

PRE- PRODUCTION

2. SCOUT FOR LOCATIONS

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- ▶ **DEVELOPMENT** (3 guides)
- ▼ **PRE-PRODUCTION** (4 guides)
 - 1. ASSIGN PRODUCTION ROLES
 - 2. **SCOUT FOR LOCATIONS**
 - 3. CREATE A STORYBOARD AND A SHOT LIST
 - 4. SOURCE COSTUMES, MAKE-UP & PROPS
- ▶ **PRODUCTION** (5 guides)
- ▶ **POST-PRODUCTION** (2 guides)
- ▶ **EXHIBITION AND DISTRIBUTION** (2 guides)

Scout for location



Once you've developed your film idea, you have to find the locations where you'll make your film. Locations should be included on your storyboard, so it's a good idea to find them at the beginning of the pre-production process. The best way to establish whether a location is suitable is to visit it and do a recce. You should consider the following when scouting for locations:

- Is the location accessible when you want to shoot your film?
- Do you need permission to film there? If so, how do you get it?
- Are there any hire costs required?
- Is there plenty of space?
- Check the sound. How noisy is the area? Is it close to a busy road, a train station or a crowded area? If so, these noises will be picked up on the sound recording, so try to find a location without too much distracting background noise. Make sure you will not be filming under a flight path.
- Is the location a safe place to film? Check for hazards that could cause accidents or injury. (Read our guide [Production: Stay Safe and Observe Set Etiquette](#) for more information.)

Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of drawings, like a comic, that shows how your film will look on screen. It includes information on the camera angles and movements you'll use, the characters that will appear in each scene/shot, costumes and props needed and sound.

- Is there plenty of light coming from above and from behind where you'll be setting up your camera?

Top Tip

It's always best to film in well-lit places and then experiment with ways of blocking some light if you want to create a moody/gothic atmosphere. Sometimes filming in dark places can result in flat, grainy shots.

- Are you going to disturb local residents?
- Do you need to inform your local police force about your film project? If your film includes something like a sword fight, this could cause alarm to members of the general public, so be mindful of this when shooting on location.

Making notes of your potential shooting locations will help when planning your production schedule and also in sharing this with the rest of the crew. Write down your observations of the above, take photographs or shoot some video footage of the location with a running audio commentary.

Your easiest option could be to film in the homes and gardens of your friends and family – with permission of course.

Activity: Setting the scene

Explore your home, garden and furniture. Take photographs of parts of rooms or corners in your garden you could transform into film sets. What pieces of furniture could you use to achieve this? Can you find any pieces of material that you can hang up or drape over furniture to create a particular effect?