

Quick Guide to a Music Video: A Checklist of Considerations

1. Choose a Song

- What Version? - If there are various versions of the song recorded, choose one and stick with it throughout the project
- Sync will be a concern
- Length of the song
- Is the song translatable to a music video? Will the audience enjoy it? Does it have wide appeal or a certain target audience?
- SMPTE time code - Music videos in the United States run on the SMPTE time code system

2. Write a Scenario

- Hollywood epic on a limited budget can look terrible
- Doing simple well, or doing complex badly
- Schtick, Creativeness. Will there be special effects?

3. Get the Crew, Equipment and Performers

- Cameraman or Cameramen
- Lighting Director
- Audio Tech - Is one needed? Will there be sound effects?
- Director - Not only to direct, but to coordinate, organize and provide

4. Create Storyboards for Scenes including Angles and Locations

- Props? - Organize ALL props for the shoot in advance - Do not wait until the last minute they may not be available
- Performers other than Band Members?

5. Meetings with Crew, Performers (Including Band Members), Location, Personnel

- Discuss equipment, camera angles, audio, performance, special effects, locations

6. Filming/Shooting

- Shoot a scene until it is right
- Shoot it again, if possible, and perhaps using different angles
- Be careful of zooms - Steady Zooming
- Special Effects? Audio and Video effects needed? Effects intended later in editing?
- Notation of/during shoots

7. Live Footage

- Understanding only one take of the song
- No control of audience or surroundings
- Limited or no control (choreography) of the performance
- No control or limited control of lighting - It can look great live, but may not on camera
- Live with: What is, What it is

8. Live Footage Option

- Stage a live performance
- Simulate a concert in a controlled environment with and invited audience

9. Stock Footage

- Incorporating stock footage that is not copyrighted or requires no royalties
- Public domains that can be used, often with only credit to the author
- Incorporating stock footage that has been purchased - Film Houses
- Stock footage can save tons of money on production costs

10. Editing

- Feel & Pace - Long Shots, Close-Ups, Quick/Sharp Edits, Hand-Helds, etc. Organize
- Effects - Don't go nuts, unless it was written in the scenario - Software Access
- Editing at a Studio/Production House allows you access to more options
- ONE person to edit, or an Editor with the Director - More involved will make the process longer, more expensive
- Rough Edit First - Create a rough edit, interpret it, digest it, and then move on

11. Software/Hardware - Editing & Duplication

- Final Cut Pro, iMovie, Adobe Premiere, etc.
- Separate Hard Drive
- Formats: Quicktime, Flash, Windows Media
- DVDs for press and media
- Broadcasters must be contacted: Beta Cam Standard Def, Digital File Formats, HD Cam, Euro/Asia - Digibeta Tape

12. Sound Effects

- Can they be added without distraction? Without Controversy? Without Insult?
i.e. footsteps, crowd noises, explosions, etc.

13. Simple, done well, can be more effective than Complex Done Poorly