

Camera Directions for use in storyboards

Here is a quick list of extra instruction you can include in your storyboard to help you to plan the flow of a feature. Try not to use these in scripts if possible as they may simply get in the way – a script and a storyboard should work together. Use capital letters for these so they're clear to the reader. Directions can be combined to show the starting position of the camera, the ending position, and what happens inbetween.

Type of shot	Abbreviation	Definition / Typical usage	Example
Long shot	LS	A view of a scene from a distance, taking in lots of the surroundings. Imagine filming a building from the other side of a park	LS Goalkeeper from top of grandstand
Wide shot	WS	The same building but close enough to fill the frame so you can see the presenter standing in front of it	WS Five classic cars in a row
Medium Shot	MS	Moving in so that the presenter is large in the frame, but you can still see some of the background	MS Presenter next to sign
Close Up	CU	The presenter's head, shoulders and upper body	CU Dog in kennel
Extreme Close Up	ECU	Just the head and shoulders	ECU violinist's hands tuning instrument
Two shot	2S	Two people equally visible in the frame, typically used for interviews	2S: Presenter and guest
Three Shot	3S	Three people in the frame – imagine a shot of one of the teams on a TV quiz show	3S: award winners on the podium holding medals
Low Angle	LA	Camera low and looking up. Good for exaggerating the height of a person or building, or suggesting a child's or animal's point of view	LA in grass, looking towards top of chain fence
High Angle	HA	Camera high and looking down. Good for showing activity in an area, eg a carnival or protest	HA On bridge, viewing traffic jam
Point Of View	POV	Shot as if a person is seeing the scene for themselves. Might be used for shots of action activities. Visible camera movement is often ok for this type of shot	POV Through doors on Ghost train
Interior	INT	A shot of something from the inside, often a building	INT Indoor tennis court, shoot along net
Exterior	EXT	The same, but from the outside	EXT Locked doors with apology notice
Tracking		The camera follows something in the scene	TRACKING Horse galloping around field
Pan		The camera swings to one side during the shot	MS playground on park, PAN left to right
Tilt		The camera tilts up or down during the shot	WS Top of skyscraper, TILT from sky to ground
Zoom		The camera zooms in on an object in the scene	WS park, ZOOM IN to burned car in centre
Boom		The camera moves physically up or down whilst filming	CU floor behind fence, BOOM UP to view over
Dolly		The camera moves physically towards or away from the subject whilst filming.	LS presenter in road, DOLLY IN from car to CU

There are other directions you can give in your storyboard relating to sound, and how the piece is edited together

Direction	Abbreviation	Definition, typical usage	Example
Voice over	VO	Used when a person speaks over a scene, but isn't actually in that scene	MS Shop front, FADE TO INT Shop counter, VO presenter, history of shop
Off Screen	OS	When someone is part of a scene, but is not visible at that moment	CU celebrity, OS interviewer asking questions
Without sound	MOS	The sound from a clip should not be used. Will often specify what sound should be used instead	CU Market traders, MOS. VO market opening times
Background	BG	Refers to something happening behind the point of interest in the shot	MS presenter, cars passing in BG
Foreground	FG	Refers to something happening in front of the point of interest in the shot	CU Presenter, working model railway in FG
Cut to / Cut in		Note to the editor to jump straight to the next scene, or start a scene immediately with no fade	Intro Titles FADE TO black for 1 sec, CUT IN WS shop front
Fade to / Fade in / Fade out		Tells the editor to fade one shot smoothly into the next	MS craftsman FADE TO ECU hands using tools
Cutaway		Used to describe a cut to a video clip during a scene, and then a subsequent return back to the original subject	2S interview with traffic warden, cutaway to WS with PAN of parked cars, 3 seconds.