



FILM LANGUAGE

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Language of film

Film and video programs are efforts at communicating and just like speaking English, tapping out Morse code, or waving semaphores, there is a whole language that can be learned including words, phrases, grammar, punctuation, rules, and common practices. And like any other language, the more thoroughly you master it, the more effectively you can communicate.

While the writer conceives the story, and the director realizes it, it is you, the editor who is the *storyteller*; given the task of organizing the thoughts and ideas and transmitting the intended message to the audience.

Shots As Words

words are the building blocks of a written language,
individual shots are the building blocks of the film
language

who,

what,

where,

when,

why and how

CU-Head to the upper Chest

- *who* question is typically answered with the close-up
- Focus in any close-up is the subject's face
- The experience of what you would see in real life if you were conversing with a person
- Close-ups can vary widely based on camera position, lens choice, and other production considerations
- If you were to go too long without providing close-ups your audience will lose track of whose story they're following and they will very likely lose interest.

Its Very Useful in Complex action scenes

Absence of close up viewers can,t identify the story flow

The most spectacular battle scene can fall flat if the audience loses track of who it is that's engaged in the fight.





Close-ups can vary widely based on camera position,
lens choice, and other production considerations,
but ultimately you can count on such a shot to answer this fundamental question.

What - Medium Shot

From waist to the Head

A subject performing an activity, and typically, this is conveyed in a medium shot (MS).

MS provides enough distance from the subject's eyes to move the focus off of their identity



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Medium Shots are perfect for showing a variety of activities.

Where - LS

Show the entire body

location of an event is critical

Sometimes this element is deliberately omitted for a while to emphasize suspense or disorientation

without answering Where question, the audience will likely grow weary and eventually disengage from your story

The *where* question is nearly always answered with a Long Shot - (LS)

The LS shows a subject in an environment

Depending on the nature of the scene

A medium long shot (MLS) - From Head to below the Knees

where this question is frequently omitted is in non-fiction or documentary style shows that contain a lot of interviews

Give a brief shot of the room where the interview is taking place

At least using a wider angle of the interview will show the type of location

Provide the answer to this pressing question.



A clever editor may be able to indicate at least a hint of the "where" using *inserts* or *cutaways* to objects or details of the environment

Ex. A toy on the desk, a diploma on a wall, a bird in a tree

When can mean what period in history -- ELS subject appear small or isolated in the landscape, dominating the background
How long before or after an important story event, or it can mean at what point in the overall story arc

when shot is the extreme-long shot (ELS or XLS), which illustrates the subject traversing such a vast space that there is a sense of how much time it will take

This could be a car traversing an endless stretch of highway, camels crossing the desert, or a ship in a huge swath of ocean



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Why - ECU

This question points to the internal decision making of your subject
intimate relationship with the subject

why questions may require a more complex approach



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How - the question is very external – Cuts the body at the lower chest

Usually answered using either medium close-ups (MCU) of a subject performing a physical action or a series of CUs or ECUs of specific actions

Subject Performing a physical action

MCU retains enough distance from the subject to maintain a disengaged perspective.



The MCU is a perfect shot to show just how meticulously the photographer likes his tea prepared.

Shots classified by camera height

Three camera height

Eye level

Low level

Top level

The level at which a shot has been set up has an influence on the emotional impact of the viewer.

Eye angle – Gaze of the person within the frame that of the audience

Low angle- Looking Up the subject gains stature and the audience has the impression of a dominant character.

Villains in a film are they are mostly shot in low angle

Top angle-Camera is high and looking down The character appear diminished within the frame

Sence of helplessness,Exploitation

Shots classified by Usage

Master shot

Long shot

Entire scene is played out

It is a objective shot - Point of view of an imaginary viewer outside the scene

- subjective shot - is one where the camera shows the point of view of the actor or the character in the movie

Point of View shot

View point of one of the performers in a scene

Subjective shot

Over the Shoulder Shot

Two or more participants in a conversation

Camera looks at someone over the shoulder of the person nearest to the camera

Subjective Shot

Cut in , Cut away

Its very useful in editing time

cutaway shot is the interruption of a continuously filmed action by inserting a view of something else

The cutaway shot does not necessarily contribute any dramatic content of its own, but is used to help the editor assemble a longer sequence

editors choose cutaway shots related to the main action, such as another action or object in the same location

- Cut In Shot. For an Instance, in a scene where, the character 'A' is moving towards the pipe and opens it: Here, in this scene two shots are needed: the first one is character 'A' moving towards the pipe and the second one is the close-up shot of the pipe opening.