

CHAPTER 6

Chapter 6 covers the subjects of types of camera shots, camera movements, shot sequencing, cutting on the action, and clean entrances and exits within a scene. When teaching the different camera shots, it is important to emphasize that these shots are relative to the scene. This means that a wide-angle establish shot of a house carries the same name as wide-angle establish shot of a person seated at a desk. The purpose of the shot in both situations is the same. The shot tells the viewer where the action is taking place. A wide-angle establish shot is not necessarily a large area. The amount of area viewed in the shot is relative to the action of the scene. The wide-angle shot of a desk sets-up the location of the action, as does the wide-angle view of a house.

This same principle of shot relativity is also applied to other camera shots. A medium shot of the person seated at the desk could be one that shows half of their body. Whereas, a medium shot of a person standing on the front porch of the house would be a head to toe body shot. To repeat, the shot names are the same but what is included in the frame is relative to the situation.

A MUST READ SECTION

At this point, students should have a working knowledge of framing and types of camera shots. Therefore, now is the time to watch for and correct two common faults that the majority of beginning photographers and videographers have. They are:

1. Having too much headroom in a frame.
2. Being too far away or having too wide a shot.

Some individuals may have another fault and that is:

3. They have a tendency to constantly place subjects to one side of the frame.
Favoring one side often occurs.

Students must be taught to concentrate on placing the subject's eyes on the top rule of thirds line and creating "tighter" shots. Also, that moving closer to the subject is better than zooming in.

Emphasize the chapter point that there is a difference between a zoom and a dolly. A zoom decreases the angle of coverage or view, which eliminates elements in frame as the lens is zoomed in. A dolly does not change the angle of coverage therefore; more elements in a shot will remain in view as the dolly takes place. Obviously, as a dolly occurs and elements of a scene are passed by they will no longer be visible. This is common sense but I am not making any assumptions

It is also extremely important to repeat again and again that yo-yo zooming is not acceptable.

STOP

DID YOU READ THE ABOVE SECTION?

NO, GO BACK AND READ IT.

YES, GO ON

The only way that students can develop skills in making camera movements is to practice and review their recordings. If you want to show students how important it is to have a steady camera, use a video projector with a large screen to review a few recordings that they think are steady. The large image will magnify the camera's movements and this will make a point about the necessity of making smooth camera movements that create rock solid, jitter free images.

Today, many homes have large screen TV's. Get the point?

Here is a funny side note. No charge for this. While I was teaching, I named all shaky videos "Puke video." I gave them this name because individuals can become nauseous while watching such videos. The viewers could have asked for motion sickness pills.

This term caught on with my students and on occasions when I have come into contact with graduates they always comment that they saw some "puke video" recently. The term taught the concept. It made the point.

To develop the skills of creating shot sequences students must learn to plan every production. A production plan is a necessary road to follow. Plans can be on paper in the form of a storyboard, a shot list, or a script. Storyboards, call for specific camera shots and angles. Shot lists and scripts call for specific footage but how the footage is shot is left to the discretion of the videographer.

Some productions do not require a paper plan. However, they do need a mental plan to follow. Mental plans are required when recording unscripted event such as a prom. Here the mental plan establishes what should be recorded but not exactly what will be recorded since there is no way of predicting exactly what will take place.

In either case, plans are a must. Students need to follow the plan and apply the techniques of shot sequencing. If they do not, their productions will take the road that leads to disaster.

Cutting on the action and entering and exiting a scene cleanly are techniques that can readily be seen in broadcast productions. They are constantly used in professional productions. The editing process requires the use of these techniques. Additionally, clean exits and entrances can be used as transitions.

These cuts, entrances and exits can be performed in camera or allowed for when shooting footage that will be edited. Whenever the techniques are used, they add a touch of creativity and professionalism to a production.

Use broadcast examples of these techniques and your students will get the idea of how they are used by professionals.

Finally in Chapter 6, the Ten Commandments of Camera Use are listed and explained. As with the religious Ten Commandments, they should always be observed and followed. There are no ands, ifs, buts, ors, or nors about it.

The following is a list of exercises for Chapter 6:

1. Provide practice time that allows each student to create all shot types and to make all camera movements. Each student should then evaluate their recordings for smooth camera movements and shot stability.
2. Make a recording of the exterior of a building using a variety of camera shots along with pans and tilts.
3. Using a wheelchair or a four-wheeled service cart as a dolly, make a series of recordings demonstrating trucks and dollies.
4. To illustrate the difference between a zoom and a dolly, make two recordings from the point of view of a person walking down a hall towards someone at the end of the hall. Do this by first placing an individual at the far end of the hall. Make the first recording by zooming in on the subject at the end of the hall. Make the second recording by using the wheelchair or another device to dolly towards the subject. Have the class compare and note the differences between the two recordings.
5. To illustrate continuity, provide five minutes at the beginning of a class period for students to make a list of what they did from the time they left the previous class to when they entered and took their seat in your class. Have each student read his or her list. Discuss the lists and emphasize that they contain a logical sequence of events. This is the story line and this same type of continuous story line is necessary in all video productions. This is continuity. Emphasize that the type of production does not matter. The production could be a training video, a documentary, a 30-second commercial, or a drama. Continuity is necessary to deliver the intended message. If continuity is broken the viewer will become confused and the message will not be delivered.
6. Have each student watch five minutes of a prime time drama show and while viewing, make a list of the shots used in the segment. To aid in making the list, use the following shot abbreviations:

ES – Establish Shot	LS – Long Shot	CU – Close-up Shot
WA – Wide Angle	MS – Medium Shot	MCU – Medium Close-up

Upon completion of the segment, the student will count the total number of shots used and the total of each type of shot used. Discuss the findings in class. This will illustrate the variety of shots used in a “Hollywood style” production.
7. Create a shot sequence with a jump cut and another with a correction for the jump cut.
8. Create a shot sequence that includes a clean entrance and exit and cuts on action from either of the following:
 1. A person walking to and entering a car.
 2. A person going to a locker and putting on a sweater or coat.
 3. A person going to a water fountain and taking a drink of water.