

Screenplay Quick Start Guide

1. Getting Started

Welcome to *Screenplay* by Black Mana Studios, the reimaged return of one of the App Store's first screenwriting apps.

Whether you're writing your first short film or you're developing a full-length feature, *Screenplay* gives you a clean, intuitive space designed with writers in mind. It's a place to write, organize, and visualize your screenplay with clarity and purpose. This guide walks you through the key features of the app, from creating your first draft to exploring AI-powered tools and subscription options.

Signing In

Before you begin, you have the option to Sign In with **Apple** or **Google**. This secure, one-time login helps us:

- Verify your access to **free and subscribed features**
- Enforce fair use limits for AI-powered tools like Beat Board and Scene Proofing
- Provide special offers for free users
- Offer optional email updates if you grant permission

💡 **We never store your screenplays.** Your work is saved privately to your **iCloud Drive**, which lets you access your scripts across all your Apple devices.

Welcome Screen

After signing in, you can select from the subscription options, then you'll be greeted with the **Welcome to Screenplay** panel, a quick instructional overlay designed to help you get started.

Once you close the welcome screen, you will be taken to the **Document Browser**, where you can:

- Tap the “+” to **Create a new screenplay document**
- Tap an **existing file** to continue writing
- **Tap “Import” to bring in a screenplay file** created with other software - supports .fdx, .fountain, .txt, and .pdf
- Use **AI Script Starter** to instantly generate a 1–10 page screenplay draft from a brief synopsis to help you get started.

💡 PDF screenplays are automatically converted into editable screenplay format using smart formatting detection, allowing you to revise, rewrite, or reformat with ease.

Starting Your First New Screenplay

To begin a new screenplay, tap “+” **Create Document** on the Home Screen (Document browser), select **New Screenplay** option from the start menu, enter a title, tap Create and you will land in the main writing interface where you can start your **Title Page** and **Screenplay Body**.

💡 Try the **AI Script Starter** to instantly generate a 1–10 page screenplay draft from your synopsis, perfect for jump-starting short films, pilots, or ideas you have been sitting on. More information in section 7. AI Assistant Tools.

2. Writing Basics

Screenplay keeps writing simple, structured, and smart. Whether you’re starting a new story or importing an old one.

Creating a New Screenplay

From the **Document Browser**, tap + **Create Document** on the Home Screen (Document browser), select **New Screenplay** option from the start menu. Then you’ll be asked to:

- Enter a name (this will become your screenplay title) (can be changed later)
- Choose your language, page size (US Letter or A4), and font size
- Toggle whether to include a **Title Page** (enabled by default)

Once you tap **Create**, you’ll be brought directly into your screenplay’s Title Page.

Title Page Editing

The Title Page auto-populates with your screenplay’s name and a few standard fields (e.g., “by, Author,” Email, Phone, Address). Everything on the title page is editable.

To **add additional title page lines**, tap the “+” **icon** above or below any element. This gives you full control over the structure and order of your title page.

You can include fields like:

- Draft Date
- Source Material
- Revision History
- Agent or Contact Info


💡 The Title Page is optional but helpful for professional formatting. You can always turn it off or on later from the settings menu.

Starting the Screenplay Body

Below the title page, tap the **large "+" icon** in the center of the screen to add your first element. This will default to a **Scene Header**.

Once the scene header is created, you can continue your script using:

- The “+” **icon** below the current element
- The **Cmd+Enter** keyboard shortcut to create a New Element (this will auto detect the next most probable element)
- Or **long press the “+” icon** to manually choose a specific element type (Action, Character, Dialog, etc.)
- **Shift+Enter** will split the current element where your cursor is positioned to create two elements

 Screenplay uses a built-in **probability table** to predict which element comes next, saving you time and taps. If it gets it wrong, simply tap the **element icon** on the left to change it.


Copy and Paste with Format Detection

You can paste copied screenplay text into your script two ways:

1. **Inside an existing element** (while editing)
2. **Using the paste icon** above or below the current element (only appears when something has been copied to the clipboard)

Tapping the **paste icon** brings up the **Copy and Paste Import** wizard and will guide you through pasting your copied text depending on the source of the text.

The wizard will **auto-detect element types** (Scene Header, Action, Character, etc.) using formatting rules, and group each line accordingly.

 We do our best to interpret formatting from sources like Word, Pages, or Notes, but sometimes structure can be inconsistent. If we get it wrong, you can easily correct the element type right in the import preview or after it’s been inserted into your screenplay.

3. Scene & Character Navigation (Left Shelf Navigation)

The **Left Shelf** gives you fast access to scenes and characters in your script without losing your place. It is designed to simplify navigation, organize your content, and power key AI features.

On **iPhone**, the Left Shelf appears:

- As a **slide-up panel from the bottom** in **portrait mode**
- As a **left-side drawer** in **landscape mode**

Tap the **blue shelf icon** to open or close the shelf. The shelf is divided into two tabs: **Scenes** and **Characters**.

Scene Navigation

In the **Scenes** tab, you will see a numbered list of every scene in your screenplay, automatically generated from your scene headers.

- **Tap the scene name** to jump directly to that scene in your main screenplay.
- **Tap the blue arrow** to open the **Scene Detail Panel**, which shows:
 - The full scene header
 - A list of characters detected in that scene
 - Buttons to run:

■ **Scene Proofing** (*AI subscription required*)

■ **Beat Board** generation (*AI subscription required*)

💡 Scenes and characters are automatically detected. No manual tagging or setup required.

💡 You can **manually reorder or delete** scenes by tapping **Edit** at the bottom of the list, or by long-pressing the scene.

Character Navigation

Switch to the **Characters** tab to see a list of all speaking characters, detected as they appear in dialog.

Each character entry includes:

- Character name
- Optional age and visual description if added to attributes

Tap + **Add Character** to add any non-speaking character to the character index. This will allow you to add Attributes to the non-speaking character to aid AI in creating accurate character depiction for characters that are only referenced in Action elements.

Tap the character name to view:

- All of their dialog lines, grouped by scene.
- A fast-scroll transcript showing every line they speak. Tap any dialog line to jump into that section of the main screenplay.
- A shortcut to **Edit Attributes** (appearance, physical traits, actor likeness, etc.) These help AI visualize your character during Beat Board creation.

💡 You can also **add non-speaking characters manually**, so you can define their attributes for consistency in AI Beat Board collaged images.

💡 If you'd like to add details like "he has a scar over his left eye" or "she's tall with a sleeve tattoo," use the **Additional Info field** at the bottom of the Attributes panel. It accepts up to 140 characters and gives you full freedom to describe your character in your own words.


Editing Characters

Tap **Edit Attributes button** in the Character Detail Panel to open the full visual editor.

Here you can define:

- Age range
- Hair, eyes, accessories
- Physical build
- Other defining attributes
- Optional "ACTOR OR KNOWN CHARACTER LIKENESS" field for casting inspiration
- Optional "ADDITIONAL INFO (PHYSICAL TRAITS AND VISIBLE DETAILS)" field about the character

These fields guide the AI in generating more consistent visuals and descriptions when creating Beat board images.

 Characters can be renamed here to change the spelling or name through the entire screenplay when needed. Changing a name will update every instance in your screenplay.

4. Minimap (Right Shelf Navigation)

The **Minimap** gives you a live, high-level overview of your entire screenplay. It is designed for rapid navigation and structure awareness, allowing you to jump between distant sections without endless scrolling.

Layout & Access

The Minimap is available whenever there's enough screen space to show both your script and the Minimap side-by-side.

- On most devices, this means using the app in landscape mode.
- On iPhone, the Minimap is only available in landscape.
- On iPad, some split-screen or compact layouts may hide the Minimap due to limited space.

Tap the Minimap shelf icon on the right side of the screen to open or close it at any time.

What the Minimap Shows

The Minimap mirrors the entire screenplay, showing:

- Scene headers
- Character names and dialog
- Action lines
- Transitions, Shots, and more, all in miniature format

You can **scroll through the full screenplay** in a compressed view. Tap any element in the Minimap to **instantly jump to that exact line** in your script.

Coming Soon to Minimap: Smart Finder & Text Error Highlighting

Two powerful features are on the way:

- **Smart Finder** (Coming Soon)
 - Automatically detects formatting issues based on screenwriting best practices
 - Flags problems like:
 - Scene headers missing INT./EXT.
 - Wrapping dialog blocks
 - Dialog blocks without Character elements
 - Misused elements
- **Spelling & Grammar Marking** (Coming Soon)
 - Highlights typos and grammatical issues directly in the Minimap
 - Tap a red-marked entry to jump straight to the problem in your screenplay

💡 These updates will make the Minimap not just a navigation tool, but a smart proofing system as well.

5. Beat Board Workspace

The **Beat Board Workspace** is your visual workspace for exploring the story beats of your scenes. Whether you generate them with AI or build them manually, Beat Boards let you capture the essence of a scene in a single glance, part storyboard, part mood board, part structure map.

What Is a Beat Board?

Each **Beat Board** includes:

- A **scene title** (editable)
- A **single image** (generated by AI or manually replaced)
- A **Beat List** (a sequence of story moments, either AI-generated or entered manually)

These boards live independently of your script:

- **Deleting a scene** in the screenplay **does not affect existing Beat Boards**
- You can create **multiple Beat Boards for the same scene**
- Beat Boards are **not linked** to scenes once created. They are static, editable snapshots

Navigating the Beat Board Workspace

- Cards are displayed as thumbnails with the scene title above
- Tap a card to view its full contents (image + beat list)
- Long-press any card to enter **Rearrange** or **Delete** mode

The toolbar includes:

- **Arrange | Select | Add | Help**

From the **card detail view**, you can:

- Edit the scene title
 - Use the image ... menu to Replace or Share the image
 - Tap the image to view it full screen (with share options)
 - Edit, delete, or manually enter beats into the beat list
-

+ Creating a Beat Board

Tap the “+” **button** in the Beat Board Manager to:

1. **Create a Blank Beat Board**
 - Upload your own **image** (or leave it blank)
 - Manually enter a **Beat List** line-by-line
2. **Use the AI Beat Board Creator**
 - Choose a scene from a popup based on your screenplay's scene index
 - AI will generate:
 - A **Beat List** (key moments from the scene)
 - A **single collage-style image** based on the scene and character attributes

Fast Access from Scene Navigator

You can also trigger AI Beat Board creation directly from the **Scene Navigator**:

- Tap the **Scene name arrow “>” icon**
- Select **Beat Board**
- This acts as a shortcut to the same AI workflow available in the Beat Board Workspace

⚠️ AI Limitations and Content Disclaimer

The **AI Beat Board Creator** follows strict content guidelines set by the AI provider — not by Screenplay or Black Mana Studios. This means:

- Certain **graphic, violent, sexual, or traumatic content** may be excluded from the generated image or beat list.
- The AI may **alter, omit, or soften** moments that conflict with these safety policies.
- Beat Board results are **generated using only the selected scene and available character attributes**. Broader story context is not considered.

💡 **Workaround:** You can always add your own beats or replace the image manually if something was skipped. The Beat Board Manager supports full manual editing.

6. Index Card Board

The **Index Card Board** gives you a flexible space to jot down ideas, outlines, and supporting material that lives outside your screenplay's main structure. Whether you are planning scenes or saving ideas for later, the index card system gives you freedom to think visually and stay organized.

Card-Based Visual Layout

Each **Index Card** includes:

- A **title** (used to label the card for sorting or reference)
- An optional **description** for your notes or ideas
- A **color tab** at the top - by default, it's a soft yellow, but you can change it to any color

💡 **Organizing by color is completely optional**, and you can assign **unlimited color variations** to suit your system. Colorize for tone, character, scene type, or whatever fits your workflow.

Cards are displayed in a grid:

- **Tap** Pencil icon to open and edit the title, description, icon and tab color
 - **Reorder** using **Arrange mode** or by **Long-Pressing** on a card
 - **Delete** via long-press or by selecting one or more cards using **Select** function and tapping **Delete**
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Adding a New Index Card

Tap the “+” **button** on the Index Card Board to create a new card.

You'll be prompted to enter:

- A **title** (required)
- A **description** (optional)

💡 You can immediately assign a color or change the icon to the card to help organize it within your board.

Auto-Generated Index Cards from Imports

When **importing** a screenplay using the “+” **Create Document** option, whether from .fdx, .fountain, .txt, or .pdf, any content that doesn't map to a standard screenplay element (like **notes**, **boneyards**, **synopsis**, or **unknown sections**) will be saved automatically to the Index Card Manager.

These imported notes will appear as cards titled:

“Imported Extras – [Screenplay Title]”

This ensures you **never lose any content** when migrating from another app to Screenplay, even if that content falls outside standard screenplay formatting.

7. AI Assistant Tools

Screenplay includes four integrated AI-powered tools to help users jumpstart new projects, polish scenes, and visualize story beats. These tools are completely optional and designed to assist without overriding the writer's creative control. All AI suggestions are presented clearly with the ability to accept, reject, or manually edit.

AI Script Starter

When beginning a new screenplay, users can optionally generate a starter draft based on a short synopsis and selected format (Short, Pilot, Feature, etc.). The AI returns 1 - 10 pages of formatted screenplay content to help users quickly move from concept to script.

Element Proofing

Any Individual elements can be proofed with AI. Suggested rewrites appear directly below the original, with an information bubble explaining the changes. Each suggestion can be accepted or dismissed with a single tap.

Scene Proofing

Entire scenes can be reviewed and proofed in context. AI suggestions are offered element-by-element with the same compare-and-accept functionality found in Element Proofing. A final confirmation prompt allows users to save only the suggestions they approve.

Beat Board AI Creator

The Beat Board feature uses AI to generate a visual representation of a scene. This includes:

- A **Beat List**: Summarized moments within the selected scene
- A **Scene Image**: A visual collage based on the beat list content

If a beat contains restricted material, it will still appear in the beat list but may be excluded from the AI-generated image. Users may replace or upload a custom image at any time.

⚠️ AI Limitations and Content Disclaimer

AI generated content in the Screenplay app is subject to safety and usage policies enforced by the AI provider, not by the Screenplay app or Black Mana Studios. These restrictions may limit certain features such as content proofing or image generation.

Content that may be flagged includes:

- Graphic violence or gore
- Sexual content or nudity
- Abuse, torture, or trauma
- Hate speech or discriminatory language
- Illegal activity or self-harm

Flagged content may result in:

- Skipped suggestions in Element or Scene Proofing
- Omitted beats from the Beat Board image

In all cases, users retain full control and can manually add or edit any content in their screenplay.

8. Subscription Manager

The **Subscription Manager** gives you a clear overview of your current plan, renewal status, and upgrade options, whether you're using the free plan, a standard writing subscription, or full AI access.

You can access the Subscription Manager by:

- Tapping the **star icon** in the header bar  
(If you're subscribed to an AI plan, the star icon displays a tiny embedded robot)

Subscription Tiers

Screenplay offers multiple plans to match different creative needs:

- **Free Plan**
 - Create, import, and edit up to 5 pages of a single screenplay
 - Preview 4 sample screenplay (first 5 pages)
 - Access limited AI features (e.g., 1 Beat Board or Proof)
- **Standard Plan (Monthly or Yearly)**
 - Includes everything except AI
 - Unlimited screenplays

- Unlimited pages
- Access across all Apple devices
- Full use of Index Cards and Beat Board Manager
- **Screenplay with AI (Monthly or Yearly)**
 - Includes everything in Standard subscription +
 - **25** monthly AI Tokens for:
 - AI Script Starter
 - Element Proofing
 - Scene Proofing
 - Beat Board generation with collage images and beat lists
- **Screenplay with AI+ (Monthly or Yearly)**
 - Includes everything in Standard subscription +
 - **200** monthly AI Tokens for:
 - AI Script Starter
 - Element Proofing
 - Scene Proofing
 - Beat Board generation with collage images and beat lists

💡 Your subscription status is clearly shown in the manager, including whether you're on **Monthly** or **Annual** billing, and when your next renewal occurs.

Switching Plans

From the Subscription Manager, you can:

- Toggle between **Monthly** and **Annual** for any active plan
- Restore purchases (useful when switching devices)
- Access Privacy Policy, Terms of Service and Restore Purchases

💡 Switching from monthly to annual (or vice versa) will take effect on your next billing cycle.