

# Video Shooting Tips Using Flip Cameras

12/03/08

## Assignment

1. We'd like you to do a short, 1-minute video to accompany your blog entry.
2. Keep it simple. Focus on one element of a day or an event.
3. Pick an event in advance, shoot a brief 15-second intro to give it context and to establish why it is important to study or see what you are shooting. You can ask any of the students to do a stand up intro for you. Shoot a practice run and then shoot it again to be sure your subject is relaxed. ("Hello, it's day 3 of our trip, and today we're visiting an albatross recovery facility. I'm standing outside the lab on Midway atoll, where we're going to meet with Dr. Edna Silver, renowned avian biologist. Albatrosses are endangered in Midway, and we will be learning more about what she is doing to protect them.")
4. Then shoot 10 six- to 12-second images to show what/where/who/how the students participated and learned. We're looking for involved environmental students rather than a travelogue.

## How-Tos

*Successful shooting is very Tai chi – very fluid and deliberate.*

1. Framing: the video will be posted on the web, and viewed on little screens, so the closer the shot the better. Faces are great. Don't be afraid to get up close and personal with people. But DO NOT USE the ZOOM. To "zoom" just step up closer to your subject.
2. Wide shots are great for establishing context and place. When you shoot your daily intros, do one wide shot that shows the speaker and some part of the location, and one close shot on the speaker's face.
3. The audio capabilities of this camera are very limited, so if you're interviewing someone, the closer the better.
4. Background: if you have a choice between a white background and anything else – pick anything else! Trees are great.
5. Try to shoot with your back to the sun. If you're interviewing someone, don't be afraid to ask him/her to move for you so the sun is lighting their face – they'll look much better in the finished product.
6. Resist panning. One slow pan or two to get a feel for a location is fine, but for the most part shoot one subject, scene, whatever and keep the camera focused on it for the whole six- to 12-seconds.
7. Fluidity: the goal here is to reduce jerkiness. Think of your body as a tripod. The more solid the base (you), the more solid the shot. Bend your knees slightly; support your elbows with your body; support the camera with both hands. When you pan, move your lower body first,

not your torso. Think of north of your waist as a single unit – torso, elbows, arms, hands, camera all turn together. There will be times when you can't do this and all you have is your hand to support the camera.

### **Technical Notes**

1. Please take a heavy-duty plastic zip lock baggie and carry the camera in it when you are out and about. Digital cameras hate water and moisture. The camera will die if it gets too damp.
2. When not using the camera, put it in the soft carrying bag. DO NOT put the camera in your pocket or backpack without the soft bag covering the lens and body. You can ruin the lens.
3. Before heading out, make sure you have spare batteries.

### **Making a Video**

1. Plug the Flip Camera into your computer. It will prompt you to load the software onto your computer.
2. When the software opens, you will see all of the little 15-, 6-, 12- second video snippets that you've shot under Camcorder Videos.
3. Go through them, pick the ones you want to use and save them in the order you want them to be viewed.
4. Click on Make Movie. Use No Style and No Background Music.
5. Select Videos and click on Make Mix.
6. Go Back to Menu and click on Share Video.
7. Pick Public Online Sharing to upload to YouTube.

### **Inserting a Video into Blog Entry**

1. Create a YouTube <http://youtube.com> account if you do not already have one.
2. Plug the Flip Camera into your computer and follow the instructions to upload your video to YouTube. Once your video has been successfully uploaded, YouTube will provide you with code to 'embed' it in another site -- this should appear to the right of your video.
3. Open your blog entry and choose the 'edit' tab. At the point in your entry where you want the video to appear, click the \*Globe icon\* ('insert external link'). Choose the '\*Embed external object\*' tab and copy the 'embed' code from You Tube into the box. Click ok.
4. Save your blog entry—your video should now appear in the body of your entry. If you need to format the text surrounding it etc., choose the 'edit' tab and make your adjustments.