

Documenting your production made easy.

What to do before you start shooting

Like most things, filmmaking has a distinct process already in place. Following this order of operations will help your production.

1. Identify the roll.

The first image of a new roll of film should be the slate. Identify the camera roll #, production title, date, director, and cinematographer.

2. Shoot the aspect ratio target.

For the first roll of a new project, follow the slate with an aspect ratio target. This target communicates to everyone working in postproduction the exact framing of the image. Be sure to include camera information.

3. Shoot the gray card.

Follow the aspect ratio target with the gray card. Make certain it is filmed in the primary light source for the scene. It also helps to include skin tones whenever possible.

4. Slate your scene.

After the gray card, shoot your slate for the first scene. Include all relevant information. All takes of the same scene must be slated, as well as any new scenes.

5. Complete the camera report.

Keep all camera activity recorded on your camera report. Be sure the information on your exposed film label matches the information on the camera report.



Slating 101

Slating requires diligence and is a very important step of the filmmaking process. Its purpose is to keep a consistent flow of information throughout production. Develop a slating style that works best for you and your editor.



telecine colorist understand the cinematographer's intentions for the look of the scene. As a matter of procedure, the gray card is shot without the filter to define a neutral light source. The filter will be placed in front of the lens for filming the scene.

Keep it all in perspective.

It is recommended that you shoot an aspect ratio target to communicate where your intended frame ends. Both 16 mm and 35 mm cameras display frame lines, but record an image beyond the frame, which can cause confusion in post. The aspect ratio target communicates exactly where the frame ends and helps preserve your composition.

S16 mm camera using a 1.66:1 aspect ratio.

Here's what's recorded:



Here's how the cinematographer composes the image (red for emphasis):



Aspect ratio target

If the post facility does not receive an aspect ratio target, personnel will have to guess how you composed the image and you may be disappointed by their guess.

When shooting 35 mm, the aspect ratio target is used to frame the print as it will be projected. The projectionist inserts a hard mask with the correct aspect ratio and then uses the aspect ratio target to adjust the framing of the image. Shoot your target in a controlled environment. The target center should be the same height as the center of the lens. It should also be parallel (flat) to the film plane. If it is angled, it will be difficult to match the frame lines with the ground glass markings.

Be sure the target is in sharp focus, and properly exposed. You could include additional information on the target, such as the production title, a contact name, and the camera body with serial number. If you're shooting with multiple cameras, it's best to shoot a target for each.

Filming aspect ratio target to match ground glass markings:



Targets available: 1.33:1 (4:3), 1.66:1, 1.78:1 (16:9), 1.85:1

Note:

Final Display: 1.66:1 aspect ratio image displayed on NTSC monitor (4:3, or 1.33:1) with letterboxing



The Gray Card—exposed.

Exposure and color balance information can easily be provided to the lab by shooting a KODAK Gray Card Plus before every major lighting setup. The gray portion has 18% reflectance and neutral color, while the black and white patches provide reference for 3% and 90% reflectance. The KODAK Gray Card Plus has the property of reflecting red, green, and blue in equal amounts, which greatly facilitates postproduction color grading.



Color Balance

By shooting the KODAK Gray Card Plus at the beginning of a major lighting scene, you're defining your white light—or neutral light—source. If you're shooting a tungsten-balanced film in tungsten studio lighting, shooting the gray card is very straightforward.

When shooting in daylight—which changes color throughout the day—shooting the gray card depends upon the light you want to define as the white light source. If you'd like the sun to appear warmer, illuminate the gray card with the sky plus clouds, blocking the sunlight. If you'd like the sun to appear as the neutral source, shoot the gray card in the sunlight. A daylight-balanced film is very easy to color grade in a scene shot in a mixture of sun and skylight.

If it's overcast, you won't have much of a choice unless you're introducing your own lighting. At sunrise or sunset, use the sky opposite the sun to illuminate the gray card. This will naturally keep the light of the sunrise or sunset very warm (reddish).

Exposure

When shooting the gray card, it is recommended that you meter the card with a spot meter. Point the meter at the center of the card, and use the reading directly. It is a good practice to have the meter reading for the gray card match the shooting stop, which is typically determined by using an incident meter. In most cases—if the gray card is in the key light—the two readings will be very close. Tilting the card toward the key light may be necessary for them to match exactly. It takes practice, but this method yields accurate and repeatable results. When shooting a flashback or nostalgic scene, you could light the scene with tinted gels—perhaps an orange-yellow color. To preserve this look, shoot the gray card with the same light source, but remove the gels. This defines the white light source and gives post personnel a good

reference for your intentions for the scene. If you keep the color gels on the lights and then shoot the gray card, the subsequent color grading will neutralize the unusual color of the scene. You can also shoot a slate with a comment on it such as "warm look OK."

If you plan to color balance the scenes yourself using editing or post software, having the gray card as reference saves you time in achieving a baseline color balance. Keep in mind that once the scene is color balanced, there are still tweaks in color saturation and contrast that can be done to enhance the look you are creating.

For more information on the KODAK Gray Card Plus, visit **www.kodak.com/go/graycard**

Records are made to be kept.

Completing a camera report is standard protocol in professional cinematography. It provides a concise record of all your camera activity: rolls, takes, filters, scene numbers, and other data recorded during production. Getting into the habit of completing this report will benefit you when you begin to work professionally.

The value of a properly completed camera report becomes evident when it's time to view and edit your footage. Without this report, post can be a frustrating and inefficient process. If you are shooting multiple takes on every setup, you will want to be able to quickly access information about each take. Without a camera report, you will have to search manually for the best take, or for the only take without a sound problem. Camera reports are also an important tool for processing labs. Often, these reports include instructions to lab personnel about processing, prepping for telecine, and printing. If there is any question about a particular camera roll, the lab will be able to contact you and confirm if—for example—Camera Roll 3 is push-processed one stop.

This information will be on the exposed film label on the film can as well, but it doesn't hurt to have redundant information if it helps to keep things straight. When production runs late or becomes trying, it's easy to make mistakes. If you're in the habit of completing camera reports properly, you'll have a better chance of being able to recover quickly from mistakes.

	К				D	ate 3-18-20		
					Р	age 1 of 1		
					С	amera Roll # 4 🛶		 Documenting the camera roll #
	Car	nei	ra		s	ound Roll # 2		allows you to log your footage in
-	Rep	or	t		C	^{Contact} 555-585-12	.34	post more efficiently.
I he film emulsion should match	Productio	n C	Noss	sroad	s			_
four digits represent the product	Director Melinda Byers							I he sound roll, independent of picture is two solly DAT or 1/4"
code (7219) while the final three	Cinematographer Dave Thompson							picture, is typically DAT or 1/4
represent the emulsion batch.	Film Emulsion 7218 - 225							syncing purposes
	PROCESSING: X Normal Push Stops Pull Stops						Stops	
The type of process	SCENE	TK	SD	DAL	FTG	REMARKS	GC	– GC stands for Gate Check. This box
(normal, push, or pull)				5		Gray Card		serves as a reminder for this important
indicated should match the		_			-	. 10		function. Check the camera gate after
exposed film label.	107	1	42	26	21	NG		setup Dust fibers or bair in a 16 mm
		2	43	48	22	Traffic Noise		gate are very noticeable upon viewing
		3	44	72	24	0K	X	
Documenting the scene		4	45	94	22	Good	X	
# allows you to keep						Gray Card		Remarks can include good takes.
production organized, both	• 108	1		132	38	MOS 16 mm -		problems, use of filters, lenses,
during filming and in post.		2		168	36	NG - timing		and notes about the location.
		3		207	39	-	X	
Good takes are circled for						Gray Card		The dial box indicates how much
fast reference in editing,	112	1	46	242	35	NG - Camera		film has been exposed. The
or to indicate which		-02	47	276	34	Very Good	X	numbers can be ascending or
takes should be printed						Gray Card		descending, depending upon the
(traditional system).	118	1		314	38	MOS (Tobaccol)		camera used
		2		353	39	NG Props		
		3		385	32	Good	X	- The feetage box indicates the
The sound # is sequential.			•					elapsed footage for a particular
Leave this box blank for MOS								take. It's helpful to know how long
scenes.	SPEACIAL INSTRUCTIONS:							a shot is running in case there's a
	۷	Warm look intentional Sc. 118						question about reloading.
		OUTPUT 🗙 Files 🗌 Other						
	OUTPUT							
	WHITE: Lak	WHITE: Lab YELLOW: Editor PINK: Filmmaker						

Fill in the blanks.

recommended.

The exposed film label provides all the relevant information the lab needs to process and transfer your film. Be sure to fill out the label in its entirety. The following diagram explains the items in detail.

	EXPOS		
project or production here.	- Crossroads PROJECT TITLE		number here.
The first four digits represent	Melinda Byers	555-585-123	34
the final three represent the		6165 4321 KODAK ORDER NUMBER	
found on the original can label.	385 • EXPOSED FOOTAGE	3-18-20 DATE	footage is in the can.
Noting the camera roll# will allow you to match the camera report to this particular roll of film	CAMERA ROLL #	3683 • MAG SER.#	Record the Mag. Serial# (if one is available).
If you're using a collapsible? core in a	PROCESSING: Normal	Push stops Pull stops	If requesting a special process (push or pull) indicate it here. It is essential that you contact
mag? you'll insert the plastic core before placing the roll in the bag and can. Check loose Core for this. If			the lab to make certain that this process can be done. Often a special process may require additional lab time. Ask a lab representative about
the film takes up on a core directly check Tight Core. If no core is available check No Core but this practice is not			turnaround time.



Ship with care.

When you ship your film be sure to include the camera report. Your lab can advise on preferred carriers.

As with any valuable shipment, be sure to insure it. Remember to package everything carefully so it doesn't get damaged, torn, or lost. An additional concern when shipping film — especially with air shipments — is avoiding damage from X-ray scanning.

Do Not X-Ray stickers are available for download at **www.kodak.com/go/donotxray.**

But these stickers alone are no guarantee. We recommend you contact your carrier directly so they can provide you with their requirements and processes.



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