Camera shot cheat sheet

Sizes, angles and movements with the codes used in the shot list maker and the Excel dropdowns.

Shot sizes



EWS **Extreme wide shot**
The person is small against the place, so the frame shows scale, distance and where we are.



WS **Wide shot**
The whole person from head to feet with room around them, so everyone in the scene can be placed.



FS **Full shot**
Head to toe, with the body filling the height of the frame.



MWS **Medium wide shot**
From about mid-thigh up, also called a cowboy shot or American shot.



MS **Medium shot**
From the waist up, close enough for faces while hands and gestures stay in view.



MCU **Medium close-up**
From the chest up, close enough to read the face with the shoulders still in frame.



CU **Close-up**
Head and shoulders filling the frame.



ECU **Extreme close-up**
One detail, such as the eyes or the mouth, fills the frame.



INSERT **Insert**
A close shot of an object or a detail, such as a letter, a phone screen or a key in a lock.



2S **Two-shot**
Two people in one frame, usually from the waist up.



OTS **Over the shoulder**
One person seen past the shoulder and head of another person in the foreground.



POV **Point of view**
The frame shows what a character sees, from their eye line.



EST **Establishing shot**
A wide view of a building or place that tells the audience where the next scene happens.

Camera angles

Eye level	The camera sits at the subject's eye height, the neutral angle most dialogue is shot from.
High angle	The camera is above the subject looking down, which can make them look small or exposed.
Low angle	The camera is below the subject looking up, which makes them look taller or stronger.
Overhead	The camera looks straight down from above, at a table top or a whole room.
Worm's eye	The camera is at ground level looking up, the most extreme low angle.
Dutch angle	The camera is tilted sideways so the horizon slopes, which feels uneasy.
Over the shoulder	The camera sits behind one person's shoulder, looking at someone else.
Point of view	The camera is placed where a character's eyes are, looking at what they see.

Camera movements

Static	The camera does not move; the frame stays locked off.
Pan	The camera turns left or right from a fixed spot.
Tilt	The camera points up or down from a fixed spot.
Dolly in	The whole camera travels toward the subject on a dolly or track.
Dolly out	The whole camera travels away from the subject.
Truck	The camera travels sideways, alongside the subject.
Pedestal	The camera rises or lowers straight up or down without tilting.
Zoom	The lens changes focal length while the camera stays put, so the subject grows or shrinks.
Handheld	The operator carries the camera, so the frame breathes and follows the action.
Gimbal	A stabilized rig carried by hand that glides with the subject.
Crane	The camera rises, falls or sweeps on a jib or crane arm.
Drone	An aerial move from a drone, over land, water or buildings.
Push in	A slow move toward the subject, often on a slider, that tightens the frame and the tension.
Whip pan	A pan so fast the image blurs, often used to cut between two moments.