

INDUSTRY TERMS



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A

ACTION: The command used by the director, which begins the filming of a scene.

ACTOR: The talent, or person who acts.

ADVERTISING AGENCY: This is a collective team of creative people who design the storyboards and concepts for clients who need print, radio or television advertising.

AFTRA: American Federation of Television and Radio Artists is the union, which protects actors in live and videotaped television and radio productions.

AEA: Actor's Equity Association is the union that covers actors employed in live theatre.

AGENT: The individual who solicits work for the actor by setting up auditions and negotiating contracts. They usually receive 10% of the actor's income from each job booked.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: Also known as A.D. this is the person on a set who helps set up shots, directs the extras and coordinates call sheets.

ATMOSPHERE: This term refers to the extras actors on a set.

AUDITION: The process, which an actor goes through to get a job or booking.

B

BACKGROUND: The extras actors or the scenery itself, which is placed behind the main scene being shot.

BACK TO ONE: When you are shooting take after take of the same scene, you continually go "back to one" or back to your starting position so the scene can be filmed again.

BILLING: The place your name appears in the credits, its size and how many other people are listed on the same line and space.

BIT PART: A small part that may have a few lines.

BODY SHOT: A photograph of the actor, which is like a headshot, but shows 3/4 of their body.

BOOKED: Confirmed as hired for a job.

BOOM: The microphone or piece of equipment, which supports the microphone, and hangs over the actor's head during a scene.

BREAKDOWN: The character description of what is needed for each role, such as type, age, range, hair color, height, etc.

BREAKDOWN SERVICE: This is a service started by Gary Marsh in 1971, which breaks down and condenses all of the available roles being cast in films, television, etc.

BUYOUT: When a company buys out your future rights and pays you a flat fee for the job performed. No residuals will be paid to you.

C

CALL BACK: When an actor is called to a second audition at the producer's or casting director's request.

CALL SHEET: The sheet, which lists all of the scenes scheduled to be shot that day, as well as arrival times for the actors and crew.

CALLING SERVICE: A company that helps book jobs for extras.

CASTING DIRECTOR: Also known as C.D., this is the person in charge of finding the talent for any given role in a film or television project.

CASTING INFORMATION SHEET: The sheet an actor fills out when arriving at an audition. The sheet requests statistical information such as: height, weight, hair color, agent representative, etc.

CLOSE-UP: Also known as C.U., this shot is focused very tightly on the actor's face and/or action.

COLD READING: Having to read the script or scene aloud with little, if any time to study it.

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- C** **COMMERCIAL AUDITION REPORT:** The sheet filled out by the actor at an audition, which notes arrival time, agent, social security number, etc.
- COMMERCIAL PRINT:** This is print (magazine, billboards, etc.) advertising done for commercial products like cereal, detergent, etc. All sizes, shapes and colors are used in commercial print.
- COMMISSION:** The fee paid to an agent or manager for booking a job—10% is the standard fee.
- COMPOSITE:** Also called a “zed card”, this is what a model sends to agencies and editors to book a job. It is a photograph card, which features one picture on the front and three to four smaller pictures on the other side. It can be in color or black and white.
- CONTACT SHEETS:** These are 8x10” proof sheets printed by the photographer showing all of the pictures taken in a photo session.
- COPY:** The dialogue written for a commercial advertisement.
- CO-STAR:** The billing which follows “Starring” in the opening and/or closing credits.
- COVER LETTER:** The letter written to an agent, manager or casting director requesting an audition, or simply letting them know a little bit about yourself as an actor.
- CUT:** the director on a set to mean you’re done shooting a particular scene uses this terminology. You will normally need to “go back to one” after “cut” is called, meaning you return to the original position you started in for that scene or shot.
- D** **DAILIES:** The footage seen at the end of each day of every scene shot during that particular day.
- DAY PLAYER:** An actor that is booked for one day on the shoot and is paid SAG scale.
- DEAL MEMO:** This is your first negotiation of the things you want in your contract for a project (salary, per diem, hotel, etc.).
- DIRECTOR:** The individual on set responsible for direction of all the actors and action of a film, television program or commercial.
- DUES:** Membership fees owed to the various craft unions every six months.
- E** **EDITOR:** The person who puts or cuts together individual scenes, making them one, cohesive film.
- EPISODE:** One single show of an existing continuing series.
- EXTRAS:** Background people or atmosphere on a set.
- F** **FEATURED:** This is a billing given to a less important role in film and television.
- FLAT FEE:** A fee that is determined by two parties, which waives any residual rights in exchange for one flat payment.
- G** **GLOSSY:** A photograph, which has a shiny appearance.
- H** **HEADSHOT:** The 8x10” photograph of an actor which is used to represent them. The actor’s calling card.
- HEADSHOT REPRODUCTIONS:** The duplicates of an actor’s headshot, normally done in numbers over 100.
- I** **INDUSTRIAL FILM:** This is usually a corporate training film/video produced as a teaching tool for employees.

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L LITHOGRAPHIC: It is not a photograph, but a copy done by computer dot matrix. This is the cheapest way to get reproductions of a headshot.
LOCATION: The place or site a shoot will take place. Any given film will have various shooting locations.
LONG SHOT: A shot, which shows a wider span of area in the film frame.
LOOPING: This is when actors have to re-record their voice after filming is finished to replace dialogue which was either unclear or is being replaced for television versions (replace swear words, etc.).

M MANAGER: An individual that manages your acting career and gives more one-on-one attention than an agent. This person has advice on how and what to do to advance your career and can introduce an actor to influential people.
MARK: The term used when rehearsing with a camera which is called out to “mark” the place on film. Mark is also used to indicate where your feet are exactly placed for a scene.
MATTE: A photograph or headshot, which has a non-glossy, grainy feel. It is the best quality picture, but is normally double or triple in price compared to the lithograph.
MOW: Movie of the Week.
MUST JOIN: When a non-union actor becomes eligible for a union, and must join the union before being allowed to work again.

O ON AVAIL: You are on hold for a booking, but don’t officially have the job yet.
ON ICE: The same as “on avail”.

P PANTOMIME: When actors are silent, yet appear to be talking (especially in the background of scenes).
PER DIEM: Money paid to the actor for daily expenses other than salary while filming a project. This usually includes lodging, transportation and food expenses.
PICK-UP SHOT: Small scenes which have to be re-shot because a particular angle was not filmed.
PILOT: The first episode of a television series.
P.O.V.: Point of view—usually of the actor.
PRINCIPAL PLAYER: An actor in a project that has lines and is paid at least SAG scale wages.
PRINT: The word yelled out by the director when they are satisfied with a certain takes and wants it to be printed and shown as dailies.
P.S.A.: A Public Service Announcement.

R RECURRING ROLE: A role that appears in a series every once in a while, but is not considered a series “regular”.
REEL: An actor’s videotape, which compiles five to six minutes of the best productions, they have been in.
REGULAR OR SERIES REGULAR: A role that appears in nearly every episode of the series.
RESUME: A printed sheet showing an actor’s body of work, vital statistics and schooling.
RESIDUALS: An income payment made to an actor every thirteen weeks or cycle for being in a commercial or show. This is in addition to the original payment made for the project, and is how some actors can make big money.
RETOUCHING: A photographic process, which takes small blemishes out of a photograph.

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- S** **SAG:** Screen Actor's Guild is a union that covers actors who are employed in motion pictures and television productions which are filmed, not videotaped.
- SAG-FRANCHISED:** This refers to an agent or agency that has a signed contract with SAG and agrees to abide by SAG rules when doing business.
- SCALE:** This is the minimum SAG wage paid daily to a principal actor.
- SIDES:** The two or three pages from a script containing the scene you will audition with.
- SLATE:** This is when an actor, states their name for the camera.
- STAND-INS:** The actors that stand in for the principal actors so measurements can be made from camera to mark spot. This gives the principal actors a chance to rest and prepare themselves for the shooting of a scene and not have to stand still while equipment is positioned. Stand-ins must normally be the approximate size and height of the respective actors they are standing in for.
- STORYBOARD:** The paperwork an advertising agency produces which shows a shot-by-shot format of what each frame in a commercial will look like.
- STUDENT FILM:** A film produced and directed by a student, normally at a college or university. Usually shot on 16 mm film.
- T** **TEST OPTION DEAL:** A document necessary before you audition for a network which lays out your salary, working hours etc. that you will want if you are cast in a network project.
- THOMAS GUIDE:** The book of street maps used in Los Angeles, which makes it very easy to find your way around town.
- TRADE PAPERS:** Also known as "trades," show business papers, which are published weekly, such as Daily Variety and The Hollywood Reporter, or weekly such as Back Stage West and Drama-Logue. Essential reading material for all actors.
- U** **UNDER FIVES:** Also known as U/5, this is an AFTRA job, which employs an actor for five lines or under, have spoken dialogue.
- V** **VOICE-OVER:** Also known as V.O., this is a recording of an actor's voice only, not on-camera. This is used in commercials, radio programs and animated programs.
- W** **WRAP:** the director to let everyone on the set knows that they are done shooting for the day uses this command.
- Z** **ZED CARDS:** What models use instead of a headshot (see composite).