

YOUR TITLE

Written by

Your Name

Your Name

your@email.com

Your phone number

FADE IN:

INT. LOCATION - DAY

This is an action line. It says what we see and hear, in the present tense, across the full width of the page. Keep a paragraph to three or four lines, then start a new one.

ALEX (30s) is in capitals here because this is the first time we meet Alex, with an age and one detail that says who Alex is. After this, the name is written normally.

ALEX

This is dialogue. It sits in the narrow column in the middle of the page, under the name of whoever is speaking.

SAM (O.S.)

O.S. means off screen: Sam is here, but out of the picture.

SAM (40s) comes in from the hall, keys still in hand.

SAM

(quietly)

A parenthetical says how a line is said. Use one only when the line would be misread without it.

Alex looks at the clock. A line of action between two speeches by the same person makes the next cue CONT'D.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Alex again, after the action line.

EXT. ANOTHER LOCATION - NIGHT

Every change of place or time needs a new scene heading: INT. or EXT., then the place, then DAY or NIGHT.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

V.O. means voice-over: a voice from outside the scene, such as a narrator, a recording or a memory.

INT. LOCATION - CONTINUOUS

CONTINUOUS says the action runs straight on from the scene before, with no time missing.

Sam's phone buzzes. A short message goes in the action, in quotation marks: "Running late. Start without me."

INSERT - SAM'S PHONE

An insert is a close look at something we need to read. Say what it shows, then go back.

BACK TO SCENE

Sam puts the phone away.

INT. LOCATION - LATER

SUPER: THREE WEEKS LATER

Words over the picture, such as a time or a place, are a SUPER. LATER in the heading says time has passed in the same place.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A REMEMBERED PLACE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A flashback says so in its heading. Keep it short, and make the way back to the present just as clear.

MONTAGE - WHAT THE MONTAGE SHOWS

- A montage compresses time. Give each moment one short line.
- Another moment, later.
- The last moment, where the change shows.

END MONTAGE.

INT. LOCATION - NIGHT

Present day. Alex and Sam, where we left them.

ALEX

Most scenes need no transition. A new scene heading already tells the reader we have cut.

SAM

So delete these lines, keep the
layout, and write your own.

FADE OUT.