



Camera Movement

Pan - A shot taken moving on a horizontal plane (from left to right, right to). If you want to show a frisbee flying across a field, you might use this shot to follow the frisbee from one person to another.

Tilt - Camera movement in a vertical plane. (up or down) If you want to show a tall building but you can't get it all in your shot, you might start at the bottom of the building and go up to the top.

Zoom - This shot moves you closer to the subject, into a Medium Shot or Close Shot. If you are looking at the Golden Gate Bridge, and you want to see individual people walking across it, you might zoom in.

Reverse Zoom - This shot moves you farther away into a Medium Shot or a Wide Shot. If you have a close up shot of a flower, and want to see the entire field that the flower is in, you will reverse zoom.

Three notes about shot movement:

1 - A note about photographer responsibility - you owe it to your viewers not to make them motion sick, unless, of course, that is your goal! Rapid pans, tilts, repeated zooms can make a person feel woozy, and may also prevent them from clearly seeing the video you collected.

2 - The standard rule with moving shots is this: whenever possible, start your sequence stationary on a subject, then pan/tilt/zoom/reverse zoom, then hold stationary again. This helps enormously for editing purposes. For example, if you want to move your camera from one end of a mountain range to another, start focused on one side of the mountain range and hold that shot for three seconds (stationary position), then pan to the other side (slowly enough so the video won't be a blur), then stay focused on the other end of the mountain range for three seconds (stationary position). If you edit or cut away in the middle of a pan/zoom/tilt/reverse zoom, you may make your viewer disoriented.

3 - In general, use shots with movement sparingly. Try to put a still shot (no pan, tilt, or zooming) in between two pans/tilts/zooms. This gives the viewer a moment to get their bearings.

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