

David Hughes Photography & Video and Phototheme

David Hughes is a Sole Trader trading as:
David Hughes Photography & Video
and
Phototheme

DHP&V and Phototheme

Health & Safety

DHP&V and Phototheme take health and safety regulations very seriously and are committed to ensuring a safe environment for other media professionals working with us and those with which we are working to perform our designated tasks.

The Health & Safety at Work Act (1974) is in place to ensure employers, employees and anyone self employed take responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of everyone at work.

Due to the varied nature of locations, photography and video as a profession is not mentioned specifically by the H&S at Work Act (1974), however, there are many guidelines in place which are relevant to photography and video production that can ensure safe working practises.

The following guidelines apply to all work places as well as photographic and videographic practises:

Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulation 1992

We and most if not all other photographers and videographers work with personal computers when processing images or editing videos and sometimes can spend many hours if not days on projects sitting in front of the screen.

To comply with H&S regulations and to minimise pains, strains and injuries associated with using a computer work station, we:

Take regular breaks - around every 15 minutes to prevent headaches and eye strains.

Use ergonomically designed furniture which can minimise poor posture, reduce fatigue and possible back, neck, shoulder and wrist injurie.

Adjust the text size on screen to suit requirements when working on documents and use zoom short cuts when using enhancing software for intricate detail.

Use large secondary monitors for video editing to reduce eye strain and fatigue.

Use quality audio monitors to help easily, without strain, identify dialogue for editing and removal if inappropriate, unsuitable or confidential.

Screen display parameters are adjusted for optimum display in subdued lighting as part of the colour balance and correction regime of the monitor editing profile. Our screens are flicker free and matt surfaced for comfortable viewing.

Our office is well ventilated and the walls are matt white to avoid colour casts on the screens and therefore speed photo editing.

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)

We use complicated, sophisticated and sometimes heavy equipment and comply with work equipment regulations by:

Ensuring all equipment used such as lights, cameras, flash guns, video lights tripods, light modifiers, power packs, screens etc. are suitable for the intended purpose.

All of our equipment is genuine equipment manufactured by leading brand photography and video companies avoiding premature equipment burn out and tripod or other mounts breaking when used at the demanding levels required of professionals.

All of our equipment has regular services and maintenance to ensure they're still safe to use. All of our equipment is regularly checked and regularly PAT tested.

Everyone using/handling our equipment and their own receive proper training and are made aware of all the health and safety risks.

Within our building and office we have suitable H&S measures in place for emergencies, including markings and warning signs.

We ensure, when working on location, that all hazards regarding hot studio lights (although we now use low energy continuous lighting for video), electrical cables and heavy equipment are secured and safe against electrical shock, tripping, tipping or burning.

Risk Assessments

Many of our work environments are not visited before arrival for example schools, people's homes, other public or private buildings.

On arrival at a new location we:

Check for obvious hazards to us or others during the implementation of our work.

Objects hanging from a ceiling that could be knocked off when erecting our equipment, uneven floors, location of steps and structures, glass doors or doors that don't open properly, temporary structures or objects (barriers, ladders for maintenance, warning signs on floors) that may injure us as we are moving around capturing images or injure others if we are directing a person's movement for the purposes of varied photographs or different locations for video.

If using mains power we check the condition of the socket outlets used and never use one that is cracked or broken additionally always bringing it or other potential hazards to the attention of the relevant person.

We always have sufficient equipment to complete our tasks on location and never borrow extension leads, equipment, tools, props etc. although may make use of normal objects on location for their intended purpose during our recording and photographing.

When photographing and videoing in public places we are respectful of other people

and their privacy and operate professionally and efficiently.

COSH

Control of Substance Hazardous to Health Regulations are not really applicable to us now.

When working or teaching in darkrooms the proper handling of hazardous materials was important but we don't really use anything that requires more than normal domestic care.

However we do use rechargeable batteries manufactured by Nikon (the stills cameras we use) or Sony (the video cameras).

We also use AA rechargeable batteries.

These are all regularly checked for swelling or leakage and spares not in cameras or flash units are kept in cases to avoid short circuiting.

Discharged batteries are also kept in cases to avoid touching metal objects (keys in pockets or equipment in bags) getting hot and burning or exploding.

Photographing and videoing in people's homes

Although general risks are assessed as above, it is not practical or cost effective (and may be seen as insulting) to visit a person's home or other location and then carry out a thorough risk assessment.

People's homes are dangerous.

Although they may be aware of the cracked light switch, the low hanging light fittings, the table with a broken leg and the loose paved step in the garden, they rarely think to make others aware.

I always carry out a thorough visual assessment.

Most of the equipment we use for location work for videography and photography is battery operated so the condition of the electrical supply and outlets is not normally an issue.

If I need to move furniture I always ask permission and ask if there is any reason why it can't be moved.

If they have pets I ask for the pet to be removed so they are not likely to knock over any lights or present a trip hazard.

I am mindful of physical issues such as photosensitive epilepsy although the normal rate of flash recurrence would be unlikely to trigger an event, I would nevertheless take photos at a more measured rate indoors for babies and older children dispense with flash outside.

Photophobia is more difficult to deal with and if aware before the event the photography can be arranged without flash using continuous light sources and a higher ISO. I never encourage anyone to do anything that is dangerous or risky.

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