

changing minds

YOUNG FILMMAKER FESTIVAL



LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

HOW TO MAKE A FILM ON YOUR PHONE

changingmindsfilmfestival.org



WANT TO MAKE A SHORT FILM, BUT DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START?

Here's what you'll need:

1. AN IDEA

EVERY FILM YOU'VE EVER SEEN FIRST STARTED WITH AN IDEA.

SO WHERE DOES THAT BIG IDEA COME FROM? it could be something that happened at school, at home, or on a weekend with friends, a current event or something happening in your life that's making you feel anxious, or excited. Maybe it's something that you've been thinking about for a while. Maybe it's a conversation you had with a friend the other night, or a piece of writing or poetry you want to bring to life. No matter what it comes from, an idea for a film is simply anything that you want to share with the world!



WHAT THEMES DO YOU WANT TO COMMUNICATE OR MESSAGE DO YOU WANT TO SHARE?

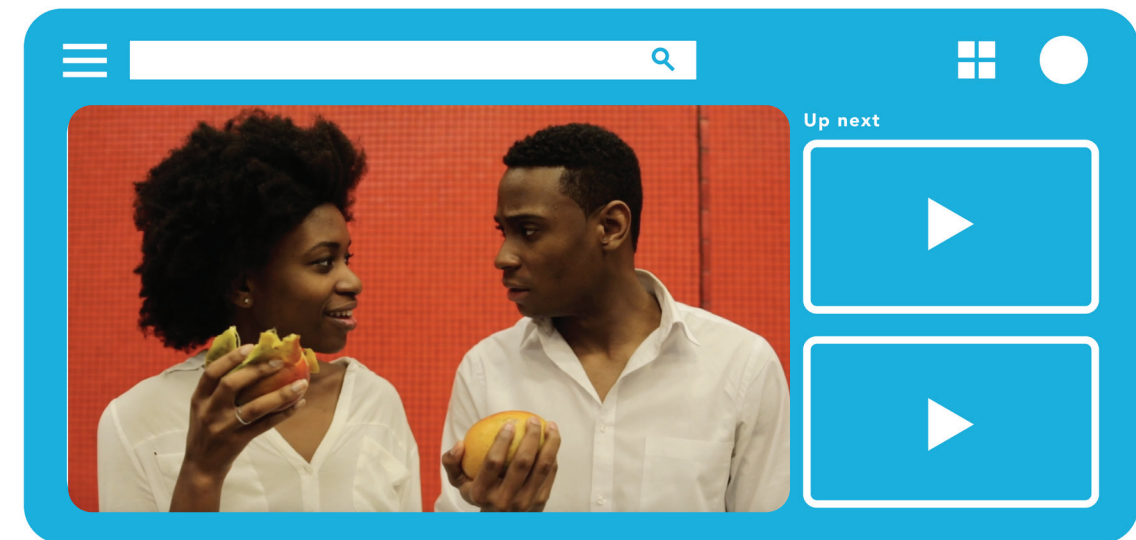
Start thinking about the kind of story you want your film to tell. What do you want your audience to walk away thinking about? How do you want them to feel? What is your film's purpose? What are the elements involved: plot, characters, conflict and resolution?

WHAT MAKES AN IDEA A GOOD IDEA FOR A FILM? Try to come up with an idea that you can articulate creatively in a few minutes, or a story that can believably occur in a short time. Keep the concept simple and focused. Take notes and jot down thoughts as they come to you. Sometimes the smallest thing can turn into a meaningful subject.

SO, WHAT'S YOUR IDEA? WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE.

2. A SMARTPHONE

PSSST! THAT DEVICE THAT YOU'RE CARRYING AROUND WITH YOU EVERYWHERE IS ACTUALLY THE SECRET TO YOUR FILMMAKING ADVENTURE! No matter what device you have — an iPhone, Galaxy, or Android - they all work! It needn't be the latest version, but you will need to make sure you have enough space on your phone to save video and edit, so make sure to clear your device of unneeded apps or photos, and to back up your info to a cloud. The functionality varies, and changes frequently, but [here is some intel on](#) smartphones and their functionality. Don't stress about having the latest and greatest



GREAT. YOU'VE GOT AN IDEA, AND A SMARTPHONE. NOW WHAT?

Filmmaking generally has three phases: Pre-Production, Production, and Post-Production. Below are some tips and tools to help you through these stages:

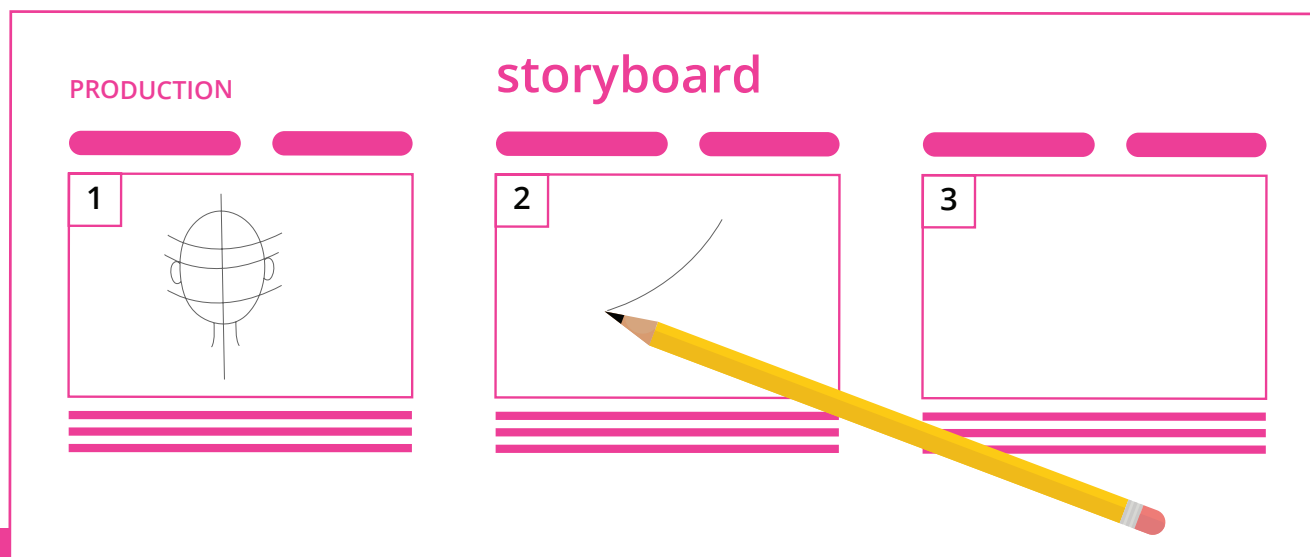
PRE-PRODUCTION (PLANNING)

In this stage, you're setting the groundwork for your film - writing, figuring out your plan, and gathering what you need! You can totally work alone on your film, or decide if you want to partner up with some friends on the project! Check out some key pieces of this stage:

STORYBOARD:

A storyboard is a sequence of drawings that represent the shots you plan to film. They can help visualize each scene and decide on things like camera angles, shot sizes, etc. AND, if you're working with a team, you can help communicate your vision to others. Whether or not you have a lot of dialogue, take the time to outline your film or create a storyboard. Think about your theme, and what it is that you want to convey.

- You can do this in a notebook -- or you can use a free tool like Storyboard Creator (<https://www.storyboardthat.com/storyboard-creator>) and have some fun.
- [Check out this article](#) from New York Film Academy on storyboards, including some tools and videos!
- Want to really capture your audience? Check out [this video about visual storytelling](#)
- Whether you're writing a script, or narrating, consider that one page of script is approximately one minute of film.



PRE-PRODUCTION & LOGISTICS:

Pre-Production - the planning, scheduling, budgeting, and overall logistics are a key part of making a film.

- If you are filming outdoors, start to scout some locations that you think help tell the story, and make sure to consider the time of day for lighting, noise, and crowds as they will affect your outcome.

If you are planning on using any existing footage, such as images or videos you already have, home videos, or archival footage, make sure you find these and save them to your device.

- If you're shooting in several places, you'll want to build a schedule and make sure to let people know where to go. Of course, if you have a cast, make sure they are available when you want to film!
- If you can, have a good portion of your film dialogue free, with scenes that can use music or non-sync sound in their stead, as sync sound will always take longer to shoot.
- You can even create a floorplan and storyboard your whole film from your device!

[Production Planner: CELTX Shots](#) helps you plan your shoot.



ADDITIONAL TOOLS:

Most smartphones have excellent filming capabilities, which makes filming super easy whether you're using an iPhone or an android phone. Still, a few add-ons can help you make your film a bit simpler:

- Additional [lenses](#) can help get some great close up or scene-setting shots, while a [stabilizer](#), a tripod or a simple selfie stick can help set up a shot without having to hold onto your phone - and minimizing the wobble that could happen by hand.
- If you have a lot of dialogue in your film, and don't want to have to match up voice overs with your footage think about grabbing a mini phone microphone
- You'll also want to consider costumes, backdrops or any other props that you'll need for your film! This can be super basic, or you can have some fun with it!



PRODUCTION (FILMING)

HERE'S WHERE THE MAGIC HAPPENS! Grab your smartphone, and get shooting!

If you want to mix up your shooting techniques, and learn about some film terms, check out [this list](#) from the New York Film Academy for some inspiration and know-how! Below are a few tips that help with the filming process!

- You probably want to organize your days so you can shoot several scenes in one day, ideally near one another if you're moving locations. Don't be afraid to shoot out of order or out of sequence since you can edit later!
- While lighting is important, don't be afraid to use natural lights. Sometimes the results of silhouettes, high contrast, backlighting, and dramatic shadows can create a powerful look.
- If you have time, try filming the same scenes from new angles. This way, you'll have more footage to work with when it gets to the editing phase.
- Think about some transition shots in between scenes to help with the flow of your film.

And, as much as you want to stick to the script, remember that sometimes you need to improvise!

SOME ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS:

- Look at your very first scene. What is your establishing shot?
- Think about your final scene that may have credits. Do you want this to be a blank screen or something you filmed?
- Think about recording a scene with no dialogue from far away, but layering with the sound from that scene from much closer. For example, layer a scene of a beach with the sound from a video taken right by the water. Does the script have any dialogue? Remember that dialogue should be filmed in medium or close-up shots.
- Is there any strong emotional content? Emotional scenes can be shot close-up. Are there any extreme facial expressions? These can be extreme close-ups.



POST-PRODUCTION (EDITING)

DECISION TIME!

Post-production is when you edit all your footage to create a rough cut of the film. Once you're done with that, you can add things like sound effects, music, visual effects, and color correction using editing software.

TIPS:

- When working in post-production, do not be afraid to cut. Think about what works best for the story that you're trying to tell. Like writing an essay or a short poem, sometimes these hard choices make pieces even more powerful.
- Don't worry if things moved around from your storyboard. The beauty of editing is that you have flexibility in the process!
- Choose music, colors and visuals that can help set the mood for your film. You might also integrate some b-roll footage or still photos for transitions between scenes. [Check out this resource guide from NYU](#) about how to find and attribute free, public domain, and creative commons licensed footage, photos, and audio.
- Unsure about which key moments are most powerful? Workshop a scene with some friends or family.
- Always, always backup your project and footage in different locations.

EDITING TOOLS

- You'll need some editing tools. [iMovie](#) works great, but there are some other tools out there that you might want to try!
- Get some editing tips [from a teen YouTuber](#)
- Try out [vlogit](#), a mobile video editor that lets you add music, text, and more.
- You can film, edit, and shoot in segments with [SPARK](#)
- Check out some [free editing software](#)



BRAVO!

You've completed your first film! We can't wait to see it.



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