

7 Basic Camera Movements

These fundamental techniques can inspire a countless number of combinations that will add depth and visual interest to your next project.

Zoom

Without a doubt, **zooming** is the most used (and therefore, most overused) camera movement there is. It is often used as a clutch when the videographer is not sure what else to do to add interest to a shot. If you are going to use **zoom**, try to use it creatively. Zoom in or out from an unexpected, yet important, object or person in your shot. Use a quick zoom to add energy to a fast-paced piece. Don't get stuck with your zoom as your default move!

Pan

Panning is when you move your camera horizontally; either left to right or right to left, while its base is fixated on a certain point. You are not moving the position of the camera itself, just the direction it faces. These types of shots are great for establishing a sense of location within your story.

Tilt

Tilting is when you move the camera vertically, up to down or down to up, while its base is fixated to a certain point. Again, like panning, this move typically involves the use of a tripod where the camera is stationary but you move the angle it points to. These shots are popular when introducing a character, especially one of grandeur, in a movie.

Dolly

A **dolly** is when you **move the entire camera forwards and backwards**, typically on some sort of track or motorized vehicle. This type of movement can create beautiful,

flowing effects when done correctly. If you want to attempt a dolly, make sure your track is stable and will allow for fluid movement.

Truck

Trucking is the same as dollying, only you are **moving the camera from left to right** instead of in and out. Again, it is best to do this using a **fluid motion track** that will eliminate any jerking or friction.

Pedestal

A **pedestal** is when you **move the camera vertically up or down** while it is fixated in one location. This term came from the use of studio cameras when the operators would have to adjust the pedestal the camera sat on to compensate for the height of the subject. A pedestal move is easy to do when the camera is fixated to an adjustable tripod.

Rack Focus

Rack focus is not as much of a camera move as it is a technique, but many amateurs overlook this essential skill. You adjust the lens to start an image blurry and then slowly make it crisper, or vice versa. It is an extremely effective way for you to change your audience's focus from one subject to another.

Are there some basic moves you think we're missing that should be included? Let us know by leaving a comment below!

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