

LIVE TV

Presenting live TV requires presenters to think quickly on their feet, be able to react when the unexpected happens and have the ability to ad-lib when required. There can be a real excitement and adrenaline rush. Some live shows have a time-delay of a few seconds this is for editorial reasons if something requires censorship. On live TV anything can happen.

Cameras:

Live TV shows usually have several cameras on the studio floor all capturing different angles, aspects and elements of a tv show. Depending on the show's budget big productions can have up to eight cameras or more. Those productions with smaller budgets may only have one or two cameras. For example, a chat show format will likely have three to five cameras so they can capture the various angles. These are the basic camera angles, Long / Establish shot, mid-shot, close up and perhaps an extreme close up if you're handling props. In big studios they might also have a camera on a gib (sometimes call a jimmy gib or crane dolly.) which is a camera on a crane or long arm which can move vertically, horizontally or on rotation giving a variety of shots.

Each of the cameras send an output to the control room or 'Gallery'. This is where the production staff like the sound and vision mixer, audio engineers and producer/director are and it's their job to look at all the video footage coming from and edit the shots in real time.

In some studios they have automated cameras which are operated remotely so there might not even be a camera operator or floor manager in the studio.

Multi camera

Working in a live TV studio can be both nerve wracking and exciting but it is important to remember you are still talking 'to one person'. As a presenter you still need to make sure you're keeping your audience engaged and a nice way to do that is with an 'Aside'. This is when a presenter has a quick look to the camera after something that has been said that might provoke a reaction to the viewer. It could even be an expression eg, a confused look if something might not make sense or a surprised look if something is unexpected. This gives

the viewer a feeling they are included in the show. The key to an 'aside' is good timing. Don't just turn to the camera and randomly and smile. This might make you look creepy.

When working in a multi-camera studio, you will have to change from one camera when you're speaking to another. This might be during an intro our outro to a show. Viewers should not be distracted by these transitions, movement should be smooth, natural and without any pauses.

Similar if you were talking with two friends and as you speak you look from one friend to the other, in one flowing move.

If there are numerous cameras in operation, you'll know which one is live because it will have a Cue or Tally Light lit up. The Tally light is usually red and so can be easily seen in the presenters' peripheral vision. You may also hear the producer in the gallery call the camera shots, through your earpiece or talkback.

Working with props

It's common for presenters to handle props during a show. It's important to be mindful at all times of the role of the camera in filming the props. Generally, there will be two or more shots of the same prop using different cameras. The first shot will be of you holding the prop and the second will be close up on the prop itself.

When holding your prop for a close up, you'll need to hold the item still, even the smallest movements like your hands shaking can look much bigger on TV. If you can, rest your hands on something like a table. You'll also need to hold your prop in place for longer than you expect. This is to give the camera person time to focus in.

Be aware of the camera, if you're describing details on a prop or showing a picture of something, it may feel unnatural to have the item facing away from you and not being able to see what you're talking about clearly. You may have to lean forward, looking downward

and over the top of the item or try looking around the side all, of which is a bit awkward and fiddly but it is important to keep the shot for the audience.

At this point It does not matter that you break eye contact with the audience or that you're peering over the top of the item attempting to see it with the top of your head towards the camera, as the image being broadcast is a beautiful, still shot of the prop.

You may need to point out certain details or features on the prop too but when you do make any movements deliberate and slow, quick movements are just flashes on the screen when in a close up shot.

Some studios will have a monitor for the presenters allowing them to see any items clearly and you might think that this makes it easy. However, what is on your left of the screen will be showing on the right, as the camera does not create a mirror image and this can be very disorientating, Part of your role, therefore, is to remember to flip your left and right around in your head.

It goes without saying, when you're dealing with probs or anything that requires a demonstration, before you go live on air, take some time to look over the item to notice all its features and make sure it works.

Make sure your hands are clean and tidy

Your hands and nails might look nice, clean and moisturised to you, but when they're on a 50-inch screen, every microscopic detail is revealed. Even a small chip in your nail varnish, tiny bit of dry skin or a cut can stand out. So make sure your hands and nails are well cared for and manicured.

Co-Presenting

When presenting with another Presenter imagine you are describing a situation to a friend who wasn't at an event. Your co presenter and you both know the scenario but the viewer doesn't. In this case you would mainly look at the friend who was absent when you are explaining the details, with the occasional look for a reaction to the friend who was there. When your co presenter is talking you would then look and listen to them. It's important not to interrupt your co-presenter when they're talking. If that happens, and I'm sure you will

have seen this on TV at some point it may look like you're trying to steal the show and can look cringy.

If you are both using the Autocue, when you're not speaking, you will need to keep an eye on the script to ensure you don't miss your part. The Autocue script will have your name, and any other instructions, written in block capitals and possibly underlined as well. It goes without saying that these instructions are not to be read out!

Running Order:

The running order is a document which incorporates all the of the items and script in a broadcast or show and the order in which the items will come. This will be given to you either the day or the morning of your show. You should go over your running over with your production team to ensure you understand all the items and when these will be coming up on the programme. Remember on live tv this may change, even at the last minute if something unexpected happens. A presenter should keep their running order with them when they are onset.