

Planning (Pre-Production)

It is very important to have a plan before even picking up the camera. Having a clear vision of what you and your team expect for your short film to be, will help you tremendously throughout the process.

Work with your team and mentor(s) to start thinking about the kind of story that you want your film to tell and all the important story elements involved: plot, characters, goal, etc.

Ideas pop into our heads unexpectedly so be sure to always carry your phone or writing equipment to take down any cool ideas that enhance your story.

Check out these tutorials!

- ♦ [8 Step Checklist for Filming \(BEFORE You Hit Record!\)](#)
- ♦ [5 Tips for shooting a short film](#)



Write A Script

The script is where you will outline your story. The script will also help you write down the story, setting, and dialogue. The script is a very useful tool that will be used by the rest of the team as a guide while filming. Think of it as your map! The last thing that you want to do is have your equipment and team ready, get on location to film and don't have a plan.

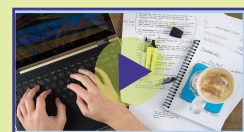
The script also has the purpose to be used as reference throughout the process since you may need to refresh yourself on certain actions, scenes, dialogues, and more.

Keep in mind that it is okay to make changes to the script even after you think it's ready. Many times, better ideas will come to you well after this stage in the filmmaking process.

Also, improvising during filming is okay to do. There are times that where you and your team would have great ideas on the spot so don't be afraid to improvise.

Check out this tutorial!

- ♦ [The Basics of Writing a Screenplay!](#)



Choose Your Filming Location

Do your homework and research before bringing the whole team and equipment to the location where your scenes will be filmed. Check for things such as the noise level of the location. In particular, this will help you if you have a dialogue with your scene. Another thing to lookout for is lighting. If you are filming a scene outdoors, check for lighting conditions. Go to the location during different times of the day to see if the area will be too bright or too dark at certain hours of the day.



You may need to construct sets for a setting you'd like to have. But for scenes where an actual location will do, you'll need to do some scouting to find the best spots. Take a camera with you and do as much traveling as possible, snapping shots of places you think will serve as the perfect setting for particular scenes.

Get Familiar With The Equipment

Now that you have a plan, a script, and have done all your research on location, its time to familiarize yourself with the equipment that you will be using. By familiarizing with your equipment, you will learn which settings are available to you and which aren't. If you are not sure what settings to use or the type of equipment that you could use, do not worry!

Check out these tutorials!

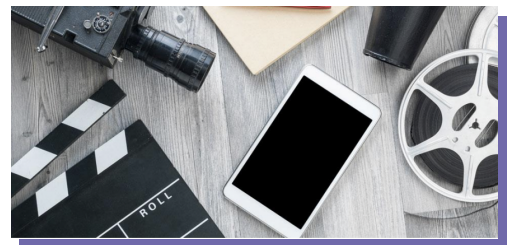
- ◆ [How to shoot video-DSLR tutorial!](#)
- ◆ [How to shoot manual video with your phone](#)



Use Your Resources

Last but definitely not least is using the available to you. Whether this is your 1st or 100th time creating a film, it is crucial to always use the resources and people around you to learn and improve.

Don't be afraid to ask questions. Reach out to your mentors, to other filmmakers, use free online videos on YouTube, etc. It is important to understand that when it comes to filmmaking, there is no perfect formula. Everyone have their own styles and different levels of expertise and you and your team should always take advantage and make use of any resources available to you.



Final Thoughts

To take your project to the next level, try to set up a shooting schedule and try to stick to it as much as you can. Give yourself plenty of time to shoot scenes, this way you will never feel rushed and can it will allow you to accommodate for changes or problems. It's common for a scene that will last one minute in the final cut to require more time than expected.

If time allows, try filming the same scenes from new angles. Doing this will allow you to have more footage to work with that can keep your viewers engaged.