

Principal Photography

WITH JIM SOTO

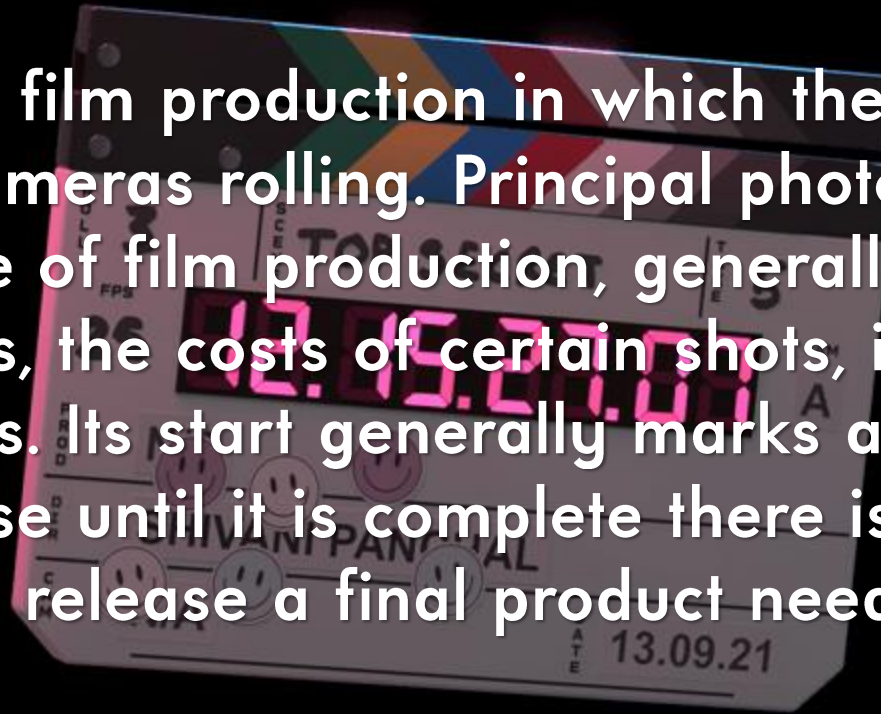




After all the preparation, and with a shooting schedule ready, both producer and director can move on to what most people consider to be real filmmaking: principal photography. It will be the most intense part of the process, and if pre-production was done correctly, the shortest.

What is Principal Photography?

This is the phase of film production in which the movie is filmed, with actors on set and cameras rolling. Principal photography is usually the most expensive phase of film production, generally due to actor, director, and set crew salaries, the costs of certain shots, including any props or on-set special effects. Its start generally marks a point of no return for the financiers, because until it is complete there is unlikely to be enough material filmed to release a final product needed to recoup costs.



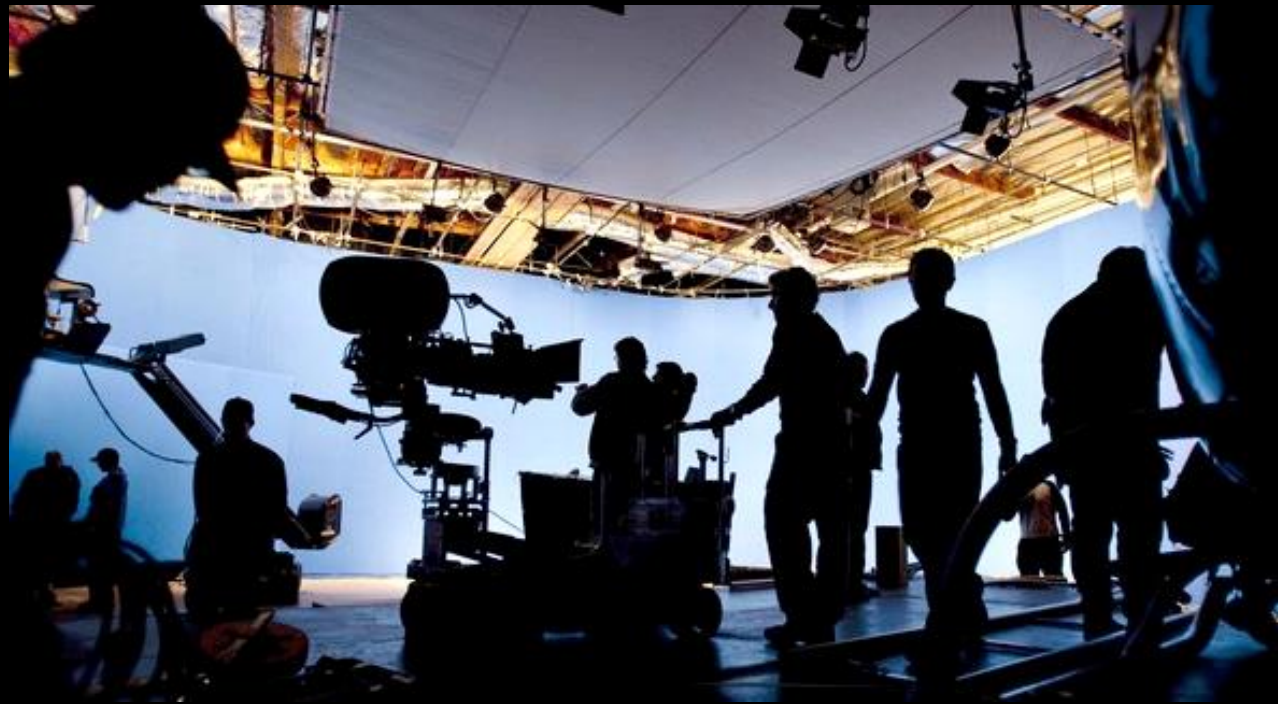


While it is common for a film to lose its greenlight status during pre-production – for example, because an important cast member drops out, like in the case of *The Fountain* – it is extremely uncommon for finance to be withdrawn once principal photography has commenced.

The scenes filmed during this stage typically involve the lead actors. This contrasts with second-unit photography or certain VFX shots needing to be completed. Principal photography does not include re-shoots or screen tests done in Pre-Production. B-roll is not always considered a part of principal photography but it can be shot concurrently with principal photography.



Goals



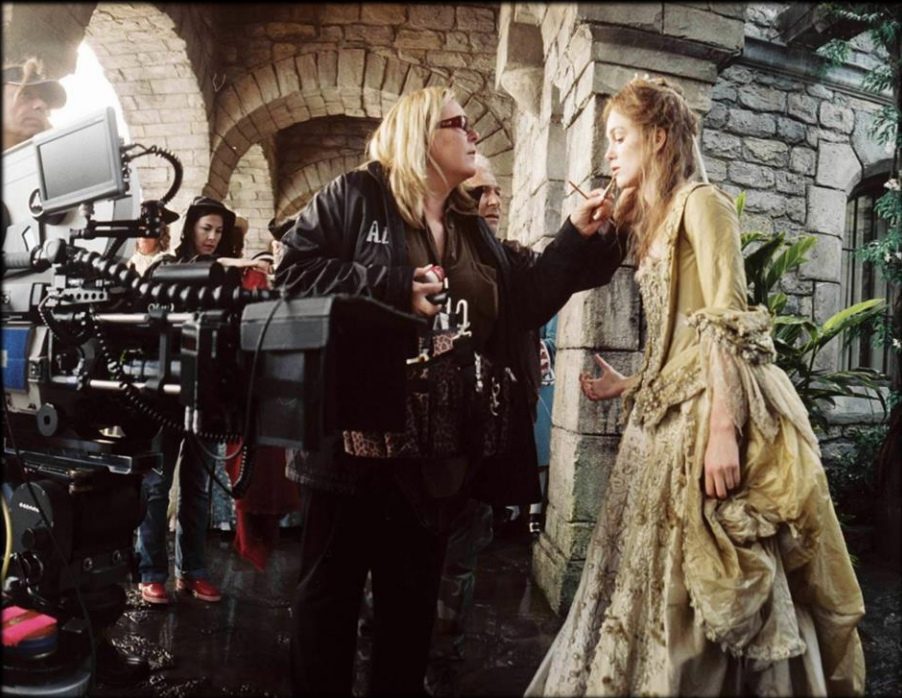
The goals of principal photography include:

- Gathering as much footage as necessary to construct the film
- Staying within the pre-determined budget and schedule

Production Overview

The Hollywood Production Standards are:

1. Avg. shooting time - six 12 hour workdays per week
2. Goal avg. - 3½ minutes of completed film per day.
3. Includes developing shooting scripts; using storyboards & clapboards; shooting principal photography; viewing dailies; etc.



Key crew members during this phase include:

- Director
- Cast (actors, extras, etc.)
- Camera crew (DP, camera operators, Grips, Gaffer, & "Best Boy")
- Sound crew (Boom operators, "Third Man [cable puller]," & Mixers)
- Special effects crew, etc.



Director: James McTeigue
Producer: Joel Silver
Writer/Director: Larry Wachowski
Producer: Andy Wachowski
Producer: Grant Hill
Co-Producer: Henning Moltzen

V FOR VENDETTA

Call Sheet 58

Production Office:
4/F 3-6-6 Business Centre, 1st Floor,
130 Shaftsbury Avenue, London W1D 5EU
Tel: 00 44 207 131 3079 / Fax: 00 44 207 131 3071
On Sat phone 07977 98062

Date: **THURSDAY, June 2, 2005**
CREW CALL: 20:30 ON SET
Tea & coffee From 20:00
Dinner break: 21:00 - 23:00 In Dining buses

Sunset: 21:09 / Sunrise: 04:48
Weather:
Cloudy with light rain / showers
Hi: 68F / Low: 56F

Minibuses depart hotels: Beglioni 19:45
Somerset Baywater 19:30

Travel times to Location from:
Battersea 20 Minutes
Prod Office 5 Minutes
Beglioni Hotel 20 Minutes
Charlotte Hotel 10 Minutes

SC	Set / Description	GN	PGR	Cost	Location / Notes
280pt	EXT. PARLIAMENT General talks to Lieutenant on radio	NDB	1/8	60.85	Parliament Sq/Whitehall, London, SW1 PLEASE SEE MOVEMENT ORDERS FOR DETAILS
290Apt	EXT. PARLIAMENT General stands on lookout, looking out towards Whitehall	NDB	4/8	60.85	Truck / action vehicles Base: Called to Battersea Power Station, then Travel to loc. As per loc. Dept
282pt/284pt	EXT. PARLIAMENT Radio man talks to Lieutenant on radio	NDB	1/8	60.85	
294Apt	EXT. PARLIAMENT The General is shadowed by confusion & uncertainty	NDB	5/8	60.85	Crew Parking: 1. Spring Gardens Car Park, levels 7 & 8 (walk to set / catering) 2. Leicester Square Car Park, Whitecomb Street (shuttle bus to set/catering) (Shuttle buses required for costume, makeuphair & AD's to crowd costume base) * Please see movement order for breakdown of crew car parking. Thank you.
286pt/286Apt	EXT. PARLIAMENT Radoman tells General there is no response from Creedy etc.	NDB	2/8	60.85	
296pt	EXT. PARLIAMENT V's - standing & watching - VFX pan	NDB	1/8	-	Articles Base & AD's office: Royal Horseguards Hotel, Whitehall Court, SW1
298	EXT. PARLIAMENT Music... V's & Soldiers standing & listening	NDB	1/8	-	Crew Dining: King Charles Street, off Whitehall SW1
299pt	EXT. PARLIAMENT / WHITEHALL The V's pull away their masks	NDB	1/8	-	

#	Set	CAST	CHARACTER	Plng	MUR/W	ON SET	Notes
1	F	Evry	EVRY	TBO	20:30	-	VFX scan 18:00 / costume fitting at location 20:30
2	H	Hugo Weaving	V	H	H	H	
3	H	Stephen Rea	FRITCH	H	H	H	
36	F	Matt Wilkinson	LITTLE GIRL, FINGERMAN	20:00	20:30	-	Costume fitting at hotel unit base
60	SW	Michael Simkins	PARLIAMENT GENERAL	22:00	22:30	As Req.	
85	SW	William Tapley	RADIO OPERATOR	21:45	22:30	As Req.	
			CHARACTER	Plng	MUR/W	ON SET	Notes
X		Chad Stahelski	STUNT COORDINATOR	19:45	-	20:30	
X/X		Mark Moran	STUNT COORD. UK / DEL. V	QY	-	20:30	
X		David Leitch	STUNT DOUBLE "V"	19:45	-	20:30	
		Mark Soderstrom	SOLDIER / "V"	QY	As Req.	20:30	
		James Oden	SOLDIER / "V"	QY	As Req.	20:30	
		Eusebio Hubert	CROWD "V"	QY	As Req.	20:30	

EXTRAS			MUR/W	ON SET	Notes
1	Radio operator (from 100 soldiers)	20:30	12AM	-	Extras transport: Courtesy buses running from Battersea unit base from 19:30
2	Officer Types (from 100 Soldiers)	20:30	-	-	Or public transport direct to costume base
100	Soldiers	20:30	-	-	
200	V's	20:30	12AM	-	Extras called to crowd costume base: Methodist Central Hall, Storey's Gate, SW1
200	V's	21:30	-	-	for Costume, makeup & Hair Then travel on foot to dining, holding & armoury area: The Banqueting House, Whitehall, SW1
6	Soldiers / Drivers (via action vehicles)	20:30	As Req.	-	Extras Catering: Snack, tea & coffee on arrival at costume base
10	Soldiers / Barriers movers (via ART Dept/construction)	20:30	As Req.	-	Dinner running from 21:30 to 23:30 in Banqueting House holding area. Tea & coffee in holding area

518	Total				
STAND-BY:		Plng	MUR/W	ON SET	Notes
Ian Mitchell	Utility	-	20:30	21:00	Parliament General
From Control	Utility	-	20:30	21:00	Radoman

SPX		CAMERA/PROP		ART DEPT/PROPS/SET DRESSING
As per Paul Carbold (07703 302 455):		As per Adrian Little & John Fleming (07850 516 971):		As per Owen Patterson/Tracy Ingle (07768 012 706/
Wireless - (standby)		Patrol (load) phone on sat. 07977 988 293		Peter Wapole (07660 320 333):
Firebars TBO		Crane on Eddies vehicle		Defensive barriers (10 x mowers dressed as soldiers)
				Young lights x 10
				Radios
				Room for General
				ACTION VEHICLES
				As per Miers Action Vehicles (John Miller, 07702 137 533):
				8 x Drivers in costume - dress @ Methodist hall changing area 20:30
				2 x Armoured Vehicles
				4 x Jeeps
				12 x Trucks
VFX		ELECTRICAL		
As per Dan Glass:		As per Kevin Gay (07973 753 994):		
16:00 cyberman w/Evry				

The Call Sheet

A call sheet is a chart issued to the cast and crew of a movie, listing the production schedule. In addition to the schedule, the call sheet also includes a list of contact information for other cast and crew members. They are issued starting the week, because schedules change frequently, and trying to plan further ahead can get complicated. As a general rule, when preparing the sheet, the scheduler assumes that everyone is available at any time, unless informed otherwise.



Callsheet 1

Production Office

Studios, PO Box 3000, Levensden, Harlow, Essex

David Heyman and David Barron
Steve Kloves
Jamie Christopher

DATE:
Unit call on set:
Breakfast from:
Stage:

Monday
08:00
07:15 in the
A stage

Set/Synopsis

INT BOYS' DORMITORY

Harry finds Ron eating chocolates that were meant for him;

Day/Night
Night

Pages
7/8

Cast / Crew
1. 2. 3.

The data on a call sheet can be difficult to interpret at a glance for people not familiar with it. Typically, the production schedule is listed by “**call time**,” as in when people are expected. Call times vary, depending on that day’s schedule. In addition to listing call times, the sheet includes the location of the call, and informs what is planned for the day.



Lindsay Lohan's partying often made her late for work and too hung over to perform.

EVERYONE is expected to read their call sheets and show up on time ready to work. If there are questions or scheduling conflicts, the coordinator must be contacted to discuss the issue. As a general rule, last-minute conflicts are viewed as a **MAJOR PROBLEM**, because the scheduling relies on the coordination of so many people that one's person's absence or lateness can upset the entire production.

A Typical Daily Shoot

The day begins with the crew arriving on the set/location by their call time. Actors have their own separate call times. Since set construction, dressing and lighting take hours or even days, they must be set up in advance.

The grip, electric and production design crews are usually a step ahead of the camera and sound departments: for efficiency's sake, while a scene is being shot, they are already setting the next one.





While the crew prepares their equipment, the actors are wardrobe in their costumes and attend the hair and make-up departments. The actors rehearse the script and blocking with the director, and the camera and sound crews rehearse with them and make final tweaks. Finally, the action is shot in as many takes as the director wishes.

MOST FILM PRODUCTIONS FOLLOW THIS PROCEDURE:

1. The assistant director (AD) calls "picture is up!" to announce filming will start, and then "quiet, everyone!"
2. When all are ready, the AD calls "roll sound" and the sound mixer records a verbal slate of the take's information, and say "sound speed", or just "speed" when ready.
3. The AD says "roll camera", answered by "speed!" by the camera operator once the camera is recording.
4. The clapper, who is in front of the camera, calls "marker!" and slaps it shut.
5. If the take involves extras or background action, the AD will cue them ("action background!").
6. The director tells the actors "action!". ADs may echo "action" on large sets.

A take ends when the director calls "cut!", and camera and sound stop recording. The script supervisor will note any continuity issues and the sound and camera teams log technical notes on their reports. If the director wants additional takes, the whole process repeats. Once satisfied, the crew sets up the next camera angle until the whole scene is "covered." When shooting is finished for the scene, the AD calls a "wrap" and the crew dismantles the set for that scene.





Later in the day, the director approves the next day's schedule and sends a report to the producer. Finally, the director, producer, other crew, and, sometimes, the cast, gather to watch that day's footage, or dailies, to review their work.

Continuity

One area that seems to be a constant issue is that of continuity. If it's overlooked, the film will suffer. Continuity can be sorted into 3 areas.

- Acting Continuity
- Props Continuity
- Costume Continuity

1. Acting Continuity - Actors need to do the same action and say the same line in different takes. If an actor picks up a glass with the right hand and then wave with their left hand, they have to do so in all the shots! Directors have to remind actors about continuity. The script supervisor and the AD usually help the director in this area.

2. Costumes - Generally, the wardrobe department will keep tabs and photos of all costumes worn by the actors. Photos of an actor before shooting the first take of a scene are a must. This photo reference can come in handy later. If an actor takes a break and takes off his tie, it is reasonably easy for him to forget to put the tie when the shoot resumes. This can cause continuity issues. A photo of what an actor wears, can ensure the actor will be in the correct clothes rather than an confusing “blooper”.



3. Props Continuity - It is a very important to get prop continuity correct. Some directors shoot a master wide shots before actual shooting of a scene. Photos of the whole film set are taken to exactly know where everything is.

If there is action such as a fight, props may be moved and then have to be replaced for the next take. A photo might prove crucial for continuity's sake. A good Continuity Person will pick up on all of these mistakes and advert any potential disasters.



A film production should have a sharp continuity person on set who watches continuity like an eagle. The continuity person should take photographs of the set and the actor's costumes. If all of this is observed properly, headaches will be avoided. This ensures that the editor has maximum cutting choices in the edit.



Reshoot

1. What is considered a major problem during the shooting of a movie?
2. Why is continuity extremely important before and during principal photography?
3. In which ways a Script Supervisor can monitor script continuity before and during the shoot?
4. Which are the types of continuity that must be monitored on the set?
5. What is a Call Sheet and who prepares it?

A red film reel and a clapperboard are visible in the top left corner. The film reel is partially unspooled, and the clapperboard is tilted, showing fields for 'ROLL', 'TAKE', 'PROD.NO.', and 'SCENE'.

Next:

MISE EN SCÈNE

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