

SAMPLE PROCESS FOR BREAKING DOWN YOUR SCRIPT

I make three lists: Male, Female, and Neutral

Starting from page one, I write down the names, and annotate if they are a major, minor character. I double check.

I then start a list of Main Character-parts I would like to have just one actor play (If possible). This is usually based on line load. I add them to the format. I either list in order of appearance or role size.

I add the smaller roles. If a name is unfamiliar to me-I see who it is and decide if they need to be there.

Once I have my list I add age/gender/description to roles I have visualized the character with. This includes accents and speech impediments.

Having identified main characters I look at minor characters where actors can play numerous parts. (Note: The less actors needed the better chance of getting enough people for the scheduled date).

I start lumping characters together. As I add a smaller role I type the name in Find (I use Microsoft Word) and then see if the two characters interact on a speaking basis. On Characters with little lines I decide on whether to keep them, delete or give their line away. I jot down the page numbers if it's only one or a few pages. I look at accents and such.

For easier review, I color code characters (See Sample 2). If I have a Minor Character, say Bob, I will change the font for his row to another color. As I look to see what roles do not interfere with Bob, I highlight that Character's font with the same color. If I look later I can identify Character groups easier/quicker. I don't do it but you could switch so all of one color are together in the format/form.

If I have loaded actors up with a bunch of characters/lines and I have a few minor lines left, I will give them to the main roles when parts don't interfere.

I print my list and then randomly type in a Character's name in Find just to ensure an actor does not have two roles in a scene. I also look for those hidden Characters of non-speaking parts I accidently added to the list.

Surprisingly, this does not take a great deal of time and it allows the writer another avenue of looking over their script.

EXAMPLE 1

She Can Tell by the Smell Comedy/Drama 92 Pages

Robert M. Christine afakeemail@yahoo.com

Kamille can tell if someone is right for someone just by their smell. As the local Librarian she has the opportunity to play matchmaker, that is, until she gets a whiff of Sam. Then she wonders if her talents will lead her to a murderer.

Language, Intense Situation, Sexual Innuendos

PG Rated

She Can Tell by the Smell

Character Breakdown

FEMALE

M = MAJOR CHARACTER MI = MINOR CHARACTER 1 = Few Pages

1/2 = Second half of the script

NAME	GENDER AGE	PAGES	NOTES (Parentheses are who I pictured or someone from SFP)
Kamille - M	F 70ISH		Strong willed and colorful
KANDY - M	F LATE 30'S		Bright and beautiful but low self-esteem
MONICA - M	F Lower 50's		Self-Centered with a humorous side
JONI - MI	F 25sih		Bright, cheerful and full of curiosity (Meryl Streep)

MALE

M = MAJOR CHARACTER MI = MINOR CHARACTER 1 = PAGE OR LESS

1/2 = Second half of the script

NAME	GENDER AGE	PAGES	NOTES
TROY - MI	M 50ISH		
TODD - M	M MID 50'S		Intense personality with a quick temper (James Dean)
MONTE - M	M MID 40'S		Sometimes spiritual, sometimes high strung
DRIVER - 1	M	13 - 14	
SAM - MI	M 25ish		ALOOF and SHY

NEUTRAL

M = MAJOR CHARACTER MI = MINOR CHARACTER 1 = A FEW PAGES

NAME	GENDER AGE	PAGES	NOTES
------	---------------	-------	-------

ACTOR 1: TROY, DRIVER

ACTOR 2: TODD

ACTOR 3: MONTE

ACTOR 4: SAM

ACTRESS 1: KAMILLE

ACTRESS 2: KANDY

ACTRESS 3: MONICA

ACTRESS 4: JONI

FEMALE CHARACTERS: 4 **ACTRESSES: 4**

MALE CHARACTERS: 5 **ACTORS: 4**

TOTAL READERS NEEDED: 8

EXAMPLE 2

Zombies Trip at Night Drama/Horror 118 Pages

Robert M. Christine fakeemail@yahoo.com

For two years, the world fought to survive a Zombie Apocalypse but were outnumbered. One fateful night it's discovered that zombies don't see too well at night and will easily trip over items. Task Forces are sent out to set up obstacles to trip the zombies up. But another Task Force sets out to remove the obstacles and soon it's a battle of wits between two political parties.

Violence, Rape Situation, Language, Intense Situation

R Rated

Zombies Trip at Night

Character Breakdown

MALE

M = MAJOR CHARACTER MI = MINOR CHARACTER 1 = A FEW PAGES

1/2 = Second half of the script

NAME	GENDER AGE	PAGES	NOTES
PAUL - M	M 55-65	NA	Quick witted
SAUNDERS - 1	M 30ISH	2 - 3	
GRAHAMN - M	M 55 - 60		Easy going with strong core
MAJOR - M	M 50 - 60		Your typical Marine/Boy Scout Leader
WALKER - MI	M		

	45 - 60		
KENT - MI	M 20ISH		
TOMMY - M	M 28 - 35		NATIVE AMERICAN Low key-observant and aware
ELDRIDGE - 1	M 70+	14 - 15	Clueless but makes a great Latte
MAN - 1	M 70+	16 - 17	
PATRICK - M	M 25 - 30		Drawn into himself until he meets Cliff
CHRIS - 1	M 20ISH	17 - 20	
MARSHALL - M	M 40ISH		AFRICAN AMERICAN Easy going - Wary
MARTIN - MI	M 30ISH		HISPANIC Follower
KURT - MI	M 30ISH		Follower
JERRY - MI	M 60+		
CHUCK - M	M 14 - 16		A kid in the tough world
KLIFF - M	M 14 - 16		Filipino A kid in the tough world
MATT - M	M 30 - 35		Idealistic: Doing what he sees as the right thing
CLIFF - MI	M 25 - 30		A DUMBASS
JOHN - 1	M	37	

TOM - M	M 35 - 45		
JOHNNY - MI (1/2)	M 35 - 45		Arrogant/Obnoxious
DEREK - 1 (1/2)	M 30ISH	68	
JUSTIN - M (1/2)	M 45 - 55		Intelligent but burnt out
AGITATOR 1 - 1 (1/2)	M 25 - 45		
JED - M (1/2)	M 70+		Doesn't realize the threat but is a great dancer
ZACK - 1 (1/2)	M 30ISH		

FEMALE

M = MAJOR CHARACTER MI = MINOR CHARACTER 1 = A FEW PAGES

1/2 = Second half of the script

NAME	GENDER AGE	PAGES	NOTES
WANDA - M	F 30ISH		NATIVE AMERICAN Bright and well-spoken but easily moved to tears
CARLA - M	F 30ISH		Strong willed, sets back and observes: ready to go into action
KELLY - MI	F 30ISH		
GWEN - M	F 40ISH		Resilient/Strong
KAREN - MI	F 50ISH		Hippyish
GIRL	F	15	NATIVE AMERICAN

	YOUNG		
MAUREEN - 1	F (20ISH)	17 - 19	
CANDY - MI	F 8ISH		
CAMERON - M	F 35 - 45		
MARSHA - M	F 14 - 16		A kid in the tough world But it's always: Marsha, Marsha, Marsha!
AGITATOR 2 - 1 (1/2)	F ANY AGE		
KIM - 1	F 40ish	37	
DONNA - MI	F 40ISH		Breaks out into song during zombie attacks
SEANNA - 1	F 25+	64	
DAUGHTER	F 8ISH	114 - 115	

NEUTRAL

M = MAJOR CHARACTER MI = MINOR CHARACTER 1 = PAGE OR LESS

NAME	GENDER AGE	PAGES	NOTES
PROSECUTOR MI	NA		
TOWNIE - 1	NA	101	

ACTOR 1: PAUL, JOHNNY, DEREK

ACTOR 2: SAUNDERS, MAJOR, ELDRIDGE, MAN, JOHN, TOM

ACTOR 3: GRAHMN, WALKER, AGITATOR 1

ACTOR 4: MARCHAL, KENT, PATRICK, CHRIS, JERRY, CHUCK, MATT, CLIFF,
JED

ACTOR 5: TOMMY, MARTIN, KURT, KLIFF, JUSTIN, ZACK

ACTRESS 1: WANDA, KELLY,

ACTRESS 2: CARLA, KAREN, KIM, PROSECUTOR

ACTRESS 3: GIRL, TAMMY, CANDY, MARSHA, TOWNIE, DAUGHTER

ACTRESS 4: CAMERON, DONNA, SEANNA

ACTRESS 5: GWEN, AGITATOR 2

MALE CHARACTERS: 27 **ACTORS: 5**

FEMALE CHARACTERS: 15 **ACTRESSES: 5**

TOTAL READERS NEEDED: 10