

10 Ways to Shoot Like Pro 3/10/2012 By Phil Wenstrand

- 1) **Know Your Camera;** Before you go in the field understand your camera. Master things like the relationship between aperture and shutter speed. If you have zebra bars understand its implication for exposure. Make sure your lens is clean and check your filters (if any). If your camera has manual white balance make sure you know how to set it Check out and test your audio.
- 2) **Be Prepared;** If the any of the following items will help you in the field pack them along with your camera. Spare battery / blank tape / memory cards
White balance card
Lens cloth /cleaner
Tripod / Unipod / Quick Release
Battery charger
Duct tape
Tools
Power cables
Lights
Microphone
- 3) **Use a Tripod or other camera support device**
- 4) **Lighting;** Always be away of your source light. If shooting exteriors always check the position of the sun in relationship to your subject. The human eye and brain have tremendous dynamic range compensation capability. A capability that is lacking in your camera. You may think that the face of your subject is fully lit But the camera may see an entirely different image. As an example a hat may hide the detail in a face. If shooting under artificial light follow the simple key, fill & kicker light model.
- 5) **Audio;** If possible record your audio with a microphone that is not attached to the camera. If that is not possible try to get the camera's mike as close to the subject as possible.
- 6) **Shoot "B" roll;** "B" roll or cut-a-way shots will aid you tremendously in the editing process.
- 7) **Avoid Digital Zooms!!**
- 8) **Composition;** As you look through the viewfinder always think about composition. How is my subject situated in the frame. Think about things like "headroom", "the rule of thirds" and "safe area"
- 9) **Make a Self Assignment;** By assigning yourself to a simple 3 minute film you can hone your skills for bigger projects. Make sure the assignment has the following elements: camera movement, stills and still manipulation, mixed audio tracks (music, sound effects) titles,
- 10) **Have Fun!!**