

Category	Action	Description	Reason
Interaction	YES	Be the first comment on your own videos	It kind of breaks the ice, people will race to be "first" at some point, and it helps your interactions statistics. At a bare minimum, it gives you another chance to be visibly entertaining - one-liners rock!
Interaction	NO	Click links in personal message from people you don't know	This is spam and could cause your computer harm. Stick to people you know and trust.
Interaction	MAYBE	Consider thanking people for friend invites	Pop on over to their channel and leave a message thanking them for their friendship - it's nice and helps visibility. Make it genuine - generic / canned responses are counterproductive.
Interaction	MAYBE	Consider thanking people for their subscription	Pop on over to their channel and leave a message thanking them for their friendship - it's nice and helps visibility. Make it genuine - generic / canned responses are counterproductive.
Interaction	YES	Create a related Facebook account and connect it to YouTube	Another great way to interact and to give viewers a way to know more about you / contact you. You might need a 'group' or 'page' as there is a 5000 friends limit.
Interaction	YES	Create a related Twitter account and connect it to YouTube	Another great way to interact and to give viewers a way to know more about you / contact you
Interaction	YES	Enable comment voting	Comment Voting (Ratings): Comment Voting allows users to evaluate comments. I also suspect this helps your Interaction metric.
Interaction	YES	Enable video ratings	Ratings: Videos with high ratings are significantly more likely to be viewed.
Interaction	YES	Favorite the videos you really like	Favorite more videos (especially relevant ones) and categorize / playlists. Favoriting DEFINITELY helps people out - do it if you feel it's warranted, but don't be too stingy.
Interaction	YES	Get hints from other favorites	Save favorite videos from other users that relate to your channel. Consider putting them in their own playlist, 'inspiration' or 'hints' for example.
Interaction	YES	Give the viewer options at the end	Throw up some annotations for some other videos at the end of your video - give them some place to go next. Consider a long "pause" annotation at the end to give them time to choose.
Interaction	MAYBE	Give the viewers options during the video	A small annotation or two to direct them to a another video can be useful, especially if they are bored. :)
Interaction	NO	Increase awareness in video responses	Don't put intros / outros / watermarks / annotations back to your channel / videos - this can be seen as spammy and send the wrong message. You're doing it to contribute to interaction / the video at hand.
Interaction	NO	Learn from popular styles / other channels	By all means, take hints and learn, but you must be you.
Interaction	YES	Leave video update comments	If you update a video in some substantial way (annotations, closed captions, et cetera) then leave a comment stating as such. It's a good record and exhibits your concern and care for your viewers.
Interaction	YES	Participate in contests	Don't worry about winning - do your best, but it's about having fun and interacting. Additionally, this is good exposure!
Interaction	YES	Treat people like neighbors & friends	Don't fall into the trap of viewing other channels / people / creators as just another number. Even the people who just created accounts to only comment are still awesome human beings. Treat them ALL that way. Be genuine, be you, BE!
Interaction	NO	Use irrelevant video response	You will get some views, but the chance for negative interactions is very high. Make it a genuine response instead - and don't advertise your channel - they can already see your name.
Interaction	NO	Watch all of your Subscription videos at once	This can drain you VERY quickly. Consider spreading it out over a few days. If you keep falling behind, then you have to cut back.
Interaction	MAYBE	Watch subscription videos immediately after release	Quality will be down, annotations might be missing, and traffic will probably be huge. Getting in at the first moments can be fun, though. Weigh your options and do what fits.

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Production	YES	Audio transitions	Use audio transitions if your program supports it. A "Constant Power" audio transition can take a very sharp pop between cuts and turn it into a seamless connection.
Production	YES	Audio volume level	Maintain a constant volume level throughout the video. Constant changes in volume can be annoying to the viewer. Use your program's internal 'Mixer' feature if it has it.
Production	YES	Be mindful of the entire frame	Create an appropriate scene – the background does matter – if you're going to do it sans studio, do it with class!
Production	YES	Convert your video if you have to	FFMPEG is a command-line tool for converting video
Production	YES	Encode audio for the best quality	Audio settings: MPEG-4 (MP4) container, MP3 or AAC codec, 44 [khz] or better, 128 [kbs] or better bitrate
Production	YES	Encode video for the best quality	MPEG-4 (MP4) container, H.264 or MPEG-2 codec, >2Mbps bitrate, HD if you can. I exclusively use CBR encoding (it will always look better than 2 pass VBR, but bigger file size); use a bit rate >4Mbps for videos with constant movement.
Production	YES	Entertain and speak clearly	Be energetic, funny, entertaining (when appropriate) and DO NOT MUMBLE! Practice and psych yourself up before shooting!
Production	MAYBE	Intro sequences	If you must have one, then make it short. No one wants to sit through the same 20 to 30 second introduction every time they see your video.
Production	YES	Just upload it	Make it nice and edit for capturing the audience's attention, but just do it. You never know who will watch it, so just do it for fun. The experience you gain will help make you better. You can plan yourself to death.
Production	YES	Keep it short and sweet if you can	If can be done in 30 seconds to 2 minutes, then do it in less than 2 minutes! Period! It's okay to leave some questions unanswered - it might even elicit questions/interaction, which is good!
Production	YES	Keep them coming back	Have some form of 'hook' to entice and keep people coming back and to reward those who are in on the inside joke / use.
Production	YES	Keep videos relatively independent	Try to treat every video as a stand-alone – don't depend too much on others in your library. The majority of people will not go back and watch all of your old videos - sorry.
Production	NO	No letterbox or pillarboxes, please	Do not add letterbox or pillarbox bars – sites will do that automatically to fit the viewer
Production	YES	One step at a time	You don't have to do it all in one day – shoot one day, process another, & upload shortly after
Production	NO	Overuse cheesy transitions	The star, heart, and rotating cube transitions every 5 seconds is annoying and usually detracts from overall viewer entertainment. Use transitions sparingly / when warranted. Aim for subtle. Dissolves are nice.
Production	NO	Overuse effects	You don't need lightning for every scene, cloning yourself is cool, but should be used sparingly, and just because the program supports it doesn't mean it needs to be used. Effects are not a crutch - don't let them use you.
Production	YES	Sound matters	Ensure you have decent sound – what's the point of a presentation if you can't be heard clearly?
Production	YES	Switch it up & add variety	Try something new every once in a while: scene change, more 'actors', new format, et cetera
Production	YES	Transcribe your videos (Closed Captions)	This is tough work and I don't anyone likes to do it, but it really does help those in need or of different languages. Consider doing it only for your very popular videos, if you like. I like to believe this information will be used by search engines, too.
Production	YES	Use an Outro Sequence	This is a good opportunity to advertise your website, channel, other social networks. If they made it this far, then they probably care.
Production	NO	Use copyrighted songs, pictures, movies, et cetera - without permission	If you ever plan to become a partner (and make money!), then you just HAVE to stop using other people's stuff without permission. The ContentID software will automatically detect copyrighted music and immediately disable your video.
Production	YES	Video Lighting	Try to have plenty of soft lighting on your subject as no one wants to see a very dimly lit, low contrast scene. Open the blinds and do it during the day if you have to - keep the window (or other bright light sources) out of the frame.

Category	Action	Description	Reason
Social	YES	Advertise loyalty in the Outro	Put a small blurb or image in your Outro about "thumbs up", "favorite", "friend", and "subscribe" - dno't be pushy and do be quick.
Social	YES	Be friends with everyone decent	Check out their page 1st and see if you mesh, but really be lenient with your 'Friend' criteria - the more the merrier. I see friends as those you like, but aren't sure you want to subscribe to, yet. Give everyone a chance.
Social	YES	Be good to your friends	Cater to your super-fans: they are putting in good time for you – do the same! Everyone who interacts with you is doing more work than they have to - remember that.
Social	YES	Be sure to attribute when appropriate	Give credit where credit is due somewhere in your video and description box (doobly-doo).
Social	NO	Beg for "Favorite"	Favorites are sacred ground and a big deal. If someone is familiar with the Favorites function, they'll do it when they feel like it.
Social	NO	Beg for "Subscribe"	Subscribers are special and should be very picky. If they like your stuff, then they will subscribe - consider proposing subscription in that manner, if you must.
Social	NO	Beg for 'Thumbs Up'	People know this and will do it if they want to - I HATE seeing annotations of the "Thumbs up if you..." nature. I've NEVER given a "thumb up" for a reason that was suggested by the producer.
Social	NO	Buy channel / video views	Money cannot produce useful views and will not make a helpful, representative audience of people who truly appreciate your contributions. This is fake.
Social	NO	Buy friends	Money cannot produce friendships and will not make a helpful, representative audience of people who truly appreciate your contributions. This is fake.
Social	NO	Buy subscribers	Money cannot produce true subscribers and will not make a helpful, representative audience of people who truly appreciate your contributions. This is fake.
Social	YES	Check-out / friend commenters on videos you like	If your interests are aligned and they seem nice, why wouldn't you be friends?
Social	NO	Full screen annotations	It's just a cheesy way to get people to accidentally click-through a link - probably low "interaction to accidental click" ratio.
Social	YES	Grow a thick skin & ignore the trolls	Be "hard-skinned" and DO NOT feed the trolls. Treat trolls like 3 year old kids - nothing you can say will explain the situation adequately - it will just be more fuel for the fire. I suggest ignoring all together, or deleting if highly offensive.
Social	YES	Have a call to action	It doesn't have to be a straight up question, but if the viewer doesn't have a clear point for response - there will be less interaction. Make it easy for people to leave a comment.
Social	YES	Leave a comment on every video	It helps the producer learn, interact, have fun, and improved statistics (interactions). You might even become friends! It also puts your name out there - YouTube is a social environment.
Social	YES	Thumbs Down with more information	Do the video maker a favor and kindly, charitably, and constructively let them know why you think it deserved a Thumb Down (but you might not want to own up to the Thumbs Down). You can help them grow!
Social	YES	Thumbs Up or nothing	Be VERY judicial with the thumbs down option. It is almost never needed and provides ZERO value to the producer if you don't leave a comment with constructive criticism.
Social	MAYBE	Use existing videos as a video response	This can be tricky as it looks very spammy. They MUST be relevant and you should consider asking the producer first via message.
Social	YES	Use on-the-spot / specific video responses (not existing)	This is an ultimate thank you to the producer - shows you took some time and interest. Be short, relevant, nice, and respectful. Respond in the way you would want someone to respond to your own videos.
Social	MAYBE	You do not need to introduce yourself every time.	Your viewers are your friends and probably don't need to be reminded of who you are every time / can also be a disconnect in the flow of your video. Do what works for your material / channel type.

Category	Action	Description	Reason
Visibility	YES	Always spread the word	Promote your brand channel on other sites and media.
Visibility	NO	Box4Box - solicited insertion of someone in your 'Other Channels' box	You want real, representative, and interested subscribers - not just a number.
Visibility	YES	Broadcast a fun message with your new videos attached	Use the 'Broadcast' feature to let your subscribers AND friends know about your new video. They may not be subscribers but you friends might be interested in your new work - so let them know!
Visibility	YES	Categories matter	Be very specific in picking a CATEGORY for your video – it matters! For instance, "Non-profit and Activism" videos don't show up in every country.
Visibility	YES	Check insight for your videos occasionally	If Insight shows your video has gone stagnant, then change up the title, thumbnail, tags, description, et cetera to see if you can bring it back to life.
Visibility	YES	Choose an interesting thumbnail for your video	A good thumbnail can really catch the viewers' attentions. Make it good, but make it relevant - do not deceive people. And for the love of all that is Holy, stop using body parts to lure people in...
Visibility	YES	Create a blog and connect it to YouTube	Get your posts out there on a webpage external to YouTube for more visibility. You have more control over there, too. Oh and putting your blog post URL in your video discription is a free backlink for your blog. :)
Visibility	YES	Enable video embedding	Allow video embedding in your settings to "Embed" them in various sites.
Visibility	YES	Include your channel name in video tags	This increases your chances at having more of your videos in the "Related Videos" bar.
Visibility	YES	Keep your channel tags up to date	Check your channel tags occationally and make sure they are still relevant.
Visibility	YES	Like and favorite your own videos	You get one free like, can favorite / comment - so why not use it? I am convinced this helps (minutely) with visibility though it should be noted that you get a grey 'heart' showing on your activity log for favoriting your own videos (as opposed to red).
Visibility	YES	Link to yourself in the video description	Put a link to your website or YouTube channel in each video description. It's good exposure and your video will get siphoned off to other sites so free links-back are good.
Visibility	YES	Make a custom channel background	Make it look unique / stand-out from the crowd. This is your home and you welcome your potential friends.
Visibility	YES	Make a custom channel profile image	Make it look unique / stand-out from the crowd. This is you - and shows up on every main page your interact with... make is respectable and eye-catching. The default image is just too boring. Google up an image of a CareBear if you have to.
Visibility	YES	Make playlists	It's a nice way to organize videos for your viewers - make it easy for them. Also, the playlist metadata can increase visibility.
Visibility	MAYBE	Share YouTube activity with Twitter / Facebook	Having every 'like', 'favorite', 'sub', & 'comment' show up to these sites can be VERY spammy. Consider just enabling 'new uploads' for sharing to your other social networks.
Visibility	YES	Share YouTube activity with YouTube	People like to see what you like and it shows you are active in the community. Be sure to activate the correct 'Module' to do this on your channel page.
Visibility	NO	Sub4Sub - solicited subscribing to someone	You want real, representative, and interested subscribers - not just a number.
Visibility	NO	Subscribe to someone with no uploads	You are effectily subscribing to nothing - simply padding their numbers.
Visibility	YES	Titles matter	Use very descriptive titles – include short purpose blurb, if possible – keywords!
Visibility	YES	Use Google Adwords in deciding tags / titles	Check out the Google AdWords research tool. It's free, it intimately related to YouTube, is THE search engine leader, and can increase visibility.
Visibility	YES	Use YouTube Keyword Tool in deciding tags / titles	It's free, is THE video community leader, and can increase visibility.