

Submitting Your Script: Dos and Don'ts

So, you're submitting your script for the PAC Script Lab. Great! We can't wait to read it. We love finding great WA scripts to read professionally and we want to make sure that your story has the best chance to get in front of an audience. So here a few tips on how to give your submission the smoothest transition from your fertile mind to our stage.

Checklist

Initially we just need an overview of your script. A one-page synopsis and the first ten pages (plus the title page) of the script are enough. If we like what we read, we will ask you for the complete script later. It's not that we don't want to read your entire screenplay, it's just that we get plenty of submissions and reading a full script can take over an hour!

What to send

- A one-page synopsis
- The first ten pages of your script, plus the title page

Make sure your documents (Word **.doc** and Adobe **.pdf** files are preferred) have the title of the project in the filename and your script has a title page with your contact details.

Synopsis

When writing your synopsis, remember that you are not writing a blurb like you find on the back of a DVD. A synopsis tells the whole story (yes, even your awesome twist ending) in prose. This allows us to decide whether the story is appropriate for the Script Lab (don't worry, we're not easily shocked) and gives us a good idea of the strength of the story as a whole. While a blurb is designed to tease the reader and get them excited about reading the story, a synopsis takes us through the whole thing. Don't worry, we are already excited about your story and are looking forward to reading it!

The formatting of your synopsis is also important. Use a clear, easy to read font at a decent size (the font you are reading is 12-point Arial). If you have to shrink your font under 10-point or widen your margins then your synopsis is too long! Stick to the central plot and the key characters, checking to see if you have spent too many lines describing supporting characters or sub-plots that don't affect the main story.

Script

I know you're thinking "What? Just the first ten pages? But my first big turning point is on page fourteen!" Don't worry. We've read your synopsis and we're excited about the turning point on page fourteen too. Sending the first ten pages of your script is primarily so we can see how readable it is, because we are, after all, intending to read it. Out loud. In front of an audience.

Professional script formatting is very important. If you are unsure whether or not your script is written properly, check out the AFC's FAQ page (<http://www.afc.gov.au/profile/pubs/faq.aspx>) which has a Suggested Script Layout.

Also, remember to check and double-check your first ten pages for spelling and grammatical errors. The beginning of your script is often the first time a reader will "meet" you and you don't want them to think you can't spell! Having a friend (especially a real nitpicker) read over your script and circle any errors they might come across can be very helpful.

And finally...

For examples of how to submit, we have made available the synopsis and first ten pages of Winter and Spring, the script we read at the September 2008 Script Lab with Charles "Bud" Tingwell as a featured reader.

If you have any questions you can email us at pac@screenworkshop.com.au.

Remember, we are always looking for great stories from WA writers, especially ones we haven't met before. Just follow these few simple steps and your feature film script could be professionally read in no time!