

How to shoot better video

Chris Snider | chrisniderdesign.com

Get wide, medium and close-up shots

You'll use more medium and close-up shots in your editing, so get more of those.



Wide: shows subject and the environment and answers the question "where is this happening"



Medium: Begins to isolate the subject from the environment and answers the question "who is this about"



Close-up: Isolates subject from the environment (hands and faces make for good close-up shots) and answers the question "what are they doing"

Shoot in shots

- Don't hold one shot for too long
- Frame your shot, then record until it gets boring (5-15 seconds). Then move to the next shot.
- Shoot a series of unique shots and edit them together to tell your story

Plan your shoot

- Create a storyboard of what you think your finished video will look like. Use that list of shots to make sure you get all the shots you need.

Avoid camera movement

- Any sort of camera movement is advanced technique
- Hold the camera still and let the movement happen inside your composed shot
- Ideally you'll shoot things that move, but if you're shooting something that does not move some subtle camera movement may help

Tell a story

- Every video will be better if it tells a story. A story should include: A person who wants something, an obstacle in their way, how they overcome that obstacle

Compose your shots

Take charge and properly set up the shot, pay attention to backgrounds and don't be afraid to move things around to make a better shot



Rule of thirds: Putting your subject off-center creates more tension/energy than centering



Leading lines: Look for lines that will lead a viewer's eye to your subject



Foreground/background: Put something interesting in front of or behind your subject



Framing: Look for items that can make a frame around your subject

Shoot in sequences

- Think in terms of scenes
- For each scene, shoot wide, medium and close-up to tell the story of where, who and what is happening
- Reconstruct the event so it unfolds in the proper order

Get quality audio

- A video that is difficult to hear will turn off viewers
- Avoid locations with bad acoustics
- Avoid distracting background noises
- Use an external microphone for quality audio

Hold the camera horizontally...

- ...Or vertically. Just be consistent so you don't have to edit together different videos.
- Know where the finished video will be displayed and shoot the correct format (vertical for social media stories, horizontal for most other videos).

Zoom with your feet, not your lens

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



Frame your interview properly

- Keep the background simple
- Leave a little bit of space above the person's head
- Leave room in the lower third to add their name and title
- Have them look at the interviewer, not the camera
- Use rule of thirds and have them look toward the extra space

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)

Apps to use



FilmicPro - \$15
Professional tools for shooting video



VideoShop - free with in-app purchases
Edit, add music, sound effects and text



InShot - free with in-app purchases
Video editing, filters, music, voiceovers, stickers and text.



Quik - free
Automated video editing - adds music, transitions and text



Clips - free (iOS only)
Make fun videos with text, effects, graphics.

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.

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

-
- 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>