

## Video: From Capturing to Downloading to Editing to Sharing

### Be organized

Label all of your tapes (if you have tapes) and/or organize your movie files so that you can easily find them when you need them. Pick a label that will make it easy to identify later. If a shoot requires several tapes, be sure to label each one. Keep each mini-DV tape in its plastic box to avoid dust getting into the tape.

Shift the little white switch on the tape from record mode to save mode to avoid accidentally recording over a tape. If later you want to record over the tape, move the switch back to record mode.

### Prepare to shoot

Shoot a little blank tape to avoid any dropouts at the beginning.

Check your audio. If you have connected an external microphone, plug in a set of headphones to make sure you are getting audio. Whether or not you record with an external mic, check to make sure you can hear your subjects.

### Shooting tips

**Hold your shots.** Holding a shot for 15 seconds or more before moving the camera or zooming in or out is a good rule of thumb. This will ensure that you have good clips to work from if you want to cut between shots.

**Avoid excessive panning and zooming.** This only makes your video disorienting and harder to watch. Practice zooming in and out slowly and smoothly (which is harder to do on small cameras with tiny controls).

**Compose your shots.** Try to frame your subject to minimize “headroom” (not too much space at the top of the frame). If the person is looking to the side, include space in the direction they are looking (in front of their nose).

Use the rule of thirds: If shooting at a distance, place the subject on one of the grid lines below. For a medium shot:

- One third of the frame should be above the subject’s eyes
- One third of the frame should be the person’s face and shoulder area
- One third of the frame should be the person’s lower torso

Pay attention to the background: Try to shoot against a plain background. Avoid having things appear to be coming out of your subject's head. If you're shooting toward the light, use the "background light" feature or your subject will appear dark or in silhouette.

***Avoid shots of areas of high contrast*** such as dark versus light settings, or bright sunlight and shadows. It's usually best to shoot with the sun to your back. If you can't avoid shooting toward the light and the camera has a "back light" setting, use it. Back light is problematic for the automatic exposure feature of the camera. If the camera focuses on the light in the background, then the face of the subject will be dark and indistinct. If the camera focuses on the person's face, then the background will be washed out in light. Don't place subjects against a bright window, white wall, or with sunlight behind them. If the sun is directly overhead, hold your hand over the top edge of the camera lens. This will in effect extend the sun screen and avoid having the camera misread the amount of sunlight.

***Change Angles and Perspectives.*** Shooting everything at eye level or from the same distance can be boring. Try to change point or angle of view after every shot. Look for interesting perspectives. Try shots where you hold your camera low and shoot up toward your subject. The small size of digital video cameras makes these shots very easy to take.

If you're shooting children at work, take one shot from over one child's shoulder, then another that is a close-up of their hands and fingers using the keyboard and mouse, then a shot from over the other shoulder, then a low angle shot looking up at them, and then a facial shot. Perhaps hold the camera above your head to get a different perspective on the scene.

Move the camera in close to the action. The camera (especially Flip cameras) will pick up better audio this way. Don't talk when you're shooting unless you want to include your voice in your video. The camera will pick up your voice even if it's not pointed directly at you.

Including close up shots provide a more intimate view of a person and make the viewer feel connected to the subject. This is especially important with video on the Web, because the video viewers use small windows and wide-angle shots won't display much detail.

If you take shots from these different perspectives, when you edit your video you'll be able to put together a sequence of 4- or 5-second shots of your subject, rather than one 20-second shot from a single perspective.

***Use a tripod to get a steady shot***, particularly if you're shooting something that is not moving or a formal interview. If you don't have a tripod or you're doing a shoot where you'll have to move quickly, then find something to steady your camera - i.e. lean against a wall, put the camera on top of a table or bookcase, etc.

If you must shoot without a tripod or other support, shoot a wider angle shot. The wider the focal length, the steadier the shot.

**NOTE:** Mo also wrote up sections on editing your footage, downloading footage from a flip camera and converting it for editing or importing into a new project in iMovie, importing footage from an iSight camera or miniDV footage into a new project in iMovie, and exporting a movie. Not sure how long this will be current for...