



THE CREW VIDEO LESSONS

LESSON 1: INTRO TO VIDEO PRODUCTION AND THE CAMERA

AIM: This lesson provides the student with an introduction to the video camera. Issues of camera care and personal safety are treated.

GEAR REQUIRED: A video camera and tape. 1 video camera to a small group of 5 students.

INTRO: The video camera is a highly sophisticated piece of equipment. It gives the user the ability to express themselves in a myriad of different ways. Cameras range in price from around \$500 to over \$100,000. Because of their ever-shrinking size they are easy to sit on, drop or even get stolen. The moral of the story is simple:- the camera can be your greatest friend but if you don't look after it, it will not be there for you to use tomorrow.

There are a few basic rules that you can follow to ensure a happy relationship between you and your camera (and your teacher). The over-riding rule is to always be careful and always use your common sense.

RULES OF CAMERA USE

- 1) Always take a great deal of care.
- 2) Make sure your camera is securely attached to the tripod if you are using one.
- 3) Don't leave or place the camera where it may be knocked over or bumped.
- 4) If the camera is attached to a power supply ensure the cables are safe and out of the way.
- 5) Don't leave a camera in the sun or in a place where it will be subject to excessive heat, e.g. the back of a car. Fried camera is NOT GOOD!!
- 6) Take the tape out of the camera when it is not in use for an extended period of time. Leaving it in can damage the tape heads. This is especially true with changing humidity and temperature.
- 7) Cameras work on electricity, electricity likes water, if you get the camera wet at the least it will nuke!!, and at worst so will you!!!! This includes any cables used.
- 8) Thou shalt definitely not point the camera at the sun. This may seem obvious but it's not that hard to do. It most often happens when carrying the camera between shoots locations face up, without a lens cap.
- 9) Keep an eye on your camera all the time. This is especially important in public. Cameras are small, easy to hide and can be taken quickly and unfortunately it happens.
- 10) If the camera is damaged in any way while you are using it, let the appropriate person know, don't go into the home repair business!!

11) Charge the batteries before you put your camera away. This ensures your camera is ready for use by the next person and will keep the batteries in peak condition.

12) Most cameras these days use batteries that should not be 'deep cycled'. Don't allow the batteries to go completely flat

13) Learn the correct way to load the tape into your camera. Don't force it or try to hurry the loading process. This is the most common way for cameras to break. Repairing the tape transport will often cost nearly the price of the camera!!

14) When you are finished with the camera, pack it away properly.

15) Have fun, experiment and enjoy! The best way to become a good camera operator is to experiment, make mistakes and find out what works and what doesn't.

These guidelines are not an exhaustive list, however they cover the main points. Copy them into your book and see if you can add to them. If you come up with some good ideas let us know.

SAFETY ISSUES

There are three main area of safety that need to be looked after when it comes to using cameras. The are:

- 1) **PUBLIC SAFETY** Ask yourself the question, Is any aspect of my video taping going to cause an unsafe situation for the public? Position of power cables, lights, tripod, mic cables, are you blocking and public access? All aspects of your shoot need to be looked at to ensure that they don't cause a safety problem for the general public.
- 2) **PERSONAL SAFETY** issues are extremely important and mostly underrated when it comes to using cameras. We loses good camera operators each year due to accidents that with little thought could have been avoided. When you are using a camera your mental focus is where your picture is not necessarily where your feet are. It is not that difficult to walk of a cliff or in front of traffic if you are moving around when shooting. If you are in an unsafe area have a friend keep an eye on you.
- 3) **EQUIPMENT SAFETY** Keep you gear safe, follow all the above rules and most of all use your common sense!

Your camera can become one of your closest friends. Following some of these guidelines will ensure that the friendship is long lived.

ACTIVITIES

INTRO TO CAMERA (Have the manual close by for reference if you need it.)

- 1) Take the camera out of its case. Connect a battery and load a tape. If you are unsure of the procedures check the manual.
- 2) Turn the camera on and identify the stop start record button, usually a red button on the back of the camera.

3) Identify the ZOOM control, usually a toggle button with 'T' and 'W' either side. Gently push it toward the T side and then the W side. Take note of the effect that is created. T stands for 'TELEPHOTO' and 'W stands for 'WIDE"

4) Push the record button and record 30 seconds of footage of your friends.

5) Consulting the manual, find out how to place the camera into playback mode. Now play the footage back.

6) When you are finished remove the carefully remove the tape, disconnect the battery and place it in the charger and carefully pack the camera away.

LOCATION SAFETY

For each location write down some of the safety issues that you may face.

1) Video taping in the city at lunchtime _____

2) Video taping in a work place office _____

3) Video taping at the beach or near a river office _____
