

CHAPTER 4 – LIGHTING VOCBULARY

Artificial Light – Any light generated by a man-made device such as a film light, a desk lamp, or a neon sign.

Natural Light – Any light that is made by the sun or fire; non-manmade sources.

Hard light – A quality of light defined by the presence of strong, parallel rays being emitted by the light source. Dark shadows are created by hard light.

Point Source – A light source derived from a specific, localized instance of light generation/emission. A non-diffused light source.

Soft light – Any light that has diffused, non-parallel rays. Strong shadows are very rare if one uses soft light to illuminate talent.

Contrast – The range of dark and light tonalities within a film frame.

Low Key Lighting – A lighting style in which a large contrast exists between the brightly lit areas and the dark areas of the frame.

High Key Lighting – A lighting style in which a low contrast exists between the brightly lit areas and the dark areas of the frame. Overall, even lighting gives proper exposure to most of the set and characters within it. There are no real dark shadow regions and no real overly bright regions.

Three Point Lighting – A basic but widely used lighting method where a key light is employed for main exposure on one side of talent, a fill light for contrast control on the opposite side, and a back light for subject/background separation.



Be able to map this out on your own.

Key Light – The main light source around which the remaining lighting plan is built. Traditionally it is the brightest light that helps illuminate and expose the face of the main subject of the shot.

Fill Light – A light, of lesser intensity than the key light, used to help control contrast on a set but most often on a person's face.

Back Light – A light used on a film set placed behind an object but pointed at its back side. It generally serves to help separate the object from the background by providing a rim or halo of light around the edges.