

Tips for Beginner's

Pre-Filming:

1. Come up with a story first (or choose a song that could be made into a movie with the features available in the Sims) A clear storyline is very important; you don't have much without it! Try to write about something you know or have personal experience with. Trying to write a story about a subject you know nothing about will lead to a very shallow, weak story.
2. Make a short outline, jotting down ideas of the kind of shots you think you want, the general sequence of events, sets, characters, etc.
3. Create your characters and sets for your movies. I very often make more than one of the same character in each house (with different personalities) so I can film them doing different things. This also works so that you have an extra Sim to "hold" the green diamond so it doesn't appear in your shots. Use Body Shop to create your Sims incase you need more of the same Sim in the future.

Filming:

(Note: using the boolprop cheat makes filming much easier. It can be safe when used correctly. To learn more about it, see the Cheat Codes page)

4. Start filming. Choose whether or not you want simlish to be in your movie or not. If not, disable it before recording. It will improve your performance and you won't have to edit it out at the end!
5. CLOSE-UPS are key! They are almost always better than far away shots. Always film longer than you think you need because a lot of times you'll find that you need that extra second here and there.
6. Vary your camera effects; some moving shots, some still shots. Unless you're really skilled with the camera, still shots work better for most scenes. And if you have a good editor, you can use the effects in the editor to make the scene move rather than in game.
7. Make sure to save your camera angles if you want to either jump from one shot to another, or, if you want to come back to the exact same shot at a later time. You do this in both regular mode and cameraman mode by pressing CTRL and numbers 4-9.
8. Use cameraman mode (hit TAB) to get extra close-up shots, or shots of the sky, funky angles, etc. This can also be used in the neighborhood screen.
9. Practice makes perfect! You probably will have to film a scene many times to get it right! Practice how you want your camera to move, and just keep trying until you get it right! The camera will become easier to use the more you use it.
10. Remember: no green diamonds (plumbobs) in shots, as well as no little thought bubbles and plus/negative signs. Keep the walls up in your house during your shot; inside and outside; as well as the ceiling! This really adds more realism to your movie. To film with the walls and ceiling up, you must use the cameraman mode.

11. Using the “move_objects on” cheat, can really help you get better shots. For example, when someone is talking to another Sim, start the conversation, then move one of the Sims, and you’ll be able to get a close up angle on the Sim talking without the other one being in the way. This cheat is invaluable for many good shots in movie making.
12. It's often helpful to film your scenes in sequence to keep continuity. For example, if you have your Sims standing in a room talking to each other, it may be very hard to get them back in the exact same spot later, so film everything you need at that time before you move them.

Editing:

13. There are two ways to edit. One, is shooting everything and then putting all the shots together. The second is filming and editing as you go, which is what I do. This helps to ensure that I get all the shots I want in a certain scene before I change something or move on to the next scene. Depending on what software you use, the method and way of editing will vary. Things to remember are:
 - a. Don’t linger on one shot/scene too long, unless absolutely necessary. If you find that you have to linger along time, then you might need to go back and get more footage at different angles, etc., just to add variety.
 - b. Make sure to cut the beginning and end of movies so you don’t show any ‘paused’ footage. Same with sound; no one wants to hear the sound of when you unpause your game.
 - c. When adding scenes to a movie, make sure they are important to the story. If nothing happens or changes in a scene, then ask yourself is it really necessary?
 - d. Transitions are cool only when used sparingly. Even the "fade" effect can be over used. Only use transitions were necessary or where they will add something to that particular scene. Watch a movie and take note of how many scenes use transitions, and you'll find that it's not very many.
14. Don’t forget titles and credits, but don’t make your credits super long; just include the necessary credit. We all know you used Sims 2 to make the movie...so you don’t really need to include that.
15. Last but not least, have fun! It's a learning process and takes practice, but it's just a game and is supposed to be enjoyable!