Three-point lighting

Key, fill, back. If the face is a white blob, you went too far.

Where the stands go

1. Key: main light, about 45° off the nose, a little above the eyes.

2. Fill: other side, dimmer, so the shadow is soft — not a black hole.

3. Back: behind the subject, kissing the hair and shoulder so they separate from the wall.

4. Stands: sandbag or a foot on the leg. Tape the cable. Keep the walkway clear.

Don’t blow the highlights

- Forehead or shirt gone white? Dim the key or move it back.
- You can lift a shadow later. You cannot paint detail back into a blown face.
- Window light counts. Don’t fight a bright window behind the subject.