

Camera Shots

There are three basic camera shots:

Wide shot (also known as **Establishing Shot** or **Long Shot**) This shows the whole scene. Frequently you'll see video pieces begin with this shot. It's helpful because it sets the stage - the viewer gets oriented to where s/he is. These shots are also good if there's a lot of movement because there is plenty of room to move around. This shot might show a small crowd of people. To get this shot, you may need to zoom back as far as you can.



Medium Shot This shot shows less of a scene than the wide shot. The camera seems closer to the subject (although it may not be if you use your zoom lens). For example, if you were interviewing someone, this shot would show them from about the waist up in a medium shot. Use this when you want a closer look at your subject, or when you need to transition between wide shots and close-up shots (it is difficult for the viewer to follow what you are doing if you go straight from a wide shot to a close-up shot).



Close Up Shot This shot shows an even smaller part of the subject or scene. It's great for showing detail, like a person's emotional face or individual leaves on a tree. If you were interviewing someone, this shot would show the person from the top of the chest or shoulders up. An **Extreme Close Up Shot** is even closer than a Close Up. For example, it is just of the person's eyes, or of a bug gnawing on a leaf.

Other concepts for gathering video

Over the Shoulder or Cutaway Shot A cutaway is a shot away from the main action. For instance, if you are interviewing someone, a cutaway could be a shot of the interviewer, who can be listening, nodding, or responding to the guest. This is used a lot in interviews to show the person who's asking the questions. This particular shot is also called "over the shoulder" because the photographer is literally shooting video of you over the shoulder of the person you are interviewing. (An over the shoulder shot is a type of cutaway). These are very useful when editing because they give you an easy way to transition.



Two Shot/Three Shot - a two shot has two people in the frame. A three shot has three people in the frame. Because you have to be some distance from the people to get them all in the frame, this is usually a medium or wide shot.

Sequence - a term used in gathering video and editing. It refers to a series of related shots. For example, a sequence could be a wide shot of the Bay, followed by a medium shot of a few windsurfers, followed by a single windsurfer zipping through the water.

Length of shot - How long you show each shot depends on what's going on in the shot, and what you're trying to accomplish. If there's a lot of action or movement in a shot, you may use 20 seconds of it or more. If nothing is happening in the shot and you're showing a still scene, you may only use three seconds. When deciding how long to make a shot, keep in mind that your goal is to gain and hold the audience's attention and understanding.