

MM240: Digital Video Camera / Capture / Output Shot List

The Camera / Capture / Output exercise is designed to give you experience shooting on the Sony Mini-DV cameras, as well as capturing, editing and outputting video from Final Cut Pro.

In order to complete this exercise, you will need to check out a Mini-DV Camera and a tripod from Studio Ops. Each student must turn in a separate videotape (with different shots), but you may work in teams. This way, you can act as each other's on-camera "talent", as well as helping troubleshoot if something goes wrong. Additionally, if you share a camera, you won't have to use up as many camera check-outs.

This is primarily an exercise in following directions. Pay attention to what you are doing and don't wait until the last minute to complete the project. Completing this exercise will be the primary exposure you have to the DV Cameras so ask questions if you don't understand something. Save your project *frequently* as you are working.

1. "Blacken" a mini-DV tape by recording over the entire tape with the camera's lens cap on. This adds continuous time-code to the tape. If you do not "blacken" the tape, you may experience time-code breaks between shots which can make it difficult or impossible to capture the media into Final Cut Pro, and impossible to finish the project. Blackening should be done on with the same camera you are going to be shooting with.
2. Rewind the tape, advance the tape 30 seconds and begin shooting the 16 shots in the **Shot Checklist**.
3. **Still shots should be at least 5 seconds long. Moving shots (shots that contain camera movement, lens movement, or subject movement) should be about 8 -10 seconds. Be sure and allow time to start the movement, perform the move, and come to a stop.**
4. Be sure to record an extra 5 seconds at the beginning of each shot and let the camera record for an extra 5 seconds after each shot is complete to leave room for capturing and editing. Your shortest shot should be 15 seconds long. If you make a mistake just shoot another "take." When you capture the footage, you can choose to capture only the good "takes." **All shots except for 14 - 16 require the camera to be on a tripod. Really! You NEED to use the tripod.**
5. Remember, your shots all must have a subject and have enough light for proper exposure. Normal home lighting does not usually provide enough light for the camera.

Camera Capture Output Exercise - Shot Checklist

Static Shots / Composition

Shot 01: Head Shot

This shot uses the "rule of thirds". This shot shows one person's head and shoulders. The subject's eyes should be 2/3 up from the bottom of the screen (1/3 down from the top). You need a human to be the "talent" this shot.

Shot 02: Off-Center Subject

This shot takes a subject that might normally be centered in the frame, and frames it off to one side, leaving empty (or *negative*) space on the other side.

Shot 03: Pre-Framed Composition

This frames a shot with the anticipation of something entering the scene to balance it out. The camera does not move, but allows the element entering the

scene to complete the composition. The best way to do this is to frame the shot *with* the element already there. Then move it out of the frame, begin recording, and have it enter (hence “pre-framed”).

□ **Shot 04: Diagonal Horizon Line**

This shot works best outside where a horizon (and therefore a horizon line is visible). Rotate the camera on the Z-axis so that the horizon line goes from the top left to the bottom right, or from the bottom left to the top right.

□ **Shot 05: Wide shot (zoomed all the way out)**

This is a static shot with the lens zoomed all the way out in the “Wide” position. This tends to slightly distort straight lines and is not very flattering for people either. A wide shot can also exaggerate the distance between foreground and background elements and make large objects appear more dramatic. In a wide shot almost everything in the show is in focus.

□ **Shot 06: Telephoto Shot (zoomed all the way in)**

A telephoto shot is a shot that is zoomed all the way in to magnify one area of the total field of vision. Telephoto shots tend to “flatten” or compress depth and can make objects moving toward or away from the camera, seem like they aren’t getting anywhere. A telephoto shot requires precise focusing, because only one distance can be in focus at a time.

□ **Shot 07: Macro lens**

A lens with a “macro” setting, can focus on objects very close to the lens (even almost on the surface of the lens). The macro setting can only be used when the lens is zoomed all the way out. It is good for getting shots of tiny objects like fingernails, coins, and printed text.

Lighting and Exposure

□ **Shot 08: Overexposed Shot (use manual exposure)**

An overexposed shot is a shot which lets too much light into the lens by opening the aperture. Dark areas appear light and light areas can appear pure white. You will need to have a lot of light available to get this shot (such as outside in bright sunlight). This effect is often used in flashbacks, dream sequences. The exposure should be set before shooting and should not change during the shot. Do not make the shot completely white.

□ **Shot 09: Underexposed Shot (use manual exposure)**

The opposite of over-exposure, this shot lets too little light into the lens by closing the aperture. The picture appears dark (and sometimes grainy). This shot cannot be accomplished in bright sunlight because the aperture may not be able to close far enough. The exposure should be set before shooting and should not change during the shot. Do not make the shot completely black.

Changing Zoom or Focus within a Shot

□ **Shot 10: Pre-focused Zoom In (using manual focus)**

This shot is a zoom from a wide shot (zoomed out) to a telephoto shot (zoomed in). However, it is likely that when you zoom in the image will go out of focus. You should zoom the camera all the way in on the subject, focus the lens (in manual mode), and then zoom all the way out (without refocusing). Now start recording and the zoom will stay in focus from beginning to end. The camera does not move in this shot.

□ **Shot 11: Rack Focus (from far to near subject, using manual focus)**

This shot is a telephoto shot (zoomed all the way in) in which you shift the focus from an object in the background to an object in the foreground (close to the camera), while you are recording. In order to make this shot look good, you will need to practice quickly switching the focus between the two subjects before you actually record it. The camera does not move in this shot.

Camera Pivot within a Shot

☐ Shot 12: Pan, from left to right

This camera pans over a subject by rotating the tripod head from left to the right.

☐ Shot 13: Tilt, from low angle to high angle

This shot starts at the bottom of a subject and tilts up, ending at the top.

Camera Movement within a Shot

☐ Shot 14: Dolly Forward

A dolly shot is a shot in which the camera physically moves on the Z-Axis (forward or backward), but does not zoom.

☐ Shot 15: Tracking Shot (sideways)

A tracking shot is a shot in which the camera physically moves on the Y-axis (right or left), but does not pan.

☐ Shot 16: Simultaneous Zoom Out – Dolly In

I won't lie: this shot is tough to get. It first appeared in the film "Vertigo" by Alfred Hitchcock, where it was used to convey the feeling of vertigo by exaggerating the distance down the shaft of a bell-tower. Later it was used by Stephen Spielberg in Jaws. It's been seen in a lot of horror movies, including Evil Dead II. The subject is usually a person's head (framed like a head shot). Here's how it goes...

With the lens zoom most of the way *in* frame the subject in a head shot. Now smoothly move the camera toward the subject while, at the same time, slowly and smoothly zooming out. The movement toward the person should end at the same time that the zoom ends. The key is to keep the person's head the same size (and position) in the frame as you do this. The effect is that the background will seem to get smaller and farther away as the person's head stays the same size.

A good idea is to have someone to push you in a wheelchair while you hold the camera and do the zoom. You can also simply walk forward, if you do it smoothly.