

# The Art of Cinematography: Realizing the Visions of Light

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## 1.Introduction

Cinematography is the science and art of making motion pictures that include techniques such as general scene composition, lighting of the set or location, selection of cameras, lenses, filters, and film stock, camera angle and movement, and integration of any special effects. It is the task of the director of photography—cinematographer, first cameraman, lighting cameraman, or director of photography—to acquire the photographic images and effects the director wants. All these issues may involve a large crew on a feature film.

The first films were composed of static frontal photography, shot with one or only a few cameras, as if they were stage plays. But already by the second and third decades of this century, under the guidance of cameramen like Billy Bitzer the camera was being used in ways that distinguished the motion picture from the theatrical tradition: close-ups, shooting from moving vehicles, using backlighting and other lighting effects, and more.

When sound was introduced, innovative camera movement was brought to a dead end because noisy cameras had to be confined within cumbersome soundproof boxes that could not be easily moved about; however, silent cameras opened cinematography all over again. The introduction of the camera crane and the broad-angle lenses for wider coverage and better depth of field expanded the view for the camera. Moreover, teamwork in filmmaking is much more compared to photography. With the director, producer, designer, sound engineers, and each actor, the cameraman must plan his or her job. The gaffer, or head electrician, who is usually a lighting technician, and may also be under the control of the cinematographer; he is supported by one or more "best boys." There may also be a special effects team on a large-budget movie, and sometimes an entire second unit of cinematographers and assistants.

Certainly, the two most prominent developments in cinematography after the introduction of sound were widescreen and color processes.

## 2.What does a cinematographer do?

A cinematographer, also known as a director of photography, is a person who generally heads the camera and light crews on any film or video production. This person works hand in hand with the director in bringing about the images that one sees, and he does this throughout the process.

What are some of the concerns? We will touch on the major concerns in this chapter, but the work of a cinematographer warrants so much more page space.

Let's take a look at how acclaimed cinematographer Roger Deakins shot 1917 to appear as though it were a "oner." He explains that duties of a cinematographer include choosing a camera, knowing about different lenses for cameras, and creating a lighting style.

These decisions in particular, from 1917, were made really to have as much first-person POV on the battlefield as possible.



### 3.Camera Placement

The position of the camera carries a lot of emotional resonance into the way an audience is going to feel while responding to the shot, hence to the remainder of the action. It can express character traits or strong emotions.

For example, if the plot requires that a character be perceived as unpleasant or unruly while on a date, then the placement of the camera close to the mouth of the subject when they are chewing might have some practical applications.

Following is a guide to camera framing and shot composition so that you know the choices a director and cinematographer have, and how those choices contribute to visual storytelling.

### 4.Camera Movement

Camera movement can create tension or intensity in a situation. Move the camera with the characters to create perspective. Keep the camera still, and now we're distant observers. View our below camera movement video.

Camera movement can importantly make a huge difference to your footage, provoking changes in how your viewer perceives a situation. Before you add pans, zooms, and tilts, among other motion effects, it's important to understand how your viewers interpret various sorts.

Let's break down the very basic sorts of camera movement you're capable of getting with a phone—so that next time you shoot, you are more careful about what's resulting from your actions.

**4.1 PAN:** It all starts with the pan. Moving your camera from side to side is called panning. By and large, panning comes in handy when you need to reveal a bigger scene, like, say, a crowd, or maybe something that is off-screen.

The whip pan, great for transitions to indicate the passage of time or traveling a distance in a dramatic or funny way, is achieved simply by stepping up your speed. If you want to know how to do a whip pan, then check out our latest episode because, man, we really get into this there.

**4.2 TILT:** Think of your camera as your head nodding up and down as you tilt it. As a "reveal" technique, tilts are handy for revealing either everything from top to bottom or vice versa.

**4.3 ZOOM:** By far, probably the most popular camera movement is "zooming," which lets you get quickly closer to the subject without actually moving. On the other hand, use these carefully because zooming reduces the quality of your shots.

**4.4 TRACKING SHOT:** A "tracking shot" is a shot in the process of which the camera travels against the synchronization of the movement to be recorded. Sometimes it can be confusing between a dolly shot and a tracking shot, but you will notice the difference in the path they follow.

Tracking shots almost always move horizontally with the action. You're no doubt familiar with seeing scenes where people are walking around talking and walking and a tracking shot follows them. Tracking shots come in handy to show a stretch of highway or a view.

**4.5 DOLLY SHOT:** In a dolly shot, the camera is traveling either toward or away from what you are photographing. The camera itself is moving in relation to the static subject, not achieving this effect using the zoom and pulling closer.

A slow dolly push-in creates drama or tension to a scene or some significance to the subject it is moving in on.

**4.6 FOLLOWING SHOT:** The "following" shot is where the action of the subject is tracked by the camera without any breaks.

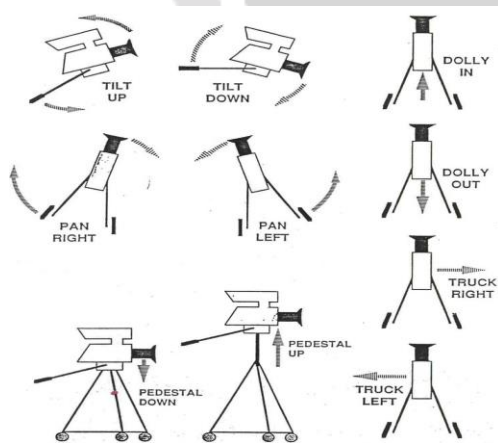
Steadicams and gimbals are your buddies if you want to get an ultra-fluid, silky-smooth following shot. Otherwise, the handheld wobble gives a real-world or unnerving feel.

Well-done, long following shots are genuinely breathtaking and enthralling cinematographic feats.

**4.7 PEDESTAL:** This last shot is the pedestal, which is otherwise referred to as a boom up/down. It's the same thing as the tilt, but instead of merely angling up or down in relationship with the subject, the pedestal raises or lowers the camera. Perhaps the difference between this and the tilt we discussed above, is that with a pedestal, the entire camera is going up or coming down, rather than just the angle. One may use a pedestal shot to maintain the frame at eye level when framing a tall or elevated subject (such a building).

**4.8 PUTTING IT ALTOGETHER:** Camera movement can add interest to the story you're revealing, whether you're using a pan to slowly reveal a detail or following with a tracking shot.

Overall, DON'T move your camera just because you can. Make sure there is a reason for your movement.



## 5.What is Cinematic Lighting?

These techniques will increase drama, depth, and atmosphere while storytelling. Since cinematic lighting doesn't end at the point of the three-point lighting setup, light bouncing, light diffusion, and temperature adjustment are a few more lighting techniques in filmmaking.

### 6. Why is Lighting Important?

Film lighting is very important because it gives the viewer a visual feeling and atmosphere, and the sense of meaning. In other words, every phase of the filmmaking process interacts with the lighting plan and is affected by it.

1. Lighting focuses attention. The lighting design does draw attention to some performer, item, or aspect of a scene.
2. Lighting gives way to character psychology. One could express the mood of the characters with changes in brightness, size, colour, and harshness of light in surroundings.
3. Lighting makes and reinforces the genre of the film. Arguably, lighting is the finest tool at the disposal of a filmmaker in communicating mood. For example, if not one of the best, then at least most famously, unique lighting style is characteristic of one of the genres of cinema—film noir. It is characterized by jarring contrasts of light and dark and strongly patterned shadows, together with creative framing and composition choices.

### 7. Who Determines the Lighting Setup for a Scene?

1. The filmmaker discusses his visual influences and suggestions for cinematic lighting.
2. The lighting plan is created by the cinematographer or director of photography with the director's involvement.
3. The gaffer manages the team and designs and carries out the lighting plan created by the cinematographer.



### 8.12 Film Lighting Techniques Everyone on Set Should Know?

1. Key lighting: The most intense and principal light source for a scene or actor
2. Fill lighting: Softening harsh shadows created by the main light and adding depth to them
3. To help outline the features of the actor and set them out from the background, backlighting is placed at the actor's back.
4. Side lighting gives a dramatic, high-contrast impression and lights the performer from the sides to focus attention on the features of their face.
5. Visible light sources in a scene include lamps, lighting, candles, and televisions, known as practical lighting. They normally aren't strong enough to light up a subject but do contribute the mood to a scene.
6. Hard lighting—a lighting style with pronounced shadows that brings attention to just one character or a particular element of a scene.
7. Soft lighting—a lighting aesthetic that is bright but balanced, with little to no strong shadows.

8. High-key lighting has no shadows and is extremely bright, almost to the point of overexposure. High-key lighting is frequently used in sitcoms, music videos, and advertisements.
9. Low-key lighting—This is a lighting style that is dominated by shadows to achieve a mysterious or suspenseful effect.
10. Natural Lighting: This uses and augments the available light existing at the place where the photograph is taken.
11. Motivated lighting is a controlled approach that seeks to suggest the source of the light, such as the sun or moon, in the scene.
12. Bounce light: This is a method where light from a heavy source is bounced onto an actor with the use of a reflector; it softens and spreads out the light. Lighting a scene requires trial and error. Take some time to play around in creating your photograph using three-point lighting, soft light, hard light, low-key light, and high-key light to find out the perfect balance of light and shadow.

## 9. Visions of Light

Visions of Light will truly delight both movie-buffs and photographers. It is a rare treat for the people who belong to either camp. This movie reveals interviews with many of the most successful directors of photography at work today, examining their work and some of the great films of the past to provide an insiders' perspective on the job of the cinematographer. I dare anyone that sees Film to come away with a new viewpoint on the artform of cinematography. When you see the next film, you are probably going to be much more aware of the fact that there always exists a camera in this artwork.

Visions of Light presents the idea that cinematography is the art of composing light to serve the director's viewpoint. He elaborates on this topic, as well as a thousand and one other technical features of the craft: the part which close-ups play, the importance of showing a performer from a particular angle, the advantages of disadvantages in using certain shots. Be sure that it is not at all half as dry as it may sound. Enjoy movie clips from over a hundred films, including *Goodfellas* and *The Cabinet of Doctor Caligari*.

There are three sections to the film. The first, and the shortest, documents Hollywood's history and insists upon silent footage being particularly valuable for capturing camerawork techniques. Indeed, much of the interviews express that the addition of sound to films came about too early. The prevailing opinion was that another ten years of silence would have somehow put their profession ten years ahead of then.

The following part belongs to the period of black-and-white following the invention of sound. Many of these belong to the period from 1930 to 1960. Much emphasis is made on the role of contrast and shadow in these films. An extensive analysis of *Citizen Kane* is given to illustrate the numerous photographic innovations present in this film.

Next are color films; all the many ways that color photographers apply their work to evoke feelings are detailed and set tone, from *Gone with the Wind* to the movies of the 1980s. This section includes discussions of *Goodfellas*, *Annie Hall*, *Blue Velvet*, and *Jaws* (and an explanation of how one of the more bizarre images in that film was added).

While the documentary technique in general is nothing unique with *Visions of Light*, in fact, rather didactic, the mixture with facts and film snippets keeps a pretty good pace. For those who already know and are familiar with the work of cinematographers, the movie will expand their knowledge. And those who are not so much interested will deepen their knowledge, gaining an appreciation for yet another feature characteristic of filmmaking.

Jean-Luc Godard is sometimes responsible for a remark that the only way to criticize a film is to make another movie. The best way to criticize cinematography, of course, is to look at it. We begin here with a few of the early images when the artistic dimension of motion picture photography began to set itself off from the technical capacity to capture light and motion on film.

Indeed, at first, directors simply pointed their cameras at some object and cried when the people saw it. A little later, the temptation of fashion began to draw them.

What used to be called the "lighting cameraman" in Britain, because light—the way it falls on the subject, the way it is present or absent—is the fundament of the trade, the cinematographer. Shooting "*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*," the late James Wong Howe was said to have had a dispute with the technical gurus from Technicolor.

They advised him to use a lot of light, even when Tom and Becky are trapped in the cave.

All the cinematographers listed here comment on how lighting black and white is more difficult but also more fulfilling.

Of all the crimes against television.

Now consider lighting in a film: With the complexity of the subject of lighting, one may wonder how or where to start to learn about it. In fact, quite the contrary when one considers that our eyes are somewhat like cameras and what we see is what is produced when light touches everything before us. In total darkness, do we see anything at all?

In other words, lighting is indeed a very powerful aspect of film making. Why? We must remember that lighting can dramatically enhance a film or a video production's ability to tell a story. The objective of lighting is, therefore -

1. To establish the mood or ambient of the scene
2. To provide more meaning and direction to the storytelling
3. To editorially re-direct the attention of the scene's, character's or prop's

Add tension and drama in a scene, or in an interview, for that matter; that is, draw the viewer's attention to what one wants them to see.

Effectively, it can be a very good way of controlling and manipulating an audience's attention.

5. To enhance the overall look and feel of the production.
6. To make sure that consistent optical effects are in use, across the lighting, any digital adjustments and color correction.
7. To find their identity within the genre of the production, so a consistent set of rules can be applied within that genre and please the target audience.
8. There will be no lighting on the set so the audience will completely be lost deep into the story, and will forget the real world.

The final reason lighting is fantastic in movies and videos.

However, lighting is not an easy skill. Even when a camera is able to capture some footage, the lighting sometimes is not as good. There is no person that can be considered a lighting expert.

Is The Lighting Any Different In The Movie Than In The Video?

If you watch it in the format setting, you will effortlessly tell that the video illuminating is varied from that of a film. Dynamic brilliance, additional highlights, and shadows generate a soft or warm impression for the film. In other words, the manner in which filmmakers take pictures for a movie is different from how they record them for a video. These images are often brutal looking, with sharp and clear images. Even the lighting settings and lighting techniques used in film and video are the same, but due to these factors, the frame appears changed.

**9.1 Projection medium:** The images on films seem large since they are projected from the front to the projection screen, thus visible to the viewers from a distance. In movies there is front light and the images appeal on a larger screen, the video screens are backlit and often the source is displayed on a small screen; that's why the video screens give one a hard-light feeling. Hence, they both have different types of lights.

**9.2 Frame Rate:** This is the count of the number of frames displayed in one second. Films have been made up of the rate of 24 frames per second (fps) or even above that (48 fps). Though this is slightly technical as well, they also affect lighting, more so in the case of high and low speed shooting.

**9.3 Production Timeline:** Lighting setups are the longest parts of a shoot. Therefore, the production team often has little trouble and is able to get the time it needs to light and set up the scenes. Though, for a film this size, the pre- to post-production period is less than 30 minutes.

**9.4 Time of Day:** Movie producers and photographers are always on the lookout for the best time to record the scene and obtain desired looks and feels to capture the best moment of light. Nevertheless, since many of the videos can be taken during day and night, this has little impact when it comes to videos. One major difference is that.

**9.5 Camera Equipment:** Video cameras and film The type of film used in cameras and the image quality differ. With respect to movies, the picture resolution of the visual is way deeper in information content. Films provide much more information on illumination than videos do.

**9.6 Lighting Budget:** Lighting equipment is very costly, so film makers and cinematographers plan and budget for very good lighting equipment before the shoot. Whereas, in small video production, you may be working with whatever lights you have available on location or what you can afford. So that may make the videos not at par with the films. Lighting is an intricately complex topic, so you need a great cinematographer to light up your production. The Importance Of Lighting In Television

Lighting in television is as integral as any other, if not the most important element of all.

If you watch different TV programmes you will notice they are quite different. One may think it is hard to understand why two programs being broadcast on the same channel could seem more different. Everyone that watches TV will always be looking for content as that is what television is essentially about. Any good show is created with good content. Still, lighting is also very crucial.

The director would instead go for something warm and delightful if you had a show with children in it. To create the perfect mood for a kid's program, the showrunners use lighting.

The results are pretty the same when it comes to that for the mature audience. The showrunners use lighting towards telling a rather sober story and create the sort of mood that spells a lot about the concentration of the largest percentage of the mature audience.

For instance, the most highly regarded series ever, Game of Thrones (GoT), has a mythological look because of the lighting scheme it boasts and also the processes imposed on its medieval sets. The lighting in Breaking Bad entirely transforms the narrative and sets the mood extreme for living in Albuquerque, New Mexico. But both are outdoor performances. Sitcoms and TV series usually are the indoor works having their individual lighting schemes.

Therefore, lighting for television programs in this location mainly supports a standardized setting. Most of the TV programs occupy a static setting, and all the stages taken are similar; hence, camera operators barely move. Overall, one therefore is that the most significant complications arises when trying to produce a static environment capturing the similar photographs from various angles. The producers of the program design a single layout that bears similar lighting to afford a sleek and elegant look for all the cameras.

It facilitates the audience to visualize objects. The reason that lighting is brought in most of the cases is that it ensures that we visualize anything around us in our day to day life for that matter. This fact does not allow you to skip and macro or micro content of importance.

In the context of television, lighting in this perspective quite regularly supports a standardized setup. With reference to this in the sense that, as, in case the bulk of television shows takes place in a well-defined set where the specific edition along with a particular stage is incorporated, people holding the camera do not maneuver very often.

Hence one of the critical problems involved in a static environment is that of creating a uniform environment, from varying perspectives, capturing the same photographs. The showrunners create a stage having similarities in lighting, giving it a classy as well as elegant look for all cameras.

It helps viewers to see objects. Lighting mainly serves to ensure that we can see anything in our daily lives. This fact gives an opportunity not to overlook any significant or tiny element.

In a TV program, the same case applies since the filmmakers want the viewers to see the proper things. Lighting can also affect what you see on a TV screen.

## 10. Creates Mood

Lighting contributes to the evocation of emotions and building moods for a scene. Light will often bring the whispering at the back of the shot to focus. Camera positions are also used in conjunction with lighting to help emphasize and direct the attention of the audience to certain assets of the film. Use eye-friendly lighting features that will elicit the response of choice from the audience.

## 11. Establishes Authenticity

Accurate setting of a scene takes a lot of effort. Carefully thought-out decisions are made when choosing the scenes, from making sure they have all the necessary items placed in them for the period in history to ensuring that the lighting is right to be able to create the mood of the scene. Audiences relate when the work is authentic, therefore are interested in a credible film. It is the desire, fundamentally, to be watching a war movie and yet to feel like you are there with them. This can mean a lot of motion and fluidity in order to help illustrate a chaotic and dangerous scene on the screen.

## **12.Elicits Audience Reactions**

You want to feel frightened while you are watching a horror movie. You should not look at a screen that happens to be blaring bright light during an essential part. It is all about spooky feelings through dark lighting and shadows. Through the creation of brilliance and the setting up of certain situations like these in film, lighting is what it takes. On the other hand, comedies tend to be in bright lighting and full of life.

These are just some of the ways in which lighting contributes toward the film being capable of delivering the emotion and realism needed. Most of the lighting team works behind the scenes in order to design, develop, and implement the lighting features best able to reflect the vision of the film's director.

## **13.How technology advancements have been beneficial**

The tools applied nowadays are more versatile, user-friendly, and compact, resulting in us being able to jump headfirst into utilizing lighting in video and film making. A product will be easy for users to use and to move from one place to another if it's compact. Lighting production includes a massive amount of machinery, most of which is cumbersome, delicate, and occasionally difficult to move. However, the lighting setup for motion video or film shoots has progressively become very much easier and quicker with time, since products have evolved, are now lightweight and small, and most of them are now faster and easier to set up.

High performance, energy saving products are now available, while still guaranteeing high quality results for the shot created. Features like silent operation, battery packs, and add-on features that can be attached to a camera have made this possible. For further information on video lighting.

## **14.The benefits of good lighting**

While sometimes perceived as unnecessarily time-consuming and arduous, the preparation and execution required for producing video or film are actually time-saving. The more specific and perfect the lighting is at the source, the less time must be spent in the editing suite afterwards. Badly lit projects can destroy or make your movie or film look subpar to the rest, therefore degrading the overall aesthetic. Lighting can be the most time-consuming and nerve-wracking element of a set, though it's important to take care of because it is always so much easier to make adjustments before shooting occurs; in post-production, it is more difficult because not nearly as many changes can be done.

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