

Camera Moves

Camera movement adds interest and excitement to shots. Each move should be done smoothly and should start and end with a static, well-composed shot. Camera moves should be motivated, which is to say they should be done for a specific reason, such as to reveal information or to follow the action.

Certain terminology is used to describe each specific type of camera move. The most common physical camera moves are **PANS**, **TILTS**, **DOLLIES** and **TRUCKS**.

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Objectives:

After completing this section you will be able to:

- Identify basic camera moves
- Describe how each move is used
- Explain why a zoom is not a true camera move

A **PAN** is a smooth left-to-right or right-to-left camera movement. The camera stays fixed on the horizontal axis.

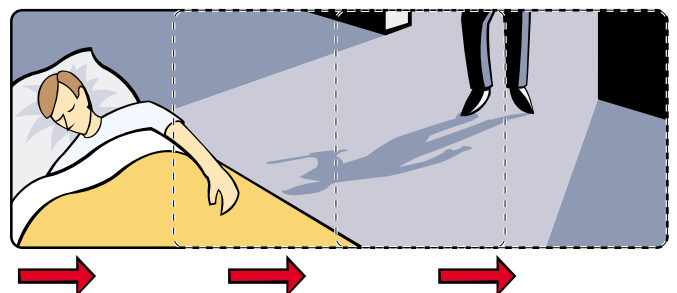
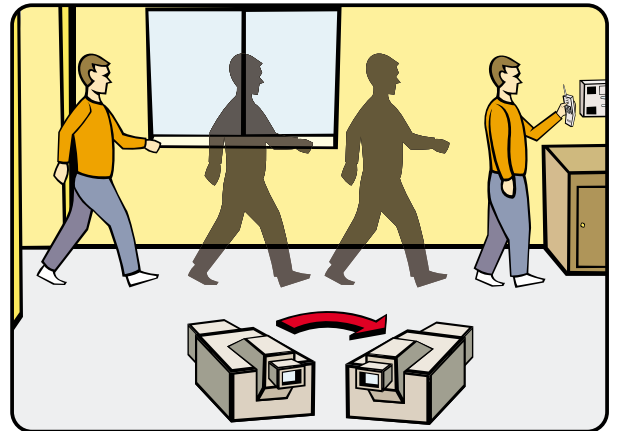
The pan is probably the most misused of all camera moves. It should only be used when there is some reason to pan, such as following the action when a subject moves or revealing more of a scene a bit at a time. A good pan has a distinct beginning and end. Make sure that you begin and end your pan with a static, well-composed

shot. The movement should be slow and smooth, not jerky or bumpy.

There are times when you may want to pan quickly to heighten the sense of excitement and action.

A rapid, blurry pan is called a **WHIP PAN** or a **SWISH PAN**. Sometimes these pans are also referred to as “spraying.” Swish pans go from left to right and then quickly back right to left. They can be used as transitional shots in editing to create a sense of movement or action. Too much of this effect may give your viewers motion sickness, so use it sparingly!

The commands to “**pan LEFT**” or “**pan RIGHT**” refer to screen direction, not the way you move the handle. In fact, it is reversed. To pan left, you push the tripod handle to the right; to pan right, you push the tripod handle to the left.



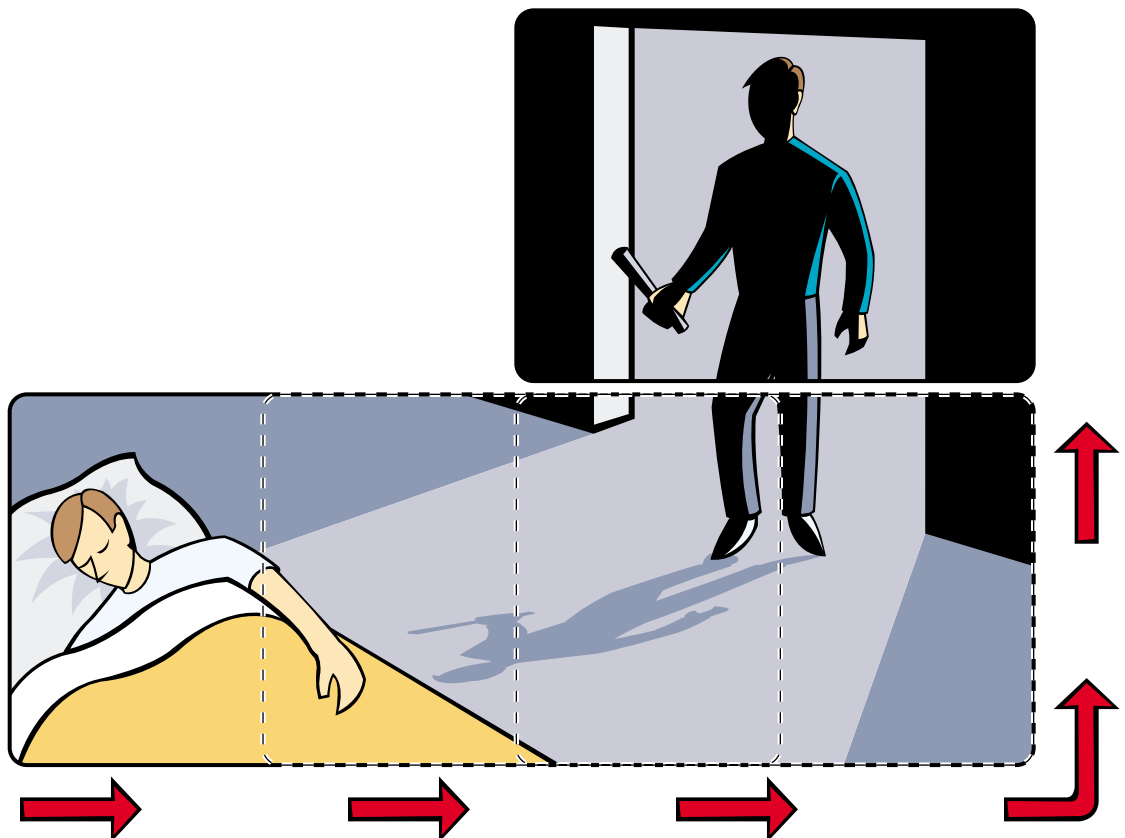
TILT

A second basic camera move is the **TILT**. A tilt is simply an upward or downward camera movement. The camera remains stationary and changes only its vertical axis.

reveal a different perspective or to surprise viewers with the unexpected. For example, you can tilt up from a shot of a classroom to reveal a shot of a clock. Tilts are also a useful way to reveal the height of an object, such as a tall building.

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When would you use a tilt movement? Tilting the camera changes the dynamics of a shot. Once the viewers understand what they are seeing, you can use the tilt to

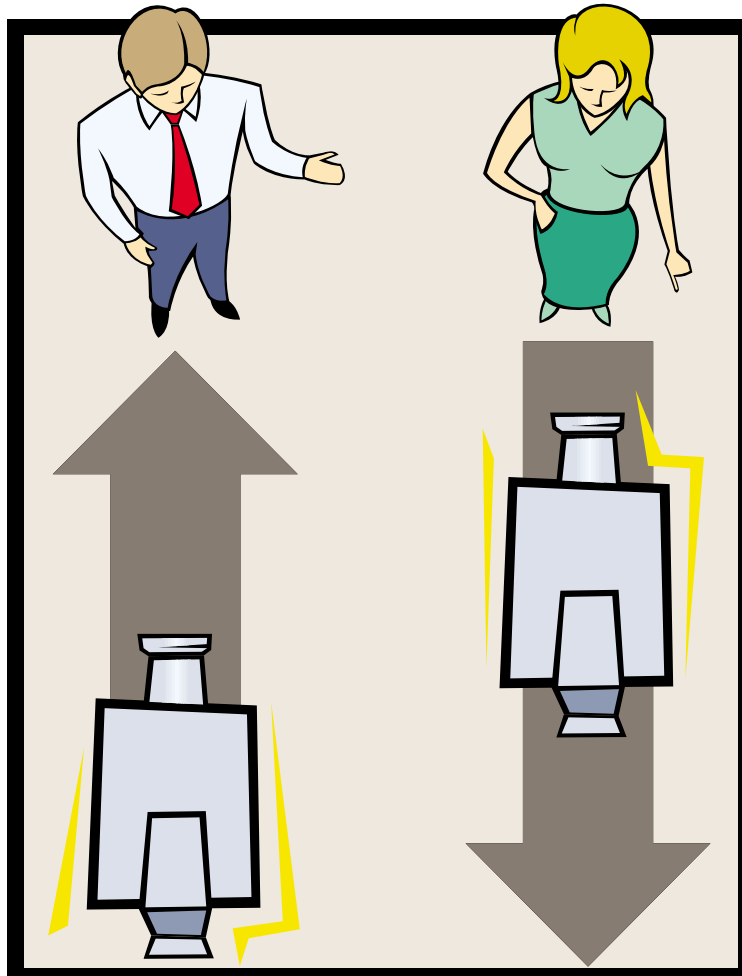


DOLLY SHOT

The words “pan” and “tilt” specify changing what’s in a shot by pointing the camera in a different direction. You can also move the entire camera (and tripod) to create a sense of depth, space and immediacy. When you push the whole camera forward or backwards in a straight line, we call it a **DOLLY SHOT**.

Dollies should be performed with the camera lens zoomed all the way out in the wide-angle lens position where the focus is less critical. Remember: as you move the camera you have to pay attention to the framing and focus throughout the entire dolly move.

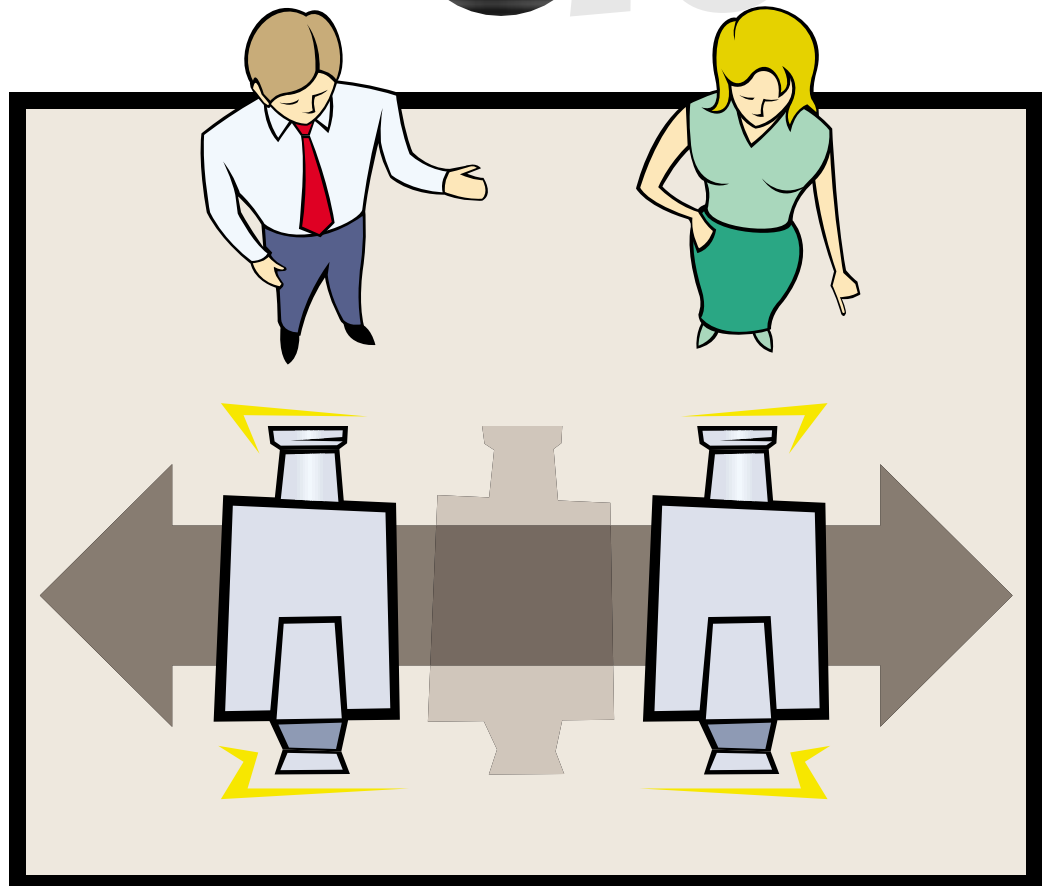
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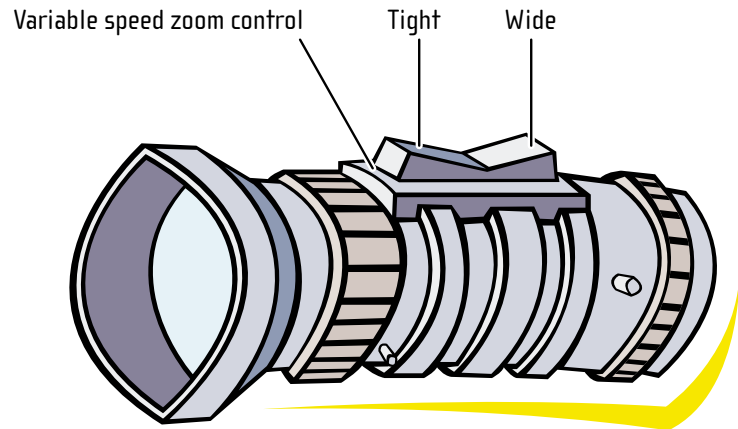


TRUCKING

Trucking is the lateral or side-to-side movement of a camera. Camera and tripod can “truck right” or “truck left.” Trucking lets the camera follow lateral action. The distance usually remains constant between camera and subject.

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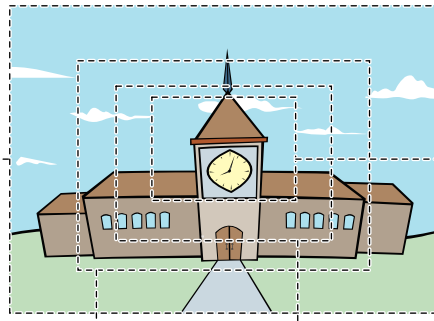


ZOOM

What camera feature looks like a move but really isn't a move? The answer is a **ZOOM**. A zoom is the manipulation of a variable focal length lens. Zooming in makes objects in the frame appear to move closer and get larger; zooming out makes objects appear smaller and farther away.



A zoom can be performed automatically at a preset speed by some cameras, giving a smooth, gliding effect, or manually by means of a pressure-sensitive rocker switch for variable control. Manual zooming gives you greater control over the shot, but automatic zooming may be helpful for beginners. The zoom lengths are represented on the camera by the letters W for wide and T for Tight (telephoto), or by "+" for wide and "-" for tight. The zoom setting on your camera is called the zoom position.

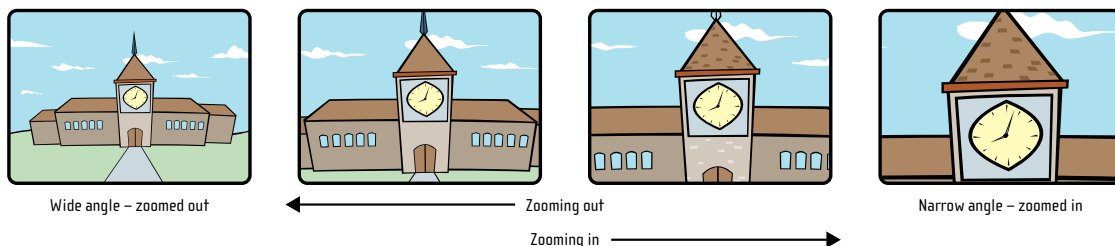


Use a zoom when you want to follow action, give emphasis or lead a viewer in a certain direction. Zooming in on a subject provides drama and emphasis;

zooming out allows you to expand the area where action can be seen in the frame or to reveal more information about a particular location. Try to avoid using "unmotivated" zooms simply because you are bored with a shot. Also avoid zooming in and out on a subject unless you are doing so to achieve a special effect.

Zooming in makes it appear as if the subject has moved closer to the camera. We refer to this as the telephoto or narrow-angle perspective. Zooming out "moves" the subject away from the viewer. We refer to this as the wide-angle lens perspective. Again, we are not talking about the physical position of the camera, only a change in the perspective created by zooming. Later on in this course we will explore more about focal length and lens perspective.

The zoom feature on a camera may either be completely automatic or allow for manual focus.

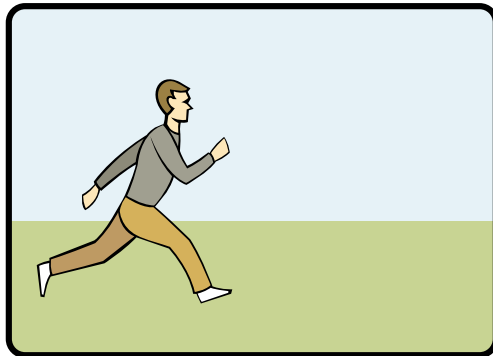


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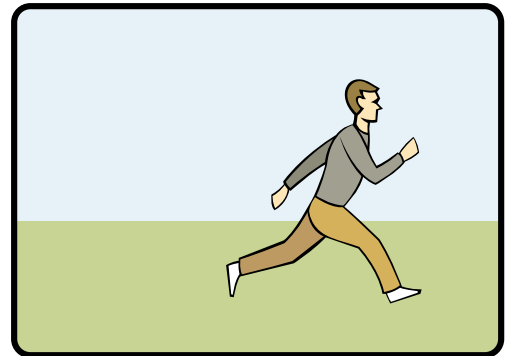
LEAD ROOM

Even when you move the camera you have to remember the rules of good composition. When following action, always frame your shot with some space in front of the subject. This is called **LEAD ROOM**. The amount of lead room you give a moving subject increases with the speed of the subject. As the subject moves across the screen, keep it in the first third of the frame and leave the remaining two-thirds of the

screen as lead room. The ratio should not change as the subject moves. By placing your subject in either the left or right third of the screen, depending on the direction of your subject, you will automatically have the correct framing. This is important to remember when shooting any action, especially sports. The audience is more interested in where the subject is going than in where it has been.



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1. Define the term "pan."

2. How can a tilt enhance a shot?

3. What direction does the camera move when dollying in?

4. When trucking left, in which direction would the camera and tripod be moving?

5. How does the viewer perceive a zoom out? What happens to the subject?
