Basic Film Terminology

Shot Designations
Apparent camera-subject distance

Camera appears far away
Apparent camera-subject distance

Camera appears far away = LONG SHOT
Apparent camera-subject distance

Subject seen from head to toe
Apparent camera-subject distance

Subject seen from head to toe = FULL SHOT
Apparent camera-subject distance

Subject seen from waist up
Apparent camera-subject distance

Subject seen from waist up = MEDIUM SHOT
Apparent camera-subject distance

Subject seen from waist up = MEDIUM SHOT
Alternate term = WAIST SHOT
Apparent camera-subject distance

Only head & shoulders are seen
Apparent camera-subject distance

Only head & shoulders are seen

= MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT
Apparent camera-subject distance

Only head & shoulders are seen

= MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT or SHOULDER SHOT
Apparent camera-subject distance

Subject’s face fills the frame
Apparent camera-subject distance

Subject’s face fills the frame = CLOSE SHOT
or CLOSE-UP
Apparent camera-subject distance

A *portion* of the subject’s face fills the frame
Apparent camera-subject distance

A *portion* of the subject’s face fills the frame

= EXTREME CLOSE SHOT
Apparent camera-subject distance

Camera too far away to identify subject
Apparent camera-subject distance

Camera too far away to identify subject

= EXTREME LONG SHOT
Apparent camera-subject distance

Closer when facial expression is important...
Apparent camera-subject distance

Farther away when environment is important
Angle of camera’s viewpoint

From below looking up at subject
Angle of camera’s viewpoint

From below looking up at subject

= LOW ANGLE SHOT
Angle of camera’s viewpoint

From above looking down at subject
Angle of camera’s viewpoint

From above looking down at subject

= HIGH ANGLE SHOT
Angle of camera’s viewpoint

EXTREME LOW ANGLE
Angle of camera’s viewpoint

EXTREME HIGH ANGLE
Angle of camera’s viewpoint

Low angle shot used for dramatic emphasis
Angle of camera’s viewpoint

Camera tilted on the horizontal
Angle of camera’s viewpoint

Camera tilted on the horizontal

= OBLIQUE ANGLE (aka CANTED ANGLE)
Angle of camera’s viewpoint

OBLIQUE ANGLE is sometimes referred to as a “DUTCH ANGLE”
Angle of camera’s viewpoint

OVER THE SHOULDER SHOT
Angle of camera’s viewpoint

OVER THE SHOULDER SHOT
Functional Description

ESTABLISHING SHOT
Number of subjects in frame

TWO SHOT
Number of subjects in frame

THREE SHOT
Number of subjects in frame

FOUR SHOT
Number of subjects in frame

FIVE SHOT
Number of subjects in frame

GROUP SHOT
Aspect Ratio

Academy Ratio = 3 units high x 4 units wide

1:1.33
Aspect Ratio

Flat Widescreen

1:1.85
Aspect Ratio

European Flat Widescreen

1:1.66
Aspect Ratio

Anamorphic Widescreen
(CinemaScope, Panavision, etc.)

1:2.25
Aspect Ratio

Anamorphic Lens
Aspect Ratio

Anamorphic Lens
Aspect Ratio

Anamorphic Lens
Pan & Scan

Widescreen on standard TV
Pan & Scan

Widescreen on standard TV
Pan & Scan

Widescreen on standard TV
Letterbox

Widescreen on standard TV
Aspect Ratio

Widescreen TV (16 x 9)

1:1.77
Aspect Ratio

Widescreen TV (16 x 9)

16 x 9

1.66

1.85
Focus description
Focus description
Focus description
Focus description
Selective Focus
Focus description
Selective Focus
Focus description
Selective Focus
Focus description
Deep Focus
Focus description
Deep Focus
Focus description
Soft Focus
Focus description
Soft Focus
Focus description
Soft Focus
Lighting Description

Entire scene well lit
Lighting Description

Entire scene well lit = HIGH KEY LIGHTING
Lighting Description

Isolated pools of light intended to simulate darkness
Lighting Description

Isolated pools of light intended to simulate darkness = LOW KEY LIGHTING
Lighting Principles

Standard lighting is designed to create the illusion of depth.
Lighting Principles

Standard lighting is designed to create the illusion of depth.
Lighting Principles

Variations: No fill
Lighting Principles

Variations: No fill
Lighting Principles

Variations: No eye light
Lighting Principles

Variations: Dominant back light
Lighting Principles

Variations: Dominant back light
Lighting Principles

Variations: Light from below subject
Lighting Variables

Not enough light through the lens
Lighting Variables

Not enough light through the lens
= UNDEREXPOSURE
Lighting Variables

Too much light through the lens
Lighting Variables

Too much light through the lens
= OVEREXPOSURE
Lighting Variables

Overexposure used for dramatic emphasis
Lighting Variables

Use of shadows
Lighting Variables

Use of shadows
Lighting Variables

Use of shadows
Lighting Variables

Use of shadows
Lighting Variables

Lighting the background but not the subject
Lighting Variables

Lighting the background but not the subject = SILHOUETTE
Lighting Variables

Lighting the background but not the subject

= SILHOUETTE
Lighting Variables

Lighting the background but not the subject = SILHOUETTE
Lighting Variables

Lighting the subject but not the background
Lighting Variables

Lighting the subject but not the background

= LIMBO LIGHTING
Lighting Variables

Luminescent subject: subject gives off light rather than reflecting light.
Lens Variables

Depth perspective
Lens Variables

Depth perspective
Lens Variables

Linear distortion:
“Fish eye” lens
Lens Variables

Linear distortion:
“Fish eye” lens
Lens Variables

Linear distortion
Lens Variables

Linear distortion
Lens Variables

Linear distortion
Color Variables

Hand Coloring
Color Variables

Hand Coloring
Color Variables

Tinting
Color Variables

Tinting
Color Variables

Tinting
Color Variables
Two-Tone Technicolor
Color Variables

Two-Tone Technicolor
Color Variables
Two-Tone Technicolor
Color Variables

Three-Tone Technicolor
Color Variables

Saturation: High
Color Variables

Saturation: Low
Color Variables

Palette: Broad
Color Variables

Palette: Narrow
Color Variables

Dominant Color
Color Variables

Dominant Color
Color Variables

Dominant Color
Contrast Variables

Low Contrast
Contrast Variables

High Contrast
Image Texture Variables

Grain
Image Texture Variables

Grain
Image Texture Variables

Grain
Image Texture Variables

Interposed materials
Image Texture Variables

Interposed materials
Image Texture Variables

Interposed materials
Compositional Variables

Horizontals and Verticals
Compositional Variables

Diagonals
Compositional Variables

Diagonals
Compositional Variables

Diagonals
Compositional Variables

Symmetry
Compositional Variables

Symmetry
Compositional Variables

Asymmetry
Compositional Variables

Balance
Compositional Variables

Balance
Compositional Variables

Balance
Compositional Variables

Balance
Compositional Variables

Density
Compositional Variables

Density
Compositional Variables

Depth
Compositional Variables

Depth
Compositional Variables

Depth
Compositional Variables

Depth
Compositional Variables

Framing
Compositional Variables

Framing
Compositional Variables

Framing
Compositional Variables

Framing
Compositional Variables

Masking
Compositional Variables

Masking - IRIS
Compositional Variables

Masking - IRIS
Compositional Variables

Masking
Compositional Variables

Masking
Compositional Variables

Natural Masking
Compositional Variables

Natural Masking
Compositional Variables

Natural Masking
Cinematic Metaphors
Cinematic Metaphors

Richard,

I cannot go with you or ever see you again. You must not ask why.
Just believe that I love you. So, my darling, and God bless you.

Alora
Cinematic Metaphors
Cinematic Metaphors
Cinematic Metaphors
Cinematic Allusion
Cinematic Allusion
Cinematic Allusion
Cinematic Allusion
Camera Movements

Horizontal movement on a fixed axis
Camera Movements

Horizontal movement on a fixed axis

= PAN
Camera Movements

Vertical movement on a fixed axis
Camera Movements

Vertical movement on a fixed axis

= TILT
Camera Movements

Movement of entire camera forward or back
Camera Movements

Movement of entire camera forward or back
= DOLLY
A Brief Digression:
The “camera movement” that isn’t.
Adjustment of the lens focal length while the camera is running.
A Brief Digression:
The “camera movement” that isn’t.
Adjustment of the lens focal length while the camera is running = ZOOM
Camera Movements

Movement of entire camera horizontally
Camera Movements

Movement of entire camera horizontally

= TRACKING (or TRUCKING)
Camera Movements

Movement of entire camera up or down
Camera Movements

Movement of entire camera up or down

= BOOM
Transitions

Instantaneous transition
Transitions

Instantaneous transition

= CUT
Transitions

Gradual transition from a completely dark screen to a fully illuminated screen or from a fully illuminated screen to a completely dark screen
Transitions

Gradual transition from a completely dark screen to a fully illuminated screen (FADE IN) or from a fully illuminated screen to a completely dark screen (FADE OUT) = FADE
Transitions

A fade out superimposed on a fade in
Transitions

A fade out superimposed on a fade in

= DISSOLVE
Transitions

A line moves across the screen; behind the line is the incoming shot and ahead of the line is the outgoing shot
Transitions

A line moves across the screen; behind the line is the incoming shot and ahead of the line is the outgoing shot = WIPE
Transitions

A line moves across the screen; behind the line is the incoming shot and ahead of the line is the outgoing shot = WIPE
Transitions

A line (or a graphic shape) moves across the screen; behind the line is the incoming shot and ahead of the line is the outgoing shot = WIPE
Transitions

NATURAL WIPE
Editing Concepts

Similar shots made from opposing directions
Editing Concepts

Similar shots made from opposing directions = REVERSE ANGLES
Editing Concepts

A transition in which the conceptual content is greater than the conceptual content of the two shots when viewed separately.
Editing Concepts

A transition in which the conceptual content is greater than the conceptual content of the two shots when viewed separately

= THEMATIC (CONCEPTUAL) EDITING
Editing Concepts

Conveying a large amount of narrative time in a minimal amount of screen time through intensive use of time compression
Editing Concepts

Conveying a large amount of narrative time in a minimal amount of screen time through intensive use of time compression

= MONTAGE
Editing Concepts

Parallel editing which cuts back and forth between two different settings to establish a dramatic connection between the two
Editing Concepts

Parallel editing which cuts back and forth between two different settings to establish a dramatic connection between the two

= CROSS CUTTING
Editing Concepts

Parallel editing which cuts back and forth between two different settings to establish a dramatic connection between the two

= CROSS CUTTING
Editing Concepts

*Editing* does not necessarily entail *cutting*, although the words are frequently used interchangeably.
Editing Concepts
Editing to create content