

STUDENT GUIDE



Navigating FotoKem

The first thing to do at FotoKem is contact the Student Services department. Student Services specializes in guiding students through the various stages of post production. You can familiarize yourself with our facility by setting up a tour. It is also possible to arrange an on-campus visit for a technical and service related discussion.



Accessing a School Account & Student Pricing

Most accredited schools already have an account with FotoKem. You can access the accounts with the school's approval and a valid student identification. Photoshopped ID's not accepted (unless they are really, really good). If you are a student involved in an independent production, we may also be able to apply student discounts with a valid ID. Call Student Services for a price list.



Pre-Production

The more organized you are in the production stage, the more efficient your post production experience will be. Here are some helpful tips that will help you get started during the pre-production stage.

- Shoot Camera tests to check exposure, framing, & aspect ratios. This is also a good way to find a light-leaking mag or film-scratching camera.
- Call the Production Services department for advice on film stocks, push or pull processing, skip bleach, cross processing, and film lab turnaround times.
- Decide on print dailies or telecine dailies. Print dailies suggest traditional post and neg cutting; telecine dailies suggest a digital finish.
- Once you've decided on a traditional or digital workflow, map out each step. Schedule telecine time and fill out the specification sheet (available from customer service/scheduling) to ensure a proper transfer. FotoKem does not provide certain services (like negative cutting and sound mixing) but can recommend some local vendors that offer these services. Cans, black bags, and cores are available at FotoKem for no charge.



Shooting

If you are shooting digitally, the film items won't apply, though some things are universal regardless of your capture medium.

- Shooting color charts under 'white light' is extremely helpful for dailies color correction. You can purchase an accurate color chart at FotoKem.
- Consistent head and tail slating is essential for dailies transfer, sound sync, and editing. This will decrease the amount of time (and \$\$) spent on sessions.
- Accurate camera reports and circle take information help us organize film rolls (or VT's), create usable lab reports, and answer questions down the line.
- Include notes and special instructions on each camera report, including camera problems, special processing requests, frame rates, etc.
- Tape your film cans with black tape around the edge, a universal signal the can contains exposed, undeveloped film.



Time Schedules—Dropping Film off for Processing/Scheduling Telecine

FotoKem is open 24 hours a day, Monday–Friday. No appointment is necessary for processing. Film dropped off for processing is usually ready 24 hours later. If you add a print or special processing please add another 24 hours. Film dropped on Friday night (no later than 10pm) can be picked up Saturday if you call Production Services and schedule a Saturday pick up. For turn around of special processing (push, pull, skip bleach, cross process) please contact Production Services.

Telecine requires an appointment through a Student Services video scheduler. The scheduler will ask you to fill out a telecine specification sheet in order to set up the session. High definition telecine is a high demand service that may be difficult to schedule in a time frame that suits your deadline. FotoKem can suggest alternate vendors for you to call in these cases.



Dailies

Shooting on film will require a telecine process (film-to-tape) to either standard or high-definition digital video.

- High-Definition telecine is more costly, but more flexible in regards to finishing due to the high resolution and 24p framerate.
- Standard-definition is less expensive, but will require a higher resolution re-transfer of selected takes for finishing after offline editing.
- Telecine provides flex files to plug into your editing system which include all the information for offline/online editing and final conform.
- We can transfer or downconvert to a format you can capture with (mini-dv, dvcam, dvcpro) for offline editing, or transcode directly to offline media.

Shooting digitally does not require telecine, but may require a downconversion, transcoding, or a deck rental.

- If you are using a high-end digital camera that shoots to HDCam, SR, D5, DigiBeta or high resolution data, we can downconvert to an offline format.
- FotoKem can provide Final Cut or Avid offline media (or workflow solutions) for data cameras that have proprietary formats (RED ONE, HPX, EX3).



Audio

Be aware of sound considerations in relation to telecine transfers.

- Drop off audio elements with your negative, tape, or data for projects with sync sound.
- Audio formats we can work with include DA88, DV40, Dat, MMR-8, DIVA, DVD-A, 1/4" Nagra
- NTSC transfers should have 29.97 ndf timecode, 24p projects can have 23.98 timecode.
- Provide at least 8 seconds of continuous timecode pre-roll prior to slate closure (sound only) for syncing.
- Make use of electronic slates (smart slates) when possible. Aaton and Arriflex systems are also advantageous.
- Student Services can answer more specific questions about recording audio in relation to telecine requirements.



Forms

The two main forms to fill out in regards to the film lab are the camera reports and laboratory purchase orders. These forms are freely available at FotoKem Will Call. If you are viewing this as a PDF you can zoom in for details.

Fill out a camera report for each roll of film shot. Please make a note of any special instructions (skip bleach, cross processing, gels used, day for night scenes, push, pull, etc.) Questions about processing should be directed towards Production Services.

Camera reports are printed in quadruplicate. The top original should be turned in with your film. Other copies are typically distributed to the production office, editors, and camera depts.

The laboratory P.O. should be filled out with each stack of film that is dropped off. Please account for the amount of film (number of cans) and instructions for processing, printing, telecine prep, and delivery.

Contact information and emergency phone numbers are also a good thing to include on this sheet. If you have an account code specific to you, write this down and your information should already be in our computer system.



Color

Print dailies (once standard), have been replaced by video dailies. Sometimes a few rolls are printed for reference. Your workflow path should help decide between standard-definition or high-definition dailies. Scenes are graded to color charts (if available) plus filter information, unless the process is supervised by a DP or director. Typically dailies color is a best-light transfer on a scene-by-scene basis. If you are finishing in HD it is common to do flat pass dailies to retain all the color information for final color after conform.



Negative Cutting & Digital Conform

For years neg cutting was a standard method of conform after offline editing. Today there are a variety of ways to finish a production, including high-resolution offline/online and digital intermediates. If you are cutting negative, send a cut list from your edit system with the original neg to a neg cutter. FotoKem does not cut negative but can recommend local facilities that do. A digital conform can be accomplished with high resolution scans, HD master tapes, or even high quality offline codecs like Pro Res and DNX HD 175. You can speak to Student Services about the different finishing workflows.



Opticals, Intermediates, & Answer Prints

FotoKem can optically print simple effects such as dissolves, overlays, reverse imagery, and repositioning. We can also create optical blowups from 16mm to 35mm. Intermediate elements can be made at this point with built-in corrections. Intermediates (Internegatives and Interpositives) are used for printing multiple copies for theatrical distribution in order to protect the original cut negative. The answer print is the final approved print after color timing. If the negative was filmed out on a laser recorder, these corrections are already built-in.



Digital Video Mastering

There are several ways to approach your digital video master. Many of these choices are dependent on the workflow you've decided upon. Traditionally, your cut negative (or Interpositive created from your cut negative) would be scanned on a telecine and color graded scene by scene. If you have mastered on HD video, color grading usually occurs after online assembly, tape-to-tape.

HD, 2K or 4K data can be mastered on capable Digital Intermediate platforms. A DI is typically a more expensive solution, since the systems designed for high-resolution color and conform are the most expensive and in-demand technology. Some people deliver uncompressed Quicktime or other high quality codec video files which can then go through the color process. We recommend completing a color grading pass in a calibrated environment with a professional colorist, especially if the finished master is going to be projected digitally in a theater or broadcast to SMPTE specifications.



New Acquisition Technologies

New camera technology is constantly emerging, enabling high quality acquisition with file based workflows. Some of these cameras include Panasonic's HVX series and other P2 based capture media, Sony's EX series and SxS capture media, and RED ONE with CF cards or Flash Drive based media. While some of these cameras allow for native ingest into editing systems, there are many new specifics when working with data. These include archive, data management, data integrity, codecs, colorspace, offline versus online resolutions, and many other technical details. The standard rules of production still apply, including dailies workflow, QC, sound sync, so having the assistance of a post house is still essential, especially for multi-camera feature-length projects.



Contact Information

Main Number: 818.846.3101 Student Services: ext. 558 Sales: ext. 520
 Direct Number: 818.846.3102 Telecine Scheduling: ext. 412 Production Services: ext. 824 | ext. 825 | ext. 812