



# 4-H Filmmaking

## Filmmaking Glossary

### **Camera and Tripod Parts/Functions**

**Camera Mode**— This mode is where you shoot your footage. If it's in camera mode, you can hit the record button and get footage. Make sure it's not in VCR Mode if you want to record!

**Lens Cap**— The protective cap you put over your camera lens to protect it from dust and scratching.

**Menu**— Interface that allows you to change settings on your camera: manual vs. automatic, audio settings, exposure settings, etc.

**Rec**— Indicates camera is recording, usually red letters, often accompanied by a little red circle. Make sure it is on Rec if you want it to record--standby won't do!

**Standby (STBY)**— Means your camera is ready to start recording video.

**Tape or DVD Eject Switch**— Pulling this will eject your tape or DVD, just pull it once, and be patient!

**Tripod**— The three-legged fixture you put your camera on for non-hand held footage. Consists of legs--adjust height; handle--controls pan and tilt; and baseplate--secures camera to tripod.

**VCR Mode**— This mode allows you to look at the footage you have already shot on the camera (as opposed to Camera Mode, which only lets you shoot footage). This mode needs to be on when you download footage with Firewire.

**Zoom Toggle**— Toggle that allows you to zoom in or zoom out of a shot. Marked "W" for wide shots and "T" for tight, or closeup shots.

### **Film Terms**

**Angle Down**— Also known as high angle. Camera shoots down at subject, diminishing them or making them seem less powerful.

**Angle Up**— Also known as low angle. Camera shoots at upward angle, often to make subject in shot seem powerful.

**B-roll**— Footage you use to put over a talking head interview, it usually has to do with what the subject is talking about. Example-- Jane Goodall: I worked with gorillas in the jungle. Image: Gorillas eating in the jungle. It is often used to cover up parts where you cut up the subject's speaking.

**Close-Up or CU**—A CU shot tightly frames a person or object. The most easily recognizable close-ups are shots of people's faces. Close-ups are often used as cutaways from a more distant shot to show detail.

**Composition**— Where the subjects or objects of the shot are positioned in the frame.



## 4-H Filmmaking

**Character Development**— Making your subject interesting to watch by telling their story, or letting out bits of information about them. Good character development lets you get to know the subject and viewers like to feel connected to the film subjects they are watching.

**Exposure**— How bright or dark your footage or subject is. Be careful, if you are over exposed it'll be too bright and you won't be able to see detail. Underexpose and it'll be too dark to see.

**Focus Shift**— Also called rack focus. The crisp or "critical" focus shifts from one subject or object in frame to another.

**Frame**— The box or "frame" (think picture frame) that goes around the subject or image in film.

**Green Screen**—A filming technique for mixing two images together. A green screen is put behind the person or object being filmed. The green background can later be deleted through the editing process and then allows us to overlay the person/object on anything we want.

**Head Space**— Space between the top of subject's head and top of frame. Need to have some in case subject drops out of frame, but too much looks off balance.

**Host/Guide**— "Interactive Narration" - a mixture of the Narrator method and the Interactive method. An on-screen host guides the viewer through the story by directly providing information.

**Interactive Filming**— The filmmaker interacts with social actors on screen. The selection and arrangement of the witnesses and social actors provide a central part of the film's rather than directly from the voiceover commentary of the narrator. *Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill, 2003*

**Interviews**—The filmmaker films a human subject and asks him or her questions pertinent to the film's topic. Commonly, the filmmaker is off-screen and the interviewee talks directly to him/her rather than the camera. Interviews are used in many of the methods above to provide external sources for supporting the filmmaker's argument.

**Matched Action**— Matching action or movement from shot to shot (i.e.: from a wide to a close-up).

**Medium Shot or MS**—An MS is a camera shot from a medium distance, though the exact distance is not clearly defined. The dividing line between a "wide shot" and "medium shot" is also not defined, nor is the line between "medium shot" and "close-up." Commonly, an MS is referred to as a partial view of a scene or person.

**Narrator**—"Voice of God" - an off-screen narrator relays information through voiceover narration. Everything is structured to support the commentary, which emphasizes the impression of objectivity. *March of the Penguins, 2005*.

**Nose Space**— Often tied in with rule of thirds. Space between subject's nose and left or right side of screen. It's good to give nose space so it doesn't look like the subject is crammed to one side of the screen.



## 4-H Filmmaking

**Observational Filming**— “Fly on the Wall” - the filmmaker records unobtrusively what people do while they are not explicitly addressing the camera. The filmmaker aims to have an absent presence, which allows the viewer to develop a special relationship with the characters. This method conveys the idea of unmediated access to the world. *Murderball (2005)*, *The War Room (1993)*

**Pan**— A sideways or horizontal movement of the camera.

**Post Production**— The third phase of movie making. It involves editing, adding voiceover, music, sound effects (audio sweetening), advertising and screening your movie in some venue.

**POV**— Point of view. Puts viewer of movie in movie subject's point of view.

**Pre Production**— The first phase of movie making. Here you plan how to make your movie--what's it about? How will you shoot it? Where? Etc.

**Reflexive**—The filmmaker engages in the commentary and gives emphasis to this act. This method arose from a desire to make the conventions of representation more apparent and to challenge the impression of reality that other modes convey. *Sherman's March, 1986*, *Bowling for Columbine, 2002* *Super Size Me, 2004*.

**Production**— The second phase of movie making. In this step you actually film all of the footage you plan to use in the final product.

**Rule of Thirds**— Generally accepted rule of aesthetics in film and photography that divides frame into thirds, both along vertical and horizontal lines. It's said to be more aesthetically pleasing when your subjects fall within those sections. Horizon shots (where the land meets the sky) often follow rule of thirds (horizontally).

**Shake and Quake**— Also known as shaky cams--happens when you don't use a tripod and move the camera around all over the place while shooting. Good in horror movies and sometimes music videos but not much else.

**Shot Variation**— How many different types of shots you use to cover a subject, scene or object. It's good to use a lot of shot variation to make your movie more interesting. It allows the viewer to see the topic from a new angle--literally.

**Sound on Tape or SOT**—SOT refers to the audio recorded on tape during filming. It is used in television and film script writing to indicate portions of the edited video that will use the natural sound from the time of recording, as opposed to audio recorded later (studio voiceover for example).

**Static**— A shot with no movement. Also called "locked off".

**Tilt**— An up and down, or vertical movement of the camera.

**Tracking Shot**— A shot which follows the movement, or "tracks" a subject.



## 4-H Filmmaking

**Voiceover or VO**—VO is narration that is recorded to accompany the image on screen. Voiceover is commonly referred to as "off camera" commentary.

**Wide Shot or WS**—A WS is a shot framed to reveal a wide angle of view. When referring to a person, a WS shows a person's entire body. A WS is also commonly referred to as an establishing shot, or a shot that establishes the sense of place.

### ***Computer Terms and Editing***

**.avi**— Audio Video Interleave. This is a file type that is more commonly used on Windows machines (PC's) (although Macs can play them with Windows Media Viewer software). .avi files are a way to compress and show your movie.

**.mov**— Quicktime Movie. This is a file type used on Macs (although PC's can play .mov files with Quicktime software). Like .avi's, they are format you can compress your footage to (out of iMovie or Final Cut) so you can display it on your computer or on the web.

**Capture**— This is a common term in editing programs like Final Cut and iMovie. It's what you do when you want to "capture" footage off of your Mini DV camera.

**Clip Viewer**— The part of your editing program that lets you click on clips in the clip pane, or on clips in the timeline and view them.

**Editing**— This is the cutting and rearrangement of shots to tell your story.

**Export**— Moving your video out of the editing program and converting it to a form that anybody can watch on the internet or on their computer. You usually export .mov, avi or .wmv files.

**Firewire Cable**— Very similar to USB, more commonly found on Macs, but some PC's have them too.


**Firewire Port**— Very similar to USB, more commonly found on Macs, but some PC's have them too.

**iLink**— Also known as IEEE 1394. It is the same thing as Firewire, it's just Sony's name for it.

**Import**— Bringing footage you shot in from your camera (if you use Mini DVD, Flash or Internal Hard Drive cameras) and putting it into your editing program.

**Internal Hard Drive**— Some cameras don't have any type of media that they save to (flash, Mini DVD or Mini DV), they record to a harddrive right on the camera. They're handy, but make sure you have a computer to download the footage to or you'll run out of room!

**Mini DV** Don't confuse me with Mini DVD! Mini DV is a type of tape (think really small VHS or cassette tape), that your camera records to. Mini DV cameras usually have to use Firewire to transfer footage to the computer.



## 4-H Filmmaking

**Mini DVD**— Looks like a tiny DVD. Your camera records the footage to this Mini DVD just like when your computer burns a CD or DVD. Make sure you have a mini-DVD slot in your DVD drive if you use a Mini DVD camera.

**Pacing**— The rhythm you establish when you edit a movie. How fast or slow does it move? Do you want a fast action sequence? Or a slow sequence to ponder nature's beauty? You decide the pacing.

**Timeline**— The part of your editing program where you see your footage not as a storyboard (little squares lined up next to each other) but each clip's rectangle is in proportion to how long the clip is. This is good for making fine tuning cuts in your movie, not just shuffling clips around.

**Upload**— The final stage of making your video. Once you finish editing your footage, you export it to a file type (.avi, .mov, .wmv) and upload it to a website for everybody to watch.

**USB Cable**— The cable used to hook up your hard drive or Flash-based camera to the computer.

**USB Port**— Universal Serial Bus. A type of input for electronic devices on your computer. Found on both Mac and PC computers. Just know that it is one way that you can get footage from your camera to your computer by plugging your USB cable into the computer's USB port.

