

## The Interview

News-style interviews on YouTube and other websites are just like what we've seen on TV for decades. The traditional interview is often presented in an amateurish way on websites, with the interviewer off-camera throwing questions to the subject, while holding the camera jerkily in his or her hand. You're aiming for something better. We'll take a look at the basic setup of an interview in the next section.

## PRODUCING AN INTERVIEW

The interview is the oldest type of video known to man. Just ask the 2,000 Year Old Man himself, Mel Brooks, who spun his comedic tales on audio records in the 1960s by answering questions posed by interviewer Carl Reiner. TV's first programs—such as NBC's "Today" and "The Tonight Show"—featured newsmakers and celebrities responding to questions posed by the hosts. For the web, you can easily produce an online interview with as little as a point-and-shoot or iPhone camera (see Chapter 4). You'll get a more professional-looking result using a multicamera setup, with one camera on the subject, another on the interviewer, and ideally a wide shot of the two as seen in *Figure 2.7* (also see Chapter 7).

But let's start with the basics of interviewing. (We'll get into more details on shooting an interview in Chapters 6 and 7.)

**Figure 2.7**

This wide shot includes both the author and Mike Tyson, making for a more interesting shot to use during editing.



## Booking the Interview

Where do you find your “talent”? Seeking someone to interview in your video is as simple as calling your subject and asking for the time. Why wouldn’t the gardening expert want to appear on camera and show off his expertise? For one, it’s a big ego builder. And two, it’s free publicity, which could translate into more sales for the shop.

**TIP** Before you call the local pizza king or top town cobbler to set up an interview and run over with your camera and gear in tow, do a dry-run interview with a friend or family member. Give it a whirl in the living room. Do a version sitting down and standing up. Get comfortable asking questions. Have a list of questions ready to refer to. Even if you don’t look down at them during the interview, the act of writing them out will help you prepare.

## Interview Tips: The Five Best Questions

Start with the obvious: who, what, where, when, and why. Those are the five basic questions in journalism, and they always work.

Say you will be interviewing a local handyman about the various services he offers. Here are some questions you could ask:

- What’s his name? (Who.)
- What does he do? (What.)
- Which areas does he serve? (Where.)
- How busy is he during these recessionary times? (When.)
- How has he become one of the most sought-after handymen in town? (Why.)

Now flip the question to a nearby Taco Truck and it won’t be much different:

- What’s the name of the establishment? (Who.)
- What fare do you serve? (What.)
- Where do you generally park this truck? (Where.)
- What’s the best time to get to the truck before the huge lines appear? (When.)
- Why are these tacos so popular? What’s your special way of making them? (Why.)

Of course you can expand beyond the five questions with anything you’d like to know. For instance, if it’s the profile of the Taco Truck, I’d want to know a little background on the Taco Trucker: What he was doing before he started the truck, and what a normal day at the truck is like. What time do they start prepping the food? How many tacos will they churn out of the truck from morning to night? If the truck is always around, when does he get the supplies?