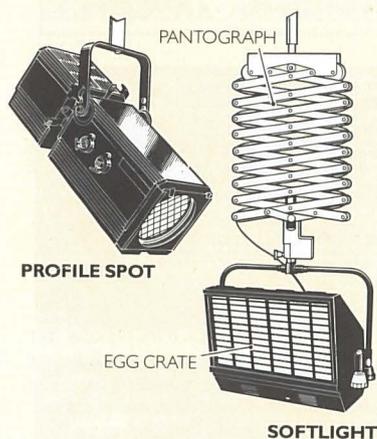


LIGHTING FOR TELEVISION

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS USED IN TV, FILM AND VIDEO LIGHTING



Originally developed from film lighting, television lighting has now become an art form in its own right. New ideas and purpose-designed equipment have made possible new standards and effects that meet the unique challenge and potential of the medium. Nevertheless, the underlying principles of good lighting remain much the same as ever, and success depends on adherence to simple rules which are just as applicable to television as to film-making, photography or painting.

In colour television productions, effective lighting of scenery and costume is especially important if costume and set designers are to achieve their aims. The concentration of the eye onto a small picture automatically leads to much closer examination of detail in a scene than would be the case if life-size.

ASPECT RATIO

The ratio of the width to the height of a TV screen or viewed image.

BACK LIGHT

A luminaire used to light the subject from the rear to help separation from backings and to increase the three dimensional effect.

BARNDOOR

Movable shutters fixed to a luminaire (usually a spotlight) to control and shape the light beam.

BARREL

A metal tube, usually 48mm diameter, for suspending luminaires (scaffold tube).

BASE LIGHT

The basic level of flood lighting intensity required to satisfy the medium used.

CATENARY

A flexible power feeder suspended at several points to enable movement of a lighting suspension unit e.g., pantograph. Note: usually seen on overhead mobile cranes.

CHANNEL

The circuit from the fader on the console to its associated dimmer.

COLOUR TEMPERATURE

A method of specifying the colour of a source which emits light in a continuous spectrum. Expressed in Kelvin units, the range used in lighting is from 2600K (white light with a high red content) to 6000K (white light with a high blue content). N.B. Cannot be used with discharge sources although sometimes used as a guide to approximation of colour.

CONE

A tube placed in front of a spotlight to give a smaller beam of light.

CROSS BARREL

Used between barrels to allow accurate positioning of luminaires.

C.S.I.

A discharge lamp which tends towards a tungsten source for colour balance (4000K approximately).

CYCLORAMA

A backing mounted in a studio to provide a continuous surface and an illusion of infinity.

DIFFUSER

Sheets of frosted plastic or spun glass fibre used to soften the shadows produced by the light beam.

DIMMER

An electronic device used to reduce current flow to a lamp and therefore allowing its light intensity to be adjusted.

DROP ARM

Used to hang a luminaire lower than the normal suspension system permits.

EGGCRATES

A device consisting of small cross baffle plates to restrict the spread of the light beam on a softlight.

EXTENSION BAR

Used to extend barrels to accurate positioning of luminaires.

FADER

A control potentiometer for indirectly setting the current output of a dimmer and thus varying the light intensity.

FILLER

Used to control shade areas: usually a soft light but can be controlled hard light.

FLAG

A sheet of metal or card mounted a short distance in front of the luminaire to give a sharp cut off to the light beam.

FLOODLIGHT

A luminaire that only has a reflector to control the beam and has a wide angle distribution. (Soft light and cyclorama light).

FOLLOW SPOT

A narrow angle focusing hard edge spotlight used to follow moving artists.

FRESNEL LENS

A convex lens built up in steps to reduce its thickness, thus reducing its size and weight.

GOBO

A mask placed in the gate of a profile spot to shape the beam. It is a simple form of outline projection.

HARD LIGHT

A luminaire that produces strong shadows, normally a spotlight.

H.M.I. (C.I.D.)

A discharge lamp which is daylight colour balanced (5600K).

KEY LIGHT

A principal modelling light, usually the fresnel spot.

LUX (Lumens/m²)

The unit of measurement of the incident light arriving at a surface. (Old system used foot candles; 1 f.c. = 10.76 lux.)

MASTER/GROUP MASTER

Usually refers to a lighting control system fader which overrides a group of individual faders.

PANTOGRAPH

A spring balanced cross-armed device for varying the height of luminaires.

PICK-UP-TUBE

The name sometimes used for camera tube (generally denotes photo-sensitive device).

PRESET (BLIND MODE)

A facility on lighting control systems that enables a lighting plot to be set up without affecting the lights already operative.

PROFILE SPOT

A luminaire used to project shapes or patterns.

SATURATED RIG

A lighting installation where luminaires are used in large numbers to avoid the need for physical movement thus reducing rigging time and manpower.

SCRIM

A fine mesh used in front of a spotlight to attenuate the whole or part of the light beam.

SOFTLIGHT

A luminaire designed to produce virtually shadowless light; used to control contrast.

SPOTLIGHT

A luminaire with a focusing system to concentrate the light beam and give greater control.

STAND

A tripod device which allows varying fixed heights of luminaires above floor level.

TELESCOPE

A device made from retractable tubes that is used to suspend luminaires at varying heights in the studio.

TUNGSTEN HALOGEN

Describes a family of lamps with either hard glass or quartz envelopes, tungsten filaments and halogen (usually iodine or bromine) fillings.

VOLTAGE DROP

That loss of volts which occurs through energy wastage when a current passes through a cable or electronic device.

