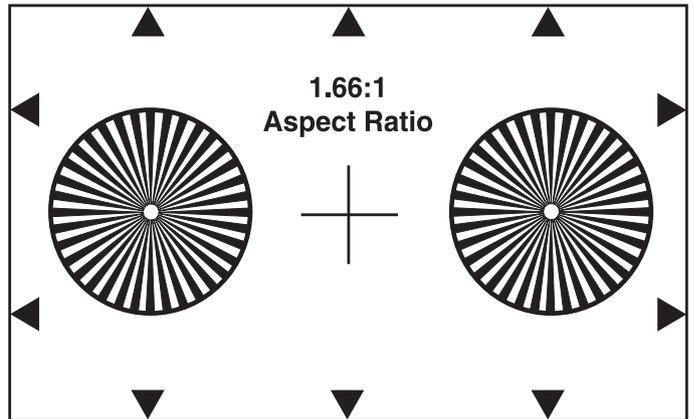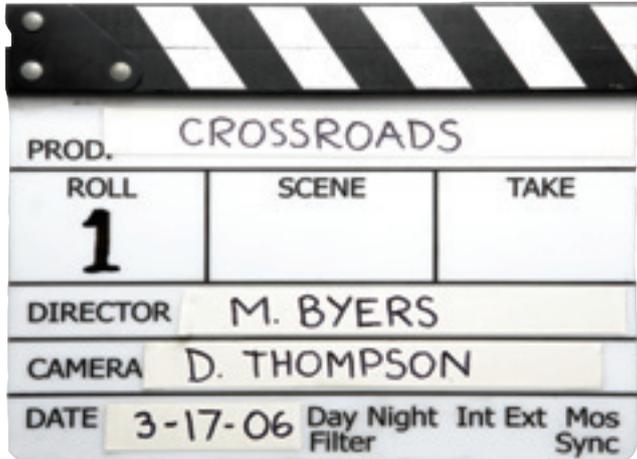# Documenting your production made easy.

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.

1.66:1 Aspect Ratio

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

production
postproduction
distribution & exhibition
archive

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.

Properly slating the roll # requires active dialogue between the camera assistant and the person slating. Slating the camera roll # eliminates lost time and confusion in post.

If you are using a dry-erase slate, it's a good idea to put unchanging information like the director's name and production title on white camera tape or printed labels.

Noting the camera filter on the slates helps the 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.

Establishing a repeatable procedure for slating take #s will prevent confusion on the set.

Scene numbers should be designated by the director's team during preproduction. The scene # is essentially a shorthand scene description. Often, scene #s start with 101.

It's important to note whether a scene is MOS or sync sound. This expedites workflow in post.

CROSSROADS

PROD.

ROLL	SCENE	TAKE
4	118	1

DIRECTOR **M. BYERS**

CAMERA **D. THOMPSON**

DATE 3-18-06 Day Night Int Ext Mos
Filter TOB. 1 Sync

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.

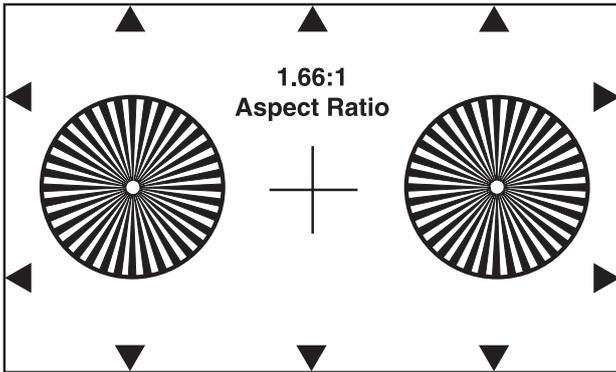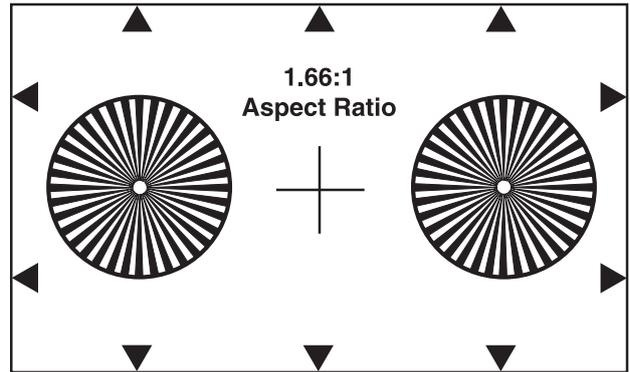S16 mm camera using a 1.66:1 aspect ratio.

Here's what's recorded:

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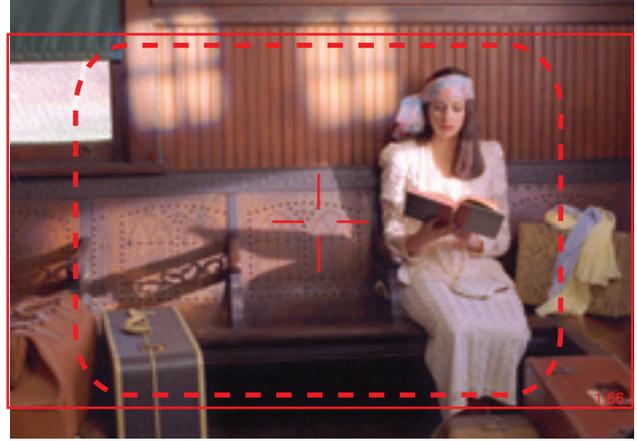
Aspect ratio target

Filming aspect ratio target to match ground glass markings:

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.

For free PDFs of aspect ratio targets, visit
www.kodak.com/go/aspectratio

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
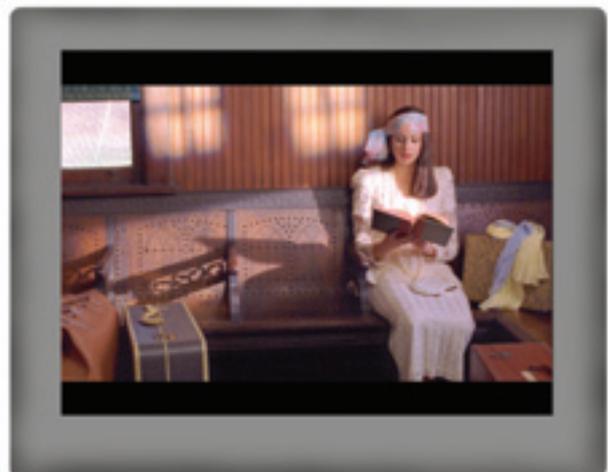
The Gray Card—exposed.

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.

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.

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).

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.

The film emulsion should match the exposed film label. The first four digits represent the product code (7219), while the final three represent the emulsion batch.

The type of process (normal, push, or pull) indicated should match the exposed film label.

Documenting the scene # allows you to keep production organized, both during filming and in post.

Good takes are circled for fast reference in editing, or to indicate which takes should be printed (traditional system).

The sound # is sequential. Leave this box blank for MOS scenes.

Documenting the camera roll # allows you to log your footage in post more efficiently.

The sound roll, independent of picture, is typically DAT or 1/4" tape. It is important to note for syncing purposes.

GC stands for Gate Check. This box serves as a reminder for this important function. Check the camera gate after every good take and for every major setup. Dust, fibers, or hair in a 16 mm gate are very noticeable upon viewing.

Remarks can include good takes, problems, use of filters, lenses, and notes about the location.

The dial box indicates how much film has been exposed. The numbers can be ascending or descending, depending upon the easiest way to read the dial on the camera used.

The footage box indicates the elapsed footage for a particular take. It's helpful to know how long a shot is running in case there's a question about reloading.

CAMERA REPORT

Date __3-18-06__
Page __1__ of __1__
Camera Roll # __4__
Sound Roll # __2__
Contact Phone # __555-585-1234__

Production __Crossroads__
Director __Melinda Byers__
Cinematographer __Dave Thompson__
Film Emulsion __7219-225__

PROCESSING: ☑ Normal ☐ Push____Stops ☐ Pull____Stops

SCENE	TK	SD	DIAL	FTG	REMARKS	GC
			5		Gray Card	☑
						☐
107	1	42	26	21	NG	☐
	2	43	48	22	traffic noise	☐
	3	44	72	24	OK	☑
	④	45	94	22	Good	☑
					Gray Card	☐
108	1		132	38	MOS 16 mm	☐
	2		168	36	NG - timing	☐
	③		207	39	Good	☑
					Gray Card	☐
112	1	46	242	35	NG - camera	☐
	②	47	276	34	V. Good	☑
					Gray Card	☐
118	1		314	38	MOS (Tobacco 1)	☐
	2		353	39	NG Props	☐
	③		385	32	Good	☑
						☐
						☐

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Warm look intentional Sc. 118

WHITE: Laboratory   YELLOW: Editor   PINK: Filmmaker

Fill in the blanks.

The exposed film label provides all the KODAK Film Kit

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.

Enter the name of your project or production here.

The first four digits represent the film stock, 7219. The following three digits represent the emulsion batch. These can be found on the original can label.

Noting the camera roll # will allow you to match the camera report to this particular roll of film.

If you're using a collapsible core in a mag, you'll insert the plastic core before placing the roll in the bag and can. Check Loose Core for this. If the film takes up on a core directly, check Tight Core. If no core is available, check No Core, but this practice is not recommended.

Enter your name and phone number here.

Document how much exposed footage is in the can.

The magazine serial number is documented to track problems to a specific piece of equipment.

If requesting a special process (push or pull), note it here. It is essential that you contact the lab to make certain that this process can be done. Often, a special process will require additional lab time. Ask a lab representative about turnaround time.

EXPOSED FILM

Crossroads

Melinda Byers

555-585-1234

7219-225

6165 4321

585

3-18-06

of

3683

Loose Core   Tight Core   No Core

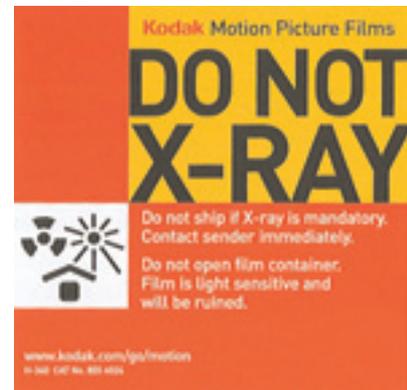Processing   Normal   Push ___ stop   Pull ___ stop

Ship it. Ship it good.

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.

www.kodak.com/go/motion