THE TALKING HEAD CHECKLIST

The steps I use on my own talking-head videos. Tick every box before you post. Free tools only.

1. IDEA

- [ ] One video, one person you're talking to (not everyone)
- [ ] One promise: “After this, you'll know ___.” Pay it off in the same video
- [ ] Use a real thing you did or learned this week. No made-up results

2. HOOK AND SCRIPT

- [ ] Your first words are the hook. No “hey guys,” no logo, no music intro
- [ ] Call out who it's for, or name a pain they already feel
- [ ] One idea per sentence. Then the payoff. Then one ask
- [ ] Keep it 55 to 90 seconds
- [ ] Pick your big words now: one per line, the word that carries the point

3. SHOOT

- [ ] Phone sideways, chest height, on a tripod, wide enough to zoom in later
- [ ] Light in front of you, never behind you
- [ ] Clip-on mic on your chest, away from traffic and AC noise
- [ ] 4K at 60 fps if your phone has it
- [ ] Talk to one person. Finish every sentence, then breathe
- [ ] Stumble? Restart the whole sentence

4. CUT

- [ ] Cut stutters, long pauses and filler words
- [ ] Never cut while your voice is still going up. End every clip on a finished sentence
- [ ] Keep the breath at the end of each sentence so it never feels choppy
- [ ] New sentence, new framing: tight on one side, wider on the other
- [ ] CapCut: Split, Delete, then scale the next clip to about 130%
- [ ] Keep your head the same height in every shot

5. TEXT

- [ ] Two fonts: a small serif for the setup, one big bold word for the point
- [ ] Free pair: TeX Gyre Termes + TeX Gyre Heros (GUST font licence)
- [ ] Big word beside your head, never on your face
- [ ] It appears on the exact frame you say it
- [ ] Pop it in fast (three quick flashes, or a quick blur-in). Mix it up
- [ ] White text with a soft shadow. No full word-for-word subtitles burned in

6. COLOR

- [ ] White by default
- [ ] Red for a loss, green for a win. About one colored word every 15 seconds
- [ ] Never color the call to action
- [ ] Biggest loss line: fade the background to black and white

7. SOUND

- [ ] Clean the voice first: reduce noise, cut the low rumble
- [ ] One soft click when a big word lands. One soft whoosh on each cut
- [ ] No beeps, no cartoon sounds, no harsh digital swooshes
- [ ] Music way under your voice, never louder than you
- [ ] Free sounds and music: Pixabay (check each file's licence)

8. EXPORT AND POST

- [ ] 60 fps. 1080p or 4K. 4:5 for the feed, 16:9 for YouTube
- [ ] Watch it once on your phone with sound on, start to finish
- [ ] Check the first frame: no half-loaded text, no black flash
- [ ] Caption: one punchy line, then your ask. That's it