

Video

Initial planning and preparation

This is crucial. You must know *what* you want to film, *where*, and *when*. Most videos will require:

- A *script*, showing in written form what filming is required including camera angles and shot sizes *and/or*
- A *storyboard*, showing the intended shots in the form of drawings.

- A *recce* of each location to check that it is suitable.
 - Is there enough light?
 - Is it quiet enough?
 - Is there enough space?
 - Do you need permission to film there?

- A checklist of *equipment* you will need.
 - Do you need anything else (eg props and costumes for an acted scene)?
 - Will you need transport?

- A *shooting schedule* indicating what will be filmed, where, and when.
 - Will the people, equipment and facilities you need will be available when you want to film?
 - Will you have enough time for scenes that need several takes?

Equipment checklist

You may not need all of these every time.

Check that each piece of equipment is working before you take it out on a shoot.

Name of project _____

Individuals involved _____

Date of shoot _____

Location of shoot _____

Camera Required Ready

Clapperboard Required Ready

Tripod Required Ready

Microphone Required Ready

Lead Required Ready

Stand or boom Required Ready

Headphones Required Ready

Tapes with blank labels* Required Ready

Batteries and spares, fully charged Required Ready

Mains adaptor Required Ready

Extension cable Required Ready

Script Required Ready

Storyboard Required Ready

Notebook to log shots Required Ready

Lights Required Ready

Other: _____ Required Ready

_____ Required Ready

* If you're reusing old tapes, check their condition and rewind them.

Filming checklist

Before you start recording

- Check your camera isn't displaying the date and time
- Check colour balance if necessary.
Avoid mixing light sources (eg daylight + fluorescent light)
- Set exposure and focus to manual or automatic as required
- Check for background sound and other distractions
- Check sound levels if possible
- Check there's enough light but not too much contrast
- Record a short section and play it back to check everything's working (including sound)
- Film with the camera pointing away from the light source
- Check the background – is it distracting, too light, too dark?
- Check your framing
- Make sure your shots don't 'cross the line'
- Check focus and exposure
- Remember to record cutaways

When you're filming

- Check that the 'REC' symbol appears in the viewfinder when you start filming, and that PAUSE or STANDBY appears when you have stopped filming
- Record more than you need: start the camera running several seconds before things start happening, and keep it running for a couple of seconds after things stop

After filming

- Label each tape and make supporting notes of what you have filmed

Filming an acted scene or interview

Team:

- Director
- Production assistant
- Camera operator
- Sound recordist

(You could have one or two people filling all these functions)

- 1 When everything is set up and everyone is ready to do a 'take', the *Director* asks for quiet and says Stand by.
- 2 The *Director* asks the *Camera Operator* to start recording by saying Turn over.
- 3 The *Camera Operator* presses the button to start recording. Once she can see the symbol REC in the viewfinder, she signals that the recording has started.
- 4 The *Director* counts the actors/participants in silently using 3, 2, 1, fingers and a wave of the hand.
- 5 Once the action has finished, the *Director* silently counts to five and then calls out CUT.
- 6 The *Camera Operator* presses the button to stop filming and checks that the REC symbol has been replaced by PAUSE
- 7 The *Production Assistant* ticks off the scene on the list.

Hints for shooting

- When the shot includes a camera movement, hold on the still image for a couple of seconds before and after the movement
- Try to include a complete movement
- Don't cut while the camera/zoom is still moving
- Zooms should only be used rarely if at all
- Allow shots to run until a natural break occurs