



REEL NIKKEI STORIES: Nikkei Family Legacy Project

A project of the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California

USING THE CAMERA By Urban Voice

Depending upon what type of camera you are using these instructions may be slightly different. These instructions are for the Sony Handycam HDR-SR11. The JCCCNC has them available to borrow for your Reel Nikkei project. Please call for more information.

Think about how you want to shoot your interview. By changing the camera angle, you change the way the image looks.

1. If you have a tripod, use it.

You don't want it to look like everyone is floating in a boat.

- Set up the tripod and attach the base plate to your camera. It will screw easily into the hole of the camera's bottom.
- Once the base plate is on the camera, slide it onto the tripod, and lock it in place.
- Then, level the camera. If your camera is not leveled, your interviewee will look like they're leaning at an angle when you watch the footage later.



2. Turn your camera on by rotating the power switch so that the movie symbol lights up.



3. Then, press the "easy" or "auto" button. With the "easy" button selected, you don't have to worry about adjusting the camera's exposure. The camera will adjust it automatically. The camera will also adjust the white balance.



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4. Now that your camera is set up, it's time to bring in your interviewee and place them into their position.
5. Make sure that your lights are placed in the right places. If they need any adjustments, then this is a good time to make them.
6. Look at the camera's LCD screen to see the effects in moving around the lights.
7. Once everything is set, check your audio levels and adjust them accordingly. While setting up the camera, it's a good idea to talk to the interviewee to help them become comfortable being in front of the camera. This also helps set audio levels at a natural conversation volume.
8. **Don't forget to focus your camera.** You don't want everything to look blurry. The best way to set the focus on your camera is to zoom all the way in on your interviewee's eyes. Focus the camera, and then zoom back out to set your shot composition.
9. You also have to think about the frame in relation to the story for your interviewee. That is what composition is all about.
10. **Basically, there are three frame sizes used in describing shot composition.**

- Wide shots are shots that show a lot of the area and are good for showing the location of the interview. These are good to use in the beginning and ending of your interview.



- Medium shots show the interviewee from about the waist up and are good for bringing the viewer into the story.





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Shot composition (cont.)

- Close up shots are good to show emotion of the interviewee. Used from that are parts and parts of the interview where you want the viewer to really listen to what is being said.



11. If you want to include still images in your video, hang them from a wall and record them with your video camera. Make sure your camera is on a tripod so that the pictures will be still and not floating around.
12. Remember, these are only suggestions for shot composition. Use your own creativity and frame the shots how you want to see them.
13. You are now ready to start your interview, so press record and start asking questions!