

# Top 5 Videography



## 1 Steady your shot

*Tripods are the easiest way to always get a professional looking shot. Even a cheap monopod makes a huge difference. Walking around with a camera will make the viewer dizzy! No tripod? Lean against a wall. That'll keep the shaking down. No wall? Sit on the ground, bend your knees, and prop your elbows on them, instant tripod. If you must walk, walk smoothly and hold as steady as you can with two hands. Want a fun project with 4-Hers? Create a homemade steady cam and make a video you can be proud of.*

## 2 Raise the lights

*The most important factor of good videography is lighting, because it's really hard to fix post production. The best lighting is natural light, and the best way to get it is to shoot outdoors, where even a cloudy day produces enough ambient light to keep your video crisp and colorful. Wherever you're shooting try to avoid having the main light source above your subject(s) as it can produce unflattering shadows on their faces, and avoid having light sources behind them as it creates contrast which the camera can't handle. So shoot away from windows and try to bring in extra light sources for behind the camera.*

## 4 Frame Your Shot

*Use the "Rule of Thirds" Divide the frame into nine squares and try to keep your subject's eyes centered on the top line and near where the vertical lines cross. Try to avoid zooming or panning unless it is very slow and deliberate. If you need to get closer to your subject, stop recording and move closer or just zoom with your feet. Another tip is to use two cameras, one on a separate tripod from a different angle. Having the variety of angles makes it more interesting for the audience. Take notes on how the shots are framed when you watch videos and TV; the pros learn that way too.*

## 5 Tell a Story

*Take some time to plan things out, thinking what the story is you want to tell. If you have no story it will come across that way. You may not need a script, but having some bullet points of what you want to show will help guide you when you shoot. Most of the time you can keep your clips short (under 10 to 20 seconds). Take at least three or four takes of the same segment to make sure you get it right. It's easy to delete bad clips when you get to editing but it's hard to reconstruct a scene. Also remember to take some clips of B-roll; these are those secondary shots of scenery, people talking, kids feet, subject standing looking off to the side of the camera, shots of a soccer ball going into the net, etc. These are so helpful to set the scene, break up the action, or fill in if something doesn't go right.*



## 3 Get the Audio Right

*Getting audio right is the difference between an excellent and a mediocre video. The microphones built into most camcorders are limited, and often will pick up a lot of extraneous noise. If possible use a digital audio recorder and lavalier mic, and match up the audio in post-production. The first rule is to always test your audio first by having your subject(s) speak loudly and listening to it live with earphones prior to recording so you can hear how it will sound. The second rule is to be aware of extraneous noises. If you're trying to film someone talking near a busy street or in a loud room, the noise may drown out the person's voice. Your best bet is to get your subject(s) as close to the microphone as possible. If you must, you can slightly adjust or re-record audio during post-production.*

