

SOUND



There are **two types of sound** you will use in your video: real sound and added sound.

Real sound refers to voices, ambient sounds, noises-anything that was recorded in the moment, in the actual location.

Added sound refers to the sounds that you are going to add in post-production, these can be ambient sounds and specific sounds that you want to reinforce. And it also refers to the music that is added in the edit.

These are the two elements that you can use in your story, and you should be very conscious of both the sound you record on set and the sound you will need later.

The importance of sound and music in your video

Sound is more important than image in the professional quality feel of any video. This element is often forgotten, but it is essential if you want your video to "feel" professional.

The feeling we get from the images is closely related to the sound and music that accompanies them. Sound is the emotional narrator of your story, so think of it as much as your image and the content of your video.

The ambient sound recorded in the scene helps to transport us to the place where the people in the video live. Music, on the other hand, helps us understand what they feel. Never choose music at random, always think about the emotion you want to convey with your story. Remember that you must choose how you want to be perceived and what you want your audience to feel.

The same scene will convey quite different emotions if you superimpose vigorous or sad music.

Sound serves to create greater realism (by being able to hear the ambient sound of the scenes). In our daily lives, we do not listen to all the sound elements that surround us, but we select. The sound editing offers us that same option.

The sound and the music also help to join all the parts of the video, it gives unity to each sequence and to the whole video. Generally, in editing, the sound is more continuous than the image, the same ambient sound and/or music remains stable during a sequence while the photographic shots have cuts. Never cut sound and image at the same time (jump cut effect) unless you want to generate a break on purpose.

The use of music and sound can allow you many effects. For example, they can help you to warn of the next sequence (when you softly introduce a sound of a sequence that will come next). This is a quite common effect in editing.

They can also help you express something hidden, either something that is not seen in the scene and is important to highlight, or they can also help reinforce a hidden emotion. For example, in a celebration scene, we can focus on one person and introduce sad music, to reinforce how that person feels. This contrasting effect between sound and image helps to reinforce certain emotions that may not be visible in the shot.

Use sound to tell us what is going on around the characters that we can't see. This will reinforce the presence of what is outside the camera frame and give a sense of greater spaciousness to your sequence.

Be careful with the use of silence, it is important to maintain the rhythm of the story. Not all your video should have music, alternate between moments of music and silence to achieve a better rhythm.

In a short video, don't use too many musical themes or continuously change the sound emotion. When there is little time it is better to reinforce the main emotion of the story.

Sound recording

One of the main shortcomings of low-budget films is the sound quality. Thanks to technological advances, it is now possible to capture fairly high-quality sound without a great deal of expense.

The simplest and most economical option is to use a lavalier microphone that you clip onto your interviewee's clothing. This is most appropriate for interviews.

To record ambient sound, you can use your camera's microphone or use an external recorder with microphones (brands like Zoom and Tascam are the most economical and of good quality). Remember that this option is good for capturing all the sounds of a scene, but it is not appropriate for an interview where we want to record mainly the voice.

Be careful that there is no wind outside where you are going to record the interview, nor that there are very intense noises in the vicinity. It's crucial to get the sound right, if it's wrong or not very good, you won't be able to use the material. As a general rule try and keep the microphone as close as possible to the speaker, pointing at them directly. Do not try and record dialogue with noises in the background, whether it's traffic or a group of people talking. The most appropriate place is a quiet place, so that the interviewee's voice is the main sound.

If you can track audio on the screen and have some manual control, ideally a spoken voice should be recorded at -12db (roughly three quarters of the sound bar) and general sound around -20db.

What music can I use in my video?

Since music is subject to copyright, we must make sure that the music we include is under a Creative Common license. This means that it is music that can be used in outreach and educational (non-commercial) content without having to pay the author.

There are several sites where you can get this kind of music. Don't forget to include in the credits the name of the songs and authors you are using:

<http://freemusicarchive.org/curator/video>

<http://publicdomain4u.com/top-ten>

<https://musopen.org/music/>

Well known authors are not usually Creative Common. In this case you can't use their songs without paying and they are usually very high sums. Avoid using music that you do not have the rights to use, or your video may be removed from your channel and you will not be able to distribute it on any TV channel or at film festivals.

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Photos: Joel Redman / If Not Us Then Who.