

TV terms, jargon and slang: a glossary

http://journalism.ukings.ca/journalism_3925.html

For a profession whose goals are supposed to include simple and clear language, TV journalism has a lot of jargon and slang. Some makes sense, some doesn't. Some is rooted in ancient (20-year-old) practices and technologies that no longer exist; some is straight from the IT department. Some will be obsolete by the time you encounter it on the job and some is too new to make this list...But for what it's worth, here's what some of it means.

2-shot: most often an interview guest and the back of the reporter's head. Also used in re: any shot including two people.

"the 6" ...or the 11, etc. The newscast airing at the time referred to.

16:9 (sixteen-nine): the "letterbox" ratio of horizontal to vertical on the screen. Many programs are now being shot in 16:9. It's still uncommon in daily news, but will become the standard as HD advances.

24-hour clock: get familiar with it, if you want to be able to read a show lineup or a feed list. Example: 1 pm is 1300 on a 24-hour clock. NOTE: When working across time zones, remember to check *whose* 1300 it is!

AC: alternating current. The plug in the wall vs. the battery belt. (aka "shore power")

AD: associate director—usually similar to production assistants or researchers. AD's do a range of jobs, including circulating scripts, working in the control room (with the director), or doing logistical jobs such as timing the program or booking feeds.

AVO or VO : announcer voice-over. Announcer reads a script (often but not always live) over pictures. When there's a clip, it's...an **AVO-clip**, or **VO-clip**. Other terms include: **VCV** (voice-clip-voice), **VOSOT** (VoiceOver/Sound On Tape)

Academy leader: see *countdown*

ad lib: (semi-) spontaneous, unscripted talking. "*The host can ad lib about the convention if we need to fill extra time.*"

add – new version of a script, or a new addition to the lineup. "*The hostage-taking story is a late add.*" See also *sub*.

air: not much actually goes directly through the air to the Folks At Home

anymore, but we still use the word. Also...go to air: program start—“*Our 6 o’clock news actually goes to air at 17:59:45.*”

aircheck: recording of a program for logging or screening purposes.

airtime: time on TV: “*They burned an hour of airtime with that live newser and I still don’t know what the story is.*”

Amnets: American networks, as in, “Yippee! We beat the Amnets on that story by a full hour.”

assignment editor: similar to print, one of the principal people on a news desk (hierarchies vary). An assignment editor keeps track of what’s going on in the newsroom’s coverage area, maintains an outlook for the day, the lookahead for tomorrow, and the futures file.

autocue: a system of mirrors and lenses which displays a newsreader’s script as a superimposed moving image on the camera lens, so the reader doesn’t have to look down (much) while reading. Various trademarked names, including the old *TelePrompTer*.

AVID: Company which makes a range of editing suites for video and film. Most broadcasters run AVID... so it’s often used to describe any non-linear edit suite/process...just as “Scotch tape” is used for all brands. See also Leitch.

axis: imaginary line through a scene. As a general rule, the camera should stay on one side of the axis to prevent (e.g.) two people in separate shots from appearing to look in the same direction while speaking, instead of one facing right, and the other left.

BG background. Could be background information or background of a shot. **BGS:** background sound. **BLT** : bright, light and trite. Snarky term for a cheery story with no news value.

B-roll : This term is a leftover from film days. Refers to pictures (often generic) used to cover a reporter’s voiceover. This term makes some people (incl. me) twitch: it sounds as if you don’t care what the pics are, as long as there’s cover.

backtime: *Noun:* If a show is ten minutes long, and you’re three minutes in, you have seven minutes left. Seven minutes is the backtime. *Verb:* Figuring out where you are in relation to where you want to get. Some people who have spent years as AD’s, backtiming shows, can still backtime in their heads.

bagger: slang for a piece that will play anytime, usually during a slow season or at the last minute. “I’m doing three baggers—one on kids’ toys, one on holiday recipes, and one on department store Santas—before I take

off for Christmas." Other terms: *on the shelf, in the can*.

bars: *colour bars* are used to test video signal, to make sure the colours are true and/or match the bars generated from other sources (cameras, control room, video feeds).

Betacam: Sony's Betacam is the industry standard for professional video. It is not the same format as the Betamax video which competed with VHS in the 1980's (and lost)

bin: in non-linear editing..one of the (imaginary) file folders you dump your digitized images and clips before you start to edit.

black: see *control track*.

bins: metaphorical drawers, holding files of digitized tape. In non-linear editing, sections of field tape are digitized into the AVID and stored in bins. This sounds confusing but it will become clear with your first edit.

bird: slang for satellite. "Book the bird" means to make a satellite booking. *bite:* a short sound clip. May be a quote, or some natural sound—chanting, storm noise, etc.

bridge: *standup* in the middle of an item...bridging from one chapter to another.

billboards: *promo* or *tease* inside the body of a show.

block: the "blocks" of a newscast are like the sections of a newspaper. "A" Block or Block 1 would contain the top news stories; "B" Block could be weather, and so on. Blocks are usually framed by commercials.

boards: 1. full-screen graphics, such as a map, or a transcribed quote from a viewer mailbag. The graphics in a weather block may be called the weather boards (CBC). 2. see billboards.

bumpers: see *sting*. As on cars or boats, a bumper on TV keeps things from crashing up against each other...you can have a bumper going into or out of commercial, for example, *espy* if there's a sad story that might run up against a commercial with dancing clowns. Locally: ATV calls bumpers a *tease* with *vo script*, for an upcoming story.

CA : see current affairs

can: in the..., building a.... An item is finished ahead of deadline: *it's in the can*. If you're doing a number of Christmas *baggers*, you're building a holiday can.

cans (pl.): headsets.

capture: another term for *digitize* or *ingest*. After you've captured your tape on the computer, you can start your edit.

cell: sometimes used to describe the graphic that appears above the host's shoulder during an intro in a newscast.

chocolate bar: some Betacam camera batteries look like thick, heavy chocolate bars.

clip: Some people in the real world refer to a report as a "clip"...but news people hardly ever do, at least hereabouts. The term comes from the olden days of film, when the editor would literally cut out (clip) a piece of film containing an interview quote, and then physically insert it into the story. *Would you get a clip on gas prices from the finance minister when you're at the legislature this morning?* Also used as a verb: *Can you clip the finance minister for me this morning?*

close-up (see shot sizes and framing)

control track: (see also *black*) A track of electronic pulses, laid down on videotape while shooting or before editing, which maintains continuous timecode and enables more complex edits. Or, as an editor once told me, "It makes the pictures stick better."

countdown (*Academy leader, leader, beeps, d-cue, digital*): the "5, 4, 3, 2.." that goes before the start of an taped item.

cover: pictures that "cover black" between the clips in your story. NOTE: If you ask someone to "shoot some cover," it helps to tell him/her what the pics will be covering...unless you just want *wallpaper*. See also *B-roll*.

crawl: type moving across the screen. Most all-news stations have a *headline crawl* moving constantly across the bottom of the screen.

crease: once you've seen a crease in a tape, right in the middle of your best clip or the only good take of your standup...you'll never forget what a crease looks like.

crossfade: to fade out one source (usually audio) and fade up another at the same time as a kind of transition. In video it's called a *dissolve*.

cross-scripting : writing or talking about one thing while showing another. Talking about a criminal while showing a picture of the victim is bad cross-scripting.

current affairs: open to lively and sometimes cranky debate. Depending on who's doing the defining, current affairs is: a more thoughtful take on people, events, issues and behind-the-scenes goings-on in the news; an investigative piece which may in fact break news; a looonng news story; a

fancy name for a feature; an excuse to spend a week on one story while everyone else is out there making sausages, etcetc.

cut: the simplest of edits, which cuts from one picture to another. Different from *fades*, *wipes*, and *dissolves*.

cutaway: when you need to avoid a jump cut or compress time, you “cut away” from the principal subject. The more common example of a cutaway would be a shot of a reporter listening to an interview guest. These reporter shots are usually shot AFTER the interview. When the interview is edited, you can cover the jump cuts with cutaways of the reporter.

cutdown: a shortened version of a longer item. “*The piece on the feed was 4 minutes long, so we did a cutdown for the 11.*”

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DV: digital video. Not necessarily on a DVD...not yet, anyway. Our cameras at school use miniDV digital videotape. Sony Betacams (industry standard) come in DV and non-DV models; at this point most newsrooms are not shooting in DV.

d-cue (digital cue): see *countdown*

dayside: the day shift. The people working for the daytime/suppertime newscasts.

dead air: silence. Not generally something you want too much of, but... “Sue had to avoid dead air when John missed his spot in the newscast, so she ad libbed her way into gibberish.”

digital: see *countdown*.

digitize: act of loading field tape (linear) into the (non-linear) editing system, transferring the material from analog to digital format in the process. Some newsrooms shorten the term to **didge**—or however you would spell it—as in, “Did you get your tape didged yet?”

director: NOTE: IMPORTANT DISTINCTION! In TV news, the director is usually the *studio director*—the person who sits in the control room and has the main responsibility for getting the newscast to air (with the help of the switcher, AD s and others). In drama and most documentary, the director is the *principal editorial/content person in the field*. In news, a director’s job is not principally an editorial one. In TV news, the principal editorial person (if not the reporter himself) is the field producer or producer.

dissolve: the video version of audio’s *crossfade*. One picture dissolves into another.

dolly: a contraption with wheels, which you attach to a tripod to let you move the camera around. See also *truck*.

double-ender: interview in which the interviewer and guest are in two places, connected by phone. Each phone is connected to an earpiece and a mic. Cameras in each location roll at once and afterwards the two tapes are cut together. In a true double-ender, the host and guest cannot actually see each other. A satellite or other remote interview, where the host in the studio sees the guest (but guest doesn't usually see host) is not a called a "true" double-ender.

dropout: When a tape has been used several times (and occasionally when it's new), it may start shedding the particles that record the information. The irregularities on the tape show on screen as dropouts.

dry run: rehearsal, or practice runs for a particularly complicated production. "We'll do a few dry runs for the live convention coverage at 0700 on Saturday, before the delegates arrive." New programs often go through a series of dry runs as well.

dub: a re-recording of another tape. There may be a loss of quality in a dub compared to an original or master tape. With each dub of a dub, the problems intensify, though less so (or not at all) in professional tape formats and since the advent of digital video. NOTE: Avoid dubbing from VHS to any other format.

EDL: Edit Decision List. In non-linear editing, the EDL is the record of every sound, visual and effects decision made during an edit session. The EDL will guide the machines to *res up* the final product

EFP, EJ and ENG : Electronic field production, electronic journalism, electronic news gathering. These three terms seem obvious, but they came into use during the advent of tape, when some crews still shot film. They are often used interchangeably, usually in re: a news camera crew, unit or edit suite.

EFX: effect/s (as in special effects). Also called **FX**

executive producer: Senior editorial person on a program or programming unit. Not always a manager per se, s/he nonetheless usually has at least some power over staffing and spending. A *news director* may have the same, fewer or more responsibilities...depends on the company.

exterior: If you're asked to "get an exterior," you take a shot of the outside of where you are, usually of the building in which the action is taking place.

eyeline: The line from a camera lens (the camera's eye) to the subject's eyes. Generally speaking, the eyeline should be neutral, i.e., parallel to the ground.

factoid: slang for a graphic with a kernel of information written on it. "After the interview with the snow plough operator, let's throw up a factoid with how much snow we've had this year."

fax, full fax: Facilities. "Full fax" in a studio means all the crew and equipment are ready to go. "The studio shift starts at two, and once we fire everything up we can be at full fax by two-thirty."

feed: noun and verb. When tape or images are fed to another source or location by fiberoptic landlines, microwave, satellite and/or internal computer servers such as CTV's Gateway. All networks have regularly scheduled news feeds for domestic affiliates, and partners in other countries.

field, in the: Anywhere that is outside the station and its immed. environs (a standup in the parking lot is not a field shoot.)

field tape: tape shot in the field. Usually used to denote original source tape, as opposed to the *master* or *edit pack*, containing edited items.

file: 1. as in print. "I filed a report for the 6." You wrote, edited, and got it to air. 2. **file footage:** Even though we don't use film "footage" anymore, this is the term for viz from the archives.

flash frame: frame(s) of video between the two halves of an edit, so quick as to slip through to air unnoticed, augh. Rarely happens in non-linear editing, unless you're having a really bad day.

follow-the-puck: Easy to do badly and maybe the hardest style of shooting to do well. As in a hockey game, the cameraperson follows the action with the camera, rather than shooting for sequences or montage. It is not the same as point of view shooting.

font: see *super*

GFX : graphics. Usually used in scripts for shorthand directions to an editor or control room.

Gateway (CTV): it's a...portal to all the items available to the CTV network. Contains news feeds, individual items, graphics, etc.

goodnight – Surprise! it's a verb. To "goodnight a feed" is to let the source or recipient of a feed know you're finished with the satellite or fiberoptic line. If you don't goodnight a feed, you could be paying for *bird time* you don't need, or tying up a recording suite unnecessarily, as someone waits for tape, or a request for tape, that isn't coming.

graphics: maps, statistical graphs and tables, photographs, supers or any combination thereof. See also **GFX**

HD , high-def: high-definition television has many more horizontal lines of resolution than the TV we're all used to. When you see it on a regular TV, it's *letterboxed*. Is it a big deal? Will it happen overnight? Industry types compare it to the transition from black and white to colour TV...which took more than a decade. Industry site @ <http://www.cdtv.ca/en/index.htm>

hard out: **1.** if a show's hard out is at the *top of the clock*, that means the computer, or someone, will cut it off when the second hand hits twelve (or more likely, a second or two before). **2.** If an item has a "hard out", that means there is no time to waste going to the next video...or you run the risk of going to black.

"health warning" – slang for a cautionary announcement or disclaimer, either at the top of a program, coming back from a commercial break, or in the intro of a news story. It warns viewers of content they may find objectionable or disturbing.

hot :**1.** if a shot "looks hot" it is over-exposed. Refers to colour temperature. Ask Kevin about that one. **2.** If a set is hot, the show being broadcast from it is either on the air, or about to be.

IFB : interruptible foldback. see *telex*

idiot cards: cue cards...You see them on Letterman, but not on news shows anymore. News uses *autocue*.

ingest: (CTV) see *digitize, capture*. The process of loading tape into a computer.

international sound: an unmixed audio track without announcer/reporter voiceover or translation. "*We need an international-sound version of that Portuguese soccer story...the nat sound is drowned out by the announcer yelling in Spanish.*"

invu: script shorthand for interview.

jump cut: a jarring edit, so that the image seems to "jump". Forbidden for many years, they are now used frequently in various contexts.

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key: see *super*

kicker: a light, often funny (or we hope it is) item at the end of the newscast. See also *BLT*

land line: couple of meanings, best described by what it's not. Not a satellite feed. Not a cell phone. For feeds, usually a fiberoptic phone or video line. Also used as a verb: "*We'll feed the story to Toronto, insert the graphics and*

then landline it to Ottawa."

lead: **1.** First sentence of your story. **2.** First story in the newscast. You'll sometimes—usually in print, and rarely anywhere nowadays--see it spelled lede. I'm told it was to avoid confusion in the days of lead type. (?)

leader: see *countdown*

Leitch – Another company that makes non-linear edit gear. CTV term for AVID suites.

letterbox: the effect of watching visuals shot in a *16:9 aspect ratio* on a *4:3* screen.

lineup: the list of all the elements –copy, voice-overs, reports, promos, stings, billboards, commercials—in the news program, from start to finish in order of appearance. A completed lineup includes tape numbers, running times and other information the control room needs to get the show to air properly. It is often the archival record of the show as well. Most newsrooms now use specialized software to produce their lineups (AVIDstar, i-news, ENPS, etc). Lineup software backtimes the show, adjusts the show script and timing for every new element or change, and builds templates for recurring elements and user preferences. However, it cannot compose an elegant sentence, and you can. Hah.

live hit: see *live shot*.

live shot: Original meaning is simple: a shot which goes to air live. **1.**If your program uses "*a live shot of the harbour at the top of the 6*", it means that somewhere it has a camera pointed at the harbour, the live output of which can be put to air at the opening of its 6:00 news. **2.** A live shot can also be a live insert into the program, where a reporter does his/her live hit. Some stations call debriefs "live shots" even though they may be pre-recorded *look-lives* (raise that w/ Swick).

log: **1.** see *shotlist*. **2.** Record of events... trouble logs, and espy air logs. CRTC regulations require all broadcast stations to make and keep (very low quality; don't think you can use them on air) recordings of all programming as it went to air.

lookahead: another example of how newsrooms turn normal words into jargon. A list of stories and ideas which...looks ahead. May be daily, like an outlook, or longer-term: "*Move that fireworks convention from last week's lookahead into the Monday outlook, will you?*"

look-live: a taped intro or extro to a report that "looks live," as in a standup ending with "...back to you, Janet."

master: the master tape is the best copy of an edited item, the one that

goes to air. Before non-linear editing, there could be only one master; all others were *dubs*. Now you can use your *EDL* to make as many masters as you want.

melt (CBC) : an overview report summarizing a range of developments on a story.

missing (one's) spot: A major newsroom crime. Failure to have an item ready for its spot in the lineup, throwing everything into (momentary, if you're lucky) confusion. Making your spot every time, every day, is closer than cleanliness to newsroom godliness.

montage: A collection of disparate elements (visuals, sound) that create an overall impression. In editing talk, it's an alternative to sequences or "follow-the-puck" visuals.

NFT: Not For Today/tonight. Could be a *bagger* or a *WIP* which will take more time to complete.

NTSC : the North American broadcast standard for video. PAL and SECAM are used in other parts of the world. Three people, worldwide, remember what the letters stand for.

nat sound: natural sound 1. The ambient sound from video, good-quality nat sound gives the viewer a stronger sense of the location or event. aka wild sound. 2. a *natsound version* of a story is fed minus the reporter's voice track. See also *international sound*. As you'll find in class, a natsound version lets you use ambient sound in *AVOs* and *cutdowns*.

news director: the senior person in a newsroom...sometimes this job is in concert with or senior to an executive producer's. (FYI job hunters: CBC newsrooms don't use this title.)

news hole: the amount of time available for news in a program. Take away the opening animation, headlines, commercials, sports, weather, promos, stings and credits, and you have the news hole. Same as in print. May also refer to the blocks dedicated to news (as opposed to the *CA* hole).

newser: news conference. Occasionally, "presser".

nightside: the evening or night shift. People working for late-night or very-early-morning newscasts. See also *dayside*.

noddies : reaction shots of a reporter or interviewer, often gathered after an interview to use as cutaways in editing. Term comes from the habit many reporters have of bobbing their heads as if agreeing with what the interview subject is saying—beware! Some people argue it's fairer and more ethical to use *jump cuts*, so it's clear to the viewer that the clip has been edited.

noise: the ultimate dead air in television: no signal at all. Noise is the irritating racket and snow that wakes you up on the couch after the station signs off.

non-linear editing: Tape editing used to be a linear process of dubbing source, or field tape to an edit master. Linear editing is gradually disappearing from television. In non-linear editing, the video and audio information on the field tape is loaded (*digitized*) into *bins* in an edit suite's computer drive, where the (human) editor can put them together without going back and forth through the source tapes.

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O/C –Usually this means **on-camera**. but sometimes people use it to mean **OFF-camera**, so BEWARE! and when in doubt, ask.

one-man band: see *videojournalist*

out – depends on context: 1. the last picture or words in a piece of tape. Abbrev. of outcue, as in "What's your out?" A typical out, or outcue on a field report is: "Andy Smith, CTV News, Halifax." 2. abbrev. of outtakes—the flubs and bloopers. "*There were some great outs of that interview—they kept getting each other's names wrong.*" 3. If your show has a *hard out* at 17:59:45, that means the computer will cut you off then.

outlook: The list of possible stories for the day. The first outlook may be no more than info from clippings and news releases, and possible follows from the days before. At the story meeting, reporters and others pitch stories to add to the outlook. As the day progresses, the outlook may grow and shrink until lineup/s reflect what will actually be on the newscast/s.

PA: production assistant. Job descriptions vary.

POV: point of view, belonging either to the camera or to the reporter.

1. A POV documentary will not always adhere to traditional news criteria for impartiality. 2. In a POV shot, the camera "sees" from a subject's point of view. V difficult to do well. Requires careful planning, and can raise ethical concerns worth considering, esp in re-enactments: how do *you* know what the murder victim saw?

pan: pivoting the camera on the tripod, or turning your body (hand-held) to move the lens (but not the whole camera) in a line parallel to the ground.

plant: the station, the office. "*The shoot starts at one, so let's meet at the plant at noon, and we'll go to the site together.*"

post-mortem: A review of a production or project. A *critique*, usually focusing on what worked, what didn't, lessons learned and practices to be instituted for the next edition.

producer: No single definition in TV news. *News producers* have both editorial and production responsibilities, usually farther-reaching than those of reporters, who are necessarily focussed on producing their individual stories. They may not get into the field much. *Studio or presentation producers* may have no core editorial responsibilities, focusing on the look, pacing, packaging and style of a program. A *field producer* may work with a reporter... or as a reporter. Note: It's easy to get (even more) confused between TV news's broad definition of "producer" and the feature-film definition. *Movie producers* are focussed on larger issues (funding, logistics, casting and finances) of film production. See also *director*.

pronouncer: pronunciation note, usually phonetic, to a reporter or newsreader. If someone asks you to add a pronouncer to your intro on McAfee Virus Scan, you file your intro with a note in the left-hand column, or inside the autocue copy (protocols vary—check) : MAC uh fee

QTV: Brand name for a type of autocue system (see *autocue*).

RF: radio frequency. An RF mic is cordless. A transmitter on the mic sends the audio signal to a receiver which is usually mounted on the camera in news situations. The receiver may also be plugged into a public-address system, e.g. in a news conference.

re-ask: for editing purposes, an interviewer may do re-asks after a single-camera interview—after the interview is over, she repeats some or all questions to camera, since her back was to the camera during the interview. This allows for smoother editing and gives the effect of two cameras. In a perfect world, there would always be two cameras, but that is often not the case. (I have just ruined the movie Broadcast News for you.) ETHICS NOTE: V. important that you ask the SAME question/s, the SAME way...and even then re-asks can be problematic.

remote: outside the studio. A live remote can be a weather report from the parking lot, a political convention with 20 cameras or a guy with a satellite phone on a rooftop in Baghdad.

res, res up: In non-linear editing, you will sometimes use low-resolution (low-res) video in your rough cut, to use less space in the computer's memory. When you re-edit your *EDL* for a final product, you "res up" to broadcast quality.

rough cut: a first-draft edit. Editorial types screen a rough cut and suggest changes. You rarely get a chance to do rough cuts in daily news.

rundown: **1.** a version of the lineup with additional technical information for the studio and control room crews; **2.** an updated lineup filed after the newscast, with any last-minute and on-the-fly changes incorporated.

SA: script assistant. Similar to a PA. This term (and the job) is falling out of

use in most newsrooms. **SOT** : Sound On Tape (see also *AVO*, *VOSOT*)

S/U: usually, "sound up"--- a script direction for editing, as in "*S/U of chanting at 04:45:34*"*****WATCH OUT**: it is also sometimes used to mean "standup."

scrum: term from rugby. A news scrum is when a bunch of reporters and crews surround a newsmaker for an impromptu or scheduled question-and-answer session. Noun: "*There's no newser, but the PM and some of the premiers will do scrums outside the meeting room just in time for the Eastern time zone deadline...so Halifax, you're up the creek*" :) Verb: "*She wouldn't do individual interviews, but a bunch of us scrummed her on the way out.*"

segue (pron. seg-way): transition from one topic to another. Every reporter has a story about a forced, embarrassing or just plain bizarre segue on live TV... of course, it's hardly ever theirs.

sequence: Traditional structure for a series of shots. The camera changes position through an action to give a complete view of what's going on, to compress the time required to do the action, etc. There are good basic examples in the "Editing Decisions" video.

setup pack: A short background item, usually preceding an interview, panel or other longer item. May be a host *AVO*.

shelf: see *bagger*.

shotlist: Noun—a list of shots on a tape, with their corresponding *timecodes*. Verb—to make a shotlist. See also *log*.

shoulder graphic: the graphic magically floating over the host's shoulder in the standard newscast shot. aka cell.

slug: as in print, the one- or two-word name used to refer to a report. I hear you're filing a VO for the 6.... your slug is 'Election Melt'

soundup: noun, from the action of turning up the dial on an audio mixing board, a soundup is usually a few moments of natural sound—to establish the atmosphere of a location, to show the enthusiasm of a crowd, etc. *I want you to use a soundup after that edit, to give viewers a chance to adjust to the change of location..*(Caution: some people use S/U for standup—watch for the difference.)

"Soviet newscast" – snarky description of a long stretch where the newsreader just...reads.... without changing the shot or going to tape, graphics, etc. *Her standup was so long, it started to feel like a Soviet newscast.*

spear: CBC jargon. To “do a spear” is to collect tape, espy interview clips, for another reporter’s piece. The reference is to the knight’s squire, supplying the gear to do battle. When you do spears, you’re contributing to a greater cause, aw shucks.

standup: reporter speaking to camera, usually in the body of a field report. (Note: some scripts will use S/U to mean soundup as well as standup—watch for the difference.)

sticks: slang for camera tripod.

stings: production elements in a program, usually promoting an item coming up later. A sting may also be used to smooth out a difficult *segue*...e.g., from a report on a fatal fire to what’s on downtown this weekend.

stock: Stock shots—library footage, particularly generic pictures, e.g. of a place or activity...people fishing, mowing lawns, etc.

swish pan: a rapid pan of the camera, so fast, “you can hear the ‘swish’”. Generally not a good idea, though it has its uses.

streeters: non-gender-specific version of what used to be called the man-in-the-street interview. “Go out and shoot some streeters on gas prices.” Also known as voxpops (Latin: *vox populi*, voice of the people).

super: noun and verb. Verb : to superimpose an image (usually type) over another; noun: the superimposition itself. The supers in a news item are the names of guests and reporters, locations, etc. Other terms: key, font, chyron (brand of machine)

super tech: does not wear a cape. *Supervising technicians* are the senior technical people. They have a range of duties which may include coordinating feeds, booking crews for special events, troubleshooting in the studio, etc. and supervising the other technicians on a shoot/set. See also **TP**

switcher: the person who, and the machine which, switches various production sources—studio cameras, tape playbacks, graphics, etc—as a program goes to air or to tape.

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TP: technical producer. See also *supertech*. Differences between a TP and a supertech may or may not be more than a question of union jurisdiction—depends on the plant.

tag: copy tag, or on-camera tag...often a PS to an item, e.g., “That piece first aired in January.”

talkback: 1. for reporters, the term usually refers to a debrief with the

host. 2. In the studio, the intercom system by which the director or other members of the control room crew communicate with the anchor or other people in the studio. I told him on the talkback that the item wasn't ready, so he skipped to the next intro instead. See also *IFB*

tally light: the red record light in a camera, usually just above the lens and/or inside the viewfinder.

tease: a promo which doesn't give away the kernel of the story. "*This man has committed no crime, but he's wanted across Canada. We'll have his story...later on the show.*"

teleprompter: see *autocue*

telex: the earplug through which a host or field reporter hears other sources of audio: the program, an interviewer (or guest)...but not him/herself (at least, when it works properly...). Also called an IFB (interruptible foldback), after the system it's part of.

throw—where one on-air person hands the commentary or hosting to someone else. "*Chris in the field will throw to Pat in the studio.*" A throw can be scripted or ad libbed.

tilt: literal—to tilt the camera up or down. "*I'm going to tilt up to the sky at the end of this shot.*"

timecode: electronically generated code marking every frame in video. A gift from the gods for shotlisting.

timeline: in non-linear editing, the timeline is the on-screen map of your report. You click-and-drag clips from the bins, into the timeline. The timeline stretches and contracts when you insert or remove a piece of captured/digitized tape.

tops and tails (CTV) -- specific types of live hits, where the reporter does a live (or *look-live*) on-camera before the start of the cut piece (top) or at the end (tail).

toss – see *throw*

track, tracking shot: camera moves with the action. A common tracking shot would be to shoot a streetscape from the (open!) window of a moving car. Note: Do not attempt this while driving.

truck: to move the camera and tripod laterally, on wheels (as opposed to panning), or forward (as opposed to zooming). See also *dolly*.

under: fade under, sound under... these terms refer to lowering the level of video or audio elements as new elements enter the story (or *fade up*).

VCV, VO , VOSOT : see *voice-over, AVO*

VJ :see *video journalist*

vet: dictionary definition is "to examine carefully." Most newsrooms require all scripts to be vetted by a senior editorial person, for journalistic, legal, technical and creative reasons. Many shows go through several vets before getting to air.

video journalist or VJ: In literal terms, we are all video journalists, but the term is used to describe someone who both shoots and reports.

viz: visuals, as in "*What are the viz for the billboard at the end of Block One?*"

voice over: two meanings... a short on-air piece (see AVO), or the reporter's spoken script in a report/pack

voxpath: see *streeters*

WIP list : Works In Progress. A newsroom's or reporter's WIP list is a way of keeping track of story ideas and their status, including "needs research", "researching", "shooting", "writing", "editing", "on hold for better weather".

walkthrough: rehearsal. It's always good to do a walkthrough of the first minute or so of the show before it goes to air.

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Final note:

See also: "The Producer Book: Newsroom Jargon" at

http://scrippsjschool.org/producermore.php?story_id=339

Health

warning: some terms on this link are not for the faint of heart; others are downright offensive, but rude or not, they're all used somewhere.

wallpaper: Slang for boring pictures that don't bear much relation to the script. See also B-roll, cover.

wild sound : see *nat sound*