

CHAPTER 2 VOCABULARY

Headroom – How much or how little space exists between the top of the subject's head and the top edge of the recorded frame.

Look Room/Nose Room – When photographing a person, it is the space between their face and the farthest edge of the film frame. If a person is positioned frame left and is looking across empty space at frame right, then that empty space is considered the look room or nose room.

Rule of Thirds – A commonly used guideline of film frame composition where an imaginary grid of lines falls across the frame, both vertically and horizontally, at the mark of thirds. Placing objects along these lines or at the cross points of two of these lines is considered part of the tried and true composition of film images.

Neutral Angle – The camera is positioned to observe the people, objects, or events from the same height as where the people exist or where the action takes place.

High Angle Shot – shooting from a high angle means that you are covering a shot of a person or action from a higher vantage point. Example: The camera, looking out a third-floor window of an apartment house, records a car pulling into the driveway down below.

Point of View - The camera records what one of the characters is seeing. The camera sits in place of the talent, and what it shows to the viewing audience is supposed to represent what the character is actually seeing in the story.

Low Angle Shot – Any shot where the camera records the action from a vertical position lower than most objects being recorded. Example: The camera, on a city sidewalk, points up to the tenth floor of an office building to record two men, suspended with rigging, cleaning the windows.

Two-Shot – Any shot that contains the bodies (or body parts) of two people.

Direct-to-Camera two-shot – Whenever two people stand side by side and face the camera.

Over-the-Shoulder Two-Shot (OTS) – While recording a dialogue scene you place the camera behind one character and shoot over his shoulder to see the face of the other character. The backside of character A's head and shoulder form an "L" shape at either left/bottom or right/bottom of frame.

Dirty Single – A medium shot to a close-up that contains the main person of interest for the shot but also contains some visible segment of another character who is also part of the scene. The clean single is made “dirty” by having this silver of another’s body part in the frame.

Dutch Angle/Dutch Title – Any shot where the camera is canted or not level with the actual horizon line. This angle is often used to represent a view of objects of actions that are not quite right, underhanded, diabolical, or disquieting. All horizontal lines with the frame go slightly askew diagonally. (tipped)

Power Dynamic Two-Shot – Up/Down in a two-person profile shot. One character is placed higher in the frame while the other character is placed lower on the opposite side of frame.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW

1. Provide appropriate headroom for each shot type.
2. Create ample look room/nose room for your subject to balance the weight of the frame.
3. Follow the rule of thirds and place important objects along the one-third lines within the frame, both horizontally and vertically, and at their intersections.
4. Shoot from a neutral, high, or low vertical camera angle to inform an audience about a character’s “power dynamic.”
5. Profile and direct to camera two shots work best from long to medium shots, but over-the-shoulder two shots may work best from the medium close up.
6. A “dirty” single contains only a small portion of the other character in the scene. Good for audience reference but may pose a continuity problem for the editor.
7. A power dynamic can be generated while using a neutral camera angle on a profile two-shot if you place one character higher in the frame.
8. Dutch angle skews horizontal and vertical lines to create imbalance. Implies that something is not quite right with this character or scene.