DIRECTING

Camera Movements, Their Names, and Their Magic

Useful information that helps you

Camera movement is not just moving the lens. It is a visual language that expresses meaning, guides the viewer's feeling, and adds wonder through discovery, depth, tension, intimacy, energy, and even grandeur.

Pan



Moving the camera horizontally right or left to reveal more of a scene or follow a subject.



Magic: Reveals space and connects elements within a scene.

Tilt



Moving the camera vertically up or down to reveal height, depth, or an element in the scene.



Magic: Highlights scale and draws attention to details.

Dolly In



Moving the camera forward toward the subject.



Magic: Increases intimacy and tension, and sharpens focus on the subject.

Dolly Out



Moving the camera backward away from the subject.



Magic: Expands the scene and can create distance or isolation.

Truck / Track



Moving the camera sideways while following the subject.



Magic: Adds vitality and keeps the action flowing smoothly.

Pedestal Up / Down



Raising or lowering the whole camera vertically using a support.



Magic: Changes the feeling of power, status, or vulnerability.

Crane / Jib



Moving the camera through a sweeping upward or downward arc using a crane or jib.



Magic: Creates scale, elegance, and cinematic breadth.

Zoom In / Zoom Out



Changing focal length to magnify or widen the image without moving the camera itself.



Magic: Pulls attention to detail or reveals more context quickly.

Handheld



Shooting with a handheld camera, with natural vibration and unstable motion.



Magic: Creates realism, immediacy, and tension.

Static Shot



Keeping the camera fixed in place with no movement.



Magic: Creates calm, contemplation, and focus on details or mood.

Common Aspect Ratios, Resolutions, and Frame Rates

16:9 — For TV / YouTube.
Common resolutions: 1280×720, 1920×1080, 3840×2160

21:9 — For cinematic wide look.
Common resolutions: 2560×1080, 3840×1607, 4096×1716

4:3 — For archive / interviews / vintage look.
Common resolutions: 1024×768, 1440×1080

9:16 — For reels / TikTok / stories.
Common resolutions: 1080×1920, 2160×3840

Common Frame Rates and Uses:

- **24 fps** — Cinema (a classic, film-like look).
- **25 fps** — Television / PAL systems (common in many countries).
- **30 fps** — Digital content (a widely used standard e.g., YouTube).
- **50 fps** — Live TV / faster motion (smoother and clearer).
- **60 fps** — Sports / smoother motion (more fluid and detailed).

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DIRECTING

Shot Sizes and Their Names

Useful information that helps you

Shot sizes are levels of framing within the frame. Choosing the right size affects how much information is shown, how close we feel to the character, and therefore the meaning and emotional effect on the viewer.

What is it?



Extreme Long Shot (ELS)

When used:
To present a place on a wide scale and show the surrounding environment.

Visual / emotional effect:
Creates a sense of vastness, loneliness, or the character's smallness within the world.



Long Shot (LS)

When used:
To show the full character within the space and movement.

Visual / emotional effect:
Balances the character and location, with a feeling of freedom and motion.



Medium Long Shot (MLS)

When used:
To show most of the body, usually from the knees up, while keeping part of the environment.

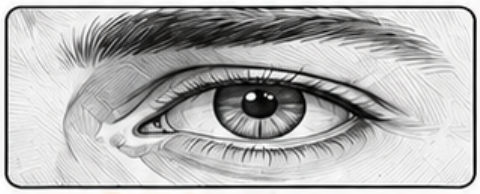
Visual / emotional effect:
Brings us closer to the character while preserving context.



Medium Shot (MS)

When used:
To focus on the character from the waist up, common in dialogue and interaction.

Visual / emotional effect:
Shows body language clearly and builds a direct connection with the character.



Extreme Close-Up (ECU)

When used:
To focus on a very small detail, such as an eye or an important object.

Visual / emotional effect:
Emphasizes fine detail and intense emotion or significance.



Close-Up (CU)

When used:
To reveal the character's face and expressions clearly, especially in emotional or dialogue moments.

Visual / emotional effect:
Creates strong emotional intimacy and reveals internal feeling.



Medium Close-Up (MCU)

When used:
To show the person from roughly the chest or shoulders up, often in interviews and conversations.

Visual / emotional effect:
Focuses on facial expression while retaining some body language.

Two Shot (2S)



When used:
To show two people together, often during dialogue or direct interaction.

Visual / emotional effect:
Highlights relationship, tension, or harmony between the two.

Over-the-Shoulder (OTS)



When used:
To frame one character from behind another person's shoulder, especially in dialogue.

Visual / emotional effect:
Creates presence, connection, and perspective between characters.

Important Landscape and Portrait Formats



16:9
For TV / YouTube (widescreen standard).

Common resolutions:
- 1280 × 720 (HD)
- 1920 × 1080 (Full HD)
- 3840 × 2160 (4K UHD)



21:9
For a cinematic wide look (cinema / dramatic storytelling).

Common resolutions:
- 2560 × 1080 (UltraWide HD)
- 3840 × 1607 (UltraWide 4K)
- 4096 × 1716 (DCI 4K)



4:3
For archive / interviews / vintage look (classic TV and early video).

Common resolutions:
- 1024 × 768 (XGA)
- 1440 × 1080 (HD 4:3)



9:16
For vertical mobile and social media (phones, Shorts, Reels, TikTok).

Common resolutions:
- 1080 × 1920 (Full HD Vertical)
- 2160 × 3840 (4K Vertical)

Frame Rate
(Frames Per Second - fps)

24 fps	25 fps	30 fps	50 fps	60 fps
Cinema (film look, natural motion).	Television (broadcast standard).	Digital (common for web & video).	Live (smoother, ideal for live broadcasts).	Sports / smoother motion (very fluid, great for fast action).

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