

Camera Equipment Tutorial



Middlesex Community College
CENTER FOR NEW MEDIA

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Tripod Setup



Take the tripod and unscrew the arm and extend it out and way from the legs. While holding the tripod like a baby, unlock and extend the lower legs. Extend the legs and place the tripod on the ground. Be sure to push down the center support so that the legs are secure. Depending on what you will be shooting you may have to raise or lower the tripod to get the correct shot.

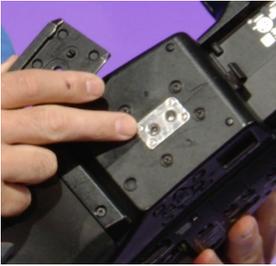


When shooting an interview, you typically want the lens the same height as the persons head. On the head of the tripod there will be a bubble level to help make sure that your tripod and camera are level. Some tripods Will have a screw under the head. Loosen up the screw and the head will be able to be moved around. Move the head so that the bubble level is in the center of the circle.



On the top there will be a screw on the right side, this will unlock the plate from the tripod. On this tripod loosen up the screw and push it down and lift the plate out. On some tripods there will be a button either on the back or side that you push and slide the plate off. On the bottom of the plate you will see an arrow showing which side the camera lens needs to be. Make sure you have this side of the plate near the lens.

Tripod Setup



Grab the camera and on the bottom, there will be one or two holes. If there are two, they are different sizes. Screw the plate on using the hole that will fit the screw you have. Tighten the screw with either a coin, in this case a quarter, or you can use a key, but be sure to use the flat side of the key. Now place the camera on the tripod on an angle push down once in tighten the screw. On the side of the head loosen up the tilt knob while holding the handle and see if the camera is balanced on the tripod.



If it is not balanced the camera will fall to one side or the other. If it is not balanced loosen up the plate screw and carefully slide the plate to make the camera balanced. Tighten up the plate screw and recheck. You may have to do this a few times.



You know you are well balanced when you let go and the camera doesn't fall front or back. Most importantly never leave the tripod without locking the tilt and pan knobs. Otherwise the camera will fall, and you could possibly damage the camera and/or tripod.

Camera Setup



Start by putting on the battery. Look at the battery and locate the electrical connectors. These will go in first. Slide the battery in and push until you hear a click. It may take a few tries. To take the battery off push the gray button next to the battery and pull the battery out.

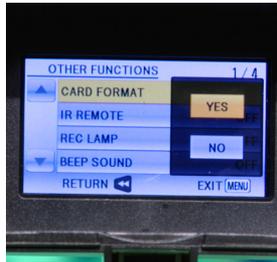
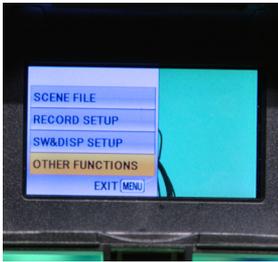


On the side of the camera is a sliding door where the SD card will go. Slide up the door to access the SD card slot. Take your SD card and slide it in with the brass contacts down and the label up. Push it in then slide the door down. Make sure that the switch for the camera mode is in AVCHD so that your project will be recorded in HD. Now on the other side of the camera where grip is, push in the white bottom and slide down to the on position.



Back on the other side of the camera locate the Menu, up, down, left right and enter buttons. You will use these to navigate the menu options when we change the camera setting. Press the menu button and look into the view finder. You will see a list of options. Use the down button and highlight Record setup then press enter. With Rec format already highlighted hit enter. This menu is where you can select what format you would like to record in. Press the up or down arrow to highlight your preference then press enter.

Camera Setup



Press menu and arrow down to other functions. Already highlighted, press enter on card format. Word of caution make sure you have removed your footage before you continue. Arrow up to highlight yes and press enter. Arrow left to highlight yes and press enter. Once done press enter to exit. Now look in the view finder and you can see how much time you have to record. This will be different based on the size of the SD card and what you have your record format set to.



This next step is not necessary but if you want your video to have special timecode so you can keep track of things like day 1, 2, 3 or SD Card 1,2,3 you can set your timecode to a specific number. Press the menu button. Arrow down until record setup highlighted and Press enter. Arrow down until TC preset is highlighted and press enter. Arrow up and press enter. Here you can now change the time code to what you want.

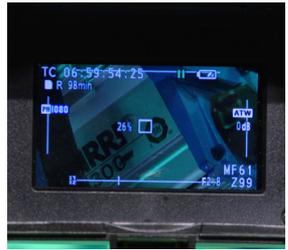


To do this use the up and down arrows to change number and the left or right to change between the hr, mins, and frames. Once you are down arrow right until you highlight, select and press enter. Once back to the menu press the menu button to get you back to the view finder. Now you're ready to record with the correct settings and a clean SD card.

Manual Mode



You will want to use the camera in manual mode so that your exposure, focus and color balance are correct. Not all cameras are good in auto. First make sure the switch is in manual. Next look in the view finder and you will either see a number in DB or AGC. If it is in AGC push the iris wheel in to change the setting. Once you have the iris in manual where you see a number you can now move the wheel up and down to open and close the iris to get the correct exposure.



To get the proper focus you will use the ring at the front of the lens. Always zoom in as far as you can so that you can get the best focus. Focusing on a wide shot will not get you the best focus. Our cameras have a focus assist button. After you zoom in all the way push the focus assist button and your shot will zoom in even more allowing you to really fine tune the focus. Once you are done make sure to turn off focus assist. Zoom back you to get the framing you want.



Always do a manual white balance. While looking in the view finder push the white balance button until you see AWW Ach. Once you are on AWW Ach place a white card in your shot where you will be shooting. You may have to open or close the iris a bit to get a proper exposure. Now press and hold the white balance button until you see AWW ABB active and let go. The camera will go into black and back to white. Once it is correctly done you will see AWW ABB OK. Make sure to reframe your shot and fix your iris if needed.

Audio



To plug in the xlr into the mic and the camera make sure to line up the pins with the cable. Push in the cable and make sure it is tight. To remove the cable push in the button on the cable pull on the connect and the microphone to separate the two. On the back of the camera there is a switch to provide 48 volts to the microphone. Depending on the type of microphone you are using you may or may not need this switch on.



Next make sure the line/mic switch is set to mic because that is what we are using. Now plug in the male side of the xlr into channel one. To remove the xlr, push in the tab above the connector and pull the xlr out. You will want to use headphones to monitor the audio. Take the headphone connector and plug it into the headphone jack located just under the battery release button.

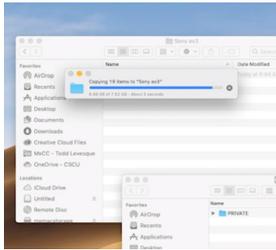
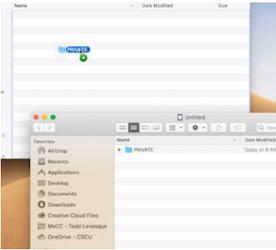


Make sure you select what inputs the camera will be using for each channel. The rear for channel one which is our mic and using channel two front mic which is the camera mic as nat sound or backup. Make sure you are in manual for audio level control. While using the audio dial for channel one, which is your external microphone, you can adjust the level. Looking in the view finder you will see bar and dots on the bottom off the view finder. This shows you the audio level for each of your channels. First look at channel one and adjust the level using the dial. Adjust the level so that the audio is peaking just past the vertical line which indicates good audio levels. Do the same thing for channel two which is the on-camera microphone.

Breakdown



Once you are done make sure you properly disconnect the xlr, remove the tripod plate and leave it with the tripod, collapse the tripod legs and fold it in along with the arm, and neatly put away all the equipment in the bag.



Don't forget to remove the SD card and transfer all of the contents of the SD card to your computer or external hard drive so that you can edit the video later. Once you have transferred your footage put the SD card back into the camera and return the equipment to the loan room.