
Screen Guilds of Ireland
Competency Framework

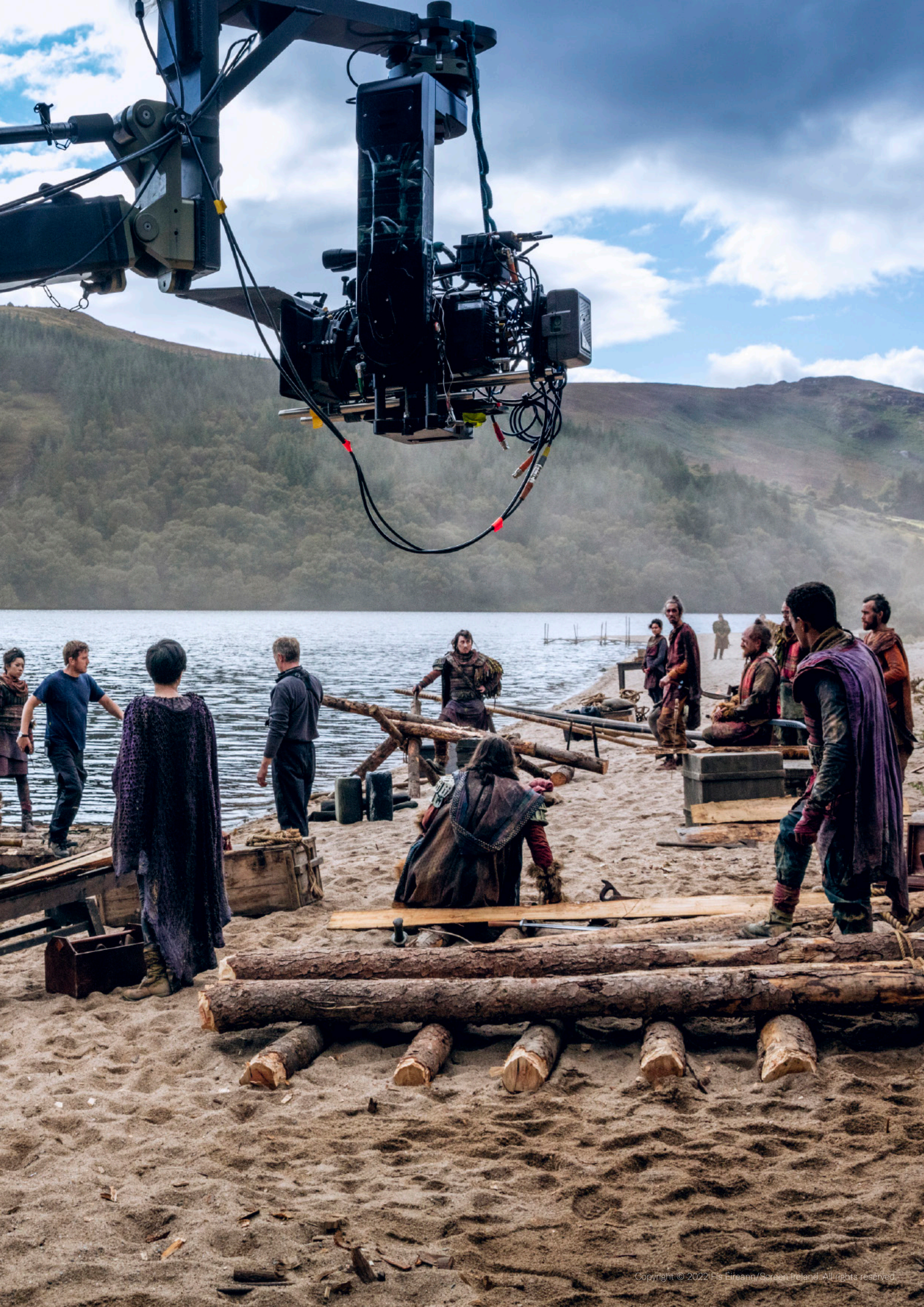
Grip

Department



Fís Éireann
Screen Ireland





Grip Department

Roles

1. Key Grip
2. Best Boy Grip
3. Grip/Dolly Grip
4. Crane Technician/Remote Head Technician
5. Trainee Grip

Key Grip

The job of a Key Grip is to collaborate with a Director and Director of Photography and Camera Operators to determine the requirements of a given production. They will then assemble a team of the appropriate personnel. If there are any pre-production meetings before the scheduled shooting day, the Key Grip will attend these. During location scout meetings, the Key Grip will determine what additional support equipment (extra dollies, camera cranes, stabilized heads, telescopic camera cranes, tracking vehicles etc.) are required to achieve the desired shots and the necessary vehicles and labour requirements to get the necessary grip equipment to a certain location. Once on location, the Key Grip works with the Director of Photography and Camera Operators and starts directing what grip equipment goes where and who will manage it. While all this work is in progress, the Key Grip will begin to plan what will be needed for the next series of shots, based on their experience and what has been discussed with the Producer, Director, and Director of Photography during pre-production meetings.

Key tasks:

1. Attends recces and recruits crew.
 2. Sources equipment.
 3. Assembles and operates equipment on set.
 4. Collaborates with the DP/Director in designing the method for achieving the shot.
 5. Manages department resources and budget.
 6. Creates safe solutions
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Task statements

Task statement 1:

Attends recces and recruits crew.

Associated activities

- ✓ Knows in a practical way what can be achieved with the given crew, equipment, and conditions.
- ✓ Provides advice based on knowledge and experience regarding technical solutions to achieve the Director's vision in unusual locations.
- ✓ Evaluates locations and get an idea of days where more personnel will be needed – additional camera days, crane days etc.
- ✓ Assesses the access to and size of locations in order to evaluate what equipment will be needed for the shoot.
- ✓ Assembles a team based on previous jobs and/or conduct interviews.

Task statement 2:

Sources equipment.

Associated activities

- ✓ This might include dolly tracks, sliders, apple boxes, mounts, remote heads, ladderpods and supporting equipment for laying tracks.
- ✓ Other Items might include camera crane, tracking vehicles and low-loaders.
- ✓ Comprehensive understanding of modern equipment available and technological changes within camera equipment and grip equipment that affects the film business more and more with the advancement of digital technology.
- ✓ If needed, Grips work with specialist companies to devise tailor-made pieces of equipment for difficult camera manoeuvres which are sometimes performed on location in extreme terrain and/or severe weather.

Task statement 3:

Operates equipment on set.

Associated activities

- ✓ Grips and their team (which may include other Grips, a Remote Head Technician, a Crane Operator, Tracking Car Drivers, and all Construction Standbys) arrive on set early, unload all the equipment, and ensure that everything is prepared for the day's filming.
- ✓ After the Director has rehearsed the actors and all the shots are choreographed, Grips set up any required equipment.
- ✓ Anticipates all the camera moves, whilst also keeping in mind the preparations required for the next camera set-up.
- ✓ The lights hanging overhead, the backdrops balanced behind the actors, the cameras in mid-air, ramps stunt performers launch themselves off—grips rig all of these.
- ✓ Manages and constructs all green screens on set with the aid of construction crew and riggers.

Task statement 4:

Collaborates with the DP and Director in designing the method for achieving the shot.

Associated activities

- ✓ Knowledge of the Director and Director of Photography's ideas for how they would like the film/show to look.
- ✓ Helps achieve desired lighting conditions by setting flags and bounces.
- ✓ Knowledge of different cameras, lenses and lighting techniques.

Task statement 5:

Manages department resources and budget.

Associated activities

- ✓ Awareness of the Producer and Production Manager's budget to shoot the film/show and a responsibility to report to both on an ongoing basis regarding costs of equipment requirements and labour requirements for the production.
- ✓ Manages team workflow and delegates who does what.
- ✓ When there are multiple cameras, the Key Grip is usually responsible for A camera.
- ✓ Leads and manages a team of Grips and Standbys as well as other members of crew with the ability to communicate and delegate effectively.

Task statement 6:

Creates safe solutions.

Associated activities

- ✓ Is adaptable to change, i.e. weather, budget, time etc.
- ✓ Good problem solver.
- ✓ Keeps abreast of technological innovation devising unique solutions in order to create specific shots.
- ✓ Has a thorough understanding of H&S and how it applies to the Grip Department.

Technical competencies

Area	Indicators	
Demonstrable track record of techniques and conventions of filmmaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can show understanding of techniques and conventions of film making Can decipher camera/rigging challenges while shooting in any given location and evaluate any constraints.
Demonstrable knowledge of up to date grip equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can evaluate and source what equipment is required Skill in assembling operating and repairing equipment
Budgeting Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can understand and work within the limitations of a budget Can break down and explain the details of the budget for production Can prioritise what is essential Can understand all the paperwork that goes with this PO/invoices etc.
Knowledge of rental houses and skilled technicians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When it comes to sourcing equipment, where to get the best deals Ability to negotiate on rental deals Extensive knowledge of specialist technicians i.e. Crane Technicians to do the best job and collaborate on the shoot day
Health and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent knowledge of H&S protocols, in particular with relation to rigging Ability to supervise and brief their department on Health and Safety Can maintain an overall awareness of Health and Safety regarding their equipment and crew (track trip hazard, crane overhead etc.)
Physical Fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strength and physical fitness in assembling and rigging equipment.

Best Boy Grip

The Best Boy or Second Grip runs the Grip Department for the Key Grip. He is the direct link between the Key Grip and the other Grips. The Key Grip tells the Best Boy Grip what they want and where and why. The Best Boy Grip manages the other Grips, giving each an assigned task and instructions on when to report back upon completion. The Best Boy Grip is also in charge of all the grip equipment and expendables on the grip truck. They inventory the equipment when it leaves the truck and when it returns and are in charge of the time sheets for the whole department. The Best Boy Grip also gives a status report to the Key Grip on the works in progress, along with an estimate of how long everything will take.

Key tasks:

1. Establishes special daily equipment and labour requirements as per Key Grips notes from location recces etc.
 2. Deals with Production Manager in regards to ongoing costs of equipment and labour.
 3. Manages stores, equipment, and consumables.
 4. Executes tasks given by the Key Grip and reports on the time management of such tasks on an ongoing basis to the Key Grip.
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Task statements

Task statement 1:

Establishes special daily equipment and labour requirements.

Associated activities

- ✓ Breaks down tech recce schedule incorporating notes from the Key Grip.
- ✓ Establishes which days will require additional labour i.e. additional camera days.
- ✓ Establishes which days will require additional equipment, cranes, tracking vehicles etc.
- ✓ Puts together a document detailing all addition crew/equipment requirements according to schedule.

Task statement 2:

Deals with Production Manager with regards to costs of equipment and labour.

Associated activities

- ✓ Works within the confines of a budget.
- ✓ Breaks down the costs of everything to provide a detailed account to production.
- ✓ Negotiates with regards to budget according to requirements.
- ✓ Explains the breakdown and needs to production, and answers any questions about the needs for additional crew/equipment.

Task statement 3:

Manages stores, equipment, and consumables.

Associated activities

- ✓ Knowledge of rental houses and source equipment.
- ✓ Negotiates regarding equipment rental within the confines of a budget.
- ✓ Orders and maintains stores throughout the shoot.
- ✓ Keeps a digital and paper record of equipment throughout.
- ✓ Carries out an inventory on wrap.

Task statement 4:

Manages other Grips and Trainees.

Associated activities

- ✓ Overall knowledge and understanding of tasks required by Key Grip.
- ✓ Prioritises and delegates these tasks to the rest of the Grip Department.
- ✓ Reports back to the Key Grip re progress and timing of completion of these tasks.

Technical competencies

Area	Indicators	
Knowledge of techniques and conventions of filmmaking	✓	Can show understanding of techniques and conventions of filmmaking
	✓	Can decipher camera/rigging challenges while shooting in any given location and evaluate any constraints
Excellent knowledge of up to date grip equipment	✓	Can evaluate and source what equipment is required
	✓	Skill in assembling operating and repairing equipment
	✓	Ability to adapt to circumstances to facilitate a given shot
Knowledge of rental houses, suppliers, and skilled technicians	✓	When it comes to sourcing equipment, knowing where to get the best deals
	✓	Ability to negotiate on rental deals
	✓	Extensive knowledge of specialist technicians i.e. Crane Technicians to do the best job and collaborate on the shoot day
Budgeting skills	✓	Can understand and work within the limitations of a budget
	✓	Can break down and explain the details of the budget for production
	✓	Can prioritise what is essential
	✓	Can understand all the paperwork that goes with this PO/invoices etc.
Health and Safety	✓	Understanding of Health and Safety protocols
	✓	Ability to supervise that team are adhering to Health and Safety protocols on set
Physical Fitness	✓	Strength and physical fitness in assembling and rigging equipment



Grip/Dolly Grip

Grips' responsibility is to build and maintain all the equipment that supports cameras. This equipment, which includes tripods, dollies, tracks, jibs, cranes, and static rigs, is constructed of delicate yet heavy duty parts requiring a high level of experience to operate and move. They are also responsible for any rigging on set. They are responsible for maintaining, setting up and striking of equipment and rigging.

Key tasks:

1. Preps all required equipment for the shoot and carries out necessary checks.
 2. Builds rigging equipment as instructed by the Best Boy.
 3. Provides physical support 'spotting' Camera Operators where necessary.
 4. Strikes rigging equipment when it is no longer required.
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Task statements

Task statement 1:

Preps all required equipment for the shoot and carry out necessary checks.

Associated activities

- ✓ Preps all equipment, tests and makes sure that it's all clean and working correctly.
- ✓ Organises equipment so that it can be easily found and accessed when shooting.
- ✓ Troubleshoots any equipment issues when required.

Task statement 2:

Builds rigging/equipment as instructed by the Best Boy.

Associated activities

- ✓ Answers to the Best Boy to meet requirements of the Key Grip.
- ✓ Watches rehearsals where required to determine what may be needed for the shot.
- ✓ Assembles and lays track.
- ✓ Builds and rigs as required.
- ✓ Provides a time estimate to carry out each task.

Task statement 3:

Provides physical support 'spotting' Camera Operators where necessary.

Associated activities

- ✓ Understands the desired movement of the shot.
- ✓ Works closely with the Camera Operator to establish speed/movement required.
- ✓ Rehearses the move with Camera Operator before other elements are introduced to establish speed and movement: pushing a dolly on a track or supporting the operator's movement for other shots that don't involve a dolly, i.e. Steadicam/handheld.
- ✓ Acts as a buffer between the camera and anyone who might come into its path, other crew, extras or cast.
- ✓ Is aware of safety concerns, keeping an eye on others who may be focused on their own tasks

Task statement 4:

Strikes rigging/equipment when it is no longer needed.

Associated activities

- ✓ Follows instruction from the Best Boy strike equipment/rigging when it is no longer needed.
- ✓ Ensures all equipment/rigging is returned to the correct truck/place.
- ✓ Has a sense of urgency where needed – sometimes equipment will be needed straight away on another set/unit.

Technical competencies

Area	Indicators	
Excellent knowledge of equipment	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	Can test and prep equipment, and flag any issues in advance of the shoot Can lay a track Possess knowledge of all dolly/track related equipment Can rig and set up equipment on shoot day
Physical skill and dexterity	✓ ✓	Can 'spot' the Camera Operator on rough terrain, sometimes at speed Excellent spatial relations to navigate tight routes
Health and Safety	✓	Excellent understanding of Health and Safety protocols
Knowledge of techniques and conventions of filmmaking	✓ ✓	Can show understanding of techniques and conventions of filmmaking Can decipher camera/rigging challenges while shooting in any given location and evaluate any constraints
Knowledge of rental houses, suppliers, and skilled technicians	✓ ✓ ✓	When it comes to sourcing equipment, knowing where to get the best deals Ability to negotiate on rental deals Extensive knowledge of specialist technicians i.e. Crane Technicians to do the best job and collaborate on the shoot day



Crane Technician/ Remote Head Technician

The Crane Technician or Remote Head Technician is a Grip who specializes in the operating, assembly and maintenance of a camera crane or remote head. As these pieces of equipment are highly specialized in their assembly and understanding, they require a designated technician to ensure they work properly and without fault on set. These pieces of equipment can be temperamental so require a specialist standing by at all times. There are many types of camera cranes, most being a counterbalanced arm on a pivot, whilst others are hydraulic. Cranes can be used to lift the camera, and often the Camera Operator and Assistant also, quickly into the air. The Crane Technician sets up and operates the camera crane so that the camera arrives at the right spot. This can be difficult since the camera may be a long distance from the operator.

Key tasks:

1. Plans shots, angles and positioning under the direction of the Key Grip and Camera Operator.
 2. Sets up and de-rigs specialized equipment in keeping with the production schedule.
 3. Maintains and services equipment for the duration of the shoot.
 4. Ensures the safety of the equipment, putting detailed safety and preventative measures in place.
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Task statements

Task statement 1:

Plans shots, angles and positioning under the direction of the Key Grip and Camera Operator.

Associated activities

- ✓ Understands the requirements of the shot according to the Director/Operator/Key Grip.
- ✓ Takes direction from Director/Camera Operator.
- ✓ Is able to provide time estimates – for setting up or fixing equipment.
- ✓ Articulates knowledge of specialised equipment and suggests the best way to obtain the shot required.
- ✓ Specialised knowledge of and in-depth experience with rigging, managing and operating the camera crane on set.

Task statement 2:

Sets up and de-rigs specialized equipment.

Associated activities

- ✓ Sets up equipment in advance as much as possible.
- ✓ Ensures that everything is working efficiently on the morning of the shoot.
- ✓ Is aware of problems that might occur and has the tools/resources standing by to fix them.
- ✓ Disassembles equipment when shooting is finished.
- ✓ Is aware of the condition of equipment before and after shooting.

Task statement 3:

Maintains and services the equipment according to the production's deadlines and schedules during the shoot.

Associated activities

- ✓ Keeps an eye on the condition of the equipment as the shoot progresses performing necessary maintenance.
- ✓ Flags any issues that might arise in different conditions, rain, snow, mud, sand etc – outlining the possible time consequences.
- ✓ Lubricates parts, fixes any mechanical malfunctions as they occur.

Task statement 4:

Ensures the safety of the equipment, putting detailed safety and preventative measures in place.

Associated activities

- ✓ Awareness of the risks and dangers of operating camera cranes, and ability to put safety measures in place.
- ✓ Ensures the safety of the equipment, putting detailed safety and preventative measures in place.

Technical competencies

Area	Indicators	
Excellent knowledge of equipment	✓ ✓ ✓	Can test and prep equipment, and flag any issues in advance of the shoot Possess knowledge of all dolly/track related equipment Can rig and set up equipment on shoot day
Health and Safety	✓ ✓	Excellent understanding of Health and Safety protocols Can ensure the safety of the equipment being used
Knowledge of techniques and conventions of filmmaking	✓ ✓	Can show understanding of techniques and conventions of filmmaking Can decipher camera/rigging challenges while shooting in any given location and evaluate any constraints
Specialised technical knowledge of specific grip equipment	✓ ✓	Can rig and set up equipment on the shoot day Knows how to operate crane/remote head expertly



Trainee Grip

The main role of Trainee Grips is to support the smooth running of the Grip Department and learn the trade. Grips' equipment, cranes, jibs and dollies (the wheeled platform that carries a camera and a Camera Operator), can be used in different ways. Trainee Grips watch everything that's happening; learn how the gear is used and how to operate it. Trainee Grips start the day by helping to unload the truck with the gear that supports the cameras. Under supervision from the qualified Grips, they move the equipment to the right place on location. Trainee Grips are on set throughout the day. At the end of each shot, they help put equipment away that's no longer needed and set up the kit for the next shot. They do this until the end of filming and then they help put all the equipment away.

Key tasks:

1. Completes assigned tasks for set up, shoot and wrap each day.
 2. Is alert and aware and able to use initiative.
 3. Learns to understand how the Grip Department works and when to ask questions.
 4. Has a desire to learn the technical requirements of cameras and of the baseplates, dollies, cranes and jib arms on which they are mounted.
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Task statements

Task statement 1:

Completes assigned tasks for set up, shoot and wrap each day.

Associated activities

- ✓ Supports the overall running of the Grip Department.
- ✓ Assists the rest of the department with building equipment/rigging.
- ✓ Assists in unloading and loading of the truck.
- ✓ Moves the equipment to the right place on location.

Task statement 2:

Be alert and aware and able to use initiative.

Associated activities

- ✓ Watches and learns to understand how the set works.
- ✓ Carries out any actions required by the Grip Department.
- ✓ Assists in heavy lifting and laying track

Task statement 3:

Learn to understand how the Grip Department works and when to ask questions.

Associated activities

- ✓ Watches and learns the different roles within the Grip Department.
- ✓ Observes and saves any questions for an appropriate time.
- ✓ Listens to the grip, works as part of a team, and communicates well, especially when under pressure.
- ✓ Learns how to lift, and has stamina.

Task statement 4:

Has a desire to learn the technical requirements of cameras and of the baseplates, dollies, cranes and jib arms on which they are mounted.

Associated activities

- ✓ Watches and learns the different roles within the Grip Department.
- ✓ Observes and saves any questions for an appropriate time.
- ✓ Has a passion for the genre and a love of the industry.
- ✓ Can get to set on time and do what is asked.

Technical competencies

Area	Indicators	
Basic understanding of set etiquette	✓	Can understand how to behave on set at any given time
	✓	Have an understanding of basic terminology: rolling/cut/standby
	✓	Have basic knowledge of who's who on set
Physical fitness	✓	Can navigate the set quickly, often while carrying heavy equipment
Health and Safety	✓	Have a basic understanding of Health and Safety protocols on set and how they apply to the department
Basic knowledge of equipment	✓	Are learning to test and prep equipment, and flag any issues in advance of the shoot
	✓	Are learning to lay a track
	✓	Are learning about dolly/track related equipment
	✓	Are learning to rig and set up equipment on shoot day
Personal attributes	✓	Have enthusiasm, willingness to work hard and be punctual
	✓	Have an interest in camera and technical aspects of filmmaking
	✓	Have the ability to be proactive and use your own initiative
	✓	Are a good communicator and have the ability to work well under pressure





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