

In Chronological order

In italics is the dictionary definition of each word, if applicable. After that is all the fun stuff.

Intro:

Actor - *A person whose profession is acting on the stage, in movies, or on television.* Nowadays, an actor can also be a person whose profession is acting in social media posts, on YouTube, in training videos, or anywhere where we can see your face and/or hear your voice. An actor is an artist and their art is being other people, whether that be creating an entirely new original character, or being an already existing human being.

Section 1:

Survival job - *A job not related to your profession.* This is a job that facilitates your acting. It is not considered a survival job if you cannot also do your acting while you hold that job.

Audition(s) - *An interview for a particular role or job as a singer, actor, dancer, or musician, consisting of a practical demonstration of the candidates suitability and skill.* An audition is a sample of your work that you give to casting directors so that they can better get to know your work, or your product. Despite popular opinion, an audition is not an opportunity to get *that* particular role in *that* particular film. Instead, it's an opportunity to get any role in any film *that* particular casting director is casting.

Acting work - Any work you get in relation to your acting. This can be a feature film, short film, student film, commercial, ad, television series, webseries, industrial, and many more types of work. It does not have to be paid to be considered acting work.

Acting classes - Classes that teach you how to act. These classes also: raise your confidence, give you acting experience, connect you with other industry professionals, inspire you to do more work, and teach you how to audition and selftape.

Headshots - *A photograph of a person's head.* A headshot for an actor is much more than the dictionary definition of it. A headshot doesn't only represent what you look like, but also what you can play. It's a marketing tool that, if used right, can get you a lot of auditions.

LACasting.com - A casting website that specializes in commercial projects and Fox projects.

Actorsaccess.com - The casting website that most casting directors use for any type of acting project.

Manager(s) - *Managers are in charge of overseeing your career in the long term. They have fewer clients, and have developed relationships with casting directors, producers, show runners, and directors.* They have the ability to pitch you to casting directors for specific roles that they think you are perfect for. (*Pitch* meaning to email or call up a casting director and tell them *why* you're perfect for that role.) From

Backstage.com: "*Managers can give that extra push when an agent can't get you in the room and can really make sure you are being submitted for the right projects. They are more likely to sit down with you and pick out your headshot from a gallery of 300, tell you what to wear to your audition, get feedback for you, and talk you off the ledge when you are questioning your career (I know some agencies that take the time to do this, too).*" Full article: <https://www.backstage.com/magazine/article/agents-vs-managers-one-right-10047/>

Agent(s) - *Agents get the breakdowns for the big projects and submit their clients. They have more clients than managers, but they also have great relationships with casting directors and can push to get you in the room. Nonrepresented actors don't have access to these breakdowns. Here's a great article from Backstage.com:* <https://www.backstage.com/magazine/article/agents-vs-managers-one-right-10047/>

Cast - *(verb) Assign a part in a play, film, or other production to (an actor).* When a casting director casts you in a role, that means you booked the job. No matter the size of the production, this is reason to celebrate! Time to get to work and start learning your part before your shoot day.

Short - *A short film is any motion picture that is short enough in running time not to be considered a feature film.* Shorts can range in length anywhere from a couple minutes to 30 minutes. They are most likely the first projects you'll get cast in and it's important not to underestimate them; despite their size, shorts often go to major film festivals and win awards. You can get a lot of free publicity from a good short film.

Professional relationships - *Appropriate relationships with people you want to work with or are working with currently who are in the industry. These are not necessarily friendships and they're definitely not romantic relationships. You would treat these individuals like business colleagues. Definitely be friendly to them and market to them, but don't expect a large time commitment from them. They are very busy people.*

Section 2:

Casting directors - *The person responsible for assigning roles in a film, play, or other production.* These are some of the types people you want to build professional relationships with. Their job is to find the perfect person to fill a role in a project. Sometimes that person is you, and sometimes that person is not. It's important to understand that casting directors are rooting for you. They want you to do well. They are not scary people, and they're excited to see what you bring to the table. When you bring your all to an audition and ace it, you've made their job easier. It's important to market to casting directors so that they see your face often. When your face is familiar to them, they're more likely to bring you in for an audition or send you an invitation to self tape.

Commercial headshot - *Headshots with commercial intent.* These photos of you are typically more character-y, brighter, and used to submit you to commercials. They are often accompanied by a large smile.

Theatrical headshot - *Theatrical headshots are geared toward being cast in plays, TV shows, and films.* These photos of you are typically darker, maybe a little emotional, and possibly dramatic. They don't have to be, but some of them are. These types of headshots are used to submit you to projects that are more serious in nature.

Casting - (verb) The process in which casting directors find the actor to play the role in a project. When used in the past tense, you would say the casting director *cast* that project. NOT *casted* that project.

Reel - *Also known as a demo reel, a showreel, or a sizzle reel.* A 1- to 2- minute long edited video collection of an actor's best performances. You and your agents and managers will use this material to submit you to projects. Casting directors decide if they want to call you in for an audition or selftape after viewing the submitted reel. That's why it's important to keep updating your reel with better and better footage. As you get more footage, it is important to cut them up into appropriate length reels under one category. I.e., a one minute comedy reel featuring all of your best comedic scenes, a two minute musical theater reel featuring all of your best musical theater clips, etc. Then when you get a project that you want to submit to, if you know what type of project it is, dramatic or comedic, you can easily send them the appropriate reel.

Book - (verb) *To be cast or offered a role in a project.* When you say you booked it, it means you got the job!

Footage - Any video you get back of your work in a project. Not all filmmakers will give you your footage without you asking, so it's important to follow up and ask for your footage.

Background - Also known as a backdrop. This is the space behind you during a selftape. It can be paper, fabric, or any other material. In regards to selftape backgrounds, it should be a plain color.

Lighting - *Equipment in a home, workplace, studio, theater, or street for producing light.* In regards to selftapes, it is important that your face is well lit. This means that we can clearly see your face. The light should be shining on your face and you should not be backlit.

Scene - *A sequence of continuous action in a play, movie, opera, or book.* For actors, a scene is a digital PDF or physical piece of paper describing the contents of a fictional or non-fictional circumstance. This can be two people talking to each other, or an action that is happening without dialogue. The scene will tell you who has what dialogue and who does what action. Most of the time, it will tell you the location as well as other descriptive details about the scene.

Off-screen - Not physically in the video with you. You can only hear this person's voice.

Tripod - *A three-legged stand for supporting a camera or other apparatus.* A tripod can be something you buy online, in a store, or fashion out of books and tables. Working actors use them all the time for selftapes and often have a spare tripod in their car whenever they leave the house just in case they get a selftape.

Horizontal - *Parallel to the plane of the horizon.* NOT vertical (like most TikTok's). Horizontal looks like a movie or a TV show.

Frame - *One of many still images which compose the complete moving picture.* When actors say frame, we mean what you can see in the video at a specific moment. You'll often hear me ask on set, "What's the frame?" And the answer will tell me how much of my body is being seen on camera.
(videocide.com/glossary/film-frame/)

Comedic - *Relating to or characteristic of comedy; comic.* Light-hearted, funny, possibly full of jokes. Whimsical or silly situations. Usually fun to watch.

Dramatic - *Relating to drama or the performance or study of drama.* Serious situations, usually accompanied by serious emotions.

Shoot - (*noun*) The day(s) a production captures the video footage of the actors to edit into the project. When I say, "I'm on a shoot," I mean I'll be on set that day.

Character - *A person in a novel, play, or movie; a part played by an actor.* Your character is the person whose lines you are reading in the scene. They have personal traits that sometimes aren't noted in the scene that you have to figure out for yourself. They have personal traits that sometimes aren't noted in the scene that you have to figure out for yourself. They can be similar to other existing or fictional people or not at all, but regardless, they are individual and unique in their own way.

Memorized - *Commit to memory; learn by heart.* Knowing your lines. Knowing where the scene goes emotionally.

Paraphrase - *Express the meaning of using different words, especially to achieve greater clarity.* Saying your lines in a different way than they are written. Depending on who you ask, this is either a great thing or a horrible thing. I personally paraphrase most everything, as it sounds more natural in my voice and in character. Sometimes paraphrasing is the only way to go if the character that you've created is much different than the character that is written. (Which is totally acceptable and usually encouraged.)

Selftaping - *A form of auditioning that you record yourself and then send in to the casting director.* This is a very common form of auditioning nowadays.

Range - *A set of different things of the same general type.* In acting, this means different characters, possibly different emotions, or different genres. It shows casting directors that you are capable of portraying different types of characters. An example of range is playing a sweet school girl on one day, and then a psychotic lawyer on the next. (Dug from my own experience.)

Section 3:

Actors Access - *An online membership site that allows actors to submit directly to casting breakdowns. Breakdown Services which owns and operates Actors Access releases over 43,000 projects per year and has a database of over 1.1 million actors. (Stagemilk.com)* The most common and standard website that actors use to get acting work.

Commercials - *A television or radio advertisement.* Commercials typically pay more than film and are quick shoots. Non Union commercials usually pay you for the day (this is called a buyout) and SAG commercials usually pay for the day AND give you residuals (repeat checks in the mail) every single time the commercial airs.

Money - A form of vibration, and a tool. Nothing more, nothing less.

LA Casting - The other main website the casting directors used to cast their projects. LA Casting typically casts more commercial projects, but occasionally you'll find a film or a short film on the website.

Investment - *The action or process of investing money for profit or material result.* In acting, any investment in your career could be made with money or time. This could be spending your *time* in class, *money* on headshots, etc. Each investment in your career makes you a more valuable actor to have in productions, and will get you booked more and more.

Career - *An occupation undertaken for a significant period of a person's life and with opportunities for progress.* Acting is not a one-and-done pastime. It is a full-fledged career that takes time, energy, and commitment.

Materials - In acting, your materials are anything you use to get work. Anything the casting director sees that is an example of your work, i.e. videos, headshots, and resumes.

Clips - Short scenes under a minute long that can stand alone or be paired with other clips to create a specific set of characters that are used to present your work to a casting director for a particular breakdown.

Genre - *A category of artistic composition, as in music or literature, characterized by similarities in form, style, or subject matter.* In the film industry, genre would be something like romantic comedy, sci-fi thriller, drama, etc. When auditioning for projects, it's important to note what genre the project is. Acting for a thriller is a lot different than acting for a romantic comedy. To learn the differences in each genre, I would recommend watching each genre, taking notes on what stands out as different to you, and trying to copy the emotions you see in each. This way, when you get an audition for a thriller, you've practiced what emotions are common in a thriller.

Slateshot - A very short video introducing yourself, only used on Actors Access. Slateshots give you an algorithm boost.

Resume - *A brief account of a person's education, qualifications, and previous experience, typically sent with a job application.* An acting resume is much different than the resume you use to get an office job. But there are certain similarities; in the same way that you would put your education and qualifications, you would put what acting classes you've been a part of and what training you've received as an actor. You'd mainly include your past credits, showing you've acted before.

Credit(s) - *An acknowledgment of a contributor services to a movie or a television program, typically one of a list that is scrolled down the screen at the beginning or end of a movie or program.* In plain terms, a credit is an acknowledgement that you worked on a certain project. Adding to your credits is important, because it shows that you are consistently working and growing your craft. Some credits are worth more than others, like if you were in a Marvel or big blockbuster movie, but in the beginning, it's important to grow your credits even if they are unpaid credits.

Special skills - Any skills that you may have that you can perform on camera comfortably. For example: dancing, gymnastics, stage fighting, swimming, and many more.

Algorithm - *A process or set of rules to be followed in calculations or other problem solving operations, especially by a computer.* Actors Access follows an algorithm. If you know how to use the algorithm, you can get more self tapes than if you didn't know how to use the algorithm. I teach a whole other course on the Actors Access algorithm, it's that detailed.

Selftapes - (*noun*) *The video that you send in to the casting director as an audition.* Both a noun and a verb.

Submit - *Present (a proposal, application, or other document) to a person or body for consideration or judgment.* To submit for an actor is presenting our materials to a casting director in hopes of getting an invitation to self tape for a particular project. There is no acting without submitting. Even when you have an agent or a manager, they are submitting on your behalf.

Actors Access Plus - The paid membership for Actors Access that gets you unlimited self submissions. Currently, actor's access plus costs \$68 a year or \$9.99 a month.

LA Casting Premium Unlimited Membership - The paid membership for LA casting that gets you unlimited submissions, and unlimited photo and video uploads. Currently, it costs \$259.90 a year or \$25.99 a month.

Breakdown(s) - *A brief description of a forthcoming production, along with the characters and roles featured in that production. (actingmagazine.com)* A breakdown for a project is either created by the casting director, or the writer. Usually, if the casting director writes the breakdown it's shorter. It gives the actor information to submit according to the descriptions listed in the breakdown for each character.

Age range - What age you can play on screen. Sometimes it's your actual age, but usually you either look younger or older than your actual age. It is a range of ages that you can play, regardless of your actual age. For example, I am not seventeen, but my age range is 17 to 25.

Ethnicity - What ethnicity or ethnicities you can play on screen. If you've been asked what your ethnicity is multiple times in your life, you're probably ethnically ambiguous and can play multiple ethnicities on screen.

Union status - Your union status is if you are in the union or not. For simplicity reasons, you are usually either SAG or non-union. This just means that you get paid differently.

SAG - The Screen Actors Guild. It is a union for actors that was created to protect actors and their money. If you are non-union and do enough SAG work, eventually you will be asked to join SAG.

Non union - Any actor that hasn't joined SAG. You can do projects that SAG actors aren't contractually allowed to do, which is why most actors wait as long as they can before joining SAG.

Comedic reel - A video of your more comedic acting.

Dramatic reel - A video of your more dramatic acting.

Unpaid - A project in which you do not receive monetary compensation. You may receive other compensation, like food, gas money, a copy of the project, and/or credit.

Short film - (*See "Short"*) *A short film is any motion picture that is short enough in running time not to be considered a feature film.* Shorts can range in length anywhere from a couple minutes to 30 minutes. They are most likely the first projects you'll get cast in and it's important not to underestimate them; despite their size, shorts often go to major film festivals and win awards. You can get a lot of free publicity from a good short film.

Student film - A film that students, usually in film school, create as a learning experience or as an assignment. Usually, they are unpaid, unless they are deferred payment. Deferred means that you will not be paid unless the film is bought. Student films are a great way to get really good footage for your reels.

Copy - (noun) In regards to acting, when you get a copy of a project you were in, it means you get the whole film or the section of the film that you were in via downloadable link. This makes it so that you can use your footage from the film in your reel.

Paying - (adjective) In regards to projects, a paying project will pay you monetarily for your work, like a regular job does. Usually, your money comes to you NET30 which means in 30 days or less - very rarely are you paid upfront. Make sure you find out how you will be paid before you accept the role so that you don't get taken advantage of.

Section 4:

Acting teacher – A professional who teaches people how to act for television, film, or theater. Keep in mind however that there are multiple different ways to act, so finding a style that works best for you personally is paramount. This may result in taking different acting classes over time to find the way that works for you. Be patient and you'll find a way that makes your heart sing. Acting teachers have typically worked in the industry before – I wouldn't recommend taking an acting class from someone who hasn't worked in acting before. For example, my acting teacher who I refer people to all the time has been on countless TV shows and movies. Her IMDb page is huge.

Reader – Someone who reads the other character's lines during a selftape. This is a word we use often in acting, because we're constantly getting more selftapes and then needing a reader for said selftapes. You only need one reader, even if there are more than 2 characters in the scene you're reading. Your reader will read every character that isn't yours.

Lines – The pieces of dialogue written in a script that are meant to be said out loud. If some words are in parenthesis, those aren't typically said; they're notes written in for the actor. For example, if your line looks like this: *ACTOR: (friendly:) How are you doing today?* Your line is "How are you doing today?" and you would say it in a friendly manner.

Direct – (*verb*) *Control the operations of; manage or govern.* To direct your reader is to let them know what you want for your selftape in regards to their reading for you. You can let them know if you want a pause before a line, to go slower or faster, or to have a certain emotion on a particular line to set you up for your line. Usually you don't have to direct too much because casting is mainly focused on you, but if you find there's something that could be better, bring it up with your reader.

Opposite you – The lines that aren't your character's lines are opposite you in a scene.

Eyeline – Where you're looking during filming. This is in regards to selftapes *and* professional filming. A lot of the time on set, they'll manipulate your eyeline so that it looks good in the camera frame; sometimes you won't be looking at your scene partner at all, just because it looks better.

Profile – The side of your face when you are looking 90 degrees away from the camera. This shouldn't be used in a selftape but is totally acceptable in professional film and television.

Tape – (*noun*) Popular term for a selftape.

Edited – Finished to make look professional. This could mean putting the original videos in editing software and trimming them to the right length, cropping some of the frame, and/or zooming in to make them look the best they can before sending them to casting.

Sides – Pieces of a whole script that actors get from casting directors to show what they would do as the character they're reading for. These are the pages you read during your selftape.

Directions – In regards to casting directors, their directions can include how to frame, label, or edit your selftape. Casting directors have a certain way of working just like every professional, so when we follow their directions with respect to how they work, they notice, appreciate it, and are more likely to give us callbacks.

EcoCast – The name Actors Access gives to an invitation from a casting director to selftape.

Media Request – Similar to an EcoCast, this is the name Casting Networks/LA Casting gives to an invitation from a casting director to selftape.

Section 6:

Updating – (*verb*) Adding new work to your resume as you get more bookings. Also: adding new training and skills as you take more classes and learn more extracurricular talents.

Director – (*noun*) *A person who supervises the actors, camera crew, and other staff for a movie, play, television program, or similar production.* A director knows the full journey of the film or TV show that they're working on, so when you join a production and get notes from the director, they are shaping your performance to the full journey of the piece. Sometimes as actors we can get caught up in the minutiae of a character, but the director can see the whole and can guide us to better serve the story.

Producer – (*noun*) *A person responsible for the financial and managerial aspects of making of a movie or broadcast or for staging a play, opera, etc.* These are either the people with the money or the people with the passion. Sometimes they're both. Producers are the life force of a project, so if you want to keep your job, be good professional friends with them. They often hire you back on future projects if you were fun to work with!

Feature films – Full-length films distributed (or in hopes to be distributed) by one or more of the major distributors, i.e. Netflix, Hulu, Disney+, Peacock, etc.

Working actor – An actor who makes their living off of their acting; there are many different types of working actors. I know a working actor who makes a living off of playing dads in TV shows and commercials that have him say anywhere from 3 to 10 lines per project. I also know a different working actor who makes a living off of being the leading man in indie films and rom coms. And lastly, I know a working actor/comedian who makes a living off of being a quirky woman in comedic commercials and ads.

IMDb Pro – The paid version of IMDb, aka the Internet Movie Database. IMDb Pro gives you features that aren't available in the regular version of IMDb, like the ability to get industry professional's email addresses and the ability to change your photos and videos. The sooner you get one, the better!

Writer – The writer of a project. Sometimes the writer also directs the project, and even casts it. You can usually tell the budget of a project by how many jobs the writer is juggling in the production – the more jobs, the less budget. That's not necessarily a bad thing. It could mean that they're very passionate about this project.

Industry pros – People who work in the entertainment industry. These are actors, directors, writers, casting directors, producers, gaffers, prop makers, puppeteers, you name it. If they've helped make a movie or a TV show, they are an industry pro.

Star meter – A ranking system on IMDb that tells you who's trending. The lower the number, the more trending. The higher the number, the less trending. It is a confusing system, but you'll catch on. Star meter doesn't necessarily matter, but it is impressive when casting directors can look you up and you're trending. Things that build your star meter are mainly credits, but also in the beginning it's an important first step to just put up a couple photos, a short bio, and a video or two.

Demo reel – This is just like your comedic reel and dramatic reel, but larger. In this reel, you can add a little more footage, totaling to 2 minutes or less to get the vibe of your acting. This can be a mix of different genres and styles of filmmaking. These are typically used on your IMDb page, website, and social media platforms to show what you can do.

Edit – (*verb*) The act of manipulating videos to get them to do what you want. Sometimes with special editing techniques to make your projects look fancy. For example, I edited all of these learning videos myself. The pop ups on the screen happen in the editing.

Section 7:

Reps – Your representation. The people who get you auditions.

Refer – When mutual acquaintances introduce you to their reps. This happens when someone you know, let's say a class mate, already has an agent and refers you to them.

Represent – (*verb*) Work for. Submit to auditions for. Negotiate deals for.

Clients – The actors that are signed with a certain agency or manager.

Pitch – (*verb*) Selling the idea of your art. When you pitch yourself, you are convincing someone to try your product, i.e. your acting, by giving you an audition. We pitch ourselves to agents and managers just like they pitch us to casting directors once we sign with them. Pitching is a great skill to have as an actor. I know an actor who reached out directly to a production pitching himself and then he got the job. Just like that!

Roster – The list of clients an agency or manager has. Their roster has all of the actors that are signed with them. Usually you can see most of a roster on IMDb.

Film schools – Schools and Universities that teach filmmaking. Film schools are a great resource for beginning actors (*even if you don't enroll in one!*) because there's an abundance of students looking to cast their school projects. They put out great footage that makes for some really good reels.

Set – The place where filming for TV shows, movies, and commercials takes place. This can be a sound stage, an Airbnb, or any other location.

Filming – (*verb*) The act of recording video. Usually done on a camera, but can be done on a phone thanks to modern technology! There is a way of filming for every budget.

Writing – (*verb*) The act of creating a story and developing it into a script. This is usually done on a writing software on a laptop or computer nowadays, but if you want to be artsy and write your story on paper, more power to you! Everything is possible and do-able.

Directing – (*verb*) The act of molding the overall production into one cohesive vision.

Lighting – (*verb*) The act of setting up lights to make all performers and settings look the best they can look, given the circumstances of the scene. Lights make a difference! People who light productions professionally are called gaffers. They control whether a scene looks moody, happy, scary, or any vibe the project calls for.

Film festivals – Competitions that judge films and give out awards. Even if you don't win any awards, if you get into a film festival, you just got your face in front of a lot of people in the industry who can get you more work. Film festivals are great for publicity!

Improv 101 – A class to teach you the art of Improv, otherwise known as Improvisation. Improv is widely used in almost every form of acting because it gives a realness to characters that may not be in the script. Marvel is infamous for its improv'd scenes! Not only that, casting loves to see Improv on your resume when they're casting a commercial! Commercials are often Improv based, so it's useful to have the Improv skill. Also, it's really fun! The best-known Improv schools right now are Second City, Groundlings, and UCB. (I personally took UCB's 101 and 201 classes and loved them!)

Inspiration – The force that fills you with passion and excitement. Do more things every day that fill you with inspiration and your career will take off.

Self help books – Literature that teaches you wisdom and insights that make life easier and more fun. They often give you inspiration as well! My life would not look like it does now without self help books. They give you hope, peace of mind, serenity, and excitement for your life. All of those things are of the utmost importance in this career.

Mindset – A grouping of core beliefs that shape your life. Depending on your mindset, your life will either be close to what you want it to be, or not so close. But the good thing about mindset is that you can always change it. It is malleable and temporary. Self help books and meditation work wonders for giving yourself a mindset of ease, flow, peace, and abundance.