

## *Introduction to Shots*

How you choose to frame your subject will have a specific impact. How close or far your subject is to your camera — your shot size — will underscore how the audience should feel about it (or them).

Your subject will appear smallest in a long shot (or wide shot). They will be larger in a medium shot and largest in a close-up shot.

Think about familiarity when you consider your subject's size in your camera shots. It's like meeting someone for the first time. You might shake hands or talk about the weather, but odds are you'll stay at a relative distance. That's because you haven't built any familiarity yet. Camera shots work in the same way.

### *Establishing shot*

An establishing shot is a shot at the head of a scene that clearly shows us the location of the action. This shot often follows an aerial shot and is used to show where everything will happen.



### *Extreme Long Shot (ELS)*

An extreme long shot (or extreme wide shot) make your subject appear small against their location.

You can use an extreme long shot to make your subject feel distant or unfamiliar. It can also make your subject feel overwhelmed by its location.

Of all the camera shots, consider the extreme long shot when you need to emphasize the location.



### *Long Shot (LS) / Wide Shot (WS)*

The long shot (also known as a wide shot abbreviated “WS”) is the same idea, but a bit closer. If your subject is a person then his or her whole body will be in view -- but not filling the shot. In other words, there should be a good deal of space above and below your subject. Use a long shot to keep your subject in plain view amidst impressive surroundings.



### **Full Shot (FS)**

In the Full Shot (FS) the subject fill the frame -- while keeping emphasis on scenery. In a shot of this kind, the camera is usually close enough to capture the subject's basic appearance.



### **Medium Long Shot (MLS) / Medium Wide Shot (MWS)**

A medium long shot frames your subject from roughly the knees up. It splits the difference between a full shot and a medium shot.



If framed in a low angle shot (i.e. looking up from the ground) you can make one formidable villain.

### **Cowboy Shot**

A variation on the Medium Long Shot is the **Cowboy Shot**, which frames the subject from roughly **mid-thighs up**. It's called a "cowboy shot" because it is used in Westerns to frame a gunslinger's gun or holster on his hip.



### *Medium Shot (MS)*

The medium shot is like the cowboy shot, but frames from roughly the waist up. So it emphasizes more of your subject and keeps their surroundings visible. A Medium shot reveals the subject in more detail.



### *Medium Close Up (MCU)*

The medium close-up frames your subject from roughly the chest up. So it typically favors the face, but still keeps the subject somewhat distant.



### *Close Up (CU)*

Next, let's talk about camera shots that get up close and personal with your subject.

You know it's time for a close-up when you want to reveal a subject's emotions and reactions. The close-up is where you fill your frame with a part of your subject. If your subject is a person, it is often their face. A Close up shot let the audience get close to the character to see their facial



gestures in detail. Close-ups are great camera shots for capturing monologues.

### **Extreme Close Up (ECU)**

An extreme close-up is the most you can fill a frame with your subject. It often shows eyes, mouth and gun triggers. In extreme close-up shots, smaller objects get great detail and are the focal point. It is used to emphasize a specific feature of the subject.



### **Camera Framing options**

Camera framing is the art and science of placing subjects in the shots. Shots are all about composition. Rather than *pointing* the camera at the subject, you need to *compose* an image. For filmmakers and videographers, a major consideration for framing is the number of subjects you feature in your shots, and their physical relationship to each other and the camera.

Based on how you plan to position your subjects, you'll need to adjust your camerawork. You'll want to capture your framing details on a shot list well before you arrive on set. That way you have a clear idea for the scene and can communicate your vision with ease. That's not to say that things may not change the day of the shoot. But, having a shot list at the ready showcases that the director and DP have done their homework and are well prepared.

### **Single shot**

When a shot captures one subject it's known as a single shot.



### **Two shot**

A two-shot is the same concept, but with two people in the frame at once. When a shot captures two subjects it's known as a two shot.



### **Three shot**

A three-shot fits three characters into the frame. When a shot captures three subjects it's known as a three shot.



### **Over-The-Shoulder (OTS) Shot**

Another element of camera shots to consider is the perspective of the shot. An over-the-shoulder shot shows your subject from behind the shoulder of another character. Because it emulates perspective, it's common in conversation scenes.

