Recording Techniques for Producing Better Videos

If you are shooting a video with your own video camera here are a few tips to help you get a better result:

- Go into the shoot with a plan. Write a script or an outline of the content you want capture and the type of shots you need.
- Get to know your video camera prior to the shoot. Practice!
- Use a tripod at all times. If you haven't got a tripod consider setting the video camera on a table so it doesn't shake as much.
- If possible, use an external microphone to record voice and sound.
- If you are using the camera's in-built microphone position your on-camera talent away from any loud or constant noise (e.g. air-conditioner, construction work, refrigerator, busy playground, busy road, wind tunnel). If in doubt test the quality of the audio recording prior to the recording.
- Think about the recording location and how it is lit. Be aware of harsh shadows at various times of the day, and florescent lights in offices which often don't produce enough light. If possible consider using portable lights.
- Don't shoot into a light source because it will make the object you record appear dark (e.g. avoid recording in front of windows with glaring day light).
- Choose your backdrop carefully. Keep it simple and make sure it is appropriate for your content.
- Press record and call "action" after you have been recording for 3 seconds at the start of every shot.
- Record an extra 3 seconds of footage at the end of every shot as well. This will give you clean edit points; start and end.
- Vary your shot sizes (wide shot, medium shot, close up). It will offer more choices during editing.
- Record "cut aways" to cover awkward edits (edit points) in your video (e.g. if you are recording a student presentation, don't forget to film the audience).
- Record "cut-ins" for impact (e.g. if you are recording a person looking into a microscope, record a wide shot of the person showing their full body, followed by a close shot of their hands only or their face as they peer into the microscope).