

TV TAPE-LIVE FORMAT

"Epi sode Ti tle"

Written by

Matt Carless

Every script should have a title page with one contact address only in the bottom left hand corner. Always include a phone number and an e-mail address if you have one.

If you have an agent the address and number can go here. A draft number or date is not required on a spec script.

TEASER

EXT. LOCATION - DAY

(BEGIN YOUR SCRIPT WITH A TEASER OR COLD OPENING. ALL TEASERS AND ACTS MUST BEGIN WITH FADE IN: FOLLOWED BY A SET HEADING)

(SET HEADINGS ARE CAPITALISED AND UNDERLINED AND TAKE THE FORM OF EXT. OR INT. LOCATION - DAY OR NIGHT)

CHARACTER #1

Character names appear capitalised. A character is designated by either their first or last name, but a role designation may be used instead with personal titles abbreviated. The designated character name should remain consistent throughout the entire script.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

Scene 1

FADE IN:

EXT. LOCATION - NIGHT

(SCENE ACTION IS CAPITALISED WITH EACH PARAGRAPH ENCLOSED WITHIN ROUND BRACKETS. SCENE ACTION SHOULD ONLY DEAL WITH WHAT IS ON THE SCREEN AND NEVER STRAY INTO SUPERFLUOUS NOVELISTIC TEXT)

CHARACTER #2

Dialogue appears double-spaced under the character name in normal upper and lower case.

CHARACTER #1

Parenthetical instructions appear in capitals enclosed within round brackets in the body of the dialogue.

It is recommended that these are used sparingly!

ACT ONE

Scene 3

INT. LOCATION #3 - NIGHT

(SOMETIMES IT MAY BE NECESSARY
TO HEAR CHARACTERS WHEN WE
CAN'T ACTUALLY SEE THEM)

CHARACTER #1 (O. C.)

Off-camera means the character is present within the scene, but can only be heard, e.g. they are speaking from an adjoining room.

CHARACTER #2 (V. O.)

Voiceover is used when the character is not present within the scene, but can be heard via a mechanical device such as a telephone or radio. It is also used when a character narrates parts of your story.

CHARACTER #2

If you need to differentiate between a character's narration and their on-screen dialogue, just begin a new speech, omitting (V. O.).

CHARACTER #2 (V. O.)

Reverse this process to return to narration. As (O. C.) and (V. O.) are technical instructions, they appear next to the character name.

(USE V. O. WHEN YOU WANT TO SHOW ONE CHARACTER SPEAKING ON THE PHONE BUT ONLY HEAR ANOTHER)

CHARACTER #1

This is the character we see on the phone.

CHARACTER #2 (V. O.)

Whilst we hear the second character speaking at the other end.

CHARACTER #1

But the first character remains in vision throughout the scene.

(END EACH ACT IN THE FOLLOWING WAY)

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

Scene 4

FADE IN:

INT. LOCATION #1 / LOCATION
#2 - NIGHT (INTERCUT)

(IF YOU NEED TO CUT BACK AND
FORTH BETWEEN SIMULTANEOUS
ACTION, LIKE THE PHONE
CONVERSATION, THEN HANDLE YOUR
SCENE LIKE THIS)

CHARACTER #1

You can type your dialogue as
normal.

CHARACTER #2

Whilst indicating that both
characters are on the phone.

CHARACTER #1

Although you don't need to do
that for every speech.

CHARACTER #2

Just make sure you indicate
when the character hangs up.

CHARACTER #2 (CONT' D)

Especially if you are going

ACT TWO

Scene 5

EXT. LOCATION #1 - NIGHT -
1956 (FLASHBACK)

(IF YOU WANT FLASHBACKS IN YOUR
SCRIPT THEN TREAT THEM AS
SEPARATE SCENES AND INDICATE
THEM IN THE SET HEADING)

YOUNG CHARACTER #1

If it's important, you can
include the specific year or
time period.

YOUNG CHARACTER #2

If your flashback takes place
across a number of
consecutive scenes, then
specify it as a flashback
sequence in the heading.

(INDICATE WHEN THE FLASHBACK OR
FLASHBACK SEQUENCE FINISHES AND
BEGIN A NEW SCENE)

(END FLASHBACK)

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

CREDIT WINDOW

FADE IN:

EXT. LOCATION #1 - DAY

(END YOUR SCRIPT WITH A CREDIT WINDOW OR TAG SCENE. ALL PAGES SHOULD BE NUMBERED. PAGE ONE BEGINS WITH THE TEASER, NOT THE TITLE PAGE)

(THIS EXAMPLE OF TAPE-LIVE FORMAT INCLUDES NUMBERED SCENES WITHIN EACH ACT -- EACH NEW SCENE BEGINS WITH THE ACT NUMBER AND SCENE NUMBER)

(AN ALTERNATIVE WAY IS TO USE THE UN-NUMBERED SYSTEM. ONLY NEW ACT NUMBERS ARE SPECIFIED, WITH EACH NEW SCENE INDICATED BY A SET HEADING ON A NEW PAGE)

(IT IS CUSTOMARY TO SIGN-OFF A TV SCRIPT IN THE FOLLOWING WAY. FADE OUT. ONLY EVER APPEARS AT THE END OF AN ACT AND THE ENTIRE SCRIPT. IF YOU WANT TO INDICATE A FADE OUT. AND A FADE IN: BETWEEN TWO SCENES WITHIN AN ACT, THEN THE CORRECT TRANSITIONAL TERM IS FADE TO:)

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW