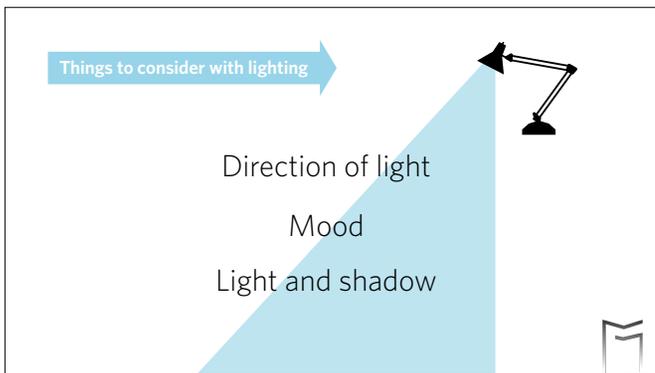
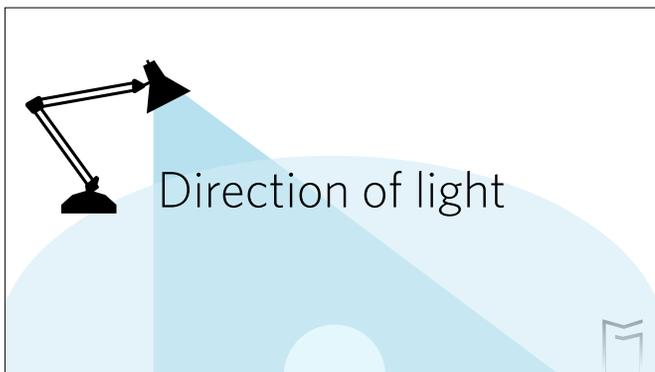




How you choose to make your image will determine how your viewer interprets it and how you choose to light your image has a huge impact on viewer interpretation. In this video you will learn basic principles of lighting in your still and moving images.



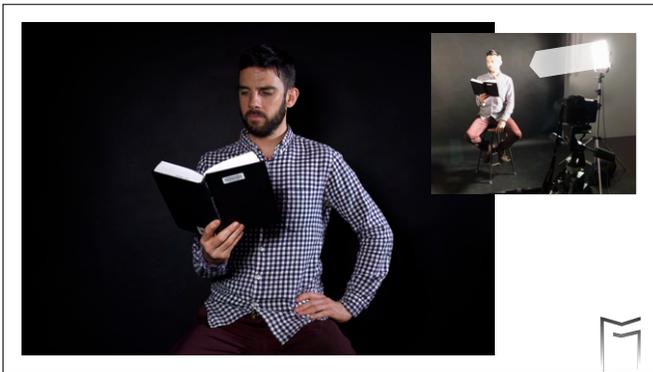
There are three important considerations when you are planning your lighting - the direction of your light sources, what mood do you want to convey to your audience and the details of light and shadow.



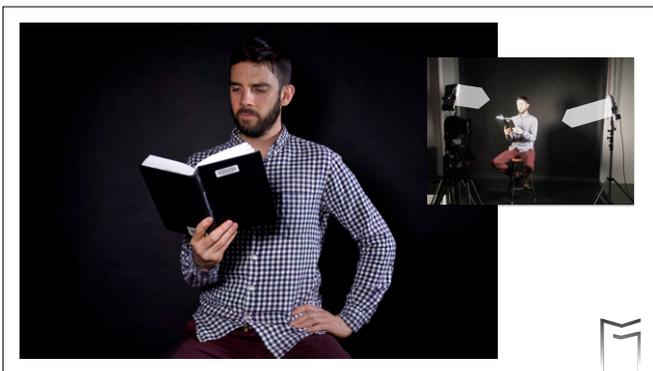
What type of feeling or mood are you trying to convey to your audience? Lighting will play a huge roll in shaping how the audience views your image. It is important to consider the direction of light and light sources when planning your image. If you're shooting outside, where is the sun? In front or behind your subject? What time of day it is will effect the direction of light. Closely connected to the direction of light, is the intensity of your source, is the light diffused? direct or harsh? All of these things have a different effect on your image.



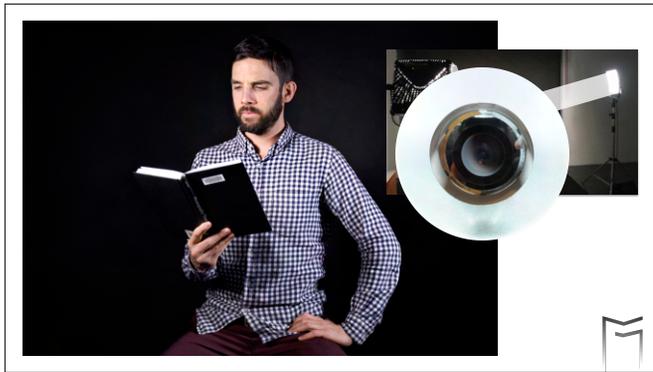
Here, we have see an example of subject lit from the left side - notice where the shadow is cast, what part of the face is highlighted and where the detail is. The subject is in detail with the brightest point on the face, focusing on the viewers attention to our subjects facial expression. Here, you can see the studio set up of a left side lit subject.



And here is the right side - again notice where the shadow is cast, what part of the face is highlighted and where the details are. Here is an example of the set up.



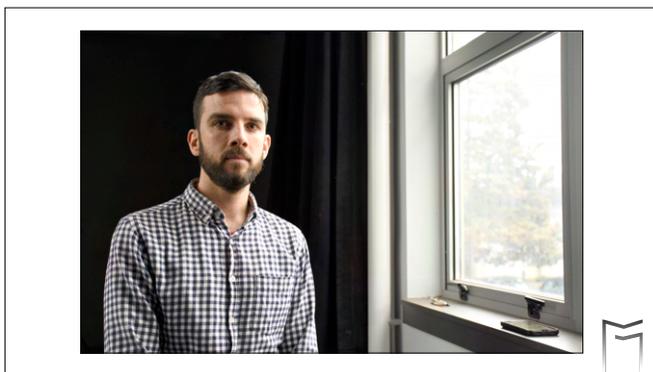
Here, both left and the right sides are lit - you will notice there is less of a high contrast, there is even lighting over our whole subject with less drastic shadows. The light on the right fills in details on the right side of the subjects body. Here is a studio set up with both sides of your subject lit



In this image our subject is direct or front lit. This type of lighting is commonly used in fashion photography when you want to highlight your subject in their entirety without a huge emphasis on the depth of shadows caused by features on their face. Some fashion photographers use a ring shaped light that is placed all around their lens to avoid as many shadows as possible from the lens perspective.



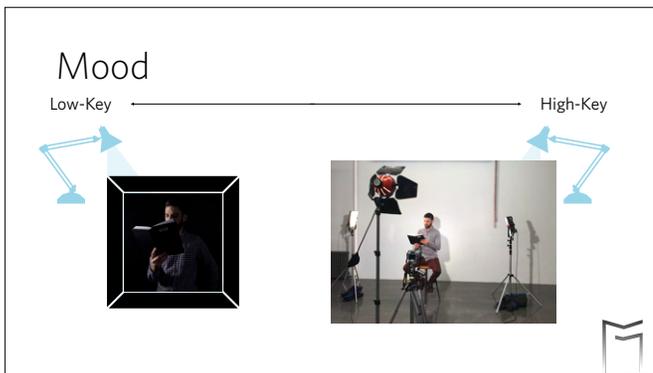
There is also a big difference in the mood if the direction of your light comes from overhead or below your subject. In this image, the light source is overhead and you can see our subject's features are more dramatically defined because of the shadows that are cast across his face, especially below dominant features such as his nose.



One thing you do not want to do is back light your subject. Here is an image using the natural light of a window. Because the lens is adjusting the image to the bright background, the subject ends up being in the shadow and you can barely distinguish his features. You want to be careful of the strong outside light, and always consider where the sun is when you are photographing or filming your subject. If we move our subject and our camera position so that the light is to the side or even behind the camera, then we can make the image work with the same amount of light. It is all a matter of what angle you are on. If you are finding the singular light-source is casting too much shadow on the unlit side of your subject, you can place a reflector on the other side and bounce the light back onto your subject as we did here.



The mood of an image can be determined by how low or high key the lighting is. High and low key can be imagined on a spectrum, at the very end, if an image is extremely low key, this means your image is mostly in shadow with a few highlights. In low key images there are usually lots of deep shadows and contrast. Low key images can be described as dramatic, dark, moody, emotional or mysterious. On the other end of the spectrum, if an image is extremely high-key it means your image is very bright, with light coming from multiple sources and directions and there is not much shadow or contrast. A high key image may be described as being bright, content, lively, obvious or even disorienting, if it is seemingly unnatural.



Here is an example of a low key image (also the example we used for a left side lit subject), there is a singular light source. The viewers attention is focused on a specific area with dynamic shadows cast on and around our subject.

And here is an example, of a more high key image, there are multiple light sources on our subject and the whole of his body is well lit. A high key shoot set up would have multiple bright light sources, can use reflectors and usually a white background.



A sign of a good professional image is how much detail you can see in the light and dark parts of the image. Is there detail in the dark black areas, or in the bright whites areas? Depending on the feeling you want to convey to your audience, you will want to ensure your images is balanced with its lighting details.



For example, this is a blown out image. Our subject's features are washed out and at some points on his face, there is no detail or texture of his skin, just pure white. As well, you can hardly see the edges of the pages in the book because they are blindingly white. The background has uneven spots and his shirt is looking washed out. An image that is too bright can give your audience a sense of disorientation and an unnatural, acidic quality. It can also make your subject look shiny or hot. If your images are unintentionally coming out looking like this, try adjusting your light meter or your white balance on your camera, or adjusting the positioning or light intensity of the light you are using.

On the other hand, the image to the right has good detail in the white areas, but the black or shadowed areas are flat. His hair has no texture and the viewer cannot see the quality of the surface of the book. There is too much contrast, so the black areas of the image are becoming graphic fills of black. To fix this you want to even the lighting of your space out a bit, reduce the strength or closeness of the lighting giving you too much contrast and shadows. You may want to use reflectors or another light source to fill in the areas that are not recording the details.



Here is an example of a balanced image, with the light sources adjusted. This image has a little bit of true black and true white, but overall it is a complex variation of detail in between. You can see detail, texture and surface in both the well lit areas in the highlights, such as his forehead and the pages of the book, as well as detail in the shadows and dark areas -such as the texture of his hair and the folds of his pants. This makes for a more complex and interesting picture because of the nuance and abundance of details in all areas. It adds to the depth and naturalness of an image.

Our eyes balance highlights and dark areas naturally all the time, just try walking into a dark room after traveling through a bright hallway. In time, you will notice that your eyes adjust themselves to see more tones so that we can see details.

As an image maker you have to do the work that our eyes do naturally. You have to help the lens of your camera to balance the highlights and the dark areas.



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Actor:
Credit to daniel?

