

Camera Angles

The term *camera angle* means slightly different things to different people but it always refers to the way a shot is composed. Some people use it to include all camera shot types, others use it to specifically mean the angle between the camera and the subject. We will concentrate on the literal interpretation of camera angles, that is, the angle of the camera relative to the subject.

Eye-Level

This is the most common view, being the real-world angle that we are all used to. It shows subjects as we would expect to see them in real life. It is a fairly neutral shot.

High Angle

A high angle shows the subject from above, i.e. the camera is angled down towards the subject. This has the effect of diminishing the subject, making them appear less powerful, less significant or even submissive.

Low Angle

This shows the subject from below, giving them the impression of being more powerful or dominant.

Bird's Eye

The scene is shown from directly above. This is a completely different and somewhat unnatural point of view which can be used for dramatic effect or for showing a different spatial perspective.

In drama it can be used to show the positions and motions of different characters and objects, enabling the viewer to see things the characters can't.

The bird's-eye view is also very useful in sports, documentaries, etc.

Slanted

Also known as a dutch tilt, this is where the camera is purposely tilted to one side so the horizon is on an angle. This creates an interesting and dramatic effect. Famous examples include Carol Reed's *The Third Man*, Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane* and the *Batman* series.

Dutch tilts are also popular in *MTV-style* video production, where unusual angles and lots of camera movement play a big part.