

Video Production Tips

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Pre Production:

1. Write a script, revise your script and then stick with it as much as possible.
2. Make Storyboards to make framing your shots much easier during production
3. Try Celtx (celtx.com) which is a free Scriptwriting program for Windows, Mac, or Linux, pre-formatted script templates

Video:

1. White Balance (Camera) and/or Color Correct (Post- Production) if possible
2. Always Use a Tripod, Steady cam or Monopod to keep camera still and steady **ALWAYS**
3. Only use Black and white if the movie is meant to be “retro” or if there is a flashback; don’t use Black and White just because you can
4. Use a variety of shots; don’t just use the same type of shot for the whole movie mix it up, it makes the movie much more exciting
5. Don’t begin the action until AT LEAST 3 seconds after the record button is pressed, so that your video doesn’t get cut off.
6. Have backup camera batteries or make sure your battery is charged before recording a scene
7. Once recording, leave the shot where it is during recording
8. If you use multiple camera either use a clapper board before each scene or just clap your hands loudly before recording so you can easily sync your cameras up
9. Use Shot log as you record, so you don’t have to re-watch every clip when capturing
10. Focus your camera
11. Only Use a Greenscreen or Bluescreen if you have thoroughly tested it and know it works prior to production
12. HD is good, if you have a computer hardware and software to handle it, if not a well light, standard definition picture looks fine.
13. Shoot as much more than you expect to use; If there is a glitch with one take, have one or more backup take so you don’t lose your scene.

Lighting:

1. Make Sure your subjects can be easily seen and well light; dark video causes a grainy pictures
2. If recording outside, record with the sun behind you to prevent sun glare

Audio:

1. Don't use the camera's built-in Microphone if at all possible
2. Don't record outside unless you absolutely have to
3. If You do have to record outside, microphones are must
4. Beware of background noise; do a test recording before you begin your project to listen for background noise so, you can eliminated or reduce them
5. Keep Audio cables, microphones and the camera away from power cords because they cause noise
6. Monitor Audio levels with headphones while recording (If Possible)
7. Beware of the Wind, the wind makes audio nearly impossible to hear and a nightmare to work with
8. Don't film in rooms that have an echo; once again makes audio annoying to listen to
9. Silence your cell phones; If you are using wireless microphones, turn all cell phones off because they cause interference with the microphones

Acting:

1. Make Sure the Actors project their voices so they can easily be heard in the video
2. Use Cue cards or a teleprompter if the actors need help with their lines
 - a. Put lines on a PowerPoint slideshow on a laptop and have it easy to read for the actors. Page through as the video goes on for the actors to easy know their lines.
3. Practice Your lines before recording

Post-Production:

1. NEVER USE WIPES, for transitions stick to: Cuts, Dissolve, fade and dip to color
2. Dip to color (Black) is a good way to show passing of time
3. Never Use Jump cuts unless it is meant to be a part of the video
4. Expect to spend hours editing!
5. Save Always and Save often
6. Make Sure Audio levels are not too loud or too soft and if they are, then either amplify or reduce the volume

Music:

1. Don't Use Copyrighted Music
2. Use Creative Commons, Royalty-free or Public Domain Music

DIY Video Making Ideas:

1. Use house lights for additional lighting (Make sure you white balance or color correct because house lights give off a yellow color temperature)
2. White Poster board as a bounce board (absorb and bounce light) \$1
3. Use Cardboard covered with Aluminum foil to reflect light (Reflector)

4. Google “DIY Steadycam” to find a tutorial on how to make your own steady cam for \$10
5. Mix or Combined multiple microphones by using a basic headphone splitter to record two microphones- **BEWARE THIS CAUSES EACH MICROPHONE TO ONLY BE HEARD ON ONE SIDE (LEFT OR RIGHT) WHEN PLAYED BACK**
6. Greenscreen- Green Tablecloths from the Dollar store (Needs proper lighting)

Miscellaneous:

1. Remember Murphy’s Law: “Everything that can go wrong will go wrong”; Plan for everything to take more time than you think it will
2. Ask For Help when you need it
3. Don’t break the law during the production of the video
4. Be Patient
5. Have Fun ☺
6. Don’t Spend too much money when you can do a lot for very little money
7. Have a schedule and follow it
8. Be Flexible
9. Manage your time well

Resources:

1. Film Riot Video Podcast (Teaches effects and techniques)
revision3.com/filmriot
2. Creative Commons Music: ccmixter.com
3. Royalty-Free Music and Sounds: freesounds.org

Tutorials:

4. Howcast.com
5. Ehow.com
6. Mediacollege.com
7. Videomaker.com