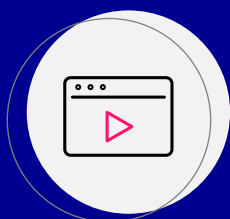


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WHITEPAPER

# Footage

**Everything you need  
to know about it**



## What is footage?

Footage includes all material shot at any time during the filming process. Usually, a concept or script with a scene breakdown is created in advance to know what needs to be shot. These scenes are then broken down into individual shots from different perspectives which are only compiled as a coherent scene during editing. If your project is not complex and doesn't require precise coordination, you may be able to shoot without a script.

## What are the different types of footage?

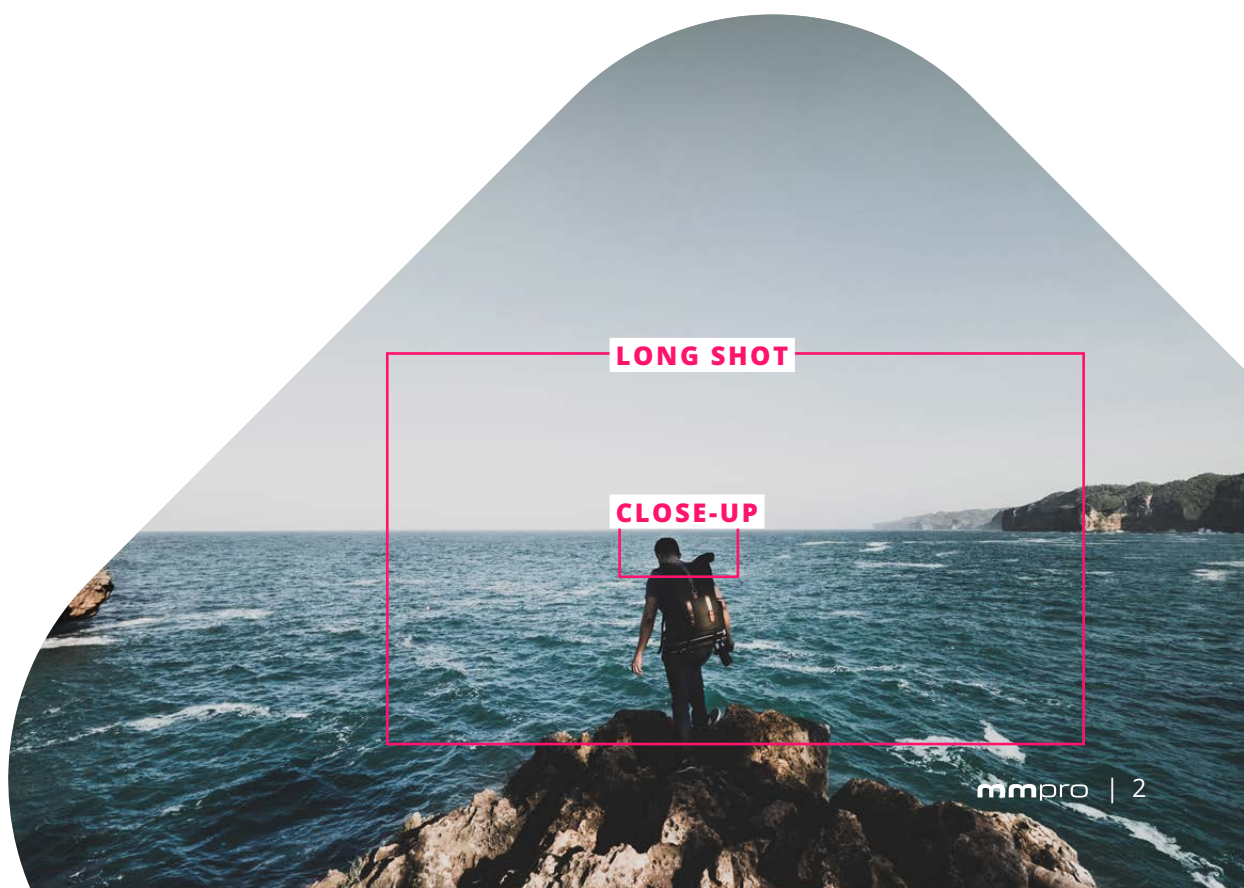
Footage comes in all shapes and sizes – from recently shot to a bit older or even stock material bought from an image library. You may have even heard the feature film term “found footage”, which refers to stories primarily being told through archive (found) material. Commonly re-staged in a documentary style, the footage is meant to look old and „real“. Found footage is especially popular in the horror film genre because the alleged „authenticity“ increases the scare factor. But this stylistic device can also be used in the corporate sector: for example, in HSEQ, when an accident is re-enacted to create an authentic learning experience for employees.

The more common approach in the corporate sector, however, is to use stock footage from video databases. In contrast to found footage, this material is supposed to look like newly shot; it is generally used when original footage can't be shot due to time or cost restrictions. For stock footage, you obtain usage rights for the required purpose. On the downside, the material is often very generic and suitable only for creating a general setting or atmosphere. It's rare to find the right material for specific situations. In these cases, it makes more sense to produce the footage from scratch.

## Footage details

### SHOT SIZE

Footage has different running lengths and comes in all different shot sizes. Shot size is defined as the visible section that the camera has captured. For example, if you can only see a person's face in the picture, it's called a close-up shot. If, on the other hand, you see a person on a horse galloping through a vast prairie, this is called a long shot (because you can see almost everything) or even a panorama or extreme long shot. As a rule, we distinguish between the following camera shots:





**Example backlight shot**

But not all close-ups are the same. Each individual shot size can include further detailed design elements. For example, backgrounds or foregrounds can be deliberately blurred, or a shot can be backlit which makes objects in the foreground appear as silhouettes, creating a particular atmosphere.

## **UNLEASH THE CAMERA**

On top of that, the camera itself can either move or remain static. For example, it can ride on a dolly, a wheeled cart, alongside the protagonist who is moving towards a destination. A birds-eye view may also be achieved by using a camera drone. There are many technical possibilities when it comes to camera mobility (using a slider, mini jib arm, crane, easy rig, steady cam or the ever-popular gimbal). Simply holding the camera

is also an option. Depending on how it is handled, the movements may be slightly harder and rockier, which may be the perfect stylistic element for certain content.

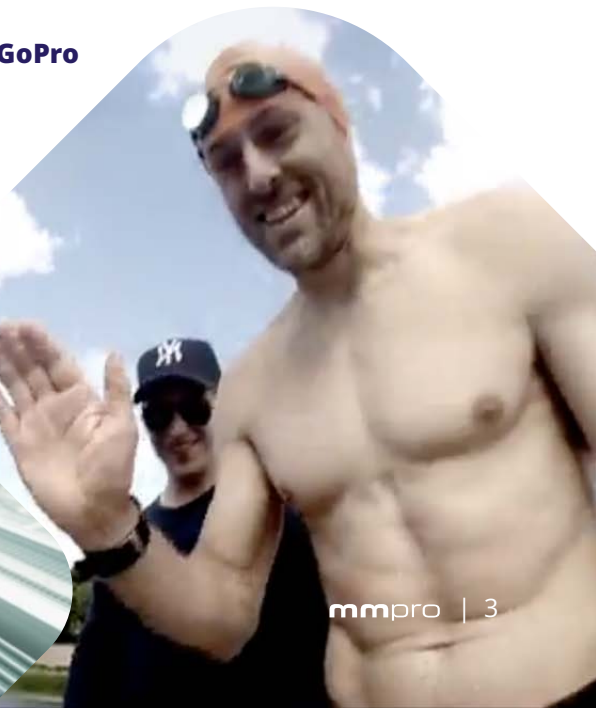
If the camera is fixed on a tripod, the objects of the shoot can change the shot size themselves by moving closer to or further away from the camera.

Another possible stylistic choice is using GoPro or mobile phone footage. While the material is of a lower quality, it helps create an added sense of authenticity to the film and lets the viewer feel as if they are “right there” for an event.

**Example cell phone shot**



**Example GoPro shot**



## Film shooting

It is essential in filming that there is enough time scheduled to produce the footage, as the quality can be affected if the process is rushed. You need to find the right location and subjects as well as set up the camera, choose the right lens for the desired shot and stage the protagonists. A good video also depends on the on-scene lighting, which may take a considerable amount of time to set up. For high-quality videos, employee profiles, product films or interviews especially, sophisticated imagery is often vital – and primarily achieved through the perfect lighting.

When filming finally starts and the camera is running, the individual shots often require several attempts to get right, because it's difficult to have it in the bag on the first go. On average, you end up with a 3:1 shooting ratio – meaning that you have produced three times as much material as will be included in the final film. This of course varies per shot; however, good quality footage definitely takes some time to produce.

## Technical specifications

Technical specifications also are central when it comes to footage. As with photos, videos can vary in size. There are two components to digital videos:

- the number of pixels
- the aspect ratio of the images

## THE NUMBER OF PIXELS

In digital film production, the format is determined by the number of pixels. A pixel is a color value in a digital raster image, also called an image cell. The total number of pixels is called resolution or image resolution. The higher the resolution, the greater the number of pixels for the particular film format. For example, full HD usually has a total of 1,920 x 1,080 or 2,073,600 pixels.

## THE ASPECT RATIO

What matters here is how the pixels are distributed. The aspect ratio is always stated in width to height. 16:9 is now the standard for television and most social media. For full HD, this corresponds to a pixel ratio of 1,920 x 1,080 pixels for full use of the potential resolution. For HD, the aspect ratio is 1,280 x 720 pixels and for 4K it is 3,840 x 2,160 pixels. If you turn the aspect ratio around to 9:16, the video is taller than it is wide, corresponding to the standard Instagram format. However, social media videos do not always need to be full resolution; it may be enough to cut off the sides of an image to create the desired aspect ratio.

## FRAMES PER SECOND

Films consist of individual images which create the illusion of movement when they are shown quickly one after the other. It's basically the same principle as the good old flip book. The standard is 25 frames per second, or 25 fps for short, as this is the minimum frame rate for movements in a video to look natural, but fps can be increased or reduced as needed. With an increased frame rate such as 50 fps, which is later run at a speed of 25 fps, the impression of slow motion is created because twice as many pictures of each movement in front of the camera have been taken as is the case at 25 fps. If we reduce the frame rate, the movements later appear choppy and hard.

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If you have further questions about footage or would like to produce your own, please feel free to contact us.

We can also advise you on special formats and find the best individual solution for your video project!

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