



Bringing Video into Your Fitness Business: A Step-by-step Guide

Why add live streaming, pre-recorded videos, or private, virtual sessions to your business?

With the global coronavirus pandemic, fitness businesses all over the world raced to offer their classes online and keep their members busy with pre-recorded workouts. Virtual fitness is here to stay, too. After their local fitness studios and gyms re-open, 43% of Mindbody app users say that, in addition to returning to their regular fitness routines, they plan to use video fitness.¹

Permanently adding video to your fitness offerings adds value for your current clients and can extend your reach and strengthen your brand. Video is a powerful acquisition tool and a chance for you to bring your signature workouts and attitude to anyone eager to try. With video in Mindbody you can bring your brand to people all over the world.

How can you prepare for going virtual with video? Start with a plan.

Before you hit record or go live for the long term, it's important to think about why you want to add video to your service offerings. You wouldn't open a new fitness studio location without a plan, and you shouldn't rush into investing time and effort into video without one either.

[Use our Business Plan Template for Your Fitness Video Offerings in tandem with this step-by-step guide. >](#)

The video plan template has the following sections:

- Executive summary
- Organisation and management
- Equipment and retail
- Pricing and retention strategies
- Marketing and sales
- Financial projections
- Key performance indicators and future vision

Don't worry—we'll break down each section with you. As we explore topics like pricing, staffing, promotions, and more, you can fill out the template with your studio or gym's plan. You'll get the basics, some things to consider, best practices, and links to further resources you can explore.

1. Mindbody. "COVID-19 App User Survey." March 2020.

Executive summary

When tackling the executive summary, you want to give a general overview of what you want video at your business to look like. What are you hoping to gain in bringing virtual offerings to your business? You're probably busy enough as it is, so it's important to have a clear idea of what you're hoping to gain in pursuing video.

Is video something you're adding to give extra value to memberships? Or are you hoping to grow your brand and build a following for video all its own? The latter means you're targeting a new market segment. How are your competitors approaching video? Now that you're offering video, you're competing with global players. How will you differentiate? The answers to these questions will guide how you set up your video operations.

Importantly, you need to identify what type of video offerings you want to provide (maybe it's all three detailed below).

Which type of video offering is best for your business?

There are three main ways to approach your new video fitness offerings: live streaming classes, hosting private sessions over a video chat, and sharing pre-recorded videos clients can access on demand.

Not sure which one's for you? Here are the main differences between these video options and when to opt for one over the others.





Choose to live stream classes when:

- You want to create or [maintain a sense of community](#). Even though you're not in the same room, there's a certain energy—and accountability—that comes with live streaming.
- You want to move fast and keep it real. You can always post a recording of the live stream workout later, but it's really all about being in the moment.
- Your audience can easily do your workout in their living room.
- You want to interact with your clients in real time.

Choose pre-recorded workouts when:

- There's a series of movements you only need to demonstrate once, but you want your audience to repeat or do as a prescribed routine or regimen.
- You want to be able to choose your best takes and edit the content.
- You want shorter content or even episodes.
- You don't care if the audience watches now or later.
- You want to share a "workout of the day" that clients can do at any time.
- You're looking to scale.

Choose private, virtual sessions when:

- You want to meet one-on-one or in a small, private group. Virtual sessions are a great way to give personal attention to your clients.
- You're introducing clients to complicated movements where it's important for you to see their form. Virtual sessions can help clients "feel" how a movement is supposed to when it might be otherwise difficult in a fast-moving class.
- Your client has an injury, is pregnant, or has some other condition that requires modifications or special attention and care.
- You want to customise a workout.
- You want to help clients set goals.

Organisation and management

Once you have an idea of what your aim for video is, it's time to get into the logistics. Is video something you're going to have your team help you with? Will you appoint or hire someone who will wholly focus on video? Consider if there will be any modifications in pay or incentives for employees who help with video efforts.

You'll need to consider when filming and/or private sessions will occur. Is this something you want to do outside of your normal studio or gym hours? This likely depends on what type of video you're hoping to pursue.

Whether you delegate to your team or go it alone, here's how to get started with these popular video offerings.

How do you start live streaming?

Live streaming can feel awkward when you're first getting started. After all, you're used to being in a space full of clients. There's a different energy when it's just you in front of a camera—and oftentimes, without music.

Live streams are an excellent way to bring your community together. Lean into the social aspect and open the live stream 15 minutes before class so your clients can chat amongst themselves beforehand. Let them linger after class, too. The social component is yet another reason why they'll want to join your live streams.

[Check out our blog post for more details on how to start live streaming fitness classes. >](#)





Some best practices for live streaming:

- Look clean, fresh, and wear clothing that has your brand on it
- Prioritise good lighting—natural is best (and the cheapest)
- Consider acoustics—you don't want the room to be overly echo-y
- Make sure the area you're filming in is clutter-free and won't distract your audience
- Secure your camera (a tripod's great!) and ensure it's at an appropriate height (and oriented to shoot horizontally)
- Ensure your internet connection is stable, and the camera battery is full
- Do a trial run and test everything before your first live stream
- Greet clients as they join but make sure to mute all live stream attendees before starting the class
- Have fun!

[Read our blog post with more best practices and things to avoid when you're live streaming. >](#)

If you're having instructors on your team lead live streams on their own, make sure that they're well-versed in these best practices, too.

Before any instructor streams his or her first live class, have them lead a practice one with the rest of your team as attendees. Your instructor will get more comfortable in front of the camera after a bit of practice, and you can work out any kinks together.

[Have fitness instructors on your team who will be handling streaming? Give them our handy checklist. >](#)



How do you create top-notch, pre-recorded workout videos?

With Mindbody, you can readily share access to your complete video library with your members. But before you share, you want to make sure you have something for your members to watch.

Some best practices for creating pre-recorded videos:

- Film all of your content horizontally
- Bring professionals in to help you film and edit or even enlist knowledgeable friends to help
- Use a tripod or rest the camera on a sturdy surface to reduce shaking
- Choose a spot to film that has bright and natural lighting and minimal noise
- Make eye contact with the camera and treat it like a client you're working with one-on-one
- Practice and invite feedback
- Remember: It's all about authenticity—not perfection

[Here are more tips from an expert on how to produce professional-looking workout videos. >](#)

How do you offer private virtual sessions?

When you're meeting with clients one-on-one or in a small group, you want to be focused on your clients. It's important that you set up your virtual sessions properly, so you and your clients don't have any distractions.

Set yourself up for success by:

- Having clients fill out an intake form beforehand, so everyone knows what to expect
- Offering an initial consultation
- Helping clients set up their space before getting started
- Asking the right questions during the session to ensure proper form
- Supplementing sessions with live stream classes or on-demand videos

[See more best practices on virtual sessions. >](#)



Equipment and retail

You might feel especially out of your element when it comes to considering audio/visual equipment. It, of course, depends on what you're hoping to achieve—and on your fitness modality.

Do you need to invest in additional audio/visual equipment to create your video offerings? When you're first getting started, it's hard to know what's a necessity and what might be overkill.



What audio/visual equipment do you need?

If you're live streaming or hosting virtual sessions, you're likely to want to use a phone or a computer web cam. If you're opting for pre-recorded videos, you can get good footage from an iPhone or simple DSLR camera.

No matter what virtual offering you choose and what equipment you use, make sure you're familiar with it before you start shooting or go live.

[See what you should consider when you're looking at equipment. >](#)

How will you approach equipment that your clients regularly use?

For many looking to work out at home, needing lots of equipment is a non-starter. Make sure you clearly indicate what equipment is needed so no one starts working out only to realise they can't continue. Consider tailoring your workouts to be more home-friendly with less equipment (or suggest substitutes for household items like laundry detergent and soup cans) and/or rent out your equipment to clients.

[Learn more about renting out equipment. >](#)

Better yet, you can sell branded equipment online that anyone can buy to supplement their workouts. Items like hand weights, exercise balls, and stretching straps can help your clients get more from their workout and bring your business additional revenue.



How will you approach music?

Music gets complicated when it comes to video. It's important to know that you need the proper "sync" license to legally use music in videos you're posting. It can also be difficult to hear an instructor when ambient music is playing in the background during recording. For these reasons, you may want to forego music in your video workouts.

If you're determined to include music:

Share the playlist for your live stream or video with your clients. As you email out a link to join a live stream class, you can also share a link to the playlist on Spotify or Apple Music to accompany it. Clients can play the music on their end while still supporting artists.

Use royalty-free music. Sites like [Artlist.io](https://www.artlist.io) or [Premium Beat](https://www.premiumbeat.com) have great options.

Use a microphone. If you're using music during a live stream, you can use AirPods or another external mic so you're still audible.

Note: Please consult local legal counsel for advice.

Pricing and retention strategies

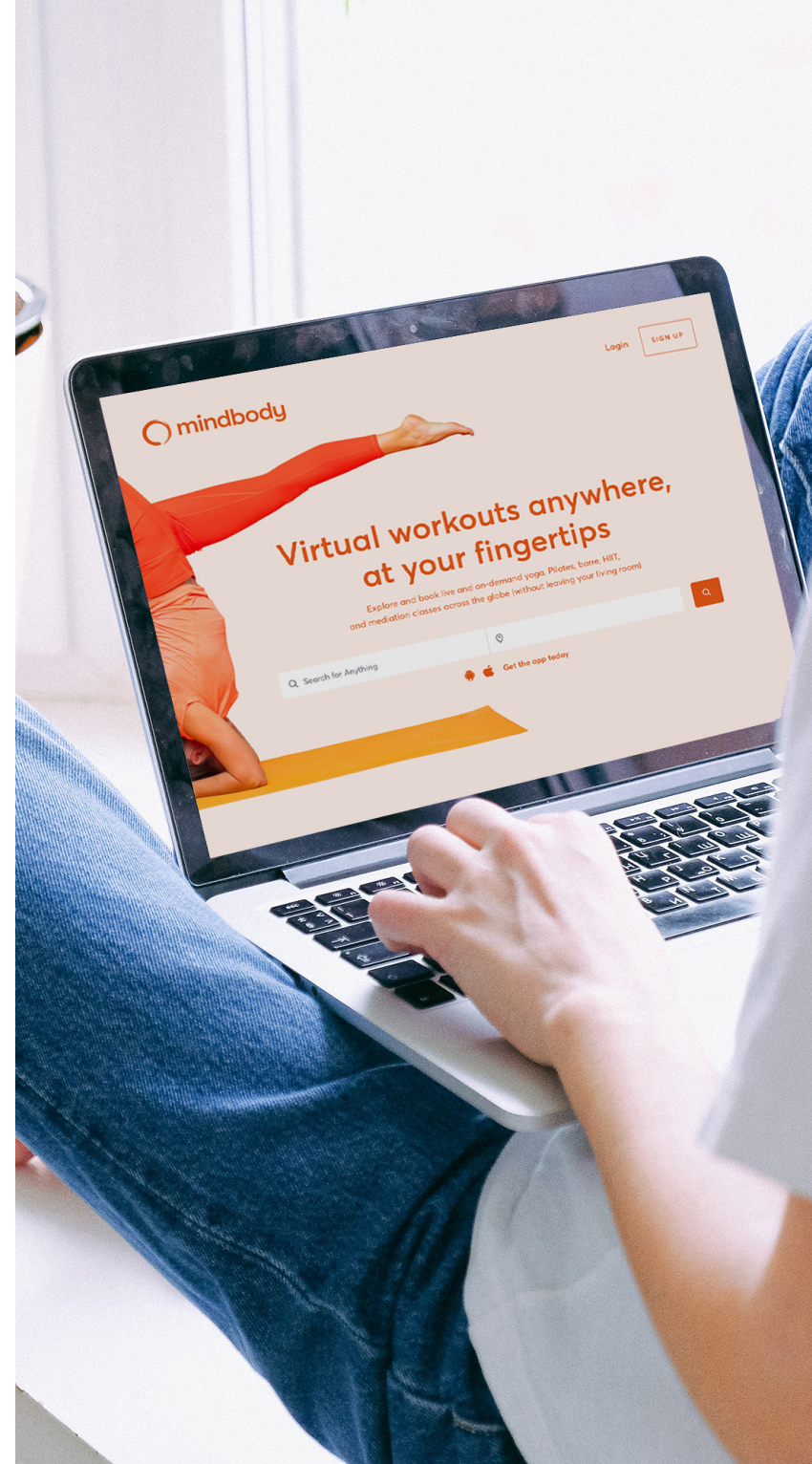
How should you price your video offerings?

Pricing is part art, part science. Pricing your live stream classes, on-demand videos, and virtual private sessions depends on many factors. Video offerings have never seen such demand, and, because of that, pricing for it is still shifting.

As video is increasingly popular in fitness, it's important to stay informed about general industry trends. Search "virtual" on mindbody.io to see how virtual classes similar to yours are priced. Even after you decide your pricing strategy, check back in frequently to ensure your prices are in line with general industry trends.

Depending on your business, you may need to approach pricing differently for members, drop-ins, and potential new clients.

[Here are best practices for pricing now. >](#)

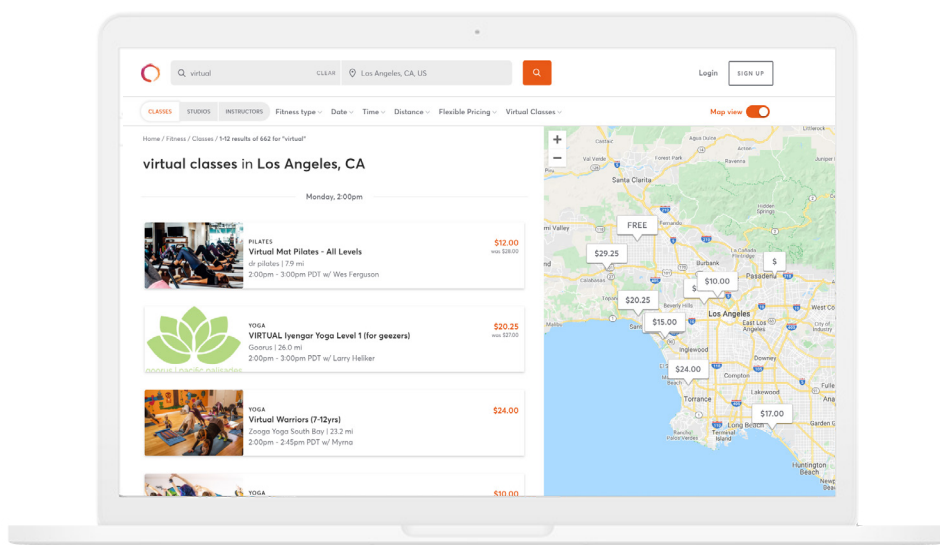


Marketing and sales

What are the best (and easiest) ways to promote your video offerings?

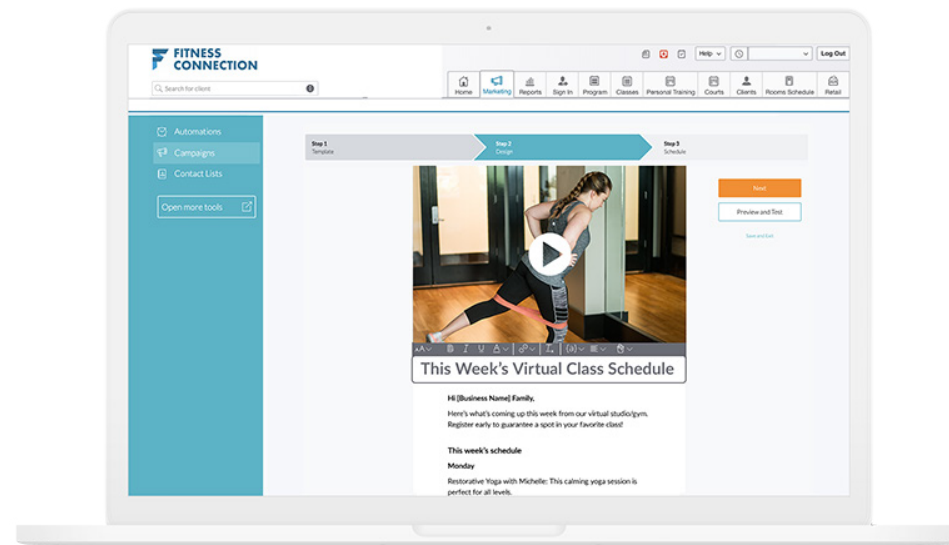
Once you decide what sort of virtual offerings your business will pursue, it's important to get the word out about them. Video can help your business extend its reach—but only if people know that you have video available. The last thing you want to do is live stream to no one.

A few ways to promote your virtual offerings:



List your live stream on Mindbody.

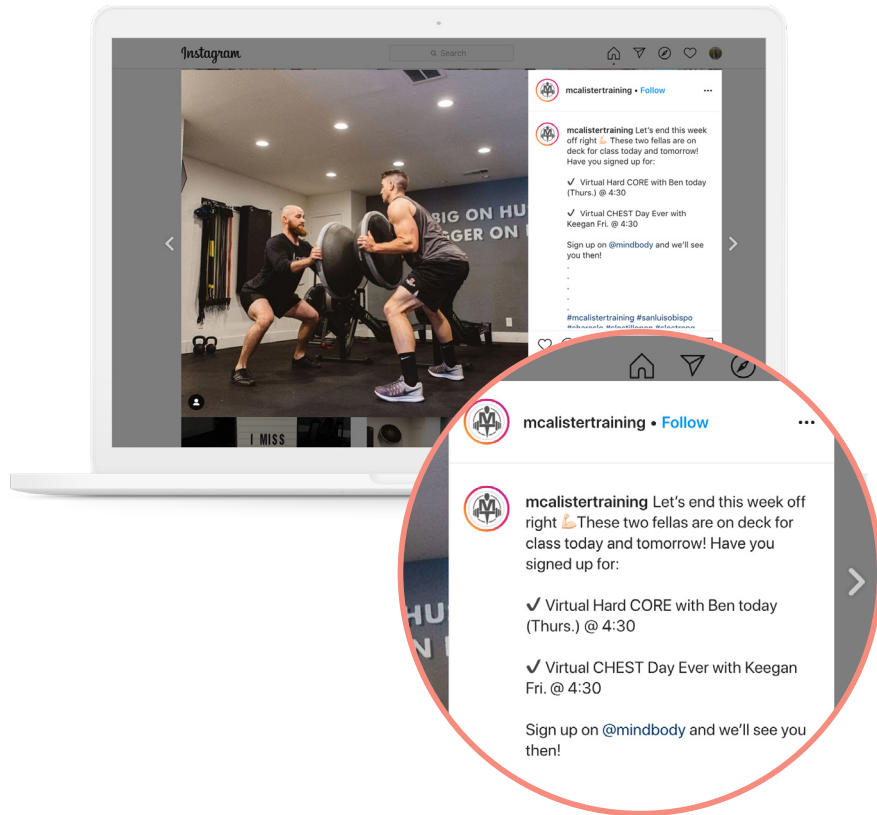
Make sure you're using the word "VIRTUAL" in all caps before the regular title of your class so it's easy for anyone in the world to find it on the Mindbody app and on mindbody.io (for example, "VIRTUAL Power Yoga"). Want even more of a boost in the [Mindbody app](#) or on mindbody.io? Create a promoted digital intro offer for people to try your virtual version.



Email, email, email.

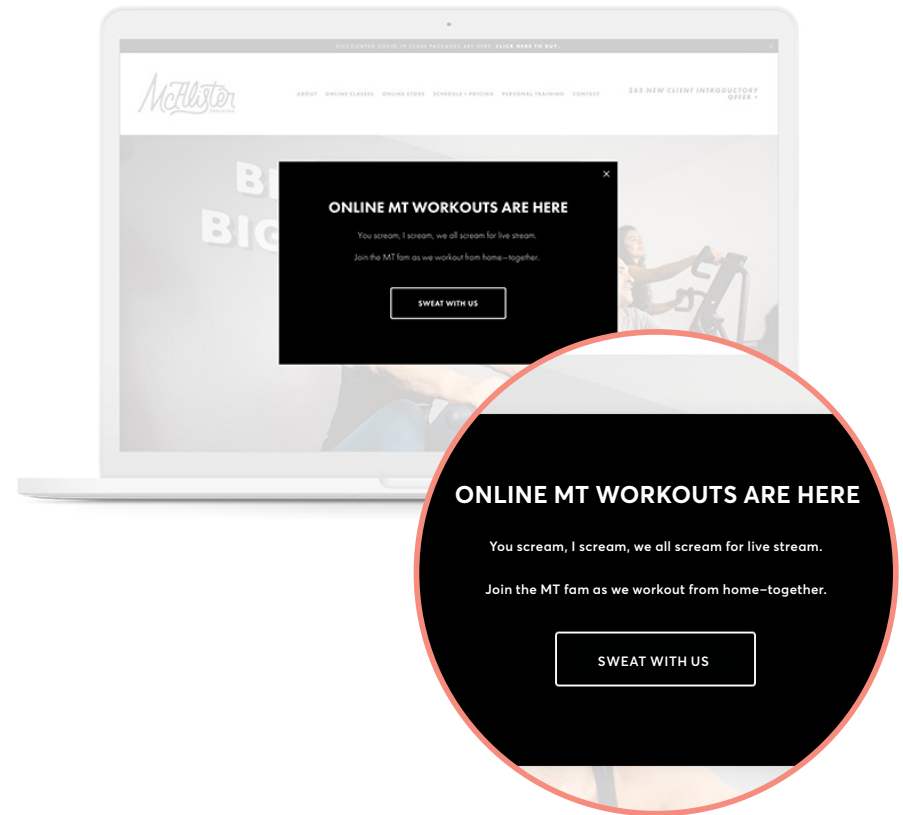
Your virtual offerings are for everyone on your email subscriber list. It's easy with Marketing Suite to keep everyone in the loop.

[See how you can use email templates to make it easier than ever with our Marketing Suite Playbook. >](#)



Share on social media.

Post clips of the live stream or workouts on your accounts to get your followers excited to join you. Think about creating ads for Facebook and Instagram that promote your video services, too. Encourage your clients to share photos of their workouts with you to broaden your reach even more.



Update your digital presence.

Make sure visitors to your website know that you've gone virtual.

[Check out our blog post on the best ways to promote your live stream classes, virtual sessions, and workout videos. >](#)

Financial projections

It's important that your video endeavors make sense financially. You'll have to make an initial investment, of course, but you'll have ongoing costs to maintain it, to continue to create new content, and even improve your offerings down the line.

Calculating your start-up and ongoing costs will help you see if this is a viable option for you to pursue alone—or if you need additional capital or investors to make it happen.

Key performance indicators and future vision

Just as it was important to consider your mission in pursuing video, it's important to define what success for you looks like. Are there key metrics you can use to determine your success?

A breakeven analysis can be helpful in determining what it will take for your video efforts to literally pay off. Depending on the timeline, this can also be a useful tool in attracting investors.

You want to think about what you want your video endeavors to look like in the long term. If you're successful, is this something you want to expand? Do you see video ultimately overtaking your brick-and-mortar business?

With a plan in place, you're much more likely to succeed in your video efforts. You can revisit this plan as much as you want and modify as you go.

Start-Up Costs	Costs
Video equipment	\$100
Retail inventory	\$\$
Sound System	\$\$
Legal fees	\$\$
Hardware	\$\$
Total	\$100



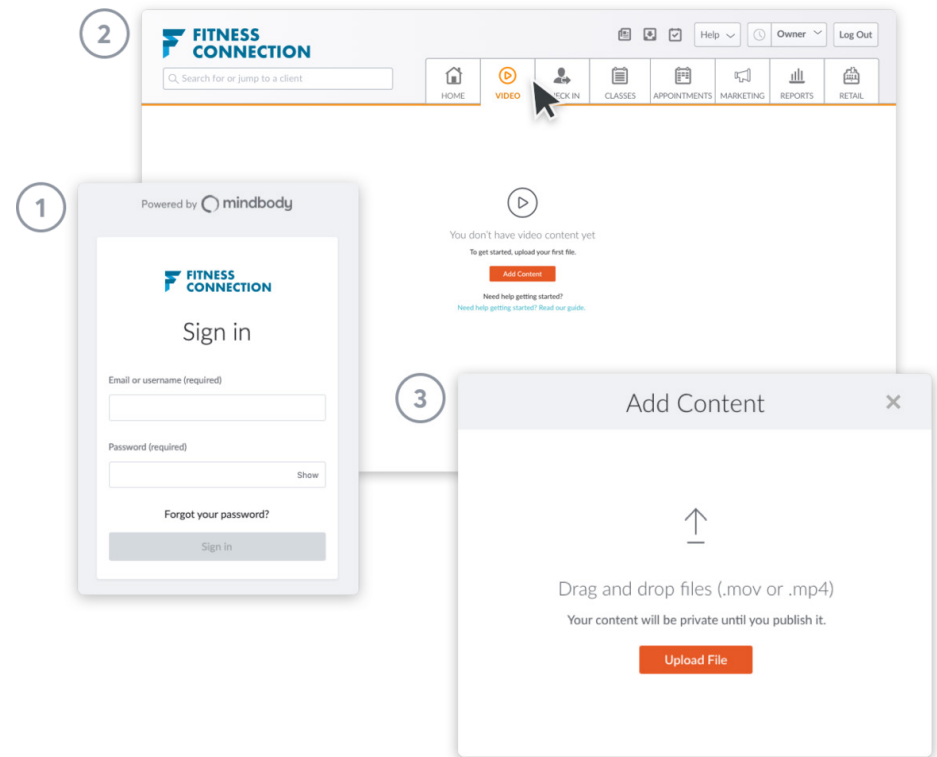
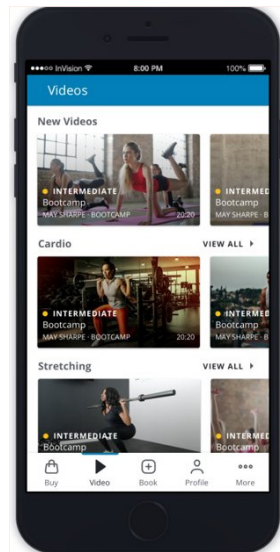
Reach your virtual fitness goals with Mindbody

A well-thought-out plan deserves software that can support it. The integrated video feature in Mindbody makes it easier than ever to connect with your clients—no matter where they are in the world.

With both live streaming and on demand video functionalities, the decision to offer virtual fitness is an easy one. With Mindbody, video is:

Integrated.

With Mindbody's video feature, you can get up and running—fast. It's integrated right within your software meaning there are no new account logins for your team and clients and no need for third-party apps. Plus, it works seamlessly with the Mindbody Business app, branded app and branded web tools, Marketing Suite, and more, so you can promote your virtual offerings everywhere your clients are.



Secure.

It's all too easy for other streaming platforms to get visits from unwanted guests. By live streaming in Mindbody, you know exactly who's accessing your classes—clients. Plus, with a built-in paywall, you know those accessing your live streams and on-demand videos have paid for your service.

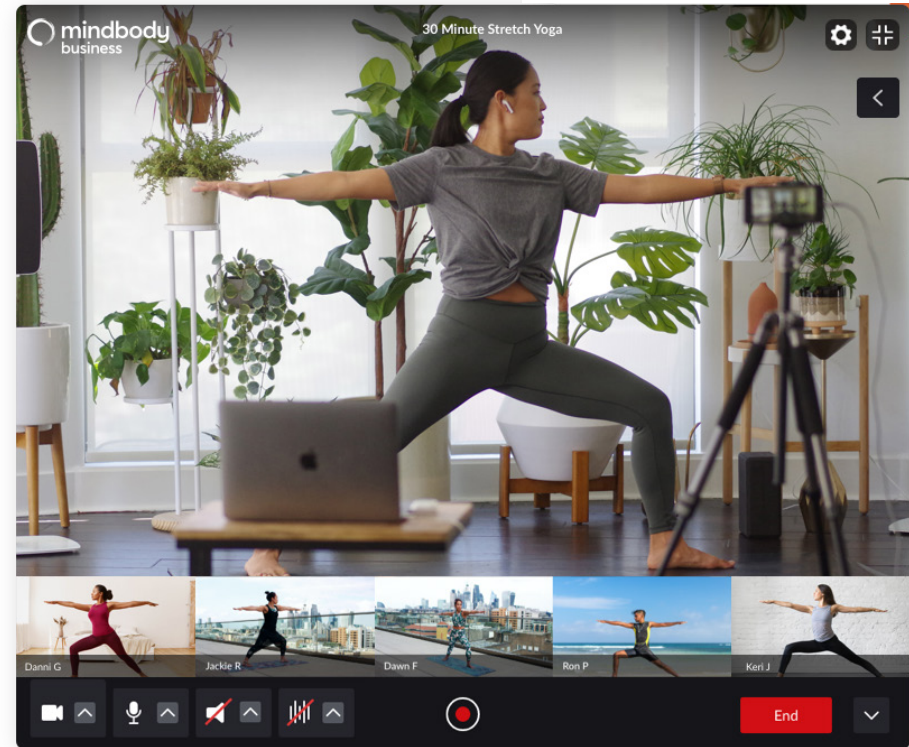
Clients use the same account logins to access your classes and pre-recorded videos that they do to book and pay for your services. Login security applies to your instructors, too. Mindbody automatically assigns host permissions to the instructor scheduled in your software, meaning you don't have to set up new passwords or permissions.

Streamlined.

With Mindbody, you don't need to spend time creating and distributing links to your class attendees. When a live stream class is scheduled, the platform automatically creates and sends a link to students 30 minutes before class starts. If they book after the 30-minute window, they'll receive the link in real-time.

Made for fitness.

[Mindbody video](#) is made for fitness studios and gyms like yours, not business meetings.





Explore video in Mindbody.

Get a Demo