

Guidelines for location selection

Very often, the action in the video will determine the location. On some occasions, though, for example when filming interviews, this will need to take place in a location of your choice. These guidelines are provided to help you in choosing a suitable location.

Noise:

It's important that the location we use isn't going to suffer from any unwanted noise. This is especially true for interviews but it's also relevant to any style of filming.

For example, a room next to the staff canteen or kitchen would probably be unsuitable. Likewise rooms next to the loading bay, main reception, the telephone sales team, a busy corridor - all would probably not be as quiet as is necessary for a successful shoot. Road noise doesn't help either, so choosing a location right next to the M6 is probably best avoided. Double glazed windows may help but remember that if we are using additional lighting it can get very warm, very quickly!

Of course we realise that it's not always possible to find a room away from the day to day noise that goes on in an office or shop floor. In these cases it would be best if the people that are working in the immediate area could be gently encouraged to be as quiet as possible during the duration of the shoot. An email in advance might be a good idea.

Noises inside the room are just as bad, like humming, buzzing, gurgling and rattling. When choosing a room, please consider noise from fans, air conditioning, water coolers and vending machines, fluorescent lights, squeaky doors and floors and electronic equipment. Telephones that can be unplugged or switched off are always welcomed by film crews! When choosing a room, close your eyes for a minute and listen to what you can hear. You'll be surprised!

The microphones we use are very, very sensitive and will pick up noises that our ears and brains have filtered out. So, when choosing a location for an interview style of filming, please think about any noises inside and outside the room that would affect shooting. Use the checklist below to help you with your selection.

Facilities:

We will usually (but not always) need mains power for our equipment and lighting. Because some equipment can draw a lot of power, we would ideally like to spread the load over more than one socket (three or four would be ideal, if possible). We will provide extension cables.

The ability to turn off all the room lights and close blinds or curtains to make the room as dark as possible is a HUGE benefit. Natural light is nice but can't be relied upon (it changes throughout the day) and fluorescent lighting is just plain horrible on video.

Safety:

The safety of everyone on a location shoot is our primary concern. Some of the lights we use get very hot and there will be cables to trip over. As such, we ask that only people involved in the shoot are allowed in the immediate filming area.

If shooting is to take place on the shop/factory floor or any other location where there may be heavy equipment, hazardous materials or members of the public present then it is essential that everyone that comes into the area is fully aware that filming will be taking place.

If you have any questions or concerns about choosing a sensible location, please let us know as soon as possible so we can advise accordingly.

Checklist:

Please use this simple checklist to make sure that you're choosing a good location.

- Have you done the 'eyes closed' sound test?
- Road noise?
- Neighbouring rooms/areas?
- Busy thoroughfare?
- Double glazing?
- Blinds/curtains? How dark can the room be made? Not very / Fairly / Very dark
- Telephones unpluggable?
- Water fountain/vending machine etc?
- Air conditioning? Can it be switched off?
- Fluorescent light hum?
- Electronic equipment, e.g. PC's, cash registers?
- Squeaky doors/floors?
- How many mains power sockets?
- Can the room be locked (in case equipment needs to be left unattended)?
- Everyone notified?
- Will filming interfere with routine activity? Is this acceptable?
- Will any special safety precautions have to be taken, e.g. protective clothing?