

# Screenplay format on one page

Measured from the left edge of the paper,  
the way screenwriting programs count.

## THE PAGE

- **Courier 12 point**, single spaced. Ten letters to the inch, six lines to the inch.
- **Paper**: US Letter (8.5 × 11 in) in North America, A4 (210 × 297 mm) elsewhere.
- **Margins**: 1 in top and bottom, 1.5 in left, 1 in right (about 0.77 in on A4).
- **Page numbers** top right, 0.5 in from the top, with a full stop: 12. None on the title page.
- About **54 lines** a page on Letter, 58 on A4. A page plays in roughly a minute, on average.

## THE SIX KINDS OF LINE

|               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
|               | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |                |
| Scene heading |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 1.5 to 7.5 in  |
| Action        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 1.5 to 7.5 in  |
| Character     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | from 3.5 in    |
| Parenthetical |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 3 to 5.5 in    |
| Dialogue      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 2.5 to 6 in    |
| Transition    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | ends at 7.1 in |

| Element       | Case                                      | Blank line before |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Scene heading | Capitals, bold optional                   | One or two        |
| Action        | Normal; a name in capitals when first met | One               |
| Character     | Capitals                                  | One               |
| Parenthetical | Lower case, in brackets                   | None              |
| Dialogue      | Normal                                    | None              |
| Transition    | Capitals, against the right margin        | One               |

## SCENE HEADINGS

INT. MAYA'S FLAT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

- INT. inside, EXT. outside, INT. /EXT. through a door or in a car.
- Place from general to specific, named the same way every time.
- DAY or NIGHT; CONTINUOUS runs straight on, LATER is the same place after a while.

## AFTER THE NAME

- (O.S.) off screen: in the location, out of the picture. TV often writes (O.C.).
- (V.O.) voice-over: not in the location at all. Narrator, recording, memory.
- (CONT'D) the same character again after an action line.

## THE CASES THAT COME UP

### Phone call, both sides seen

A heading for each place, then one line, and the call runs on:  
INTERCUT - MAYA / ROSA

### Only one side seen

The far voice is (V.O.), or (on phone) under the name.

### Another language

Write it in the reader's language and say so, once:  
(in Spanish, subtitled)

### A text or an email

In the action, in quotation marks:

A text from Leo: "did u send it".

### Something we must read

INSERT - LAPTOP SCREEN  
...  
BACK TO SCENE

### Words over the picture

SUPER: 6:40 A.M.

### Flashback or dream

Label the heading, and make the way back plain:

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

### Montage

MONTAGE - MAYA FIXES THE SCRIPT  
- One short line for each moment.  
END MONTAGE

## TITLE PAGE

- Title in capitals a third of the way down; **Written by** and your name under it.
- **Based on...** under your name if it is adapted.
- Contact details bottom left: email and phone.
- No date, draft number, logline, picture or registration number on a script you send out.

## PAGE BREAKS

- A split speech ends with (MORE); the next page opens NAME (CONT'D).
- Two lines at least on each side, at the end of a sentence.
- Never leave a heading, a name or a parenthetical at the foot of a page.

## BEFORE YOU SEND IT

- ☐ One name for each place and each character, all the way through.
- ☐ Action paragraphs of four lines or fewer.
- ☐ Parentheticals short and rare; transitions only where they mean something.
- ☐ No camera directions you could do without.
- ☐ No scene numbers, revision marks or CONTINUED.
- ☐ Within the page limit: 90 to 120 for a feature is comfortable.
- ☐ Saved as a PDF with a sensible file name, and read once from start to end.