

Setting a 6 x 6 frame (aka – overhead, aka butterfly) with silk

First assemble the frame and place spud in the 4.5" gobo head of a high roller. If necessary, use a c-stand to support the other side of the frame. If the joints are not secure, use gaffers tape to hold them together. If they are secure, there is no need for gaffers tape.

It is often best to tie safety lines to the corners of the frame at this point, before the rag is tied on. #8 Cotton Sash is good in most cases. When the winds are too strong, it is best not to fly any overhead frames.

Wind is the atmospheric condition that delays more shoots than any other, more than rain, snow, ice, heat. Wind can be very dangerous. It throws equipment. It messes with actor's hair and wardrobe. It interferes with sound recording. So be cautious when the wind kicks up.

Always position your silk so as to minimize the shadows from its seams. You do not want a seam shadow to move across an actors face – or worse to have an actor stop in the shadow – especially on a close up. Set the rag the right way and you will not have to re-set it. Usually this means setting the seams so they run horizontal.

If an actor is to walk from an area of open sunlight into the shade of an overhead, you will want to take care to camouflage the edges. If you are near buildings where a hard straight shadow will not stand out, be sure to fill in the space between the frame and the rag, so the frame's shadow is not obvious. If you are in an area, where it is more likely that the shade is provided by a tree, secure branches to the edge of the frame to hide the straight edge of its shadow.

When moving a large frame on rolling stands – flatten or "table" the frame so it is parallel to the ground, and less likely to catch any wind. Loosen the knuckle on the bottom riser of each stand and roll the frame into place. Loosening the bottom knuckle will allow the wheels to move more easily over uneven terrain without requiring you to battle with the resistance of a reluctant frame.

When raising any stand, be sure to check overhead for wires. You DO NOT want to hit a power line with an aluminum frame on aluminum or steel stands.

Never leave a large frame unattended, as a sudden gust of wind could prove very dangerous.