

# Film Terminologies



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**Philadelphia Film society**





## Screenplay

A screenplay is the guide for the Producers, Director, Actors, crew of exactly what will appear on screen. It is the common ground that everybody on the film will work with from start to finish of production. It tells the complete story, contains all action in the film and all dialogue for each character.

## Cinematography

Cinematography sets and supports the overall look and mood of a film's visual narrative. Each visual element that appears on screen, a.k.a. the mise-en-scène of a film, can serve and enhance the story. It is in the hands of the cinematographer to ensure that every element is cohesive and supports the story.



## Shot

The shot is a fundamental cinematic unit. It is untouched by editing; it is a single stream of images. There can be a fixed or moving frame, a standard or nonstandard frame rate, but the shot has to be continuous.



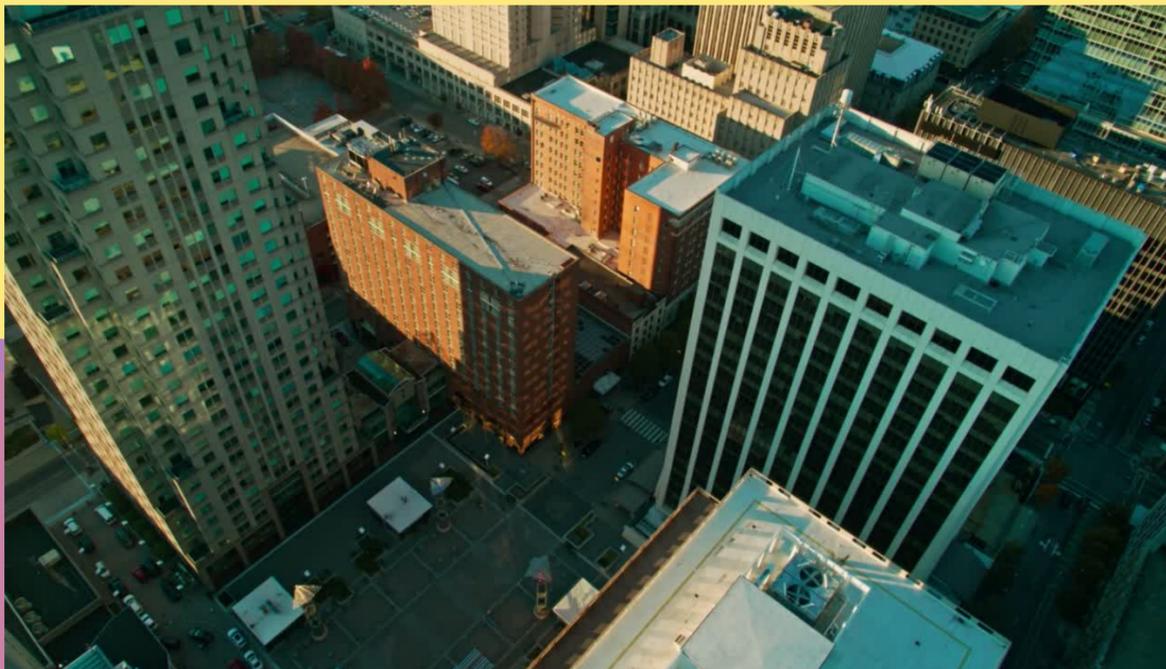
## Scale

When it comes to storytelling and transmitting meaning to the audience, the perceived distance between the camera and the scene's main subject, known as the "scale of shot," is a critical element. Depending on the situation, it can either promote a closeness with a character or bury the character in its environment.



## Bird eye view

This is a very long shot or establishing shot taken from a drone or aircraft far above the ground.



## Establishing shot

This is a necessary shot for the plot's progression. To help the audience follow along, this shot explains where the characters have been or where they are going.



## Long Shot/Full shot/Wide shot

is a shot in which a human standing in the frame would take up almost the whole vertical space of the screen. It allows for a steady shot that doesn't require constant reframing. It is used in genres where a full body action is to be seen in its entirety. As a result, a scene's protagonist and his or her immediate surroundings can be depicted in a single frame.



## Medium Shot

Medium shots are usually filmed from a middle distance and move us a little bit closer to the subject compared to the long shot. Character actions or the effects of an object on a character are typically shown in this type of shot.



## Close Up Shot

A framing in which the scale of the object shown is relatively large. In a close-up a person's head, or some other similarly sized object, would fill the frame. Framing scales are not universal, but rather established in relationship with other frames from the same film. These two shots from *Eyes Wide Shut* and *A Summer Tale* can be described as close-ups, even if one starts at the neck and the second at the upper chest.



## Extreme Close Up Shot

A framing in which the scale of the object shown is very large; most commonly, a small object or a part of the body usually shot with a zoom lens.



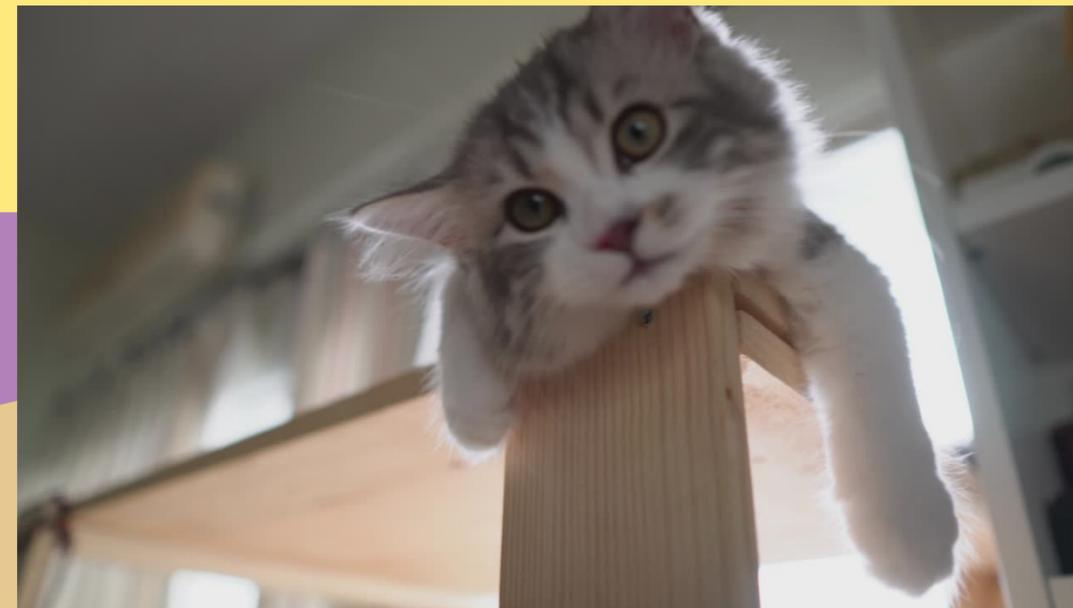
## Crane Shot

Crane shots are often long or extreme long shots: they lend the camera a sense of mobility and often give the viewer a feeling of omniscience over the characters.



## Handheld Camera, Steady-Cam

Handheld cameras create a shaky, jerky film, but they also provide greater mobility and flexibility than bulkier standard cameras.



## Pan

This is a camera movement where the whole camera turns to the right or left. It creates a fluid, horizontally-scanning frame effect on the screen. When two locations or characters are panned together at the same time, we are immediately aware of how close they are. Different dramatic effects can be achieved by manipulating the pace at which a pan takes place.



## Tilt

This is a camera movement in which the body of the camera moves upwards and downwards on fixed support. It generates a movable frame that looks up and down as it explores the area. When the camera is tilted, the framing angle frequently shifts as well.



## Tracking Shot

This shot moves forward, backward, or laterally through space. In film, a tracking shot is used to follow a moving character or object. It makes the viewer feel more connected to the moving actor or item since they are participating in the action rather than simply observing it.



## Whip Pan Shot

This is an incredibly quick movement of the camera from side to side, which temporarily causes the image to blur into a collection of blurry horizontal streaks. Sometimes, a scene transition is achieved by splicing together two whip pans with a seamless cut.



## Following Shot

This is a shot in which the frame moves to follow a moving subject. A following shot is one in which the camera follows a figure or object as it moves inside the frame by means of a movement such as panning, tracking, tilting, or craning.



## Reframing

Quickly panning or tilting the camera to follow the subjects and maintain them in view or focused. Actions of the characters supersede those of the camera.



## Full Pan

A pan does not necessarily mean that the camera moves along an horizontal line. There is also something called a 360° pan.



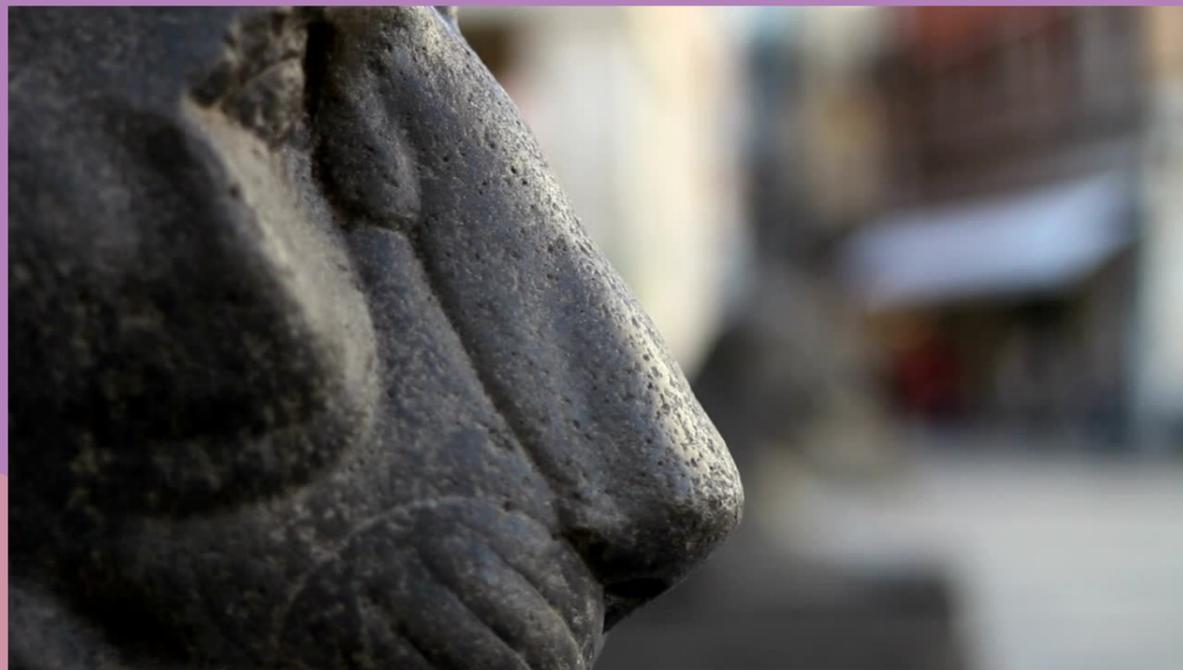
## Focus

The term "focus" is used to describe how well the lens allows light rays from a certain location on an item to converge at the same spot on a frame of the film negative, resulting in an image with crisp lines and detailed textures that accurately represent the original.



## Racking Focus

The term "racking focus" describes the process of shifting the focal point of a lens to make an object in one plane of the picture blurry while bringing one in a different plane into sharp focus. Racking focus is an even more overt method of guiding audience attention across a scene and connecting two areas or items. The technique is often performed fast, imitating a brief, fleeting gaze that can be utilized to hasten the pace or heighten tension.



## Zoom Shot

The zoom shot employs a lens with many elements to adjust the focus length mid-shot. We move closer or away from the subject when the image quality varies from short to long lens, or vice versa. Similar to crane or tracking shots, perceived distance fluctuates, but depth of focus and size do not. Zooms are used to introduce an object or character at the opening of a scene or film.



## Long Take

Plan-Sequence must be planned and rehearsed to the fullest detail, as each misstep means starting again. Plan-Sequence affects cinematic rhythm. Long takes may make a film tense, stagnant, and spellbinding or bold, fluid, and lighthearted.



## Rythm

Consistency and rapidity with which sounds, sequences of shots, and motions within shots are experienced. Rhythmic elements consist of beat (or pulse), accent (or stress), and tempo (or pace). One of a film's most important characteristics is its rhythm, which plays a major role in setting the tone and leaving an impression on the audience. Combining rhythmic mise-en-scene, cinematography, sound design, and editing is essential to creating an engaging narrative. Rhythm is the overall harmony of a film.

## Slow Motion

The standard frame rate for motion pictures is 24fps (frames per second). In order to make the action appear to go slower than usual, one might increase the amount of frames exposed every second. Conversely, reducing the amount of frames exposed each second makes the resultant motion look faster.



## Stop Motion

The extreme case of frame rate manipulation is stop-motion, when the camera takes only one frame then the subject is manipulated or allowed to change before taking another frame.



## Framing

The craft of filmmaking involves a lot of picking and choosing. What happens in front of the camera, known as the "profilmic event," is contained within a "frame" whose borders determine what is shown and what is left out. The camera's position in respect to the subject, the projected image's aspect ratio, the nature of the connection between camera and subject, and the identification of the camera with a particular personality are all examples of the expressive features of framing.



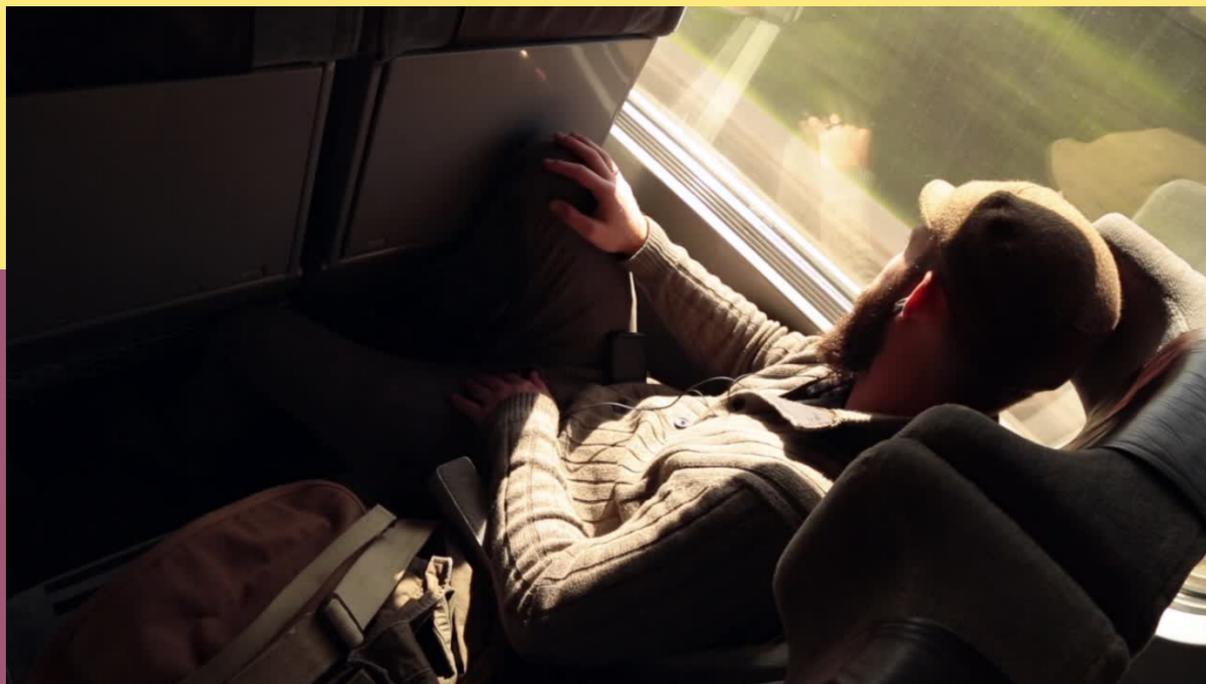
## Angle Of Framing

Many films are shot with a camera that appears to be at approximately the same height as its subject. However, it is possible to film from a position that is significantly lower or higher than the dominant element of the shot. In that case, the image is described as low angle or high angle respectively. Angle of framing can be used to indicate the relation between a character and the camera's point of view. Or can simply be used to create striking visual compositions.



## Canted Frame

Objects in a canted frame appear to be tilted out of their normal vertical orientation because the frame is not horizontal. The usage of canted frames suggests disorder and instability. That's why they're linked to the fast beats of action movies, music videos, and cartoons.



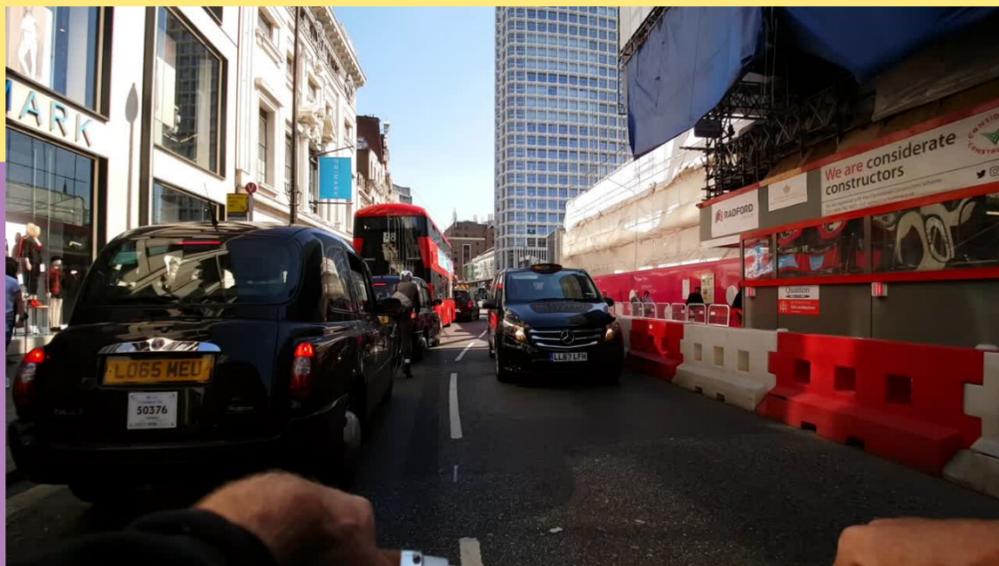
## Level of Framing

The camera's height might also be important in a film. A low-level camera is near to the ground, whereas a high-level camera is above the cinematic viewpoint. Camera level is employed to show sympathy for people or create pleasing compositions. Camera level is employed more when objects or characters differ in height.



## Point-of-View Shot

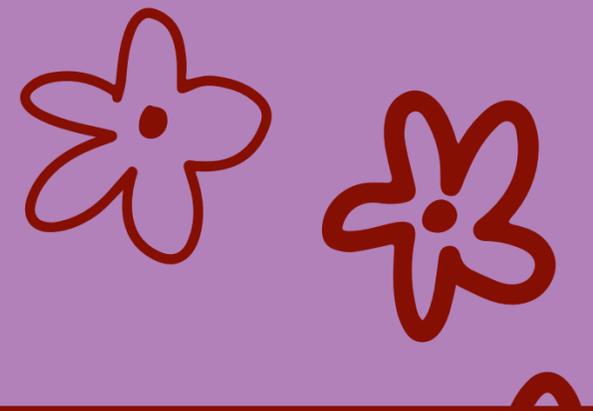
A shot taken with the camera placed approximately where the character's eyes would be, showing what the character would see; usually cut in before or after a shot of the character looking. Horror films and thrillers often use POV shots to suggest a menacing and unseen presence in the scene. Films that use many point-of-view shots tend toward dynamic and nON- naturalistic style.



## Flashback Flash-Forward

Flash-forwards and flashbacks both move the narrative from the present or present to another time. While a flash-forward takes a narrative forward in time (to the future or present), a flashback goes back in time (to the past), often to before the narrative began.





## Film Editing

Film editing is the art, technique and practice of assembling shots into a coherent sequence. The job of an editor is not simply to mechanically put pieces of a film together, cut off film slates or edit dialogue scenes. Editors play an important role in the making of a film.

## Continuity Editing

A method for maintaining continuous narrative action. Continuity editing matches shot direction, location, and timing. The film assumes continuous space and time between shots. When on-screen directions match film world directions, diegesis is easier to understand. Eye-line match and match on action help create a consistent space. In Hollywood continuity editing, the camera axis angle varies by more than  $30^\circ$  between shots, for example in a conversation scene rendered as a series of shot/reverse shots. The  $180^\circ$  line is not usually crossed unless the transition is smoothed by a POV shot or a reestablishing shot.

## Elliptical Editing

Shot transitions that omit parts of an event, causing an ellipsis in plot and story duration. Elliptical editing need not be confined to a same place and time.

## Overlapping Editing

Synonymous with dragging out the story, these cuts show the same or similar sequences of events many times. Films that put an emphasis on action and movement rather than plot and dialogue, such as sports documentaries, musicals, martial arts films, etc., often make use of this technique, which is more commonly associated with experimental filmmaking due to its temporally disconcerting and purely graphic nature.



## Editing Matches

Editing matches refer to those techniques that join as well as divide two shots by making some form of connection between them. That connection can be inferred from the situation portrayed in the scene (for example, eye-line match) or can be of a purely optical nature (graphic match).

## Eye-Line Match

A transition that adheres to the axis of action principle is one in which the first shot depicts an actor moving in one direction and the second depicts a surrounding environment that contains what the actor is looking at. If the subject glances left, the next shot should indicate that the person doing the looking is located to the right of the frame. This highlights how using eye-line matches to generate space in a video, whether it be actual or fictional, can be a highly powerful strategy.

## Match On Action

This is a clip that appears to prolong an action by splicing together two shots taken at the same time but from different angles. It's no surprise that one of the most typical continuity transitions has these qualities. Since the match on action indicates two movements—the one that actually takes place on screen, and an implied one by the viewer, since her/his position is shifted. It adds diversity and energy to a scene.

## Cheat Cut

Cheat cut in the continuity editing system, a cut which purports to show continuous time and space from shot to shot but which actually mismatches the position of figures or objects in the scene.



## Parallel Editing

This is editing that alternates shots of two or more lines of action occurring in different places, usually simultaneously. The two actions are therefore linked, associating the characters from both lines of action.

## Jump Cut

A single-shot elliptical cut. Either the figures change against a constant background or the background changes while the figures stay constant. Jump cuts are employed expressively to represent a character's ruminations or ambivalence, but they also break with orthodox cinema narrative. Jump cuts are like statements that evidence both the artificiality and the difficulty of narrating a story.



## Shot/Reverse Shot

These are two or more shots edited together that alternate characters, typically in a conversation situation. In continuity editing, characters in one framing usually look left, in the other framing, right. Over-the-shoulder framings are common in shot/reverse-shot editing. Shot / reverse shots are one of the most firmly established conventions in cinema, and they are usually linked through the equally persuasive eye-line matches. These conventions have become so strong that they can be exploited to make improbable meanings convincing.



## Telephoto Shot

An image shot with an extremely long lens is called a telephoto shot. The effect of using a long lens is to compress the apparent depth of an image, so that elements that are relatively close or far away from the camera seem to lie at approximately the same distance.

## **Cut In**

This is cutting into what our character is looking at. This is an instantaneous shift from a distant framing to a closer view of some portion to the same space and Vice Versa.

## **Cut Away**

This is a shot cutting away to what our character is looking at in a far distance.

## **Cut To**

This describes a change of scene over the course of one frame.

## **Over the Shoulder Shot**

This shot is taken from over the shoulder of one person and is focused on another person or thing. There is also the tight over the shoulder shot which is a little more zoomed in than the over the shoulder shot.

## **Single/Double**

This shot focuses on one person while the double shot focuses on two

## **Master Shot**

This shot shows where each character is in relation to the other character for the audience to understand the location of each character.

## **Fade**

A fade in is an opening shot or transition technique film editors use to ease viewers into new imagery, rather than using a sudden cut from scene to scene.

## **Dissolve**

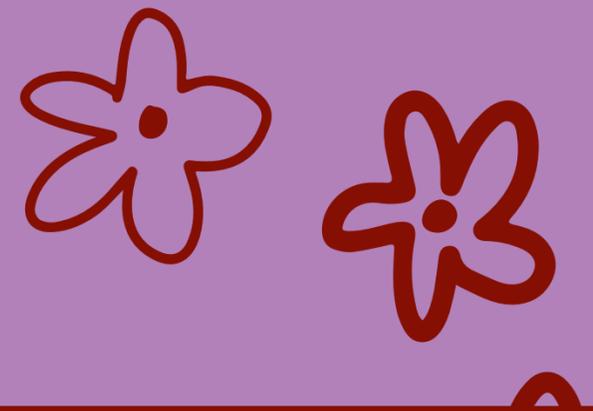
A dissolve is a classic editing technique used to transition between shots, typically shots that bridge two scenes together. As opposed to a straight cut from one shot to another, a dissolve involves the gradual transition from the first image to the next.

## **Whip**

A transition between shots in which a line passes across the screen, eliminating the first shot as it goes and replacing it with the next one. A very dynamic and noticeable transition, it is usually employed in action or adventure films. It often suggest a brief temporal ellipsis and a direct connection between the two images.

## **Exposure**

A lens' aperture determines how much light reaches the film. When the aperture is expanded, more light passes through, exposing the image. Overexposed images are so pale that detail disappears. A tiny aperture that lets in less light creates a "underexposed" image. Exposure may shape an audience's reaction to a scenario.



## Contrast

this is the ratio of dark to light in an image. High contrast images have huge differences between bright and dark regions. "Low contrast" describes a minor difference. Low contrast helps filmmakers create natural lighting. High contrast is related with low-key lighting in horror and film noir. Light and dark are often used to differentiate good from evil.

## Three Point Lighting

Three-point lighting is the standard form of professional lighting in video production and still photography. It involves using three light sources placed in three different positions. By playing with the size, distance, intensity, and position of these light sources, including their degree angle, it is possible to control how light and shadow fall on a subject, creating different moods.



## High-Key Lighting

This is a lighting scheme in which the fill light is raised to almost the same level as the key light. This produces images that are usually very bright and that feature few shadows on the principal subjects. This bright image is characteristic of entertainment genres such as musicals and comedies.



## Low-Key Lighting

This is a lighting scheme that employs very little fill light, creating strong contrasts between the brightest and darkest parts of an image and often creating strong shadows that obscure parts of the principal subjects. This lighting scheme is often associated with suspense genres.



## **Sound Quality**

The aural properties of a sound its timbre, volume, reverb, sustain, etc. have a major effect on a film's aesthetic. A film can register the space in which a sound is produced (its sound signature) or it can be otherwise manipulated for dramatic purposes.

## **Sound Source**

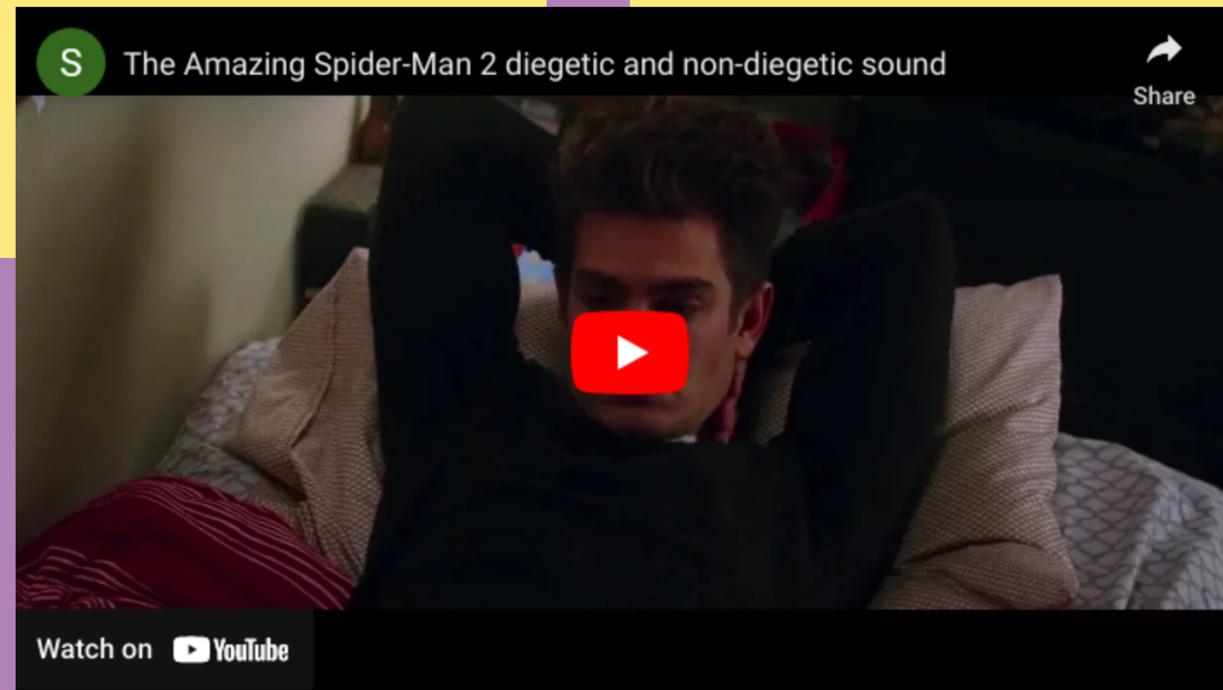
This refers to the place of a sound in relation to the frame and to the world of the film. A sound can be Onscreen or offscreen, diegetic or nondiegetic (including voice over), it can be recorded separately from the image or at the moment of filming. Sound source depends on numerous technical, economic, and aesthetic considerations, each of which can affect the final significance of a film.

## Diegetic/Non-Diegetic Sound

Sound that originates from within the video or film's world is termed diegetic sound. It can come either from on-screen or off-screen but it always happens at the same time that the action takes place.

## Diegetic/Non-Diegetic Sound

This is also known as "complementary sound," non-diegetic refers to the sound that's added in post-production, such as a narrator's summary, musical scores, and custom sound effects. Editors employ non-diegetic sounds for a variety of uses, from making small tweaks to creating comedic touches.



## **Direct Sound**

When using direct sound, the music, noise, and speech of the profilmic event at the moment of filming is recorded in the film. This is the opposite of postsynchronization in which the sound is dubbed on top of an existing, silent image. Studio systems use multiple microphones to record directly and with the utmost clarity.

## **Synchronous Sound**

Sound that is matched temporally with the movements occurring in the images, as when dialogue corresponds to lip movements.

## **Post synchronization Dubbing**

The process of adding sound to images after they have been shot and assembled. This can include dubbing of voices, as well as inserting diegetic music or sound effects. It is the opposite of direct sound. It is not, however, the opposite of synchronous sound, since sound and image are also matched here, even if at a later stage in the editing process.

## **Nonsimultaneous Sound**

Diegetic sound that comes from a source in time either earlier or later than the Images accompanies. Nonsimultaneous sound is often used to suggest recurrent obsessions and other hallucinatory states.

## **Offscreen Sound**

Simultaneous sound from a source assumed to be in the space of the scene but outside what is visible onscreen. A film may use offscreen sound to play with our assumptions.

## **Sound Bridge**

Sound in the cinema does not necessarily match the image, nor does it have to be continuous. The sound bridge is used to ease the transition between shots in the continuity style. Sound bridges can lead in or out of a scene. They can occur at the beginning of one scene when the sound from the previous scene carries over briefly before the sound from the new scene begins. Alternatively, they can occur at the end of a scene, when the sound from the next scene is heard before the image appears on the screen.

## **Voice Over**

This is when a voice, often that of a character in the film, is heard while we see an image of a space and time in which that character is not actually speaking. The voice over is often used to give a sense of a character's subjectivity or to narrate an event told in flashback.

## **Automated Dialogue Replacement**

Automated dialogue replacement (ADR) is the process of re-recording an actor's dialogue in a quiet environment, during post-production. During an ADR session, the performer watches a looped scene of themselves in order to dub new dialogue over the original production track.

## Auteur

"Author" in French is "auteur." This is an artist with a unique style, usually a film director whose control over the filmmaking process is so complete and personal that the director is likened to the "author" of the film, which shows the director's unique style or thematic focus.

## Production Design

Production design is the visual concept of a film, television or theatre production. It is a design style for sets, locations, graphics, props, lighting, camera angles and costumes. The production design gives the viewers a sense of the time period, the plot location, and character actions and feelings. It is the art direction and interior design in film.



## Costume

A costume simply refers to the clothes that characters wear. Costume in narrative cinema is used to signify character, or advertise particular fashions, or to make clear distinctions between characters. It can also be used to portray the time period of the film, the narrative and the different social classes of the characters.



## Visual Effects, Motion Graphics

Visual effects (VFX) is a term used to describe imagery created, manipulated, or enhanced for any film, or other moving media that doesn't take place during live-action shooting. VFX often involves the integration between actual footage and this manipulated imagery to create realistic looking environments for the context. These environments created are either too dangerous to actually shoot, or worlds that just don't exist. They use computer-generated imagery (CGI), and particular VFX software to make it happen. VFX producers communicate with directors and cinematographers to determine which scenes require them to shoot with green screens.



## Casting

In the performing arts industry such as theatre, film, or television, a casting is a pre-production process for selecting a certain type of actor, dancer, singer, or extra for a particular role or part in a script, screenplay, or teleplay.



## Call backs

A callback is an invitation an actor receives to, for a second time, meet with or perform for a casting director in consideration for an acting role. Callbacks, or "recall auditions", are meant to build upon a first audition and provide further clarity as to the actor's fitness for the role(s) that must be cast.

## Actor

An actor or actress is a person who portrays a character in a performance. The actor performs "in the flesh" in the traditional medium of the theatre or in modern media such as film, radio, and television.

## Acting

The definition of acting is the job of someone in the performing arts who takes on roles in performances like movies or plays. Playing a part in a movie and making the audience believe the role of that character is an example of acting.



# Storyboard

A storyboard is a graphic representation of how your video will unfold, shot by shot. It's made up of a number of squares with illustrations or pictures representing each shot, with notes about what's going on in the scene and what's being said in the script during that shot.



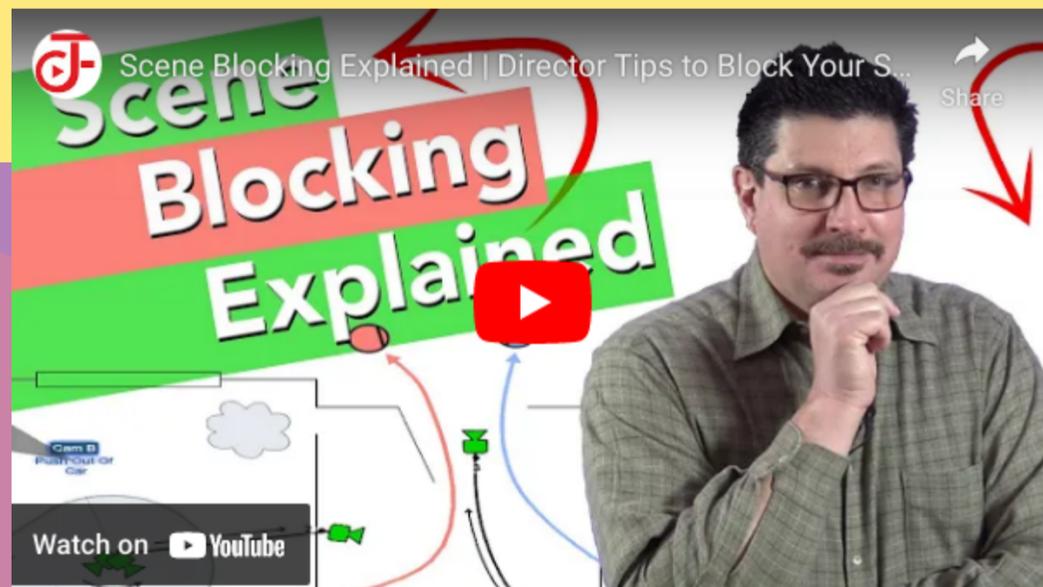
# Shot List

A shot list is a document that maps out exactly what will occur and what will be used in that particular shot, or scene, of the film. It serves as a detailed checklist that gives the video a sense of direction and prepares the crew for film expectations.

Script /SB Ref.	Shot #	Interior Exterior	Shot	Camera Angle	Camera Move	Audio	Subject	Description of Shot
1	1	Exterior	WS	Eye Level	Static	VO	Paul and son	Paul and his young son are at the lake, fishing
6	2	Exterior	WS	Eye Level	Static	VO	Paul	Paul at the lake, fishing alone. He pulls out a photo of him and his son; he smiles.
9	3	Exterior	WS	Eye Level	Static	VO	Paul, son, grandson	Paul, his son, and grandson at the lake, fishing
2	4	Exterior	VWS	High Angle	Static	VO	Paul and son	Paul and son playing baseball in a backyard
3	5	Interior	MCU	Eye Level	Static	VO	Paul and son	Paul teaching his son how to drive
4	6	Interior	WS	Eye Level	Pan	VO	Paul, wife, and son	Paul and his wife at their son's high school graduation
5	7	Exterior	WS	Eye Level, Birds-Eye view	Static	VO	Paul, his wife, and son	Paul's son packs up a car, clearly leaving for college. He hugs Paul and his wife, and they both watch him as he drives away.
7	8	Interior	MS	Eye Level	Pan	VO	Paul at his son's wedding	Paul hugs his son before he walks out to the altar; they smile
8	9	Interior	MS	OTS	Static	VO	Paul's son and his wife	Paul's son is at the hospital with his wife; she's in labor, gives birth to a boy

## Scene Blocking

Blocking a scene is simply “working out the details of an actor's moves in relation to the camera.” You can also think of blocking as the choreography of a dance or a ballet: all the elements on the set (actors, extras, vehicles, crew, equipment) should move in perfect harmony with each other.



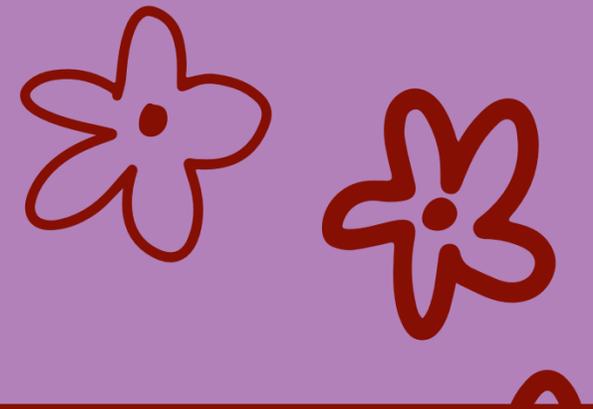
## Logline

A logline is typically just one or two clear, concise sentences. Some set a word limit of around 35 words. A logline should swiftly convey what a screenplay is about, including the main character, central conflict, setup and antagonist.

**world/setting**      **character**

To escape his demanding family, lab technician Gordon Starr freezes himself in dry ice only to emerge 1000 years later to an unrecognizable world and his out of control great-great-great-grandson, The President. Gordon must finally put an end to his family drama before all hell breaks loose.

**consequences**      **obstacles**      **objective**

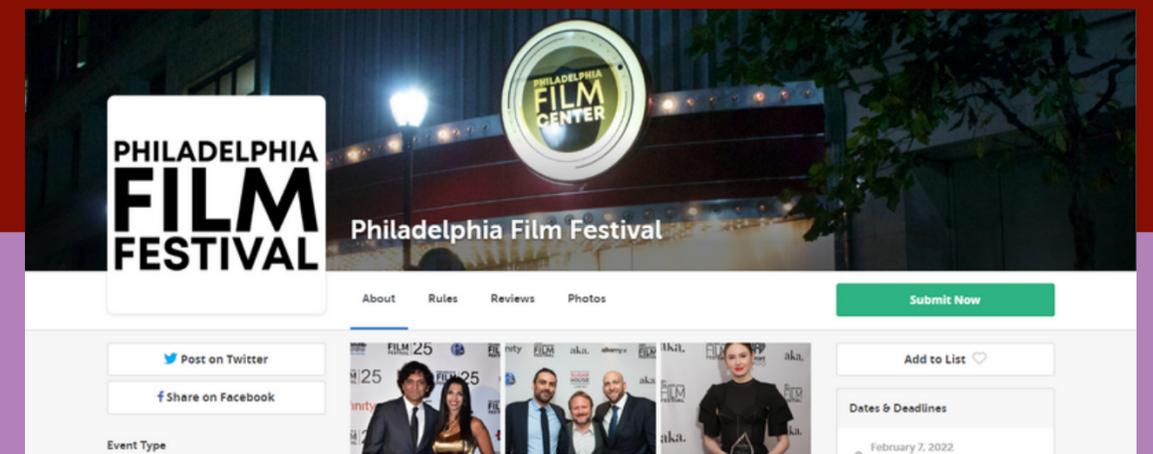


## Colour Grading

In the world of cinema, color grading refers to the manipulation of film and video images to create consistent color tones throughout a motion picture. Many filmmakers use a color palette as part of their overall production design.

## Screenings

When you are done with your film it is time to send it out to be screened. A film screening is the displaying of a motion picture or film, generally referring to a special showing as part of a film's production and release cycle. You can send out your film to distributors, cinemas, upload on yputube and other streaming platforms. You can also submit your films to film festival like The Philadelphia Film Festival or Showcase.



**What have you learnt so far  
from this presentation?**



PHILADELPHIA

FILM

SOCIETY