

FILM SCRIPT FORMATTING CHECKLIST

FROM THE SCREENWRITER'S BIBLE¹

GENERAL FORMATTING:

- **Font:** Courier New or Courier, black, 12 pt. (p. 162)
- **Margins:** 1.5" on left, recommended 1" inch on all other sides (p. 162)
- **Pagination:** Upper right hand corner, flush to margin, ½ in. from top followed by period, title page blank (p. 163)
- **Line Spacing:** Single space throughout, double space after headings and between action/dialogue lines (p. 174)
- **Dialogue Indent:** at 25 spaces (2.5 in.), that's 10 spaces from *left margin* (p. 163)
- **Actor's Instructions Indent:** at 31 spaces (3.1 in.), that's 16 spaces from *left margin* (p. 163)
- **Character's Name Indent:** at 37 spaces (3.7 in.), that's 22 spaces from *left margin* (p. 163)

TITLE PAGE (SAME AS FIRST PAGE OF TEXT)

- **Alignment:** Centered, title and author names 1/3 from top (p. 161)
- **Title:** You may place quotation marks around title, underline it, or both (p. 161)
- **Author Names:** Use "&" for two or more writers who collaborated; use "and" for writers brought for rewrites (p. 161)
- **Contact Information:** Place address, phone, email, etc. in bottom right hand corner (p. 161)
- **Copyright:** Place copyright in bottom left hand corner. You **can** also place your Writers Guild Association registration number there (p. 161)

MASTER SCENE HEADINGS (SLUG LINES): THREE PARTS

- **Camera Location:** For exterior or interior shots, use the abbreviations EXT. or INT. If a scene is outside and transitions inside (or vice versa) use INT./EXT. (p. 166)
- **Scene Location:** Place of scene (i.e., COFFEE SHOP, CLASSROOM, DORM ROOM etc.) (pp. 166-167)
- **Time of Day:** Do not use times on the clock, most commonly DAY or NIGHT (p. 167)
- Write all three in caps with a dash between the location and time (p. 166)

SECONDARY SCENE HEADINGS (SLUG LINES)

- **Secondary Locations:** Different part of the Master scene location (p. 170)
- Write new location in all caps, flush left as the heading. (i.e., COFFEE COUNTER) (p. 170)

SPECIAL HEADINGS (SLUG LINES)

- **Montages, Series of Shots, Flashbacks, Inserts, and Dreams:** write in all caps along with main concepts or idea as the heading (pp. 175-181)
- Use all caps heading to indicate when the special scene is over (e.g., END MONTAGE or BACK TO SCENE) (pp. 175-181)

PRACTICE NOW

¹ Trotter, David. *The Screenwriter's Bible: A Complete Guide to Writing, Formatting, and Selling Your Script 6th Ed.* Beverly Hills, CA: Silman-James Press, 2014. Print.