

THE DIGITAL FILMMAKING HANDBOOK

6

Sonja Schenk and Ben Long



The Digital Filmmaking Handbook

Sixth Edition

Sonja Schenk

Ben Long

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CONTENTS

Introduction	xxiii
What You'll Find in This Book	xxiv
Who This Book Is For	xxv
What Equipment Do I Need?	xxvii
1 Make Your Movies	1
What's New?	2
Technological Innovations	6
What Kind of Movie Should You Make	10
Questions to Ask Yourself	13
2 Writing, Scheduling, and Producing	15
Screenwriting	16
Finding a Story	17
Structure	18
Writing Visually	20
Creative Writing Exercises	21
Formatting Your Script	23
Screenwriting Software	25
Writing for Television	28
Writing for Unscripted Projects	30
Writing for VR	32

Writing for Corporate Projects	33
Scheduling	34
Breaking Down a Script	34
Production Boards	37
Scheduling for Unscripted Projects	40
Producing	41
Producing Tools	42
Forming a Production Company	42
Insurance	43
Making Sure You Own Your Film	44
Contracts and Lawyers	44
Working with Unions	44
3 Digital Video Primer	47
<hr/>	
Digital Video for Filmmakers	48
HD	49
UHD: 2K, 4K, 8K, more K	50
Components of Digital Video	52
Tracks	52
Frames.	52
Scan Lines	53
Pixels	54
Aspect Ratio	55
Audio Tracks	57
Audio Sampling	59
Working with SD and Analog Video	60
Digital Image Quality	63
Color Sampling	64
Bit Depth	65

Compression Ratios	66
Data Rate	66
Understanding Digital Media Files	67
Digital Video Container Files	68
Codecs	69
Audio Container Files and Codecs	73
Transcoding	73
Digital Video Formats	75
Acquisition Formats	75
Raw Media	76
Intermediate Formats	77
Finishing Formats	77
VR Media Formats	77
Unscientific Answers to Highly Technical Questions	78

4 Choosing a Camera **81**

Evaluating a Camera	82
Image Quality	83
Sensors	83
Compression and Raw Video	89
Sharpening	90
White Balance	91
Dynamic Range	92
Image Tweaking	92
Lenses	93
Lens Quality	94
Lens Features	95
Interchangeable Lenses	96

Never Mind the Reasons, How Does It Look?	97
Camera Features	98
Camera Body Types	98
Manual Controls	104
Focus	105
Shutter Speed	106
Aperture Control	107
Image Stabilization	108
Viewfinder	110
Interface	111
Remote Control	114
Audio	113
Media Type	115
Wireless	116
Batteries and AC Adaptors	117
DSLRs and Mirrorless Cameras	117
The Director of Photography	120
What You Should Choose	120
5 Planning Your Shoot	123
<hr/>	
Storyboarding	124
Shots and Coverage	126
Camera Angles	129
Computer-Generated Storyboards	134
Less Is More	137
Camera Diagrams and Shot Lists	138
Location Scouting	141
Production Design	146

Art Directing Basics	147
Building a Set	147
Set Dressing and Props	148
DIY Art Direction	148
Visual Planning for Documentaries	151
Try These Planning Exercises	152
Effects Planning 153	
Creating Rough Effects Shots	154

6 Lighting **157**

Lighting Your Film	158
The Art of Lighting	159
Three-Point Lighting	159
Types of Light	162
Color Temperature	162
Types of Lights	163
Wattage	165
Controlling the Quality of Light	171
Lighting Gels	173
Diffusion	174
Lighting Your Actors (Tutorial)	174
Interior Lighting	178
Power Supply	178
Mixing Daylight and Interior Light	179
Using Household Lights	179
Exterior Lighting	180
Enhancing Existing Daylight	180
Getting Rid of Light	182

Special Lighting Situations 183**7 Using the Camera 187**

Setting Focus 188**Using the Zoom Lens 192**

Controlling the Zoom 197

Working with Interchangeable Lenses 200

So Why Is Changing Lenses So Great? 200

What Lenses Do I Need? 201

Exposure 203

Aperture 204

Shutter Speed 207

Gain and ISO Settings 207

Which One to Adjust? 208

Exposure and Depth of Field 209

White Balance and Color Profiles 211

White Balancing 211

Color Profiles 213

Lens Filters 213

UV Filters 214

Polarizing Filters 215

Neutral Density Filters 215

Diffusion Filters 216

Shooting Raw 217**Composition 217**

Headroom 220

Lead Your Subject 221

Following Versus Anticipating 222

Don't Be Afraid to Get Too Close	223
Eyelines	224
Clearing Frame	225
Beware of the Stage Line	225
TV Framing	225
Breaking the Rules	226
Camera Movement	227
Panning and Tilting	227
Zooms and Dolly Shots	227
Tracking Shots	228
Handheld Shots	228
Deciding When to Move	230
Shooting Checklist	232

8 Production Sound **235**

What You Want to Record	236
Microphones	238
What a Mic Hears	238
How a Mic Hears	242
Types of Mics	244
Mixing and Recording	247
Connecting It All Up	248
Wireless Mics	250
Setting Up	250
Placing Your Mics	251
Getting the Right Sound for the Picture	258
Testing Sound	258
Reference Tone	259
Managing Your Set	260

Recording Your Sound	260
Room Tone	261
Run-and-Gun Audio	261
A Crew of One	262
Gear Checklist	263
9 Directing	265
<hr/>	
The Shooting Script	266
Updating the Shooting Script	267
Directing	268
Casting	269
Auditions	271
Rehearsals	271
Managing the Set	272
Putting Plans into Action	274
The Protocol of Shooting	276
Respect for Acting	276
Organization on the Set	277
Script Supervising for Scripted Projects	277
Documentary Field Notes	279
10 Advanced Shooting	281
<hr/>	
Camera Rigging and Supports	282
Basic Supports	283
Rigging for Lens Accessories	285
Gimbal-based Rigs	287

Dollies, Jibs, Sliders and Cranes	289
Aerials and Drones	290
Measuring and Pulling Focus	294
Measuring Focus	294
Pulling Focus	295
Viewing Video on the Set	296
Video Assist Monitoring	297
Histograms, Waveforms and Vectorscopes	301
Double-System Audio Recording	302
How to Record Double-System Audio	304
Multicam Shooting	306
Multicam Basics	306
Challenges of Multi-Cam Shoots	308
Shooting VR Projects	309
360-degree Cameras	310
4K Doesn't Mean What You Think It Does	313
Checking the Stitch	313
3D	314
Audio for VR Projects	314
360 Cameras As Action Cams	315
Managing Media on the Set	316
On-Set Media Workstations	317
Media and Workflow	317
Organizing Media	318
Audio Media Workflow	320
Shooting With DSLRs	320
DSLR camera settings for video	323
Shooting Green-Screen Effects	326

11	Getting Started in Post	329
	Scheduling Post	330
	Setting Up a Workstation	332
	CPU	333
	RAM	333
	GPU and VRAM	333
	Storage	335
	Monitors	336
	Custom Keyboards and Controllers	338
	Backing Up	338
	Networked Systems	339
	Local Networks	339
	Cloud Storage	340
	Render Farms	340
	Audio Equipment	342
	Color-grading Hardware	343
	VR Workstations	344
	Digital Video Cables and Connectors	345
	Thunderbolt	346
	SDI	346
	HDMI	346
	eSATA	346
	USB	346
	FireWire	347
	Fibre Channel	347
	RS-422 and LANC	347
	Audio Interfaces	347
	Know Your Hardware Requirements	348

12	Editing Software	351
	The Interface	352
	Editing Tools	353
	Drag-and-Drop Editing	354
	Three-Point Editing	354
	JKL Editing	355
	Insert and Overwrite Editing	355
	Trimming	355
	Ripple and Roll, Slip and Slide	356
	Multi-Camera Editing	358
	Other Advanced Features	358
	Organizational Tools	360
	Importing Media	360
	Effects and Titles	362
	Transitions	362
	Image Enhancement & Color	363
	Motion Effects	363
	Image Stabilization	363
	Compositing	364
	3D Effects	364
	Titles	365
	VR Plugins	365
	Audio Tools	365
	Equalization	366
	Audio Effects and Filters	366
	Audio Plug-In Formats	366
	Mixing	366
	OMF and OMFI Export	366
	Finishing Tools	367

Our Software Recommendations 367**13 Preparing to Edit 371**

Organizing Your Media 372

Create a Naming System 373

Getting Media into Your Project 375

Some Helpful Tools 377

Preliminary Color Grades 378

Setting Up Your Editing Project 379

Ingesting 380

Transcoding. 380

Capturing Media on the Fly 384

Importing Audio 384

Importing Still Images 384

Moving Media. 385

Sorting Media 386

Sorting for Documentaries 386

Synchronizing Double-System Sound 387**Preparing Multicam Media 389****Preparing VR and 3D Media 389****Troubleshooting 390****14 Editing 393**

Editing Basics 393

Applied Three-Act Structure 396

Building a Rough Cut 396

Watch Everything	397
Radio Cuts	397
Master Shot—Style Coverage	397
Creating a First Cut (Tutorial)	398
Editing Techniques	409
Cutaways and Reaction Shots	409
Matching Action	410
Matching Screen Position	412
Overlapping Edits	412
Matching Emotion and Tone	412
Pauses and Pull-Ups	412
Hard Sound Effects and Music	413
Refining Your Cut (Tutorial)	413
Transitions Between Scenes	415
Hard Cuts	415
Dissolves, Fades, and Wipes	416
Establishing Shots	416
Clearing Frame and Natural “Wipes”	417
Solving Technical Problems	417
Missing Elements	417
Temporary Elements	418
Multi-Cam Editing	418
Fine Cutting	419
Editing for Style	420
Duration	420
The Big Picture	420

15	Sound Editing	423
	Sounding Off	424
	Setting Up	426
	Temp Mixes	426
	Audio Levels Metering	427
	Clipping and Distortion	428
	Using Your Editing App for Sound	429
	Dedicated Sound Editing Apps	432
	Moving Your Audio	434
	Editing Sound	436
	Unintelligible Dialogue	436
	Changes in Tone	436
	Is There Extraneous Noise in the Shot?	437
	Are There Bad Video Edits That Can Be Reinforced with Audio?	437
	Is There Bad Audio?	438
	Are There Vocal Problems You Need to Correct?	438
	Dialogue Editing	439
	ADR	440
	Non-Dialogue Voice Recordings	441
	EQ Is Your Friend	441
	VR Audio	444
	Sound Effects	445
	Sound Effect Sources	446
	Music	446
	Editing Music	447
	License to Play	449
	Finding a Composer	450

Do It Yourself	451
Fix It in the Mix	451

16 Color Grading **453**

Color Basics	455
Advanced Color Controls	458
Seeing Color	460
A Less Scientific Approach	463
Too Much of a Good Thing	464
Brightening Dark Video	465
Compensating for Overexposure	468
Correcting Bad White Balance	470
Matching Footage	471
Using Tracks and Layers to Adjust Color	472
Black-and-White Effects	473
Making Your Video Look Like Film	473

17 Titles and Effects **477**

Titles	478
Title Titles	478
Choosing Your Typeface and Size	479
Ordering Your Titles	480
Coloring Your Titles	481
Placing Your Titles	481
Safe Titles	482
Create a Main Title (Tutorial)	484

Motion Graphics software	486
Motion Effects	487
Keyframes and Interpolating	488
Slow-Mo and Speed Ramps	489
Integrating Still Images and Video	490
Special Effects Workflow	492
Compositing 101	494
Keys	495
Keying Tips	497
Mattes	501
Editing VR Footage	504
Using Effects to Fix Problems	505
Mixing SD, HD, 2K and 4K Footage	505
Eliminating Camera Shake	508
Getting Rid of Things	510
18 Screening & Finishing	515
<hr/>	
Start Early	516
Outputs for Screenings	517
Preparing Your Sequence	517
Conform and Color Grade	520
Create a Mix	520
Export Your Cut	522
Watch Your Export	523
Web Screenings	5023
Preparing for Film Festivals	524
Scheduling Festival Submissions	524
Generating Interest in Your Film	525

The Big Finish	526
What Do You Need to Finish?	526
Deliverables	527
Passing QC	528
Final Delivery	529
Making Masters	530
Textless Masters	530
Reel Changes	530
Final Audio Mixes	531
Preparing for a Professional Audio Mix	532
Preparing for Professional Color Grade	533
Putting Audio and Video Back Together	534
Digital Cinema Masters	535
Archiving Your Project	536
GLOSSARY	539
INDEX	573



Introduction

What You'll Find In This Book
Who This Book Is For
What Equipment Do I Need?

If there's one word that describes Hollywood, it's "innovative." The film industry is a business that migrated from Europe with a pit stop on the east coast and landed in California because of the climate. But even Los Angeles has rainy days sometimes, so then came stages, and silent films turned into "talkies" and so they invented "sound stages," because they needed to be built differently to block out the ambient sounds of the world outside. And there were many more decidedly unglamorous innovations such as sound-proofing materials, overhead rigging for lights, and banks of electrical patch bays for all the equipment. This need for innovation has driven a list of inventions that goes on and on over the last century.

Today, the entertainment industry continues this history of innovation, as producers and directors seek out new technology, such as VR, new forms of storytelling, such as web series, and new tools, like lenses that function in very low light, high dynamic range video, cinema-oriented LED lighting that comes in all shapes and sizes, and remote-controlled camera rigging that lets you move the camera with precision, whether its on a dolly, a jib arm, or a drone. In postproduction, collaborative workflows aided by cloud-based resources are challenging the sanctuary of the editing room. Whatever your area of interest, we've added new sections throughout the book to guide your way through the creative and technical challenges of this brave new innovative world.

What You'll Find in This Book

This book is organized into three parts, just like the process of making a film:

Preproduction (Chapters 2 through 5) is the part of the process during which you make all the decisions necessary to start shooting: writing, technology basics, planning, scheduling, storyboarding, set design, and choosing a camera.

Production (Chapters 6 through 11) is the principal shoot of your project: lighting, using the camera, shooting, and recording production sound, including a special chapter on advanced shooting situations, such as using DSLR cameras, drones and VR (virtual reality).

Postproduction (Chapters 12 through 19) is the editing and finishing of your project. We'll give you an overview of the post process, workstations and equipment, organizing and media management, editing, sound design, color grading, titles, special effects, and both DIY and high-end delivery of the finished product—everything from streaming video to a digital cinema screening in a theater.

Finally, although we assume no formal training in video or film production, we might—on occasion—use film and video production-related terms. You'll find definitions for these terms in the glossary. Also, Chapter 3 is a digital video

primer that contains everything you ever wanted to know about the files that add up to a final film and then some. Consider it to be a reference for technical questions you may have at any point in the process.

But you might be surprised to learn how much you already know about digital filmmaking. Watching movies is the best way to learn the visual literacy required of a good filmmaker, and most people have seen plenty of movies.

Look for the “What to Watch” tips for suggested movies and TV shows to watch along the way. And in this edition, we’re adding some “Recommended Apps” tips, for mobile apps that seem particularly useful to digital filmmakers.

Filmmaking is a challenging, exciting, and always instructive process. We wish you the best of luck in your filmmaking endeavors. Now, it’s time to get started!

Mobile Apps We Like

We’ll use this phone icon to quickly inform you about mobile apps we recommend. Most of the apps we recommend have “pro” versions and usually these are worth the extra cost.

What to Watch

We’ll use this monitor icon when we have viewing suggestions for you. Think of it as the best homework assignment ever.

Who This Book Is For

Digital video is everywhere these days—on your television, your computer, your game console, and your smart phone. And the ways to acquire it abound, too: camcorders, cell phones, built-in cameras on your computer, and point-and-shoot cameras that just happen to record 4K. What used to be the rarified territory of “film geeks” is now the norm.

There’s a reason for that. The fact is that the collaboration, imagination, and work involved in crafting even a short film are extremely enjoyable. Digital video technology makes it possible to make films for fun. And with web-based distribution, you no longer have to be a hobbyist filmmaker with no audience. You can actually present your finished work to the world for practically zero cost.

This book will teach you everything you need to know, whether your aim is to create a feature-length movie with the hope of screening in a theater, an industrial or corporate production, or a short film or music video simply for your own enjoyment.

This book is meant to be both a start-to-finish production guide and a reference for learning more about particular tasks. For more experienced users, we've included details on the latest technologies and strategies for refining a digital workflow to reduce your production costs and to enhance creativity. From sophisticated shot design to cutting-edge graphics, *The Digital Filmmaking Handbook* will show you how to create images and effects that are rarely associated with low-budget productions. For serious beginning filmmakers, this book provides a wide overview of the entire process of making a movie from the very first steps of writing a screenplay to shooting to the final screening. Full-blown video production is a huge affair that involves many different arts, crafts, and sciences.

No single volume can address the tremendous amount of training and expertise that is required to master all of these disciplines. However, we have tried to fill you in on the questions you need to ask, and the major problems and issues you will have to solve at each stage of your production. So even though this book doesn't cover, for example, 3D animation, our postproduction chapters should at least bring you up to speed on the issues you can expect to face when trying to create visual effects. These questions should help you interface better with the artisans and craftspeople who *do* have the skills for these various disciplines and point you in the direction of further self-education if that's your intention.

Whether your goal is an industrial project, a short subject for your website, or a feature-length movie for a film festival, *The Digital Filmmaking Handbook* contains everything you need to know to make your movies.



Watch a film you saw recently. Find a film you saw recently and watch it again. Instead of paying attention to the story, pay attention to how the film was made. This time, look at how it is shot, where the camera is, and why. Listen to how music is used (or not used). Notice if there are any graphics of special effects, and if there are any unusual editing choices. Try to imagine the creative choices the director made during each phase of filmmaking: preproduction, production and post. Now start thinking about your own film in these ways. Remember when a film is well made, you won't see "the strings." So, to learn from the work of a good filmmaker, you have to actively observe how the film was constructed.

What Equipment Do I Need?

This book assumes you will be using a Macintosh or Windows-compatible computer. Some familiarity with your operating system of choice is required, as well as a video camera of some kind. Guidelines for selecting equipment are provided throughout the book. We also assume that you are familiar with some basic computer terms, such as RAM, megabytes, gigabytes, and so forth. A glossary is included in the back of the book.

Companion Media Downloads

Look for this filmstrip to indicate that there is media for you to look at or download on the website for this book. The tutorial media for this book can be found at www.thedigitalfilmmakinghandbook.com, under the “Book Resources” menu and are organized by chapter. The color plates for this edition can also be found there.

In addition, sections of previous editions that feature older technology, such as videotape, and sadly, 35mm motion picture film are now available on the website.

The website also features blog postings, product reviews, and articles about new digital filmmaking developments, so check it out.



1

Make Your Movies

What's New?

Technological Innovations

What Kind of Movie Should You Make?

Questions to Ask Yourself

What's new?

Every time we revise this book, it provides an opportunity to step back and look at the big picture. What has changed in the entertainment industry since the last edition? And it is worth noting that there is always a new defining trend in the industry. This time, the biggest change is that feature films have lost their place as the king of the hill. Digital video has expanded to such a degree that it is able to mean all things to all people.

Thanks to the internet, the idea of distribution has been blown wide open. The options include digital video distributors like Netflix and Amazon, traditional broadcasters with online presence, popular blogs, social media, and video hosting sites like Vimeo and YouTube. There's really no limit to the choices available to indie filmmakers right now. As a result, the types of projects that are being made by indie filmmakers are more varied than ever.



Photo courtesy of Motion Impossible

Figure 1.1

The rugged Mantis remote-controlled dolly from Motion Impossible.

Web movies

Chipping away from the bottom of the Hollywood hierarchy are all the myriad forms of web content, the defining quality of them being that they are short: 5 to 10 minutes, maybe even less. What's so different from short films of yore? They are often episodic, not standalone one-offs. Any marketing person can tell you that the amount of effort spent marketing recurring content isn't that much greater than that required to market a standalone film, and yet the pay off is much bigger. You have the ability to build an audience at the same time that you develop your idea, your brand, and, if you are new to filmmaking, your voice. Better yet, there are no real rules. That's because it doesn't cost much to make these videos. (It can cost a lot but it doesn't have to.) So you can write, direct, and star in your own project and no one has any say over what you do and don't do. Be aware, of course, that this is a double-edged sword. Without the old guard of gatekeepers, you're on your own. And since there's no real hierarchy, you also won't have those gatekeepers to lift you up above the hoard. So, you know, it's easier and harder at the same time.



Photo courtesy of Netflix.

Figure 1.2

Okay Netflix isn't exactly new and neither are smart phones. But video on demand services streaming content across a variety of devices are definitely changing the game for filmmakers.

Phone movies

Even farther down the list are the movies people are making on their phones. Their audience is found on Instagram and Facebook and other social media sites. Often these movies are less than a minute long. In a way, this is really a whole new genre— more than a photograph, less than even the shortest short film, often entailing only one shot and nothing in the way of traditional filmmaking technology. This revolution will not be televised, but it is already mobilized, literally, in that the most important piece of technology is the mobile phone. Smart phones offer both the means of production and the means of distribution, all in one tiny device that goes everywhere you do. Everybody can make movies at this level, from your grandmother to your little cousin. And yet, there are those people out there who have thousands, and even millions of followers. That's a whole new way to find an audience and one that can rival the size of most feature films and many TV shows.

TV series

Well, for lack of a better term, that's what we are calling the long-format narratives that are chipping away at the feature film hierarchy from the top. You know what we're talking about, it's that series you binge-watched last week. Back in the olden days when film was invented, the dominant form of narrative was the novel. Feature films are notoriously unable to capture all of the content of novels. Rather, they offer a simplified version of that sort of storytelling. Usually what got sacrificed was depth of character development, and also a certain sort of complexity in the plot, such as more developed side narratives or subplots. But today, television series have swooped in and taken up the mantle of long-form storytelling and the most popular series have dropped the old school network model where every week something sorta similar and sorta different happens (a new murder!). Instead, we get complicated narratives that unravel over eight to thirteen episodes and the result is that TV is more popular than ever. Ironically, it's really not TV anymore. But we still call it TV for now. Even if there's still often a murder mystery at the heart, it's usually just a jumping off point. And these long-arc TV series aren't limited to scripted entertainment, some of the biggest successes recently have been unscripted true crime series, like *Making of a Murderer* and *The Jinx*.



Aside from having maybe the funniest title ever, **I Love Dick** is a great example of how something more akin to a traditional indie film in terms of style and content can translate to an episodic TV series that's delivered over the web. (And yes, "Dick" is a character in the series.)

VR movies

There's another genre that's chipping away at the top of the film production pyramid: virtual reality. Those Hollywood tentpole blockbusters we mentioned?

They have notoriously been whittled down to a very specific type of movie, often tellingly described as a “ride,” a “rollercoaster.” These big action movies have more in common with amusement park attractions than they do with sophisticated storylines and characterizations of long-arc television series. And that’s why the next generation is looking towards VR. With its potential to more thoroughly immerse an audience member in a fictitious space, it might prove an even more engaging “ride” than a regular movie. Is it going to be a fad that will fade, like 3D movies a few years back? Maybe, but VR is really a completely new thing that will require a new form of storytelling. The code on this one hasn’t been cracked yet, but it’s clear that a lot of people are investing a lot into the future of VR (Figure 1.2).



Photo courtesy of Sean Wagstaff.

Figure 1.3

Painting with Google Tilt Brush on a laptop with an Nvidia graphics card. Running at 90 frames a second in two streams (one for each eye) requires some serious computing hardware.

Movie movies

But what about indie films? They aren’t going anywhere. But very soon, we will stop defining types of entertainment by the way they are distributed. Is it really TV when you watch it on your phone? Is it really a movie when you never go to the theater? Whatever you call them, these other genres are not just launching

pads to get into the “real” movies: they are all real movies, because this multiplicity is the future of moviemaking.

So what is YOUR movie? It could be a theatrical feature film, but are you really sure about that? Whatever the case, the fact is that filmmakers today aren't aiming at that one big film that gets them to the top of the heap. Instead, they plan multiple projects and enjoy the creative freedom that that entails. So what are you going to do? Don't think about the rules, just go out and *make your movies*.



Photo courtesy of Blackmagic Design.

Figure 1.4

The Blackmagic Ursa Mini Pro digital cinema camera.

Technological innovations

Sensors, computers, remote controls, wireless— the territory described with the phrase “digital filmmaking” keeps expanding. So what's new, in terms of digital filmmaking technology?

Cameras

A few years back, most camera manufacturers had only a couple cameras that the indie filmmaker would be likely to use. The rest were either consumer-oriented or just way too expensive. These limitations lead many filmmakers to shoot their films with DSLRs. Today, DSLRs are still around and they've gotten better for shooting motion pictures, with functional auto-focusing, improvements to viewfinders, and better audio capabilities. But now, almost everyone who makes cameras makes a video camera designed to compete against DSLRs. They offer all the perks (like interchangeable lens mounts and high-quality sensors) and the additional benefits of a camera body that's actually designed ergonomically for movement (Figure 1.4). It's safe to say that there's a type of digital video camera available for every type of digital filmmaking production mentioned in this chapter. In addition, there's a much wider selection of cinema lenses available as well.



Photo courtesy of Radiant Images.

Figure 1.5

A VR camera array with a gimbal-based 360-degree rigging from Radiant Images mounted on a Mantis camera rig from Element Technica.

Robotic camera rigging

Halfway between the jib arms of yore and a giant 3d printer head, robotic camera arms move with a speed and precision that makes you think of the early Terminator movies. On a more human scale (and budget), there are programmable dollies and sliders, every sort of gimbal-based camera rigging you can imagine (think Steadicam meets those acrobats spinning in hoops at the Cirque du Soleil), and all sorts of housings for the camera (underwater, handheld pistol grips, follow focus, etc). It's a brave new world out there and this once boring category of gear that includes tripods, monopods and jib arms is now the most innovative part of cinema gear manufacturing. Look for this trend towards robotics to continue with the goal being that a single person can operate a camera and make it fly.



Photo courtesy of DJI.

Figure 1.6

A DJI drone with Hasselblad camera.

Drones and their tiny camera friends

Speaking of flight, the drone is still the coolest toy on the block. Do you need one? It depends on what you do. Most indie filmmakers will end up hiring a drone operator to come to the set and bring their own gear with them. But if your films involve action sports, nature, or any other topic that benefits from beautiful low-flying aerials, drones are important. Two or three years ago, Go Pro was the only game in town when it came to small cameras that you could literally duct-tape to the underside of a car. Now there is a lot of competition in the world of these so-called action cameras. And some of them aren't even that

small, like the Hasselblad in Figure 1.6. There are now drones that can fly a 30lb camera. We discuss drones more in a new section of Chapter 10.



Photo courtesy of Nokia.

Figure 1.7

360-degree Nokia OZO VR camera with 8 lenses shoots 2K video at 30fps.

Virtual Reality

We already mentioned VR above, in terms of creative content and storytelling. But VR involves all sorts of new technology: 360 degree camera-housings, special drives and playback gear, and video cards that can support high-frame rates playing in two streams—one for each eye, to give the 3d effect (Figure 1.7). VR could be the topic of a book itself, but we've added sections that cover all aspects of making a VR production throughout this book.

VR Info

Look for this icon to identify special new sections about Virtual Reality production and post-production.

Technology Graveyard

For each edition of this book, just as new forms of technology are added, other forms of technology get relegated to the website. This edition is no exception. Say goodbye to any discussion of the DV video format, which caused a revolution in independent filmmaking in the 1990s. DVDs are only standard definition and so we must say goodbye. BluRay disks are fading fast as well. And we will also be saying goodbye to 35mm film as a finishing medium. Film has been obsolete for shooting and editing for some time, but people were still printing and projecting on film for theatrical movies. But now even that is more or less over, so RIP 35mm motion pictures, you changed the world.

What Kind of Movie Should You Make?

Every project, no matter what it is, will have its own unique set of challenges. That's part of the thrill of filmmaking. Every film is a different learning experience with a different set of variables. No matter how experienced you are, you have an opportunity to learn something new from every project.

If you are reading this book and trying to figure out what type of project you should make, here are some of your options:

Video shorts for the web. Thanks to websites like YouTube, everyone has the opportunity to create and distribute short videos for potentially millions of viewers. And there are many other websites that seek more specialized content: travel videos, sketch comedy, music performances, to name only a few. Even the big studios create shorts for the web, in the form of trailers and film clips, to promote their high-budget feature films. On some level, every filmmaker who reads this book will find they need to create at least one video short for the web related to their project, whether it's a trailer, a promotional clip, segments broken down into webisodes, or the whole thing. For that reason, we have a section in Chapter 18 to walk you through the process of getting your video on the internet.

Short films. For many, a short film is the ideal first film project. It has all the elements of a full-length feature film, but on a much smaller scale. You'll learn about every stage of the process, from screenwriting to shooting to editing and finishing, but the task won't be quite so overwhelming, and it definitely won't be as time-consuming and expensive. If you've never made a scripted film of any kind before, this is the way to start. But do your homework first. There is an audience for short films in festivals and on the web. Typically, short films are under 30 minutes in length, but many believe they are best when they are

below 10 minutes. After all, the average half-hour sitcom only has about 20 minutes of actual content, so if your “short” is longer than that, it starts to not feel like a “short.” Making a great short film is like writing a great short story, it’s a different animal than a full-length movie and has its own unique challenges. For those who decide to make a short, every chapter of this book will be relevant to your project.

VR projects. Virtual reality has been around for about twenty years, but only recently has it started to achieve critical mass. Filmmaker Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu broke new ground this past year at Cannes with his documentary-like VR exhibit, “Carne y Arena” (“Flesh and Sand”), where viewers experienced a seven-minute immersive film about migrants trying to get across the U.S. border. VR projects at this level are very expensive because there are no existing venues for VR films, so they require a dedicated space and lots of gear. But everyone who has ever played around with VR knows that you can get a cardboard headset from Google for \$15. And no matter how low your budget, you still have a great chance of breaking new ground with this as yet fluid medium.

Corporate and industrial projects. These types of projects may not be what you dreamed of when you decided to become a filmmaker, but let’s face it, they are plentiful, and they almost always involve receiving a paycheck for your work. What’s more, they’ll require the same skill set and problem-solving challenges of any of the other personal filmmaking projects you may be working on. Corporate videos are driven by an agenda that is usually given to you by your boss(es). They have a narrative, but it’s usually about a product or a business or an event, rather than a character. Every chapter of this book is relevant to corporate and industrial videos, but take a special look at Chapter 2, “Writing, Scheduling, and Producing,” where we discuss the nuts and bolts of these types of projects.

Webisodes. Webisodes are usually an ongoing story that unfolds in segments that are under 10 minutes in length. Sometimes, these segments add up to a longer story, such as the web classic “Dr. Horrible’s Sing-Along Blog,” and sometimes they are more like a sitcom, like “High Maintenance,” which got picked up by HBO. As of this writing, there are many webisodic video projects out there, but the form has yet to be truly defined. This is an exciting opportunity for new filmmakers. Every time a new type of storytelling evolves, the door opens to create a new crop of success stories. There are no real rules yet, but writing, shooting, and finishing webisodes involves all of the elements discussed in this book. In addition, we feature a special section on finishing for web distribution in Chapter 18 that’s of crucial interest to webisodic filmmakers.

Television pilots. In a perfect world, all television pilots would be pitched, ordered in advance, and paid for by a network. But that's not always the case, especially for innovative or non-scripted TV series. Instead, producers (that's TV-speak for "directors") take a gamble and shoot their own pilot episode. Then they present that material in the form of a *pitch reel* or a finished cut of the first episode of the series, aka the *pilot*. It's called a pilot because it flies out ahead and leads the series—unless it crashes and burns. If you consider the range of shows on TV—from daytime talk shows to reality TV shows to sitcoms to hour-long dramas—and that's just the tip of the iceberg—then you know that the choices and options are almost limitless. But whatever the genre, your TV pilot will need all the resources covered in this book. When TV production differs greatly from film production, this book tries to address those differences.

Documentaries. The filmmaking equivalent of "non-fiction" or "journalistic" writing, documentaries today have a strong audience. If you think of some of the most exciting and controversial films of the last decade, they are often documentaries. Films like *Citizen Four*, *Supersize Me*, and *An Inconvenient Truth* have had a demonstrable effect on our perception of the world around us. This is the power of documentary filmmaking. Documentaries are shot in a way that is very different from scripted films, but they share many of the same creative challenges— structuring a story, crafting a style in terms of how the film is shot, refining the structure in the editing room, designing the sound, intensifying emotions with music, and enhancing the film with graphics. All of these things are as necessary for documentaries as they are for scripted films. Like a good biography, just because it's real doesn't mean it's not art. In Chapter 9, "Directing," you'll find a section on the unique concerns of shooting for documentaries because this is an area where making a documentary is significantly different than making a scripted film.

Scripted feature films. Whether you agree with it or not, or like it or not, at the time of this writing, scripted feature films are still what many people think of when you say you are a filmmaker and they still hold a position of power in Hollywood, even if other forms of entertainment have chipped away at their cultural dominance. What does that mean for you? It means that if you are a director and you have directed a live action feature film, you are eligible to direct any project lower on the Hollywood pyramid, which is everything else. (We didn't say you had to like this or agree with it!) And the same goes for writers, cinematographers, actors, editors, composers, graphic designers, visual effects artists, the list goes on. Having that feature film credit will open doors, guaranteed. Making a feature will require great resources, especially if you are going to do it independently. But there's no question that it will be a rewarding experience.

Questions to Ask Yourself

If you're seriously thinking of embarking on a digital filmmaking production, you're about to begin a very complicated process. The more you know before you start, the more smoothly things will go for you. Before you dive in, you should know the answers to these questions:

What is your final product? Projected theatrical release? Home video? Broadcast television? Webisodes? Corporate/educational use? (Chapter 3, "Digital Video Primer," and Chapter 18, "Screening & Finishing," can help you understand the technical specifications for these different formats.)

What peripheral products will you be creating? Work-in-progress screeners? Email-able trailers? Press kits? No matter what your final project is, you will need to export it to several different formats.

What equipment do you already own or have access to that you can use to produce your project? Consider this question carefully, as some older equipment—both computer and video equipment—might be more of a hindrance than a help.

How much time and money do you want to spend? Remember that postproduction can often cost as much or more than production.

If you take the time to make some hard decisions before you shoot, you'll save time and money throughout the process. Even if you can't find all the answers up-front, you should at least know all the questions.



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Digital Video Primer

Digital Video for Filmmakers
Components of Digital Video
Working with SD and Analog Video
Digital Image Quality
Understanding Digital Media Files
Digital Video Formats
VR Media Formats
Unscientific Answers to Highly
Technical Questions

What is the best way to shoot my project? Should I shoot 24p? What is the difference between HD and digital cinema? Should I shoot 2K or 4K? What type of digital video will look most like film? What are codecs? What do I need to know about audio? What is raw? What do all those other acronyms and numbers mean? In this chapter, we're going to introduce you to the fundamentals of digital video technology. Consider this chapter a reference for the terms and concepts you will encounter on a day-to-day basis during your production process, as well as throughout the rest of this book.

By now, you should have a script and have started to work out what your budget and your shooting schedule will be. And you should have started to make decisions about the way you want to shoot your project. The big question for most filmmakers at this point is whether to shoot 2K or 4K digital cinema. But of course there's a bit more to it than that.

? Digital Cinema

Digital cinema is a type of high-resolution digital video that is aimed specifically at making films, as opposed to television. In fact, 2K digital cinema is only slightly larger than 1080 HD, and 4K digital cinema is twice as big as 2K (Figure 3.1). Both HD and digital cinema are groupings of video specs, rather than one single type, so you can expect both of them to change and grow in the future.

Digital Video for Filmmakers

Today almost all movies and television shows are shot, edited, and distributed digitally. Although some studios still use 35mm motion picture film as an archive medium, only a select handful of A-list directors are able to insist that they shoot their movies on film. For the rest of us, digital filmmaking is the only option.

Now that the entire Hollywood film industry has gotten behind digital video, technological advances continue at an astonishing rate. Ultra high-resolution 4K digital cinema has become a viable shooting option and 2K has replaced HD even for low-budget indies (Figure 3.1). Even though a frame of 2K digital cinema is not that much larger than a frame of 1080 HD, the differences in the capabilities of the cameras that shoot in digital cinema formats are striking.

**HD (1920 x 1080)****2K (2048 x 1080)****4K (4096 x 2160)****Figure 3.1**

A frame of 1080 HD video (upper left), 2K digital cinema (upper right) and 4K (bottom). 2K digital cinema is not significantly larger than 1080 HD video, but 4K is twice their size.

 Hulu series **The Handmaid's Tale** was shot with an Arri Alexa Mini at 4K UHD Pro Res with a special aspect ratio of 2.0:1. Like many series, it was delivered in multiple formats: 4K, HDR, and HD.

HD

The term HD (high definition) itself does not actually refer to any one particular type of digital video. Rather, it's a set of digital video formats and specifications. When digital filmmakers talk about HD video, they are usually talking about the two most popular subsets, 720 and 1080.



Super 35mm sensor



Micro 4/3 sensor



Super 16mm sensor



2/3" sensor

Figure 4.5

Comparison of super 35mm, micro 4/3, super 16mm, and 2/3 image sensors.

If bigger sensors capture better images, why aren't digital cinema cameras equipped with full-frame sensors? The most basic reason is because the look of footage captured by sensors based on the size of 35mm motion picture film is considered visually pleasing to most filmmakers. It looks like what we think of when we think of movies. Also, because of the shallow depth of field that comes with larger sensors, it can be harder to stay in focus. This is less of an issue for still photographers, but for cinematographers who must often rely on a second person to pull the lens into focus as the shot changes, staying in focus is already hard enough. And on top of that, aesthetically speaking, it's possible to have a depth of field that is too shallow—for example, when shooting a close-up, and the eyes are in focus, but the end of the nose is soft.



Shallow Depth of Field

One of the defining trends in modern still and motion photography is the prevalence of shallow depth of field. When shooting with shallow depth of field, things in the background will be out of focus, which helps bring more attention to the subject in the foreground. To achieve shallow depth of field, you need a camera with a larger image sensor and the right lens with the right lighting conditions. We'll talk more about how to achieve this look in Chapters 7 and 10.

Compression and Raw Video

The first place that your digital video gets compressed is in the camera. Every camera uses a compression algorithm, or codec, to turn the analog subject into a digital signal, and that process affects image quality greatly. In Chapter 3, “Digital Video Primer,” we discussed compression in great detail and provided a list of acquisition formats including raw and log modes.

All cameras acquire raw video and then use a codec to compress it into a more user-friendly format that includes information such as white balance, sharpening, and color and contrast adjustments. These compressed video files are smaller and usually ready for editing straight out of the camera. Raw files have more information and are therefore bigger but also more flexible. You can shoot raw and decide later on the white balance, the color, and the contrast, a process called color-grading. (See Chapter 13, “Preparing to Edit,” and Chapter 16, “Color Grading,” for more on this.)

But even though all cameras acquire raw video, not all cameras give you the option of getting raw files out of the camera, so if you know you want to work with raw video, you'll have to make sure the camera you select has that option.

Most lower-budget indie filmmakers will find that 8-bit, 4:2:2 or 4:2:0 compression is acceptable for their needs. And high-end digital cinema cameras usually offer a range of choices between raw 4K or higher media and 2K codecs.

It's been said that making a movie is a lot like going to war, and while you most likely won't be risking life and limb during your production, as a producer or director, you will be managing a large group of people, all with diverse talents and goals. In addition, you'll be trying to balance these talents and goals against budgetary constraints, scheduling problems, inclement weather, temperamental actors, and any number of impossible-to-predict problems. Each one of these problems and issues will end up slowing down your shoot and that will translate directly into a financial impact. The best way to steel yourself against these problems is with meticulous, thoughtful planning.

There's no correct way to plan, and different types of shoots require different degrees of planning. In Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo*, there is a scene in which Jimmy Stewart spies on Kim Novak as she shops in a San Francisco flower store. Observers of the shoot reported seeing Hitchcock meticulously plan and arrange all of the cars that were passing by the window in the background of the shot. Color, shape, speed, order—he planned and calculated it all. Hitchcock was also an avid storyboarder, utilizing his accomplished draftsman skills to create detailed illustrations of exactly what shots he would get.

At the other end of the extreme are directors like Woody Allen, who don't storyboard at all, but choose to plan and block their shots on-set with the actors. However, even if they don't storyboard, these directors still do meticulous planning by working with their camera and production crews to prepare sets and costumes, determine a "look" for their work, and much more.

As a director, you're responsible for everything the viewer sees on-screen, whether it's good or bad. With a little preparation, you can improve your odds that the viewer is seeing something good.

Your main tool for preparing for your shoot is the storyboard. Because storyboarding requires you to perform the first serious visualization of your project, the storyboarding process forces you to answer some questions that you might not have dealt with during the writing of your script. From choosing locations, to the look of your production, to how your project will be edited, storyboarding is where you'll make many practical decisions about how you'll shoot your script.

Storyboarding

Storyboards are comic book-like representations of the images in your production (see Figure 5.1). How well they're drawn and what they look like doesn't matter, just as long as they convey to you and your crew a reasonable approximation of how the composition, framings, and edits in your production will play out. The amount of detail in your storyboards will depend on the type of scene you are creating. For a scene of three people talking around a dinner table, your storyboards will probably be less detailed, and will serve more to help

you plan framing and cutting. For a special effects-heavy shot of a spaceship flying into a spaceport on an alien planet, your storyboards will include more detail to help your art department and visual effects crews plan and prepare for their work, and to help you make sure that what you shoot on location can be accurately merged with effects that will be created months later after your sets are long dismantled.

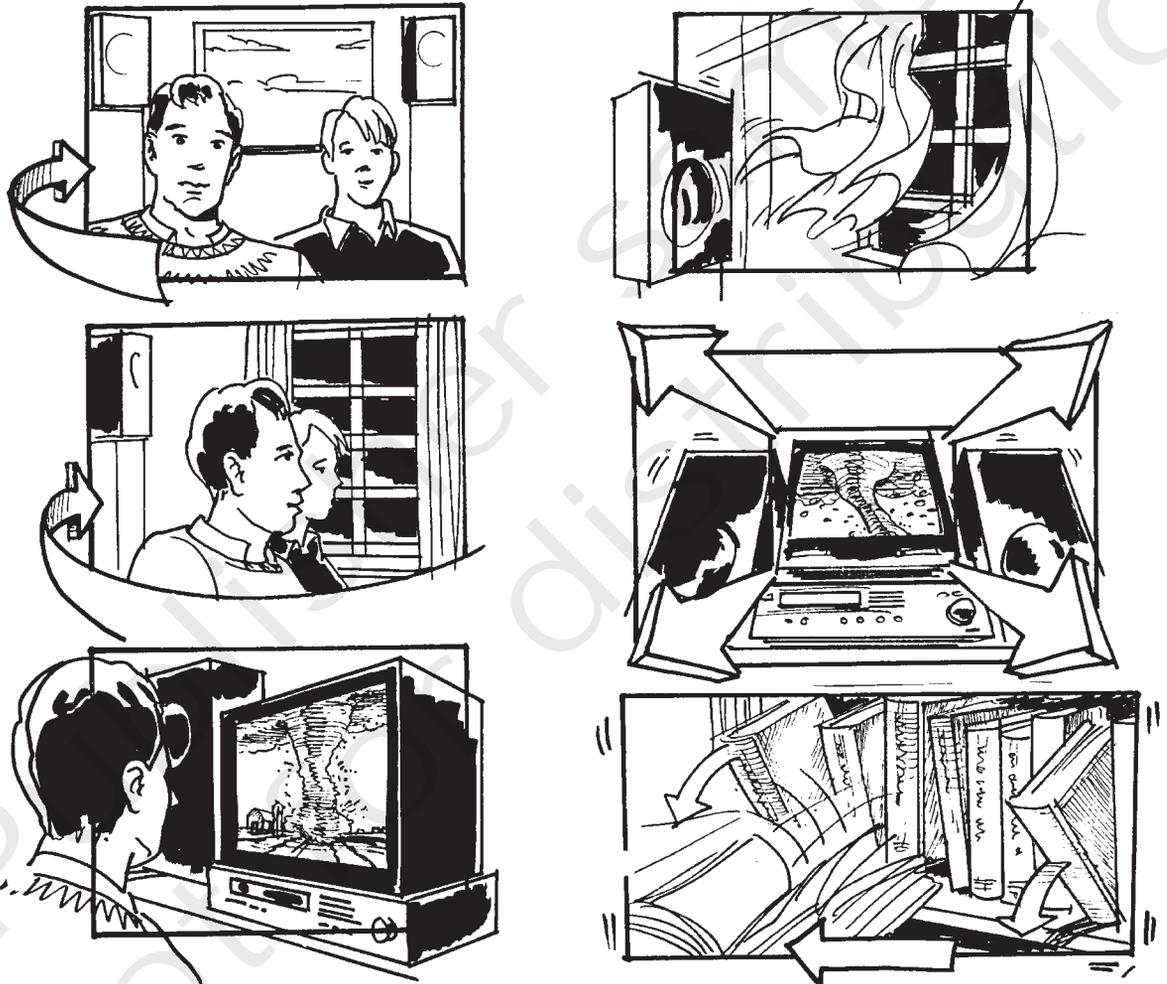


Figure 5.1

A picture can be worth a thousand words when drawn by a great storyboard artist.

camera manufacturers label their lenses with a magnification factor—2x, 3x, and so forth. However, a few other things happen to your image when you zoom.

Focal Length Defined

Focal length is the distance from the lens to the camera's image sensor(s), usually measured in millimeters.

As you go to a longer focal length (zoom in), your field of view gets narrower. The human eye has a field of view of about 50 to 55°. This is considered a “normal” field of view (see Figure 7.6).

More important, though, is to pay attention to the way that a lens magnifies different parts of your image and how it compresses depth overall as you zoom in and out.

At wider focal lengths (that is, when you are zoomed out), objects that are closer to the lens get magnified *more* than objects that are farther away. Telephoto lenses, on the other hand, magnify all objects in a scene equally, no matter how far away they are.

Use a Video Assist Monitor

Feature film directors connect video assist monitors to their cameras so that they can see what the camera operator sees through the viewfinder. A video assist monitor makes it much easier to focus and frame your shots. To see a true 4K image, you'll need to use the 4K output on the camera and the 4K input on the monitor. (For more on monitoring video on the set, see Chapter 10.)

Focal Length Equivalency

Many people are familiar with the focal lengths of lenses used in 35mm still photography. But whenever you use a camera with an image sensor that is smaller than 35mm film, the focal lengths are designed at a different scale. In other words, a 50mm lens on a super 35mm sensor camera will look different than that same lens on a super 16mm sensor camera. You can use a focal length multiplier to figure out the focal length equivalency of different lenses. Focal length equivalency is commonly discussed in terms of the crop factor. If your camera has a 1.6x crop factor, such as the Canon 7D, a 50mm lens will act like an 80mm lens. Refer to the manufacturer's documentation to get the focal length multiplier for your camera/lens



Figure 7.8

These four images were shot using four different focal length lenses: very wide, wide, normal, and telephoto. The camera's position was adjusted to keep the framing similar. Notice what happens to the tree in the background.

allow you to selectively record a particular person or event. Moreover, because a directional mic can be farther from the recording subject than an omnidirectional mic, they are better suited to some feature production sets, where keeping a mic close to the subject is difficult. Some directional mics are more directional than others, and which type to choose depends on your shooting task.

Most directional mics are sensitive to sound in a cardioid pattern (so named because it looks vaguely heart shaped—see Figure 8.4). A cardioid microphone is more sensitive to sound coming from the front of the mic, and typically attenuates, or drops off, sounds around the sides of the mic. Typically, a cardioid pattern is wide enough that a cardioid mic placed more than seven or eight feet from its subject will pick up unwanted sounds.

A supercardioid mic has a tighter pickup pattern than a cardioid and is similar to the pickup pattern of the human ear. Supercardioid mics provide good results when used at a distance of 6 to 15 feet from the subject.

Finally, hypercardioid mics have an even narrower pickup pattern that rejects most sounds that are “off-axis” from the direction the mic is pointed. Hypercardioids are, in fact, so directional that they can be somewhat difficult to use. If they stray even a little from their subject, they will not pick up the desired sound. You’ll need a diligent mic operator to use a hypercardioid mic.

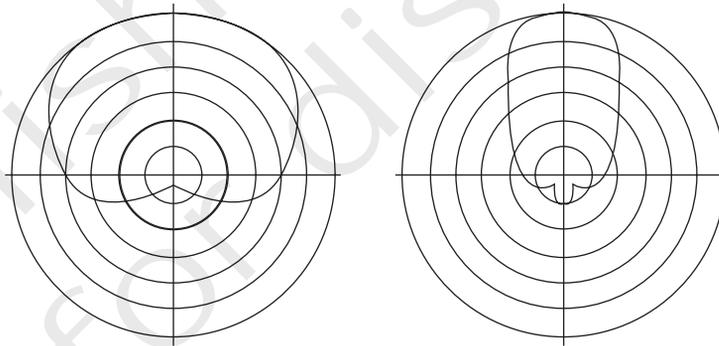


Figure 8.4

The cardioid patterns for an omnidirectional and a supercardioid mic.

Contrary to common sense, it’s the holes on a microphone that make it more or less directional. Take a look at a typical handheld or clip-on omnidirectional mic. You’ll see that most of the holes in the microphone’s case are in the very top of the mic, with just a few holes around the sides. Now look at a typical hypercardioid mic, and you’ll see a very long tube riddled with holes along its entire length. What’s the deal?

The holes in a directional mic cause the sounds coming in from the sides of the mic to cancel each other out, leaving only the sounds from the front (and sometimes, back). In fact, you can turn a hypercardioid mic into an omnidirectional mic simply by covering up the holes along the sides (see Figure 8.5).



Photo courtesy of Azden.

Figure 8.5

Extremely directional mics such as this one from Azden are ideal for mounting on a boom or fishpole or, in a pinch, mounting on the top of your camera. It is the holes in the side of the mic that give its directional qualities.

If you can't afford multiple mics or arrange for a boom operator on your shoot (more on this later), and you need to shoot dialogue scenes, then an omnidirectional mic will be the best choice. Ideally, though, you'll want a mic with a supercardioid pattern and the personnel and equipment to use it right. Later in this chapter, we'll discuss how to mic your scene.

Most microphones come with a coverage chart that indicates the directional pattern of the microphone and how different parts of the field of coverage respond to different frequencies (see Figure 8.6). Although interesting, don't lose any sleep over trying to understand these charts. Most mics are clearly rated as cardioid, supercardioid, or hypercardioid.

Finally, parabolic mics are extremely directional mics that use a large parabolic dish to gather and focus sound onto the head of a unidirectional microphone. Parabolic mics are sensitive to sounds over 200 feet away and are not practical for most feature shoots.

lined script during the shoot (see Figure 9.3). Nowadays, that's done via software, and ScriptE is the industry standard.

Continuity

During a shoot, continuity is the process of keeping track of dialogue changes, matching camera angles, actors' positions, and wardrobe and props so that the footage from shot-to-shot and day-to-day will cut together. You can use a digital still camera to take photos to keep track of continuity.

 **Sync On Set** is a web and mobile app that helps you create script breakdowns, track continuity photos, and collaborate with multiple crew members to build a shared database during the shoot. It requires an online account.

When a script is prepared for production, each scene is given a scene number. In turn, each shot in that scene is given its own shot number. Generally, the master shot is named according to the scene number; for example, scene 23, and each take is numbered consecutively: 23-1, 23-2, 23-3, and so on. The next shot in the scene, say a close-up of the lead actor, would be called 23a, and so on. This information is recorded on the slate and also on the notes kept on the shooting script by the script supervisor, usually handwritten on the facing page of the shooting script itself (see Figure 9.3). Usually, the best takes are marked with a circle around the shot number. These circled takes are the shots that the director thought were the best takes during the shoot.

For complicated scenes, a script supervisor's notes might include diagrams of the set, still images for continuity, and more. In addition, the script supervisor lines the script, drawing lines with arrows to show the portion of the script that each shot covers. Be aware that these lines indicate the dialogue that was *actually* covered during the shot, as opposed to the director's idea of what should be covered. So if an actor is cut short mid-take for some reason, it will be noted in the script supervisor's notes.

Clearly, script supervising isn't necessary for every shoot, but the longer your project and the more complicated the shoot, the more likely you will make continuity or coverage mistakes on the set without a script supervisor and the more valuable this information can be later on in post.

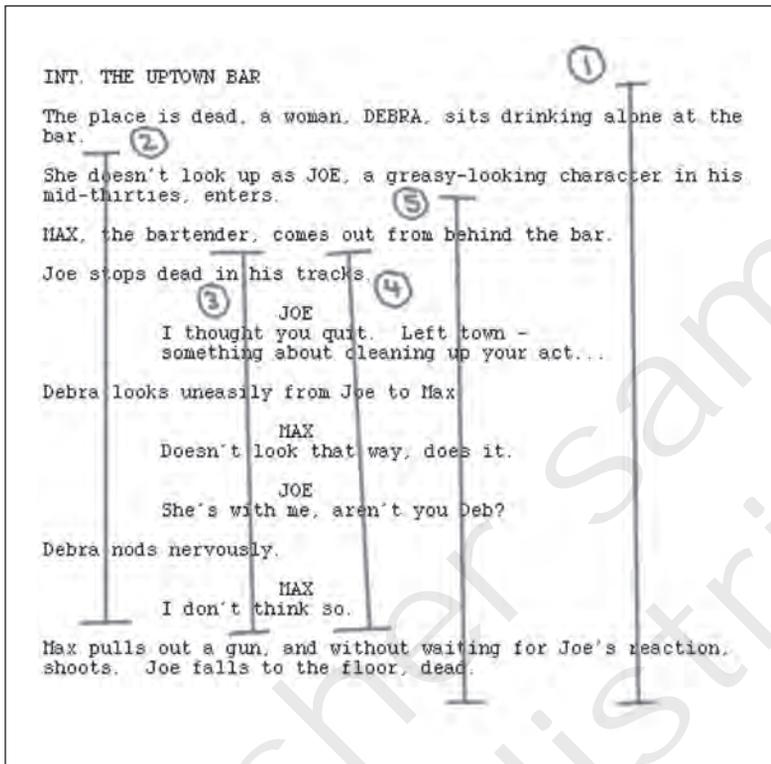


Figure 9.3

A lined script and script supervisor's marks.

Documentary Field Notes

For documentaries, there is no such thing as a script supervisor; however, there is usually someone on the set to take field notes. Field notes are not as formalized as script supervisor notes, but they contain the same sorts of information: content, technical notes, and so on. If the shoot involves multiple takes—such as the taping of an on-camera host—the takes are numbered, and the director selects circled takes, just as they do on a scripted project. With documentaries, separate “takes” don’t always exist—rather the camera operators simply cover the scene as best they can without stopping the camera unnecessarily. The field notes serve to describe what happened and to give the timecodes of key moments so that later on, people working in postproduction can quickly find important material.

Jibs and cranes provide high- to low-angle movement for swooping shots, and they are especially popular for establishing shots. Almost every talk show set includes an indoor jib for all those shots that fly over the audience and land down on the set with the hosts. Jibs can be huge or small and portable. Like a slider, a small jib can add up and down movements and give you extra height, sort of a halfway step before the extreme height of a drone or a crane. A crane is just that, an actual crane like they use for construction projects. Some cranes specially made for filmmaking have a platform that can support a full camera setup and operator, others allow you to suspend the camera from them with a gimbal-based rig that is remote-controlled. Many filmmakers today opt for drones instead of cranes, but cranes offer control and repeatability that is hard to achieve with a drone. Cranes and jibs are especially good at starting and ending with a static shot which is almost impossible to do with a drone.



Photo courtesy of That Cat.

Figure 10.10

Silent Cat slider from That Cat.

Aerials and Drones

Sometimes the gear is so cool, it's easy to forget that the important thing is the shot that it can deliver. Until recently, aerial footage was usually shot by helicopter. Renting a helicopter is expensive and FAA rules limit how low a helicopter can fly, which restricts your shots to very high altitudes. Helicopters are great for big, wide shots of large vistas but not as good as a crane for things closer to the ground. Drone technology, by comparison, lets you get those altitudes that are too high or too expensive to get with a crane, but too low to be shot with a helicopter or plane. Because of their small size, drones can even fly indoors, giving you the option to do complex indoor tracking shots without having to rent expensive cranes and rigs.

No matter how you acquire it, aerial footage is almost always better when shot by a skilled operator. With novice aerial footage, you run the risk of ending up with a long stream of imagery and no usable shots. The common fix for this problem in post is to add motion effects. A boring shot slowed down can look dreamy, a rough camera move can disappear when sped up a thousand times (or more) in a speed ramp. But when drone footage is shot well, by an operator who knows how to compose flying shots with beginnings, middles and ends, aerial footage can be truly breathtaking (Figure 10.11).



© Ben Long, 2017

Figure 10.11

A shot like this would be impossible to get without a drone.

There are two types of drones out there – drones with built-in cameras (Figure 10.12) and drones that allow you to add your own camera. Drones with built-in cameras are typically smaller and easier to fly than larger drones. Larger drones, though, can carry heavier payloads, which allows you to mount high-end digital SLRs or video cameras to them.

Small drones with built-in cameras are capable of getting fantastic footage, but they all sport fixed-focus lenses (some of them with very wide fields of view) and small sensors which give them inherently deep depth of field. However, drones like the DJI Phantom and Mavic series are incredibly easy to fly, thanks to their sophisticated software and GPS-assisted flight controllers. The camera gimbals on these drones are extremely good, allowing you to shoot stable footage in strong winds, or while flying very quickly. With the latest models offering 4K video, you can get great results from these drones which cost as little as \$1,000.

post and serves no purpose on the set. If you want a special effect on one camera, such as the look of Super 8 film, do it in post.

✓ Multicam with a Go Pro

Probably the most common form of multicam shooting for smaller productions is the combination of a regular video camera and a small action camera like the Go Pro Hero. Often the action camera will be somewhere challenging—taped to the chassis of a car or up on a drone—so you can't always record audio or slates that match the other camera. These shots are typically synchronized the hard way, by eye, in post. But there are some manufacturers who make special timecode generators designed to work with Go Pros.

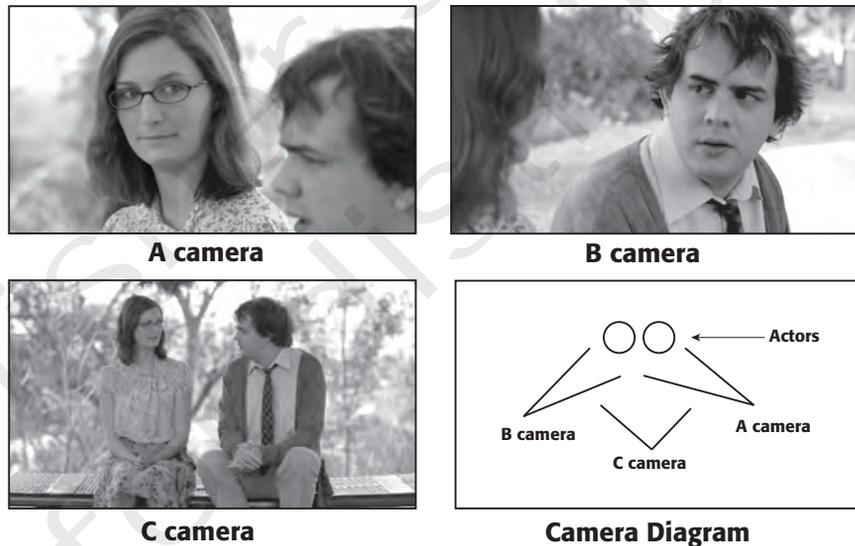


Figure 10.25

Three angles from a multicam shoot and a camera diagram.

Challenges of Multicam Shoots

Synchronizing two or more cameras is actually the easy part. What's a little more challenging is lighting and framing shots with multiple cameras on the set. Typically, lighting for multicam shoots is designed for 360-degree shooting. That usually means there is a grid on the ceiling with lights hanging from it to keep the

lights out of your shots. Shooting outside is a little easier since you can use natural daylight and not worry about lights getting in your shots.

Framing for multicam is tricky as well. Typically, you want all your cameras to cut together. That means they all need to be on the same side of the stage line and that each camera needs to be shooting at an angle that is sufficiently different from the others so that cutting between them doesn't result in a jump cut (Figure 10.25). A traditional television studio is designed similarly to a stage in a theater. The stage line is literally the line at the edge of the stage between the audience and the actors. The cameras never cross this line, and as a result, there is no risk of, in this case literally, crossing the stage line. Documentaries, reality TV shows, and sporting events are less rigorous about the rules regarding the stage line, in part because the nature of what they are shooting does not fit into clean, defined areas of "stage" and "audience." You will need to decide what rules apply to your project and frame your shots accordingly.

Also challenging for multicam shooting is finding a position so that the boom operator doesn't appear in any of the shots. For this reason, wireless mics are a must on multicam shoots.

Shooting VR Projects

Shooting a VR project is kind of like a multicam shoot turned inside out. Instead of a bunch of roving cameras, you have a single point with multiple cameras shooting out from it (Figure 10.26). This single-point mimics the point of view of a person, and just like in real life, a person viewing a VR video can look around and see a 360-degree view of the location or set.

The first thing to determine in a VR shoot is the placement of this single point of capture. Is it the point-of-view of a character? Does it move? It is at eye level? Is it handheld? How much of the area overhead or on the ground does it need to capture? Knowing the answers to these questions will help you determine how many cameras (or video streams) you will need for your shoot and it will also help you determine what sort of camera rigging is required. Capturing more streams of video means that the resulting 360-degree video will be more detailed and complete, with less problems stitching it together later in post.

Drag-and-Drop Editing

With drag-and-drop editing, you use the mouse to drag shots into the timeline window from a bin. Once there, you can rearrange shots by dragging them into the order you prefer. Drag-and-drop editing is often the best way to build your first rough string-up of a scene. You can arrange and select multiple shots in a bin and then drag them into the timeline all at once.

Three-Point Editing

Three-point editing lets you define the part of a source clip that will be used in your edited sequence, by selecting a beginning (in-point) and an ending (out-point) within the clip (these are the first two points), and then selecting where the clip will begin or end in your edited sequence (the third point). This allows you to build an edited sequence more precisely than you can with drag-and-drop editing. After setting the in- and out-points, press the Edit button and the selected part of your source clip will be placed on the timeline at the selected destination.

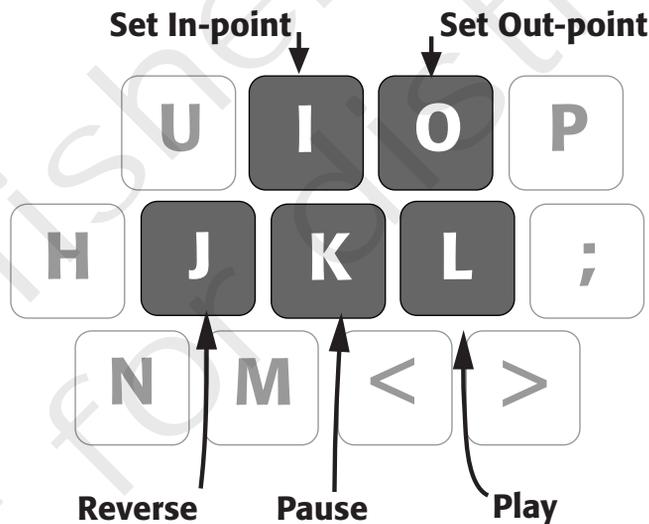


Figure 12.2

Keyboard, or JKL, editing provides a simple, one-handed editing interface.

JKL Editing

If your program provides JKL editing controls, the J on your keyboard will play your video in reverse, the K will pause, and the L will play forward. This simple mechanism allows you to shuttle quickly around a video clip to find an in- or out-point. Since you can usually select an in-point with the I on your keyboard and an out-point with the O, JKL turns your standard keyboard into an efficient, one-handed edit controller (see Figure 12.2).

Insert and Overwrite Editing

Whether you're using drag-and-drop, three-point editing, or switching between the two, your editing package should provide for insert and overwrite editing modes. These two options allow you to choose *how* your footage is added into an already-cut sequence.

When you are inserting, all of the footage after the in-point is pushed down the timeline to accommodate the footage that is being added. In other words, the new footage—whether audio, video, or both—is inserted into the timeline.

Conversely, overwrite leaves all clips in place, but writes the new clip over any existing video or audio (depending on which tracks are targeted), as shown in Figure 12.3.

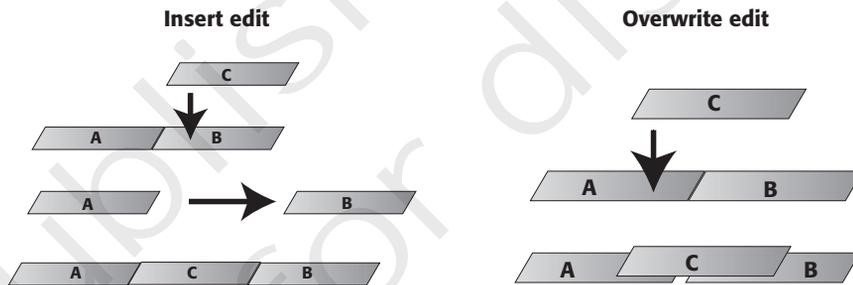


Figure 12.3

Insert edits allow you to add a shot between two existing shots (left), while overwrite edits allow you to easily add a shot to cover an edit, like a cutaway (right).

Trimming

After you have a decent rough cut of a scene, it's time to fine-tune it. For example, you might want to add beats of silence between certain lines of dialogue to show a character's hesitation, or you might want to extend a shot of a



Figure 14.5

Markers let you make notes on a specific frame in your shot.

STEP 4: BUILD THE FOUNDATION OF YOUR CUT

Now you've watched all the shots, and you have probably developed some opinions along the way. Hopefully, you've taken notes or marked the takes you liked using markers. As you watched the raw, you probably noticed that there was a bit of a plan in place, in terms of the coverage. The scene is intended to begin with James dancing in the mirror and then cuts to Sherrrie as she enters. They dance and end up at the mirror, where Sherrrie grills him about her daughter.

Here is a list of the coverage for the scene:

Wide-master-LR.mov is the wide master shot, which covers all of the action in the whole scene.

Med-master-LR.mov is the medium master shot. This shot favors “James” and covers the entire scene with a medium-wide 2-shot.

Sherrrie-single-LR.mov is a single on Sherrrie as she enters, and it only covers the beginning of the scene.

James-single-LR.mov is a single on James up to Sherrrie's entrance, and it also only covers the beginning of the scene.

Cutaway-feet-LR.mov is a cutaway of that actor's feet during the salsa dancing portion of the scene.

Two-shot-LR.mov is a two-shot of James and Sherrie’s dialogue in the mirror.

As you can see, there are two master shots of the scene—the wide master and the medium master. Even if you have an idea in your head of how the scene should be cut together, the wide master shot provides an easy way to create a very simple cut of the scene. You’ll have all the action and dialogue in one shot.

Double-click on the wide master shot to load it into the source display. Press Play and find the start of the scene. Set an in-point by pressing the “I” key and then set an out-point at the end of the scene by pressing the “O” key. Click on the “Overwrite” button in the center of your screen, and the master shot will be added to a new sequence in the timeline (see Figure 14.6). Note that the new sequence will appear in your bin as “Untitled Sequence.” Give it a name and save your project.



Figure 14.6

Load the wide master shot into the source display, set an in-point and an out-point, position the cursor in the timeline, and press the Overwrite button to create the foundation of your scene in the timeline.

STEP 5: ADD SOME OTHER SHOTS

Now that you have the spine of your cut in place, you’ll build up the scene by adding coverage. The first order of business is to add the shot of Sherrie entering the scene. Double-click on Sherrie-Single-LR.mov and set in- and out-points (I and O on the keyboard) for the part of the shot you want to insert into your master shot.

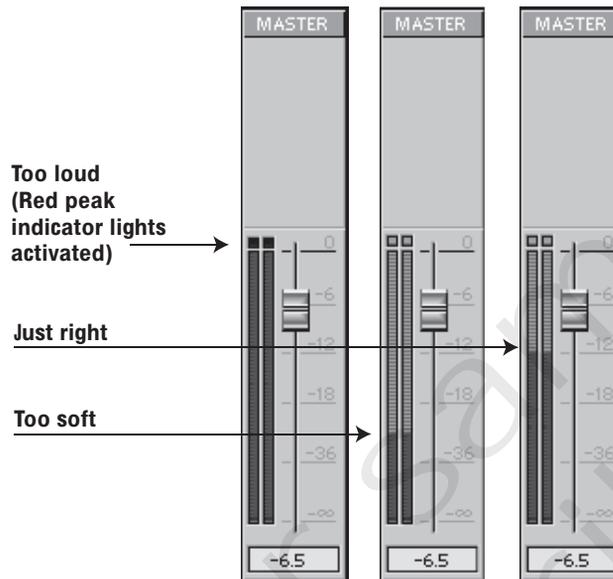


Figure 15.1

Digital audio meters provide a visual display to indicate the loudness of your sound.

Clipping and Distortion

You might be wondering what that red area on the audio level meter is. To simplify, it shows sounds that are very loud. Basically, it's perfectly natural that these sounds—a door slamming, for example—go to the top of the scale, or peak. But with digital audio, the red area should be avoided at all costs, because digital audio that is too loud gets clipped. Instead of distorting, they will simply get cut off. If, for example, the sound of a man yelling peaks, the high frequencies will get clipped, but the lower frequencies that aren't as loud will remain. The result will be a very strange sounding yell (see Figure 15.2).

? Where's That Hum Coming From?

If you hear a hum when you play audio, it might have been recorded onto your original source audio; however, there's also a chance that it might be coming from your system itself. Faulty cables, loose connections, and power supply problems can all add a hum to your audio signal. Before you try to correct a hum with EQ, make sure that your system isn't the culprit.

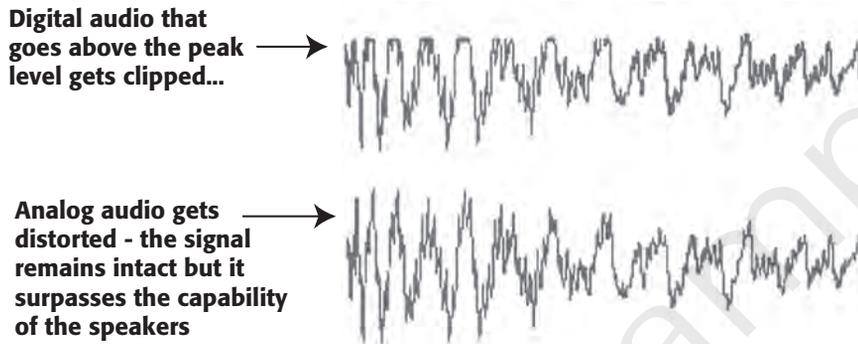


Figure 15.2

Digital audio that goes above the peak level gets clipped. The part of the signal that is too loud simply doesn't play.

Using Your Editing App for Sound

You will probably be able to perform most edits—audio cuts as well as cross-fades and simple effects—using the sound editing features of your editing software. Most editing packages provide a waveform display that makes it simple to zoom in on a sound to trim and cut, or to eliminate or replace problem areas (see Figure 15.3). As we said earlier, editing packages also usually include most of the audio filters you'll need for creating simple effects and for sweetening audio.

To determine if you'll need any additional sound editing software, you should examine your editing application to see if it has certain audio editing essentials:

Multiple tracks and playback. Most pro-level sound editing packages provide support for an unlimited number of audio tracks. Although your final master might only have four to eight tracks, being able to have extra tracks makes it easier to keep your project organized.

Level controls for each track. Any respectable, high-end editing package will have this feature, usually in the form of a simple line across the audio track that can be dragged up and down, and edited with control points.

audio mixing board A piece of hardware that takes several audio signals and mixes them together, allowing for the combination of different sources. Mixers usually include some type of equalization control.

audio sampling rate The number of samples per second that are used to digitize a particular sound. Most DV cameras can record at several audio sampling rates. Higher rates yield better results. Measured in kilohertz, 44.1kHz is considered audio CD quality, and 48kHz is considered DAT quality.

AVCHD A high-definition acquisition and mastering codec developed by Sony and Panasonic and compatible with Blu-ray Discs.

AVC-Intra A high-definition acquisition codec developed by Panasonic for use with their P2 line of cameras.

Avid DNxHD A set of codecs designed for use in digital video editing applications, particularly Avid Media Composer.

Avid DNxHR A set of codecs designed by Avid for high-resolution video like 4K

AVR Avid Video Resolution, a series of low and high-resolution codecs included with older Avid editing systems.

Axial One of several linear hardware-based online editing systems.

balanced audio A type of microphone connector that provides extra power. Sometimes needed if you want to have microphone cable lengths of 25 feet or longer.

balancing light sources In a lighting setup with several different light sources, the process of making the color temperature of all the lights the same, either to match daylight or tungsten light. Usually, this is done with CTO or CTB lighting gels.

bandwidth The amount of digital information that can be passed through a connection at a given time. High bandwidth is needed for high-quality image transfer.

barn doors A set of hinged door-like flaps that attach to the front of a light and serve to control where the light falls.

bars and tone A combination of color bars and 60Hz audio reference tone, usually recorded onto the head of each videotape. Used for calibrating video and audio levels.

bayonet mount A type of locking mechanism that allows you to fit a lens to a camera body. The lens can be easily and quickly attached and is held securely in place by two pins. See also **PL Mount**.

bin A film-editing term that refers to the place where the shots for a scene are stored. In software editing systems, bins can also be referred to as *folders*, *galleries*, or *libraries*.

Index

A

AC (alternate current) adapters, 106–107

Accessories cameras, 109–112, lenses, 88

access to power, 133

acquisition formats, 68–69

 matching, 410–411

actors, 269–270, 174–178, 271–272, 140

acts

 Act III: The end (three-act structure), 19

 Act II: The middle (three-act structure), 19

 Act I: The beginning (three-act structure), 19, 396

adaptations (novels), 15

Add Edit button, 407

Adobe After Effects. *See* After Effects

Adobe Premiere, 70, 352, 368, 460

ADR (automatic dialogue replacement), 440

advanced camera features, 98

advanced color controls, 458

advanced shooting, 281

aerials and drones, 290–293

After Effects, 486–487, 494

aliasing, 89

Allen, Woody, 124, 419

alpha channels, 502–504

alternate current. *See* AC

alternative white balancing, 212

ambient sound, 246. *See also* sound

Amelie, 162

American Beauty, 146

analog television HD frame rates, 60

analog video, applying, 60–61

angles cameras, 129–134. *See also* shots

An Inconvenient Truth, 12

answers to technical questions, 78–87

anticipating, following *versus*, 222–223

Apatow, Judd, 306

apertures, 204–206

controls, 95, 105, 117

DSLR cameras, 321

Apocalypse Now, 146

Apple Final Cut Pro, 368

Apple ProRes codecs, 394, 368, 375

applications.

 computer-generated storyboards, 134–137

 editing, 352

 MapAPic, 145

 moving files, 385

 PanaScout, 145

 Shot Designer, 171

 ShotList, 41

 Shot Lister, 140

 sound editing, 432–434

 Sun Scout, 180

 transcoding, 73–75, 394

analog video, 60–63, 89, 471, 60–63

applied three-act structure, 396

archiving projects, 536–537

ARRI Alexa cameras, 49, 101, 116, 190

art direction, 147

artifacts, 70, 90

aspect ratios, 55

analog/SD footage, 60

Assayas, Olivier, 420

assist buttons, focus, 190

asymmetrical codecs, 71

A Touch of Evil, 188

audience, knowing, 37

audio

cameras, 113

container files, codecs, 73

double-system recording, 305–306

editing, 423. *See also* sound editing

effects, 445

equipment, 235, 435

filters, 366

importing, 384, 534

interfaces, 347

metering levels, 427

microphones, 113, 238

mixing, 366, 426, 531

mono sound, 58

moving, 434

overlapping, 413

plug-ins, 366

recording tasks, 236–238

run-and-gun, 273

sampling, 59

scrubbing, 359, 430

stereo sound, 58

surround sound, 59

tools, 365

workflow, 317

Audio Mixer, 341

Audio Video Interlaced (.AVI), 68

audio/video (A/V) scripts, 24

auditions, 271. *See also* actors;
directing

auto-exposure settings, 203

auto-focus, 105, 188. *See also* focus

automatic camera shake, 510

automatic dialogue replacement. *See*

ADR

automatic script formatting, 23

Automator, 374

auto saving, 367

.AVI (Audio Video Interlaced), 68

Avid DNxHD codecs, 77, 380

Avid Media Composer, 352, 367, 353,
359, 413

B

backing up media, 338

batteries, 341, 373, 338

backlight, 160, 175. *See also*
lighting

bad audio, 438. *See also* sound
editing

bad language, 513

Baghead, 20

barn doors, 164

Barry Lyndon, 158

base plates, 284

Batch File Rename, 374

Batteries, 341, 117, 245

Battleship Potemkin, The, 394

beats, 268

best boys, 273

Birth of a Nation, 394

bit depth, 65

black-and-white effects, 473

black fabric, 101

BlackmagicDesign 6, 99, 103, 112, 170,
297, 334, 337, 343

Blade Runner, 425

Blair Witch Project, 124

Blocking, 170–171, 271

blurring nudity, 513

boards, production, 37

Bond, James, 117

book adaptations, 16

boom operators, 230, 242

bounce cards, 171
bracketing, 196
Brazil, 146
Breaking Bad, 25
breaking down scripts, 42–37
breakout boxes, 347
brightness, 363, 455. *See also* color grading
budgeting, 16
building sets, 147
built-in microphones, 238. *See also* microphones
bumps, microphones, 252, 438
Burden of Dreams, 146
business, filmmaking, 41

C

cables
Cadrag Director's Viewfinder, 269
calendars, 42
California Lawyers for the Arts, 44
camcorders. *See also* cameras
Canon C100, 189
cameras, 82. *See also* shooting

- angles, 129. *See also* shots
- audio, 113
- backing up originals, 373
- batteries, 117
- Blackmagic 4K, 105
- Blackmagic Design Pocket Camera,
- camera crews, 273
- Canon 7D, 87
- Canon C200, 104
- composition, 217
- department production assistant (PA), 273
- diagrams, 138
- DLSR (digital single lens reflex), 100, 117
- features, 117

- film-style, 100
- focus, 188
- image stabilization, 108
- multi-cam shooting, 306
- operators, 273
- pocket, 100
- shake
 - eliminating, 510
 - raw, 217
 - shoulder-mount, 100

Camera Sensor/Lens Calculator software, 201
camera-top monitors, 323
Canon 7D camera, 87
Canon C100 camcorder, 189
Canon C200 cameras, 104
capacitance, 243
capturing, 384
cardioid patterns, 124
cards, 115, 316, 333, 436, 478
car mounts, 288
Casablanca, 23
Cassavetes, John, 271
casting, 269–271
CCDs (charge-coupled devices), 83
central processing units. *See* CPUs
changes to scripts, 267. *See also* scripts
channels, 52. *See also* tracks
charge-coupled devices. *See* CCDs
checkerboarding, 439
checklists, 150, 181, 218, 232, 263
chips, single-chip cameras, 83
chroma keys, 364, 495, 501
Chrosziel, 293,
cinema lenses, 96, 97
Citizen Kane, 33, 391
clearing frame, 225
clipping, 428, 468
close-up shots, 130–134, 395

cloud storage, 340
 CMOS (complementary metal-oxide semiconductor), 83
 codecs, 64, 68–75, 360, 375, 493, 522
 color grading, 343, 361, 453
 color, 455
 columns, multi-column formats, 24
 company moves, 36
 components of digital video, 52
 composers, finding, 450
 compositing, 494
 composition, 217
 compression, 63
 computer-generated storyboard, 134
 computers, 332
 connectors, digital media cables and, 345
Consumer Electronics, 21
 consumer-grade cameras, 83. *See also* cameras
 container files, 68
 continuity, 277
 contrast, 455. *See also* color grading
 controllers, custom keyboards and, 338
 converting codecs, transcoding, 66–68
 COompressors/DEcompressors. *See* codecs
 Copolla, Francis Ford, 146
 copyrights, 44, 140, 449
 corporate films, 11, 33
 coverage capabilities, microphones, 238
 CPUs (central processing units), 333.
 cranes, 130, 133, 289
 crawls, titles, 479
 creative writing exercises, 21–22
 credits, 479. *See also* titles
Crimes and Misdemeanors, 419
 cropping, 325, 482

C-stands, 171
Curb Your Enthusiasm, 306
 custom keyboards and controllers, 338
 cutaways, 394, 409, 414
 cuts 413, 415, 419

D

dailies, 306, 397. *See also* media
 darker skin tones, lighting, 178
 dark video, adding brightness, 465
 data rates, 66
 DaVinci Resolve, 51, 343, 361, 376, 378, 454, 520, 534
 daylight, 162. *See also* lighting
 DCP (Digital Cinema Projection), 51, 72, 77, 524, 526, 535–536
 Demme, Jonathan, 158, 236
 Department Time Card, 275
 depth, bits, 65
 depth of field, 209
 design, production, 146
 diagrams, cameras, 138
 dialogue 23, 397, 439
 diffusion 171, 174
 digital cinema cameras, 98
 Digital Cinema Projection. *See* DCP
 digital films, types of projects, 2, 10
 digital image stabilization. *See* DIS
 Digital Imaging Technicians. *See* D.I.T.
 digital rights management. *See* DRM
 digital single lens reflex. *See* DSLR cameras
 digital video, 47
 digital video cables and connectors, 345
 digital zoom, 98. *See also* zoom lenses
 directing, 265
Directing Actors, 272

directional microphones, 238
 director of photography. *See* DP
 DIS (digital image stabilization), *See* EIS
 dissolves, 362, 415
 distortion, 86, 94, 258, 311, 428, 504
 distribution, 3, 516
 D.I.T. (Digital Imaging Technicians), 273
 DIY (do-it-yourself) art direction, 148
 DIY file-based masters, 517
 documentaries, 12, 30, 151, 279, 330, 386. *See also* What to Watch
Dogtown and Z-boys, 152
 dollies, 227, 289
Do the Right Thing, 141, 146
 double slot recording, 316
 double-system sound, 306, 387
Downton Abbey, 28
 DP (director of photography), 120, 273
 drag-and-drop editing 354
 dressing sets, 148
 DRM (digital rights management), 68
 Dropbox, 340, 377
Dr. Strangelove, 57, 231
 DSLR (digital single lens reflex) cameras, 99, 117, 320
 duration, editing, 420
 duvetine, 181
 dynamic microphones, 242

E

Easy A, 447
 echoes, adjusting for, 256
 ECU (extreme close-up) shots, 130, 132
 editing 330, 351, 393
 editing for style, 420

effects. *See also* special effects
 Eisenstein, Sergei, 394
 electricians, 273
 electronic image stabilization, 108
 electronic slates, 304
 eliminating camera shake, 510
 end credits, 479. *See also* titles
 enhanced viewfinders, 299
 entry-level digital cinema camcorders, 100
 E&O (Errors and Omissions) insurance, 141, 527
 EQ (equalization), 366, 441
 equivalency, focal length, 190
 Errors and Omissions insurance. *See* E&O insurance
 establishing shots, 390
 evaluating cameras, 83
 Excel (Microsoft), 42
 executive producers, 42
 exercises. *See* tutorials
 exposure, 170, 203
 exterior lighting, 180
 extreme close-up shots. *See* ECU shots
 eyelines, 224
Eyes Wide Shut, 150

F

F4V (Flash video), 68
 fades, 416
 Fair Use Doctrine, 140
 fake zooms, 98
 Farrow, Mia, 420
 feature films, 2, 5, 12, 526
 Fibre Channel, 347
 field monitors, 113, 182, 193, 284
 field notes, documentaries, 268
 fields, 45
 fill light, 150, 151, 152. *See also* lighting

film-style cameras, 100
 filters, 113, 217, 366, 430
 Final Draft, 23–25
 Final Draft A/V, 23
 financing, 16
 fine cutting, 385–387
 finishing, 77, 367, 515
 FireWire, 346
 first assistant camera (AC), 273
Fisher King, The, 146
 fisheye lenses, 200
Fitzcarraldo, 146
 flares, lenses, 94, 286
 Flash video (.F4V), 68
 flickering of lights, 207, 512
 fluorescent lights, 163. *See also* lighting
 focal length, 194
 focus, 95, 105, 188, 286, 294
 foley, 237, 246, 446. *See also* sound effects
 Foley, Jack, 237
 fonts, 480
 formats, 24
 forming production companies, 42
 4k digital cinema, 50
 FrameForge Previz Studio, 136
 frames, 52, 60, 63, 390
 frames per second (fps), 52
Frances Ha, 473
Friday Night Lights, 29
 f-stops, 92, 205
 full-frame sensors, 86

G

gaffers, 273
 gain, 207
 gels, lighting, 171
 geotagging, 145
 Gilliam, Terry, 146

Girls, 28
 glidecams, 287
Godfather, The, 159
 golden hour, 181
 Google Docs, 25, 42
 Go Pro cameras, 8, 103, 308, 310
 graphics, motion, 486
Great Train Robbery, The, 394
 green screens 183, 326, 364, 494
 Griffith, D.W., 394
 grounding electronic equipment, 341
 guerrilla shooting, 323

H

handheld cameras, 228, 279
Hannah and Her Sisters, 419
 hard cuts, 415
 hard sound effects, 413
 Hayden, Sterling, 231
 HD camcorders, 100
 HDMI cables, 284, 346
 HD-SDI cables, 346
 HD video, *See* High Definition
 head credits. *See* opening credits
 headphones, 236
 headroom, composition, 220
Hearts of Darkness, 146
 Hertz (Hz), 441
 Herzog, Werner, 146
 high definition (HD) video, 49
Hills, The, 31
 hiss, reducing, 442
 Hitchcock, Alfred, 124, 142, 417
 horizontal lines, 54. *See also* lines, scan
 horizontal resolution, 54
 household lights, 179. *See also* lighting
 hue, 363, 455, 458. *See also* color grading

hums, editing, 428
hypercardioid microphones, 124

I

Images, 63, 65, 108
importing, 360, 384
in-betweening. *See* interpolating
Incredible Adventures of Wallace and Gromit, The, 154
index cards, viewing, 25
industrial films, 11, 33
ingesting, 380
insert editing, 355
insurance, 42
integrating still images and video, 490
interchangeable lenses, 96, 200
intercutting, 394
interfaces, 352
interframe compression, 70
interior lighting, 178
Interiors, 419
interlaced scanning, 53, 60
intermediate formats, 77
interpolating motion effects, 488
intraframe compression, 70
Intuit QuickBooks, 42
iPads, screenwriting software, 23
iris controls, 204
Irma Vep, 420
ISO settings, 207

J

jam synching, 304
Jaws, 425
Jerry Maguire, 483
jibs, 289
jitter, 108
JKL editing, 534

Jungle Software Gorilla, 42
Jurassic Park, 425

K

keyboards, controllers and, 338
keyframes, 362, 488
key grips, 273
key light, 159, 161, 172, 175.
kickers. *See* backlight
Kubrick, Stanley, 150, 231

L

Late August, Early September, 420
lavaliers, 244
Lawrence of Arabia, 49, 188
lawyers, 44
L-cuts, 412
LED lights, 163. *See also*
lighting.
legal issues, 140, 274, 527
lenses, 93, 200
levels, metering audio, 427
liability insurance, 43
libraries, music, 449
licenses, 149
lighting, 158
lines, scan, 53
locations, 141
log mode, 89
lossless compression, 70
lossy compression, 70
Lost in La Mancha, 146
loudness, 259, 427. *See also* volume
lower thirds (titles), 226, 479
low-res proxy files, 376, 382
luminance, 65, 461, 496

M

Mac, moving media to Windows, 384
 Mackie mixers, 347
 main titles, 478, 484. *See also* titles
 making video look like film, 473
Maltese Falcon, The, 159
 Managing media, 317
 manual controls, 104
 manual focus, 86, 105
Man with a Movie Camera, 394
 MapAPic, 145
 marketing, 525
 masters, 530, 535
 Match Frame, 324
 matching footage, 473
 Material Exchange Format (.MXF), 68
Matewan, 136
Matrix, The, 420
 mattes, 501
 MCU (medium close up) shots, 133
 M&E (music and effects), 521
 Media, 42, 63, 68, 73
 Media Composer (Avid). *See* Avid Media Composer.
 medium close-up shots. *See* MCU shots
 medium shots. *See* MSs
 megabits per second (Mbps), 66
 members of camera crews, 273
 memory, RAM, 333
 metadata, 145, 519
 meters, 113, 124, 238, 427
 microphones, 238
 Microsoft, 42
 mixers, 247, 257, 342, 408, 427, 434, 521
 mixing 247, 366, 426, 520, 531
 modifier keys, 407
 monitors, 338
 mono sound, 58

montage, 394
 motion effects, 363, 487
 motion graphics software, 486
 .MOV (QuickTime movies), 68
 Movie Magic Budgeting, 42
 Movie Magic Scheduling, 42
 movies, 146. *See also* What to Watch
 moving audio, 434
 MP4 files, 68
 MSs (medium shots), 130, 133
 multi-cameras shooting, 306
 multi-column formats, 24
 music, 413, 446
 music and effects. *See* M&E
 .MXF (Material Exchange Format), 68

N

naming, 373
 NAS (network-attached storage), 339
 native support, 75
 neon lights, 164. *See also* lighting
 network-attached storage. *See* NAS
 networked systems, 339
 neutral density (ND) filters, 215
 noise. *See also* sound editing
 non-dialogue voice recordings, 441
North By Northwest, 23
 Novak, Kim, 124
 novel adaptations, 16
 nudity, 513
Nurse Jackie, 28

O

off-axis sounds, 124
Office, The, 306
 OIS (optical image stabilization), 108
 OMF files, 366

omitting lighting, 170
 omnidirectional microphones, 238
 on-set media workstations, 317
 opening credits, 446. *See also* titles
 optical image stabilization. *See* OIS
 organizing media, 317, 336
 originals, backing up cameras, 373
 OS (over-the-shoulder) shots, 130, 132
 O'Sullivan, Maureen, 420
 overcutting, avoiding, 413
 overexposure, 468
 overlapping audio, 413
 overscanning, 108
 oversharpening, 90. *See also* sharpening
 over-the-shoulder shots. *See* OS shots

P

Panascout, 145
 panning, 227
Paranormal Activity, 62
 passing QC (quality control), 528
 patterns, cardioid, 124
 pedestal shots, 131, 133
 permits, shooting, 141
 phones, 4, 67, 218, 262. *See also* smart phones
 pickups, 40, 417
 pictures. *See* images
 pillarboxing, 508
 pilots (television), 12
 pitches, 25
 pixels, 54
 planning, 16, 124, 146
 production design, 146
 storyboarding, 124
 plug-ins, audio, 366
 pocket cameras, 100

point-of-view. *See* POV
 polarizing filters, 215
 posters, 525
 postproduction, 53, 109, 347
 POV (point-of-view), 132, 133
 PowerProduction Software 135
 power supplies, 178
 preliminary color grades, 330, 375, 378
 preproduction, 16
 press kits, 420, 525
 primary colors, 64, 463. *See also* colors
 prime lenses, 97
 producing, 41
 production sound, 238, 261. *See also* sound
 promotion, 525
 props, 148
Psycho, 425
 pulling focus, 294
Purple Rose of Cairo, The, 419
 putting plans into action, 274

Q

QC (quality control), 528
 quality, 63, 65
 quantization, 65
 QuickBooks (Intuit), 42
 QuickTime movies (.MOV), 68

R

Rachel Getting Married, 158, 236, 420
 radio cuts, 397
Raiders of the Lost Ark, 20, 415
 RAM (random access memory), 333
 random access memory. *See* RAM
 rates, 60
 ratios of compression, 65

raw shooting, 217
 reaction shots, 376
 reading, 23. *See also* scripts; writing
 Red, 146
 red, green, blue. *See* RGB
 reel changes, 530
 reference tone, 259
 refining cuts, 413
 rehearsals, 271
 releases, 274
 remote controls, 113
 render farms, 340
 rendering, 340, 504
 replacing ADR, 440
 resolution
 reverse camera angles, 130
Richard III, 21, 24, 152, 298
 rigging, 283
 ripple and roll editing, 356
 rods, 285
 rolling shutter effects, 86, 512
 room tone, 261
 rough cuts, building, 396
 RS-422 cables, 347
 run-and-gun audio, 261
Run Lola Run, 420

S

safe titles, 482
 sampling, 39, 70
San Joaquin Valley Swiss Club, 394
 SANs (storage area networks), 339
 saturation, 363, 455. *See also* color grading
 Sayles, John, 145
 scan lines, 54
 scenes, 124, 271, 390. *See also* shooting
 scheduling, 16, 37, 42
 Schneider Optics, 200, 213
 scores, 413, 418, 425. *See also* music

scouting locations, 141
 Screen Actors Guild (SAG), 44, 271
 screenplays. *See* scripts
 screen positions, matching, 411, 412
 screenwriting, 16, 37, 42
 scrims, 183
 scripted feature films, 12
 scripts 16, 23, 25, 34, 266
 scrubbing audio, 359, 430
 SDI cables, 285, 346
 SD video, 60, 505
 secondary colors, 463
 second assistant camera (AC), 273
 seeing colors, 460
 Sellers, Peter, 231
 sensors 83
September, 420
 sequences, preparing, 517
 Shakespeare, William, 21, 24, 152, 298.
See also Richard III
 shallow depth of field, 89, 95, 202,
 209, 295
 shapes, pixels, 57, 63, 384
 sharpening cameras, 90
 Shepherd, Sam, 420
Shining, The, 231
 shooting 124, 146, 217, 306
 shot lists, 138
 ShotList, 41
 Shot Designer, 171
 shotgun microphones, 245
 Shot Lister, 140
 shots. *See* shooting
 shoulder-mount cameras, 100
 showrunners, 42
 shutter speed, 106
 sides, 24
 silence, 450.
 short films, writing, 21
 single-chip cameras, 84
 SketchUp Film & Stage, 136

slates, 260, 276
 SL Director's Viewfinder, 269
 sliders, 289
 slip and slide editing, 356
 slow motion, 490. *See also* motion effects
 slow reveal shots, 134
Slumdog Millionaire, 55
 smart phones, *See* phones.
 social media, 4, 525
 sodium lights, 164. *See also* lighting s
 sound, 49, 38, 113, 238, 306, 394, 425, 434. *See also* audio
 sound effects, 413, 445.
 special effects, 492. *See also* effects
 speed ramps, 489
 Spielberg, Steven, 25
 splitters, 300
 spotting, 426
 stabilization, image, 108, 363
 standard definition (SD) video, 52
 standard screenplay formats, 23
Star Wars, 362, 445
 steadicams, 287
 stereo , 58, 531
 Stewart, Jimmy, 124
 still images, 384, 490. *See also* frames
 storage, 335
 storyboarding, 124. *See also* planning
Stranger Than Paradise, 416
 streams, 52. *See also* tracks
 Stritch, Elaine, 420
 structure, screenwriting, 20
 studio wallpaper, 182
 submissions, film festivals, 524
 subtitles, 68
 Sun Scout, 180
 supercardioid microphones, 124, 240
Supersize Me, 12
 supervisors, scripts, 277

surround sound, 58, 73, 342, 521, 531
Survivor, 31
 sweetening filters, 430, 441
 synchronizing, 305, 330, 387
 Sync On Set, 278
 sync pops, 532

T
 table readings, 267. *See also* scripts
 tail credits. *See* end credits
 tail slates, 305, 519
 Tarkovsky, Andrei, 420
 technical problems, solving, 390
 technical specs needed for workstations, 347
 television 4, 12, 28
 temperatures, colors, 162
 templates, documents, 42
 temp mixes, 426
 1080 HD video
 textless masters, 530
Thinking in Pictures, 145
Third Man, The, 188
 third-party batteries, 117
 35 mm film, 10
 3D, 314, 364
 three-act structures, 19, 396
 three-point editing, 354. *See also* editing
 three-point lighting, 159, 174. *See also* lighting
 Thunderbolt, 346
 tilts, 131, 133
Time Bandits, 146
 timecode, 61, 304
 titles, 446, 365
 tracking, 61
 tracks, 52, 57
 trailers, 525

Trainspotting, 146, 420
 transcoding, 73, 360, 375, 380
 transferring analog video/SD video to HD formats, 60
 transitions, 394
 treatments, writing, 19
 trimming, 355
 tripods, 283. *See also* cameras
 Trop Tot, Trop Tard, 420
 troubleshooting, 390, 510
 three-point lighting, 159, 174
 tutorials

- creating first cuts, 398
- main titles, 484
- refining cuts, 413
- lighting your actors, 174

 TV framing, 225
 24p, 53
 29.97 fps, 53
 'tweening. *See* interpolating
Twister, 445
2001 A Space Odyssey, 57
 2K digital cinema, 50
 2-shots, 130, 132
 typeface, 479. *See also* fonts

U

Ultra High-Definition (UHD) video, 50
 underexposure, 203. *See also* exposure
 unidirectional microphones, 124
 unions, 44
 unscripted projects, 30
 updating shooting scripts, 267
 UV filters, 214

V

vectorscopes, 301, 343, 461

vertical resolution, 54
Vertigo, 124, 132
 Vertov, Dziga, 394
 very wide angles, 196
 video villages, 298
 Viewfinder Cine, 269
 viewfinders, 110
 vignetting, 94
 Vimeo, 340, 517, 523
 virtual reality

- audio, 314, 444
- cameras, 9, 102, 310
- editing, 504
- editing plugins 365
- lighting, 184
- media, 77, 317
- movies, 4, film projects, 11
- preparing media, 389
- shooting, 309, 315
- workstations, 344
- writing for, 32

 visually, writing, 20
 visual planning (documentary), 142–144
 vocal problems (sound editing), 405
 volume. *See also* sound editing

W

Waterston, Sam, 420
 wattage, 165. *See also* lighting
 waveforms, 169, 301, 343, 461
 webisodes, 11
 Welles, Orson, 394
 Weston, Judith, 272
 WeTransfer, 340, 378
 What to Watch

- 2001 A Space Odyssey*, 57
- Amelie*, 162
- Apocalypse Now*, 146
- Baghead*, 20

What to Watch (continued)

Barry Lyndon, 158
Blair Witch Project, 229
Brazil, 146
broadcast network TV, 56
Burden of Dreams, 146
Catfish, 31
Dogtown and Z-boys, 152
Do the Right Thing, 141
Dr. Strangelove, 57, 231
Easy A, 447
Eyes Wide Shut, 150
Fisher King, The, 146
Fitzcarraldo, 146
Frances Ha, 473
Friday Night Lights, 25
Godfather, The, 159
Hearts of Darkness, 146
I Love Dick, 4
*Incredible Adventures of Wallace
and Gromit, The*, 154
Jerry Maguire, 484
Lawrence of Arabia, 57
Lost in La Mancha, 146
Matewan, 145
Paranormal Activity, 62
Project Runway, 32
Rachel Getting Married, 158
Shining, The, 231
Slumdog Millionaire, 55
Survivor, 31
Time Bandits, 146
Tomorrow Never Dies, 127

white balance, 91, 211, 470

wide angle lenses 94, 196, 311

wide shots. See WSs

wild sounds, 446. *See also* sound editing

Windows, 332, 384, 407

Windows Media Video (.WMV), 68

windscreens, 251

wipes, 362, 416

wireless microphones, 250

wireless video transmission, 6, 112, 116

wire removal, 511

.WMV (Windows Media Video), 68

***Workers Leaving the Lumière
Factory***, 394

workflow, 50, 317, 340, 375, 459, 492, 504, 516 *See also* projects

workstations, 338

wrappers, 68

Writers Guild (WGA), 44

Writers Guild Foundation, 32

writing, 21

WSs (wide shots), 130, 133, 140

Y

Young, Sean, 420

YouSendIt, 340, 378

Z

Zeiss lenses, 96, 118, 201

zoom lenses, 95, 192. *See also* lenses

zoom shots, 98, 130, 132, 227

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