FINAL STAGE POST HOUSE

CLIENT REFERENCE

FINISHING GLOSSARY

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CONTENTS

01 How to use

02 Picture & Color

03 Color Science & Image Formats

04 Film Look & Photochemical Terms

05 Sound

06 Editorial & Conform

07 Delivery & Files

08 Under One Roof

09 Saying What You Want

01 HOW TO USE

These are the words we use in a finishing session, so you can tell us what you want and know what we mean back. Each entry gives a plain definition and where it shows up: in the picture, in the sound, or in the file you receive.

You don't need to memorize any of it. If a word comes up in a session and it isn't clear, stop us and ask.

FIND A WORD	Each section groups the words for one stage of the work.
READ A ROW	The term sits on the left with a plain definition beside it. The right column says where you will see it, hear it or need it.
BRING IT TO A SESSION	The last section turns everyday notes like "warmer" or "muddy" into what we change.

02 PICTURE & COLOR

Most color notes are about one of three zones: shadows, midtones or highlights. Saying which zone you mean makes the note precise.

TERM	WHAT IT MEANS	WHERE YOU SEE IT
Exposure	How bright the image is overall.	The whole frame
Contrast	The distance between the darkest and brightest parts. More contrast = punchier; less = softer, flatter.	Shadows vs highlights
Shadows / Midtones / Highlights	The dark, middle and bright parts of the image. Also called lows, mids and highs, or lift, gamma and gain.	Every grade is built on these three
Black level	How deep the darkest part of the image sits. "Lifted" blacks look milky or faded; "deep" blacks look rich.	Shadows
Crushed	Shadow detail pushed so dark it merges into flat black. Sometimes a choice, sometimes a mistake.	Dark hair, dark clothing, night scenes
Clipped	Highlight detail pushed so bright it turns into flat white with no texture. Once clipped in camera, it can't be recovered.	Skies, windows, lamps, skin shine
Dynamic range	How much of the range from black to white the camera or display can hold before crushing or clipping.	The whole image

Latitude	How much room the footage has to be pushed brighter or darker in the grade before it breaks.	Over- or underexposed shots
Saturation	How strong all colors are, equally. Push it and everything gets louder; pull it and the image heads toward black and white.	Every color at once
Vibrance	A smarter saturation: it boosts the muted colors more than the already-strong ones, and usually protects skin.	Background color, without cooking skin
Hue	The color itself: red vs orange vs yellow. A hue shift turns one color into a neighbor.	A specific object, like a jacket or a logo
White balance / Temperature	Whether white looks white, or leans warm (amber) or cool (blue).	Whites, grays, skin
Tint	The green–magenta balance, at right angles to temperature. Any source can push a picture toward green or magenta, and tint brings it back or pushes it on purpose. Fluorescent light is a classic case, since it often leans green.	Skin, white walls
Mixed lighting	Light sources of different colors in one shot, like window daylight with a tungsten lamp, or a face under a neon sign. One white balance can't fix all of it, so we correct each area separately.	Interiors, night exteriors
Green / magenta contamination	A cast that pulls skin toward green or magenta. Fluorescent green comes from a mercury line near 546 nm. On set it's fixed with minus-green or plus-green gels. In the grade we use tint and secondaries.	Skin, white walls
Skin tone	The most watched thing in any grade. Viewers forgive odd skies, not odd faces.	Faces and hands
Primary correction	Adjustments to the whole image: balance, exposure, contrast.	The whole frame
Secondary correction	Adjustments to one part of the image only, isolated by color, shape or tracking.	One object or area
Window / Power window / Mask	A shape that limits a correction to one area, such as brightening a face.	Wherever it's drawn
Qualifier / Key	A selection made by color or brightness, such as "only the blue sky."	One color range
Tracking	Making a window follow a moving subject.	Moving faces or objects
Vignette	A darkening, or lightening, toward the edges of the frame to pull the eye to the center.	Frame edges
Look	The overall creative style of the grade: warm and nostalgic, cold and clinical, high-contrast and gritty.	The whole project
Color script	A planned map of the film's palette, sequence by sequence, made before the grade starts.	Look development

Look arc	How the grade changes across the story. It starts from a baseline look, and each departure marks a turn in the story.	Across the whole film
Shot matching	Making shots in a scene look like they were filmed at the same time in the same light.	Across cuts in a scene
Reference	An image, film or frame you show us to describe a look. Usually the fastest way to agree.	Session prep
LUT	A Look-Up Table: a file that converts color from one state to another, as a technical conversion or a creative look. A LUT is a starting point, not a finished grade.	On set, in the grade, in review
Banding	Visible steps in what should be a smooth gradient, often in skies or dark walls. Caused by low bit depth or heavy compression.	Skies, gradients, fades
Noise / Grain	Noise is random speckle from the camera sensor, usually unwanted. Grain is the texture of film, often added on purpose.	Shadows, flat areas
Sharpness / Softness	How crisp edges and fine detail look.	Eyes, text, textures
SDR	Standard Dynamic Range: the normal TV and web picture, mastered to about 100 nits.	Most deliveries
HDR	High Dynamic Range: brighter highlights, deeper shadows and more color on screens that support it. Often mastered at 1,000 nits.	Streaming, modern TVs and phones
Nits	A measure of screen brightness. SDR reference is about 100 nits; an HDR master often peaks at 1,000.	Mastering and display specs
Dolby Vision / HDR10 / HLG	Common HDR formats. Dolby Vision carries shot-by-shot metadata that tells each TV how to show the image; HDR10 uses one static setting; HLG is common in broadcast.	HDR deliverables
Trim pass	A version of the grade adjusted for a different screen, such as an SDR version made from the HDR master.	Deliverables

03 COLOR SCIENCE & IMAGE FORMATS

These terms describe how color is recorded and stored, not how it looks. They matter most when footage moves between camera, edit, grade and delivery.

TERM	WHAT IT MEANS	WHERE IT MATTERS
Color space	The full definition of how numbers become colors: which primaries, which white point and which brightness curve.	Every file and every screen

Gamut	The range of colors a color space can hold. A wider gamut holds more saturated colors.	Camera, grade, display
Rec.709	The standard color space for HD TV and most web video.	SDR deliverables
Rec.2020	A very wide color space used as the container for HDR and UHD. Few screens can show all of it.	HDR deliverables
DCI-P3 / P3-D65	The cinema color space (DCI-P3) and its version with a video white point (P3-D65), common for HDR mastering and Apple screens.	Theatrical, HDR, Apple devices
Gamma / EOTF	The brightness curve that tells a screen how to turn numbers into light. SDR uses gamma 2.4 (BT.1886); HDR uses PQ or HLG.	Mastering and monitoring
Log	A flat, low-contrast recording format that stores more highlight and shadow detail. It looks gray on purpose and is meant to be graded.	Camera originals
Raw	Sensor data saved before most processing, so white balance and exposure can still be changed later.	Camera originals
Scene-referred	A workflow that keeps the image as a record of the light in the scene, so it can be graded once and output to any screen.	Behind the scenes of the grade
Display-referred	A workflow tied to one target screen, like Rec.709. Simpler, but harder to repurpose.	SDR-only projects
ACES	An industry color system that keeps footage from different cameras in one shared, scene-referred space.	Multi-camera and VFX projects
Color management	The setup that keeps color correct as footage moves between cameras, software and screens.	The whole pipeline
Bit depth	How many shades each color channel can hold: 8-bit = 256, 10-bit = 1,024, 12-bit = 4,096. More bits, smoother gradients, less banding.	Camera, masters
Chroma subsampling	How much color detail is stored compared with brightness detail: 4:4:4 = full, 4:2:2 = half, 4:2:0 = a quarter.	Codecs, keying, VFX
Legal / Full range	Two ways of mapping video levels. A mismatch makes images look washed out or crushed.	Exports and players
Calibration	Measuring and adjusting a monitor so it shows color to the standard. Why the grading suite and your laptop can look different.	The grading suite

Light sources, warm to cool

Kelvin describes light that sits near white. A source with a strong color of its own has no true Kelvin, so we correct it with tint and secondaries instead.

SOURCE	ABOUT	WHAT IT MEANS IN THE GRADE
High-pressure sodium	2,000 to 2,100 K	The orange streetlight. Its color rendering is very poor, so skin goes muddy and is hard to fully correct.
Household tungsten (CIE Illuminant A)	2,856 K	The reference standard for incandescent light.
Studio tungsten	3,200 K	Studio lamps and the camera's "tungsten" preset.
D55	About 5,500 K	Mid-morning or mid-afternoon daylight.
D65	6,504 K	Noon daylight, and the white point of Rec.709 and sRGB.
LED	Varies by product	Can sit at any Kelvin and still lean green or magenta. That is what Tint corrects.
Fluorescent	Varies by tube	Mercury vapor behind a phosphor coating. A mercury line near 546 nm adds the green cast.
Neon	No Kelvin	A colored gas glow. Neon itself glows red-orange, and other colors use other gases or coated tubes. It spills its own color onto faces, and white balance alone can't remove it.

SOURCES

Illuminants D55, D65 and A: Wikipedia, Standard illuminant
Rec.709 white point: Wikipedia, Rec. 709
Studio lamps: Wikipedia, Color temperature
High-pressure sodium: US patent 4137484, Philips SON-T
LED tint: MetricGate, Duv
Fluorescent and neon: HowStuffWorks, Wikipedia, Color correction

04 FILM LOOK & PHOTOCHEMICAL TERMS

These come from FSPH's research into how film creates color, the work behind our film-emulation tools. They explain why a "film look" is more than a filter.

TERM	WHAT IT MEANS	WHAT YOU'D NOTICE
Additive color	Color made by mixing light: red, green and blue (RGB). All three at full = white. This is how every screen works.	Any digital display

Subtractive color	Color made by dyes absorbing light: cyan, magenta and yellow (CMY). All three together = black. This is how film and print work.	Film prints, film emulation
CMY	The three subtractive primaries. Cyan absorbs red, magenta absorbs green, yellow absorbs blue.	The dense, rich color of film
Characteristic curve	Film's response to light, shaped like an S: a soft toe in the shadows, a straight middle and a gentle shoulder in the highlights.	Why film rolls off highlights instead of clipping
Toe / Shoulder	The ends of that curve. The toe shapes how shadows fade to black; the shoulder shapes how highlights fade to white.	Shadow and highlight roll-off
Halation	A glowing, usually reddish halo around bright highlights, caused by light scattering inside the film.	Around lamps, windows, practicals
Grain	The texture made by film's silver and dye particles.	Flat areas and shadows
Push / Pull processing	Developing film longer (push) for more contrast and grain, or shorter (pull) for softer contrast.	Gritty vs soft looks
Film emulation	Recreating the color, contrast, grain and halation of film from digital footage.	The overall look
Technicolor / Dye transfer	A historic process that printed cyan, magenta and yellow dyes separately, giving the deep, saturated color of classic Hollywood films.	Strong, stable, saturated color
Bleach bypass	Skipping a bleach step so silver stays in the image: lower saturation, higher contrast, harder blacks.	Desaturated, gritty looks
DCTL	DaVinci Color Transform Language: custom color tools written for DaVinci Resolve. FSPH's Spectra Tools are DCTLs.	Inside the grade

05 SOUND

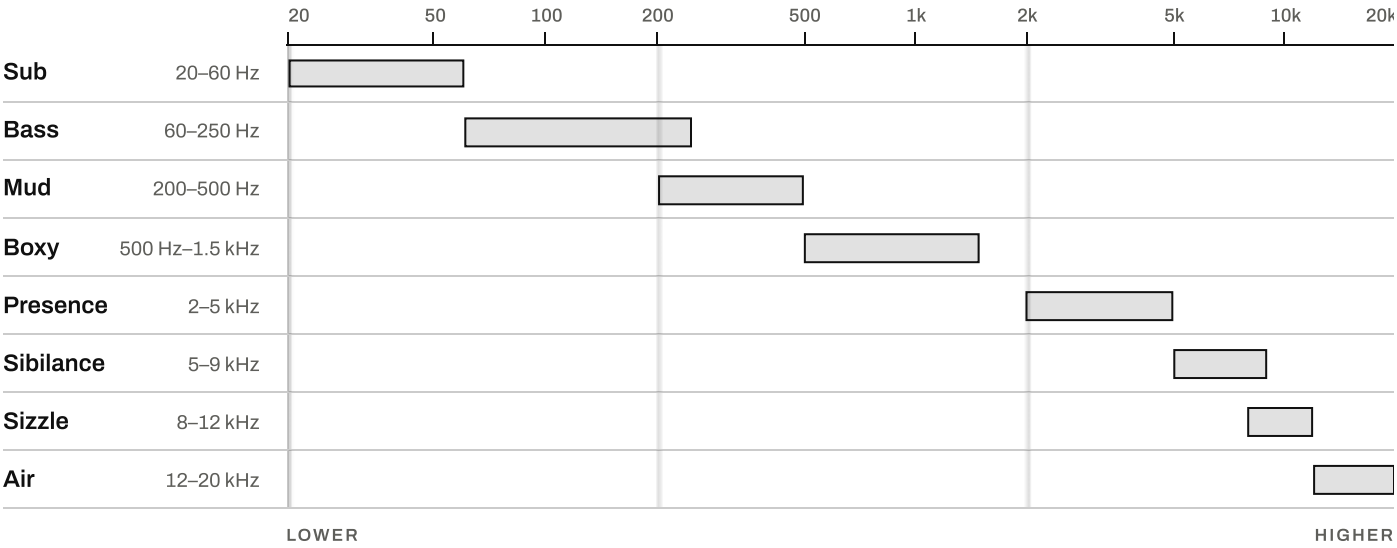
Many sound words describe a frequency range: how low or high a sound sits, measured in hertz (Hz). Human

hearing runs from about 20 Hz to 20,000 Hz (20 kHz).

Where the sound words live

Ranges are approximate and overlap; they shift with the voice or instrument.

FREQUENCY MAP · 20 HZ TO 20 KHZ, LOG SCALE



WORD	RANGE	WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE	TOO MUCH / TOO LITTLE
Sub / Rumble	20–60 Hz	Felt more than heard: explosions, engines, the floor shaking.	Too much: rumble, wasted energy. Too little: no weight.
Bass / Low end	60–250 Hz	Warmth and body: kick drum, bass, the chest of a voice.	Too much: boomy. Too little: thin.
Mud	200–500 Hz	Where sounds pile up and blur.	Too much: muddy, cloudy, "blanket over it."
Boxy / Honk	500 Hz–1.5 kHz	Hollow or nasal.	Too much: boxy, phone-like, "in a cardboard box."
Presence	2–5 kHz	Clarity and intelligibility; where words become understandable.	Too much: harsh, tiring. Too little: dull, distant.
Sibilance	5–9 kHz	The "s," "sh" and "t" sounds in speech.	Too much: hissy, spitty "esses."
Sizzle / Brilliance	8–12 kHz	Sparkle and detail: cymbals, crispness.	Too much: brittle. Too little: dark.
Air	12–20 kHz	Openness and space above everything else.	Too little: closed-in. Too much: thin and hissy.

Mixing and processing terms

TERM	WHAT IT MEANS	WHERE YOU HEAR IT
EQ (Equalization)	Turning specific frequency ranges up or down, like a detailed tone control.	Every voice and element
EQ curve	The shape of all the EQ moves on a sound, drawn as a line across the frequency range.	The EQ display
Boost / Cut	Raising a range (boost) or attenuating it (cut). A cut only lowers the range. Good mixes attenuate more than they boost.	Any EQ move
High-pass filter (low cut)	Lets the highs pass and attenuates everything below a set point, more the further below it goes. Cleans rumble and handling noise.	Dialogue, under 80–100 Hz
Low-pass filter (high cut)	Lets the lows pass and attenuates everything above a set point, more the further above it goes. Makes sound duller, farther or muffled, as through a wall.	Effects, phone or radio voice
Compression	Narrowing the gap between loud and quiet moments so a voice stays even and present.	Dialogue, music, VO
Limiting	A hard ceiling that stops sound going over a set level.	The final mix
De-essing	Taming harsh "s" sounds without dulling the voice.	Dialogue and VO
Breath	The inhale between phrases. We can keep, lower or remove breaths; removing all of them sounds unnatural.	Dialogue and VO
Noise reduction / Dialogue cleanup	Removing hum, hiss, wind, traffic or room echo from recordings.	Location sound
Room tone	The sound of a space with no one talking. Used to fill gaps so edits don't drop to dead silence.	Under dialogue edits
Reverb	The reflections that tell your ear what space a sound is in.	Placing a voice in a room, hall or outdoors
Pop / Plosive	A burst of air on "p" and "b" sounds hitting the mic.	Close-miked voice
Clicks / Mouth noise	Small wet or sticky sounds in speech, removed in cleanup.	Close-miked VO
Clipping / Distortion	Audio recorded or mixed too loud, so the waveform is cut off and crackles. Like clipped picture, it is hard to fix.	Loud moments
Headroom	The space left between the loudest moment and the maximum level.	The final mix
Dynamics / Dynamic range	The difference between the quietest and loudest parts of the mix.	Whispers vs explosions

Mix	Balancing every element (dialogue, music, effects) into one finished soundtrack.	The whole soundtrack
Stems	Separate mixed groups, usually dialogue, music and effects (DME), delivered so the mix can be adjusted or translated.	Deliverables
M&E	Music and effects without dialogue, used for foreign-language dubbing.	International deliverables
Sound design	Creating or choosing sounds to build a world: ambiences, impacts, textures.	Effects and atmosphere
Foley	Everyday sounds performed to picture: footsteps, cloth, props.	Footsteps, handling
ADR	Re-recording dialogue in a studio to replace unusable location audio.	Dialogue fixes
Ducking	Lowering music automatically or by hand when someone speaks.	Music under VO
Panning	Placing a sound left, right or center.	Stereo and surround mixes
Stereo / 5.1 / Atmos	Speaker formats: two channels; six channels of surround; Dolby Atmos places sounds in 3D space, including overhead.	Deliverables
LUFS / LKFS	Units of perceived loudness. Each platform has a target: about –14 LUFS for most streaming music platforms, –24 LKFS for US broadcast, –23 LUFS for European broadcast.	The final mix and QC
True peak	The real highest level after playback conversion. Specs usually cap it at around –2 dBTP.	The final mix and QC

06 EDITORIAL & CONFORM

Finishing starts when the edit is locked. These terms cover the handoff from edit to finishing.

TERM	WHAT IT MEANS	WHY IT MATTERS TO YOU
Offline edit	The creative edit, often cut with lighter proxy files.	Where the story is decided
Online / Finishing	Rebuilding the edit with full-quality media, then grading, mixing, titling and mastering.	What FSPH does
Proxies	Smaller, lighter copies of camera files used for editing.	Not for final output
Camera originals / OCF	The original files from the camera, at full quality.	We grade from these, not proxies
Picture lock	The point where the edit stops changing: no more cuts, lengths or shot swaps.	Grading and mixing start here. Changes after lock cost time

Conform	Relinking the locked edit to the camera originals so every shot matches the offline cut frame for frame.	The first step of finishing
EDL / XML / AAF	Files that describe an edit (which clip, where, how long) so another system can rebuild it. XML and AAF also carry effects and audio.	How your edit reaches us
Turnover	The package sent from edit to finishing: the edit file, a reference video, media and notes.	Get it complete and sessions start on time
Reference / Offline video	An export of the offline edit used to check the conform shot by shot.	Our check against your cut
OMF / AAF for audio	Files that carry the edit's audio tracks and clips to the sound team.	How sound gets the edit
Handles	Extra frames kept before and after each shot, usually 12–24.	Room to adjust dissolves and fades
Timecode	A clock stamped on every frame (hours:minutes:seconds:frames) so everyone can point to the same moment.	How to give precise notes
Frame rate	Frames per second: 23.976 or 24 for film-style work, 25 in Europe, 29.97 or 30 for US broadcast and web, 50/60 for sport and high-motion.	Must stay consistent from shoot to delivery
Resolution	Image size in pixels: HD (1920×1080), UHD/4K (3840×2160), DCI 4K (4096×2160).	Set by the deliverable
Aspect ratio	The shape of the frame: 16:9, 2.39:1 (scope), 1.85:1, 9:16 (vertical), 1:1, 4:5.	Different versions for different platforms
Letterbox / Pillarbox	Black bars at top and bottom (letterbox) or sides (pillarbox) when the image is a different shape from the screen.	Wide films on TV, vertical content
Reframe / Punch-in	Re-cropping a shot for a new aspect ratio or a tighter frame.	Social cutdowns
Title safe / Action safe	Margins that keep text and key action from being cut off on some screens or covered by platform buttons.	Titles and captions
Cutdown / Version	A shorter or alternate edit made from the master: 30s, 15s, 6s, vertical.	Campaign deliverables
Textless	A version with no on-screen text, used for translation and re-versioning.	International and future edits
VFX pull	Exporting shots for visual effects work, with handles.	Projects with VFX
Burn-in	Text burned onto the picture, like timecode or "FOR REVIEW," for review copies only.	Review files

07

DELIVERY & FILES

A video file has two layers: the container is the box, the codec is how the picture and sound inside are compressed. A .mov can hold a high-quality ProRes master or a small H.264 preview, so the file extension alone doesn't tell you the quality.

TERM	WHAT IT MEANS	WHERE YOU'LL SEE IT
Container / Wrapper	The file format that holds video, audio, captions and metadata together: .mov, .mxf, .mp4.	The file extension
Codec	The method that compresses and decodes the picture or sound.	File info, delivery specs
Compression	Making files smaller by discarding or packing data. Too much shows as blockiness, smearing or banding.	Web and streaming files
Bitrate	How much data per second a file uses (Mbps). Higher bitrate, higher quality, bigger file.	Export settings
Lossless / Visually lossless / Lossy	No data lost / losses you can't see / losses you can see if pushed.	Masters vs previews
ProRes	Apple's family of high-quality editing and mastering codecs. From lighter to heavier: 422 LT, 422, 422 HQ, 4444, 4444 XQ.	Masters, mezzanine files
DNxHR / DNxHD	Avid's equivalent of ProRes.	Avid workflows, .mxf files
H.264 / AVC	The most common compressed codec for web, social and review copies. Small files, plays everywhere.	Previews, social, web
H.265 / HEVC	A newer, more efficient compressed codec, required for most HDR files on phones and streaming.	HDR previews, 4K web
WAV	Uncompressed audio, the standard for mixes and stems (usually 48 kHz, 24-bit).	Audio deliverables
AAC / MP3	Compressed audio for web and previews.	Inside .mp4 files
Master	The highest-quality finished version, from which every other version is made.	Archive and deliverables
Mezzanine file	A high-quality file, a step below the master, delivered to platforms or distributors to make their own versions.	Platform uploads
Deliverables	The full list of files a project must produce: masters, versions, audio stems, captions, stills.	The delivery spec

Delivery spec	The broadcaster's, platform's or client's technical requirements for each file.	Provided before finishing starts
DCP	Digital Cinema Package: the folder of files a cinema projector plays, using JPEG 2000 picture in .mxf.	Festivals and theatrical
KDM	A digital key that unlocks an encrypted DCP for a set cinema and time window.	Encrypted theatrical releases
IMF	Interoperable Master Format: a package that stores one master plus versions (languages, edits, captions) without duplicating everything.	Netflix, studios, streamers
Captions / Subtitles	Captions transcribe dialogue and sound for accessibility; subtitles translate dialogue. Delivered as .srt, .scc, .vtt and similar files.	Accessibility and international versions
Open / Closed captions	Burned into the picture (open) vs a separate file viewers can turn on and off (closed).	Social vs broadcast
Slate / Leader	Information cards and countdown before the program: title, version, date, audio format.	Broadcast and cinema masters
Bars & tone	Color bars and a reference tone at the head of a master, used to check levels.	Broadcast masters
QC (Quality Control)	A full technical and visual check of a deliverable against its spec: picture, sound, levels, sync, captions.	Before anything leaves FSPH
Pre-QC	An internal check before a file goes to a broadcaster or platform's own QC, to catch rejections early.	FSPH's process
Sync	Picture and sound lined up exactly. Even a frame or two off is noticeable on lips.	Dialogue
Metadata	Data inside the file describing it: frame rate, color space, timecode, HDR info.	Wrong metadata can make a correct image play wrong

08 UNDER ONE ROOF

We grade and mix in the same room, so we hear every note twice. When you ask for "warmer," we answer in picture and in sound. A few of these words share real physics across the two.

The long air path

Light and sound both travel through air, and air takes the short wavelengths first.

At sunset the sun sits low, so its light crosses far more atmosphere to reach you. Air molecules scatter blue light

out of the beam along the way. The reds and oranges are what's left.

Sound loses its highs the same way. In mild air (20°C, 50% humidity), an 8 kHz tone loses about 32 dB over 300 meters. A 500 Hz tone loses less than 1 dB over the same distance. So a voice across a field arrives with its body and without its air.

In both cases, distance through air gently attenuates the highs.

Warmer reads as intimate

The warm light people know best comes from close by: a candle or a lamp in the room. Candle flame measures around 1,800 to 1,900 K, and a household incandescent bulb around 2,400 K. Daylight sits above 5,000 K.

Sound has its own closeness cue. Move a directional mic closer to a voice and the low end grows. Engineers call this the proximity effect.

Both tie warmth to things near us, which is part of why it reads as intimate on screen. So when you ask for warmer, we shift the picture toward amber, and the mix gets a touch of low-mid body to match.

Shared terms

TERM	IN PICTURE	IN SOUND
Long air path	Sunset light turns orange because air scatters the blue out of a long path.	Distant sound turns dull because air absorbs highs much faster than lows.
Closeness	Near, low sources like candles and tungsten read warm.	A directional mic close to the source boosts the low end (proximity effect).
Color temperature	Named for the temperature of the light source. A hotter source looks bluer, so "warm" light comes from cooler sources.	The word "warm" crossed over from picture to sound. Kelvin has no equivalent in audio.

SOURCES

Sunset color: Met Office, Why is the sunset red?

Air absorption: calculated with the ISO 9613-1 formula (Sengpiel)

Proximity effect: Sound On Sound

Color temperature: Jou et al., Unveiling the mythical candles, Building and Environment, 2020, Wikipedia, Color temperature, Molecular Expressions, Florida State University

09 SAYING WHAT YOU WANT

Everyday words work fine in a session. This is roughly how we translate them, so you know what to expect when

you say them.

YOU SAY	IN PICTURE, WE USUALLY	IN SOUND, WE USUALLY
Warmer	Shift toward amber and orange	Add low-mid body, soften highs
Cooler / Colder	Shift toward blue and cyan	Thin the lows, brighten the top
Punchier	Add contrast and saturation	Add compression, presence and low-end impact
Softer	Lower contrast, lift blacks, roll off highlights	Reduce harsh highs, gentler dynamics
Cleaner	Remove color casts, reduce noise	Remove noise, mud and mouth clicks
Brighter	Raise exposure or highlights	Add presence and air
Darker / Moodier	Deepen shadows, lower exposure	Darker EQ, more low end, sparser mix
More cinematic	Contrast with roll-off, controlled color, grain or halation	Wider dynamics, more space and reverb, deeper low end
Pops more	More saturation or contrast on the subject, or a vignette to draw the eye	Bring it forward with level and presence
Muddy	Separate the colors, add contrast, set middle gray where it belongs	Attenuate 200–500 Hz
Thin	Add density: deepen mids and shadows, give color more body	Add 100–250 Hz
Harsh	Ease saturation and bright highlights, pull back sharpening, reset the contrast pivot	Tame 2–5 kHz or de-ess
Washed out	Deepen blacks, add contrast and saturation	—
Too orange / too green	Rebalance skin or white balance	—

Notes that save a session

— **Give timecode.** "At 01:02:14:08 the sky is too blue" beats "in the middle somewhere."

— **Say the zone or range.** Shadows, skin, sky; dialogue, music, the low end.

— **Bring references.** A still or a clip says more than adjectives.

— **Say how you're watching.** A phone, a laptop and a calibrated suite show different pictures; laptop speakers and headphones hide different problems.

— **Separate taste from fixes.** "I don't like it" and "that's broken" lead to different work.

What we'll ask you before we start

— Where will this play: cinema, broadcast, streaming, social, all of them?

— Is there a delivery spec from the platform, broadcaster or distributor?

— Is the picture locked?

— Are there references for the look and the sound?

— What versions are needed: aspect ratios, lengths, textless, languages?

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