



Guidance for filming at Night (unsociable hours)

Night filming refers to any activity taking place between 22:00hrs and 08:00hrs (unsocial hours).

When working outside normal hours in residential or commercial areas, it's important to plan carefully, talk with local residents and businesses, and get the necessary approvals to keep disruption to a minimum and stay within the relevant legislation.

Key Principles

Effective consultation is essential to successful night filming. Production companies need to:

- Consult local residents and businesses at the planning stage
- Allow sufficient time for consultation
- Adhere to the Bristol Film Office's [Code of Practice for Filming](#)

Permissions

Production companies need to liaise with the Bristol Film Office at the earliest opportunity, and a subsequent permit application submitted.

A method statement must be submitted, and include:

- Location details
- Justification for out-of-hours filming
- Duration
- Premises affected
- Consultation strategy (including letter drops, and circulation to the Bristol Film Office and other key stakeholders)
- Working methods
- Noise mitigation measures

Operational Guidance

Filming outside social hours is subject to noise and nuisance controls. It is advisable to shoot scenes involving noise above conversational level before 22:00hrs.

Unless prior permission has been granted and consultation has raised no objections:

- Residential night shoots should be completed and de-rigged by 23:00hrs
- Noise must be kept to a minimum

Production companies to ensure:

- Generator noise is minimised and usage of batteries encouraged
- Noisy equipment or vehicles that cannot be removed quietly are left in situ until 07:00hrs, secured by overnight security
- Essential technical vehicles are parked considerately

Bristol Film Office

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- Personal and facility vehicles are parked away from the filming location, to minimise noise upon wrap
- Crews use covert walkie-talkies or earpiece equipment
- Crew respect the local community
- Staff amenities are sited away from residential locations (where possible)
- Call sheets reflect 'off-limits' streets for crew parking, and noise risk assessment
- Where lighting is intrusive, blackout materials are provided with assistance offered to residents as needed
- Earplugs to be offered to residents if they are concerned about any potential noise
- Alternative accommodation, or hotels, could be considered to be an option (where possible)

Noise Pollution

Production companies must comply with the [Environmental Protection Act 1990](#), which allows local authorities to take action where filming causes statutory nuisance. The Control of Pollution Act 1974 enables the regulation of working methods, hours and noise levels under [Section 60](#), with prior consent for out-of-hours activity available under [Section 61](#) where appropriate.

Productions are expected to minimise impact by adopting best practicable means for noise control in line with [BS 5228](#), which is approved by government as a code of practice.

This guidance should be read alongside [Filming in Bristol Code of Practice](#).

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