

Job Descriptions

(See <http://indie.imdb.com/Glossary/> for additional terms)

Assistant Camera (Assistant Camera Operator, First Assistant Cameraman, 1st Assistant Cameraman, 1st Assistant Camera, Assistant Cameraman, Camera Assistant): A member of the camera crew who assists the camera operator. This person is responsible for the maintenance and care of the camera, as well as preparing dope sheets.

Behind the Scenes: The off-camera goings on associated with filmmaking.

Camera Crew: The group of crewmembers directly involved with operation of the camera. Individual job titles include: director of photography, camera operator, camera loader.

Credit (Screen Credit): Recognition earned by fulfilling an essential paid function during the making of a film. Requirements for earning credit are governed by professional guilds (for producers, writers, directors and actors) and craft unions (for most crew positions) and standard industry practice for other positions. The size and order of names are governed by contractual obligations and union rules.

Crew (Crewmembers): A collective term for anyone involved with the production of a movie who does not appear in the movie. This term is usually used to refer to the more subordinate members of a production team (contrast with filmmakers.)

Development: The process of taking a film project from a concept to a shooting script, usually involving the creative team of writer, producer and sometimes director. The time required varies from about two years to ten years or more.

Director: The principal creative artist on a movie set. A director is usually (but not always) the driving artistic source behind the filming process, and communicates to actors the way that he/she would like a particular scene played. A director's duties might also include casting, script editing, shot selection, shot composition, and editing. Typically, a director has complete artistic control over all aspects of the movie, but it is not uncommon for the director to be bound by agreements with either a producer or a studio.

Director of Photography (DP): A cinematographer who is ultimately responsible for the process of recording a scene in the manner desired by the director. The Director of Photography has a number of possible duties: selection of film stock, cameras, and lenses; designing and selecting lighting, directing the gaffer's placement of lighting; shot composition (in consultation with the director); film developing and film printing.

Electrical Department: The department in charge of all electrical matters (primarily lighting) for productions.

Executive Producer (Executive in Charge of Production): Typically, an executive producer is responsible for financing, distribution, business affairs, and legal issues.

Feature Film (Feature): A movie intended for theatrical release.

Filmmakers: A collective term used to refer to people who have a significant degree of control over the creation of a movie: directors, producers, screenwriters, and editors.

Gaffer (Chief Lighting Technician): The head of the electrical department, responsible for the design and execution of the lighting plan for a production. Early films used mostly natural light, which stagehands controlled with large tent cloths using long poles called gaffs (stagehands were often beached sailors or longshoremen, and a gaff is a type of boom on a sailing ship).

Grip (Chief Electrician): A grip is a person responsible for the adjustment and maintenance of production equipment on the set. Their typical duties include laying dolly tracks or erecting scaffolding.

Independent Film (Indie): A movie not produced by a major studio such as MGM/UA, 20th Century Fox, Sony Pictures, Warner Bros, Paramount Pictures, Universal, and Disney.

Lighting: Most productions use artificial lighting when filming for various technical and artistic reasons, both on location or on a set. Lighting is designed by the director of photography in consultation with the director, and is the responsibility of the electrical department.

Lighting Crew: A group of technicians who install, operate, and maintain lighting.

Lighting Department: The section of a production's crew responsible for lighting and other electrical matters during filming. Individual positions within in this department include: electrician, lighting crew and generator operator.

Location Manager: A person who manages various aspects of filming on location, such as arranging with authorities for permission to shoot in specific places. Required for filming which occurs at a place not constructed specifically for the production. Typically this is outdoors, a well-known location, or a real place which is a stand-in for the real thing.

Post-Production (Postproduction, Post): Work performed on a movie after the end of principal photography. Usually involves editing and visual effects. See also production.

Pre-Production (Preproduction, Pre): Arrangements made before the start of filming. This can include script editing, set construction, location scouting, and casting.

Principal Cast: The leading actors or “stars” of a film.

Producer: The chief of a movie production in all matters save the creative efforts of the director. A producer is responsible for raising funding, hiring key personnel, and arranging for distributors.

Production: In the movie industry, this term refers to the phase of movie making during which principal photography occurs. Popularly, however, "production" means the entire movie project.

Production Accountant: The person responsible for managing finances during the production.

Production Assistant: A person responsible for various odd jobs such as running errands, stopping traffic, acting as couriers, etc.

Production Designer: The person who oversees the artists and craftspeople who build the sets. See also production designer, set designer, set director, leadman, and swing gang. Production design is concerned with visual artistry. Working under the supervision of the production designer and/or art director, the art department is responsible for arranging the overall "look" of the film (i.e. modern/high-tech, rustic, futuristic, etc.) as desired by the director. Individual positions within in this department include: production designer, set decorator, set dresser, property master, swing, property assistant, set construction and carpenter.

Production Sound Mixer: The head of the sound department on the set. They are responsible for the process of recording all sync dialog and sync sound effects in a scene. The Production Sound Mixer has a number of duties: selection and operation of the microphones, and recording equipment used on the set, directing the boom operator, combining the sound of multiple microphones used to capture dialog and effects on a set, recording sound ambiance and room tone for all scenes, and wild track that will aid the editor and sound mixer in matching the different sound takes in a scene for smooth sound transitions.

Production Workforce: The creative, administrative and craft workers employed in making films and video programs.

Publicity Department: The section of a production's crew responsible for promoting a movie. Individual positions within in this department include: unit publicist, publicity assistant, and stills photographer.

Second Assistant Camera (2nd Assistant Camera, 2nd Assistant Cameraman, Second Assistant Cameraman): An assistant to the assistant cameraman.

Sound Crew (Sound, Sound Engineer, Sound Assistant): The group of crewmembers directly involved with creating of a movie's soundtrack. Individual job titles include: sound designer, sound editor, sound effects, sound mixer, sound recordist, boom operator, re-recording mixer, music supervisor, and foley artist.

Swing (Carpenter/Electrician): A group within the art department that construct and take down a set. The head of the swing gang is a leadman.

Transportation Manager: The person responsible for managing drivers and coordinating the transportation of a production's cast, crew, and equipment from the various locations and sets used for filming.

Unit Publicist: Member of the publicity department who works on location during the production of a movie. Duties include working with the residents of the location where the film is being made, as well as setting up press visits and electronic press kit interviews. In addition, the unit publicist assembles the biographical materials and notes about the making of the movie that are later turned into the movie press kit.

Video Assist: Motion picture cameras often include a video camera that allows instant review of a scene to monitor framing, focus, and performance. Both this system and the person operating it are referred to as video assist.

Wardrobe Department: The section of a production's crew concerned with costumes. Individual job titles include: wardrobe stylist and wardrobe assistant.