

PRE-PRODUCTION CHECK LIST

Not all items below are needed in every project. Check the list to see what works for you. Or, you may see items that are usually handled by a department head.

Pre-production offices (if not provided)

- Rent office space for the duration of the project
- Arrange for office phones and a fax line, cell phones, pagers, and walkie-talkies
- Arrange for computers and laptops, color printers, copy machines, and supplies
- Order stationery, business cards, and envelopes
- If not provided, rent office furniture, tables and chairs
- When needed, get insurance to cover any of the above

Primary above-the-line

- All deal memos and/or contracts with the producer, writer, director, the DP, art director, and major talent are completed and signed

Insurance

- Research and obtain general liability and workers' comp insurance
- When needed, add extra insurance riders for stunts, explosives, etc.
- If necessary, obtain Errors and Omissions insurance
- Research and obtain additional insurance (and other permits) if shooting in foreign countries

Scripts

- All story rights are registered, secured, and the contracts signed
- Finalize the script
- Draw up a shot list
- Duplicate script
- Distribute script (and on-going) revisions to relevant cast, crew, clients

Get completed and signed copies of:

- ___ Contracts involving the producer, director, writer, DP, and/or other key people
- ___ Contracts and releases (including union paperwork) for all talent, including on-camera actors, hosts, narrators, voice-overs, animals, and extras
- ___ Contracts and releases or work permits for minors
- ___ Deal memos with crew members and production staff
- ___ Location agreements
- ___ Shooting permits
- ___ Certificates of insurance (general liability, possibly Errors and Omissions)
- ___ Music or stock footage clearances
- ___ Car service vouchers
- ___ Catering and craft services menus and contracts

Keep and/or distribute multiple blank copies of:

- ___ Shooting schedule (daily, weekly, or per-project)
- ___ Scripts and any changes or revisions
- ___ Contact sheet for cast and crew with cell phones, pagers, home phones, email, and other contact info (Be aware of confidentiality issues, like Social Security #)
- ___ Talent release forms
- ___ SAG guidelines, contracts, Taft-Hartley report forms, and time sheets
- ___ Maps or driving directions to locations or set
- ___ Workers' compensation accident report forms
- ___ Call sheet
- ___ Daily/weekly production report
- ___ Contact sheet
- ___ Location agreement
- ___ Petty cash report forms and envelopes
- ___ Sign-out sheets for walkie-talkies, cell phones, equipment, raw stock, etc.

Script breakdowns, including:

- ___ Storyboards and/or floor plans
- ___ Locations
- ___ Sets
- ___ Talent and cast, background extras
- ___ Stunts

- ___ Animals and children
- ___ Special visual and audio effects
- ___ Transportation, travel
- ___ Vehicles for production and picture
- ___ Second-unit shoots
- ___ Special equipment
- ___ Hair, makeup, wardrobe

Talent and cast

- ___ If needed, find and work with a casting director for casting all talent
- ___ Audition and hire all major and minor talent, extras, and background
- ___ Audition and hire animals and their trainer or wrangler
- ___ Audition and hire children
- ___ Audition and hire extras and background
- ___ Have the proper releases, union paperwork, and/or deal memos that each of the above (or their guardian) will sign and return
- ___ Schedule rehearsals
- ___ Schedule fittings for wardrobe, hair and makeup
- ___ Schedule special needs for actors: dialogue or dialect coach, music, or choreography such as dancing or fighting

Locations

- ___ Hire a location manager
- ___ Scout new locations, photograph them, and agree with the director or producer on locations to secure
- ___ Prepare and complete all location agreements with property owners
- ___ Obtain any necessary certificates of insurance to distribute to location owners
- ___ Get shooting permits
- ___ Arrange for fire safety and/or police officers
- ___ Hire or assign security personnel for traffic and crowd control
- ___ Prepare and distribute driving directions or maps to location(s)
- ___ Arrange for all parking and permits, and post notices in neighborhoods where a shoot is taking place

- ___ Assign areas to be set up for dressing rooms, catering, hair and makeup, wardrobe, extras, animals, vehicles, special equipment, and children and parents
- ___ Scout the location for nearby parking lots, restaurants and delis, emergency medical facilities, lodging, and other on-location amenities, and provide relevant information about them to crew and cast
- ___ Check on, or supply air conditioners, heaters, and/or fans
- ___ Have an alternative site ready as a cover set in case of an emergency
- ___ Arrange for a crew to clean up after the shoot
- ___ After the shoot, walk through the property with the owner and get a location release signed and dated by the owner

Sets and sound stages

- ___ Scout and research sound stages, buildings, and other places that can comfortably and creatively work for the shoot and the budget
- ___ Check the sound stage for adequate power supply, sound-proofing, heat and air conditioning
- ___ Check that the space has adequate loading areas for equipment and vehicles, and elevators for moving equipment up or down stairs
- ___ Find space for dressing rooms for the talent, holding areas for extras and audience participants, a space for meals and snacks, production office(s), set construction and painting areas, and rooms for hair, makeup, and wardrobe.

Cast and crew amenities

- ___ Provide special areas for cast and crew to sit down, eat, and relax between takes
- ___ Arrange craft service for cast and crew including coffee, tea, milk, water and snacks at all times, with at least one healthy meal per day, or every 6 hours
- ___ Supply hydraulic chairs for hair and makeup, and foldable director's chair for cast and crew.
- ___ Set up area for director, script supervisor, with a monitor and headphones.
- ___ Arrange for special area(s) designated for animals and their wranglers, for children and their parents, and for extras

Transportation vehicles

- ___ Star dressing room vehicle(s)

- ___ Equipment vans for camera, grip and electric, audio and sound equipment
- ___ Production trailer(s)
- ___ Hair, makeup, and wardrobe trailer(s)
- ___ Craft services and/or catering truck
- ___ Honey wagon(s) (portable toilets)
- ___ Props and/or furnishings truck
- ___ Trucks for delivering sets, set pieces, and dressings
- ___ Cars or vehicles featured or used in the production

Production equipment

- ___ Camera(s) and related equipment
- ___ Lighting, rigging, gels, cables, and related equipment
- ___ Video assist monitor and cables
- ___ Steadicam package
- ___ Dolly and tracks
- ___ Cranes and jibs
- ___ Grip and electric equipment
- ___ Microphones, wireless lavs, booms, windscreens
- ___ If needed, VTR or DAT recording device
- ___ Walkie-talkies and headsets
- ___ Generator(s)
- ___ Folding tables and chairs for catering, equipment, and administration

Production materials

- ___ Raw stock, memory cards, or hard drives for video or film to cover all shooting days and extra contingency
- ___ Light gels and special lighting gobos
- ___ Camera filters and lenses
- ___ Digital still camera
- ___ Batteries for all battery-powered equipment
- ___ Audio recording tape or storage
- ___ Sound blankets (moving blankets)
- ___ Blue screen or green screen for special effects
- ___ Backdrops, cycs, and/or black Duvateen fabric

- ___ All furnishings and set dressing
- ___ All props, including food, weapons, books, and objects handled by actors
- ___ All materials needed in hair and makeup
- ___ All wardrobe and accessories
- ___ Cell phones or phone cards
- ___ Portable coffee makers and hot water kettles
- ___ First-aid kit, aspirin and Tylenol, and bandages
- ___ Flashlights and extra batteries, matches
- ___ Laptop computer, portable printer/copy machine for on-set use
- ___ Office supplies, like pens and pencils, tape, blank paper, staples, paper clips
- ___ Several rolls of gaffers' tape (duct tape)

Post-production

- ___ Interview and hire a post production supervisor
- ___ Create a post-production scheduling calendar with editing and mixing dates
- ___ Interview editors, and visit edit facilities, view their demo reels
- ___ Negotiate with editing facility and/or editor for rates and schedules
- ___ Set up accounts with post production facilities to be used
- ___ Repeat the above steps with the audio mixing facility and audio sound designer
- ___ Repeat the above steps with graphics and design facilities and designers
- ___ Research and hire a composer for original music for scoring
- ___ Or, research and negotiate with stock music facilities for stock music
- ___ Prepare a rough post-production schedule
- ___ Make tentative bookings ahead of time for all post production facilities and crew
- ___ Find a motion control camera and a creative operator for shooting stills, flat art, and for building certain special effects
- ___ Research stock footage facilities, view reels, and negotiate for needed images or footage