
film industry terminology

personnel terminology:

ACCOUNTANT – Also known as a Production Accountant; keeps track of all expenditures on a film project. Very helpful if you need to know how much was spent in any given location.

ART DIRECTOR – Responsible for the film’s physical “look,” for creating all of the sets (and this usually includes choosing locations) and costumes for a production. Also known as the Production Designer.

ASSISTANT CAMERA OPERATOR (also called Focus Puller) – Working directly for the Cameraman, loads film, follows focus, marks the spot where the actors stand, and keeps the camera in proper working condition. In features and television, the normal camera crew consists of five members.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (AD) – Assists with the cast and works as intermediary between the Director and the cast and crew. The First AD is in charge of the set and coordinating all aspects of filming activities to keep the production on schedule. The First AD is always on the set and is your most important contact on the set. The Second AD coordinates movements of atmosphere or extras, is responsible for the call sheets and for making sure that everything is in the right place at the right time.

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER – A title variously given to the Producer’s deputy, the Production Manager, or sometimes to one of the financiers. Represents the Producer’s interest when the Producer is not personally on the production scene. May control finances during the location shooting. For a commercial, may be the set contact.

ATMOSPHERE – Collective noun referring to the extras (or “atmosphere players”) who lend a sense of realism to the scene.

BEST BOY – The first assistant to the Gaffer. Best Boy Grip is the first assistant to the Key Grip.

BIT PLAYER – Actor having very small speaking parts or having merely pieces of business (silent bits) in the film.

BOOM OPERATOR – The member of the sound crew who positions a microphone, mounted on a hand-held pole (boom), as close as possible to the speaker without getting it into the shot or casting a shadow that can be seen.

BUSINESS AGENT – A person, generally recognized by one or more of the unions or guilds, who represents members in negotiating individual contracts that include special provisions not included in standard union or guild agreements.

CABLE PULLER – The person responsible for the various cable hook-ups, managing all the various cables and wires, and protecting them and the crew and public from injury or damage.

CAMERA – See Director of Photography

CAMERA OPERATOR – The member of the crew who actually runs and maneuvers the camera under the direction of the Director of Photography.

CARPENTER – Responsible for all wood construction such as sets, set pieces and special effects construction on a production. Also called Prop Maker.

CASTING DIRECTOR – The person or company responsible for finding and hiring most of the actors required to fill the parts in a script or storyboard.

CINEMATOGRAPHER – See Director of Photography.

CLAPPER OPERATOR – Holds the clapboard or slate in front of the camera at the beginning of each scene to record the scene number for dailies and editing. Also known as the Second Assistant Cameraman.

COMMERCIAL PRODUCER – On commercial projects, the liaison between the agency/client and the director/crew. Responsible for budgets, casting, locations, and in general is the overall supervisor of the spot.

CONSTRUCTION COORDINATOR – Supervises the construction of sets in and out of the studio.

COSTUME DESIGNER – The person who designs and oversees the production of costumes, both period and contemporary.

CRAFTS SERVICES – People who handle the coffee and other beverages and snacks on the set. Also responsible for cleaning up and doing small chores.

DIRECTOR – The person with the overall responsibility for all the creative aspects of the production. Formulates and is responsible for the execution of the story requirements as set forth by the Producer. Directs the efforts of the Talent, the Camera Operator, and the Editor, plus all the rest of the production company. In features, the Director has artistic control. In commercials, the Director must work within the framework of the storyboard created by the advertising agency.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY – Also known as DP. Responsible for the operation of the cameras and associated hardware, and is also responsible for their mechanical condition. Selects

the film stock for the picture, supervises the lighting of the scenes, selects camera positions, and works with the Director. Makes exposure readings, focuses the camera, composes the shot, and chooses any necessary filters. Oversees lab processing of the film.

DRIVER CAPTAIN – See Transportation Coordinator.

EDITOR – Responsible for assembling all the raw material of a film (filmed footage and assembled sound) and composing it into a coherent whole.

ELECTRICIAN – Technician responsible for connecting lights to the proper power supplies; sometimes called the Juicer. This person works for the Gaffer, who is the chief electrician and also takes direction from the Director of Photography.

ENG CREW – (Electronic News Gathering). Small team, usually less than five people, with a self-contained vehicle equipped with videotape, editing and broadcast capability. Usually associated with daily news broadcasts.

EXTRA – A person who appears in filmed sequences but who speaks no lines nor does anything that would qualify as a silent bit. Also called Atmosphere, these people are directed by the Assistant Director.

FIREMAN – Also known as a Fire Safety Officer or Fire Safety Advisor. Required by many government jurisdictions to supervise the safe operation of the set. Often required when pyrotechnics are part of the shoot.

FIRST AID – Medical personnel on the crew who are available if necessary. Under union contract, this will be a registered nurse or emergency medical technician.

GAFFER – The chief lighting technician, in charge of the placement and movement of lights before and after shooting. This person works under the direction of the Director of Photography. Also called Chief Juicer, Boss Electrician or Chief Electrician.

GREENS PERSON – The person responsible for placing trees, bushes and flowers on the set or location and maintaining them. Deals with organic, not imitation, plants.

GRIP – Skilled laborer who assists the camera and lighting and art departments by moving or lifting equipment pertaining to that department. Grips load and unload equipment, build camera platforms, dig holes for camera placement, push the dolly and move the set walls.

HAIR STYLIST – Dresses the hair on all on-camera talent. Also supervises the fitting of any headpieces.

JUICER – Lighting technician who works under the Gaffer.

KEY GRIP – The head laborer who works with the Gaffer and the Director of Photography and who supervises the grip department.

LEAD – 1) The principal actor or character in a picture; or 2) The person in charge of a small group of technicians on a special detail.

LINE PRODUCER – The supervisor of both the below-the-line and sometimes above-the-line aspects of production. Responsible for the day-to-day elements of production.

LOCATION MANAGER – Responsible for scouting the locations called for in the script, evaluating their suitability and photographing them. Reports to the Production Manager; however the Director and Production Designer will be involved in approving the location. After approval, the Location Manager is responsible for securing all the necessary permissions for the use of the location, including agreements with the property owner, permits, police and fire, parking and a place for the catering. Also acts as liaison with neighbors and is responsible for making sure the site is clean before the clean-up crew leaves. **LOCATION SCOUT** – Independent contractor hired by a company to photograph potential locations and provide contact information to the company.

MAKE-UP PERSON – Applies make-up to all on-camera talent. Also supervises and/or manufactures any special prosthetics required.

MIXER – Chief sound person on the set who operates a console where sounds from multiple channels are mixed at different volumes. Supervises the sound crew.

POLICE – Off-duty, retired or on-duty officers who assist with traffic control, movement of vehicles, and, sometimes, security. Most governmental jurisdictions require the presence of police officers to ensure the public's safety and to enforce the permit.

PRODUCER – The person who develops the project from start to finish, including financing. This person hires the Director, Writers, etc., and is involved with the distribution of the film. The final authority on how funds are spent.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT – A person working for the production manager, handling a variety of tasks. May be assigned to non-skilled tasks on the set such as preventing people from walking through a shot, or picking up litter. Frequently an entry level position. Also called PA.

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR – A member of the production staff who works directly for the Production Manager or Producer and acts as a liaison between the production office and all other departments. In commercials, may scout locations and/or secure permits.

PRODUCTION MANAGER – The on-site executive in charge of all financial, administrative, and physical details of the production, including hiring below-the-line crew. Also known as the Unit Production Manager. Has authority to sign contracts and authorize payment.

PROPMASTER – The person responsible for all of the small objects used by actors or placed as dressing on the set. Responsible for the care and use of firearms.

PUBLICIST – A free-lance or studio employee whose job it is to get out interesting information to newspapers, magazines and news services about the film, as well as to hold off unwanted media. Also known as a Unit Publicist, this person is a good contact if you need production stills or want to interview any of the cast or crew.

PYROTECHNICIAN – Person licensed by the State of California and the U.S. Department of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms to transport, purchase, handle, and use materials that can ignite, burn or explode.

RECORDIST – Person in charge of operating the sound recorder. Places the mike, strings cable, and sets the controls of the recording equipment.

RIGGER – Crewmember responsible for the construction of scaffolding (rigging) on a set, and the placement of lights and equipment on that rigging.

SCRIPT SUPERVISOR – Responsible for making detailed notes on every take, including dialogue, action, costumes, props, etc., to ensure these elements match between takes and scenes.

SECOND ASSISTANT DIRECTOR – Helps organize and move large numbers of extras in crowd scenes. Takes direction from the First AD.

SECOND UNIT DIRECTOR – Directs sequences which do not involve the principal actors. Scenes may include stunts, driving shots, inserts, or backgrounds, and often do not include synchronized sound.

SET DECORATOR – The person who arranges the furniture, places the props, hangs the curtains, and otherwise dresses the set to create ambiance to fulfill the overall themes set by the Designer.

SET DESIGNER – The person who plans the construction of the sets based on drawings and details provided by the Art Director. Responsible for the overall visual impact of the film, including color schemes and ambiance design themes.

SET DRESSER – Technician working for the Set Decorator. Places furnishings, hangs draperies and arranges objects used to dress the set. Keeps track of what goes where as things are moved to accommodate the cameras.

SPECIAL EFFECTS TECHNICIANS – Members of the production crew (or sometimes an independent company) in charge of producing all the special effects on a production. This includes elements (such as rain or snow), pyrotechnics, and working parts of a set.

STUNT COORDINATOR – Person who plans and supervises those who execute activities involving an element of risk. Arranges for safety relating to stunts and choreographs the action. Acts as an advisor to the Director.

STUNT PERSON – Member of the cast who performs dangerous, or potentially dangerous, actions. Includes stunt doubles, who resemble the principal actors.

SWING GANG – A team of grips assigned to strike and clean up after filming.

TALENT – A term that covers all performers, including animals.

TEACHER – When employing minors, productions are required to have teachers who hold a valid teaching credential from the State of California, and who are also knowledgeable in California child labor law.

TECHNICAL ADVISOR – An expert hired to ensure that a certain aspect of the film is authentic (e.g., a military advisor or Civil War historian).

TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR – Responsible for supervising all of the drivers who transport the crew, equipment and other necessary vehicles.

UNIT MANAGER – See Production Manager.

WARDROBE SUPERVISOR – The person in charge of the costumes, keeping them laundered, in good repair and available when needed.

WRANGLER – Also known as Handler. Specialist who trains animals to perform on command.

other film terminology

ABOVE THE LINE – The “creative” members of the production team (such as Director, Writer, Actor, Producer). The cost of their services appears on the top half of a budget summary (top sheet), above a heavy line which divides the page.

ACTION – The order given by the Director, once the sound recording equipment and the film in the cameras are running at filming speed, to begin the action within the shot.

ANGLE OF VIEW – The amount of a scene that is taken in by the lens, usually expressed in degrees.

AIR DATE – In television and commercial production, the specific date on which a series episode, commercial spot, or television movie is to be televised.

APPLE BOX – A small wood box, usually with handholds on the side, used to raise actors or objects to the correct height for the shot.

AVAILABLE LIGHT – Filming using only naturally occurring light.

BACK LOT – Studio property that includes exterior sets, such as Western towns, New York streets, houses, etc., used for locations without going on location.

BARN DOORS – Hinged doors mounted on the front of a light that may be opened or closed to regulate light in a particular area of the set.

BARNEY – A padded camera cover, shaped to allow the camera to be operated. It reduces mechanical noise and sometimes contains heating elements for use in cold weather. Also called a Blimp.

BASE CAMP – Staging area for equipment and large vehicles when filming in a variety of locations, or when parking adjacent to the filming location is not possible. Base camp can also be the site of activities not directly related to filming, e.g., it can serve as a dressing area or be used for meal service.

BELOW THE LINE – The production staff and technical elements of a project, the cost of which appears on the bottom half of the budget summary (top sheet), below a heavy line which divides the page. These costs include non-talent personnel, equipment and services.

BLACKOUT CLOTH – Heavy, densely woven cloth used to cover windows and doors to facilitate “day for night” filming.

BLIMP – The soundproof casing around a motion picture camera. See Barney.

BOOM MIKE – A microphone with a long extendible arm, enabling the operator to position the microphone and move it silently around the set following the actors.

BOX RENTAL – A fee or allowance paid to crewmembers for providing their own equipment or some other item to be used for the production.

BREAKDOWN – The process of taking a script or storyboard and detailing each significant element. This allows for the arrangements and scheduling of the various scenes and the order in which they are to be shot.

BREAKAWAY – A set, hand prop, or other item (such as a bottle or chair) constructed to break in a specific way on cue.

BULLET HIT – A special effect that simulates a bullet striking an object or person. Also known as a Squib. This is a pyrotechnic effect.

BUTTERFLY – Net that can be stretched over an outdoor scene to soften sunlight.

CALL SHEET – A form specifying all the scenes to be filmed and all the personnel and equipment required to film them on a given day. Special notes on the location can be included here.

CALL TIME – The time that an individual member of the cast or crew is expected on the set or location and ready to work. This schedule is usually listed on the call sheet and is the responsibility of one of the Assistant Directors. Call times may vary depending on the department (make-up before crew, for example), the activity, the location, and the wrap time the preceding day.

CAMERA CAR – A pickup truck specifically rigged to carry camera equipment and crew. Used to film moving vehicle shots. Also called an Insert Car.

CAMERA LEFT/RIGHT – The left/right side of the camera. Opposite from stage directions. The directions are oriented from the camera's point of view.

CAMERA TRACKS – Tracks of metal and/or 4 x 8 plywood sheets that are laid down to carry a dolly or camera crane. The tracks are used to ensure smoothness of camera movement. Also called Dolly Tracks.

CENTURY STAND – A metal stand for positioning a lighting accessory such as a Flag. Also used to hold or support branches or leaves or other effects related to lighting. Also called a C-Stand.

CLAPPER BOARD (SLATE) – Two short boards hinged together and painted in a matching design. When sharply closed they provide an audible and visible cue which is recorded on film and sound tape simultaneously. This helps to synchronize the picture with the sound in the editing process. Some cameras have electronic slates.

COMPLETION BOND – A guarantee that principal photography on a given production will be completed. The bonding agent indemnifies the production against unforeseen costs of any sort, whether or not they result from problems covered by insurance. This only finances completion of the project – if does not reimburse creditors for unpaid bills such as location fees.

COOKIE – An irregularly perforated shadow-forming sheet, opaque or translucent, made of plywood, fabric or metal. From the Greek kukaloris, which means “breaking up of light.” Also called a Kook.

COVER SET – A location, usually an interior, which is prepared to serve as an alternate to planned outdoor work in case of weather problems.

COVERAGE – The more detailed shots of indeterminate number which are filmed to be intercut with the “master” shot.

CRAB DOLLY – A wheeled vehicle that eliminates the use of metal tracks and permits the camera to be moved in any horizontal direction. It has a vertical movement of approximately five feet.

CRANE – A large mobile camera mount, on which the camera may be projected out and over the action. Operated electrically or manually.

CUT – 1) Stop the camera; 2) Stop the action; 3) To edit or shorten a scene by cutting the film; 4) The end of the scene.

DAY FOR NIGHT – A scene that takes place at night but is filmed during the day – usually for economic reasons. The use of a filter on the camera creates the nighttime effect.

DOLLY – A wheeled vehicle for mounting a camera and accommodating a camera operator and assistant. Often equipped with a boom on which a camera is mounted.

DOLLY SHOT – A shot accomplished while the camera is moving as opposed to a “pivotal” pan shot where the camera remains stationary.

DOLLY TRACK – Parallel metal tracks laid on the ground to allow a dolly to move smoothly over rough or uneven surface or ground.

DOWNTIME – Time when a single malfunctioning or ill-prepared element of a production keeps all the other elements waiting.

DUBBING – Also known as Automatic Dialogue Replacement (ADR) or Looping. The technique of recording dialogue under the acoustically perfect conditions of a studio, to replace originally poor sound recording, or artistically unacceptable performances.

DULLING SPRAY – An aerosol spray that leaves a dull film on any surface that might be causing glare in the camera lens.

EDITORIAL – Still photography involving models or products which is intended to accompany articles in a magazine, rather than print advertisement.

ESTABLISHING SHOT – A long shot, usually at the start of a scene, which establishes the place, time and other important elements of the action. It can be either interior or exterior. Also called Master Shot.

EXTERIOR – Any scene shot outside a structure.

FILL LIGHT – The light that is used to fill in the shadow area of a subject, allowing for detail to be seen in those areas.

FIRST UNIT – Principal people on the set, including the director and actors for filming dialogue, and other scenes requiring the actors.

FISHPOLE – A long lightweight hand-held rod on which a microphone can be mounted in situations where the boom is not practical.

FLAG – See Gobo.

FLAT – A section of a set, usually modular, made of thin plywood. Surface treatments vary from paints to wallpapers, papier-mâché to sheet metal. May contain windows, simulated fireplaces, etc.

FOG EFFECT – The device used to vaporize liquid to create fog or smoke. Can be as simple as an aerosol spray or release of dry ice vapor. Mechanical devices range from hand held battery units to large devices with internal combustion engines which qualify as pyrotechnic devices. Liquids being vaporized (“fog juice”) can be either water- or oil- based.

FOLEY – Sound effects replacement (such as footsteps) often required when dialogue is re-recorded.

FOLLOW SHOT – A shot in which the camera is moved to follow the action.

FORCED CALL – Under certain union rules, when a person is recalled to work before a minimum number of hours have passed for rest purposes. Also known as a “Short Turnaround.”

FX – Abbreviation for “effects.” Also called EFX.

GAFFER’S TAPE – Wide and strong silver adhesive tape used for securing the lighting instruments, stands, cables, etc., on the set.

GEL – Colored sheets of plastic applied to lights and windows to change the intensity or color of the light.

GENERATOR – Used to provide electrical power when the film unit is on location. Usually part of a truck but may be a stand-alone piece of equipment. Some generators must be grounded by driving a metal stake (usually 36” long) into the ground and attaching a grounding wire to the top of the stake.

GOBO – Shadow-casting device made of plywood or cloth stretched on a metal frame. Specific types of gobos include cutters or fingers (long and narrow), flags (small and rectangular), and targets or dots (round).

GOLDEN LIGHT – Term referring to the warm light that naturally occurs shortly before and after sunset or sunrise.

GOLDEN TIME – Overtime periods for various union and guild members during which they are paid at two or two-and-one-half times their hourly rate.

GREENS – Real and artificial plants and trees used to dress the set, add foliage to a location, or hide a structure.

HERO – Term used in commercials to refer to the product being advertised.

HOLD – 1) A short wait until an objectionable noise dies down before rolling camera; 2) Work day when the production company has permission to be at a location, but does not schedule any activities to occur.

HONEY WAGON – Large trailer containing mobile toilets and dressing rooms.

HOT SET – A set that is completely ready for filming, with all the set elements, or a set that is still being used for shooting.

I.M.O. – Camera positioned in such a way as to isolate motion during an action sequence. Often camera is set at high speed to slow down the action. During filming, the camera is unattended and often the action occurs close to the camera itself.

INSERT – A shot added to explain the action, e.g., a close-up of a letter, newspaper headline, etc.

INSERT CAR – Also known as a Camera Car. The moving vehicle on which a camera and crew film another moving vehicle.

INTERIOR – Filming inside a building or structure, generally using artificial light.

ITC – Intermittent traffic control. Involves holding traffic on a road in one or both directions for a period of time, generally not to exceed five minutes, for filming.

KEY LIGHT – The main source used to light the subject. Its direction and amount relative to other lights establishes the mood of illumination.

LIGHTING, TYPES OF – Ambient, artificial, available, back, cross, front, fill, spots, key, flat, etc.

LIGHTING EQUIPMENT, TYPES OF – Lighting equipment falls within three categories: the illuminators themselves, the stands (e.g., century stands), and the diffusers (e.g., barn doors, gobos).

LIGHTS, TYPES OF – Ace, babies, brutes, cones, juniors, inky, quartz, arc, scoops, nine-lights, mighty mites, moles, mini-moles, sun-guns, etc.

LOADS, (FULL, HALF, QUARTER) – Terms used to describe varying amounts of explosive materials in blank cartridges used in guns on the set.

LOCATION – Any place away from the studio used as a background for filming.

LOCATION SERVICE – A company that contracts with private property owners (homes, office buildings, etc.) to represent and market their properties to the film industry. Services typically charge a 30% commission. The State of California requires them to be licensed real estate brokers.

MAGAZINE – 1) The light-tight container that feeds and takes up the film in a motion picture camera; 2) A special box designed to meet legal requirements for storage and transportation of pyrotechnic materials.

MARKS – Pieces of tape or chalk used to give actors or the camera crew a specific reference point for where they should be at a certain time in the scene.

MASTER SHOT – Term describing a complete overall shot of an entire scene to which all other shots in the scene are related.

MEAL PENALTY – Under union rules, cast and crew members must be fed after a certain number of work hours have elapsed (usually six). Failure to provide this meal period on time results in charges based on the amount of time that the meal period is delayed.

MOS – Abbreviation for “Mit Out Sound,” a term describing a scene shot without sound.

MOUNTS, CAMERA – A device that allows the camera to be attached to something else. Often used with regard to road filming as front car mounts and side car mounts. Front car mounts are generally attached to the hood of a car to film action and/or dialogue in the car. Usually the car is towed while using front mounts. Side car mounts can be mounted to either door.

MUSCOLIGHT – Brand name for a large truck with a telescoping arm that supports an array of powerful lights, intended to illuminate a large area.

MOW – Abbreviation for Movie of the Week, also known as a Television Movie, a film of 90 minutes or longer shot for broadcast on television.

ND – Abbreviation for Non-Descript. Can designate vehicles or extras who add realism to the scene.

NIGHT FOR DAY – Shooting at night, but lighting to simulate daytime.

NIGHT PREMIUM – An adjustment made to the basic rate of pay for work performed after a certain hour.

ON A BELL – Term heard on the set or location which indicates that the camera is rolling or about to roll. It is a signal that all activity not related to the filming is to stop and everyone is to be quiet.

OUTTAKES – Film shot and developed but not used in the final version of the film.

PAN – Pivotal camera movement in a horizontal plane. Sometimes used when describing pivotal camera movement in other planes.

PARALLEL – A platform or scaffolding used to raise a camera and crew or lighting above the ground for high-angle shots.

PERMIT SERVICE – An independent agent hired by a production company to complete permitting requirements, including application, payment and pickup of required permits and business licenses, and notification of police and fire departments.

PICK-UP SHOT – Re-shooting a portion of a scene, the rest of which was filmed previously.

PICTURE CAR – The vehicle actually being filmed.

PLAYBACK – Music and vocals previously recorded, used when shooting musical numbers and music videos.

POLECAT – An expandable metal bar placed vertically in a room between floor and ceiling. Used to hang lights and other equipment. A horizontal bar placed near the ceiling and spanning from one wall to another is called a Sky Bar.

POST-PRODUCTION – The period of time in a schedule from the first days of cutting until the delivery of a finished print. Activities include cutting, scoring, sound effects, and special visual effects.

POV – Abbreviation for “Point of View.” Usually the camera position that simulates a view as seen by the actor.

PRACTICAL – Refers to something on the set that actually works (like a sink or light). Also refers to a real location as opposed to a set.

PREP DAY – Work day preceding filming. Can include set construction or dressing, or rigging for stunts or special effects.

PRE-PRODUCTION – All activity prior to the first day of filming. This generally includes script rewriting, set design, budgeting, major casting, and selection of principal locations.

PRINT – Order given when a take is satisfactory. Also, the positive film.

PROCESS SHOT – Used primarily for moving automobile or train shots, the previously filmed background of the shot is projected through a transparent screen, while the actors sit in a specially designed vehicle (where the front, sides or back can be removed) and perform.

PRODUCTION – Generic term for all types of film, television, commercial and other related forms. Also, that portion of the schedule that starts at the first day of filming and ends on the last day of principal photography.

PRODUCTION REPORT – A daily record of the personnel, scenes shot, equipment and film used, and the hours spent on a given day of production. Downtime and any location problems would be noted here.

PROPS – Moveable objects on the set normally handled by actors. Also called properties.

PYROTECHNICS – Materials that can be ignited, burned or exploded on command. Most pyrotechnic material must be handled by a Pyrotechnics Technician licensed by the State of California. These materials include propane fire rings, bullet hits and sparking devices.

RAMP – When used on location, describes a structure that allows a moving object (such as a car) to pass above another object or simply to fly through the air.

REPORT TO – A call that requires the crewmembers to report directly to a location rather than to a studio for the filming day. Generally, the work day starts when the crew arrives at the location.

REVERSE – What is seen opposite the location or set being shot; shot taken of what is behind the camera, or immediately adjacent to it in the establishing shot.

RIGGING – Scaffolding for lights.

RITTER – Also known as a Wind Machine. Looks like a small airplane propeller. Can be gas or electric powered.

RUN BYS – Shots where a moving vehicle passes a stationary camera position. Also called Drive Bys.

RUNNING SHOT – Shot where a moving camera films a moving vehicle.

SANDBAG – Burlap or plastic bags filled with sand used to temporarily steady or hold down certain pieces of equipment such as light stands.

SCOUT – Visit to a potential filming location by an individual for the purpose of taking panoramic photographs and identifying the owner, permitting requirements and potential price range for use of the site. Scouting occurs early in the project, and the results of the scouting trips become factors in creative and financial aspects of the project.

SCRIM – Diffusion material placed in front of lights to soften the effect.

SETUP – Each change in position of the camera as well as the actual scene being filmed.

SHINY BOARDS – Reflectorized metal boards used to reduce the difference between light and shaded areas by bouncing sunlight into the darker area.

SHOT – One roll of the camera, also known as Take or Scene.

SLATE – See Clapper Board.

SLOW MOTION – Whenever film is shot at a greater frames per second rate than the rate at which it will be projected, it slows down the motion.

SOUND CART – The wheeled cabinet on which sound recording equipment is placed to allow easy movement around the set.

SOUND EFFECTS – Portion of a soundtrack containing sounds other than music or dialogue (gunshots, rushing water, door slams), which are edited in during post-production.

SPECIAL EFFECTS – A term describing any unusual effect to create an illusion on film. These range from the elements (rain, fog, snow) to pyrotechnics (explosions, bullet hits) and intricate optical effects.

SPEED – A cue given when camera and recorder have reached their proper operation. The signal that the Director can now say “Action.” Also refers to the sensitivity of the film stock to light.

SQUIB – See Bullet Hit.

STICKS – A term for a camera tripod.

STOCK SHOT – Footage previously filmed for other productions or purely as library footage which can be incorporated into a new production.

STORY BOARD – A series of drawings as visual representation of the shooting sequence. Sketches represent the key situations in the scene.

STRIKE – Securing or removing equipment at the end of the shooting day or when changing locations; removing set dressing. Also used to refer to camera setups; changing the position of the camera and lights in preparation for the next setup.

SYNC – Abbreviation for synchronization. Where the picture and a given sound occur at the same time.

TAKE – A scene or part of a scene recorded on film and/or sound tape from each start to each stop of the camera and/or recording. Each shot may be repeated in several takes until a satisfactory result is achieved.

TECH SCOUT – Also called Technical Scout. Visit to an identified location by a group including all department heads. This will include the Director, Director of Photography, First AD, Location Manager, Transportation Coordinator, along with technicians and special effects or stunt people. The purpose is for each to look at the site to solve logistical problems before filming begins. Could result in minor scheduling changes.

TOW SHOT – Shots where the picture car is towed by another vehicle (usually a camera car) to: 1) Allow dialogue or other action between the driver and passengers; 2) Mount cameras, lights or other equipment in such a way as to obscure the driver's view. Often involves some type of camera mount on the picture car.

TRIPOD – An adjustable, three-legged stand, to which the camera is attached. Also called Sticks.

WETDOWNS – Wetting of pavement for filming. Often requested for car commercials. Also used to match rain sequences.

WILD TRACK – Sound recording not tied to picture, such as composite sound effects with background noise.

WRAP – Usually refers to finishing work, or a particular location, set, or sequence, or filming day.

XLS – Extreme Long Shot. Distant landscape or vast interior shot in which human figures appear relatively small.

ZOOM – The magnification of a certain area of the frame by bringing it optically to the full size of the screen and excluding the rest of the frame in the process.