



Acting Video Audition Instructions and Tips

Tips for filming your audition video:

Camera:

You may use a cellphone, a DSLR camera, or a camcorder. Please make sure your device is stable. You can use a tripod or place your device on a stack of books or other objects to keep it from shaking. If you use a phone, we recommend that you use the front facing, not rear-facing camera for the highest resolution.

Frame:

For your slate, we recommend filming in a mid-shot. There should be a little bit of space above your head and the camera comes just below your shoulder line.

For the monologue and scene, we recommend a wider shot. Make sure you're not so far away that we can't clearly see your face, but also not close enough to cut off the top of your head.

Focus:

For the slate, you can address the camera directly.

For the monologue and the scene, place your focus just to the right or left of the camera.

Lighting:

The most important thing is that we can see you clearly and that you avoid creating harsh shadows on your face. You can light your video with natural light, or you can use a lamp with a cool tone lightbulb. You can use a white sheet, paper towels, or another source to diffuse the light. Do not place any of the diffusion directly on the light source. You can hang the diffuser in front of the light for a warming affect.

Background:

A solid backdrop or wall is best. Simplicity is key, so we recommend trying to remove anything from your background that may be distracting. This could include plants, furniture, or paintings. Filming outside is not ideal due to the likelihood of audio disruptions, but if you do film outside, choose a shaded spot or shoot on an overcast day when the light is even.

Attire:

There is no specific attire required for the audition. We suggest picking something that makes you feel like you. Something that you are comfortable in and that does not restrict your movement or mindset.

Audition Requirements

Your audition will consist of three separate videos. A slate, a scene, and a monologue.

The slate:

- The slate gives us an opportunity to “meet” you.
- Put yourself in a location that is fun or meaningful to you. Remain mindful of your lighting when making this choice.
- The slate should begin with your name and hometown, and then answer the prompt provided on your application checklist.
- The slate should be about one minute long.
- The more natural and relaxed you are, the better. The slate does not have to be polished or rehearsed, it should be unscripted. Just be yourself and try to have fun!

The scene:

- We have provided [three scene options](#) for you to choose from. Select one of the three scenes. You will perform part A and your reader will perform part B.
- Your reader should be off screen, sitting or standing just to the right or the left of the camera.
- Please use a live reader rather than a recording. Your reader can be a friend, family member, or colleague.
- Ask your reader to keep their volume low as they will be closer to the camera than you. The reader should never shout or raise their voice. This scene is about YOU.
- Do not slate before you begin.
- The scene should be one, continuous take.
- Begin and end the scene with a non-verbal moment of some kind between you and your reader.
- Create a backstory for yourself. There is no “right” answer as these scenes are very open. Create a story that gets you excited about the scene and makes it specific.
- Decide what your relationship and history is to the other person. This will make the interaction more realistic rather than transactional.

The monologue:

- Select a monologue from a stage play, not a movie script. We ask that you select a contemporary piece (no more than 15 years old) that is close to where you are right now in your life. This monologue should give us a sense of who you are as a person, so you should choose something you can relate to.
- The monologue should be about one minute long.
- Do not slate your name or the title of the piece before you begin.
- The monologue should be one, continuous take.
- When you are finished, simply cut the take. You do not need to say “scene” or “thank you”.

Monologue Selection Tips:

Look for:

- A clear relationship with your scene partner. A relationship with a parent, best friend, sibling, or romantic interest tend to work best.
- Action in the present tense rather than remembering or telling the story of an event from the past.
- A character that is similar to you in age and type.

Avoid:

- Monologues that need trigger warnings or cast you as an abuser, racist, murderer or sociopath. This type of material does not function well in an audition setting.
- “Remember when” or story monologues. These are designed to make the audience imagine a story, which makes it harder to see you in the piece.
- Direct address monologues – where the character is talking to a general group or to the audience. You want to address one, singular person in your monologue.
- Monologues that feel like standup. Your monologue should feel like a real person in a real situation, not a comedian telling jokes.
- Heightened or poetic language.
- Monologues from *Rabbit Hole*, because they are over-used!

Where can I find a good monologue?

- In a play. You should read the full play to understand the context of the circumstances and your character. You may need to do a lot of reading to find the right piece for you.
- Humana Festival anthologies are published every year. They have many plays by different authors.
- NPX (National New Play Network’s New Play Exchange) – this is an online subscription that costs an annual fee. If you subscribe, you will have access to a huge digital library of new plays.

If you have any questions regarding the audition requirements, please contact our Admissions Coordinator at tadadmissions@utexas.edu.

Break a leg!