

Every script should have a title page with one contact address only in the bottom left hand corner. Always include a phone number and an e-mail address if you have one.

If you have an agent the address and number can go here. A draft number or date is not required on a spec script.

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. LOCATION - DAY
(Character #1)

BEGIN YOUR SCRIPT WITH A TEASER OR COLD OPENING. ALL TEASERS AND ACTS MUST BEGIN WITH FADE IN: FOLLOWED BY A SET HEADING. SET HEADINGS ARE CAPITALISED AND UNDERLINED AND TAKE THE FORM OF EXT. OR INT. LOCATION - DAY OR NIGHT. FOLLOW THE SET-HEADING WITH THE NAMES OF THE CHARACTERS WHO APPEAR IN THE SCENE.

CHARACTER #1

Character names appear capitalized and indented to around the middle of the

ACT ONESCENE A

FADE IN:

EXT. LOCATION #1 - NIGHT
(Character #1, Character #2)

SCENE ACTION IS DOUBLE-SPACED UNDER THE HEADING IN CAPITALS WITH DOUBLE-SPACING BETWEEN PARAGRAPHS. SCENE ACTION SHOULD ONLY DEAL WITH WHAT IS ON THE SCREEN AND NEVER STRAY INTO SUPERFLUOUS NOVELISTIC TEXT.

CHARACTER #1

Dialogue appears double-spaced under the character name in normal upper and lower case. Like the character name, it is not centered.

CHARACTER #2

(SMILES) Parenthetical instructions appear in capitals enclosed within round brackets in the body of the dialogue. (PAUSE) It is recommended that these are used sparingly.

(MORE)

CHARACTER #2 (CONT' D)

Split dialogue between pages only if at least two lines appear on the first page, and only after a sentence.

IF SCENE ACTION INTERRUPTS A CHARACTER'S SPEECH ON THE SAME PAGE. . .

CHARACTER #1 (CONT' D)

Then you must begin a new character cue when continuing the dialogue.

Paragraphs of dialogue must always be preceded by a character name and never appear on their own.

IT IS CUSTOMARY IN A TV SCRIPT TO SPECIFY A TRANSITION AT THE END OF EVERY SCENE.

CUT TO:

ACT ONESCENE B

INT. LOCATION #2 - DAY

BEGIN EACH NEW SCENE ON A NEW PAGE, HOWEVER SHORT IT IS, AND ALWAYS FOLLOW A SET HEADING WITH A LINE OF SCENE ACTION.

IF YOU HAVE A PARTICULARLY VISUAL SCENE WITHOUT MUCH DIALOGUE, THEN SPLIT UP YOUR SCENE ACTION INTO PARAGRAPHS.

IT MAKES IT MUCH EASIER TO READ THIS WAY AS HEAVY TEXT ON A PAGE IS OFF-PUTTING.

CUT TO:

ACT ONESCENE CINT. LOCATION #3 - NIGHT

(Character #1, Character #2)

SOMETIMES IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO HEAR CHARACTERS WHEN WE CAN'T ACTUALLY SEE THEM.

CHARACTER #1 (O. C.)

Off-camera means the character is present within the scene, but can only be heard, e.g. they are speaking from an adjoining room.

CHARACTER #2 (V. O.)

Voiceover is used when the character is not present within the scene, but can be heard via a mechanical device such as a telephone or radio. It is also used when a character narrates parts of your story.

CHARACTER #2

If you need to differentiate between a character's narration and their on-screen dialogue, just begin a new speech, omitting (V. O.)

CHARACTER #2 (V. O.)

Reverse this process to return to narration. As (O. C.) and (V. O.) are technical directions, they appear next to the character name.

USE (V. O.) WHEN YOU WANT TO SHOW ONE CHARACTER SPEAKING ON THE PHONE BUT ONLY HEAR ANOTHER.

CHARACTER #1

(INTO PHONE) This is the character we see on the phone.

CHARACTER #2 (V. O.)

Whilst we hear the second character speaking at the other end.

CHARACTER #1

(INTO PHONE) But the first character remains in vision throughout the scene.

END EACH ACT IN THE FOLLOWING WAY.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWOSCENE DFADE IN:

INT. LOCATION #1 / LOCATION #2 - NIGHT (INTERCUT)
(Character #1, Character #2)

IF YOU NEED TO CUT BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN SIMULTANEOUS ACTION,
LIKE THE PHONE CONVERSATION, THEN HANDLE YOUR SCENE LIKE THIS.

CHARACTER #1

(INTO PHONE) You can type your dialogue
as normal.

CHARACTER #2

(INTO PHONE) Whilst indicating that
both characters are on the phone.

CHARACTER #1

(INTO PHONE) But make sure you indicate
when a character hangs up. (HANGS UP)
Especially if you are going to continue
the dialogue and scene beyond the phone
conversation.

THIS COUNTS AS ONE SCENE SO THERE'S NO NEED TO BEGIN A NEW PAGE
EACH TIME A CHARACTER SPEAKS.

SCENES CAN CONTINUE ACROSS PAGES WITHOUT THE NEED TO RETYPE THE SET HEADING. ONLY USE SET HEADINGS AT THE START OF A NEW SCENE. IF YOU NEED TO SPECIFY EFFECTS CUES THEN DO IT LIKE THIS.

SFX: SPECIAL EFFECTS CUES APPEAR SEPARATED FROM THE SCENE ACTION.

SFX: AS DO SOUND EFFECTS CUES...

MUSIC: AND MUSIC CUES.

ALL APPEAR CAPITALIZED AND UNDERLINED.

CUT TO:

ACT TWOSCENE E

EXT. LOCATION #1 - NIGHT - 1956, FLASHBACK
(Young Character #1, Young Character #2)

IF YOU WANT FLASHBACKS IN YOUR SCRIPT THEN TREAT THEM AS SEPARATE SCENES AND INDICATE THEM IN THE SET HEADING.

YOUNG CHARACTER #1

If it's important, you can include the specific year or time period.

YOUNG CHARACTER #2

If your flashback takes place across a number of consecutive scenes, then specify it as a flashback sequence in the heading.

INDICATE WHEN THE FLASHBACK OR FLASHBACK SEQUENCE FINISHES AND BEGIN A NEW SCENE.

END FLASHBACK.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

CREDIT WINDOW

FADE IN:

EXT. LOCATION #1 - DAY

END YOUR SCRIPT WITH A CREDIT WINDOW OR TAG SCENE. ALL PAGES SHOULD BE NUMBERED. PAGE ONE BEGINS WITH THE TEASER, NOT THE TITLE PAGE.

THIS EXAMPLE OF THREE-CAMERA FORMAT INCLUDES ACT NUMBERS WITH EACH SCENE -- EACH NEW SCENE BEGINS WITH THE ACT NUMBER AND SCENE LETTER. AN ALTERNATIVE WAY IS TO ONLY INDICATE ACT NUMBERS AT THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ACT, WITH EACH NEW SCENE INDICATED BY THE LETTER ONLY ON A NEW PAGE.

IT IS CUSTOMARY TO SIGN-OFF A TV SCRIPT IN THE FOLLOWING WAY. FADE OUT. ONLY EVER APPEARS AT THE END OF AN ACT AND THE ENTIRE SCRIPT. IF YOU WANT TO INDICATE A FADE OUT. AND A FADE IN: BETWEEN TWO SCENES WITHIN AN ACT, THEN THE CORRECT TRANSITIONAL TERM IS FADE TO:

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW