



Please tell me I'm not the only one still posting *how-to hooks.*

I had an AI read the opening words of 193,355 short videos to find out which ones actually get people to stay. Here's what it found.



Matthew Berman · @themattberman · Big Players

Please tell me I'm not the
only person who's the main
cook of their house

This headline copies the #4 pattern in this report. It breaks out **28%** of the time.

@cookingwithluci

I've posted the same kind of hook dozens of times.

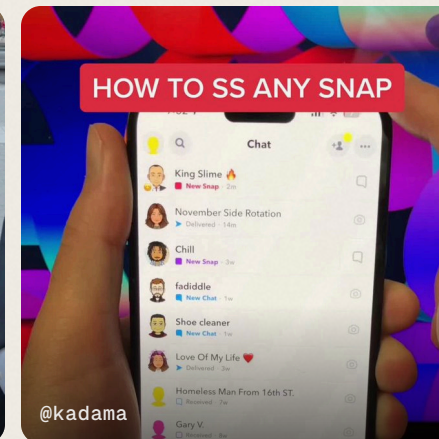
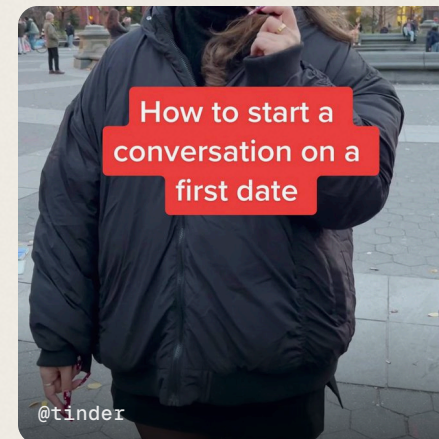
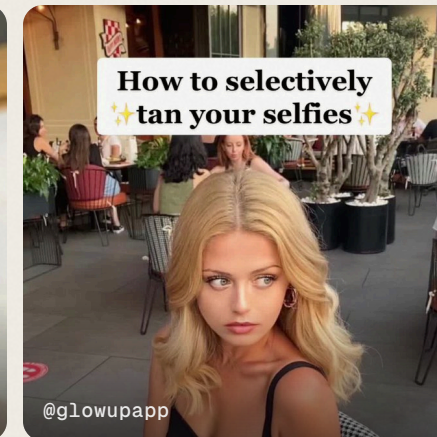
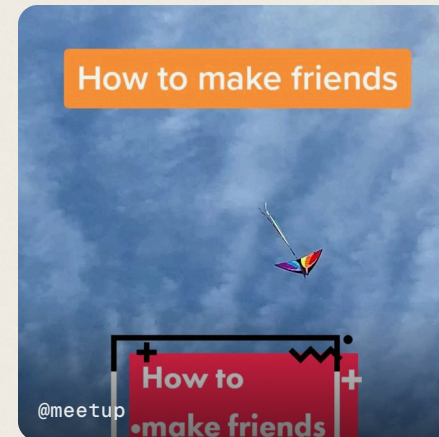
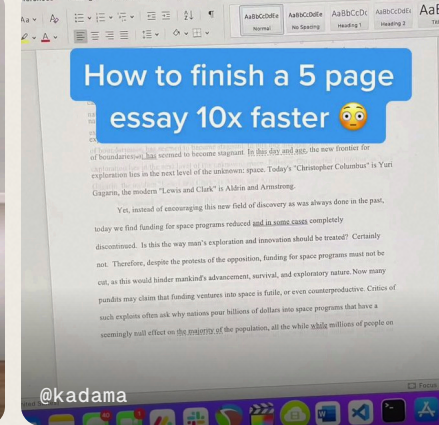
“Here’s how to do X.”

You want to share what you know. Teaching makes sense. But you can’t just teach so people know. You have to connect it to something they actually feel.

I wanted to know if the data agreed with me.



Matthew Berman
@themattberman



Every hook makes three choices. *Here's one, taken apart.*

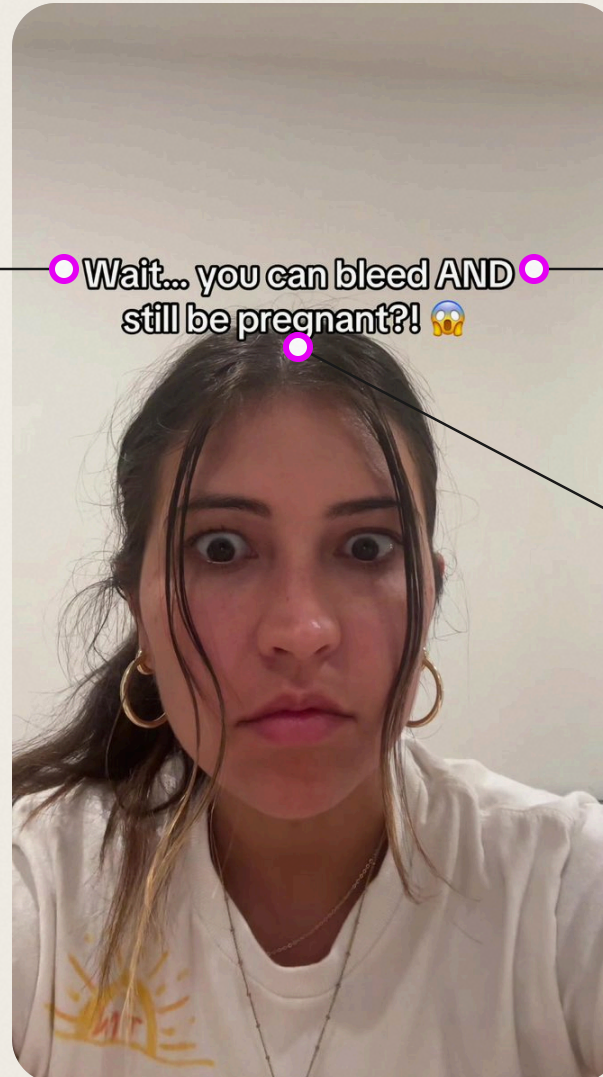
③ What do I see first?

A shocked “Wait...?!”

(The first line on screen.)

That's it. Every hook in this report got broken down this way.

When this report says **combo**, it means those three choices together. Some combos work way better than others. This report shows you which.



① What's in it for me?

A fact I didn't know.

(Why I keep watching.)

② Why do I care?

My health.

(The thing I actually want.)

25.1%

This version broke out **25.1%** of the time. The average is 18.7%.

Three steps. No cheating.

- 1 **Collect.** 193,355 short videos from TikTok and Instagram, mostly from app, tech and consumer brands.
- 2 **Read.** An AI read the words on screen and the caption of every video and answered 22 questions about it, including the three choices above. It never saw the view counts, so a viral video couldn't fool it.
- 3 **Compare.** I compared each video to the same account's usual video. If it got 3x more views than that account's typical video, it **broke out**.

Why compare an account to itself? Because a celebrity's worst video beats most people's best. This way a 5,000-follower account and a 5-million-follower account are judged the same.

About 1 in 5 videos broke out.



18.7%

That's the bar. Everything in this report is better or worse than that.

The hook everybody makes does worse than average.

The most common combo in the whole pile is a lesson: “Here’s how to do X.”

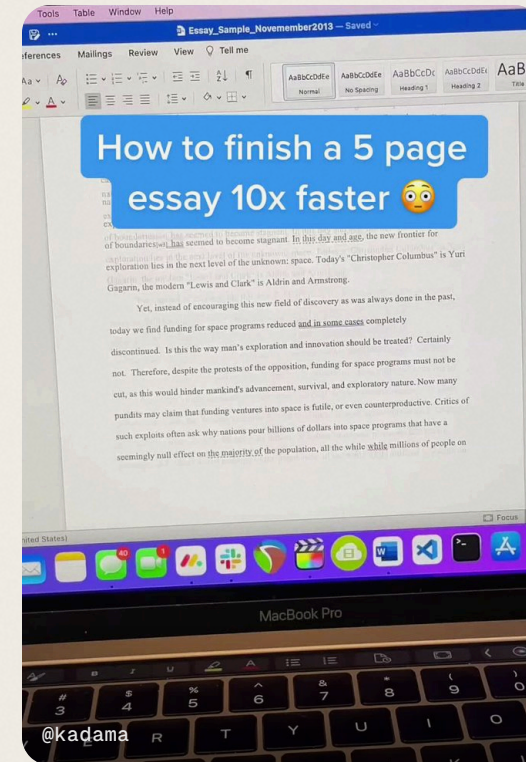
It breaks out **16.7%** of the time. The average is 18.7%.

And when the lesson is about saving time (“do this 10x faster”), it drops to **13.6%**.

One teaches. One feels like a secret you almost missed.

When that discovery is about your health, it jumps to **25.1%**.

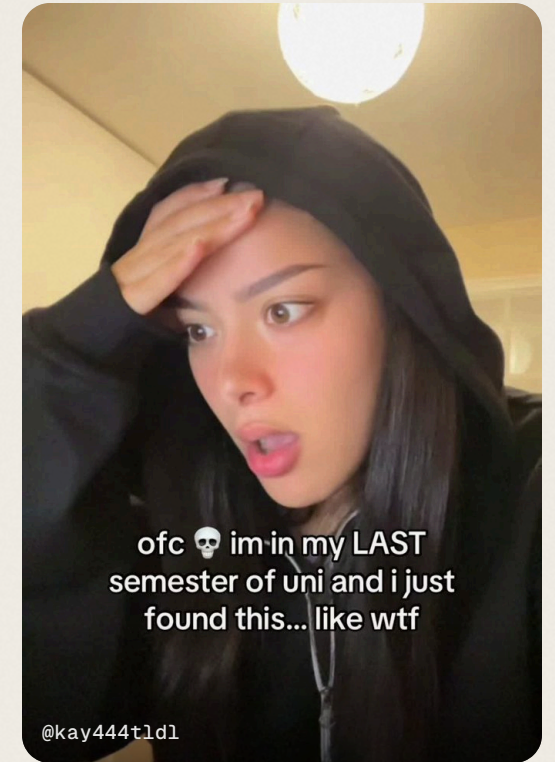
Same promise to save you time, told two ways:



“How to finish a 5 page essay 10x faster”

a lesson about saving time

13.6%



“im in my LAST semester of uni and i just found this... like wtf”

a discovery about saving time

19.0%



Bro I'm at the Travis Scott concert and someone is trying to trade his music



Remember the three choices? *Here's why they matter together.*

1

What's in it for me?

could be a secret, a result, a laugh, a story.

2

Why do I care?

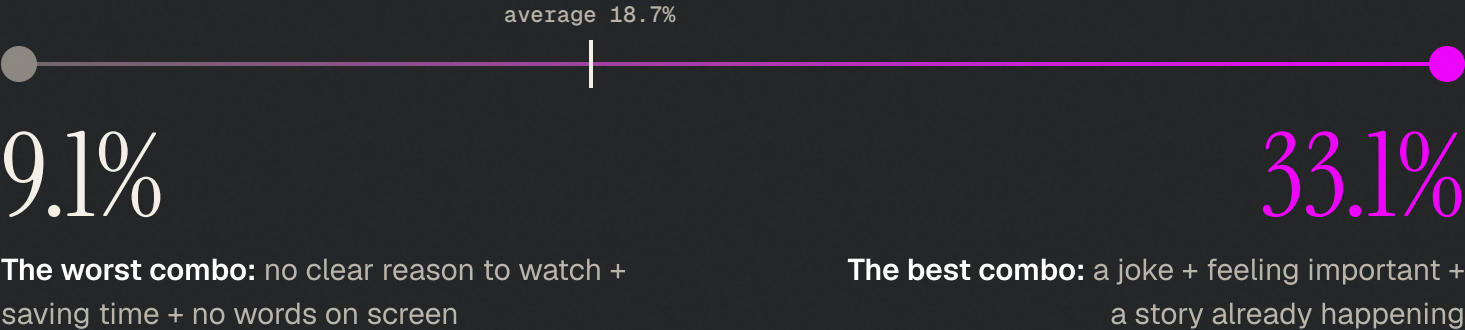
could be money, health, love, status, saving time.

3

What do I see first?

could be a number, a question, a reaction, a story already happening.

Change one choice and your odds barely move.
Get all three right together and they move *more than 3x.*

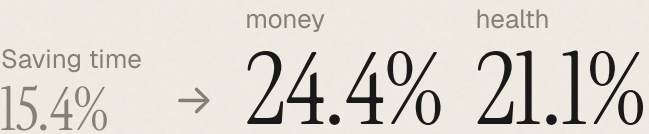


If you change nothing else, *change these.*



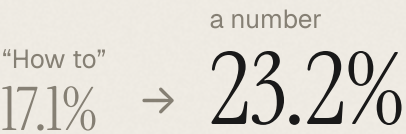
Make it about money or health, not saving time.

People care more about what they gain or lose than the minutes they save.



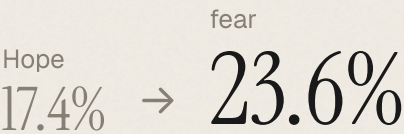
Start with a number, not “how to.”

A number is a promise you can see. “How to” is homework.



Name a fear, not a dream.

Everyone posts hope. A specific fear stands out.



Two tricks work. The rest barely matter.



Leave in a small mistake.

People can't resist correcting it in the comments.

22.4%

broke out with one

16.2%

without



Save the answer for part 2.

They have to come back to find out.

23.0%

with it

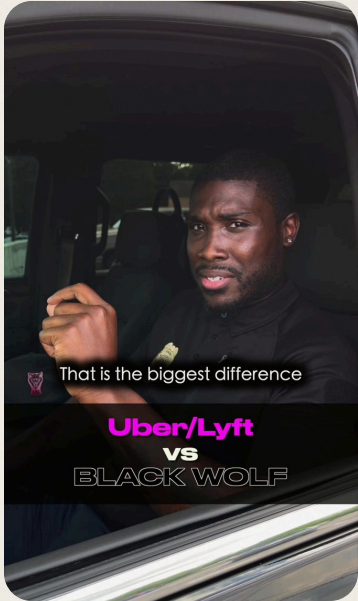
18.5%

without

Both work the same way: they leave something open that the viewer wants to close.

What barely moves the needle: “tag a friend,” debate bait, “pick a side.”

Swap in your product. *Keep the pattern.*



32%

① This vs. that

"That is the biggest difference Uber/Lyft VS BLACK WOLF"

@blackwolfapp



29%

② A real result, with a number

"5 CRAZY Back-to-School GLOW UP HACKS (How to lose 10lbs in 2 weeks)"

@amy_health

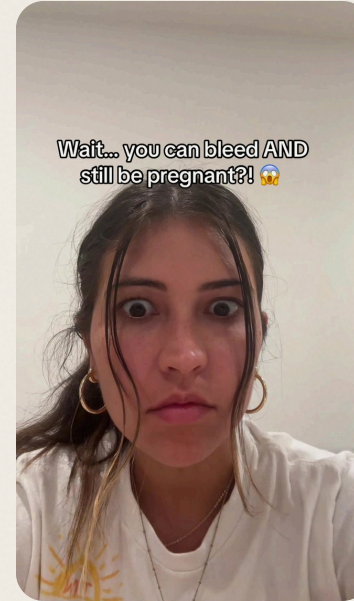


28%

③ "Is it just me?"

"Who else is starting 2026 on their period???"

@mariana.hormones

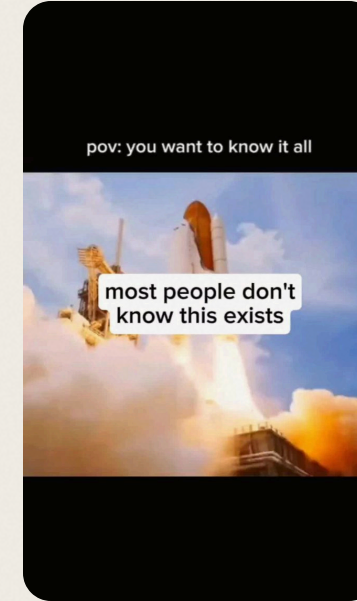


25%

④ "Wait, what?!" about a health fact

"Wait... you can bleed AND still be pregnant?!"

@sabrina.cycletips

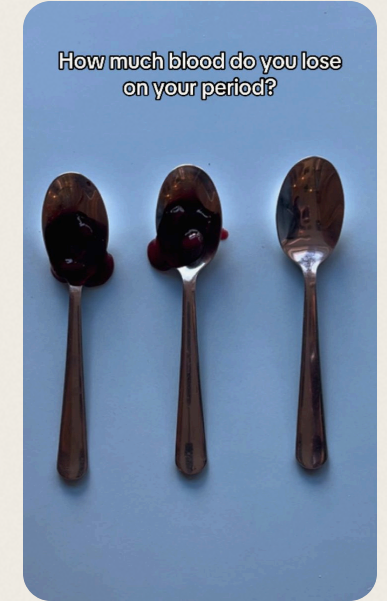


24%

⑤ A secret most people miss

"pov: you want to know it all most people don't know this exists"

@oznalle



23%

⑥ A quiz about your own body

"How much blood do you lose on your period?"

@clueapp

300%

We used these patterns in one client's ad concepts. Their leads went up 300% week over week, on the same ad spend.

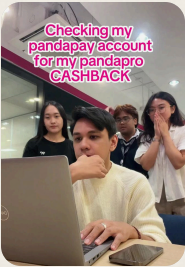
This is report 01. It read the words on screen and the captions. Next: 1,000,000+ hooks, adding what people say out loud and what you see.



Want us to build your hooks?

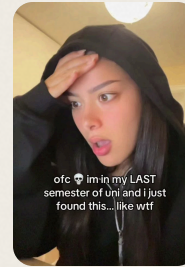
Work with us

Before you post, check *these six*.



1

Pick what they want first. Money or health beats saving time.



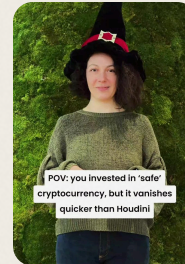
2

Teaching something? Make it a discovery. “I just found this” beats “here’s how to.”



3

Open with a number, or drop them into a story that’s already happening.



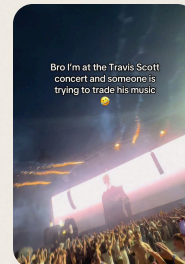
4

Name a specific fear. Hope is where everyone else is.



5

Leave one thing unfinished. A part 2, or a small mistake people will correct.



6

Check all three choices together. That’s where the 3x is.

What works best in *your world*.

What beat each category’s own average. Smaller categories have fewer videos, so treat these as what to test first.

CATEGORY	VIDEOS	AVERAGE	TRY FIRST	WITH IT
Health & fitness	72,031	20.1%	try a personal update, or a this-vs-that	27.6%
Education & productivity	70,584	15.9%	try a level-by-level progression, or a reaction video	25.7%
Travel	16,015	17.8%	try a this-vs-that, or a deadline	29.4%
Lifestyle, food & shopping	8,019	21.7%	try a challenge, or a story with a payoff	38.4%
Photo, video & creative tools	6,344	23.4%	try a bold claim	29.1%
Entertainment & games	6,064	21.0%	try showing off status, or money	33.6%
Social apps	4,231	20.4%	try an “I tried it” test, or a result they want	29.1%
Dating & relationships	4,204	23.2%	try opening on a reaction, or a told-you-so moment	31.9%
Finance & business	3,333	25.6%	try money	28.1%

How this was made. 193,355 public TikTok and Instagram Reels videos, mostly from 2025 and 2026, mostly app, tech and consumer brand accounts. An AI read the opening text and caption of each one without seeing views, likes or followers. This first pass reads text only. What people say out loud and what’s on screen come in report 02. These are patterns to test, not laws.

Build one hook in *60 seconds*.

Don't start by writing. Make the three choices first.

① Pick what they want.

Money. Health. Love. Status.
Mastery or control.

② Pick the promise.

A secret. A result. A laugh. A
story. Feeling seen.

③ Pick the first frame.

A number. A question. A reaction.
A story already moving.

YOUR HOOK

Start with the first frame. Add a promise worth staying for and the thing they already care about.

“Wait... this \$8 setting fixed the part of my ad I kept blaming on the algorithm.”

One boring idea. *Five better openings.*

STARTING IDEA

“How to write better hooks.”

DISCOVERY

I found the hook mistake everyone keeps making.

NUMBER

6 hooks I’d test before another how-to.

FEELING SEEN

Please tell me I’m not the only one still writing how-to hooks.

THIS VS. THAT

The hook people skip vs. the one they watch.

SELF-CHECK

Is your first line killing the rest of the video?

The lesson did not change. Only the reason to keep watching did.

The 10-minute *hook sprint*.

00-02

Write the plain idea.

What are you trying to say? What does the viewer want from it?

02-06

Make six openings.

Discovery. Number. Comparison. Question. Specific fear. Story already moving.

06-08

Cut the explanation.

Make the first frame obvious. Leave one useful thing unanswered.

08-10

Keep the best three.

Same offer. Same body. Different opening. Let the viewer decide.

THE RULE If the hook needs a paragraph to explain why it works, it does not work yet.