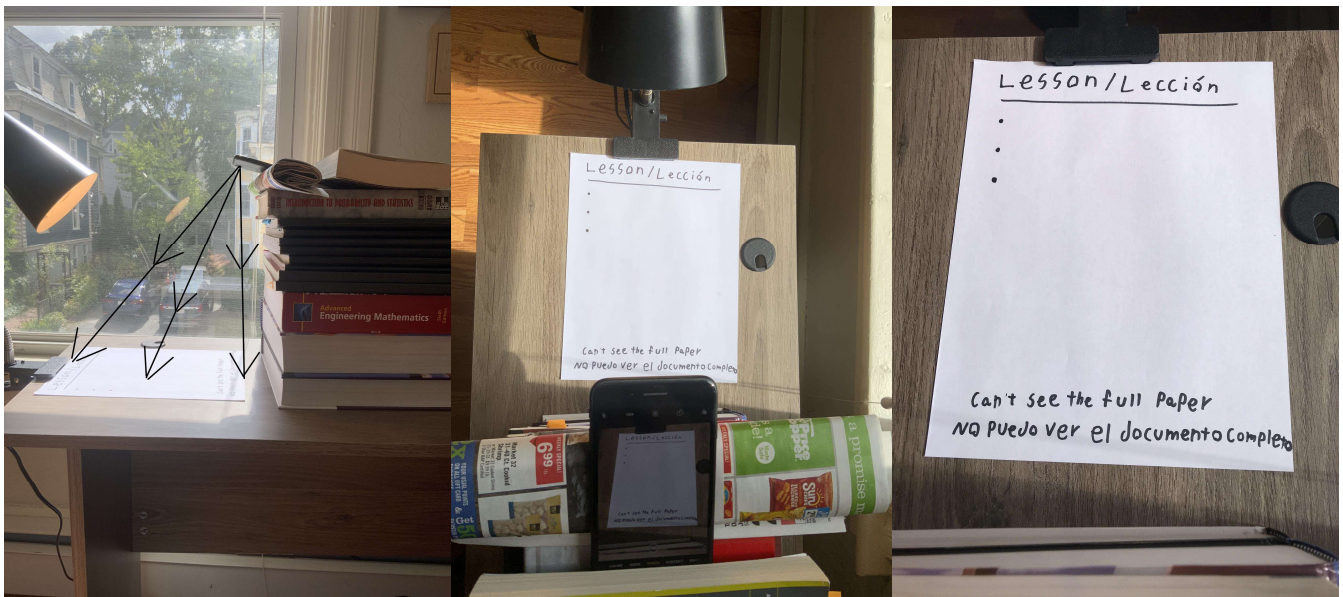
2. Next, you will need your camera phone to be positioned over your paper. If you have a camera mount with grips capable of holding your phone, then use that mount. If you do not, you can make do with stacking books on top of each other to raise and hold the phone over your paper.



3. Notice that if you use just a few books to hold your phone, your camera will be too close to the paper, and will not be able to see the full document. Therefore, you want to stack many books on top of each other to hold your camera high above your workspace.



4. You might still have an issue with getting the entire camera in view, so be sure to angle your camera so that it's pointing directly at the center of the page. In these example pictures in step 3, the phone is lying flat on top of the books with the camera pointing straight down. In the pictures for step 4, notice how the front of the phone is propped up slightly in order to point directly at the center of the page.



5. Once your camera is angled well, you can record your video lectures! (On website insert recorded videos)