



Your script is an essential part of your planning and preparations to make your short film. It is extremely important to follow the instructions below. Please use the script template below when preparing your script to enter for the Filmit Festival.

[SCREENPLAY NAME IN CAPITALS]

Tips for writing the screenplay name:

- Keep the name as captivating as possible.
- Consider the theme of the story: if it is a mystery/thriller movie, a title that raises questions is perfect!
- Is the title inspiring? Does it invoke the desired emotions?
- Use modern tools such as a Headline Analyzer.

**By**

[AUTHOR (s) NAME]

For the by line, name all authors of the screenplay. Separate two names with ‘&’ not ‘and’.

[Your/agent's Company Name]

[Address]

[Phone Number]

[Email Address]

FADE IN:

INT/EXT. [LOCATION] – DAY/NIGHT

This line gives additional information about where the scene is taking place. It has three parts to it. Each of these should be presented in all caps.

- Part 1: Determine if the scene will be shot indoors or outdoors. **INT** for indoors and **EXT** for outdoors. INT or EXT will always end with a period.
- Part 2: **LOCATION**. Specify the location the scene is set.
- Part 3: Time of day. Indicate whether the scene is taking place during the **DAY** or **NIGHT**.

[ACTION]

The **ACTION** describes the scene of the screenplay in the present tense. Tell the audience what is happening and how it is happening. Be as precise as possible without leaving room for confusion. Ask yourself: is the reader able to visualize exactly what you wish to communicate visually?

[Introduce the CHARACTER coming forth on screen for the first time. Keep names in CAPITALS.]

[CHARACTER-1 NAME] [V.O., O.C., OR O.S.]

After the character's name, indicate how the character starts with its line: Indicate **V.O.** if voiceover, **O.C.** for Off-Camera, or **O.S.** for Off-Screen.

[Dialogue]

The **Dialogue** indicates text which is spoken by the specified character.

[Introduce CHARACTER-2 coming forth on screen for the first time. Keep names in CAPITALS.]

[CHARACTER-2 NAME]

[Dialogue]

[CHARACTER-1 NAME]

[Dialogue]

[CHARACTER-2 NAME]

[Dialogue]

(MORE)

**MORE** indicates that the dialogues of this character continue on the next page.

[CHARACTER-2 NAME] (CONT'D)

**CONT'D** indicates that the same character from the previous page continues to speak.

[Dialogue continues...]

[CHARACTER-1 NAME]

[Dialogue]

DISSOLVE TO:

Use this “**TRANSITION**” between two scenes. A transition can be used any time within your screenplay and with other types of transitions. DISSOLVE TO is used in this example to designate a long passage of time. Other transitions such as CUT TO or QUICK CUT are also commonly used.

INT/EXT. INT/EXT. – INT/EXT.

[Scene-2 description]

[CHARACTER-2 NAME]

[Dialogue]

[CHARACTER-1 NAME]

[Dialogue]

[CHARACTER-2 NAME]

[Dialogue]

[CHARACTER-1 NAME]

[Dialogue]

FADE OUT.

This ending **FADE OUT** is a standard convention for denoting the end of the screenplay.

THE END



## GUIDELINES FOR SCREENPLAY WRITERS

This simple and easy-to-use template is designed to get your creative juices flowing without worrying about the technicalities of screenplay formatting. The styles of this template have been set up to make formatting the screenplay traditionally easy and as simple as a few clicks. Everything's been done for you, so you just need to sit and write your story!

If a related or unrelated idea pops into your mind while writing your screenplay, note it down in the comments of this document or elsewhere. You can return to it later and expand on your ideas when you have time.

Before you begin writing the screenplay, ask yourself:

- **Have you done your homework well, i.e.:**
  - Are the characters and the overall plot clear, well-defined, and easy to follow in your mind?
  - Can you visualise them in detail?
  - Do you have a clear idea of the detailed story before you begin writing?
  - Have you paid close attention to the opening, the core of the story, the climax and the ending?
  - Is your opening captivating enough to hook someone's interest within the first few lines so they will not give up on the story before it is told?
- **Are the characters well-defined, i.e. have you:**
  - Specified character personality and body language?
  - Properly conceived in your mind the way you intend your character to appear on screen?
  - Given proper attention to the character's desired age, look, habits, and patterns?
  - Provided your director and costume designer the foundation to bring your characters to life?
- **Are the locations finalised/thought of?**
- **Who are your target audience? What do they like?**

Remember, you can always keep improvising until you are completely satisfied with the full story, but it is great to have these questions answered before getting started. The opening will be extremely critical in grabbing your audience's attention. When answering the questions posed above, put yourself in your audience's shoes.

The screenplay will ultimately be made into a film. Ensure that the script is visually communicative.

- If you are establishing a gloomy scene, consider writing accordingly: a dark and shady scene both visually (scene description) and verbally (dialogue).
- A chirpy and vibrant scenario, on the other hand, will be written differently: colourful and bright.
- Remember, you are telling a story visually, through the camera, not writing a book leaving things to the readers' imagination!

The character introductions should be detailed and precise so that the actor or actress can make your vision come true on screen. Remember, the visual medium is very powerful and incorporates miniscule details. The more descriptive your screenplay is, the better! In your character introductions, state their:

- Appearance,
- Attire (clothes)
- Habits,
- Body language, and
- To what depth would you like to sketch the character?

You might want to detail certain characters, so the viewers know them well while you might only offer a brief about some other, not-so-important characters.

Write your screenplay at a place where you feel your natural best and inspired to write. For some, nature is the desired location for inspiration. For the others, sitting down with a cup of coffee by the side of a window is the dream place to write. What's yours?

Leave no room for ambiguity of any sort: be as clear as possible.

Do not rely on your memory as it is bound to fail you! If a related or unrelated idea pops up in your mind, note it down on a scribble-pad, on in the scribble pad template, or in the comments of this document, so you can return to it later and expand when you have the time. Many great ideas are lost just because they weren't jotted down in time.

### **Formatting Help**

When you are done using the instructions of this template, click and delete the blue tip text. Hit delete one more time to get rid of the extra line space that the tip text was on. This will ensure that you will begin typing in the pre-formatted sections.

When you wish to update the placeholder text, simply click on the text and begin typing. The built in styles have been applied to all placeholder text and will carry over when you've entered text.

Need to change the format on one of your insertions? Use the Home Ribbon's Styles group to format your text with one click.