

Basic Stage Script

SCENE 1

FRONT ROOM AT SUNSET. THE NEWS CAN BE HEARD ON A RADIO IN THE NEXT ROOM. CHARACTER-1 AND CHARACTER-2 ARE ON THE SETTEE. THERE IS A CHOCOLATE BAR ON THE SETTEE.

CHARACTER-1. This is a character's speech and actor directions are shown in brackets thus (**CHARACTER-2 HIDES THE CHOCOLATE**). The point being that the dialogue just folds under the character names and avoids any need for formatting and indents.

CHARACTER-2. The novice playwrights will only need to master bold and caps.

(STAGE DIRECTIONS SHOULD BE LIKE THIS.)

CHARACTER-1. It seems to me this would be understandable as a stage layout for most plays. It gives us a simple baseline at which members feel comfortable knowing they are not breaking any professional taboos.

CHARACTER-2. The one thing I find invaluable is the create autotext function in Word which allows frequently used phrases (eg character's names) to be added at the stroke of a key.

CHARACTER-1. Takes a lot of the sweat out of writing a script and it's not hard to do once you know.

THE END

Standard Stage Script

Characters

Character-1 Male, 60s Optional full name, one line description of character.
Character-2 Female, young Optional relationship to other characters.

Scene 1. First location. (Day, time are optional)

STAGE DIRECTIONS APPEAR UNDER THE SCENE HEADING. THESE SHOULD ONLY DEAL WITH SET DESCRIPTION OR WHAT IS HAPPENING ON THE STAGE AND MUST NEVER STRAY INTO SUPERFLUOUS NOVELISTIC TEXT RELATED TO CHARACTER THOUGHTS OR BACK STORY.

ENTER CHARACTER-1. HE SEES A PEN AND PICKS IT UP.

CHARACTER-1: This is the dialogue, which is indented to the right of the Character Name.

ENTER CHARACTER-2, MAYBE FROM A PARTICULAR DIRECTION, OR IN A CERTAIN STYLE.

CHARACTER-2: If there is an action only for this speaker, note that stressed word back there, put it within the character's speech (PATS CHARACTER-1 ON BACK.) as an actor direction.

CHARACTER-1 DOES SOMETHING IN THE MIDDLE OF CHARACTER-2'S SPEECH.

Resumption of a speech after a stage direction does not require the Character Name to be repeated.

CHARACTER-1: In the main, your script will be a succession of Character Name plus Speech pairs, with a scattering of Stage Directions.

PAUSE.

CHARACTER-2: The layout of the script is not the important element - it is the content that is vital.

CURTAIN

Note: The Basic Layout was created for the Slough Writers competition. The Standard Layout is based on the BBC model. There are other standard layouts.