

## TECHNIQUES FOR SHOOTING GOOD VIDEO

**1. STEADY VIDEO** The biggest difference between professional and amateur video is that professionals use a tripod! So, use a tripod!!! On windy days stand between the wind and the camera; do what you can to make your video steady. Take your hands off the camera when shooting. You have a pulse. Hands on the camera when you're shooting will result in shaky video. So, use a tripod. Use a tripod. Use a tripod. Earthquakes and breaking news... ok, but then get on a tripod as soon as you can. If you don't have a tripod, improvise. Set your camera on your school bag. Bottom line: shoot steady video!

**2. WHITE BALANCE** White balance (WB) is the process of removing unrealistic color casts, so that objects which appear white in person are rendered white in your photo. Proper camera white balance has to take into account the "color temperature" of a light source, which refers to the relative warmth or coolness of white light. Our eyes are very good at judging what is white under different light sources, but digital cameras often have great difficulty with auto white balance (AWB) -- and can create unsightly blue, orange, or even green color casts. Understanding digital white balance can help you avoid these color casts, thereby improving your photos under a wider range of lighting conditions.

Ideally one should white balance off of a photographic gray card, but lacking that, any white surface can be used. Be sure to white balance under the same lighting conditions under which shooting will actually place. Mixed lighting sources as well as reflections from colored surfaces can skew the white balance. That usually isn't desirable.

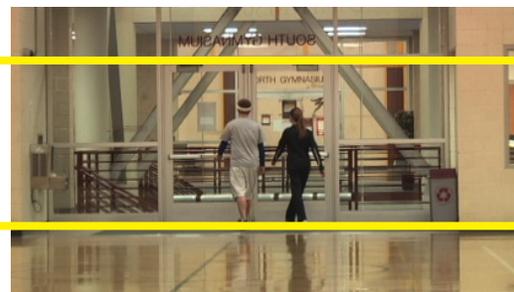


Courtesy: [www.cambridgeincolour.com](http://www.cambridgeincolour.com)

**3. LEVEL THE CAMERA TO THE HORIZON** Avoid buildings that lean by making sure the camera is level on the tripod before you start shooting. Sometimes tripods have levels; not all do. You can level the camera by using an object in your shot (street, building, etc.) and then adjust your shot in the viewfinder or LED screen using the top or bottom of the screen.



Camera NOT Level to Horizon

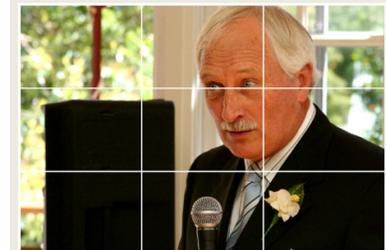
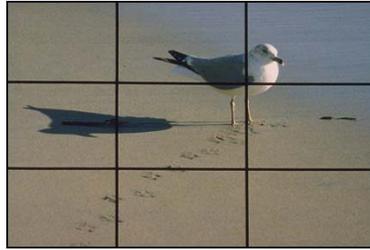
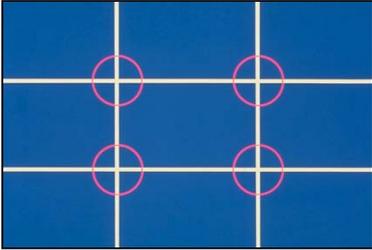


Correct Level to Horizon

**4. SOUND: WEAR HEADPHONES WHEN SHOOTING** You can't fix audio in post-production that you don't have. If the audio's bad, stop and fix it. Your interviewee will understand. How will you know if you have bad audio? You'll only know by wearing headphones while shooting. And it's not just during an interview; when you're shooting b-roll use headphones; the only way you'll know if you're getting clean audio -- or any audio at all -- is to wear those headphones!

**5. SHOOT NATURAL SOUND** Good to use as a nat sound pop and as nat sound breaks to keep your story interesting and give the viewer a sense of being there. You've got wireless mics. Get up close and personal.

**6. FRAMING** Use the rule of thirds. Imagine your picture divided into thirds both horizontally and vertically. The intersections of these imaginary lines suggest four options for placing the center of interest (where you want your viewer eyes to go when they see this picture) for good composition. The rule of thirds principle applies to b-roll of buildings as well as the subjects of your interviews. Simply put... it'll make your picture more interesting.



Courtesy: photoinf.com/General/KODAK/guidelines\_for\_better\_photographic\_composition\_rule\_of\_thirds

**7. TEN SECONDS MINIMUM PER SHOT** When shooting your b-roll, let the camera run for a minimum of 10 seconds once you've taken your hands off the camera and before putting them back on to stop recording. If there's action going on, complete the action (car driving through frame, person walking through frame, door closing, etc) The average length of a shot you'll use is 3-5 seconds. You'll see the value of the 10 second rule when you do your editing.

**8. SHOOT SEQUENCES** Makes for more interesting video and helps you with your editing. Think match cuts of continuous action. (Match Cut = wide shot me typing then direct cut close up of my fingers on the keyboard).

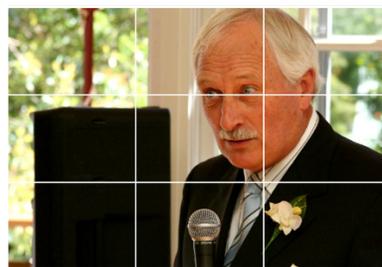
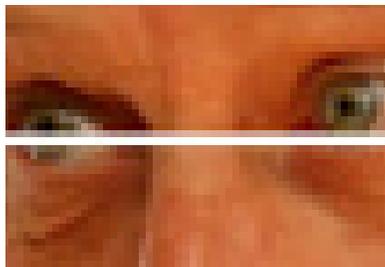
**9. DON'T PAN OR ZOOM** That's not how the human eye works. Rely on direct cuts. The only exceptions are for following action or showing perspective.

**10. SHOOT THREE SIZES OF B-ROLL** Gives variety of shots to your story and makes it more interesting. And, be creative with your shots in composition. Also helps when editing to avoid jump cuts. Shoot wide, medium and tight AND THEN shoot that extreme close up shots. What's the value of the close ups—they bring your viewer into the story instead of them having the feeling they're watching from the outside. After shooting each size, move the tripod in height and perspective (about a 35 degree angle). You want your video to be interesting!

**11. FOCUS** Use manual focus when doing an interview.

1. Set manual focus on your camera.
2. Zoom all the way in to the bridge of the nose of your subject.
3. Manually focus the shot.
4. Pull out to usually a medium (shoulder size) shot for your interview.

Be care when you use auto zoom and have objects moving across the frame while shooting; the camera will automatically zoom on the object that is crossing and then focus on the distant object again after the moving object passes.



## 12. SHOOT USING THE FIVE-SHOT RULE

Five-shot rule is a useful technique in filming someone working on something. When filming, remember to get a minimum of five different shots, which will make for a video sequence with visual variety.

There are various tutorials and guidelines on the web about five-shot rule; I found the one by Andrew Lih, a USC professor, to be very intuitive and useful.

- (1) A closeup on the hands of a subject – showing WHAT is happening
- (2) A closeup on the face – WHO is doing it
- (3) A wide shot – WHERE its happening
- (4) An over the shoulder shot (OTS) – linking together the previous three concepts
- (5) An unusual, or side/low shot – providing story-specific context



### 1 Closeup of the hands

**WHAT** is being done? Some mystery is good by going in very close up: engages the viewer. About 50% of frame should be hands



### 2 Closeup of the face

**WHO** is doing it? Frame it well, give "talk space" in front of eyes/nose. Can cut off top of head, but not the chin. **SHOW TWO EYES!**



### 3 Wide shot

**WHERE** is it being done? Get context, environment, mood and location information of the subject and surroundings. **RESPECT LINE OF ACTION**



### 4 Over the shoulder

**HOW** is it done? Combine previous three elements into one shot. Get right over shoulder for point-of-view (**POV**).



### 5 Unusual/alternative

**WHAT ELSE** should viewer know? Be imaginative: stand on a chair, crawl on your belly, vary what's in the foreground or background. This will be particular to your location or story.

## HOW TO SHOOT VARIETY SHOTS

The idea is to shoot a variety of shots from different locations, different angles, different distances, etc. For each shot you want to change the height of the tripod and the angle of the shot.

For everything that you see and want to record, remember that you need to shoot (at least) four shots. A wide shot, medium shot, and at least two close-ups — face and hands.

You should not be editing two wide shots or two medium shots in a row.

How much to film? A common rule of thumb is 25:25:50 - the number of shots for a single shooting session should be 25% wide shots, 25% medium shots, and 50% closeup shots.

Source: Storify

Source for Five-Shot Rule Courtesy of: Andrew Lih and [storify.com/mututemple/sequence-shooting](http://storify.com/mututemple/sequence-shooting)