

THE GENERAL ALL INCLUSIVE FILMMAKING GUIDE ON HOW IT ALL WORKS TOGETHER ON SET!

SET PROCEDURE

THE KEY TO EFFICIENT SHOOTING PROGRESS IS TO BLOCK – LIGHT – REHEARSE – AND SHOOT.

BLOCKING – is where the DIRECTOR and ACTORS work out the action that will take place during the scene. Usually the actors don't passionately get into their roles here as they want to save their energy for rehearsal and the actual take. The CREW MUST CEASE WORK AND WATCH in order to know exactly what the shots will be – so they can prepare for their participation in them. (The old picture is worth a thousand words bit – you get to SEE exactly what is going to happen) FOCUSED ATTENTION and QUIET are also a necessary courtesy (SET ETIQUETTE) to the DIRECTOR and ACTORS as they create. Once the DIRECTOR is satisfied with the blocking of a scene, the coverage (other setups) will be determined and you move on to...

LIGHTING – the time taken by the CAMERA, LIGHTING and GRIP departments to get the shot properly lit and rigged. STAND-INS replace the ACTORS for this often lengthy process. The ART DEPARTMENT also uses this time to get the set properly dressed and propped. The SOUND DEPARTMENT uses this time to place any hidden mikes or prepare the ACTORS with body mikes. SPECIAL EFFECTS and STUNTS may also have things to prepare. The A.D.'s control the traffic on the set and communications with the various departments to ensure that all happens safely and efficiently. When the department heads are satisfied that they have completed all pre rehearsal work you move on to...

REHEARSAL – The DIRECTOR and ACTORS are called back to set. The DIRECTOR approves the frame. The BOOM PERSON gets a frame line (boom position) for sound. Some final tweaks are made in the lighting. The ACTORS rehearse the scene. SOUND sets levels on the recording devices. When the DIRECTOR decides they are ready to shoot the scene – MAKEUP, WARDROBE and HAIR are called in for final touches and you move on to...

SHOOTING – The A.D.'s call the set to attention and quiet and the scene is recorded until all departments are happy with the results. (or at least as happy as they think they are going to get) Then the camera gate is checked. If it is clean, a print is called. The camera moves to a new position and the next shot is (depending on how big it is) either blocked again...

Or explained by the A.D. to the crew ("This is just a tight close up on Joe's last two lines.")... so the lighting phase can begin.

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SLATES

Set procedure for camera crew

Who	What
1 st AD	"Stand by for picture Quiet on set. Final touches please. First positions"
2 nd Camera	Puts slate in front of camera.
1 st AD	"Roll sound."
Sound mixer	"Speed."
1 st Cam asst	Turns camera on.
Cam Op	"Slate."
2 nd Cam asst	"Scene 1, Take 1. (slate is clapped)
1 st Cam Asst	Focuses shot and says "Set"
Cam Op	When happy to shoot says "Frame".
Director	"Action".

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ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DUTIES

These duties are for these exercises. On a professional film set you would have many many more and be dealing with a lot more people.

1. Get everyone to work at the start of the day by announcing over the radio the scene number and what set it will be shot on. Example:

"WE'RE AT WORK, SCENE SEVEN – IN THE OFFICE"

Without knowing the scene number your CREW cannot begin work. Even though scene numbers are on the call sheet, they can change – so the CREW will wait to hear the A.D. say it before they start to finalize any preparations.

2. Get the DIRECTOR and ACTORS on set by calling

"FIRST TEAM PLEASE" over the radio.

The 2nd A.D. will see that they are delivered to set.

3. The DIRECTOR and ACTORS will roughly work out what they want to do for blocking. When they are ready to give it a try (you watch and when it looks like they're ready, check with the DIRECTOR) you call ...

"STAND BY FOR BLOCKING" over the radio.

The CREW should stop all work and be absolutely QUIET.

The DIRECTOR will call "ACTION" and the ACTORS will work their way through the scene.

The 2nd CAMERA ASSISTANT will (as unobtrusively as possible) deke in to place some marks.

The DIRECTOR will call "CUT".

The DIRECTOR and director of photography (DOP) will discuss some shots. The ACTORS may want to change some of the moves or entrances or exits. You will block the scene again until everyone is satisfied (or mainly so) with what they are going to do. When they are, you make sure the crew knows the shooting plan for the scene and move on to lighting by calling...

"SECOND TEAM PLEASE" over the radio.

The DIRECTOR and ACTORS will leave the set and the STAND-INS will take their marks for lighting.

4. IMMEDIATELY find out from the DOP and GAFFER how long they estimate it will take to have the set ready for rehearsal. This information must immediately be relayed to all departments so they will know how to pace their work.

Example: If the DOP tells you forty five minutes you would call ...

"WE'RE FORTY FIVE AWAY" over the radio.

Then you would give the CREW

"THIRTY AWAY" "TWENTY AWAY" "TEN AWAY" "FIVE AWAY" "TWO AWAY".

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You watch the work during lighting and if it looks like the camera department is getting ahead of its estimate, you ask. If they are ahead you would announce the revision.

Example: It's twenty eight away. You check. The DOP says camera only needs fifteen now. You would call...

"WE'RE NOW ONLY FIFTEEN AWAY".

You also keep in touch with the 3rd A.D. to see that the set estimate is syncing up with the estimate they have from HAIR, MAKEUP AND WARDROBE for the ACTORS. When the forty five minutes are up, you ask the DOP if camera needs more time. If they do, you announce the new estimate.

Example: The DOP says they need ten more minutes. You call ...

"WE'RE TEN AWAY, AGAIN"

If the camera department is ready you call...

"FIRST TEAM PLEASE"

This will bring the DIRECTOR and ACTORS back to set.

NOTE: You must check with any other departments you see still working on the set before you call for the first team.

5. When the ACTORS come in, immediately ask them to take their first "on camera" marks and have the DIRECTOR approve the frame (or frames).

Once the frames have DIRECTOR approval the BOOM PERSON will move in and ask the CAMERA OPERATOR for a FRAME LINE. (or frame lines) When you see that these are worked out you speak to the microphone to ask the SOUND MIXER if they are "READY TO REHEARSE". If so, quickly reaffirm that the DIRECTOR and CAMERA are ready and call...

"STAND BY TO REHEARSE PLEASE" over the radio.

The CREW will get absolutely QUIET and the DIRECTOR will call "ACTION". The ACTORS will play the scene and the DIRECTOR will call "CUT."

Ask the DIRECTOR if they are ready to shoot the scene. If they are, ask CAMERA.. if they are, ask SOUND. If they are, call...

"STAND BY FOR PICTURE PLEASE"

They will do final touch ups on the ACTORS while CAMERA and SOUND do any final "tweaks" they need to do.

The DIRECTOR may have a final word or two for the ACTORS.

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6. When MAKEUP, WARDROBE and HAIR leave the set – make sure the DIRECTOR is still ready and call...

"LOCK IT UP FOR PICTURE PLEASE"

The other A.D.'s will echo this call and ensure that surrounding areas stop work and get quiet. Call...

"FIRST MARKS"

The ACTORS will take their beginning marks. The slate will go up in front of camera and the boom will take it's slating position. Call...

"QUIET ON SET"

Wait to see that it is locked up and quiet. (a jet isn't approaching. Somebody down the street isn't starting up their motorcycle) And quietly say...

"Roll sound"

AND TURN YOUR RADIO OFF!

The other A.D.'s will call "**ROLLING!**"

The SOUND MIXER will ascertain that they have speed and call "**SPEED!**"

The CAMERA OPERATOR will make sure the camera is up to speed and call "**MARK**" (or "Slate")

The SLATE PERSON will announce the scene and clap the slate.

The boom will move into shooting position.

The DIRECTOR will see that the boom is ready and decide when the space feels right to call "**ACTION**"

The ACTORS will play the scene and the DIRECTOR will call "**CUT**".

You turn on your radio and call...

"THAT'S A CUT"

Check with the DIRECTOR to find out if they are satisfied with the take. If they are not, call...

"WE'RE GOING AGAIN RIGHT AWAY"

NOTE: Any time you have to go again there will be some corrections made and then you're back to checking to see if everyone's ready to shoot.(halfway through 5.)

If the DIRECTOR is happy with the shot, check with CAMERA. If CAMERA is happy with the shot, check with SOUND. If either of these departments has a problem with the shot, have them check with the DIRECTOR to see if you have to go again. (You usually do) If they all are satisfied with the take, call...

"CHECK THE GATE PLEASE"

The 1ST CAMERA ASSISTANT will pull the lens and check to see that the film gate is clean and if it is they will announce "**CLEAN GATE**". If the gate is not clean you must go again. If it is clean, call...

"THAT'S A PRINT"

If there is coverage to do on the scene (more set-ups) call...

"CAMERA'S ON THE MOVE"

and tell the CREW what the next shot is. (If you're shooting sequentially and it's a continuation master you'll want to block it – if it's standard coverage – two shots, overs,

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close ups – you'll probably just verbally announce it)...

**"OKAY, THIS NEXT SET-UP IS A TIGHT TWO SHOT ON JOE AND MARY
AT THE TABLE."**

If there are no more set ups in the scene, call...

"NEW DEAL (and announce the new scene number and set)

- AND YOU'RE BACK TO NUMBER 1, EXCEPT YOU ALREADY HAVE THE
DIRECTOR AND ACTORS ON SET. CARRY ON...

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SECOND A.D.'S

Among the many duties they perform are::

Make sure that the ACTORS arrive on time and get them started in MAKEUP, WARDROBE and HAIR. If they aren't there on time, get on the phone and find out what's wrong.

See that the CREW MEMBERS arrive on time – or find out what's wrong.

Make sure that all "early calls" get their breakfast.

Deliver the ACTORS to the set the first time the 1ST A.D. calls, "FIRST TEAM."

Keep checking to see that the off set departments are aware of what the 1ST A.D. is calling over the radio: Scene numbers, time estimates, etc.

Keep constant communication between the home office and the set.

Prepare the DAILY CALL SHEET before the meal break, vet it with the 1ST A.D. during the meal break and see that it gets back to the office for PRODUCTION MANAGER approval and back to the set in time to be handed out at WRAP.

Reinforce (echo) the 1ST A.D. calls that prepare the company for shooting: "LOCK IT UP FOR PICTURE". "QUIET PLEASE". "WE'RE ROLLING!".

Supervise the wrap.

3RD A.D.

Assist the 1ST and 2ND A.D. Generally takes care of the following:

Works at the Circus to facilitate coordinating the set with MAKEUP, WARDROBE AND HAIR.

Is in charge of all the radios. (unless there's a TRAINEE)

Does the DAILY PRODUCTION REPORT.

Wrangles the extras and talent to and from the set – often coordinating with transportation for the movement of shuttle vehicles.

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CINEMATOGRAPHY & LIGHTING

THE CAMERA DEPARTMENTS

The Camera Department of a typical theatrical feature-length motion picture generally consists of the following crew members. Their job descriptions and usual responsibilities, and tools are also included:

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY (aka Lighting Cameraman, D.O.P., D.P., "The Boss")

- works closely with the Director, Production Designer, Costume Designer and Make-Up to determine the **visual style** of the production. Selects, through interviewing, Camera Operator, 1st & 2nd Assistant Camera, Gaffer and Key Grip
- with Gaffer and Key Grip, determines the electrical power and equipment requirements for the production
- specifies camera equipment requirements
- selects film stock for the production
- determines which film lab to be used
- supervises the shooting of the following tests: film stock, cameras, lenses, filters wardrobe, make-up, hair dressing, scenery elements, props, process components as required
- usually will set up the shot requested by the Director
 - i.e. specify camera position, lens, filters, mattes, diffusion, dolly and crane moves
- in consultation with the Gaffer, will direct the lighting of the studio or location setting
- specify aperture (T Stop) setting and exposure for each shot
- issue instructions to the lab for the proper handling and development of exposed film
- issue instructions to the lab re exposure and colour timing of the workprint and dailies
- Participate in the post-production
 - specify release print stock to be used
 - ensure contrast and colour continuity of release prints
 - ensure quality of First-run release prints
 - participate in the video transfer of TV movies, commercials, music videos
 - videocassette releases of theatrical motion pictures

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CAMERA OPERATOR

- maintains the composition prescribed by the D.O.P.
- execute smooth camera movements
- certify each take as to its technical requirements:
 - focus sharp
 - camera and/or dolly and/or zoom moves are smooth
 - no microphones, lights, stands or cables in frame
 - no lens flare during shot
 - no unwanted reflections on glass or metal surfaces during shot
- Certify each take as to its artistic requirements
 - proper composition maintained
 - proper headroom maintained
 - actors' movements properly in frame
 - actors' sightlines corrections

STILL PHOTOGRAPHER

- Shoot ALL still photographs required for:
 - Location Scout
 - Publicity
 - Continuity and Matching (Props, Wardrobe, Hair, Make-Up, Action)
 - Photographic Backdrops
 - Photographic props and set dressings

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1ST ASSISTANT CAMERA (aka Focus Puller)

- in consultation with the cameraman, is responsible for ordering the equipment needed on the production and updating with the cameraman as to any equipment that is necessary on a daily basis
- makes sure that the camera is cleaned, oiled and in good working condition
- is able to do simple field maintenance of the camera and its accessories
- has the appropriate camera with all the necessary accessories ready for shooting the scene
- loading (threading) and unloading the camera
- puts up the proper lens, filters, motors, zoom motors, follow focus gear, etc.
- keeps the camera, lens and accessories clean while they are on set
- sets shutter and aperture
- focusing and zooming
- writes up and attaches reminder tapes for shutter, filters, camera speed being used
- sets up and adjusts eyepiece for the D.O.P., director and clients
- checks for flares in the lens
- rides a wild motor to keep it at the proper speed
- keeps tabs on camera speed where possible
- checks for film scratches and hairs in the gate before and after set ups
- keeps tabs on battery condition and is always aware of battery condition light
- passes on focal length, focus distance, aperture, filters being used, etc. to the continuity/script person
- supervises the transportation of the camera
- provides the tools necessary for the job

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SHOOTING GUIDELINES

There are no rules of shooting film that are immutable, however, the following guidelines will serve you well until you know enough to ignore them.

1. Always use a tripod for fixed camera positions.
2. Always complete the action you are shooting, and allow a second or two more when the action is completed.
3. Be sure of your **screen direction** and maintain your screen direction e.g. a man walking exits frame left, in the next shot he should enter frame right.
4. Allow characters or moving objects to enter an empty frame and leave a frame. Give an extra second or two.
5. When shooting the same action from several angles, allow **lots of overlap** of action so that you can cut easily.
6. Allow complete **overlap of action** for close-ups.
7. When you do panning shots begin and end the shot on a static frame.
8. Allow the camera to pan at the same speed as the moving subject.
9. When you are panning or tracking a moving person or object, have the empty space of the frame in front of them. This makes it easier to keep them in the frame and is more aesthetic. For example – if a man is walking left, you will frame him right of center of the frame.
10. When framing people keep them in frame. Do not crop tops of heads in close-ups, or parts of the body out of the shot or small parts, like an arm, in the shot.
11. Remember that the frame has a focal point. You can use this point for shooting or cutting.
12. Establish your action axis. Remember to cross the axis, you need a neutral shot or transition shot.
13. If you plan to cut moving shots (either panning or tracking) together, they must be the same speed.
14. Maintain continuity of action, e.g. if the subject carries a briefcase in his left hand in one shot, it must stay in the left hand for the subsequent shots.

SHOTS:

The following determine the shot:

1. the angle
2. the lens
3. the movement
4. the composition (framing)

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SHOOTING guidelines #2

A. THE ANGLE

1. The angle gives the best viewpoint on the scene.
2. The angle defines the area of the scene.
3. The angle enhances the dramatic visualization of the action.

B. VIEWPOINT

There are general types of viewpoint:

1. Objective
2. Subjective

1. The objective viewpoint: the viewpoint of a detached but interested observer. NOTE: many shots you will see are taken from the "eye level" (camera is 5 1/2' from the ground).

Remember the viewpoint you select with the camera is **how** the audience sees the story.

Remember also, you can select a viewpoint that can:

- a) anticipate an event
- b) react to an event
- c) foreshadow an event

You can also be sympathetic or cynical, or adopt a variety of attitudes, and you can determine a number of moods and tones.

2. The subjective viewpoint is placing the camera within the scene to take the place of a participant, and see things from that person's point of view.

C. COMMON SHOTS

1. The two shot (has two people in frame)

One person will be the focal point. You can make a person the focal point by having him more favorably angled, in the foreground, more dramatically lit, etc.

2. The close up: a small-scale action, faces, objects. You might use a close up for:

- a) selectivity and emphasis
- b) mask or aid cutting problems
- c) eliminate or move in time and space
- d) coverage
- e) to stage or cheat a difficult scene
- f) dramatic impact

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Examples:

- a) cutaway close up
- b) cut in close up
- c) reaction shot

D. DEPTH

Remember that you are working in three dimensions.

- 1. angle subjects (45 degrees is common) toward camera
- 2. use oblique lines
- 3. use perspective
- 4. use foreground and background

E. WHAT TO CONSIDER

- 1. best viewpoints: using angle, lens, movement, composition
- 2. relationship of people and objects within the scene
- 3. depth
- 4. time element
- 5. preceding and following shots
- 6. mood

NOTE: moving camera, dynamic content and appropriateness can eliminate the necessity of too many shots. Sometimes it makes sense to "let a scene play". Too many cuts in a film can be detrimental and distracting to the story.

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ABBREVIATIONS & DESCRIPTIONS

--shots--

big head close-up, chin up	BCU	long shot, some background
close up, head & shoulders	CU	master shot
dirty shot, incl part or all of someone else	dirty	med wide shot, the room
establishing shot	est	mid-chest up, med close-up
extreme close-up, ex. eyes only	EXCU	over the left shoulder
extreme long shot, character in distance	ELS	over the right shoulder
extreme wide shot – panoramic	EWS	rake shot
full 2 shot	F2/S	tight shot
fill 3 shot	F3/S	tracking shot
full shot, full figure, not much background	FS	traveling shot
group shot; 4 or more	group	waist up, med shot
hips up (where hands end) med shot	M3/4	wide angle, distorted wide view
knees up, med long shot	MLS	wide shot, wide area of action

LS
mstr
MWS
MCU
OTLS
OTRS
rake
tight
tracking
TRAV/S
MS
WA
WS

--action--

background	BG	extras
camera left	CL	false start
camera right	CR	foreground
crosses IN TO frame – specify CL or CR	Xs in	left to right
crosses OUT OF frame – specify CL or CR	Xs out	no good
double, as in stunt, etc.	dbl	no good action or actors
enter	enter	off screen / off camera
exitshot – specify CL or CR	exit	right to left

extras
FALSE
FG
L -> R
NG
NGA
OS or OC
R -> L

--camera--

body movesL R – track mount	DOLLY	hand held camera
body movesT B – crane mount	CRANE	head movesL R
body movesT B – dolly arm mount	BOOM	head movesT to B, or B to T
cross angle focus past 2+ profiles	X/ANG	high angle
CL or CR	D/B	low angle
dolly back	D/I	mount worn by operator
dolly in	D/A	moves in or out – specify CL or CR
down angle	FAV	repositioned camera during a shot
favoured character for focus	RAK	runs over 24 fps creating SLOW motion
focus split between FG and bkgd subjects	fps	runs under 24 fps creating FAST motion
frames per second		

HH
pan
tilt
H/A
L/A
steadicam
zoom
repo
overcrank
undercrank

--sound--

guide track sound w/b repl post-prod	GT	sound effects
location ambient for final mix	room tone	sound recorded synchronously w/film
minus optical sound (mit out sound)	MOS	sound recorded without picture
no good sound	NGS	special effects
playback (reference the #)	PLB	voice over
sound	SND	WILD (each) recording; #'s start at 1001

SFX
SYNC
wild
SPFX
VO
WL

--slates--

no slate	n/s	tail slate, hold upside down & hit end of take
slate marker	STIX	2nd slate marker done

tail
2nd STIX

--general--

dialogue	DIAL	incomplete ()
special note, as in director okayed	NB	INC