

Basic Camera & Tripod Safety & Setup

M. Schoenhals
Heritage Woods Sec

Things to Consider:

- | Camera's are costly to repair (almost half of purchase price)
- | Takes 4 weeks to get a camera back from servicing
- | Heritage Woods film program cannot continue to run if equipment is abused

Video Camera Safety and Care

- | Only use approved cleaning cloths and solutions on the camera lens. You can damage the lens otherwise!
- | Only use the camera in dry locations, these cameras are not weather proof
- | Be careful not to leave batteries in your pockets or bags, you may damage the contacts
- | Do **not** pick up your camcorder by holding the viewfinder, the LCD panel, the battery pack or the microphone
- | Set up and test the stability of tripods first before mounting cameras

Video Camera Safety & Care 2

- | Set up your shot without a tape to prevent dirtying the video heads unnecessarily
- | Do not fast-forward or rewind in Play mode
- | Keep the lens cap on when not filming
- | If possible use a miniDV player/deck to transfer video to a computer
- | **Never** leave equipment unattended
- | Remember, safety first and you are fully responsible for any loss or damage while you have equipment on loan

Video Camera Safety & Care 3

- | Never point the lens right at the sun or other light source
- | Never force the tape in when placing the tape in the camera
- | Use the shoulder and handle strap when possible
- | Never push down on tape deck, the camera will close it automatically
- | Keep the camera out of the sun and away from a source of heat.
- | Never use the camera where dust and sand can get in it.

MiniDV Tapes

- | Recommend you use Fujifilm tapes
 - | to ensure good quality productions
 - | to prolong the life of the camera heads
- | Always store tapes in the proper case
- | **Never** use a damaged tape!
- | New Tapes
 - | to ensure correct winding tightness: fast-forward tape to the end, then rewind it
 - | never record picture on the first 30 seconds of tape

Tripod Setup

- | Ensure the tripod is stable prior to mounting camera
- | Setup the tripod on an even stable surface only
- | Loosen tension screw to change camera angle then tighten
- | Make adjustments to the tripod before mounting camera!

Video Camera Operation

1. Installing the battery
2. Inserting the MiniDV tape
3. Preparing camera for a video shoot
 - i. Hand-held and tripod operation
 - ii. Camera modes (VCR & Camera)
 - iii. Manual camera functions
 - a. Focus and zoom
 - b. White balance
 - c. Exposure and aperture functions
 - iv. Tape speed (SP/LP)
 - v. Checking for audio pickup
4. Recording a good video image (basic techniques) *
5. Reviewing video from the camera
6. Transferring video to the computer via FireWire
7. Disassembly and pack-up

Capturing Video

- | Always turn off the camera before plugging or unplugging from it!!!!
- | It's best to restart the computer you plan to capture to before hand.
- | Make sure your camera battery is full or use an AC adapter.

Borrowing Tips

- | Do all necessary pre-production work before borrowing any equipment
- | Remember to purchase the MiniDV tapes first
- | Include a good set of headphones in your equipment list to monitor audio
- | Equipment may be signed out over night (remember you are responsible for all equipment borrowed!)
- | DO NOT allow anyone else to operate equipment you are responsible for!
- | Equipment out on overnight loan must be returned first thing the next morning!

Production Notes

- | Take and review test footage with the video camera and microphone
- | Try to use the same camera throughout your production to keep the look/feel of your productions consistent.
- | Use a tripod, steady device, or the cradle method to stabilize your video footage
- | Do not rely on the viewfinder for color, sharpness, or lighting level of the footage
- | Always be thinking about the post production process