

Fool IOI - Camera Placement Tips

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You've decided on a genre, your characters, a central object and a storyline now introduce the camera and play. There is a limit to what you can pay attention to at any given moment, especially if you have to watch and listen at the same time, so be specific about where you want to direct the viewer's attention. Let the camera support the story not get in the way. Pertinent details bear repeating. Warning: you'll never watch a film the same way again.

Placement & Composition

- [Point of View](#): The camera eye forms a viewpoint that is neutral or deliberately slanted
- Big Picture or Close-up: Establishes the state of the world, zeroes in on an essential detail, and lets the viewer know when it's safe to breathe or pause to hold your breath
- Boundaries and [Frames](#): Shows what's in and implies what's out
- Infinity: allows the gaze to relax, survey everything and listen more
- Watch for [shapes and lines](#) that influence your gaze.

Angle

- Power: when you look up or down at someone or in someone's face
- Perspective: gives a sense of [depth](#), what is close at hand, what lies ahead, where's the horizon
- Balance: when it appears off, you feel off (warning [180 degree rule](#))
- Axis: builds relationships between people, who has the better position, the upper hand

Movement

- Attention: guides the eyes, introduces subjects, creates pacing, adjusts the level of suspense
- Interest: move to and focus on the most interesting aspect of the shot
- Aliveness: the world breathes and moves or comes to a standstill

Where you place the camera and what you show in a frame is what sets the world of your story, the time period, genre, pace and mood. [Editing](#) is how you arrange these frames effectively. [Production design](#) is everything you see in the frame. [Lighting](#) and lenses as you may have seen in the links, get further into the craft of cinematography and visual storytelling. [Emotional lighting](#)...

Next, [block](#) and choreograph how characters and objects move in relation to how the camera is placed and moves to express the power relationship and perspective between them. Movement draws your attention to points of interest and brings your scene to life. This dance between subject, camera pov, and objects in the scene is what the viewer uses to make inferences and derive meaning and understanding from the plot, subplot, and subtext, based on their own experience. A whole next level (some say balance 50%) of filmmaking comes in the sound design...

Like words and phrases the composite of these elements make up the language of filmmaking and choices.

Helpful Filmmaker Links:

[Every Frame a Painting](#)

[Studiobinder](#)

[Storyblocks](#)

[Alfred Hitchcock on Filmmaking](#)