

## Script Layout

As well as the 8 key elements of a screenplay, you may well come across two others, a transition and/or shot description. Both of these elements are not generally used in scripts in modern day filmmaking. Decisions around editing and framing are the preserve of the Director and their creative team who may decide to differ from your own ideas. For that reason, it's generally advised to not include either and instead focus on the actions and the dialogue to ensure that a vivid picture is created through your script. However, as a script is a visual medium and exists as a blueprint for a Director, including transitions and/or elements of framing can be a useful and interesting way of making clear how you, as the scriptwriter envisages the action onscreen unfolding. Similarly, sometimes an audience reaction or the overall tone of a film can be established through some technical aspects and for that reason sometimes listing the transition and/or framing used can be a powerful way of communicating something important.

Firstly, using the descriptions below as a guide, add at least one transition and one shot to the extract from the script of Juno below. Use the space around the sides and use an arrow to write what shots and traditions you would use and where. Secondly, use the second page to add more examples, focusing on *shots* to highlight how you might direct the scene.

- **Transition**

As with character names, transitions are presented in uppercase letters. They should almost always follow an Action but precede Scene Headings. Key transitions include, CUT TO; DISSOLVE TO; SMASH CUT; QUICK CUT; FADE IN and FADE OUT.

These should only be used when absolutely necessary and it is advisable to spend a good deal of time analysing the use of these transitions to explore exactly what effect they have, why someone may choose to use a specific transition and be aware of specific examples of each. CUT TO is generally the most common as it's a way to efficiently show that something has changed in some way and that the location or time has significantly changed.

- **Shot**

Shots are formatted like Scene Headings. They should be presented in all uppercase but should be next to the left margin. There should also be a blank line before and after the Shot name.

When used, a Shot can help to inform the reader about a change of importance or focus at a particular point or stage. If a POV is used, refer to who the POV belongs to. If a movement is used, be sure to include the general direction. As with a transition, these should be used as a last resort and even then sparingly.

JUNO  
Go Carole.  
(a beat)  
So, guess what?

BLEEKER  
(shrugs)  
I don't know...

JUNO  
I'm pregnant.

Stunned silence. Juno pops up the footrest of the recliner and leans back comfortably.

BLEEKER  
I guess so.  
(fidgeting)  
What are you going to do?

The Dancing Elk Prep cross country team runs past Bleeker's house in a thundering herd, wearing a motley assortment of warm-ups. Their momentum stirs the crackling fall leaves. They wave and holler at Bleeker and Juno.

INT. LORING HOUSE - DAY

49

Music plays as we see SPARSE IMAGES OF VANESSA LORING'S HANDS preparing the house for Juno's arrival -

Sprucing a vase of FLOWERS.

Straightening a FRAMED PHOTO of the Loring's.

Dusting off a table with one of those WETNAPS for furniture.

Lining up a shelf of BOOKS.

EXT. LORING NEIGHBORHOOD - PREVIA - DAY

50

The Previa cruises slowly into the Loring's fancy gated community. Mac pulls over and parks on the curb.

EXT. LORING HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

51

Mark and Vanessa Loring have an impressive, though generic McMansion. The entire yard is unlandscaped soil. Mac presses the doorbell while Juno chews her nails uncomfortably. Both look mortified as they wait for someone to greet them.

VANESSA opens the door. She's a pretty, meticulous woman in her early thirties. Very Banana Republic.

VANESSA

Hi! I'm Vanessa. You must be Juno and Mr. MacGuff. I'm Vanessa.

JUNO

Vanessa, right?

MAC

Hello. Thank you for having me and my irresponsible child over to your home.

VANESSA

Oh no. Thank you. Come on in.

INT. LORING HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

52

Vanessa awkwardly leads them into her home.

VANESSA

Can I take your coats?