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When it comes to filmmaking, every shot is a chance to tell your story in a way that words alone can't. Whether you're capturing the intense close-up of an actor's expression or the sweeping aerial view of a vast landscape, the way you frame your shot shapes how your audience experiences the scene. But with so many different types of shots and camera angles to choose from, it can be overwhelming to know which one will best serve your narrative. Ready to unlock the visual power of your storytelling? Let's dive into the essential guide to 70 types of shots and camera angles that every filmmaker should know. Here's a deep dive into the wide array of shots and camera angles that can transform your filmmaking and elevate your visual storytelling. A master shot is a filmmaking technique where the entire scene is captured from a wide angle in a single take. It typically includes all the characters and actions, serving as the foundation of the scene. This shot helps establish the setting, relationships between characters, and overall mood. Filmmakers often use it as a reference point, cutting to close-ups or other angles while maintaining continuity. The master shot is crucial for providing context and ensuring that the entire scene is covered, allowing for flexibility during the editing process. It's a staple in visual storytelling, enhancing clarity and flow. An establishing shot is a wide-angle shot used in filmmaking to introduce the setting of a scene. It usually appears at the beginning of a sequence, giving viewers a clear sense of where the action takes place, whether it's a city, a house, or an outdoor landscape. By providing context, the establishing shot sets the mood and prepares the audience for the following action. It helps orient viewers, making the transition between scenes smoother and more engaging. This technique is key in visual storytelling, enhancing the overall flow and understanding of the narrative. A wide shot captures a scene from a distance, showing the subject in its entirety along with the surrounding environment. It emphasizes the context and location while still including the subject within the frame. Wide shots are often used to establish the setting, show the scale of a scene, or highlight the relationship between the characters and their surroundings. This type of shot provides a broader perspective, making it useful in scenes that involve action, landscapes, or group interactions. It helps convey the full scope of the moment, enhancing the audience's sense of place and scale. A medium shot frames the subject from the waist up, balancing both the character and their surroundings. It's commonly used in dialogue scenes, offering a closer look at facial expressions and body language while still showing some of the background. This shot creates an intimate connection with the subject, making it ideal for character interactions, reactions, or moments of reflection. The medium shot strikes a balance between wide shots that emphasize the setting and close-ups that focus entirely on detail, helping to maintain the flow of the narrative while drawing attention to key emotional or narrative elements. A body shot refers to a framing technique that captures the subject's entire body, from head to toe. It's often used to show a character's posture, movement, or interaction with their environment. This type of shot helps convey a sense of the subject's physicality, body language, and even clothing, giving a fuller perspective of their presence in the scene. It's commonly used in action scenes, dance sequences, or moments where a character's physical performance is key to the story. The body shot provides a comprehensive view, allowing the audience to focus on both the character and their movements. A close-up shot focuses tightly on a subject, often framing just the face or a specific detail like hands or an object. It's used to highlight emotions, reactions, or important elements in the scene, drawing the audience's attention to subtle expressions or key details. This shot creates an intimate and intense connection, allowing viewers to feel closer to the subject and better understand their feelings or thoughts. Close-ups are powerful in storytelling, enhancing emotional depth and adding dramatic weight to the narrative. They're often used in pivotal moments where the smallest expressions matter most. An extreme wide shot captures a vast area, showing the subject from a great distance, often making them appear small or even insignificant compared to the environment. This shot emphasizes the scale of the location, giving viewers a broader sense of the surroundings and setting the tone for the scene. It's commonly used in epic or action films to showcase landscapes, large-scale events, or vast cityscapes. The extreme wide shot helps establish context and mood, often creating a feeling of isolation, grandeur, or overwhelming space, drawing attention more to the environment than the characters themselves. A long shot frames the subject from head to toe while capturing a significant portion of the background. It's used to show the full body of a character in relation to their surroundings, giving the audience a clear sense of both the subject and the environment they are in. Long shots are often employed to emphasize movement, action, or the spatial relationship between characters and their setting. They help create a broader perspective, allowing viewers to observe how characters interact with their environment, making it especially effective in action scenes, establishing scenes, or moments of physical expression. A medium-long shot frames the subject from around the knees up, offering a balance between the subject and the surrounding environment. It's often used to show body language while still providing some context of the setting. This shot is commonly referred to as the "cowboy shot" in film, as it was popular in Westerns to show characters from the knees up, including their holstered guns. The medium-long shot is effective in dialogue scenes or moments where gestures and movements are important, giving viewers a sense of both the character's actions and their surroundings. An extreme long shot captures a vast area from a great distance, often making characters appear tiny or even invisible compared to the environment. This type of shot is used to emphasize the scale of a location or landscape, conveying a sense of grandeur, isolation, or insignificance of the subject within their surroundings. It's commonly used in films to introduce expansive settings like mountains, deserts, or cities, creating a strong visual impact. The extreme long shot focuses on the environment rather than the subject, setting the scene or mood and providing context before the action unfolds. A medium close-up shot frames the subject from just above the shoulders to just below the chin, focusing more closely on the face and upper body than a standard medium shot. This shot allows viewers to see detailed facial expressions and emotions while still including some of the character's surroundings. It's often used in dialogue scenes to capture subtle emotional nuances and reactions, providing a balance between intimacy and context. The medium close-up is ideal for moments requiring a close look at a character's expressions or interactions without eliminating the background. An extreme close-up shot tightly focuses on a specific detail or feature, such as a character's eye, a hand, or a critical object. It magnifies the detail to emphasize its importance or to convey intense emotions and reactions. This shot is used to draw attention to crucial elements that might otherwise go unnoticed, adding dramatic impact or highlighting key aspects of the scene. Extreme close-ups create a sense of intimacy or tension, allowing viewers to closely observe minute details and emotional subtleties, making them a powerful tool in visual storytelling. An over-the-shoulder (OTS) shot is framed from behind one character, with the shoulder and back of the head visible in the foreground, focusing on the subject or scene in front of them. This perspective is commonly used in dialogue scenes to establish a connection between characters, providing viewers with the sense of being part of the conversation. It helps convey the point of view of the character whose shoulder is visible, adding depth to interactions and emphasizing their perspective. The OTS shot is effective for showing reactions and maintaining spatial relationships between characters. A point-of-view (POV) shot simulates the perspective of a character, showing what they see as if the camera is their eyes. This shot immerses viewers in the character's experience, offering a direct insight into their thoughts and perceptions. By aligning the camera with the character's viewpoint, the POV shot enhances empathy and involvement, allowing the audience to experience events and emotions from the character's perspective. It's often used in scenes to convey personal or subjective experiences, heightening the impact of crucial moments and deepening the connection between viewers and characters. A two-shot frames two characters in the same shot, often used in dialogues or interactions to show their relationship and spatial dynamics. It captures both characters from a range of distances, from medium to wide, depending on the scene's needs. This shot helps establish the connection between the characters, highlighting their interactions and reactions in a shared context. It's effective for illustrating conversations, emotional exchanges, or collaborative actions, providing viewers with a clear understanding of how characters relate to each other within the scene. A one-shot focuses on a single character or object within the frame. It's used to highlight that character or object in isolation, often providing a detailed view of their emotions, actions, or significance to the scene. This shot is effective for drawing attention to a character's reaction, expression, or personal moment, allowing the audience to engage closely with the subject without distractions from others. The one shot can be employed to emphasize key moments or to create a sense of intimacy and focus, making it a versatile tool in visual storytelling. A three-shot includes three characters within the frame, often used to depict interactions or relationships between them. This shot captures the dynamics and spatial relationships among the characters, providing context for their interactions. It's commonly used in scenes with group conversations, collaborative actions, or when illustrating how characters influence each other. By including all three characters in a single shot, it helps maintain a cohesive visual narrative, allowing viewers to understand the connections and interactions between the characters clearly and engagingly. A high-angle shot is captured from above the subject, looking down. This angle can make the subject appear smaller, weaker, or more vulnerable, creating a sense of power imbalance in the scene. It's often used in moments where a character feels overwhelmed or threatened, highlighting their vulnerability within the narrative. In contrast, a low-angle shot is taken from below the subject, looking up. This angle can make the subject appear larger, more imposing, or dominant, often used to convey power, strength, or authority. It's a common technique in scenes where the filmmaker wants to emphasize the superiority or intimidation of a character. An eye-level shot is taken at the same height as the subject's eyes, creating a neutral perspective. This angle is the most natural and commonly used, as it allows the audience to see the scene from the character's point of view without adding any dramatic influence. It's great for scenes of dialogue or everyday interactions where the filmmaker wants to keep things grounded and relatable. Also known as a bird's-eye view, this shot is taken from directly above the subject. It can be used to provide a unique perspective, showing the layout of a scene or the spatial relationships between characters. Overhead shots are often employed to convey a sense of surveillance, and detachment, or to give the audience a god-like view of the action. A canted or Dutch angle shot tilts the camera so that the horizon line is slanted. This creates a sense of unease, tension, or disorientation in the scene, often used in moments of psychological distress or chaos. It's an effective way to visually represent instability or a shift in the character's world. A reverse angle shot captures the action from the opposite side of a preceding shot, typically used in conversations. This angle helps to show the other participant's perspective, adding depth to the interaction. It's a staple in dialogue scenes, helping to create a natural back-and-forth between characters. The profile angle captures the subject from the side, often at a 90-degree angle. This shot is useful for showing a character's profile, emphasizing their features, or capturing action that moves horizontally across the screen. It's commonly used in scenes where the characters are walking or interacting with something beside them. This shot is taken at shoulder height, often used to focus on the upper body and face without the dominance of the background. It's a great way to highlight a character's emotions or actions while still keeping some context of the environment. Shoulder-level shots are frequently used in conversation scenes or to emphasize a character's posture and gestures. A knee-level shot frames the subject from knee height, often used to show action involving the legs or to create a sense of low perspective. This angle can add dynamism to a scene, especially in action sequences, or emphasize a character's movement. It's also used to give a unique perspective on the scene, often making the audience feel closer to the action. Captured at hip height, this shot is used to frame the subject's torso and waist. It's often used in Westerns to highlight holstered guns during standoffs, but it can also be effective in modern settings to focus on body language or the interaction of characters at waist level. Hip-level shots can add subtle tension or highlight specific actions, like reaching for an object. Similar to an overhead shot, a top shot is taken from directly above the subject, looking down. It's used to give a broad view of the scene or to focus on the spatial arrangement of elements within it. Top shots are particularly effective in action scenes or to emphasize the isolation or insignificance of a character within a larger environment. A side shot captures the subject from a side angle, often used to show profiles or to focus on interactions that involve lateral movement. This shot is effective in highlighting character relationships, especially when they are standing side by side, or showcasing actions that unfold across the frame. It's a straightforward angle that can be used to add balance to a scene. A back shot is taken from behind the subject, often focusing on what they are looking at or where they are going. This shot can create a sense of mystery or anticipation, as the audience sees the scene from the character's perspective without fully revealing their emotions. It's commonly used to build suspense or to lead the viewer into the next part of the narrative. A front shot captures the subject head-on, often used to convey direct emotion or confrontation. This shot is powerful for moments where the filmmaker wants the audience to connect directly with the character's feelings or expressions. It's a straightforward and impactful way to draw attention to the subject's face or actions. A landscape shot emphasizes the natural environment, often captured with a wide lens to showcase the scenery. This shot is used to establish location, create mood, or convey the vastness of a setting. Landscape shots are essential in films that rely on the environment as a key element of the story, such as Westerns, adventure films, or epics. A portrait shot focuses on the subject, usually framing them from the chest up in a vertical orientation. It's used to capture detailed expressions and emotions, often isolating the character from the background. Portrait shots are intimate, bringing the viewer close to the subject and highlighting the personal aspects of the scene. A tracking shot involves moving the camera alongside or following the subject as they move through a scene. This can be done using a dolly, Steadicam, or even handheld, depending on the desired effect. Tracking shots are used to immerse the audience in the action, creating a fluid sense of movement that feels natural and engaging. They're often used in scenes where the character is walking or running, allowing the audience to follow along with the action. A dolly shot is created by placing the camera on a wheeled platform, or dolly, and moving it towards or away from the subject. This shot can smoothly change the audience's perspective, whether by pushing in to emphasize a character's emotions or pulling back to reveal more of the scene. Dolly shots are a staple in cinematic storytelling, offering a controlled and polished way to guide the viewer's focus. Also known as the "Vertigo Effect," the dolly zoom shot is a combination of a dolly movement and a zoom. As the camera dollies closer or further from the subject, the lens zooms in the opposite direction, creating a disorienting effect where the background seems to stretch or compress while the subject remains the same size. This shot is often used to convey psychological distress, realization, or a dramatic shift in perception. A crane shot is achieved by mounting the camera on a crane, allowing it to move vertically, horizontally, or even diagonally through the air. This shot can capture sweeping, grand movements, often used to reveal a scene from above or to follow action from a bird's-eye view down to ground level. Crane shots add a sense of scale and grandeur to a scene, often used in epic moments or to transition between scenes with a dramatic flair. A panning shot involves rotating the camera horizontally on a fixed axis, typically from left to right or vice versa. This shot is often used to follow a subject moving across the frame, reveal new elements within a scene, or create a sense of continuity in action. Panning shots are versatile and can add energy to a scene, guiding the viewer's attention smoothly across the screen. A Steadicam shot uses a stabilizing rig that allows the camera to move smoothly through a scene, even over uneven surfaces or during complex movements. This shot is ideal for capturing fluid, dynamic motion without the shakiness of a handheld camera. Steadicam shots are often used in scenes with intricate choreography, such as long takes that follow characters through different spaces, maintaining a cinematic feel while staying close to the action. A handheld shot is captured with the camera held directly by the operator, resulting in a slightly shaky, more raw feel. This shot is often used to create a sense of immediacy or realism, making the audience feel like they are right in the middle of the action. Handheld shots are common in documentaries, action sequences, or any scene where a gritty, authentic vibe is desired. A drone shot, also known as an aerial shot, is captured from a high altitude using a drone, offering expansive views of landscapes, cities, or large-scale action scenes. This shot provides a perspective that was once only possible with helicopters, now more accessible with drones. Drone shots are often used to establish location, show the vastness of a setting, or create a dramatic opening or closing for a scene. A zoom shot involves changing the focal length of the camera lens to magnify or shrink the subject in the frame without moving the camera itself. This shot is used to draw attention to a specific detail or to reveal more of the scene without altering the camera's physical position. Zoom shots can be subtle or dramatic, depending on the speed of the zoom, and are often used to create a sense of focus or tension. The Zolly shot, another name for the dolly zoom shot, combines the smooth motion of a dolly with the visual distortion of a zoom. It's used to create a surreal or unsettling effect, making it popular in thriller and horror genres to depict moments of shock, realization, or intense emotion. This shot is memorable for its ability to visually convey a shift in a character's perception or emotional state. An Arc Shot involves moving the camera in a circular motion around the subject, usually at a consistent distance. This shot adds a dynamic feel to a scene, creating a sense of movement and energy while keeping the subject in focus. Arc shots are often used in moments of realization or to add a dramatic flair to a character's introduction or key action. A whip pan is a rapid, blurry pan from one subject to another, creating a quick transition between scenes or points of interest. This shot is often used to convey urgency or surprise, and it can also serve as a creative way to transition between scenes or moments within the same scene. Whip pans are effective in action sequences or fast-paced dialogue, adding to the intensity and speed of the moment. Similar to a whip pan, a whip tilt is a fast, vertical movement of the camera, typically from top to bottom or vice versa. This shot can be used to reveal something quickly, create a sense of disorientation, or transition between different visual planes in a scene. Whip tilts are less common than whip pans but are equally effective in adding a sense of speed or surprise. A Pedestal Shot involves moving the camera vertically up or down without tilting it. This shot is used to follow a subject's vertical movement or to change the perspective from high to low (or vice versa) within a scene. Pedestal shots can create a smooth, controlled transition between different heights, often used to emphasize a character's position or to reveal elements of a scene gradually. The Cowboy Shot frames the subject from mid-thigh up, often used to show a character's holstered guns, which is where the name comes from. It's popular in Westerns but also useful in other genres for emphasizing a character's stance, movement, or interaction with their environment. This shot allows for a good balance between the character and the surrounding setting, often used in standoffs or confrontational scenes. A crab shot involves the camera moving sideways, often on a track, like a crab scuttling across the sand. This lateral movement can follow a subject or reveal different aspects of a scene, creating a dynamic and fluid motion. Crab shots are effective for tracking characters as they move horizontally across the frame, offering a continuous, immersive view of the action. A cutaway shot is a brief shot that interrupts the main action to show something related to the scene, like a reaction or a relevant object. It's often used to give the audience additional information or context, such as showing a character's reaction to an event or highlighting a key detail. Cutaways help to build tension, provide context, or smooth over edits in a scene. An insert shot is a close-up of a specific detail within a scene, like a hand picking up an object or a clock ticking. This shot is used to draw attention to important elements that might otherwise be overlooked, adding emphasis to key moments. Insert shots are often used to convey critical information to the audience without distracting from the main action. A Reaction Shot focuses on a character's response to an event, dialogue, or action within the scene. This shot is crucial for conveying emotions and is often used in conversations to show how one character reacts to another's words or actions. Reaction shots help to build empathy with the audience, making the character's emotions more relatable and impactful. A Sequence Shot is a long take that captures an entire scene or sequence without cuts, creating a continuous flow of action. This shot can be very challenging to execute but is highly effective in immersing the audience in the action, making them feel like they are witnessing the events in real-time. Sequence shots are often used in action scenes, dramatic moments, or to showcase complex choreography. A pickup shot is filmed after the main production has wrapped, often used to fill in gaps, clarify story points, or add additional angles that were missed during the initial shooting. These shots are usually brief and are seamlessly integrated into the existing footage to improve the overall flow and continuity of the scene. Pickup shots are essential in ensuring that the final edit is smooth and cohesive. A ground-level shot is taken with the camera positioned at or near the ground, looking straight ahead or slightly upwards. This shot is often used to show action from the perspective of someone lying down or to capture movement close to the ground, such as a car chase. Ground-level shots add a unique perspective and can make the action feel more intense or immediate. A night shot is filmed in low-light conditions, typically after sunset, to capture the mood and atmosphere of a nighttime scene. This shot requires careful lighting and camera settings to maintain visibility while preserving the darkness of the scene. Night shots are commonly used in horror, thriller, or dramatic genres to create a sense of mystery, tension, or intimacy. The vertigo shot, also known as a dolly zoom, involves moving the camera in and zooming out simultaneously, or vice versa, to create a disorienting effect. This shot is famously used in Alfred Hitchcock's "Vertigo" and is often employed to convey a character's sudden realization, shock, or psychological distress. The vertigo shot is visually striking and often used to enhance a pivotal moment in the story. MOS stands for "Mit Out Sound" (a humorous take on the German-accented "Without Sound"), indicating that a particular shot or sequence is filmed without synchronized sound. This is used when the sound is not necessary or will be added in post-production. MOS shots are common in scenes where dialogue isn't required, such as montages, silent action sequences, or visual effects shots. A still shot captures a single frame or a motionless scene, often used to freeze a moment in time or to create a photographic effect within the film. This shot can be powerful for emphasizing a particular image, mood, or detail, often used at the beginning or end of a scene to leave a lasting impression. Still, shots are also used in storyboards or promotional materials to represent key moments in the film. A Shallow Focus Shot is characterized by a narrow depth of field, where only the subject is in sharp focus while the background and foreground are blurred. This technique draws the viewer's attention directly to the subject, emphasizing their importance within the frame. Shallow focus is often used to isolate characters or objects, creating an intimate or dramatic effect, especially in close-up shots. Deep focus is the opposite of shallow focus, where the entire scene, including the foreground, middle ground, and background, is in sharp focus. This technique allows the viewer to see everything in the frame clearly, creating a sense of depth and realism. Deep focus is often used in scenes with significant visual or narrative detail, allowing multiple elements to be observed and interpreted simultaneously, as seen in many classic films by directors like Orson Welles. A rack focus shot involves shifting the focus from one subject to another within the same shot. This technique is used to direct the viewer's attention from one element to another, creating a dynamic shift in focus that can reveal important details or change the emphasis of the scene. Rack focus is commonly used in conversations, where the focus moves between different characters, or to highlight a sudden realization or discovery. Tilt-shift is a technique that involves tilting the camera lens relative to the image plane and shifting it to create a selective focus effect. This creates a miniature or toy-like appearance in the scene, making it look as though the objects or subjects are much smaller than they are. Tilt-shift is often used in photography and filmmaking to create a unique, stylized effect, making real-life scenes appear like tiny, detailed models. A soft focus shot deliberately blurs the image slightly to create a dreamy, ethereal effect. This technique is often used in romantic scenes, flashbacks, or to convey a sense of nostalgia or fantasy. Soft focus can also be used to flatter subjects, soften imperfections and create a more gentle, pleasing image. The effect is typically achieved by using special lenses, filters, or post-production techniques. A matte shot is a special effects technique where two separate images are combined into a single shot, usually by filming the live action against a blank background and then adding a painted or digitally created background. This technique is used to create scenes that would be impossible or impractical to shoot in real life, such as fantastical landscapes, distant locations, or futuristic settings. Matte shots are a classic tool in visual effects, used in everything from historical epics to sci-fi films. In the world of filmmaking, the choice of shots and camera angles is far more than just a technical decision—it's a powerful storytelling tool. Each shot, whether it's a deep focus that immerses you in the entire scene or a vertigo shot that makes you feel a character's inner turmoil, shapes the way the audience experiences the story. Mastering these techniques allows filmmakers to guide the viewer's emotions, draw attention to crucial details, and create a visual language that speaks as powerfully as words. Whether you're capturing the vastness of a landscape with a wide shot or the intensity of a character's emotion with a close-up, understanding the impact of each shot is key to crafting a compelling narrative. So, as you continue your journey in filmmaking, remember that every frame is an opportunity to deepen the connection between the story and the audience. Camera angles play a crucial role in storytelling and can enhance the mood and tone of a scene. They can also be used to convey relationships between characters and create a sense of depth and dimension in the film. The main types of camera shots include wide shots, medium shots, and close-ups. These shots help establish context, provide character interaction details, and capture emotional expressions. Camera angles influence a viewer's perception by adding emphasis. Low angles can make characters appear powerful, while high angles may create a sense of vulnerability. A long shot captures a character within their environment, providing context, while an extreme long shot places more emphasis on the location, making characters appear smaller. Karen Mc Guinness, Customer Success SpecialistUpdated 1 November 2023Basic Camera MovesStoryboarding Shot TypesDo you sometimes feel like your vision for a film is lost in translation? It can be a frustrating experience, but one that can be avoided (or at least minimised). Before delving into the intricate world of advanced video transitions or the finesse of animatics, it's essential to establish a strong foundation in the fundamentals of storyboarding. This solid groundwork serves as the bedrock upon which your cinematic aspirations can flourish.Armed with a working knowledge of camera shots, angles, and perspective techniques, you'll be well on your way to creating easy-to-read storyboards. It's the key to unlocking your ability to draft storyboards that not only capture your original vision but also convey it to others with precision and impact. To that end, we've pulled together 16 camera moves and camera shot types to give your storyboarding vocabulary a boost.Basic Camera MovesBy incorporating a variety of different camera moves into your shots, you can add a deeper sense of visual interest. Combine this with a strategic approach to messaging and you'll be off to the races. In the realm of camera movements, take particular care when selecting the most appropriate camera move. Remember that your choices here are integral to creating an experience that resonates deeply with your audience as each camera move has a distinct impact, influencing the viewer's emotional response and immersion into the scene. Here are some well-loved camera moves to consider:ZoomProbably the most well-known camera move, zooming gives the impression of moving closer or further away from the subject. It can be used effectively to magnify a certain focus point in the camera frame, but other moves such as a dolly, are a more natural way to show movement. While a quick zoom can help add a sense of drama and energy when used correctly, avoid over-using a zoom shot as your default move.Also if you're making a storyboard, Boords has pre-built indicators for Zooming (as well as a bunch of other common camera moves). Just click Insert Camera Movement in the Image Editor: PanPanning is when the camera is moved horizontally from one side to another on a central axis. This is a rotating movement in which the camera's position remains in place, but the direction that it faces changes. It can be used to follow a moving character or to fit more into a frame, for example, panning across a landscape to create a sense of place. Panning offers a practical way to guide the viewer's attention within a scene and can be particularly useful in action sequences, where maintaining focus on a rapidly moving subject might otherwise prove challenging. Free Storyboard SoftwareBoordsThe Shortcut to Effective Storyboards.Boords is an easy-to-use storyboarding tool to plan creative projects.Try Boords for freeTilt Tilting is similar to panning in that the camera is kept in a stationary position, but unlike panning (which looks from side to side) tilting focuses on upwards & downwards movements. Using a tilting motion helps to fit more into a single frame. A slow upwards tilt can be very effective in making a subject appear bigger or more significant while a downwards tilt has the opposite effect. When the camera tilts upwards, it can convey a sense of aspiration or grandeur. For example, capturing a towering skyscraper from a low angle through an upward tilt emphasizes its height and dominance in an urban landscape. This technique is often used to emphasize power, authority, or the awe-inspiring nature of a subject. On the other hand, a downward tilt can evoke vulnerability, oppression, or a shift in power dynamics. It's used frequently to create a feeling of unease or to place the viewer in a position of overlooking a subject. For example, tilting the camera downward to reveal a character lying injured on the ground can intensify the emotional impact of the scene and encourage empathy from the audience.DollyA dolly shot is when the entire camera is mounted on a track and is moved towards or away from a subject. Unlike a zoom shot, the world around the subject moves with the camera. A dolly zoom gives the illusion that the viewer is walking towards the subject. By bringing the subject into sharp focus, it can be a great way of creating a sense of intimacy between them.The controlled movement of the camera on a track allows for smooth and dynamic transitions, allowing the audience to feel like they are truly part of the scene. This technique is often employed to establish a connection between characters and their surroundings, as it can simulate the experience of physically moving through the environment.TruckSimilar to dollying, trucking involves moving the entire camera along a fixed point, but the motion goes from side to side, rather than in and out. It's often used to follow characters in action. Mounting the camera on a fluid motion track will help to stamp out any jerking camera movements.Trucking shots are especially powerful in conveying the dynamics of a scene, immersing viewers into the environment or revealing important elements piece by piece. For instance, in a suspenseful thriller, trucking can subtly shift the audience's attention from a character to a looming threat in the periphery. This side-to-side movement can also simulate a character's perspective, allowing the viewer to 'walk' beside them, thereby building a deeper connection or empathy.To add a truck indicator in Boords, just select Pan right from the Camera Movements menu in the Image Editor: PedestalA pedestal (AKA Boom up/down or Jib up/down) requires the camera operator to move the camera upwards or downwards in relation to a subject. It's different from tilting in that the entire camera ascends or descends, rather than just the camera angle. It's a distinctive way to control the viewer's perspective and engagement within a scene. By vertically adjusting the camera's position while maintaining its angle, filmmakers can draw attention to specific elements within a composition. A pedestal shot can be used to frame a tall or high subject (such as a building) while keeping the framing at eye level view for the viewer.Pedestal shots can add a sense of dynamism to a scene by altering the spatial relationship between subjects and their surroundings. By gradually moving the camera upwards or downwards, filmmakers can emphasize changes in perspective and revealing new details. This can be especially effective in environments with significant vertical elements, such as cityscapes, forests, or architectural marvels. Plan your film with 10 professionally designed storyboard templates as ready-to-use PDFs.Storyboarding Shot TypesThere are many different camera shot angles that can be used to frame a subject within a shot, ranging from showing their entire body to fixating on a finer detail, such as their eyes. In choosing the most fitting camera shot angle, you'll need to bear in mind the message that you're trying to communicate to your audience as different angle shots can elicit different reactions from the viewer. Each shot has its own distinct impact, allowing you to craft a narrative that engages, informs, and resonates with your audience on multiple levels. Here are some of the most common types of shots and how you can go about using them: Establishing shotOften included at the beginning of a scene, establishing shots help to build ambiance and may give a nod towards the context of what's to come. It generally comes in the form of a long and wide shot and indicates where (and sometimes when) the scene is taking place. As a long shot, it can frame the subject, while also building an understanding of the effect that their environment is having on the character's current situation. As an essential tool in a filmmaker's arsenal, the establishing shot sets the tone for the unfolding narrative, enhancing the audience's engagement and understanding. Full shotThe full shot is just as the name implies and shows the entire body of the subject from head to toe. This camera shot tends to emphasize the character's physical presence, showcasing their movements, body language, and gestures as the focal points. By providing a comprehensive view of the character within their surroundings, the full shot offers a contextual understanding of their actions and interactions. This camera shot helps to establish the spatial relationship between characters and their environment, allowing the audience to grasp the character's physical actions and interactions while placing less emphasis on their inner emotions or mental state. The full shot can be particularly effective in scenes that require the viewer to observe a character's demeanor, physical reactions, or interactions with other elements in the scene. Whether capturing a character's confident stride down a bustling city street or their hesitant movements in a tense confrontation, the full shot plays a key role in presenting a holistic visual narrative. Medium shotAlso known as the ¾ shot, the medium shot typically shows the subject from the knees up. This camera angle allows the viewer to see the background environment and the character's gestures, while still being close enough to capture their emotions. It strikes a balance between intimacy and context, providing the viewer with a clear view of the character's upper body and facial expressions while also encompassing elements of the background environment. By maintaining a proximity that captures both the character's physical actions and their emotional nuances, the medium shot effectively bridges the gap between the purely physical and the internal realms of the character. Close shotWith a close up shot, the subject's head/face takes up the majority of the frame and therefore, allows their reactions and emotions to dictate the scene. As an eye level shot, it thrusts the subject into the forefront, making them the focal point and unequivocal center of attention. This emphasis creates a sense of connection between the viewer and the subject, with minimal distractions from background elements that might otherwise dilute the emotional impact. A furrowed brow, a subtle smile, or a tear-filled gaze - these are intimate details that allow the audience to resonate deeply with the character's emotional journey. Directors and cinematographers use the close-up shot to intensify climaxes of scenes, heightening the viewer's emotional engagement and empathy. The close up shot becomes a window into the soul of the character, allowing viewers to partake in their joys, struggles, and transformations with a level of intimacy that goes beyond the visual medium.Extreme close shotWith an extreme close shot, the camera position is so close that only one specific detail, such as a person's eyes or mouth, can be seen. Because of the unnaturally close nature of the shot, it should be used sparingly, but when used appropriately, an extreme close up can have a remarkable effect, infusing scenes with heightened tension, emotion, and significance. This unconventional shot acts as a magnifying glass for the narrative, drawing attention to the smallest aspects that might have otherwise slipped past the viewer's notice. Up shotAn up shot (also known as a low angle shot) is taken from a low angle, below the eye-level of the subject. As the camera points upwards, it creates the perception that the viewer is looking at them from a lower perspective. The low angle shot can alter the power dynamics within the scene, giving the impression that the subject is in some way powerful, heroic or even dangerousThe upward perspective can elevate characters to iconic status, emphasizing their purpose or the magnitude of their actions. This low angle shot has been employed in scenes where protagonists face insurmountable odds, stand tall in the face of adversity, or when antagonists rise to positions of power, projecting an aura of authority. Down shotA down shot (also known as a high angle shot), in contrast to an up shot, is taken from a high angle, above the eye-level of the subject. Camera shots like this impart a sense of dominance over the subject, while also rendering them smaller and less imposing within the frame. The down shot can be used to evoke emotions of vulnerability, powerlessness, or insignificance. This camera angle can cast characters as pawns in a larger scheme, overshadowed by external forces or trapped in situations beyond their control. It's a tool that can be harnessed to create empathy, sympathy, or even pity for the character's predicament. The down shot is particularly effective when crafting moments of tension, illustrating characters caught in compromising situations, or highlighting the consequences of their actions. Over the shoulder shotAn over the shoulder shot, a common technique in filmmaking and photography, involves positioning the camera behind the shoulder of one character while framing the subject in a close or medium shot. A shoulder level shot typically takes the form of an over the shoulder shot as it can effortlessly capture the interactions between two characters within the same frame. These types of camera shots are particularly effective in group conversation scenes and help to establish which characters are speaking to each other. By revealing both the speaker's expressions and reactions from the listener's perspective, the over the shoulder shot provides a complete view of the interaction. It helps viewers connect the verbal communication with the non-verbal cues and emotional responses of both characters, enriching the audience's understanding of the scene's dynamics. Free Storyboard SoftwareBoordsThe Shortcut to Effective Storyboards.Boords is an easy-to-use storyboarding tool to plan creative projects.Try Boords for freeTwo shotA two shot presents two characters sharing the frame, often side by side or in close proximity. This simple arrangement is a natural means of introducing both characters, providing an immediate visual context for their connection. By positioning characters in a two shot, filmmakers can convey a wealth of information about their relationship and interactions without relying solely on dialogue.Different variations of this shot can be applied to communicate different messages about the characters and their dynamic. When characters are placed side by side within the frame, it can suggest a sense of equality and mutual significance within the scene. This positioning implies that both characters have equal prominence and roles to play in the narrative's unfolding. Alternatively, when characters are framed with one slightly in front of the other, the composition can imply a power imbalance or hierarchical relationship between them. This technique can visually highlight dominance, submission, or even a mentor-protégé dynamic, where one character takes the lead while the other follows. Such nuanced placement within the camera frame contributes to the visual storytelling, enhancing the audience's perception of the characters' roles and the underlying tensions or connections between them.Point of view shotThe point of view shot, also known as the POV shot, depicts an angle that shows what a character is looking at. This unique cinematic technique places the audience directly within the character's visual perspective, allowing them to witness the world through the character's eyes. By immersing viewers in the character's viewpoint, the POV shot provides a window into their thoughts, emotions, and reactions, forging a deeply personal connection between the audience and the narrative. This shot is particularly effective at conveying a character's state of mind and their subjective experience of the environment. It enables the audience to share in their excitement, fear, wonder, or any other emotion relevant to the scene. Applying this to your storyboardsWhile a picture often speaks a thousand words, being precise with your language relating to camera shots, angles and perspectives can really make the world of difference when it comes to storyboarding. These elements possess the power to convey emotions, relationships, and narratives in ways that words alone cannot capture. Mastering the art of communicating through visuals requires a delicate balance of simplicity and precision. Every shot is a brushstroke on the canvas of your story, and with mindful attention to detail, you're primed to craft a masterpiece that captivates and resonates with viewers.Keep it simple yet specific, and you'll be on track to a brilliant animatic. Whether you are interested in making your own films or just want a better understanding of what professional filmmakers are doing, you have come to the right place. While there are dozens of camera shots and angles that a filmmaker can use, it all starts with the basics. Furthermore, many advanced shots and angles that filmmakers use simply involve combining basic ones. The Top 15 Types of Camera Shots and Angles 1. Close-Up Image Credit: Jeremy Hynes, Unsplash Best for: Capturing minute details What it misses: Everything else in the scene If you are looking to highlight a specific object or person, a close-up is a great choice. It highlights the finer details of a subject and draws the audience to a specific part. A close-up shot of a person usually only shows their face and perhaps part of their shoulders. However, it shows all of a person's face, not just a portion of it. While a close-up does a great job of highlighting a specific person or thing, it prevents you from getting any further context or see what's going on around them. 2. Medium Shot Image Credit: Usman Yousaf, Unsplash Best for: Dialogue scenes, showing body language, and giving context where a subject is at What it misses: Finer details of a subject or seeing large scenes The medium shot, also known as the waist shot or the sweet-spot shot, is one of the most popular shots in the film and photography industry. It shows a person or people from the waist up, making it a great choice during dialogue scenes. Not only can it capture each person in the scene, but it also does a great job highlighting body language throughout the interaction. However, if you're looking for finer details or need to capture a larger area, it might not be the right shot. 3. Long Shot Image Credit: Semyon Borisov, Unsplash Best for: Capturing large areas, landscape scenes, dramatic scenes What it misses: Finer details and connectedness to characters If you're going farther out, you're getting a long shot. Filmmakers often use long shots to capture a person in a landscape and highlight how they fit there. Long shots do a great job of creating a dramatic scene. However, they do miss finer details and can leave the viewer feeling disconnected from the characters or scene. 4. Extreme Close-Up Image Credit: Kincse_j, Pixabay Best for: Capturing extremely fine details What it misses: Context and everything else in the scene Extreme close-up shots are the closest shots to a subject that you'll get in filmmaking. You may not even see the entirety of the subject. It might be a shot highlighting just someone's hand, a portion of their face, or part of an object. Extreme close-ups work to highlight fine details, and they can help portray a specific theme or event that the filmmaker wants you to notice. However, extreme close-ups miss just about everything else, so the filmmaker needs to build up the context for the shot beforehand. 5. Extreme Long Shot Image Credit: Štefan Štefančík, Unsplash Best for Setting a scene and letting you know where something is happening What it misses Keeping small objects, like people, in focus Extreme long shots take long shots a step farther. They often don't even keep the person or people in focus. These shots are all about highlighting the landscape, not the people or items within it. They miss almost all the fine details of the people or objects, but they do a great job of putting everything into perspective and informing the audience where something is happening. 6. High-Angle Image Credit: Drif Riadh, Unsplash Best for Making the subject feel powerless or insignificant What it misses Connecting the audience to the subject A high-angle shot is a top-down view of a person or item, and it excels at providing a different angle and making the subject feel out of control or small. Therefore, they have limited uses; if they're used too often, they can lead to a loss of connection from the viewer to the subject. 7. Low-Angle Image Credit: Kristopher Villa, Unsplash Best for: Making the subject look powerful or making something look bigger than it is What it misses: Making something look small or capturing a neutral scene A low-angle shot is when the filmmaker positions the camera below the eye line of a subject and has it looking up at them. This makes the item look bigger than it really is, and it can make them look more powerful too. It can also portray emotion to a character effectively, and it can make them feel more vulnerable if they're displaying emotion. 8. Bird's Eye Image Credit: Alejandro Cabrera, Unsplash Best for: Providing context to a scene What it misses: Portraying events with characters A bird's eye shot, or an aerial shot, is just what it sounds like: a camera angle pointing directly down from up above. Typically, drones take these shots. They do a great job of providing context to where a character or object is at, but they struggle to portray smaller events that are happening. 9. Over the Shoulder Image Credit: _Christina @ wocintechchat.com, Unsplash Best for: In conversation What it misses: The subject whose shoulder is used If you're watching a show with multiple characters in conversation, there's a good chance that the filmmaker uses an over-the-shoulder shot at some point. It does a great job of portraying what one character sees while talking to another, making the viewer feel connected to the scene. However, it does completely cut out the view of the other subject in the shot. 10. Dutch Angle/Tilt Image Credit: Chris Andrawes, Unsplash Best for: Conveying emotions or causing disorientation What it misses: Not ideal for long term use because it can disorient the audience Any time that a filmmaker doesn't film a subject with a straight-on shot and decides to tilt the camera, they're using a Dutch angle, or a tilt shot. It's a complete stylistic choice by the filmmaker, but they can use it to convey a wide array of emotions or disorient the audience. However, since it does cause disorientation, it's not an excellent choice for long-term use. 11. Full Shot Image Credit: Omar Lopez, Unsplash Best for: Capturing multiple characters or the movement of a character What it misses: Finer details of a single character A full shot is essentially a hybrid between a medium shot and a long shot. It doesn't capture as much going on above the subject but covers a larger area around it. This makes it easier to capture multiple characters in a single shot or to follow the movement of a character throughout a scene. 12. Medium-Wide Shot Image Credit: Olivia Bauso, Unsplash Best for: Connecting to multiple characters What it misses: More of the scene around the characters The medium-wide shot is a cross between a full shot and a medium shot. It captures a longer width throughout the shot so you can see multiple characters, but it only captures them from the knees up. This lets the viewer get a better view of the characters, but it does cut out some of the scene around them. 13. Cowboy Shot Image Credit: Eepeng Cheong, Unsplash Best for: Highlighting specific characters in a dramatic scene What it misses: Context around a scene The cowboy shot has that name simply because it is one of the most common camera scenes used in westerns. It allows the filmmaker to capture the cowboy's gun and holster, since it starts the scene from the mid-thigh level. It's a great way to highlight characters in a dramatic way, but it does miss a little of the surrounding context if the filmmaker doesn't build it up beforehand. 14. Medium Close-Up Shot Image Credit: Alexandru Zdrobău, Unsplash Best for: Highlighting a character or object with a little context What it misses: A connection to the subject and more context The medium close-up shot is a cross between a medium shot and a close-up. When filming a person, it usually covers them from about their chest up. This lets you get a firm grasp on their facial expressions, but it does allow you to miss some of their body language. This combination lets you grasp finer details, but it can lead to a loss of connection with the subject, and it doesn't give you the full context of everything that is going on around them. 15. Point-of-View Shot Image Credit: Luca J, Unsplash Best for: Establishing what a character sees What it misses: Context around a character and what they can't see If a filmmaker is trying to put you in the shoes of a subject, one of the most effective ways that they can do this is through a point-of-view shot. It shows you exactly what the subject sees, and it makes it easy for the audience to connect to the situation. However, if it's used too often, it can disorient the viewer, making it hard to connect to the subject whose view you're using, since it feels like the viewer is the subject. Conclusion Filmmaking all comes down to angles and shots, and once you understand the basics, you can build on them and combine them to create different cinematic masterpieces. Even if you aren't looking to create your own films, now you have a better understanding of working with a camera and what different filmmakers do to create the effects that you see on screen! Featured Image Credit: Prasanna Kumar, Unsplash Do you dream of shooting your own music videos or feature films for a living? There are many important things that you'll need to know and equip yourself with in order to get started in the field. But to really become a cinematographer, you'll need more than just the gear and technical know-how. You'll need powerful film techniques to help you achieve your goals. Cinematography is all about the art of visual storytelling. Aside from skillfully operating a camera and setting up the lighting for every scene, it involves controlling what the viewer sees and how the image is presented to them — by choosing the right shooting techniques that best tell the story. Below we've listed down some of the most widely-used cinematography techniques that can help dictate how your audience should feel about your scene, as well as how they will interpret it. These should help both aspiring and professional cinematographers create the most impactful and engaging films and music videos. Image via Shutterstock Grab your cinema camera and get ready to try out these easy and familiar cinematography techniques that will help make your videos look more professional. We'll also explain how the shots can affect your scene, so you can make your shots work together to form a beautiful, clear, and cohesive narrative. The extreme long shot captures a very wide area to show the scale of subjects in relation to their environment, like tiny birds in a forest. It is typically used as an establishing shot when changing from one big area or city to another. 6 Best Uses Of The Bird's Eye Shot Like the extreme long shot, the bird's eye shot shows massive scale but from a much higher angle to the point where the land starts to show abstract shapes and lines out of roads, buildings, and trees. It is also typically used as an establishing shot for introductions and scene transitions. Understanding Movies 101 -- Long Shots and Extreme Long Shots The long, full, or wide shot is a significantly closer shot of an area where viewers can have a better look of what's going on, but still not close enough to actually be emotionally involved in the scene. Subjects are also closer to the camera but far enough to have their whole bodies in view. It can be used to make your viewers feel like a casual bystander, such as when your leading actors are shown walking hand in hand while crossing the street. To add just a little bit more intimacy, move in a little closer for a medium-long shot until your subject is shown from the knees up. This allows better focus on a group of 2 to 3 people at the same time. The medium shot allows viewers to move in a lot closer but in a more informative way than an emotional one. The frame typically features a person from the waist up and is used for general group scenes with dialogues and interviews. You can also move in just a little bit closer for a medium close-up shot to better show the expressions and emotions of an actor. medium close up camera shot Simply frame the subject's head up to about half of the chest to increase viewers' focus on the person and show less of the surroundings. This is commonly used for documentaries and news programs. The Close-Up Shot in Videography and Cinematography The close-up shot features just the entire head up to the chin or neck to allow viewers to feel more engaged and affected by the character's emotions. By framing less of the background and more of just the face, you are able to create an impact with the character's facial expressions. Extreme Close Up (The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly) An extreme close-up shot is used sparingly and saved for moments when you need to increase the emotional intensity of a scene. You can do this by really zooming in on the character's face, sometimes just on the eyes or even the hands. It works just as well for objects, like the ticking hands of a clock or brush strokes. While these shots greatly lack context, it's great for setting the mood or adding drama and intimacy. To execute the Dutch angle shot, you simply need to rotate the camera to either side until verticals (like people and buildings) are tilted and the horizon is no longer parallel with the bottom of the frame. It's another shot that's used sparingly in narrative filmmaking, usually to portray uneasiness and disorientation. You can use this to show a character's unstable emotional or mental state. Or it can add an unsettling feeling to a particular scene. As the name suggests, the over-the-shoulder shot shows an out-of-focus shoulder and head in the foreground. Meanwhile, there is another person, object, or background in focus. It's one of the most essential cinematography techniques for use in narrative filmmaking. It not only adds that much-needed depth to a shot but also aids in making conversational scenes look as natural to the viewer as possible. Tilt shot of the Bridge of Sighs and the canal beneath it The tilt shot is as easy as it sounds, but the best way to turn this simple technique into an elegant shot is to carefully coordinate the careful upward or downward camera movement with some action within the scene. It can be used as an establishing shot of a wide-angle view or for slowly revealing something at the end. The panning shot is the horizontal equivalent of the tilt shot. They can be used simply to show the surroundings. However, you can achieve truly professional results with it by keeping the panning smooth and accurate (make sure to use a gimbal stabilizer or something similar), especially when there's action and a carefully composed final frame involved. Remember, such movements should be well-executed to look very natural and almost unnoticeable so as not to distract the viewers from the story. Zooming vs the Dolly Shot The use of the zoom shot has evolved over time — from being jerky, fast, and cheesy to being a lot slower and smoother to create a more natural zoom effect that doesn't distract viewers. Needless to say, it increases the focus on a scene, an object, or a character. Vertigo Stretch! \ Dolly zoom, Background Stretch Tutorial You can also try the dolly zoom shot, which creates a dizzying "vertigo effect" that can be perfect for suspense films. It works by smoothly zooming out with the lens while the camera (and dolly) moves closer to the subject in perfect coordination. The crane shot captures vertical translational motion by moving the camera up or down by a couple of feet. It used to be achieved with huge and expensive cranes, but it can now be replicated with drone cameras. Fortunately, it's a shot that doesn't always have to be in every film. However, it adds production value to your work. The Shining - Tracking Shot You can very well do without a crane shot, but you'll probably have to include tracking shots to your film at some point. An important tool for this type of shot is a dolly, or a wheeled cart that moves along a rail track. This look can also be achieved with a Steadicam and other innovative motion control gear. You may even use a drone—specifically one with a tracking flight mode that allows you to choose a subject (whether a person, a vehicle, or even an animal) for the aircraft to follow. With a dolly track, you can create smoother movements and follow your subject as it leaves the frame, or simply add dynamism to an otherwise static camera shot. You can even combine the tracking shot with an over-the-shoulder shot or use any other (out-of-focus) object in the foreground to add depth and enhance the 3D illusion in your shot. HOW TO shoot GoPro POV - (the easiest way) Finally, another important shot that you can make use of (in case it works for your story) is the point-of-view (POV) or first-person shot. Your camera can either be steady or moving along its axis, as long as it shows how and where viewers should look or scan the scene and make them feel like they're in the movie. You can also accomplish this by fitting your subject with a camera mount, similar to the GoPro footage above. It's not the most aesthetically pleasing shot and can sometimes be dizzying for viewers (such as in movies like the "Blair Witch Project"), but it's one of the best ways to make your film all the more immersive and engaging. The art of cinematography involves understanding and mastering a range of film techniques and elements. However, the three most important cinematic techniques are exposure, lighting, and camera positioning. We've already covered several of the most common and useful camera moves, camera angles, and positioning techniques for beginners, but what about exposure and lighting techniques? How exactly can filmmakers achieve the best cinematography possible with these important tools? In photography, the exposure of an image relates to three key camera settings: aperture, shutter speed, and ISO. The camera techniques and settings involved in exposure for cinematography are very similar with one key difference. While many photographers use existing light to achieve the exposure they want, many filmmakers shape the look of the scene by adding light or removing it. There are a few different film techniques for a director of photography to remove light from the scene to achieve a preferred exposure. Just like in photography, you can use a narrower aperture or a faster shutter speed. However, those adjustments will also affect other important variables like frame rate and depth of field. The easiest way to remove light with as little impact as possible on other camera settings is to dim the artificial light source or use a neutral density filter. Many cinema cameras have built-in neutral density filters so you can achieve the exact exposure look you want regardless of the amount of light in the scene. Adding lighting to a scene is about more than just illuminating subjects for visibility. As one of the top film techniques, lighting is just as important and nuanced as camera angle and movement. In fact, most film schools offer dedicated classes on lighting for film. As you add light to your shots, you'll naturally consider the visibility of the actors, scenery, and important props. But also think about the lighting angle, mood, and the overall look of the light. Does the scene call for harsh lighting to create discomfort for the performers and audience? Is nuanced soft light preferable for a sense of comfort or mystery? Lighting offers a rich palette for creativity. In many ways, the cinematographer is a movie's silent narrator, using a rich collection of tools for heightened visual storytelling. Every visual element of each scene relies on the cinematographer's skill sets. Imagine what a movie would look like without cinematography or film techniques. There wouldn't be any camera angle adjustments or camera movements. Instead, there would be a single stationary perspective from the first scene to the last. Exposure is consistent throughout the film, and all the shots are filmed with the same lens. The best cinematography appears effortless because even if you hired the best actors on the planet, a movie without a cinematographer would be incredibly boring! Cinematography matters in every step of film production. Once filmmakers receive the final version of the script, the cinematographer works with the director to create storyboards for the film. Through thumbnail drawings, the director of photography designs the overall look and style of the film. These images become the road maps for the other designers and crew members to follow during filming. Filmmakers rely on different lenses to create mood in their films — it's one of their many film techniques. Cinematographers choose from a range of focal lengths and consider a variety of zoom lenses, wide-angle lenses, prime lenses, and close-up lenses to create the ideal depth of field, framing, and overall visual quality of the scene. Even after the cameras finish rolling, film editing teams build on the stylistic work established by cinematographers when selecting their editing techniques. The most effective films feature an overall cohesive style, so every element that the cinematographer establishes — from framing and camera movement to depth of field or lighting design — is considered and supported through the final cut. The primary goal of any film, regardless of genre, is to tell a story effectively. That's why we use all of these film techniques. From science fiction to nature documentaries, cinematographers teach the audience how to relate to the story they're watching. Cinematographers create a visual language that defines the film through movement, action, lighting, style, and overall mood. That's why a talented cinematographer is one of the most valued members of every film production team.