



Home and Business Security Camera Tips

Camera angles and locations

When identifying potential installation locations for your home or business' external security cameras, we encourage owners to consider the best possible positions to provide the highest quality coverage and footage.

- Many commercial cameras are placed high up in corners to maximize visual coverage; however, this usually creates a longer distance from the camera to the subject, which reduces facial detail and creates poor viewing angles.
- High mounted cameras are more easily defeated by disguises.
- The more straight on to a person's face the image is, the more likely a positive identification can be made, especially since a ball cap and sweater can defeat most high placed cameras by significantly obscuring part or all of a person's face.
- When considering your camera placement, think: Scene, Action, and Identification.
 - Scene - you want a **wide view** to see when someone came and went and where they were in the scene.
 - Action - proving what they did. Example: Did they crawl under your car to steal your catalytic converter?
 - Identification - a camera shot usually from the waist up, targeted at a door or gate to easily see who it was.
- When considering an external camera, check the temperature rating so it can withstand our cold seasons.

Video footage and storage

There are several camera or footage specifications that consequently result in a lack of facial detail, which makes generating an Investigative Lead significantly more difficult.

As a home or business owner, you should keep these in mind when choosing your external cameras:

- Low resolution cameras (low quality or older cameras) are unable to capture high resolution images, resulting in a pixelated image that lacks enough detail to compare facial features and identify a possible suspect. Cropping or zooming into these often exaggerates this distortion.
- Low resolution video files, even with top-of-the-line cameras, can be of low quality if the video files are saved in a low-resolution format.
 - High-resolution video generally requires significant storage space, so many DVRs compress the saved video to take up less disk space. This reduces storage cost to the operator but can also significantly impact the quality of the footage.
- Low lighting reduces video quality and visible details of the subject, so many cameras will offer 'night-mode' (infrared) capabilities. You should consider a camera with infrared capabilities, just know this usually provides monochromatic (black and white) footage.
- For better quality footage, use a camera with Auto Iris (automatically adjusts the aperture to optimize the amount of light a camera receives), Auto Focus, and a low Lux rating (measures light intensity).