CAMERA

Shot sizes, angles & movement



FIND WHAT YOU NEED

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FIELD GUIDE

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A visual reference for composing stills and planning moving shots.

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Rotation, translation, zoom and camera handling.

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A short prompt structure and a practical exercise.

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An interactive prompt library, builder and lighting lab.

Read the images as framing studies. Compare frame boundaries and viewpoints in the examples. On movement pages, the paired images show the intended change and the diagrams explain the camera path.

01 SHOT SIZES

Start with the frame

Shot size controls the balance between the person, their actions and the surrounding place.

Extreme wide / EWS



The environment takes priority and the person appears very small. This scale can make a place feel vast, or a character seem isolated within it. Use it when geography or distance matters more than facial expression. Make the figure easy to find through placement or contrast.

PROMPT
Extreme wide shot; keep the subject small within the surrounding environment.

Wide / WS or LS



The whole person is visible with generous space around them. We can read where they are, what surrounds them and where they might move next. Useful for entrances, movement and relationships across a location. Keep enough space for the action without making the subject disappear.

PROMPT
Wide shot; full figure with open space around them.

01 SHOT SIZES

Full shot / FS



The person fills much of the frame from head to feet. Posture, clothing and the complete physical action become the main sources of information. Useful for introducing a character or showing a stance, walk or dance. Keep the head and feet inside the composition.

PROMPT

Full-body shot; keep the head and feet inside the frame.

Medium long / MLS



A knee-up view keeps the face, hands and much of the body together. It gives a gesture more space than a waist-up shot while bringing us closer than a full figure. Also called a medium wide shot. Use it for standing dialogue, a change of posture or an action involving the hands and legs.

PROMPT

Medium long shot; frame the person from head to knees.

01 SHOT SIZES

Cowboy / mid-thigh



The frame runs from the head to around mid-thigh. It keeps the hands and hip area visible while making the face more prominent than in a full shot. The name comes from Westerns, where this framing included a gun holster. It also works for a reach, a standoff or confident body language.

PROMPT

Cowboy shot; head to mid-thigh, hands visible.

Medium / MS



A waist-up view balances expression with upper-body movement. The viewer can follow a conversation and notice what the person is doing with their hands. A useful starting point for dialogue and simple actions. If an important gesture falls outside the image, make the framing wider.

PROMPT

Medium shot; waist-up, camera at eye level.

01 SHOT SIZES

Medium close-up / MCU



The head, shoulders and upper chest fill the image. Expression becomes the priority, but a lean, breath or turn of the shoulders still has room to register. Useful for dialogue and reactions that need intimacy without the intensity of a tight facial close-up. Keep the background from competing with the eyes.

PROMPT

Medium close-up; head and shoulders, chest at the lower edge.

Close-up / CU



The face dominates and most surroundings fall away. Small changes in the eyes and mouth become readable, making this useful for a reaction or a moment of recognition. Choose the expression that carries the scene. A close-up has more impact when the preceding wider view has already established what the person is reacting to.

PROMPT

Close-up of the face; blurred background.

01 SHOT SIZES

Extreme close-up / ECU



An extreme close-up fills the frame with one small feature: an eye, a fingertip or a crucial part of an object. It directs attention to information that could disappear in a wider view.

Use it to reveal a clue, a tiny physical reaction or a surface detail. Choose exactly what the viewer needs to notice: an eye tightening, a finger pressing a button, or a damaged edge.

PROMPT

Extreme close-up of the key detail; exclude the surrounding context.

Size is not lens choice. "Close-up" describes the framing. Focal length and camera distance are separate decisions. For a first image test, state the frame boundary before adding lens language.

02 CAMERA ANGLES

Change the viewpoint

Keep the shot size in mind while moving the camera above or below the subject.



Eye level

At the subject's eye height, the camera feels like a direct encounter. This is a useful baseline for dialogue: expression and behaviour can lead without an obvious view from above or below.

PROMPT
Eye-level camera; lens at the subject's eye height.



High angle

Looking down reveals more ground and can make a person seem smaller or exposed within the space. Use it to clarify position or suggest vulnerability; the scene supplies the emotional meaning.

PROMPT
Camera above the subject, looking down.



Low angle

Looking upward can make a figure or building seem imposing. The ground gives way to sky or ceiling, and nearby features may appear larger. Useful when height or presence matters.

PROMPT
Low camera position, looking upward.

02 CAMERA ANGLES

Overhead and off-level

Camera angle and camera movement are separate choices.

Overhead / top-down



The camera looks almost vertically down. The image becomes a map of positions, routes and patterns, with less emphasis on faces and more on how elements occupy the space. Useful for choreography, object arrangements or revealing how a place is organised. An overhead view can be static; it does not imply a flying camera.

PROMPT
Directly overhead; camera looking straight down.

Dutch angle



The camera is rolled off level, so the horizon and normally upright lines become diagonal. That imbalance can support unease, confusion or an unstable point of view. Choose the slant deliberately. Holding it gives a Dutch angle; changing the slant during the shot creates a camera roll.

PROMPT
Dutch angle; a clearly diagonal horizon.

03 CAMERA MOVEMENTS

Pan: turn on the spot

The camera rotates horizontally from a fixed position.



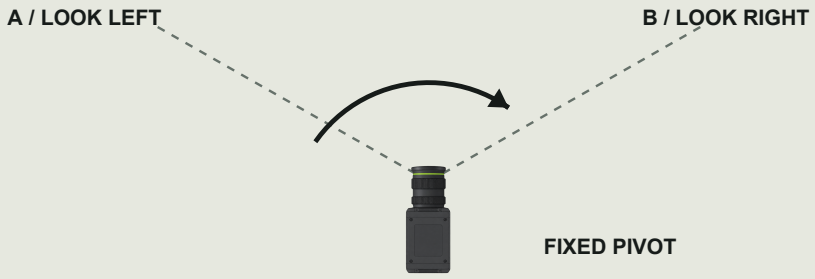
A / START



B / END

A pan can follow action, connect two parts of a location or delay a reveal. A slow turn gives the viewer time to explore; a fast one can redirect attention abruptly. Choose a direction and a stopping point. The camera pivots in place; moving it sideways would be a truck move.

Camera path



PROMPT

Pan right at an even pace from a fixed position; keep the horizon level and settle on the new view.

03 CAMERA MOVEMENTS

Tilt: look up or down

The camera pivots vertically while its position stays fixed.



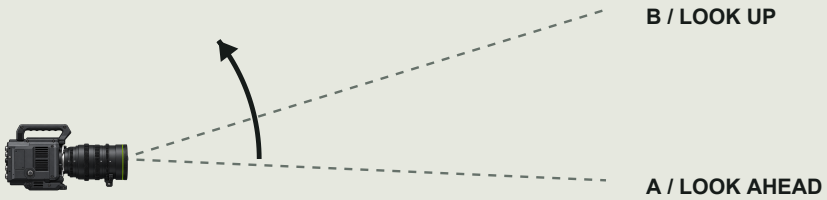
A / START



B / END

A tilt reveals a subject vertically: from an object to its owner, or from a building entrance to its roof. The change can emphasise height or let information arrive gradually. The lens changes direction; the camera does not rise. Use a pedestal or boom when the viewpoint itself needs to become higher.

Camera path



Fixed height

PROMPT

Tilt smoothly upward from a fixed position; keep the camera at the same height and stop on the upper subject.

03 CAMERA MOVEMENTS

Rise: pedestal or boom

The camera changes height; the lens may also be aimed as needed.

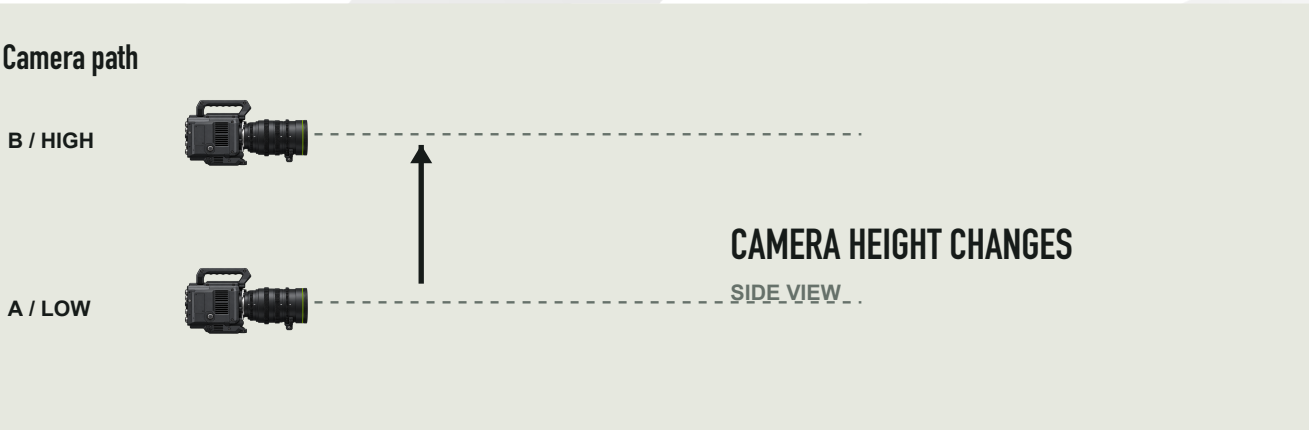


A / START



B / END

Raising the camera can uncover a place hidden by the foreground. A broad boom move can turn a close human moment into a view of the larger setting. A pedestal raises or lowers the camera vertically. A boom or crane can also sweep through space. Decide what the higher viewpoint should reveal.



PROMPT

Raise the camera vertically at an even pace; keep the lens level and finish on a higher view.

03 CAMERA MOVEMENTS

Dolly in and dolly out

The camera travels towards or away from the subject.



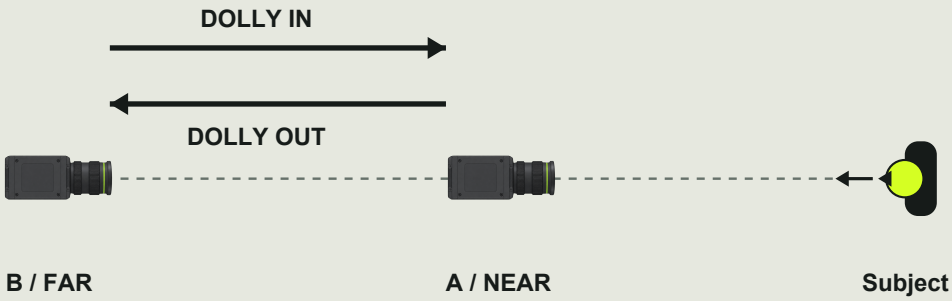
A / CLOSER



B / FARTHER

A push-in can concentrate attention on a thought or reaction. A pull-out gives the surroundings more weight, revealing context or leaving the person isolated within a larger space. Read B to A for a push-in, or A to B for a pull-out. Physical travel changes the relationship between foreground and background; a zoom keeps the viewpoint fixed.

Camera path



PROMPT

Dolly slowly forward to a closer view; keep focal length and camera height fixed, with the subject near centre.

03 CAMERA MOVEMENTS

Truck and tracking

Travel through the scene while deciding what stays steady in the frame.

Truck: move sideways



A / OBSTRUCTED VIEW



B / REVEAL

A truck moves the camera sideways. Nearby objects shift farther across the frame than the distant background. This parallax can reveal a subject or open a new view without moving closer.

Track: travel with the subject



A / START



B / FOLLOW THE SUBJECT

A tracking shot travels through the scene, often alongside a moving person. Matching their pace keeps us with the action while the passing background makes the route and distance felt.

PROMPT

Track parallel to the moving subject at a matching pace; keep a steady distance and consistent framing.

03 CAMERA MOVEMENTS

Arc: travel around

The camera follows a curved path around a subject.



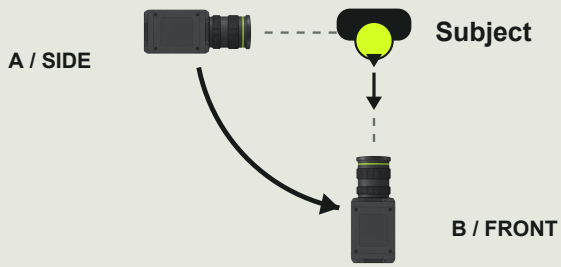
A / SIDE VIEW



B / FRONTAL VIEW

Travelling around a subject changes both the visible side and the background behind it. Use this to reveal spatial relationships or give a still moment a sense of energy. Keep the subject stationary in a first test. The camera changes viewpoint along the curve; the subject does not turn to create the new angle.

Camera path



Top view

PROMPT

Arc from a side view to a frontal view at a steady distance; the subject stays still.

03 CAMERA MOVEMENTS

Zoom: change the field of view

The camera stays in place while the lens changes the framing.

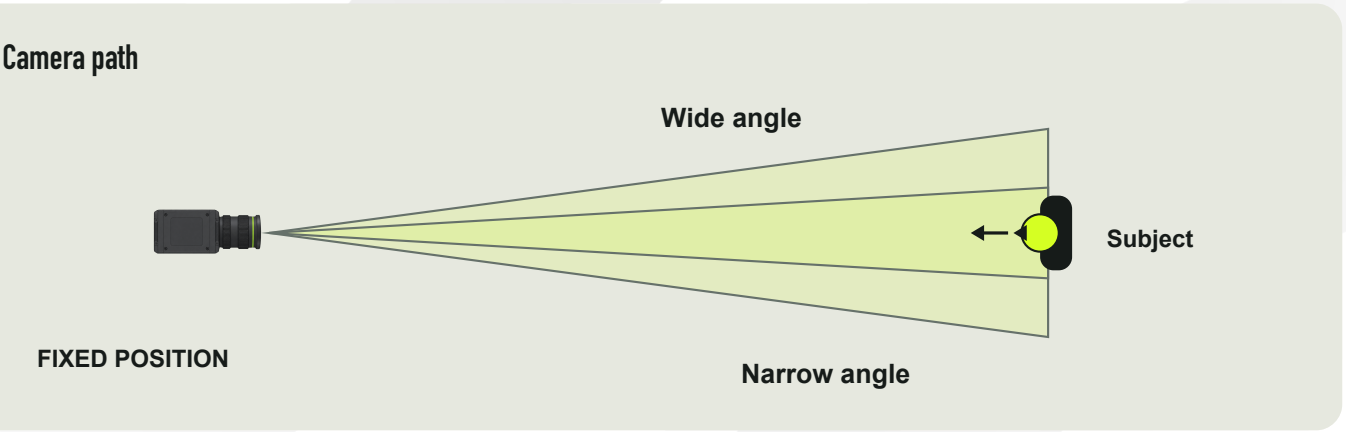


A / WIDER FIELD



B / TIGHTER FIELD

A zoom narrows or widens the field of view. It can direct attention to a detail while preserving the viewpoint; foreground and background enlarge together. Choose a dolly when you want travel through space. Choose a zoom when you want the framing to tighten or widen from the same position.



PROMPT

Increase focal length smoothly from a fixed camera position; finish on a tighter frame of the subject.

03 CAMERA MOVEMENTS

Dolly zoom: balance two changes

Camera travel and an opposite zoom keep the subject approximately the same size.



A / CLOSE + WIDE LENS

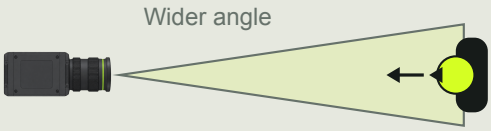


B / FAR + LONG LENS

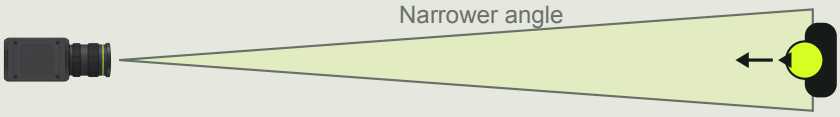
The subject stays about the same size while the background expands or recedes. This unsettling change can give a moment of shock or sudden realisation a visible spatial effect. In A to B, the camera moves back and zooms in. The foreground subject stays similarly sized while the background grows. Test both changes together in motion to keep the framing steady.

Camera path

A / NEAR + WIDE LENS



B / FAR + LONG LENS



Move back + zoom in = same subject size

PROMPT

Move the camera backwards while zooming in; keep the subject the same size in frame.

03 CAMERA MOVEMENTS

Camera handling and speed

Choose a stable frame, a physical camera feel or a deliberate burst of movement.



Static

Lock the viewpoint. The action can change while the frame stays steady.

PROMPT
Locked-off camera; keep the composition fixed while the action unfolds.



Handheld

Small variations in position and angle give the shot a physical, responsive feel.

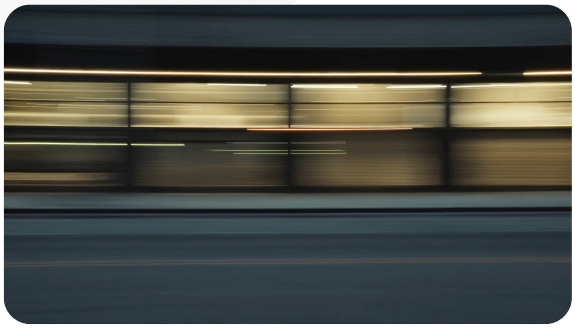
PROMPT
Restrained handheld drift; keep the subject clearly framed.



Roll

Rotate around the lens axis so the horizon turns. Holding that slant creates a Dutch angle.

PROMPT
Slow clockwise camera roll from a level frame.



Whip pan

A fast horizontal turn blurs the space between two views, redirecting attention abruptly.

PROMPT
Whip pan right with brief motion blur; settle on a sharp, readable final frame.

04 PRACTICE

Put the camera into words

Start with framing. Add the angle. Describe movement only when planning video.

For a still image

PROMPT

Medium close-up, eye-level camera. Keep the main subject clearly separated from the background.

The camera clause does most of the work. The subject and setting give the model somewhere to apply it. Inspect the returned frame before adding more detail.

For a moving shot

PROMPT

Begin with a medium shot. Slowly dolly in to a close-up, keeping the subject in the same frame position.

Specify the path, pace, what stays steady and the final composition. For a first test, change one camera choice at a time: this makes an unwanted pan, zoom or drift easier to diagnose.

Try a three-shot sequence

01 Wide: establish the subject and the surrounding space.

02 Medium: make a small gesture readable.

03 Close-up: finish on the reaction.

05 CHEAT CODE

CHEAT CODE - Soul Directory

Pick a visual example and copy its prompt as a starting point.

Open the link below to find camera moves, visual styles and lighting examples with copyable prompts. Use the result you like as a starting point, then adapt its prompt to your scene.

OPEN SOUL DIRECTORY

soul-directory.higgsfield.app

01 Browse the archive

Explore 33 styles, 46 camera-movement entries and 24 studio or outdoor lighting setups. Cards pair visual examples with prompts you can copy.

02 Build a shot

Shot Builder combines a move, an optional style, lighting and your scene into one prompt. Turn into video opens Higgsfield for the next step.

03 Arrange the light

Move lights around a 3D figure or start from a preset rig. Adjust position, intensity, colour and softness; the simulator writes a lighting prompt from your setup.

04 Generate from the prompt

Render brings archive prompts into an image or video generation workflow. Sign in with Higgsfield to use your account’s credits, history and results.

Try it: keep your scene unchanged and compare a dolly with a zoom. Watch how the background behaves, then refine the camera instruction.