Production Notebook

How To Make Your Movie

an interactive film school

Production Steps ① Research pg 00 ② Script pg 00 ③ Preproduction pg 00 ④ Production pg 00 ⑤ Postproduction pg 00 Outline pg 00

Dear filmmaker,

The three CD-ROMs of How To Make Your Movie contain an entire film school; the classrooms, the hallways, the professors, visiting professors and professionals — waiting for your curiosity, your willingness to discover, to learn, to play, to start to dream.

Once you start to explore the Film School, especially the Production floor, the first thing you'll want to do is to make your movie.

No one ever learned filmmaking without making a movie—without making a million and one mistakes. As you start to practice what you're reading about, this Production Notebook will help you stay organized throughout the entire production process of your film. Keeping notes and records each step will make some of your mistakes less painful, and will help you remember them and avoid repeating them.

Also in these pages are ideas for video exercises to help you better understand different stages of the process. Find a cheap video camera and start using it in the same way an artist uses a sketchbook.

One day, after you've finished your film, you'll be able to sit with this notebook and compare your notes and tapes with your final movie. If you're honest with yourself, you'll be able to determine exactly where you have succeeded or failed — and why. No teacher, virtual or real, can give you this knowledge.



Rajko Grlić

① Research

Research = finding and collecting anything related to your future story and characters

Research Checklist

Keep a record of all the things that inspire you and bring you closer to your characters and story. Even if you're using someone else's story for your film, write down all of these:

Books	
Γheater	
Music	
-:1	
Films	
Art	
Newspapers	
Magazines	
ΓV & Radio	
Personal	
Experience	

1 Research

Video Exercises:
Start using a simple video camera in the same way an artist uses a sketchbook. Keep the camera close at hand throughout the entire filmmaking process.

Video Exercise 1: THE CAMERA AS SKETCH BOOK

Try this exercise to familiarize yourself with the camera and how to shoot material that will be edited at a later time.

- Record everyday activities no more than three to five minutes each day.
- Try to avoid shaking the camera, or moving it too fast from one object to the next.
- Be aware of camera movement by keeping an eye on objects which are close to the edge of the viewfinder.
- Carefully watch the material you've shot at least a few times.
- Edit a two-minute version of the best material onto another tape.

Number of tapes shot:
Length of edited version:
I showed the finished tape to:
The reaction was:

Communicate with your crew as much as you can by showing them video sketches and other examples of your thoughts and ideas.

Video Exercise 2: STUDY OF CHARACTERS

This exercise will help you begin to make abstract ideas about your characters tangible.

- Find people who remind you of your characters for example, on the street or in a park and record them.
- Record two different people for each character.
- Edit the material down to two minutes for each person.

Number of tapes shot:	
Length of edited version:	
I showed the finished tape to:	
The reaction was:	

2 Script

¹script n 1 a: something written: TEXT b: an original or principal instrument or document c: (1): MANUSCRIPT 1 (2): the written text of a stage play, screenplay, or broadcast; specifically: the one used in production or performance 2 a: a style of printed letters that resembles handwriting **b:** written characters: HAND-WRITING c: ALPHABET 3: a plan of action 2 script vt 1: to prepare a script for or from 2: to provide carefully considered details for (as a plan of action)

By permission. From Merriam-Webster's Collegiate® Dictionary, 10th Edition ©1996 by Merriam-Webster

ecord th stened t	o or rea	ıd your	STORY	:		
ecord th	ne comr	ments f	rom pe	ople who)	
				ople who		

② Script	Script Notes
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	listened to or read your TREATMENT :
	Decoulable comments from a contract
	Record the comments from people who
	listened to or read your FIRST DRAFT :
	·

2	Script

Record the	tes				
	commer	nts from p	eople wh	0	
istened to	or read y	our SECC	ND DRA	FT:	
	·				
Record the					

2	Sc	ri	pt

Script Notes	
Record the comments from people who	
listened to or read your FINAL DRAFT:	
-	

② Script

Script Exercise

Answering these questions will help you arrive at a blend of character and action. They're designed to keep your screen-plays moving forward as dynamically as possible. Once you discover these answers, your script will be in good shape.

- 1 Who is your protagonist? What one quality above all distinguishes him or her from other people in the story?
- What does he or she want? (A person, a thing, something specific.)
- 3 What's at stake if he or she doesn't get it?
- 4 What does he or she plan to do to get it?
- 5 What obstacles stand in the way? (A good obstacle is a person opposed to the protagonist an antagonist.)
- 6 How does he or she plan to overcome the obstacles?
- 7 What goes wrong ? (If your hero succeeds quickly, your movie is over.)
- 8 How does your protagonist try to get things back on track?
- **9** Does it work? Or are there additional obstacles?
- 10 Whose affections or respect has he/she won or lost?
- 11 How does the end of the story grant or deny the protagonist the thing he/she wanted originally (in #2)?
- **12** Does your story have a premise a clear meaning?

Ouestions from Kevin Scott, Professor, NYU

3 Preproduction

Everything before shooting is Preproduction

Preproduction Checklist

When you prepare to make a movie, you'll find that you're working on several things at once. The only way to stay organized is to make a list of your priorities and keep detailed notes. On the pages that follow are separate forms for detailing each of these items.

Here's a short checklist of the main things you'll have to keep track of as part of preproduction.

- Crew
- Actors/Cast
- Location Scouting
- Script Visualization
- Set Design
- Costume Design
- Makeup
- Equipment Rental
- Scheduling
- Budgeting

③ Preproduction

Phone, Fax, E-mail

Crew Contacts

You don't need to fill every crew position for your first production. Consider which positions can be combined and assigned to one person. Keep your list of crew contacts up-to-date so you know where to find each other during preproduction.

Producer
Director
Editor
Asst. Director
Dir. of Photography
Key Grip
Continuity Person
Sound Crew
Storyboard Artist
Set Designer
Costume Designer

③ Preproduction

Print multiples of this page as needed

Casting Checklist

When casting, you'll consider lots of people before you decide on who is just right to portray a certain character. Make notes of the meetings you have with each person, and **keep track of any materials they give you** (such as demo tapes, head shots and resumes).

Name				
Work Address				
	Phone			
	Email			
Home Address				
	Phone			
	Email			
Play an instrum	ent?			
Previous experi	ence: acting	/music/dance		
Notes				
Head Shot				
Audition				
Resume				
Demo Tapes				
Call back				
Rehearsal				
Other producti	on areas of i	nterest:		
Lighting	Sound	Props	Makeup/Hair	Costumes
Continuity	Editing	Mixing	Production	

3 Preproduction

Video Exercises

Video Exercise 3: CASTING

This exercise will help you make casting decisions easier. In order to compare different talents for the same role:

- Give each actor the same material.
- Record the scene with the actor. Allow the actor to interpret the scene as he or she envisions it.
- Discuss with the actor what you want for the scene.
- Record the scene again to determine how the actor works with your input.

In order to be able to compare the actors more easily, always record the same scene:

- From the same camera angle.
- With the same frame for each character.
- At the actor's eye level so you can see the actor's eyes.
- With the same time limit for each actor.

Number of tapes shot:	
Length of edited version:	
I showed the finished tape to:	
The reaction was:	

3 Preproduction

Video Exercises

Video Exercise 4: IMPROVISATION

This exercise will help you and your actors develop the scenes, characters and dialogue.

Take one simple scene:

- Record it as it's written in the script.
- Give the actors ideas about which direction the improvisation for the scene can go.
- Give them enough space and time, and record them without interruption.
- Watch and discuss both versions with your actors.

Go carefully through these tapes and decide what, if anything, you can use to help enrich your script.

Number of tapes shot:	
Length of edited version:	
I showed the finished tape to:	
The reaction was:	

③ Preproduction

Print multiples of this page as needed

Location Scouting Checklist

Location scouting is a process of looking for the proper places to shoot a movie. While visiting different places, record your thoughts about each of these aspects.

Location
How close does this location come to matching your vision?
Is the space big enough for lights and camera movement?
What are the sound conditions?
How much will it cost to decorate (dress the set)?
How far is it from your other locations?
Is parking available?
Is electricity available?
Is there telephone access?
Do you have permission to use the site?
When/how long can you use it each day?

3 Preproduction

Storyboarding

Script Visualization

Script visualization is the process of breaking down and translating each scene from the script into individual shots that are filmed and later joined in continuity. Making a storyboard will help you define the movement of the camera and actors during each shot. The blank storyboard frames on the next page will get you started on your own storyboard.

Sceene No.	Shot No.		

How to use the three-box storyboard format

- Each line of three boxes is for one single shot.
- If it's a static shot, draw it in the first box and leave the other two blank.
- If it's a moving shot, use the first box for the start of the shot, and the third box for the last frame of the shot. This is the best way to see how the end of one shot matches the beginning of the next.

③ Preproduction

Three-Box Storyboard Form

Sceene No.	Shot No.			
Sceene No.	Shot No.			
			,	
Sceene No.	Shot No.			
		J	J	
Sceene No.	Shot No.			
Sective No.	Short No.			

3 Preproduction

Video Exercises

Video Exercise 5: ONE SCENE SHOT TWO WAYS

This exercise is designed to help you face the complexity of breaking down the scene into individual shots.

- Find three actors and develop a scene that is no longer than two or three minutes.
- Shoot the entire scene in one moving camera shot.
- Break the exact same scene with the same blocking into five to ten shots.
- Edit the cut-up version of the scene.
- Compare the two and decide which one is closer to the meaning and rhythm of your scene.
- Decide how many shots you really need for this scene, and make a new shot list.
- Reshoot the whole scene on the basis of the new shot list.

Number of tapes shot:
Length of edited version:
I showed the finished tape to:
The reaction was:

3 Preproduction

Video Exercises

Video Exercise 6: VIDEO STORYBOARD

A video storyboard is usually shot:

- From a prepared drawn storyboard
- In the real location
- With the real actors
- With a minimal crew: director and director of photography (DP)
- Shot by shot through the script
- Without worrying about lights, camera shaking, costumes, or set design.

You can make a video storyboard for the entire movie, or one important scene. If you are a first-time director, it will be very helpful to make a video storyboard for your entire movie. Keep the video storyboard and compare it with your final movie. Find out if, how, and why you made changes and if they are better. This can be the best learning experience of the whole production process.

Number of tapes shot:
Length of edited version:
I showed the finished tape to:
The reaction was:

③ Preproduction

Keep close track of your equipment rental arrangements

Equipment Rental Record

	Rental Cost	Rented From/10	
Camera			
Lighting			
Grip			
Electric			
Transport			
•			
Other			

3 Preproduction

Find these forms in the Preproduction Room on the How To Make Your Movie CD-ROMs

Blank Preproduction Forms

You will need to do a lot of paperwork during the course of making your movie. These forms will help. They can be found and printed in the Preproduction Room on the third floor of the School of Film (you'll find them on the "Schedule and Budgeting" wall).

- Location Survey Checklist
- Camera Report
- Budget
- Script Breakdown
- Crew Deal Memo
- Cast List
- Crew List
- Contact List
- Location Release
- Talent Release
- Script Supervisor Report
- Cast/Scene Number Breakdown
- Daily Call Sheet

Day Number:

Production Diary

4 Production

So far, you've kept detailed records during your preparation. It's time to start shooting! Take the time to keep a brief diary of what happened during each day of production.

Print multiples of this page as needed

	Today we shot	Still to be shot
Number of shots	<u> </u>	-
Number of scenes		
Number of script pages		
Film rolls / Videotapes		
-		
-		

4 Production

Find these forms in the Preproduction Room on the How To Make Your Movie CD-ROMs

Director's Commands

For clear and fast communication with the crew, the Director and Assistant Director use these commands on the set:

Roll sound

Starts the sound equipment

Roll camera

Starts the camera equipment. (Sometimes instead of "Roll Camera," the command "Speed" will be called by the Sound Recordist.)

Mark it

Slates the shot

Action

Signals the performers to start acting

Cut

Stops the operation of the camera and sound

Cut and Hold

Tells everyone to stop, but hold their places because the shot has to be continued.

Pickup

Starts a new take from a certain place within the previous shot

Retake

Reshoots a shot because the previous one was unsatisfactory

From the Top

Starts a scene from the beginning

Print it

Indicates the shot was accepted and that a print can be made from the take

4 Production

Say it like you mean it!

Phrases to Inspire Your Crew and Actors

Be nice to your actors and crew; remember you can't make your movie alone. Use these phrases when directing to inspire them. And when you say them, sound sincere!

1	Wow!	40	•
2	Super!	41	Great discovery!
3	Outstanding!	42	You've found the secret!
4	Excellent!	43	You figured it out!
5	Great!	44	Great Acting!
6	Good!	45	Hip, hip hurray!
7	Neat!	46	Bingo!
8	Well done!	47	Magnificent!
9	Remarkable!	48	Marvelous!
10	I knew you could do it!	49	Terrific!
11	I'm proud of you!	50	Phenomenal!
12	Fantastic!	51	You're sensational!
13	Superstar!	52	Creative job!
14	Nice work!	53	Super job!
15	Looking good!	54	Fantastic job!
16	You're on top of it!	55	Exceptional performance!
17	Beautiful!	56	You're a real trooper!
18	Now you're flying!	57	You are exciting!
19	You're catching on!	58	What an imagination!
20	Now you've got it!	59	You're spectacular!
21	You're incredible!	60	You tried hard!
22	Bravo!	61	Outstanding performance!
23	You're fantastic!	62	You're a good friend!
24	Hurray!	63	I trust you!
25	You're on target!	64	You're important!
26	You're on your way!	65	You mean a lot to me!
27	That's the way we do it!	66	You make me happy!
28	How smart!	67	You belong!
29	Good job!	68	You've got a friend!
30	That's incredible!	69	You make me laugh!
31	Hot dog!	70	You brighten my day!
32	Dynamite!	71	I respect you!
33	You're unique!	72	You're wonderful!
34	Nothing can stop you!	73	You're perfect!
35	Good for you!	74	A-plus job!
36	That was clever!	75	My buddy!
37	You're a winner!	76	You made my day!
38	Remarkable job!	77	That's the best!

39 Beautiful work!

⑤ Postproduction

Editing is the process of selecting, cutting and arranging the shots, scenes and sequences for the final film.

Editing: Record the Length at Each Step

It's a good idea to keep records of the length of your movie during each step of the editing process.

Assembly 1	Date
	Length
Assembly 2	Date
	Length
Assembly 3	Date
	Length
Rough Cut 1	Date
	Length
Rough Cut 2	Date
	Length
Rough Cut 3	Date
	Length
Final Cut 1	Date
Tillar Cat T	Length
	Length
Final Cut 2	Date
	Length
Final Final Cut	Date
	Length

⑤ Postproduction

Sound Checklist

To prepare for the final sound mix, make a "to do" list and bring it to the mixing room to avoid problems.

Cleaning up dialogue tracks
Building Sound Tracks
Sound Effects
Music
Mix

⑤ Postproduction

Sound Mix Questionnaire

Each hour spent mixing sound can be very expensive, so you want to be prepared. Answer these questions before you go to mix your sound, and you'll save time (and money).

- 1 If you are mixing in film, do you have foot counts for 16mm and 35mm?
- 2 What problems do you know of in your sound tracks?
- 3 Do you have camera noise?
- 4 Are your levels all the same?
- 5 Have you cleaned your tracks? Are your splices okay?
- 6 Are your problem tracks separate from other sound?
- 7 Are all your tracks in sync with head and tail beeps?
- **8** Do you want any special sound effects? Telephone, reverb, delay??

Questions from John Butler, Professor, Ohio University

5 Postproduction

Laboratory Checklist

Working with film: After the picture is locked and the sound is mixed, it's time to put the elements together. A film processing lab will perform the necessary steps. It's a good idea to talk to more than one lab to compare prices and services. Be sure to discuss all of these steps and their costs with the people who will be processing your film.

Negative Conforming

Editing the original negative to match your workprint on the basis of the final cut.

Negative Timing

Balancing the color and brightness of the negative from shot to shot.

Optical Sound

The magnetic sound track is transferred to an optical track on a film negative.

Answer Print

The first developed print combining the picture and optical sound.

Release Print (Festival Print)

The final, color-corrected print.

⑤ Postproduction

Lab Name			
Contact Person			
Phone			
Estimated Costs			
Lab Name			
Contact Person Phone			
Estimated Costs			
Estimated Costs			
Lab Name Contact Person			
Phone			
Estimated Costs			
Lab Name			
Contact Person			
Phone			
Estimated Costs			

⑤ Postproduction

Prints and tapes are expensive, so keep this record of copies you've sent out.

Record of Prints/Tapes

Print/Tape No.	Date Sent Date Returned
Sent To	Date neturned
Print/Tape No.	Date Sent
Count	Date Returned
Sent To	
Print/Tape No.	Date Sent
	Date Returned
Sent To	
Print/Tape No.	Date Sent
Time rape its.	Date Returned
Sent To	

⑤ Postproduction

Festivals Entered

Festival	Date Sent	
	Answer Note	
Contact Person		
Address		
Festival	Date Sent	
	Date Returned	
Sent To		
Festival	Date Sent	
restivai	Date Returned	
Sent To	Date Neturned	
Sent to		
Festival	Date Sent	
	Date Returned	
Sent To		

Outline

Contents of the CD-ROMs

Film Grammar

Visual Units Shot

Shots By Position In The Scene

Establishing Shot Point-Of-View Shot

Reaction Shot

Shots By Number Of Subjects

Single (One-Shot)

Two Shot

Group Shot

Shots By The Type Of Lens

Wide-Angle Shot

Telephoto Shot Zoom Shot

Shots By Camera Movement

Dolly Shot

Panning Shot

Tilting Shot

Shots By Camera Angle

High Angle

Low Angle

Bird's-Eye View

Shots By Camera Position

Over-The-Shoulder Shot

Head-On Shot

Scene

A Scene Composed Of

A Series Of Shots

A Scene Shot (Integral Shot)

Sequence

Coverage

Master Shot

Coverage Shots

Reverse Angle Shots

Triangle Principle

Continuity

Imaginary Line

Framing

Extreme Close-up

Close-up

Medium Shot

Medium Full Shot **Full Shot**

Wide Shot

Match Cut

By camera position

By subject movement

By dialogue

Film Punctuation

Fade Out

Fade In

White Out

Cutting To Black

Color Fade

Dissolve

Composition

Light, Color

Camera Angle

Camera Movement

Object/Character Placement

Recommended Reading

Film Festivals

List of Festivals Worldwide List of Student Festivals

Lecture: "Some Remedies

For Festival Fever"

by Arsen Anton Ostojic

A scene from "The Bird Lover"

Equipment

Equipment Light Metering

Lighting Studio

Equipment Binders

Camera

35mm Cameras

16mm Cameras

Camera Distributors

Lenses

Video Cameras

Film Stock Kodak

Fuji

Ilford Film

Film Labs

Sound Nagra

Zennheiser Microphones

Zennheiser Distributors **Grip And Lighting**

Arri Compact Arri Daylight

Arrisun 12 Plus

Fresnels

Arrisoft Arrilite

Kino Flos

Steadicam

16mm Bolex: parts & loading

Shutter, iris, & aperture

Formats & aspect ratios Recommended Reading

Film History

Lecture: "The Speedy Gonzales History of (North American and European) Film" by Dan Muggia

Recommended Reading

Library

Resources Course outline Printable files Websites Film schools Film commission offices

Restroom

Trivia Game Persistance of Vision Demo

Research

Reading **Newspapers And Magazines Books** Pasta Paolo Reading Documentary Film Body Language Looking & Watching People Body Language **Television News Documentary Films** P.P. Looking & Watching Listening People And Their Language Music Of The Area Pasta Paolo Listening

Dialogue, Music Experiencing Videotaping Video Exercises

#1 Camera As A Sketchbook #2 Study Of Characters

"There are plenty of intriguing, funny and surprising ideas buried in everybody's memories" by Yvette Biro "The Short Film: How To Prepare For It" by Srdjan Karanovic

Recommended Reading

Scriptwriting

Definitions Scriptwriting Computer Story

Pasta Paolo Story Step Outline

Pasta Paolo Step Outline

Treatment

Step-outline Treatments **Literary Treatments** Pasta Paolo Treatment **Grande Illusion Treatment**

Script

Pasta Paolo First Draft Pasta Paolo Final Draft

Script Format Script Page Layout

Front Page Layout **Computer Software** Script Registration

Scriptwriting Exercise

"How To Write Short Films" by Lew Hunter "Just For Laughs: Writing The Short Comic Script' by Andrew Horton "Plotting Conventions" by Kevin Scott "On Aristotle's Poetics" by Wojtek Chojna Recommended Reading

Pre-production

Crew

Producer Director Editor

Assistant Director (AD) Director Of Photography (DP)

Camera Assistants Camera Operator

First Assistant Camera

Slate Person (Loader/Clapper)

Key Grip

Continuity Person Sound Crew

Sound Recordist **Boom Operator**

Sound Mixer Storyboard Artist Set Designer

Prop Person Costume Designer Makeup Artist

Where To Look For Actors Head Shot And Resume

Auditions Callbacks

Rehearsals Video Exercises

Casting, Improvisation Set And Costume Design

Location Scouting Set Design

Props

Costume Design & Makeup

Script Visualization Shooting Script Storyboards Shot List Video Exercises

One Scene Shot In Two Ways

Video Storyboard

Lectures

"Legal Basics For Independent Filmmakers" by Susan H. Bodine and Jose I. Luzurrango "Steps In Preparation Of A Short Dramatic Film From The Producer's Point Of View" by Robert Nickson

Scheduling And Budgeting Script Breakdown Blank Production Forms **Location Survey Checklist**

Camera Report Budget

Script Breakdown Crew Deal Memo

Cast List Crew List Contact List Location Release Talent Release Script Supervisor Report

Cast/Scene No. Breakdown

Daily Call Sheet

Production

Blocking The Actor Pasta Paolo Blocking Staging The Camera Camera Setup Rehearsing The Shot Shooting Director's Commands Phrases To Inspire Your Crew Lecture "How I Made My First Professional Short Film" by Goran Dukic

Recommended Reading

Post-production

Editing technology Film Video Digital **Editing process** Assembly Rough Cut Final Cut **Editing Exercise** Sound **Building Sound Tracks** Sound Effects

> Music Mix Questionnaire Mixing Interlock

Titles Laboratory **Negative Conforming Negative Timing Optical Sound** Answer Print Release Print

Lectures "Music For Films and Film Music Editing" by Suzana Peric "The Mysterious Law of 2-1/2" by Walter Murch "Clear Density/Dense Clarity" by Walter Murch Recommended Reading

Screening Room

Film: "Pasta Paolo" Two reviews of the film Diploma

3rd Disc

Pasta Paolo Footage Assembly 24:00 minutes of QuickTime footage of Pasta Paolo for editing Rough Cut 8:32 minutes of QuickTime footage of Pasta Paolo Final Cut 7:46 minutes of QuickTime footage of Pasta Paolo **Sound Effects** Sound effect files for use in creating your own edit of "Pasta Paolo" Music Song, "Solo per te Lucia" from "Pasta Paolo"

Course Syllabus Academic Syllabus for teaching a one-year production class based on the CD-ROM set