



COMMUNITY ACTION MONTH | TOOLKIT

MAY 2018

Video Production Tips

How to shoot videos

Cinematography and Videography are the art of visual storytelling. Anyone can set a camera on a tripod and hit record, but the artistry of cinematography comes into play when you control what the viewer sees (or doesn't see) and how the image is presented.



Shot sizes, angles, and movements are the heart of exceptional camerawork, and when coupled with good lighting, enhances emotions, forming the essence of cinematography. They provoke, inspire, frighten, relieve, and amaze us.

Your **opening shot**, often referred to as an **establishing shot**, is usually a long shot. It establishes the general location of where the action will follow. Video producers and editors often showcase something moving toward the camera. For example, in a movie, you often see a car driving into the scene toward the camera or a person walking toward the camera. Those are common establishing shots.

Rain can signify change in your story. If you want to change the direction of your story from happy to sad or vice versa, many videographers use a rainy shot to subliminally highlight that the story is changing.

The end/close of your story always works nicely if you provide a closing shot or sequence. Videotape something moving away from the camera to subliminally signify the end. For example, in a love story the subject of your story may walk off into the sunset holding the hand of his or her romantic love interest. You only see their backs and not their faces. This signifies the story is ending.

Bottom line: When you are videotaping a story, you need to look for opening sequences, middle transition shots and closing sequences.



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Video Production Tips Continued

Important Video Tips

1. Depending upon which social media platform you use, the length of your video will need to fit within their guidelines. For example, **Twitter supports the MP4 video format. You can upload videos up to 512MB; however, you will be prompted to keep videos to 2 minutes and 20 seconds** or less in length. Facebook has different parameters. **Per Facebook: Videos should be less than 45 minutes long and smaller than 1.75 GB. The longer your video...the larger its file size. This may affect the quality of the video.** Keep in mind that most people don't watch videos longer than 2:00 minutes.
2. **Use a tripod** or other method to stabilize the camera. (Unless you're going for a certain creative look, it is highly recommended that you stabilize your camera or video recorder.)
3. Make sure the recording **environment is quiet** and there is no background noise in your video.
4. Use a plain background for your video and ensure that your subject doesn't blend into or clash with your background. (Solid walls / brick walls work well.)
5. **Avoid busy patterns in clothing and jewelry** and stay away from shirts or patterns with stripes.
6. Make sure there is **plenty of light and that the subject's face is well-lit** in the recording.
7. **Shooting B-roll** refers to shooting video footage that sets the stage. For example, at a school play, besides shooting the play, you need to get b-roll of the outside of the school, the program, faces of audience members, cast members hiding in the wings, or costume details. These shots will be spliced into your story to help tell the story.
8. **Shoot more footage than you think you'll need.** Include footage that enhances the story or sets the scene. You can use it for smooth transitions in your video.





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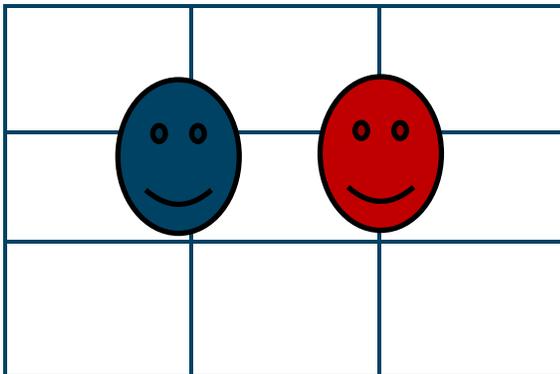
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Video Production Tips Continued

More Important Video Tips

Before you begin, check the lighting and sound. Say a few lines for the camera / recorder, and then review the footage. Does your lighting need to be adjusted? How does your shirt look against the background? Is your video inviting and appropriate or unflattering and amateurish? Can you be easily heard on a laptop computer with the volume at a normal level?

You might have to experiment a bit to get the lighting, the colors of your wardrobe, and the sound just right.



Placing your subject slightly off center, so there is space on the left or right side is preferred in videography and photography. Try to stay away from videotaping people in the center of your frame. If the person is on the right side, angle their body inward. If the person is on the left, also have them turn their body slightly inward. These are common videography and photography tips that even the pros follow.

Editing Tips

When choosing a video editor, it's all about control. Do you need something simple? If so, iMovie and the YouTube video editor work well. To use the YouTube editor, sign into your account, click Video Manager, click create in the menu at the left and select Video Editor. Create a new project.

If you need something more robust and polished, you should use Adobe Premiere Pro, Final Cut Pro X, or Avid. Keep in mind, these take longer to learn.

[The top 10 Video Mistakes to Avoid](#)

[Video Editing Tips & Tricks](#)