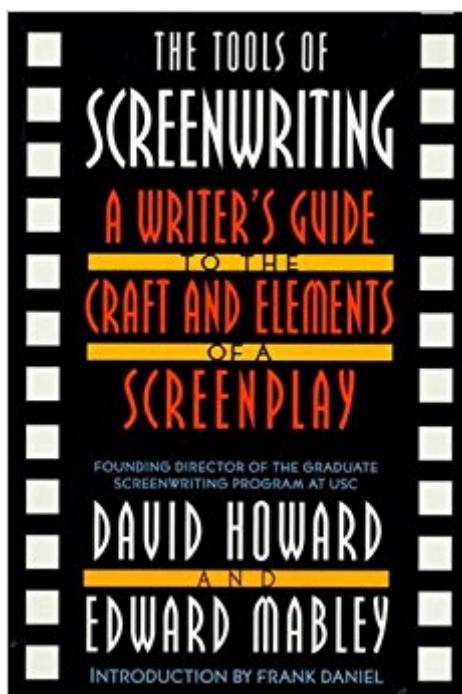


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# The Tools Of Screenwriting: A Writer's Guide To The Craft And Elements Of A Screenplay



## Synopsis

In *The Tools of Screenwriting*, David Howard and Edward Mabley illuminate the essential elements of cinematic storytelling, and reveal the central principles that all good screenplays share. The authors address questions of dramatic structure, plot, dialogue, character development, setting, imagery, and other crucial topics as they apply to the special art of filmmaking. Howard and Mabley also demonstrate how, on a practical level, the tools of screenwriting work in sixteen notable films, including *Citizen Cane*, *E.T.*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Rashomon*, *The Godfather*, *North by Northwest*, *Chinatown*, and *sex, lies, and videotape*.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A comprehensive guide to writing screenplays by an experienced screenwriter and a respected writing teacher. Along with sections on the screenwriter's craft, basic storytelling, and the parts and objectives of a screenplay, the book is distinguished by detailed analyses of sixteen successful films' screenplays, including the likes of *E.T.*, *Some Like It Hot*, *North by Northwest*, *Citizen Kane*, and *Annie Hall*. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Ã¢ "David Howard calls this book 'a writer's guide.' I think it's a wonderful and indispensable producer's guide to story, storytelling, and screenwriting.Ã¢ " Lawrence Turman, producer of *The Graduate*, *Running Scared*, *The Flim-Flam Man*, and other filmsÃ¢ "What David Howard has done with *The Tools of Screenwriting* is to reveal for me and for all readers just how stories work; he shows that there are no absolute rules, but there are principles that can help a

beginning writer gain understanding of all the elements that go into the creation of a 'good story well told.' Diane Keaton says "The Tools of Screenwriting is the best primer on the craft, far better than the usual paint-by-the-numbers sort of books that abound."

Frank Pierson, Academy Award-winning screenwriter of Cool Hand Luke, Dog Day Afternoon, Presumed Innocent, and A Star is Born

A how to book that reads like one is on a wonderful adventure of discovery. Kirk Iverson of Globalcraft Studios recommended the book to me so tally ho off I went to for some more mind candy. This author writes well. An Indiana Jones screenwriting tip (my conception) from the book: "It is a good idea to think of the three acts not as a mold or formula to be filled in with some kind of batter the writer has concocted, but rather as a set of landmarks an explorer/guide tries to keep sight of when traveling through new and dangerous territory." Learning a new craft IS traveling through new and dangerous territory. I've read a few how to books on how to write a screenplay. The ones I read leaned more to formula: "By such and such a page this must happen." In "The Tools of Screenwriting" one simply reads an engaging book. You don't want to put it down and you don't want it to end. In fact I haven't finished it. There are a few films I haven't seen that he's analyzed so I will see them first then read David Howard's analysis. Enjoy.

Excellent butter. Excellent bread. Excellent sandwich.

I have gazed into this book, and in simply gazing, I realized there is a LOT MORE TO SCREENWRITING than I had imagined. In fact... as I wrote my first screenplay, it did not take long at all to feel like I was WAY IN over my head. Talk about RE-WRITES GALORE!!! One thing about screenwriting, as well writing a short story, novelette or a full blown novel... there will be constant re-writes... a ton of them, and I wish that I had been pointed to books like this one... so I would have learnt MUCH about HOW TO WRITE screenplays and novels before I embarked on the expedition... and boy was it ever. LOL I wrote a short story for a film I am making which lasts all of about 5 minutes... 42 HOURS and at least 30 re-writes later... I have the polished works ready to make the film. And the reality of this is... (Just like the Kenny Rogers song Gambler said) you gotta know when to hold em, know when to fold em... know when to walk away, know when to run... in this realm of writing, you have to know 'When to stop editing' because the more you edit/re-write... the more you hone in on things that could be written differently... or better in your mind... and if you don't walk away... you'll never reach the finished end. No charge for that personal insight today. :-)

Wonderful purchase

Great for a beginner.

I think this book stands out from others in the heap of books on screenwriting in at least two salient aspects. First, it does a fairly good job of defining the terms being used. There is great confusion in screenwriting terminology; different authors have differing definitions for commonly used terms -- or none at all. They just throw out terms as if the reader already knows what it means or the meaning is so intuitively obvious it doesn't need definition. Or they define the term vaguely and apply it inconsistently so it seems to mean one thing in one paragraph, and then something else in another. Terms do need clarification and authors need to be consistent. Second, whereas some authors emphasize a particular element or technique as a *sin qua non* -- if not the *sin qua non* for creating a marketable manuscript -- this book discusses all the basics with no particular emphasis or preference for one. After surveying the basics, the authors apply their analytical schema to 14 notable films from various genres including *The GodFather*, *Rashomon*, *Annie Hall*, *sex lies and videotape* and *Hamlet*. Though I don't always agree as to how they apply their schema, it's a practical schema.

Howard's later "How to Build a Great Screenplay" is the very best single book if you want to master screenwriting, but this is a great book, and I consider it a "must have." Better than any seminar or course, and I've spent thousands on most of them over the years, including a couple years at AFI.

Great fast very good condition excellent book.

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