

Lighting Tricks, Tips and Setups by Scott Lundergan

Throughout the last six years, I've seen several lighting setups and what I'll share with you are the quick, efficient, simple and clutter-free ways to get good lighting. I know your time is valuable, as mine is as well, so let's get to it. You'll know everything you need to know to get good lighting in less than fifteen minutes from now. I could make this very overly complicated, but this reference guide is for small business owners, webmasters or any concept that deals with having someone or multiple people speak in front of a camera, otherwise known as a "piece-to-camera" for multimedia marketing, promotional, testimonial and social proof messages.

Presuming you are using Three 350-500 Watt Lights with soft boxes or something similar, you'll have a key, fill and back light (more on what those lights are in a few seconds).

Also, I recommend

- Two whiteboards from Office Depot.
- A few cheap lighting dimmers from Home Depot.
- 2 extra power cords for attaching to the other end of the lighting dimmers. When buying the power cords, make sure each one can run 500 watts through it.
- A 20 amp outlet will allow you to light all three lights from it, just make sure the 20 amp circuit doesn't have anything else running off of it and use a separate circuit for plugging in your video, especially if you are going to be using a dimmer.
- A muslin, otherwise known as a backdrop. Having this in the background can add more depth than your kitchen wall.

Basically, here is the math $1500 \text{ watts} / 100\text{-}120 \text{ V} = 15 \text{ or } 12.5 \text{ AMPS}$. It is somewhat standard to use 100 for Voltage to compensate and round the numbers up, rather than down, because its power and we don't want anyone getting hurt☺

Lighting Lingo

Key light.

This is the main front light usually around 40 degrees above the subject.. This light acts as lighting most everything in the front. I say "most everything" because the fill light does the rest. Key lights can cause harsh shadows, so it's always good to have diffusion or soft boxes on there. Simple put, these take down the harshness of the light because you don't want hard and/or deep shadows

Fill light

This light is a diffused light and basically acts as to cover/fix/compensate for any harshness and dark spots from the key light. For the most part, I keep this about 10 degrees above eye level so it blends the shadows in

Back light – The backlight adds depth to the video to separate it from the background.

Tips

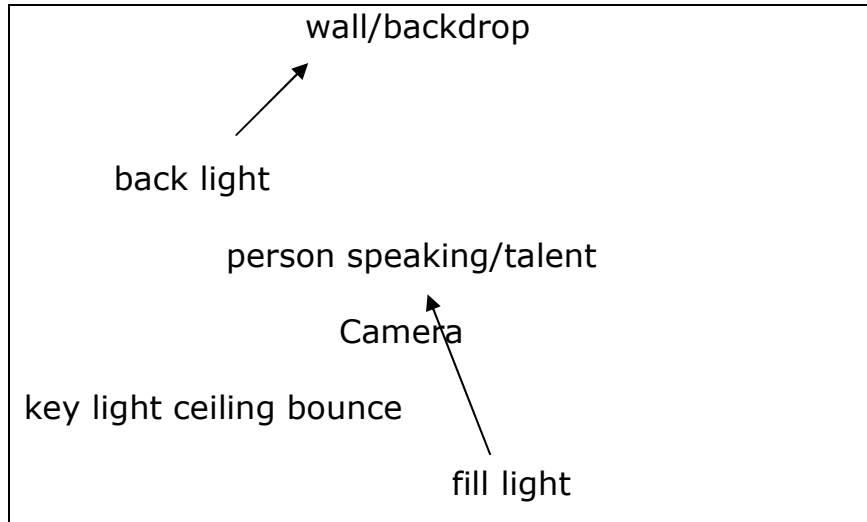
Always be sure to wear different color clothes from the background and never wear a tie or a shirt that has lines/stripes very close to one another. When lines/stripes are very close and seen on a camera, it develops a blur/fuzzy/progressive scan effect.

By the way, for the key light, you don't have to put it directly in front of you. In fact, most people put it off to the side a bit. If it's right in front of someone, it can blind the person speaking on camera, hence the reason why you will see it off to the side a bit when you see people setting up video shoots.

Okay, so here goes for the different set-ups. I don't have photos of the set-ups, so I'll be very clear. Also, when doing these set-ups, **keep the white-boards and dimmers nearby, so you can adjust any hot spots and take away any harsh shadow. That is the ultimate trick I use, is that I always use both, so I never run in to harsh shadows.**

Easy Set-up 1.

Raise your backlight above the talent's head and just out of the frame. Shine it on the backdrop evenly. Use diffusion so there are no hotspots.

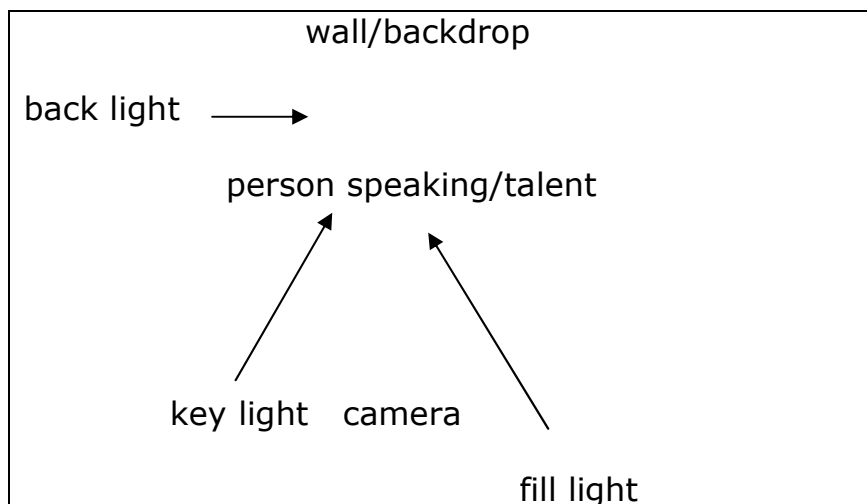


Take your key light and put it directly in front of the person talking and shine it up to a ceiling (presuming you are inside) so it hits your white ceiling and bounces down. This causes a nice blend without hard shadows. It doesn't really matter if your ceiling is shiny or not, the point is to spread more even light that matches the color temperature you are using for the other lights.

Take your fill light and put it 10 degrees above eye level off to the right of the person speaking, so it would be to the left of the person speaking from his/her point of view. Whatever direction they are facing, put the light in their line of sight so any light shadows are not on their facial highlights, but off to the side, barely noticeable.

Easy Set-up 2.

From either side, shine a backlight between the backdrop and the person to give it depth.

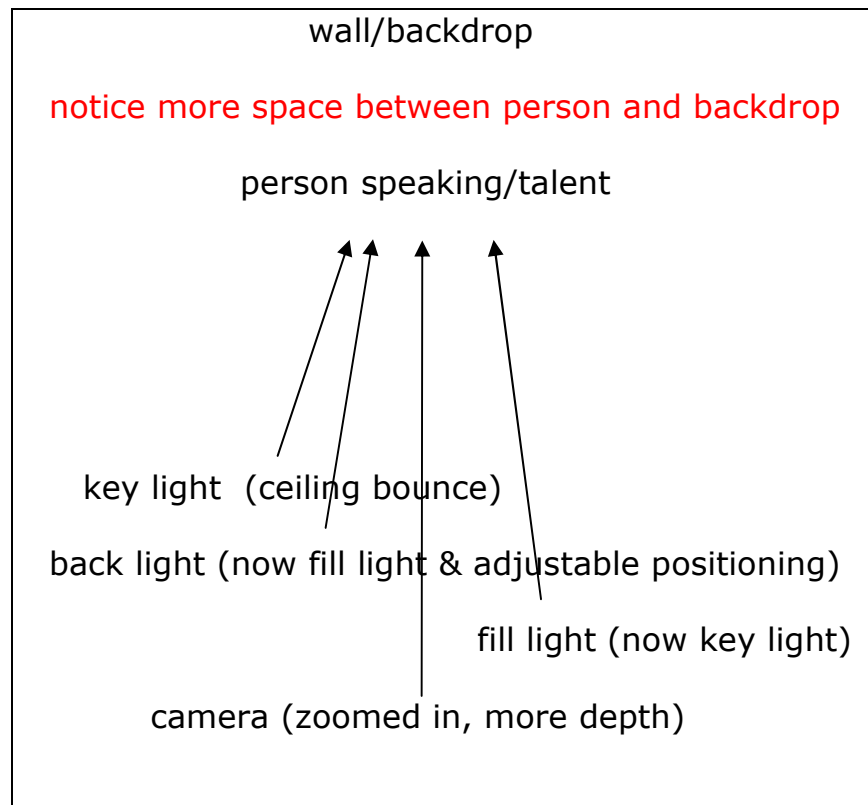


Put the key light to the left of the camera and raise the light 45 degrees from the talents' head.

Put the fill light to the right of and behind the camera. Then raise it about 10-20 degrees.

Easy Set-up 3

If you have a lot of space between the backdrop/wall and the person on camera, just skip the backlight for now. Instead, move the camera a little further back and zoom in a bit to create a tighter, yet longer depth of field. The depth of field is the distance/area between the subject in focus and the lens of the camera.



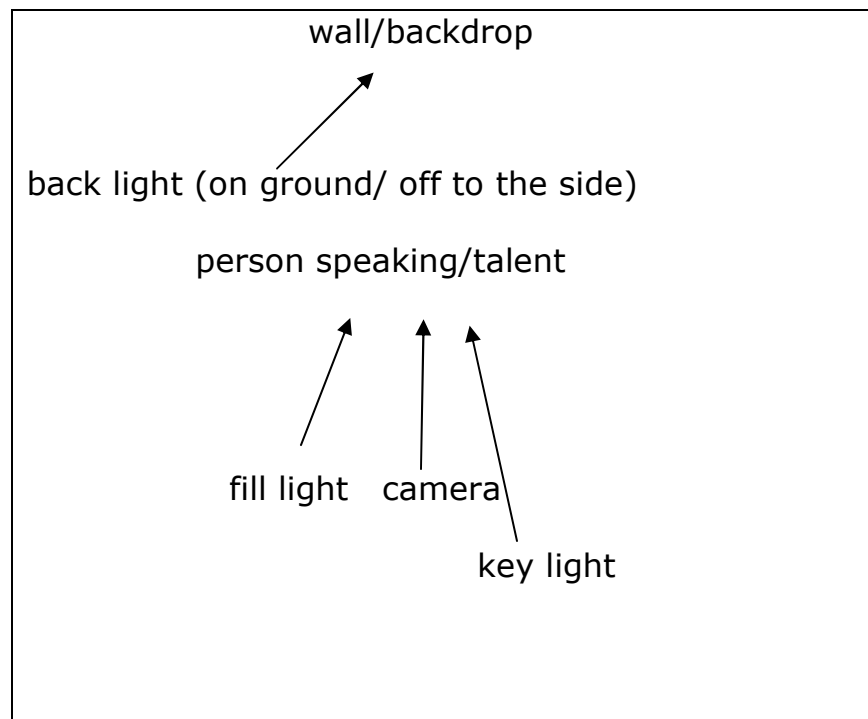
Then, you will basically have two key lights now. Take one light and bounce it from the ceiling where the light hits the ceiling about five feet in front of the talent. This will allow the light to hit the front and top of the talent. It really doesn't matter if your ceiling is white or not this time. The point is to get rid of any other lighting in the room if there is lighting coming from other places that have a different color temperature that you can't get rid of or turn off, basically. This will give a natural, blending light. Now, you probably won't have enough light for the video, so make the fill light your key light by just placing it in front of the camera and to either the left or right of you by just an

arm's length and raise it 20-35 degrees, give or take to get rid of the shadows.

Add the back light in front or behind you a few feet if you need to diffuse the subject anymore. The back light basically becomes the fill light and you will probably need a dimmer for the back light to fill in any gaps or if you don't have a dimmer, just move the light back to add less lighting or move forward to add more lighting.

Easy Set-Up 4

Place the backlight behind the subject, on the ground to the left or right of wherever they are. Shine the light up, hitting the background or wall. You can also shine it on them if you want a glow effect, but I recommend having a cheap dimmer for this so you can adjust the back lighting that hits the wall. This is the kind of image/lighting that you see on Discovery Channel when people are talking in their home and there is a bookcase or object scenery lit up to highlight the backdrop, especially if it relates to the subject.



You can put some colored gels on if you'd like and use that to break up the monotony'white diffusion of the backdrop. Colors that work well for this are light orange/amber or a blend of blue/green.

Put the fill light directly to the left or a little bit in front of the camera and raise about 10 degrees.

Put the key to the right and a little behind the camera, only raising the light about 20 degrees. You'll have a nice amount of light coming in to your camera, so either take the iris of your camera down, buy a cheap dimmer or move the fill light back. The cool thing about getting a cheap dimmer is that YOU become in complete control and aren't having to move lights further from the subject to take the intensity of the lighting down.

So there you have it. Those are the easy set-ups I've used and have seen several professionals use. Now, if you look throughout all the patterns, you'll notice that I put the light out of the direct line of site of the person speaking/talent, but still just at an angle to where the light will cover both sides of their faces. I do this so they are lit, but aren't squinting and can't see the camera. If you want to create a more dramatic effect of adding more darkness to one side of the face or the other, just move the lights at more of an angle and adjust the other lights accordingly.

Where To Get My To-The-Point Resources

To find more related info on video producing, the back-end of video when it comes to intertwining it with sales and marketing and free resources, articles and content about the ins and outs of why you want to use video and how to do it efficiently in delivering your message, go to www.videoproduceronline.com and sign up for my newsletter. There's even a free PDF called The Power Of Video that talks about how to speak in front of the camera and how to get rid of any on-camera fear in less than 20 seconds. The trick is so simple, I couldn't believe it was right in front of me my whole life. The book also goes in to the back end of how to get multimedia powerful testimonials and other simple things about video that most people never talk about for some reason

About The Author

Scott Lundergan has been shooting and editing promotional and marketing videos off and on for the last six years. He has shot for BBC, PBS, Discovery Channel, BBC and CNN.

Scott has walked several people through making them feel comfortable on-camera and in front of an audience along with testing, tracking and seeing the results video can pull for delivering a message on the internet, in front of hundreds of people and different promotional strategies where the most powerful tool to make sales was video.

He has also ran three successful small businesses in publishing, direct sales/online marketing along with his current web marketing video business, where he produces affordable direct response videos for online businesses that takes web surfers and potential buyers out of resistance by informing them of the features, benefits and/or what's in it for them in a very clear, efficient and clutter-free way. This is done mainly through a huge + 10,000 royalty-free multimedia audio, film, video and animation library spread across several niche categories tied in with Scott's editing capabilities and resourcefulness.

In 2004, Scott had his feature length program, "World Explorations: A Six Continent Journey" picked up by Bestbuy.com, Amazon.com and Travelvideostore.com. This program was shot over a period of 2.5 years and explores thirty-three countries around the world with a very up-close and personal feel while marrying the world music to each destination.

To get in touch with Scott, subscribe to his newsletter, grab some article content, browse the video knowledge pages or use his services, head over to www.videoproduceronline.com