

# Create a Production Plan

In order to move into production, you need a plan on paper so you can accurately communicate with your team. The production plan includes the following:

## Shot List

A list of every moment you would like to capture from the script with information on framing, camera position and action to be covered.

An example of a 360° narrative shot list:

- Shot 1: Eye Level, In the kitchen as Jeremy is making dinner while talking to Bethany as she is reading a newspaper at the kitchen table, they both stop talking and look on the floor
- Shot 2: Low Angle, Point of View of a mouse as Jeremy and Bethany talk, they look down and see the mouse
- Shot 3: Eye Level, Outside the front door as Jeremy and Bethany burst out of the door run past the camera and down the street screaming

An example of a 360° documentary shot or coverage list:

- Shot 1: Seated position Interview of Museum Director in the T-Rex exhibit room
- Shot 2: Eye level B-roll at the museum entrance as patrons enter the museum
- Shot 3: Child eye B-roll level of youth looking at T-Rex exhibit and Museum Director talking about it's history

Remember, with 360° video, the viewer will be able to look around the whole space. Consider whether the interview space is interesting enough to be shot in 360 degrees, or if your subject's commentary could be better as voice-over for your other shots.

## Interview Questions (For Documentary Projects)

If you are conducting an interview, make a list in advance of the information you would like to learn and the questions that will get you this information. You can send the questions to the subject in advance so that they can prepare, or withhold the questions until the cameras are rolling in order to capture a spontaneous response. Either way, discuss your intentions with the subject in advance so they feel at ease, since interviews can feel awkward at first.

## Script (For Narrative Projects)

A screenplay is a document that tells the story of your film. It only contains text (no images) but is the visual representation of the actions, words and sounds that will embody the final product.

Unlike a novel, it does not include what the characters are thinking and feeling. It only includes what we see and what we hear. Feelings are implied from the performance of the actors.

There are several books and websites that can give you examples of the correct format for writing a screenplay. Simply put, the script should tell us your story from beginning to end.

## Schedule

- What happens from the moment the first person arrives on location to the moment the last person leaves?
- What time will you film each scene?
- Who will arrive when with what props and equipment?
- What time is lunch?

All of these questions are a part of your production schedule. You should be as detailed as possible to avoid confusion and have clear communication.

## Contact List

An essential tool is a full list of the cast and crew including but not limited to:

- Name
- Contact info for the best way to get in touch
- Role (either character role or crew role)
- Call Time (What time should they report to the location, sometimes crew and cast have different call times)

## Budget

Make a list of everything you need for your project including locations, equipment, food, etc and how much each item will cost. If you are getting some of those things for free, as favors from friends or using your uncle's house for instance, write it into your budget anyway as a gift so you can account for the item and thank everyone after your project is complete.

## Location Information

Always visit your location before production begins so you know what to expect and you know where the action on camera and off camera will take place. This is known as a location scout. [Here is an article](#) about how a professional cinematographer conducts location scouts.

During the location scout, ask yourself these questions:

- Do you have permission to film in this location?
- Does it have the look and feel you want in the story or will you have to modify it in some way?  
Do you have permission to modify the location?
- Is it quiet and do you have control of the people traffic through the area?

## Equipment & Materials List

Make a list of all of the equipment and accessories that you need for production including batteries, chargers, headphones, tripods, props, costumes, etc. Include who is responsible for bringing what so there is no confusion or missing equipment on the day of the shoot. For items not provided by your teacher think about how you will budget for it or find a way to get it donated.

## Care for the Crew

"A film crew marches on its stomach." Make sure your cast & crew has snacks to eat, water to drink and has adequate time in the schedule to rest and recharge. And be sure to thank everyone involved for their participation and support.

## Production Meetings

Production Meetings are an essential element of the pre-production process as they provide an opportunity for your team to discuss the needs of the project. There is no one-size-fits-all template for how to hold a production meeting.

Here is a helpful [resource](#) that talks about the importance of production meetings. The key is to ensure every person involved with producing the project is on the same page as to how the project will be brought to life.