

Basic Video & Audio Terminology

Camera Movement and composition terms

closeup (CU) -A tightly framed camera shot in which the principal subject is viewed at close range, appearing large and dominant on screen.

medium shot (MS) Defines any camera perspective between long shot and close up, viewing the subjects from a medium distance.

long shot (LS) Camera view of a subject or scene from a distance, showing a broad perspective.

pan - Horizontal camera pivot, right to left or left to right, from a stationary position.

Tilt - Vertical camcorder rotation (up and down) from a single axis, as on a tripod.

zoom Variance of focal length from wide-angle to telephoto, or vice versa, in one continuous move. "Zoom in" and "zoom out" are common terms.

Shot -A shot describes the way a lens produces an image. It frames the subject in the viewfinder/monitor and is usually defined in two dimensions by how much or little of the human figure is included in the frame.

Single Shot - A shot with one subject in the frame.

Two-shot - A camera view including two subjects, most generally applicable to interview situations.

Tracking - Lateral camcorder movement that travels with a moving subject. The camcorder should maintain a regulated distance from the subject.

Head room - is the space between the top of a subject's head and the top of the screen frame.

Nose Room -The distance between a subject and the edge of the frame.

Additional Video Terms

Video Switcher - is a hardware device used to switch or choose between different video sources. Although the main functionality is for selecting between the sources of video, they are at times used in mixing video and adding footage or special effects on a secondary source.

Video Transitions

cut - is the most common type of video transition. It simply means replacing one shot instantly with the next.

The "fade from black" and "fade to black" - are ubiquitous in film and television. They usually signal the beginning and end of a scene.

Audio Terms

Audio Mixing Board - is an electronic device for combining sounds of many different audio signals. Inputs to the console include microphones and laptop audio.

Fader - Each audio channel on a mixer has a fader to adjust the volume.

gain and levels - refer to the loudness of the audio.

Wireless Microphone - A microphone that does not need a cord. Usually it consists of a clip-on microphone attached to a small belt pack transmitter. At the camera is the receiver portion of the system.