



## Screenwriting Tips



1. Remember that film is a visual medium, so when you write your script you need to consider how scenes will look and sound to an audience.
2. Writing your story:
  - Good stories have a story arc:
  - Start in balance (may be an uneasy balance)
  - Inciting incident (something upsets the balance and creates a problem preventing balance)
  - Rising action with a number of crisis (increasing tensions with a number of events that help or hinder the protagonist)
  - Climax (solves the problem)
  - Falling action (tying up all the loose ends)
- End in balance (may be an uneasy balance but must be different than beginning)
3. Keep lines of dialogue short.
4. Spoken words can be dialogues, monologues, or narration.
5. Spoken words can be distorted or dialogues can overlap to create certain effects.
6. Sound effects can be sounds that occur within the story or can be added to the sound track. A sound could be a doorbell ringing within the story or scary music that indicates impending doom that is external to the story.
7. Keep what you know of the target language in mind and don't make it too complicated.
8. Think about movies you love. Most have a strong emotional component (sadness, fear, suspense, excitement, worry, relief, surprise, humor etc.) What did the film do to create those feelings? What emotions will you try to elicit in your audience?
9. Think about the genre your film fits in to. What are the conventions of that genre?
10. Make sure the film has a conflict of some sort.
11. Make sure your story has an overall point. And, your point should be about something important. You don't want your point to just be about doing something crazy or silly. The point of a good film usually relates to or connects with the big questions in life. Think about issues and topics of the human experience: *love, loss, happiness, frustration, aging, discovery, family, tension, disappointment, quests, adventures, identities, the use of power, hopes, achievements, relationships, overcoming obstacles, learning, becoming an adult, rejection, redemption, violence, deception, inspiration, strength, fear, perseverance, illusions* etc.
12. Balance dialogue with moments in which no one speaks. The "feel" of a scene or film depends on a many things that do not have to do with talking. Strike a balance between providing information about the story and the setting through dialogue and through other means such as lighting, sound and shot composition.



## Tips for making a great film



### General Movie- Making Tips

Scroll down for more tips

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. You don't need an expensive camera, but a tripod will help a lot. Shaking is never good unless you've got some sort of artistic purpose for it.</li><li>2. Try shooting scenes with wide, medium, and tight shots, then editing these together.</li><li>3. Avoid using zooming shots! Zooms shots are rarely used in professional films.</li><li>4. Practice with your camera before filming.</li><li>5. Protect your microphone from the wind if working outside.</li><li>6. Find royalty free music.</li><li>7. Make something that you would want to watch.</li><li>8. Give yourself enough time to shoot and edit.</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>9. Make a schedule.</li><li>10. Rehearse before you film.</li><li>11. Doing simple well is better than doing complicated poorly.</li><li>12. Actors- MEMORIZE YOUR LINES - Don't read!!!</li><li>13. If you do not have access to editing software, there are many websites that provide free, basic software. Try to find one that doesn't put its logo on your film.</li><li>14. Remember- You are making a movie for an audience.</li><li>15. Consider NOT trying to be funny. Being truly funny is very difficult. Sometimes attempts to be funny just look silly.</li></ol> |
|---|--|



## Film Directing / Film Shooting Tips

1. Vary your shot length and camera angle. For ideas, watch a video on youtube on camera angles and shots used in the world of cinema:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZwbsYgZ7d-8>
2. Close ups of faces generally produce a more emotional effect.
3. Point of view shots: To show what a character is looking at (to stress a character's point of view), create a shot of the character, then cut to the object or thing he/she is looking at and then add a shot of the character's reaction.
4. Read about different ways to shoot character dialogue. Do not pan the camera between the faces of the speakers. Rather make sure there's a cut between the shot of each speaker.
5. Think about the mood and appearance of the setting. Think about props, backgrounds, the environment, and sound.
6. Sound is crucial to the overall tone and experience of the film. Pay attention to sound when you watch a film. How does it enhance the movie?

## Acting Tips



1. Think about what the dialog you are saying. How are you feeling? What expression should your face have? Look at yourself in a mirror to see if your facial expression matches your emotion.
2. Think about non-verbal expression such as body language.
3. Avoid overly dramatic gestures or expressions. You don't want the audience to know you are acting.
4. Think about the tone of your voice and whether it is appropriate for the scene.
5. Know the script very well.
6. Observe other people in daily life. Notice how a variety of people move, speak etc. By studying other people you heighten your awareness of the subtle aspects of character.