

13 tips for shooting better video

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1. Shoot in shots

- Don't hold one shot for too long
- Shoot a series of unique shots and put them together

2. Avoid camera movement

- Any sort of camera movement is advanced technique
- Hold the camera still and let the movement happen inside your composed shot

3. Compose your shots

- Take charge and properly set up the shot
- Pay attention to backgrounds
- Don't be afraid to rearrange the furniture (in non-documentary situations)



WIDE SHOT MEDIUM SHOT CLOSE UP

4. Shoot wide, medium and close

- Wide: shows subject and the environment
- Medium: Begins to isolate the subject from the environment
- Close-up: Isolates subject from the environment (hands and faces make for good close-up shots)

5. Shoot in sequences

- Think in terms of scenes
- For each scene, shoot wide, medium and close-up
- Reconstruct the event so it appears to happen in real time. Look for things that repeat (so you can shoot more than once). Or have your subject repeat them (if possible)

6. Shoot when you see their eyes

- Half of our communication is through our eyes
- Miss the eyes and you miss half the message

7. Capture emotion and motion

- Emotion comes through loud and clear on video
- Viewers also respond to motion (ever watch a school board meeting on TV? Boring!)

8. Tell a story

- Every video will be better if it tells a story. A story should include: A hero, a beginning (where we meet the hero), a middle and an end

9. Zoom with your feet, not your lens

- Shoot at camera's widest setting, and get close to the action
- 10x zoom = 10x shakiness

10. Let subject enter and exit the frame

- This will represent passage in time and make it easier to transition to another shot

11. You're only as good as your audio

- A video that is difficult to hear will turn off viewers
- Avoid locations with bad acoustics
- Avoid distracting background noises (busy areas, heavy machinery, lawnmowers, etc.)
- Use an external microphone for quality audio

12. Avoid vertical video

- Unless using a platform that prefers vertical video, such as Snapchat, Meerkat or Periscope

13. Use the 5-shot method

- Extreme close-up of action detail
- Close-up of face of person doing action
- Medium shot - face and action together
- Over-the-shoulder view of the action
- One more different angle (be creative)

Video Editing Tips

- Cuts should be seamless, so one shot transitions to the next naturally without distracting from what the viewer is watching.
- Matching action from one shot to the next creates the illusion of one continuous motion.
- Cut on motion. Motion distracts the eye from noticing editing cuts and is the most common way of achieving the much sought after match cut. So, when cutting from one image to another, always try to do it when the subject is in motion.
- The types of shots (wides, mediums, close-ups) should be varied, to create a dynamic sequence.
- The pacing of the shots should also be varied to create different moods.
- The length of the shot is determined by the amount of information it contains. Once this information is conveyed, it's no longer necessary to linger on the shot.

Jump cuts

- A jump cut occurs when you have two consecutive shots with dramatic differences. These differences can be based on movement, screen position, etc.
- Jumps create a disconnect for the audience, it makes the cut very obvious and makes them take notice. Cutting to B-Roll can cover up jump cuts.

Common cutting patterns

- Conventional - begins with the wide shot and then cuts to the medium shot, and finally the close-up, working closer towards the character.
- Reveal - begins with a close-up shot, then cuts to a wider shot, revealing more information about the scene.
- Matching Action - cutting on movement makes for slick, dynamic cuts

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- Sources: How to Shoot Video That Doesn't Suck, <http://www.videomaker.com/community/forums/topic/10-rules-for-video-editors>, <http://cuvideoedit.com/rules-of-editing.php>