"The single most important component of a camera is the twelve inches behind it."
-Ansel Adams
Making Video
Making Video

Four things to get out of today:

Getting steady, sharp images, including shot framing and camera moves

Characteristics of lenses and how to take advantage them for storytelling purposes

Practical interview techniques

“Composing” a video program including continuity, pacing, and breathing room
Holding steady
- Make yourself a tripod, using furniture, elbows, vertical object or whatever; get comfortable
- Carry and USE a tripod or monopod when it’s not too much of a hassle
- Use steady shot function
lens and focus
- Auto vs manual, when to use each

- Focus lock function
- Wide and tele setting issues
- Macro mode tips
- Pans, tilts and other moves

Begin recording, hold at least 5 sec, perform move, hold 5 sec
Slow and steady moves; if you have time, practice move before recording
Keep moves short, subtle
- Mixing wide, medium, close shots
- Get close to subject, fill the frame, walk up to subject rather using the zoom, unless you
  want a narrow depth of field and you can make the camera steady
lens and focus
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- In manual focus mode, ZI, focus, ZO to desired composition
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- wide and tele setting issues
- You will need to steady the camera when using the lens zoomed all the way in
- Macro mode tips
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**Macro mode tips**
**lens and focus**

- Get close to subject, fill the frame, walk up to subject rather using the zoom, unless you want a narrow depth of field.
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TELE SETTING
- less depth of field
- camera shake more apparent
- less in view
- perspective between objects compressed

WIDE SETTING
- greater depth of field
- camera shake less apparent
- more in view
- perspective between objects expanded

tele  mid-zoom  wide
**lens and focus**
- Pans, tilts and other moves
  - Begin recording, hold at least 5 sec, perform move, hold 5 sec
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Interviewing

Recording video interviews with Point + Shoot cameras is fair at best. You need to get close for any sort of interview.

Sound quality is directly proportional to mic proximity.

Use headphones if possible while recording. If that’s not possible, do a test and confirm you are getting audio before performing the interview.

Avoid camera handling when recording for sound.

Use a tripod or monopod to maintain steadiness.

- Avoid loud locations
- Engage the “wind filter” (...if possible with your camera)
types of framing

cu - close up
ms - medium shot
ws - wide shot
**interview techniques**
- arrange good lighting but avoid squinty eyes, or having the subjects face in all shadow.
- confirm good audio with headphones
- tripod height should be the height of the person’s eyes
- consider the background, and compositional elements
- Generally compose with medium & close-ups, and with more space in the direction they are looking
- subject should be the the brightest part of the frame
- eyeline; have them look at the interviewer standing close to the camera, or you, the camera op
interviewing
- Choose strong, articulate characters
- Conduct a "pre-interview" if possible; talk with them in person or on the phone to establish the issues. This also helps build a sense of trust, they will be more relaxed once the camera rolls.
- Ask short questions, be alert to answers that will lead to more questions
- Be sure they answer in complete sentences, your questions will be edited out
- Use non-verbal acknowledgement during interviews- head nod, smiles, pause before next question
consider:
- close, medium and wide shots to help tell the story
  (WS tells viewer where you are, CU can add lots of info)

- action/reaction shots (to guide the viewer and advance the story)
  (e.g. WS walking to bike, CU of deflated tire, CU of frown.)

- cutaway shots
  (shots used to bridge between different action, places or people)

- edit in the camera! Shoot in the order you want the viewer to see it and the order you may need to edit it. (you may want to create a plan on paper as to what shots you need and in what order)

**Scene and clip length**
The nature of your subject should determine scene lengths. You might film a scene for several minutes if the action or dialogue is holds. A cutaway may only last for 5-10 seconds.

**Keep The Camera Rolling**
It's better to cut out lots of bad footage than to miss any good footage. Don't be too quick to turn the camera off, especially when your subject is children or wildlife or an interesting interview. You can’t predict when something interesting will happen or be spoken. Anticipate the next move. Get there, set up and roll before it happens.
Audio
- Built in mic use, pros and cons
  - possibility of getting camera handling sound, be gentle
  - get close to subject if you plan to use this mic for an interview
- External mic use: wired or wireless
- Wind issues: wind filter (menu setting), wind screens
- Monitor with headphones
  - to evaluate wind problems, volume, clarity, and to confirm that the external mic is working, especially during an interview
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Foundations of storytelling

"You don’t take a photograph, you make it."
- Ansel Adams

"The camera doesn’t make a bit of difference. All of them can record what you are seeing. But, you have to SEE."
- Ernst Haas

"Composition is the strongest way of seeing."
- Edward Weston

lighting
composition
timing
personnel
narrative
Lighting
- learn to recognize “legible” lighting, pay attention to the qualities of light
- hard vs. soft light sources
- be aware of mixed light sources and color temperature
composition

• elimination of non-essential elements
• composition usually benefits by getting closer
• consider the 4 edges of the frame, and the subject in relation to the 4 edges
• study the masters
• Leonardo advised “study the stains on the walls”
COMPOSITION
Composing your scenes carefully in the viewfinder enhances the quality of your movies.

You're already far ahead of the game if you can
(1) keep the background uncluttered,
(2) concentrate the camera on one center of interest at a time, and
(3) keep the horizon straight.
An uncluttered background helps focus attention on the subject. By shooting from a low angle and using the sky as a background, or by shooting from a high angle toward the ground or water, you keep a lot of distracting elements out of your backgrounds. This is especially effective with close-ups of people.

Although it's possible to eliminate a lot of unwanted background distractions, you can't do so every time. Follow the action even if it sometimes moves into an area where the background is a bit cluttered.
rule of thirds
rule of thirds
CONTINUITY
- Keep in mind that you are telling a story. As in any story, it needs an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. Continuity of shots and storyline tie all the parts together.

- Continuity may come naturally when you film the action as it happens in its normal progression, or create the order when you edit the film later into sequences with possibly of 2-5 shots.

- Sometimes it’s helpful to create a storyboard. A storyboard is a way to identify key moments or points in a comic strip sort of format, made during the pre-production stage.
Figure 3.5 Venus Mountain stick figure interpretation. Reprinted with permission.
**Scene Length**
The nature of your subject should determine scene lengths. Because you film different subjects doing different things, varying the scene length almost comes naturally. You might film a long scene for several minutes if the action is maintained. A cutaway may only last for 5-10 seconds.

**Shot types**
Wide shot - establishes place and people  
Medium shot - provides detail  
Close up – provide a lot of detail, and sometimes drama

- intermix long, medium, and close-up shots for variety  
- rule of thumb is to start with a wide shot to establish the action, but it could also be a close-up  
- follow with a related scene shot from a different distance.  
- keep in mind that close-ups add variety, impact, and interest.

**Cutaways**
In a cutaway, you simply leave the main action for a brief scene to film something else that's related to your movie. Cutaways are useful in the editing process to provide an “action/reaction” relationship in a scene

**Camera angles**
Shoot from different camera angles. You might shoot head-on for a medium shot, move in (or zoom in or out) for a close-up or a wide shot. Then try a different angle. Shoot high and low. Shoot with or out of focus elements in the foreground to add depth to the shot.
When shooting:

Avoid the common tendency to move the camera all over the place, e.g., zooming in and out, tilting up and down, panning left and right

Hold the camera longer on a shot longer than you think you need to, that’s when interesting stuff happens. Let the action and motion unfold in front of you.

Try keeping the lens wide, and just shoot, and let the action and motion unfold in front of you. After a bit of time, move in for close ups, or change camera position.

Be aware of the dialogue so as to avoid turning the camera off during a key moment.

Become invisible to your subject by moving at the proper time, getting close but not being intrusive, and by staying silent. Just keep shooting.

Pre-plan as much as possible; strive to get a mental picture of how the finished video will look even before you record anything. A short, well thought out and produced video is far better than a long, sloppy one. Keep it simple.
camera topography and menu options

- on/off
- menu
- settings dial
- zoom
- focus controls
- battery
- on board & external mics

in menu:
- activate wind screen
- turn digital zoom off
- turn lens stabilization on
- adjust eyepiece focus control