

American Motion Picture Society

home of the world's longest-running non-commercial film festival

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TECH TIP: Moving Shots

A criticism of many n-c films is that the camera is static. Some aids to camera movement are:

- a wheelchair with the camera operator aboard
- a skateboard for very low angle shots.

Both these methods need a smooth floor. If the floor isn't smooth then sheets of construction plywood or hardboard will level it out.

Another method for low level moving shots is to put the camera in a mesh bag, LCD screen open and the lens poking through the mesh,. Hold the bag just above floor level and walk slowly. Tilt, lift and rotate the bag for interesting angles.



For very low level dolly shots the Shepherd Super Dolly is camera size. There are two models, 12 inch (\$20; maximum - load 300 lbs!!) and 6 inch (\$12) I bought mine at Ace Hardware. These simple three wheel dollies designed for moving small but heavy items work perfectly on dense pile carpets and smooth surfaces. They can also be used as

table-top dollies.

A pair of saw horses with a plank on them will act as a dolly track for tracking shots. Two folding ladders and a plank will permit adjustment of the tracking height. A strip of beading nailed along the plank will keep the dolly on line. An LCD screen on the camera is helpful to ensure correct framing. For a camera without an LCD (Canon XL) take composite video out to a monitor and check that.