

How To Set Up Your Mirrorless Camera For Streaming

If you're looking to get the best possible quality for your live stream, then upgrading your webcam to a mirrorless camera is a great first step. With most brands of cameras, you will need two pieces of free software to do this.

The first piece of software you will need is the manufacturer's tethering software, this is nearly always free and can be downloaded from their website. Please see this chart, to find out what software you will need and where to download it. The second piece of software isn't always needed but is worth having anyway, as not all brands of cameras are compatible with every streaming platform. This software is called OBS

OBS, or Open Broadcaster Software, is effectively a virtual switchboard. This allows you to combine multiple feeds, such as a camera, graphic overlays, game-capture or even presentation slides into a single output, with the option to switch between them.

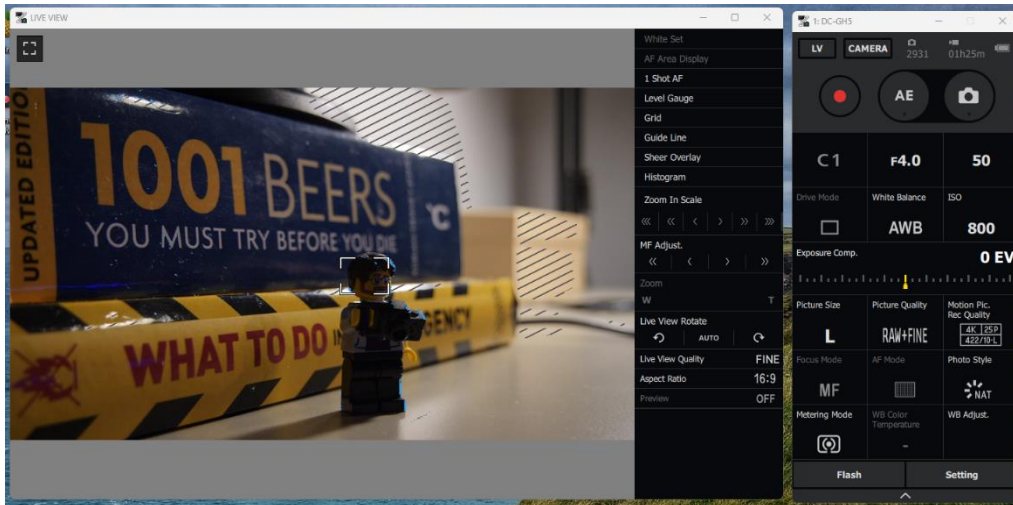
Your computer then interprets this single output feed as a normal webcam, meaning there's no need to worry about sharing the wrong screen in that important work presentation on zoom. This is somewhat similar to how producers of a live TV show can seamlessly switch between multiple camera angles, with only one feed being broadcast to your TV.

If you're just using your camera as a webcam for Zoom calls, Microsoft Teams or Google Meet, then you may not need to download OBS. When testing this with a Lumix GH5 and the Lumix tether software, I found that it worked perfectly fine in Zoom, Meet and Twitch, without the use of OBS. However, Discord would not recognise the GH5 as a webcam.

Once you have downloaded the correct tethering software for your camera, you should first test it with your streaming platform of choice, to see if it works. You may need to manually select the camera in the settings first. I found this to be the case when using a Sony ZV-E10 and Sony's excellent Imaging Edge Webcam software.

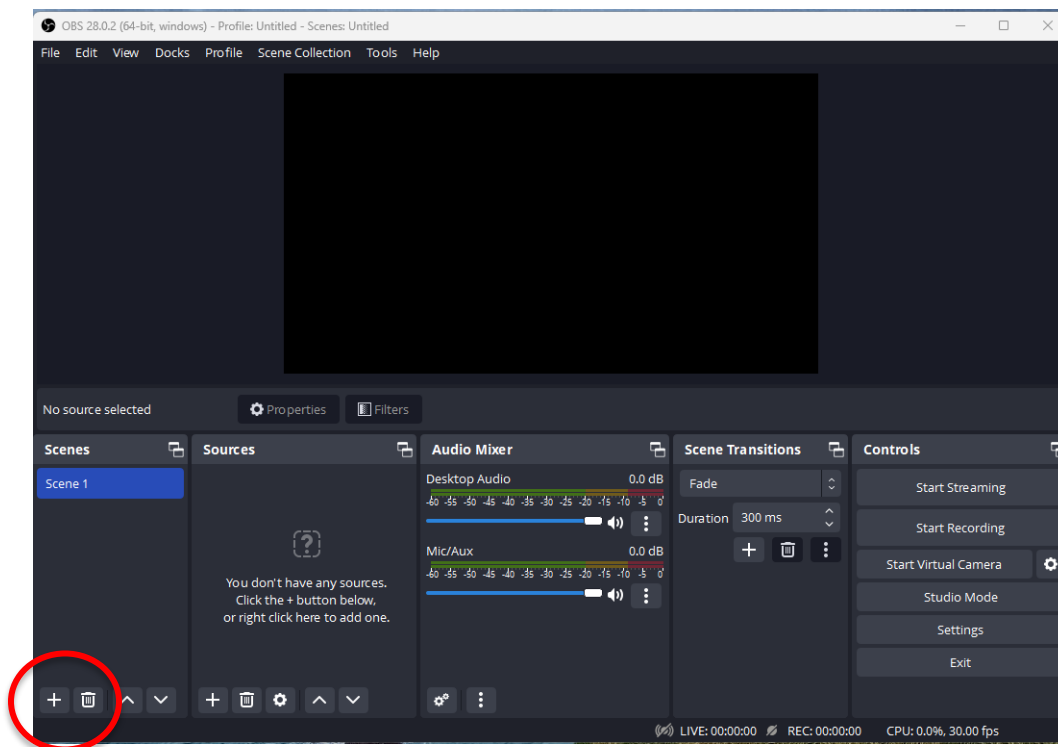
If for whatever reason your camera isn't being detected by the streaming platform, then this is where OBS comes in useful.

To start with, you need to open up your camera tethering program and turn on live view, which should look something like this.

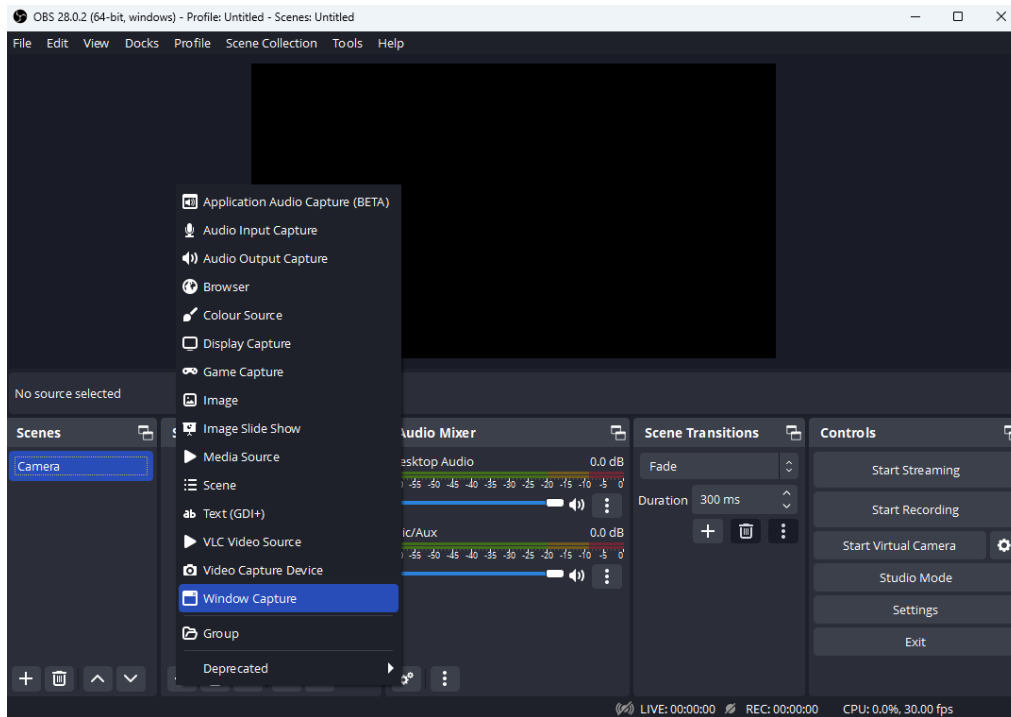


Then, using the on-screen controls, adjust the camera settings until you have a properly exposed image. If you have reliable autofocus, then turn it on as well. Now is the time to make any other adjustments, such as white balance.

Once you have achieved the image you want, hide any menu settings if possible. This isn't essential but helps a lot with the next steps. Opening OBS, select navigate to the section of the page called 'Scenes' and press the + to create a new scene. Call this 'Camera'.

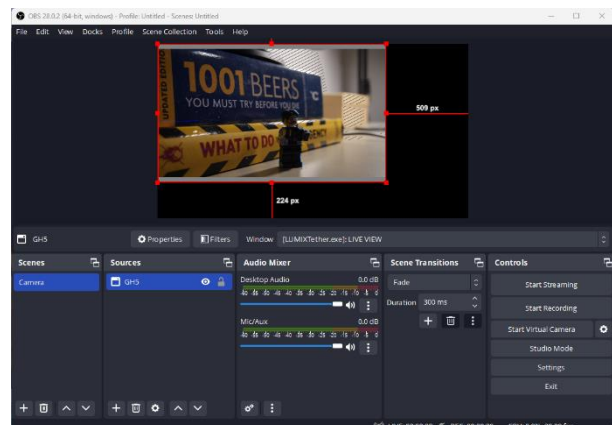
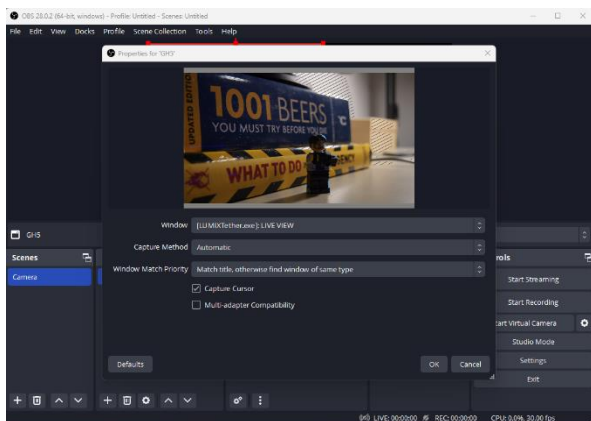


Next, select the new scene you have just created, and navigate to the panel to the right, called 'Sources'. Press the + to create a new source, selecting the option called 'Window Capture'.

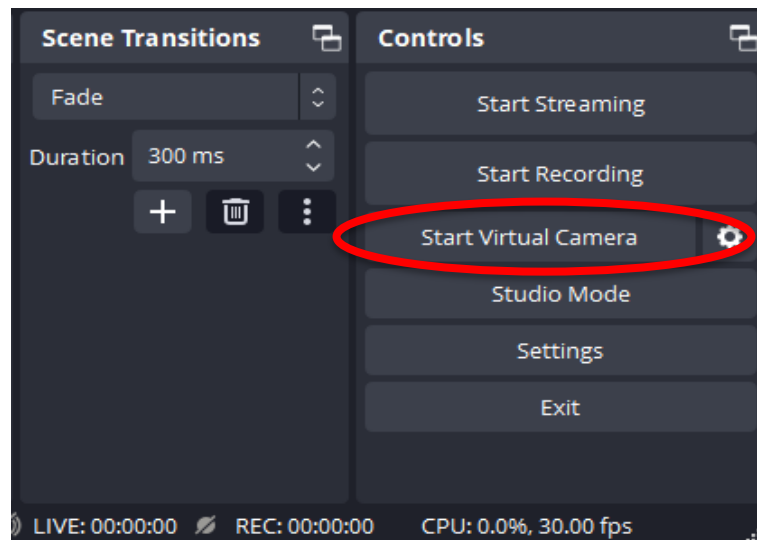


Make sure to select 'Create New' and name the new source '[Camera Name]'. In my case 'GH5'. Press 'Okay'.

In the next pop-up window, select the tethering programs live-view from the drop-down menu, as can be seen here. Resize this to fit the page. This is done by dragging the corners of the image, highlighted in red. Much the same way you resize an image in any other program.

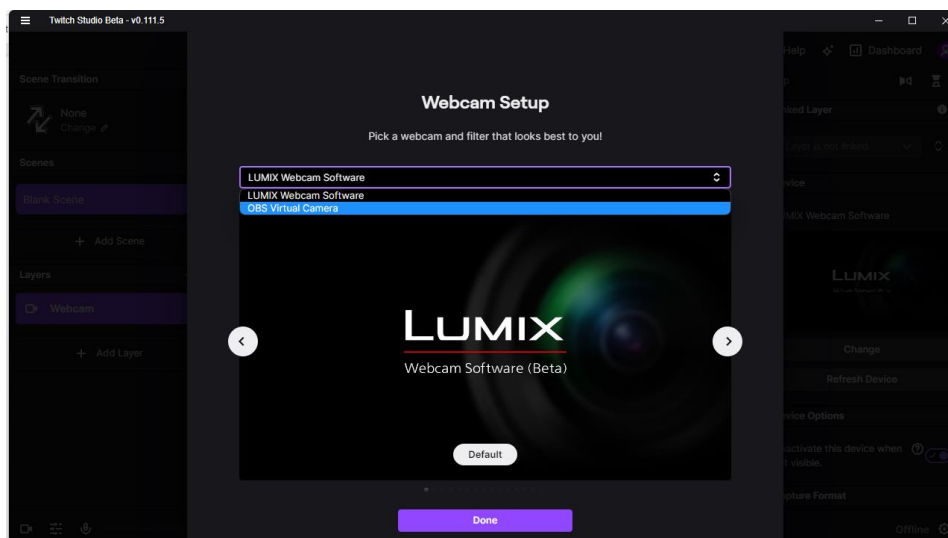


The final step here is to click the button on the right-hand side of the page, titled 'Start Virtual Camera'.

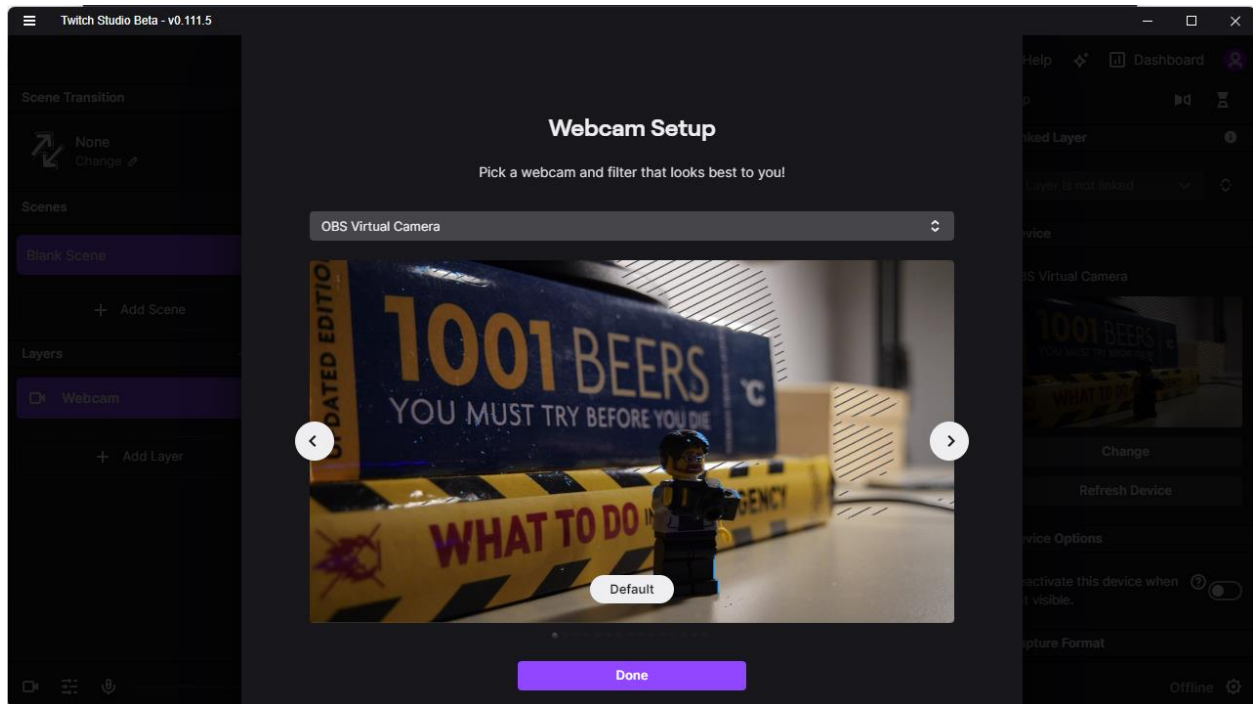


What we have just done is effectively screen share the live-view camera feed. OBS is now outputting that as a virtual webcam.

Open the streaming platform of your choice and navigate to the settings page, you should see the option to select your camera input. Here you will need to select one of the two OBS options. You may have to try both to see which one works for you.



Finally, you should now see the live view feed from your mirrorless camera showing as a webcam feed. As seen in the image below.



One thing which is important to note when using your mirrorless camera for streaming is that you will probably need to use an external microphone. In many cases, the tethering software will not allow you to record audio through the camera. So if you have any shotgun or lapel mics, you are better off plugging them directly into your computer. I found that out of a shotgun, lapel and desktop condenser mic, the latter option gave me the best quality.