CAMERA TERMS

Introduction
Cameras have been around since the 1820s, and cinematography since the 1880s, so many industry terms and conventions have developed in those two hundred years. These are a few that you should be aware of.

Terms for camera movement
The angles that the camera is positioned communicate intuitive information to the viewer about the subject’s character and situation. For example, a character who is consistently shot from below looks more dominating than one shot from above. A canted shot gives a sense of unease to a scene, and a bird’s eye view detaches the viewer emotionally from the action.

**Shots**

The distance that the camera is placed from the subject communicates other types of information about the plot or the character’s reaction to events.

Apart from the establishing shot, which places events in a location, time period, and style, the use of varying camera distances allows the characters and director to use posture (whole body), gesture (hands and arms), or facial expressions to communicate reaction and intention.