

The script

Although conventions vary from one country to another, the script usually develops over a number of distinct stages, from a synopsis of the original idea, through a “treatment” that contains an outline and considerably more detail, to a shooting script. Although the terms are used ambiguously, *script* and *screenplay* usually refer to the **dialogue** and the annotations necessary to understand the action; a script reads much like other printed forms of **dramatic literature**, while a “shooting script” or “**scenario**” more often includes not only all of the dialogue but also extensive technical details regarding the setting, the **camera** work, and other factors. Moreover, a shooting script may have the scenes arranged in the order in which they will be shot, a radically different arrangement from that of the film itself, since, for economy, all the scenes involving the same actors and sets are ordinarily shot at the same time.

Generally, more elaborate productions require more elaborate shooting scripts, while more personal films may be made without any form of written script. The script’s importance can also vary greatly depending on the director. Griffith and other early directors, for example, often worked virtually without a script, while directors such as Hitchcock planned the script thoroughly and designed pictorial outlines, or storyboards, depicting specific scenes or shots before shooting any film.