

Introduction to Cinematography Part Two: Camera Focus.

Key Words:

Depth of field

Deep focus

Shallow focus

Remember: if it's in bold, purple font, learn by heart. You'll be needing it !

Depth of field: the basics.

Put simply, this means **how much of the subject matter in the frame is sharply defined / clear and how much blurred**. The camera operator can manipulate the camera lens to change who or what is in focus at any one time.

Depth of field can be adjusted to influence what the spectator focuses on.

Deep focus.

Deep focus means that pretty much everything in the frame is sharply defined – from objects or people at the front of the frame to objects or people in the distance.

Example 1: *The Seven Samurai* (Akira Kurosawa, Japan, 1954).

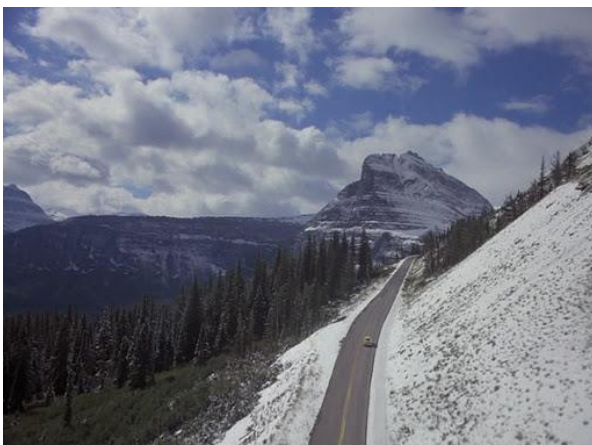


In this shot, all seven characters are sharply defined by using deep focus.

The spectator can choose which character to look at. Because each actor is in focus, their faces and expressions, costumes and props can all be discerned and add to the characterisation.

Kurosawa was a master director who made great use of deep depth of field. The film (later adapted into the Western *The Magnificent Seven* (John Sturges, USA, 1960).

Deep focus and establishing shots: Example 2 *The Shining*, (Stanley Kubrik, USA, 1980)



Deep focus is often used in establishing shots. The entirety of a large location can be seen in detail. This allows the spectator to gain a sense of place and of scale. Here, the effect is to make the car seem miniscule and vulnerable in a vast, towering wilderness landscape.

Activity 1: Embed this knowledge.

Visit this site and read the article, watch the clips and make notes in your Film Studies Notebook.

<http://screenprism.com/insights/article/cinema-terms-what-is-deep-focus>