

## Typical working day during the shoot

This is a training module from the ScreenSkills 'From Script to Screen' programme.

The text includes multiple choice questions for you to answer. Each question is identified with the words 'Multiple choice question' and finishes like this:

**Question end**

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That's so you can stop and think. Each question end is followed by the correct answer or answers, and feedback.

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## Section A: Introduction

So let's face it... Your first few weeks on a production are going to be intense!

Regardless of what stage you join or what role you're in, during Development, Pre-production, Production or Post and VFX, there will be a lot of new people to meet, names to learn, and tasks to complete.

It will be a whirlwind, but knowing what to expect up front will help you feel less overwhelmed and more organised.

I'm Sami, a Production Coordinator, and I'm going to talk you through what a typical working day looks like during filming. Although there really is no such thing as a "typical" day, they can follow similar patterns for different roles.

## Section B: What makes a successful day?

You might be wondering about your hours. Usually, it's not a regular day's schedule, and you may work day or night. Even before filming starts, there's lots to get done. Most departments often work long days during Pre-production, especially the nearer it gets to the first filming day.

A successful day depends on everyone and everything being ready when they're needed. Since editing, VFX, and production schedules are optimized to be as efficient as possible, delays can have a negative impact on the schedule right down the line.

Preparation is key. The days might be intense, but being on a production is always exciting!

Now let's look at what happens during prep and wrap.

As we've described in other modules, Pre-production is often referred to as the "prep" period. But in relation to the shooting day, "prep" also means the time each department needs to get ready for Unit Call. Unit Call is when most crew required for filming need to be on set.

During the shoot, how much daily prep each department does will vary.

Any work needed for departments, such as pre-lighting or pre-rigging of camera equipment will be reflected on the call sheet as a Pre-Call time.

The amount of prep time some departments such as Costume, Hair and Make-Up need, will depend on what's being filmed, how many cast are involved and the complexity of the requirements.

In Production, where I work, we make sure that all the paperwork for the day has been distributed, especially any script, schedule, or risk assessment changes. If extra admin or problems crop up for any department, it will come to us in the Production Office, and we'll try to fix it.

## Section C:

### Who does what to keep the day running smoothly?

Here are some examples of what other departments do in Prep during the shooting day.

**Locations** make sure the unit base/base camp and locations for that day are up and running on time. They check that parking areas are in place and marshals are standing by to direct Crew to their allocated spaces.

**ADs** (remember, those are Assistant Directors) are in before the first Cast arrive. They greet the Cast and make sure they're on time for their allocated costume, hair and make-up slots. They inform the 1st AD of any delays or issues arising that might impact filming

If any last minute script changes have been made that are being filmed that day, the **Writers** will make sure that the script revisions are completed in time to give to production to distribute.

**Costumes** will be laying out that day's wardrobe for each Actor in their dressing room and dressing them if needed. That means they'll already have ensured that all costumes for the day are cleaned, ironed and prepared. They also go over the crowd costumes and make sure all Cast and crowd have been fitted in time for their unit call.

All sets for the day will be dressed by the **Art Department** and **Props**. They check that any additional props for each scene are on set and ready to use. And if any vehicles have been scheduled for that day, they make sure they've arrived, and are dressed and ready for that scene.

**Post Production** ensures all drives or camera cards have been uploaded and returned to production so they're ready.

**The Script Supervisor** ensures that the latest version of the pages being shot that day are ready for continuity notes.

The **Technical Departments** set up camera, sound and lighting equipment, including monitors and any playback. They will also complete the rigging and lighting for the first set up.

If the **Visual Effects** Department is involved in the day's planned setups, they'll liaise with the technical departments to ensure every necessary element is in place.

All of the departments will then continue to work consistently throughout the filming day.

During the shooting day, **Post Production** will be feeding back notes and information between the creative decision makers, creating assemblies for the Editors, and organising paperwork from set.

In a TV Series **Post Production** may be organising ADR sessions for the actors, fitting around their filming schedules in order to re-record dialogue.

The **Visual Effects** department might also be on set, and keeping a tracking log of approvals, feedback and paperwork.

## Section D: It's a wrap

Wrap is the general term for when the shoot is finished for the day.

Once we've finished the day's filming, we have another kind of wrap, "camera wrap." This is when we finish rolling and we pack away the camera and other technical equipment and most importantly get all the footage sent to the lab. These are known as "rushes" or "dailies".

Throughout the day, the DIT (Digital Imaging Technician) will have been backing up the sound and camera files and during camera wrap, these rushes are transferred to the Post facility, either via the cloud or a hard drive. We talked about the rushes or dailies in the Post Production module, so see if you can answer this question.

**Multiple choice question.** What else should go with the rushes to edit? More than one of these answers is correct.

- A. Script supervisor's notes
- B. Copies of the camera sheets
- C. Sound Mixer's notes
- D. DIT technical notes

## Question end

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All of those are correct. Everything needs to go to the lab. The Camera, DIT, Sound and Script departments arrange this so that the Post team have the right files, and notes about which of the cuts and sound clips are best to use.

Of course, in other departments there are various things happening on wrap.

Production distributes call sheets and schedules to everyone except the cast. The cast get theirs from the Assistant Directors. Production arranges all the next day's paperwork and arrange collection for hired kit. The Assistant Directors log leave time and collect radios at the end of the day.

## Section E:

### Having the right documents will help you keep up

Working on set is very fast paced and things can change quickly, so you need to make sure you have all the right documents on hand.

In particular, make sure you have the latest version of the call sheet, shooting schedule, risk assessments, and scripts.

During filming the Script Editor will often be working on scripts at their computer. They use software like Final Draft to create revisions. These can involve all sorts of things from dialogue tweaks, to changes to stage directions or even which characters are in a scene. These revisions will have been requested and are then signed off by the Creator, Producer and Director before being issued. And it's the Script Editor's job to ensure that suggested revisions don't impact continuity, and to come up with alternative suggestions if required.

When we distribute revisions, each changed script is sent with a different colour so cast and crew can easily identify that they're using the most recent version.

If you don't have the right version, you might miss a key requirement for that day, such as a costume change. Even the smallest change could affect your department.

Before we finish, let's take a quick look at the callsheet. You must know how to read it so you can be at the right place at the right time.

Remember, like everything else, unit call times can change. Some days you may be starting earlier, or if you're doing a night shoot for example, then your call time will be later.

We'll be covering callsheets in a later module, but here's a quick guide to what to look for.

First, find the Unit call time. Make sure to have breakfast.

Find the addresses for the Unit Base/Base Camp and the filming location. These two are usually at different addresses. Most crew will start their day at Base camp but sometimes departments start at the location, so make sure you know where you're supposed to be.

Along with the call sheet, you'll get a movement order, produced by the Location department. It will have detailed information of how to get to both Base camp and the Location. All this information will help you plan your day.

So, every production may be run a little differently, but now you know the basic patterns that most follow. That's a Wrap for this module.

And that's the end of this module. This was created by ScreenSkills.