

STEADYING THE CAMERA

Simple hand-held options:

Hand-holding the camera

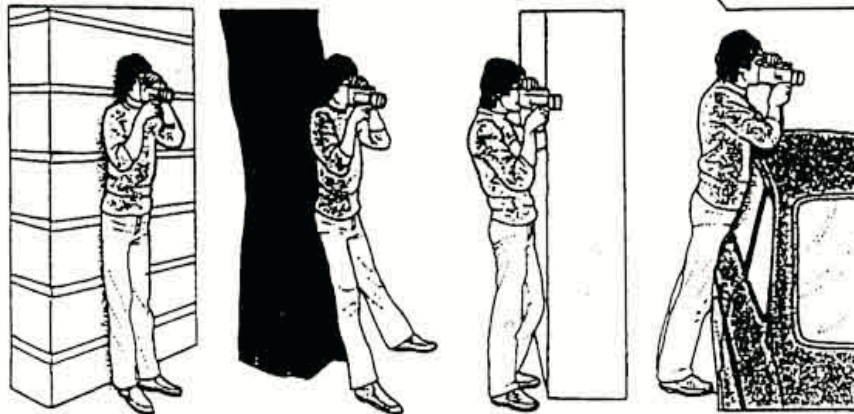
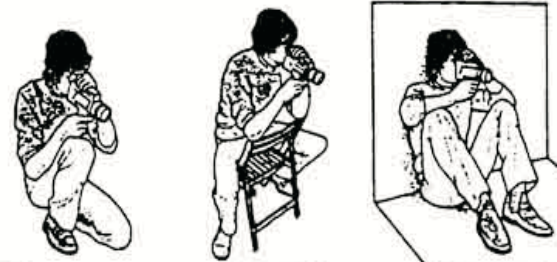
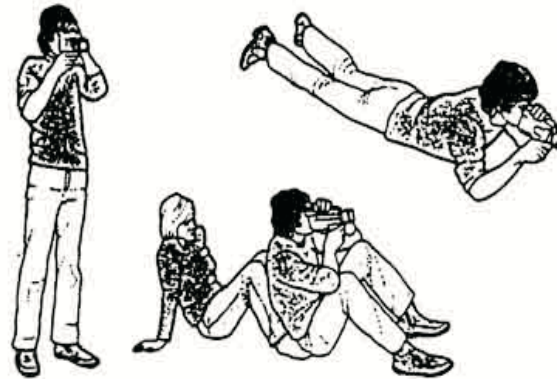
There are many occasions – when you need to be able to move quickly or when space is restricted – where it clearly makes more sense to hand-hold the camera than to use a tripod.

When hand-holding the camera, move in close and use the widest angle you can justify. The picture will appear steadier and you will also have a greater depth of field. Remember that the longer the focal length the more your movements will be exaggerated by the lens. So, unless you have no choice, avoid sustained hand-held telephoto shots. If you want your subject to be larger, move nearer rather than zooming in.

The hand-held camera really comes into its own when following a moving subject (see p. 72). Aim to move in a smooth glide, keeping your steps short to minimize up-and-down motion. Practice keeping both eyes open so that you can see and avoid any obstacles in your path.

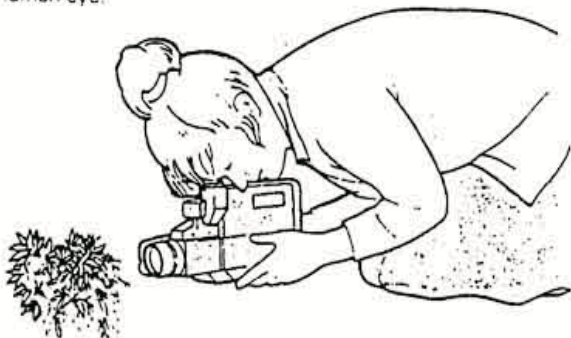
How to hand-hold the camera

Almost all cameras are designed for right-handed people. Therefore, brace the camera by pressing it up against your eye with your right hand, keeping your right elbow pressed tightly against your side. Keep your feet slightly apart and stay literally on your toes. Use a wall, a tree, the corner of a building, a car roof, the back of a chair, or even another person to lean on whenever you can.



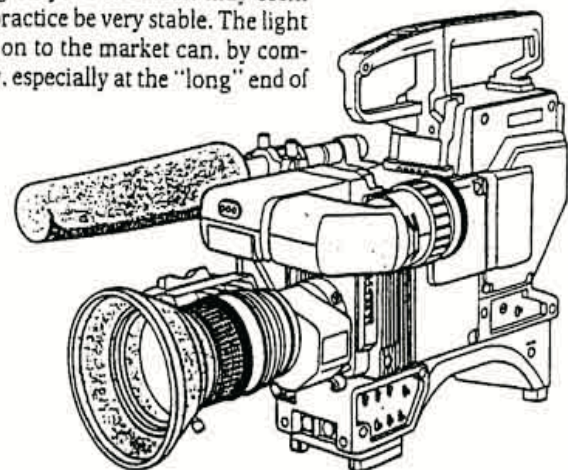
Low level viewing

Use the advantages of the rotatable viewfinder for very low ground shots. You cannot do this with the human eye.



Stabilizing the camera

The stability of the image is in some ways the movie-maker's first priority. Although a small camera might seem easy to hold, oddly enough the weight of the camera is in inverse proportion to its steadiness. A heavy camera, resting on your shoulder, may seem unwieldy, but will in practice be very stable. The light new cameras coming on to the market can, by comparison, be very shaky, especially at the "long" end of the zoom.



Shoulder-mounting camera