

- **Font:** Courier 12pt
- **General Formatting:** 1 Page of Writing = 1 Minute Filming



Screenwriting Lingo Cheat Sheet

Scene Elements

- **INT.** — Interior (scene takes place indoors)
- **EXT.** — Exterior (scene takes place outdoors)
- **INT./EXT.** — Sometimes used when a scene moves from inside to outside
- **DAY / NIGHT** — Time of day for the scene (can be more specific: MORNING, EVENING)
- **SCENE HEADING / SLUGLINE** — The line that starts a scene, includes INT./EXT., location, and time

Dialogue & Character

- **CHARACTER NAME** — Name of the person speaking, centered above their dialogue
- **(O.S.)** — Off Screen (character speaks but is not visible)
- **(V.O.)** — Voice Over (character's voice heard but not physically present in the scene)
- **(CONT'D)** — Continued (used when a character's dialogue continues after an action or another character's line)
- **PARENTHETICAL (Wryly, Whispering, Angry)** — Directions for how dialogue should be delivered (use sparingly)

Action & Description

- **ACTION** — The description of what's happening in the scene, written in present tense
- **BEAT** — A short pause or moment of silence in dialogue or action
- **CUT TO:** — A transition indicating a new scene (can be omitted in many modern scripts)

- **FADE IN / FADE OUT** — Script's beginning and ending transitions



SCREENWRITING TEMPLATE

Standard Screenplay Format (based on Hollywood industry norms)

1. Title Page

None

TITLE OF SCREENPLAY

Written by

Your Name Here

Contact Info (Email, phone, etc.)

2. Scene Headings (Sluglines)

Format: INT./EXT. – LOCATION – TIME OF DAY

- INT. = Interior / EXT. = Exterior
- TIME = DAY / NIGHT (or specific if needed: MORNING, LATE AFTERNOON, etc.)

Example:

None

EXT. CITY STREET – NIGHT

3. Action Lines (Description)

- Describe what's happening visually.
- Write in **present tense**.
- Keep it brief, punchy, and cinematic.
- Only describe what can be seen and heard.

Example:

None

Cars rush by on the wet pavement. A lone figure steps into the street, silhouetted by headlights.

4. Character Introduction

- First time? Use ALL CAPS for name.
- Add a brief physical description (if important).
- Keep intros short and relevant.

Example:

None

JAMES (30s), wiry and intense, scans the alley like a predator.

5. Dialogue

- Character name **centered above the dialogue**.
- Keep dialogue natural and concise.
- Avoid overexplaining emotions—let subtext work.

Example:

None

JAMES
We can't go back there. Not now.

6. Parentheticals (*used sparingly*)

- Use to clarify how something is said (tone, emotion, action while speaking).
- Don't overuse—only when it's not clear from the dialogue or context.

Example:

None

JAMES
(whispering)
I think someone's following us.

7. Transitions (*optional*)

- Indicate how scenes change. (Rarely needed in spec scripts.)

Example:

None

CUT TO:



MINI SCENE TEMPLATE

None

INT./EXT. – [LOCATION] – [TIME OF DAY]

[Action line describing the setting and what is happening.]

[CHARACTER NAME]

(Dialogue goes here.)

[Another character's action or response.]

[CHARACTER NAME]

(Parenthetical, if needed)

(More dialogue.)

The Office – “The Injury” Scene (Recreation for Educational Use)

Written by: Mindy Kaling

Original Air Date: January 12, 2006

None

INT. DUNDER MIFFLIN – MICHAEL'S OFFICE – MORNING

MICHAEL sits at his desk, foot elevated and wrapped in bubble wrap.

The camera crew enters mid-conversation.

MICHAEL

I enjoy having breakfast in bed. I like waking up to the smell of bacon. Sue me.

MICHAEL

So I wake up, I plug in the grill, I go back to sleep. Then I wake up again, and I step onto the grill. That's it.

PAM (O.S.)

You stepped... *onto* the grill?

MICHAEL

I *stepped onto the grill!* It was on the floor! And then I had to spend three hours in the emergency room because someone left a stupid message that I had a "mild" injury.

JIM (O.S.)

It *was* mild.

MICHAEL

Oh, really, Jim? Is your foot a “mild” part of your body?

Imagine your foot... has been blown off by a landmine.

DWIGHT (O.S., serious)

Mine has.

(beat)

MICHAEL

What?

DWIGHT

Nothing.

Michael sighs and leans back, clearly waiting for sympathy that never comes.

MICHAEL

I want to be treated with the same level of respect as if I were in a wheelchair. Temporary disability is still disability.