

MIKE STANIFORTH



AI FILMMAKING

The Director's Starter Kit

Direct a small story. Build the shots. Finish the film.

Course framework 0.1

One identity to return to

MILK / FINISHED FILM

One character. Real film frames.

Compare face, hair, dark knitwear and proportions across the selected shots.



Arrival / wardrobe
Source 00:14.3



Face / downward gaze
Source 00:33.0



Frontal reaction
Source 00:41.0



Turning eyeline
Source 00:45.0

Actual film frames arranged for study. This sheet was assembled after the finished film.

These film frames let you compare face, hair and costume across views. Keep a labelled reference version with your practice project.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Choose the details that must persist between shots.

Identity under the scene light

MILK / FINISHED FILM

Performance through the sequence.

Observe the eyeline, expression and scene light. The scream is a story spoiler.



Look down
Source 00:33.0



Hold the reaction
Source 00:41.0



Turn to the source
Source 00:45.0



Scream / spoiler
Source 01:13.2

Actual film frames arranged for study. This sheet was assembled after the finished film.

Compare expression and scene light in the finished film.
Check which details hold as the view and mood change.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Record the expression and wardrobe needed for your shot.

<templates/03-expression-performance.md>

A practice frame for one shot



One camera
One moment
One composition

Use a single film frame for composition. Keep the character sheet separate for identity checks.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Keep multi-panel sheets out of the first-frame slot.

Light belongs to the room



Describe the source position and quality. A reverse angle changes its screen position while the light stays fixed in the room.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Write where the light comes from.

Upstage and downstage key



Upstage key

The key moves to the camera side. More of the face opens to light, changing the modelling.



Downstage key

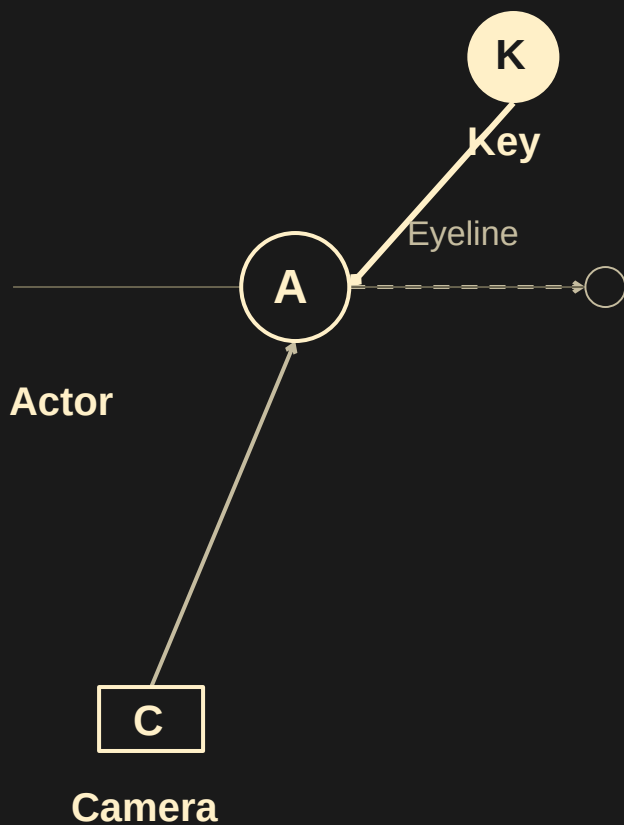
YOUR NEXT STEP

Compare the shadow, source and story.

Where the key sits

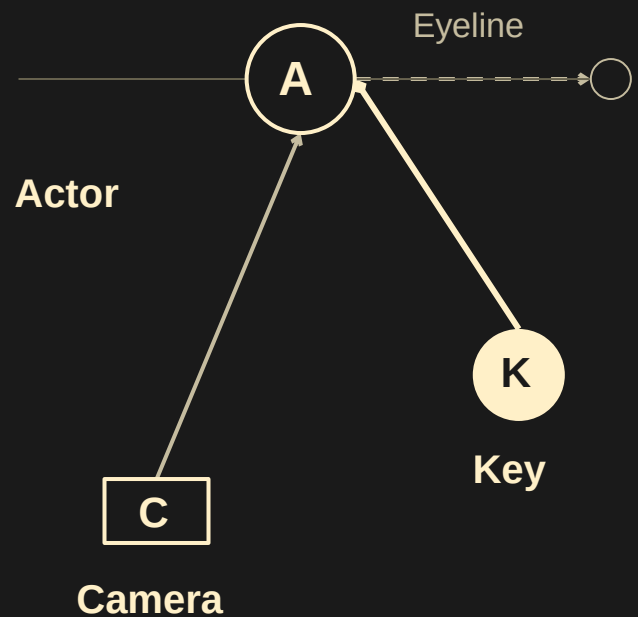
Upstage

Key on the far side of action



Downstage

Key on the camera side



Illustrative positions, not measured lamp locations.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Mark actor, eyeline, camera and key first.

Choose the light for the scene



Upstage

Camera sees shadow.
Stronger facial shape.



Downstage

More face receives light.
Often a more open look.

Either can serve the story. Check motivation, eyeline and continuity before choosing.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Describe source and camera in your prompt.

[prompts/12-reverse-shot-lighting.txt](#)