

# TV Script Writing

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TV Script Writing is more complex than other types of scriptwriting because it involves creating engaging episodes that fit into a series format. Here's a brief guide to get started:

## 1. Understand the Structure of a TV Episode

- **Explanation:** A TV script is typically divided into acts, with each act building toward a central climax or resolution. Most TV episodes follow a three-act structure:
  - **Act 1:** Setup (introduce characters, setting, and conflict)
  - **Act 2:** Confrontation (develop the conflict)
  - **Act 3:** Resolution (resolve the conflict, often with a cliffhanger)
- **Example:** In a crime drama, Act 1 introduces a crime, Act 2 involves investigating the crime, and Act 3 reveals the suspect or leaves a twist for the next episode.

## 2. Create Compelling Characters

- **Explanation:** TV characters need to be memorable, as they drive the story over multiple episodes. Make sure each character has a clear personality, goals, and flaws. Character arcs are essential, as they evolve over time.
- **Example:** A detective in a crime show who is brilliant at solving cases but struggles with personal issues.

### 3. Write Dynamic Dialogue

- **Explanation:** TV dialogue should be snappy and character-driven. It should reveal character traits and move the plot forward. Keep in mind that subtext (what's implied but not said) is often key in TV scripts.
- **Example:**
  - **Detective:** "I'm this close to solving the case."
  - **Partner:** "Just like last time, right before everything went wrong."

### 4. Use a Script Format Specific to TV

- **Explanation:** TV scripts follow a specific format with clear distinctions for dialogue, actions, and scenes. A typical TV script includes:
  - **Slugline:** Indicates where the scene takes place (e.g., INT. OFFICE – DAY).
  - **Action:** Describes what's happening in the scene.
  - **Dialogue:** The lines spoken by characters.

### 5. Incorporate Scene Transitions

- **Explanation:** TV shows often have quick scene changes. Use transitions like "CUT TO:" or "FADE OUT:" to indicate movement between scenes. These transitions help set the pace of the episode.

### 6. Include a Teaser and Cliffhanger (Optional)

- **Explanation:** Many TV episodes begin with a "teaser," a short scene before the main credits that hooks the audience. Episodes often end with a cliffhanger to keep viewers coming back.

- **Example:** The detective finds a critical clue at the end of the episode, but the suspect escapes, leading to a cliffhanger for the next episode.

## 7. Keep Pacing Tight

- **Explanation:** TV episodes are time-bound, typically 30 minutes or 60 minutes, so pacing is critical. Every scene should serve a purpose, either advancing the plot or developing a character.
- **Example:** If a scene doesn't add tension or develop the characters, cut or shorten it.

## Sample TV Script Excerpt

**Title:** Under the Radar

**Genre:** Crime Drama

**Episode:** S01E01 – “The First Clue”

### TEASER

#### INT. ALLEYWAY – NIGHT

A body lies in the shadows, partially hidden behind a dumpster. The sound of distant sirens grows louder.

Detective Rachel Torres arrives, crouching beside the body. She looks up at her partner, Detective Miller.

#### DETECTIVE MILLER

Another one. Third this month.

**DETECTIVE TORRES**

Same signature. It's him again.

(She stands, looking toward the dark end of the alley.)

**DETECTIVE TORRES**

We need to catch him before he finds his next victim.

**ACT 1**

**INT. POLICE STATION – DAY**

Torres and Miller pour over evidence, images of the crime scenes pinned to the wall.

**MILLER**

None of this makes sense. What's he after?

**TORRES**

(leaning in)

It's not about what he's taking. It's what he's leaving behind.