

***15 Proven, Time-Tested
& Unfailing Tips
To Help You***

ROCK Your Green Screen Video Production



FLORIDA SUN STUDIOS

First Hand Tips from a Broadcast Quality Production Studio Owner Servicing CNN, Fox News, CNBC, MSNBC & All Other Major News Networks!

Lights, camera, sound and action! If only creating a brilliant green screen video was that simple! The fact of the matter is that there are literally hundreds of things that can go wrong during the production of a green screen video. With you usually having just one practical shot at shooting a fantastic video, it is imperative that you get it right and get it right the very first time.

This guide will give you 15 FAILSAFE tips to create a stunning green screen video that will turn out exactly like you imagined it to be, if not more.

But, before we delve into the 15 tips, let's first help you understand the true power of a green screen video.

Why a green screen video for your business, campaign, cause or advertisement?

Simply put, a green screen allows you to extract a subject from a green background and then replace the background with images of your choice. In the technical video production world, this process is called "chroma keying". Green is the preferred color of screen as it is the color that is furthest away from the color of any or all human skin tones, thereby making it great for accurate and precise extraction and also replacement.

Advantages of a green screen video...

- Spectacular flexibility to include any image or video as your video background
- Exponentially speed up production time, thanks to elimination of travel to different shoot locations
- Immensely improved logistics to finish a video shoot in one location, in one short duration
- Tremendous cost savings



15 Tips to Rock a Green Screen Video Production

#1 Lay Down Your Green Screen Video Plan Or Blueprint

Call a meeting with everyone who will be involved with your green screen video. It is imperative that you discuss and reach an agreement about the following elements, even before shooting the video:

- Background Image(s)
- Set props
- Framing/composition of subjects
- Multiple cameras (Especially if you are filming more than one subject)
- Titles/graphics, with specified details down to colors, font sizes and styles
- Storyboarding and script
- Location scouting to understand any pitfalls or unforeseen obstacles you may encounter (If not shot in a controlled environment of a professional studio)

#2 Lighting Is Key! Get It In Order

Even the best of video production facilities cannot make up for bad use of lighting when you shoot a green screen video. If there was only one component you could pay attention to when producing a high quality green screen production video, it has to be lighting.

BASIC LIGHTNING TIPS

- Light subject and background separately
- Use soft, even lighting for the background. For e.g., using two soft box lights on either side of a green screen, at 15 degree angles, is ideal
- Maintain at least 6-8 feet of space between subject and green screen
- Use three point lighting, using a key light, fill light and a rim or backlight
- Avoid hotspots or overexposed areas
- Avoid color spill
- Avoid wrinkles and rough edges on the screen you use (If shooting on location, bring a hand held steamer to remove wrinkles)
- Avoid excessive green screen lighting. Less is more. Too much light can spill into the foreground!

ADVANCED LIGHTNING TIPS

- Sometimes, light spill from subject's key and fill lights are sufficient to light your background!

EXPERT LIGHTNING TIPS

- Use color gels to reduce or eliminate color spills, especially for backlights
- Also use color gels to match tone {mood and feel} of background plate
 - For e.g., use warm colored gels for sunrise/sunset
 - Or cool gels for Christmas snow backgrounds

#3 The Right Clothing For Your Green Screen Video

Don't wear Green! You probably knew that already. The whole point of a green screen video is to allow the green background to be picked up for extraction and replacement. Subjects wearing green clothing will see that part {or all} of their clothing become translucent in front of a green screen

Interesting fact 1: Green is used in green screens because it is a color furthest away from skin tones. But, green screens can be replaced with blue, pink, purple, yellow, orange and red, in that decreasing order of efficiency.

Interesting fact 2: Hollywood uses blue screens more than green screens!

Interesting fact 3: You can actually use any color to 'key' out a subject, but chroma green and chroma blue are the preferred choices and industry standards.

■ #4 Choose The Right Background(s) To Replace The Green In Your Green Screen Video

The background is technically called the background plate. The whole point of producing a green screen video is to replace the green with a background of your choice. Choose a compelling and complementing background plate. For e.g., a story about corn farmers will look fantastic when shot with a corn field as a background plate.

■ #5 Multiple Camera Setup Checklist

Shooting a green screen video that uses multiple camera angles is a technically laborious process if you want to get it right. All cameras need to be in sync and set up properly (matched camera settings, such as exposure, aperture, shutter speed and white balance, etc) to result in high quality video production.

How to Produce/Create a Studio Set for a Multiple Camera Production?

Option 1: Shoot your own background plates.

- Setup your camera, tripod and lights
- Shoot a background plate for each camera angle (e.g., if you have three cameras and you're filming a Host and a Guest, shoot one for the Host, one for the Guest and a wide two shot camera angle)
- Aim for a "shallow depth of field" on the ISO Host and Guest camera angles... these shots will be filmed tighter (with camera lenses zoomed in for a "head to sternum" shot) than your wide two-shot camera angle
- Wide two-shot camera angle will be filmed wider and more likely the background will be in focus
- This is the least expensive, most cost effective of your options

Option 2: Purchase and use a virtual set

You may purchase a virtual set from a company like [virtualsetworks.com](https://www.virtualsetworks.com).

- Each set will come with many different camera angle backgrounds, in some cases, up to 16 camera angles! (ISO of Host, Guests, wide angle shots & more)
- Optional alternative angled sets if you are filming with space restrictions to the sides of your green screen video background

Option 3: Hire a graphic/animation artist to create a multi-camera angle setup

- Can be expensive, depending on complexity of the graphics designed
- A custom designed virtual set can be particularly expensive, starting at about \$3,000 +
- Is an exhaustive time consuming process, requiring advanced software tools for compositing

#6 The Right Camera With The Right Lenses

Not all cameras and lenses are created equal!

Choice of camera

- Cameras with an HD resolution of 1080i or 720p resolution, or 4K if working with an Ultra HD resolution. Say no to SD!

Choice of lens

- Image quality is all in the lens! Select as high quality lenses as you can afford
- Quality of lens is much more important than a camera's resolution, even if said resolution is 720p or 1080i!
- Even cheap and inexpensive cameras found in a web camera, smart tablet or a point and shoot digital camera now shoot at high resolution, but don't have "high" quality lenses



■ #7 The Right Camera Focal Lengths & Angles, Particularly For Multi-Camera Setups

Background focal length must match that of your subject

Example: Three camera green screen production video with two subjects on set

- One camera dedicated for each subject
- Third camera angle to focus on two shot, with greater depth of field, with background in focus
- Tight shots or isolation shots on subjects will have a more shallow depth of field
- Zooming in on subjects should put background out of focus or make background softer
- Remember, when shooting for green screen, the background does not change when you zoom into the talent. **Background remains static on tight or wide shots of subject or subjects!**

It is very critical that focal lengths and corresponding backgrounds match the way they would naturally match.

■ #8 Shoot With A Shallow Depth Of Field

It is imperative that you turn off all camera sharpening and skin detail settings. Strive for a shallow depth of field, which will allow for easy separation of talent (subjects) from background, thereby allowing for a great green screen video production.

Shooting with the right camera settings helps avoid laborious and time consuming post production work!

■ #9 Lock Down Your Camera On Your Tripod!

The last thing you want is a camera that moves around when you shoot your background. Lock down your camera if you want to avoid this costly mistake that can make your video look incredibly amateurish.

■ #10 Use A Professional Broadcast Monitor To Check Your Work

Checking your green screen key with a consumer television is yet another very amateur mistake. For high accuracy, only use a broadcast monitor equipped with waveforms and scopes to ensure maximum accuracy of critical video levels like chroma, hue, waveform, levels, black levels, peaking levels, etc.

■ #11 Reflections Are A No-No!

You must go out of your way to identify and eliminate reflections that can be caused by eyeglasses, jewelry, shiny studio set props, TV Monitor glares or reflections caused by windows or mirrors close by.

■ #12 Talent's Hair Can Affect Your Green Screen Video!

Certain types of hair styles, particularly blonde, thin, wavy or curly hair can cause color spills that can make your subject look very odd when a small area of the background around their head exposes an artificial background {Like a flickering color spill or a halo like effect around the outline of your talent's hair}.

Use gels to fix such color spills. There is no scientific formula here. Some trial and error is definitely required to get it right. Sometimes, using a chroma blue screen is better than using a chroma green screen, especially with talent who have thin, curvy blonde hair.

..... BALD HEAD SHINE TIP

Turn off the backlights to eliminate that lustrous shine off a bald head!

Invest in a Basic Makeup Kit! – A little bit of makeup can go a long way and help cover up that awful bald head shine, facial imperfections like wrinkles, dark spots and dark circles under the eyes.

■ #13 A Backup Recording Is An Absolute Must!

Green screen video production is tedious and very hard work and must not be attempted without a backup recording of both video and audio! Footage can be corrupted or lost any time during transfer, editing or encoding and only a backup can save the day.

EXPERT TIP

What do you do when a client suddenly wants to use a new background image after hours and hours of shooting?

If you had rolled a green screen ISO camera recording, you can use this backup to easily replace the background.

■ #14 Use High Quality Royalty Free Images As Backgrounds!

Stock image sites like shutterstock.com and iphotostock.com offer incredibly rich and high quality images that will serve as ideal background plates for your green screen videos. Costing just a few dollars, they are a very convenient and cost-effective investment for your video production.

■ #15 Do Not Compromise On Your Green Screen Quality

The last thing you want to do is pick out your green screen materials from Home Depot or Lowe's. Instead, invest in a green screen from a professional photography shop like B&H or chroma-key.com.

B&H and Chroma-Key.com also specialize in pop up screens, tape, light stands, clamps and other green screen specific equipment and parts.

ADVANCED TIP

It pays to have a backup chroma blue screen, especially if your talent shows up wearing green, despite your million requests telling them not to wear green! It is also always smart to have backup gear, camera, lenses, lights and audio equipment as well, should your primary equipment fail!

**Ready To Rock Your
Green Screen Video
Production With These 15
Failsafe Performance Tips?**

**Yes?
The Very Best Of Luck
To You!**

No, Too Overwhelming?

**Leave Your Green Screen Video
Production Work To Professionals With
A Broadcast Quality Studio**

**CALL Florida Sun Studios For ALL
Your Green Screen Video Needs**

Call (954)-376-4835

