



Shoot Brief for Contributors:

# ESTABLISHING SHOTS







# INTRODUCTION

Establishing shots are one of the most frequently requested types of content from our customers. They can be used in many different situations and projects, but some of the most common uses for establishing shots are TV shows, films, documentaries, and corporate videos.

We encourage every footage collection to offer establishing shots. They are a popular kind of content that gives your collection variety. They're also relatively easy and fun to shoot. To ensure your establishing shots are sellable, you must *secure property releases for all footage*.





SHOT LIST

CITIES

Barcelona  
Berlin  
Chicago  
Dubai  
Hong Kong  
Las Vegas  
London  
Los Angeles  
Mexico City  
Miami  
New York  
Paris  
San Francisco  
Shanghai  
Singapore  
Sydney  
Tokyo  
Toronto  
Washington

BUSINESS FACILITIES

Corporate campus  
Factory  
Industrial park *(concrete buildings in a cluster)*  
Upscale office building  
Warehouse

HEALTH FACILITIES

Dentist’s office  
Dermatologist’s office  
Doctor’s office  
Hospital  
Mental health facility

BUSINESSES

*(retail, service, hospitality)*

Art supply store  
Bank  
Barber shop, hair salon  
Bookstore  
Car dealership  
Clothing boutique  
Coffee shop  
Corner/convenience store  
Diner  
Dive bar  
Funeral home  
Grocery store  
Gym  
Hardware store  
Jewelry store  
Laundromat  
Luxury hotel  
Mall  
Old motel  
Pawn shop  
Record store  
Restaurant  
Strip club

INSTITUTIONS

*(civic, governmental, educational, religious)*

Cemetery  
Church  
Courthouse  
High school  
Library  
Morgue  
Police station  
Post office  
Town hall  
University campus

COMMUNITIES/NEIGHBORHOODS

Apartment buildings  
Cottage by lake  
Farmhouse  
Home with swimming pool  
Low-income neighborhood *(dilapidated homes, houses with bars on the windows)*  
Shack *(beachfront, forest, etc.)*  
Townhouses  
Trailer park  
Upscale neighborhood *(mansions)*  
Urban homes

SETTINGS


Barn  
Bus stop  
City alley  
Coastal town  
Parkade  
Suburbia in winter/snow  
Train station

RECREATION

Amusement park  
Country club  
Houseboats  
Movie theater  
Nightclub  
Opera  
Playground/park  
Public swimming pool *(indoor and outdoor)*  
Water park







Take a variety of shots of the same location (exterior) in different contexts: day, night, weather (snow, fall, summer, rain, etc.).

## SHOOTING TIPS

Take a variety of shots of the same location (exterior) in different contexts: day, night, weather (snow, fall, summer, rain, etc.).

Create your shots in pairs. If you shoot a still shot in the day, take the exact same shot at night. A still day shot and a panning night shot won't work because that works against the continuity that establishing shots are meant to help create in a story.

Types of establishing shots to capture, when possible:

- static shots (on tripod, not handheld)
- slider shots, unveils, etc.
- panning shots (multiple pans from different directions with the subject being the focal point the shot ends or begins with)
- drone shots: fly-overs of the scene/location; specific subject is the focal point, camera moves toward it or spins around it; top-down shots

[See some examples from Dissolve's collection.](#)







## METADATA TIPS

If you are doing your own metadata/keywording, ensure you cover the following points:

- Include “establishing shot” in the keywords.
- Be as specific as possible about the location in the description and keywords, without being spammy.
- Provide a full description of the type of building/location with accurate keywords.



## RELEASES

It is imperative to get a property release for your establishing shots. Shots with releases are more sellable, whereas establishing shots without property releases are virtually unusable by our customers. As well, with a property release, you won't have any concerns about having to disguise the property's identifying details.

If you need a release template, we recommend the [Dissolve Property Release](#).

### OBTAINING A PROPERTY RELEASE

If your shot focuses on one specific building, you must secure a property release. However, if the shot has multiple buildings in it and doesn't focus on any one structure (such as a cityscape aerial), no property release is required.

A private home is an easy place to get a property release for your establishing shot. Just ask the homeowner, explaining that the address or any other identifying details will never be made public. Ask your friends and family. In all cases, you will have greater success obtaining a property release by paying a small fee in return for the signature.

You may also have to explain what stock footage is and the types of projects that might use it. Generally, establishing shots are used by fictional television shows and films to set the location of a scene. Occasionally they are used by reality television or documentaries, and in those cases the shot is evocative of a particular area (Victorian homes in San Francisco, brownstones in Brooklyn).

You may also have luck obtaining releases from independent businesses in industrial or semi-industrial buildings. (We can always use shots of warehouses or large industrial buildings.) However, it's unlikely you'll be able to get a release for a warehouse owned by a large company, such as Coca-Cola or Federal Express.

If you're shooting a small business and including its signage in the shot, get a special release or include a clause in your property release explicitly stating that the name, wordmark, and signage are included. Fully released shots of businesses can be difficult to obtain, but this makes them valuable.

If you can't get this special release to cover signage, wordmark, and the name, avoid capturing any branding.

Other locations to pursue property releases for include apartment buildings, lobbies of large buildings, offices, and gardens.







Questions: [contributors@dissolve.com](mailto:contributors@dissolve.com)  
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**DISSOLVE**