

## (Flip) Video Best Practices

Listed below are video's best practices, catered to the Flip camera

### LIGHT:

Light is one of the most important criteria to video. It creates shadows, enhances your depth of field, and gives the video definition.

#### Indoors:

1. Windows
  - a. Avoid shooting your subject with the camera facing a window. This will cause a backlight, which in turn will create a silhouette of your talent.
  - b. Shoot with your back to the window instead. This will create a nice light for your subject, and good lighting for the camera.
2. Rooms
  - a. Make sure you have sufficient lighting.
  - b. Flip cameras in particular do not operate well in low lighting.
3. Lighting kits
  - a. If you have access to a lighting kit, use it!
    - i. Three point lighting: Key, fill, back
      1. See diagram
  - b. If you have access to even one camera light, use it!
    - i. Place the light nearest the camera to give the talent a nice key light.

#### Outdoors:

4. Sunlight
  - a. Use the sun as your key light, not your back light.
5. Overcast
  - a. An overcast day is the most even lighting you can ask for because the light is dispersed throughout the sky, as opposed to centralized during a bright sunny day.

### SOUND:

Good quality sound makes all the difference in a video. As one of our sound engineers always says:

“Without video, it's just radio. Without audio, it's just a security camera.”

#### Indoors:

1. Room
  - a. Try to find a nice, quiet room.
  - b. Avoid spaces with a lot of reverb or echo.
  - c. The closer your Flip cam is to the talent, the better the audio will sound.

#### Outdoors:

1. Surroundings
  - a. Be aware of the ambient noises.
    - i. Try to avoid areas with a lot of foot traffic, crowds, cars, etc.
  - b. Find an open space where sound will not bounce (avoid reverb or

- echo).
- c. The closer your Flip cam is to the talent, the better the audio will sound.

## STABILITY:

Generally, the lighter the camera is, the harder it is to keep stable.

A good practice is to have the camera stabilized by an accessory. In video, we try to avoid the “shaky cam” look at all costs.

### Accessories:

1. Tripod
  - a. “Sticks” as we call them in the business, are a videographer’s best friend. You don’t need a heavy-duty tripod for a Flip cam. In fact, a lightweight still camera tripod will probably do the trick.
  - b. Make sure that the tripod is balanced so that your video is not slanted.
2. Counterbalance
  - a. You can find rigs or even instructions on how to create a counterbalance for the Flip cam. This gives the camera more base weight so that you are more in control if using the Flip as a “hand held.”
3. Zoom
  - a. “Shaky cam” worsens when zoomed in.
  - b. If possible, bring the camera closer to the talent rather than zooming in.

## CREATIVITY:

There are many ways to get creative with video. Here are just a few tips.

### Panning and tilting:

1. Panning:
  - a. Avoid fast pans
    - i. This causes a blurred video and dizzy viewer.
  - b. Avoid pans while zoomed in tightly
    - i. This too causes a blurred video and a dizzy viewer.

### Rule of Thirds:

1. It is aesthetically pleasing to the human eye to view the main subject in one of the thirds of the screen.
2. Having your subject in a third of the screen creates more dynamism in the video.

### 180-Degree Rule:

3. This is one of the first rules we learn in production. Unless you are aiming to cause confusion in your video, do not cross the 180-Degree line.
  - a. See the diagram for a clearer explanation.

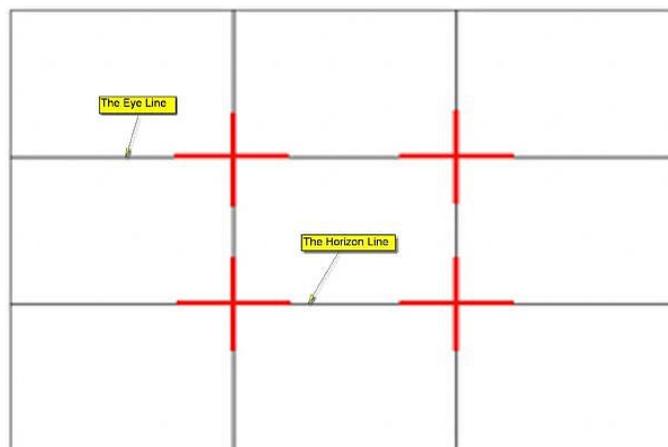
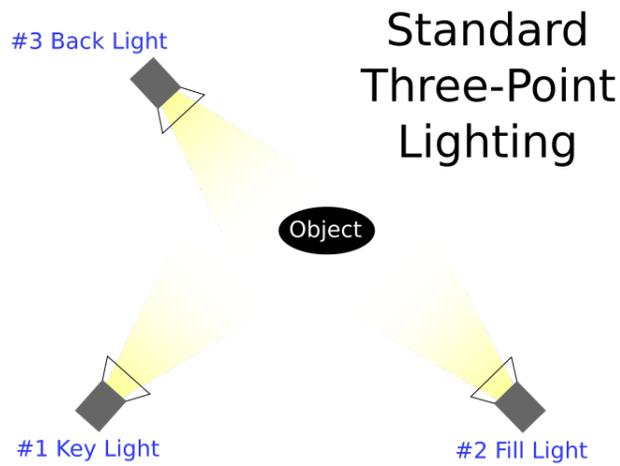
### Zooming:

1. Avoid zooms on a Flip cam
  - a. Because the Flip cam only has a digital zoom (as opposed to optical), the image will lose resolution and begin to distort.

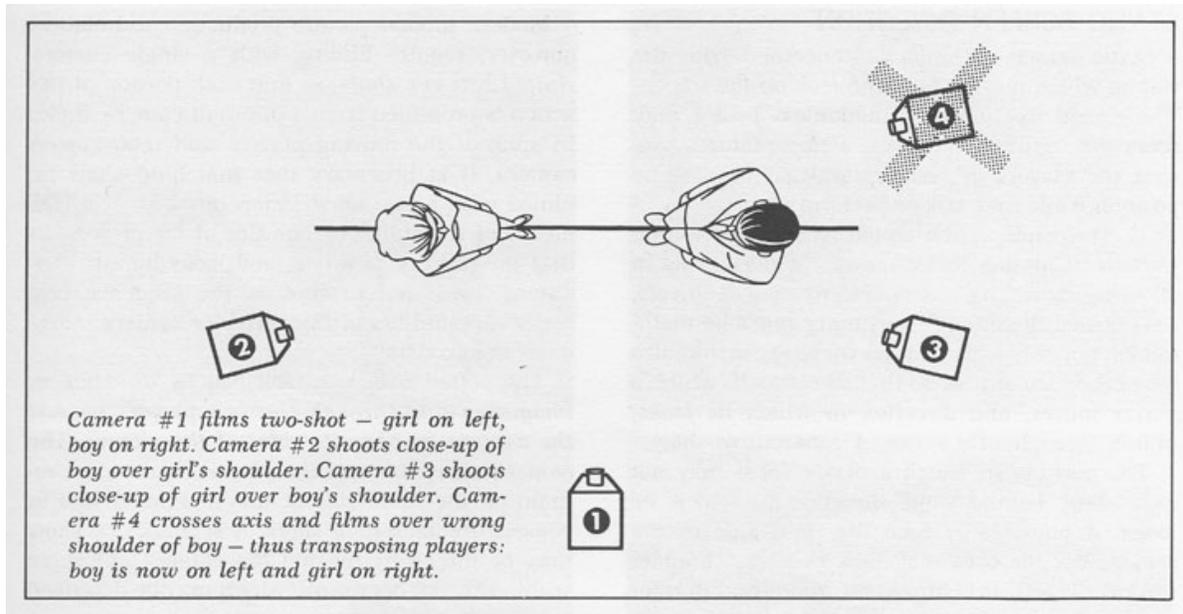
**Backgrounds:**

1. Try to find a nice background.
  - a. A nice, clean background will help to create a more dynamic video.
2. Avoid busy backgrounds.
  - a. Busy backgrounds will distract the viewer.

**DIAGRAMS:**



**RULE OF THIRDS**



### 180-DEGREE RULE FLIP VIDEO:

1) In most cases – unless you're recording a meeting or event -- **limit length** to 1:30 minutes or briefer. That makes for easier downloading and tighter bites. As you're shooting, look for a moment that seems like a natural stopping point. Cutting the clip off at the right time helps in the editing process.

2) **Avoid unnecessary and fast pan shots.** Instead, stay with an image and let the action move

through the scene you are taping. When panning a scene, **hold the camera steady** and move it very slowly. Keep the subject in focus. In all cases, keep the camera steady as much as possible and avoid jerky movements. Bracing your elbow with your non-shooting hand, or keeping your "shooting elbow" close to your body, can help steady the camera. A tripod, sold separately, can also keep the camera stationary.

3) **Avoid using the zoom** feature unless necessary. The digital zoom will result in loss of image resolution. Though magnified, the image has less quality than what you would get from a camera with an optical telephoto zoom. Instead of zooming, stay at the wide part of the lens and move your whole body closer to the subject. This will also make the image more stable.

4) In an interview setting, be as **close to the person** as possible for the camera microphone to sound good. This means you do not use the zoom on the camera but you hold the camera and stand close to the interviewee for the recording.

5) **Adjust for ambient noise.** Make sure the sound around you is not distracting. In particular, try to stay away from or minimize your exposure to street noise or lots of talking. If you cannot get away from intrusive background sound, then make sure to include the source of noise in the shot behind your interviewee. That way, the image explains where the extra noise is coming from. This makes the distraction more acceptable to the viewer.

6) **Avoid high-contrast scenes** as much as possible. Dark shadows will go black in the transfer, and shadows across someone's face will not transfer well. Try to put your interview subject in even light so their face is in an even light level throughout. Also avoid backgrounds behind the subject that are too bright or too dark, since this will increase the image contrast and make the image hard to see on the Web. If you are inside a building, try to avoid bright walls behind a dark-skinned person when doing interviews or b-roll. The contrast could be too extreme. Also avoid the fluorescent flicker of lights on the wall behind someone, particularly overseas, where the electrical power is a different voltage and produces a light flicker with

cameras set for United States electrical current settings.