

## Interviews

An interview is when one person (the interviewer, or host) is asking questions and another person, the guest, is answering them. There are several ways in which to shoot an interview.

A video interview can be thought of as a conversation involving three types of people:

- ) The **interviewer** is the facilitator. (S)he chooses the topic of conversation, asks questions and guides the discussion.
- ) The **guest** is the subject of the interview. (S)he will do most of the talking and get most of the camera shots.
- ) The **viewer** is a silent observer who has been invited into the conversation.

Interview Terminology	
<b>IV</b>	Interview
<b>Guest</b>	The person being interviewed.
<b>One-Shot</b>	Shot of a single person, either interviewer or guest. Usually a mid-shot or tighter.
<b>Two-Shot</b>	Shot of two people, e.g. interviewer and guest.
<b>Back-Cut Question</b>	Shot of the interviewer asking a question, shown from the other side of the guest.
<b>Noddy</b>	Shot of the interviewer nodding or showing an appropriate facial expression.



## Facing Direction



One Eye:  
Too much  
profile

Two Eyes:  
Acceptable

In most cases the subject (interviewer or guest) is facing slightly left or right of the camera. This shows that the subject is talking to someone else (not the viewer), but by being relatively front-on the viewer is still part of the conversation.

A big part of video interviews is making sure the interviewer and guest are always facing the "right way" so they are talking to each other. If they are facing the same way they will both appear to be talking to an unseen third person.

Avoid severe profile shots — you should always be able to see both eyes. People are very attuned to seeing someone's whole face when they talk and if the viewer can't see enough of the face it becomes uncomfortable. Profiles are also unflattering to the guest.

Check the background and make sure there's nothing distracting from the person speaking. Often the worst visual distractions are subtle things the camera operator didn't notice during the shoot, for example:

- ) An object which appears to be growing out of the guest's head.
- ) A sign in the background with some letters obscured to make an unwanted new word.

Try to have something in the background which suits or supports the interview (e.g. a landmark, monument, etc).

## Eyelines



It is very important to make sure the guest's eyes are level with the interviewer's. Any noticeable difference makes the interview look uncomfortable, and may even give an unwanted message (such as dominant and submissive appearances).

In studio situations, chairs are adjusted to make everyone the same height.

In the field you may need to be a bit more inventive. In the situation pictured on the right, the interviewer and guest are only ever shown from the waist up. The audience need never know the true height relationship.

## Sound

You want to capture what the interviewer and guest are saying, but not the sounds of other people. Try to find a quiet place to conduct your interviews. Use a microphone on your camera whenever possible.

## Lighting

Try to use even, soft lighting whenever possible. Don't backlight your subjects. Remember, if the guest has a window behind them, the lighting will make it difficult to see their features.

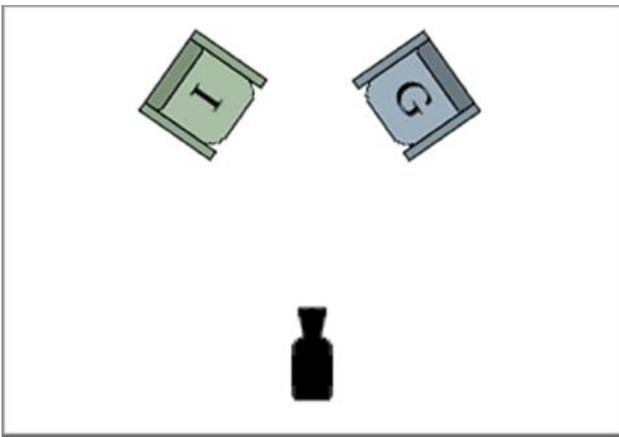
## Studio Interview Settings

There are many possible settings for conducting interviews. The first one to become familiar with is the seated interview. Whether it be in a permanent studio or someone's living room, you need to arrange the interviewer, guest(s) and cameras to achieve the look and feel which best suits your objectives.

There are a number of common floorplans from which you can choose. Often you will be limited by factors such as space and number of cameras. The guidelines below include options for most settings.

**Key:** Interviewer Guest

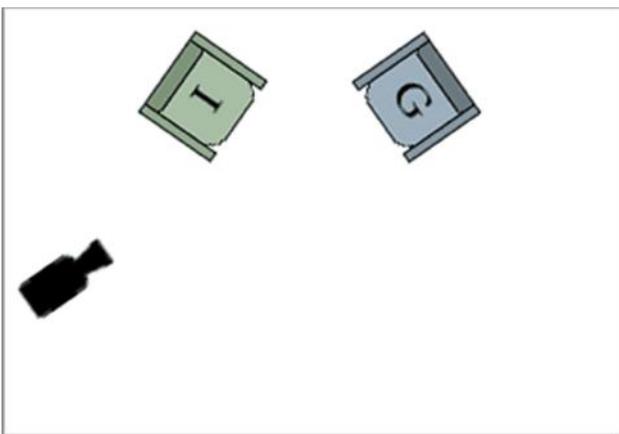
Camera Optional Extra Camera



*1 Guest, 1 Camera*

In this simple case the interviewer and guest are given the same framing and appear with equal prominence. This is useful if you aren't sure who will be doing most of the talking, or if the talk-time is spread evenly between the interviewer and guest.

It is a fairly casual setting, especially suitable for less formal interviews.



*1 Guest, 1 Camera*

Taking the same situation and moving the camera to one side gives a different feel. Now the guest is much more prominent and becomes the main focus. The interviewer can face the camera at the beginning and end of the interview, but not usually during. This leaves the interviewer with profile framing so your 1-shots will be reserved for the guest. From time to time you can zoom out to a 2-shot, then back in to the guest.

## Practice time!

In groups of 3-4, practice setting up and filming interviews. Interview your other group members. Each group member should get a chance to be director, interviewer, guest and camera operator. For each guest, ask five or six questions.

Once you are finished, answer the following questions.

Did you have difficulty controlling the sound? How did you solve the problems you had?

Did you have difficulty controlling the lighting? How did you solve the problems you had?

Did you have difficulty framing the shot? How did you solve the problems you had?