**Development**

This is the very first stage of filmmaking. This is the process in which a **producer(s)** will choose a project to develop further. Once the producer(s) have selected the project, the producer and writers then work it on. In this time, the synopsis, step outline and treatment for the film are written. Once these elements are completed, it moves into screenwriting.

At this point a **screenwriter** will spend a period of time, ranging from months to years, writing the screenplay and possibly re-writing it to improve or remove characters, scenes and dialogue that slow down the pace of the script. However, scripts are not always finalised before it goes to the pitch process, as producers usually want to get production started as soon as, ultimately keeping the project from reaching ‘Development Hell’. Development Hell is a filmmaking term for a project that is stuck in development for a long period of time. *John Carter* holds the world record for longest project in development hell being 79 years.

This stage however can work in a number of ways and scenarios. A director or screenwriter can come up with the idea for a film and write it him or herself and seek a producer to develop it further. Or the screenwriter can be commissioned by a producer or studio to write a movie in a genre or theme that the screenwriter has experience.

The screenwriter and producer then form the pitch. The pitch is a presentation intending on selling their idea to a **film studio**. The overall purpose of the pitch is to get the film studio attached to the project and supply funding for the film. If the pitch is successful, it is ‘green light’ meaning that the film has financial backing. Once the film has been green light, it moves into re-production.

**Pre Production**

This is the stage where the film is prepared, designed and planned. The **storyboard artist** will help the **director** create a visual representation of the entire film through storyboards. Storyboards can be created either on Photoshop or hand drawn and will usually have captions written beside them describing certain angles, effects or other elements that are important. Once storyboards are complete other elements are fleshed out. Costumes, props, sets, and special effects are identified so that a schedule can be made, so that when certain elements are needed, it can be ready for the director.

A **Set Designer** will be employed to design certain sets for the film. The designer will sit with the director and they will discuss the visual look of the film so the set can be built to represent the visual style of the film. The set will also be built to accommodate technical requirements such as removable walls, roofs and floors so that cameras can be moved throughout the set easily.

Some production will decide to shoot on location or use real locations for exterior shots of the film. This will require a **Location Scout** to find locations that are both suitable to the films story and fit the visuals of the film but that is also inexpensive so that more money can be used in other areas of production.

Casting will also take place. This is when actors will be called in or request to read for certain parts in the script to a **casting director** (in large productions), producer and director. Sometimes, when reading for one character, it may be found that they are more suited for another role. In *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* TV show, Sarah Michelle Gellar read for the role of Cordelia Chase and Charisma Carpenter read for the part of Buffy. The two were found better suited for the opposite roles and read again, both landing the other persons part. Once the cast has been selected, contracts are written up between the actor’s **agents** and the producers.

Once the cast has been set and the physical elements identified for the production, **crewmembers** are hired. Then a start date for the start of production is set. At some stage, a read through will be held in which all the cast, director, producers, publicists, heads of departments and financial backers are together and they read through the script.

Most of pre-production will happen simultaneously as to reduce how long it spends in pre-production and to also get the film shot as soon as possible.

**Production**

This is where the filming takes place. More crew will be hired at this point such as **property masters, script supervisors, assistant directors, editor, sound editor and** **photographers.** Besides the editor, all the crew members will be on set at all time.

A normal day on set will begin with the arrival of crew on the set. They will have specific call times that are different to the actors. The crew will set up the equipment needed for that day of shooting or in advance in some cases. A **lighting technician** will set up the lighting for the set and ensure that when recording takes place, lights are not visible or that they glare against the camera lenses. During the initial setting up of equipment, the actors are in costume and make-up getting ready for the scene they are about to shoot. The cast and director will then rehearse the script and scene being filmed before rehearsing with the camera operators and sound crew.

Once the scene is ready to be filmed a number of actions and queue words will be shouted to everyone to announce the scene is ready. The following sequence is what typically happens on a set:

* Assistant Director will shout out ‘Picture Is Up’ signalling that the scene is about to be recorded. They will then shout ‘Quiet Everyone’.
* ‘Roll Sound’ follows once everyone is ready to shoot. Roll sound signals the **production sound mixer** to start his equipment ready to record the sound or play sound if necessary. The sound production sound mixer will then reply with ‘Sound Speed’ confirming everything is ready.
* The assistant director will then shout ‘Roll Camera’ followed by ‘Speed’ from the **camera operator** when the camera is recording.
* The **clapper boy** who is ready in front of the camera will shout ‘Marker’ and snap the clapper down on the board. If there is background extras in the scene the assistant director will say ‘Action Background’ and they will begin.
* Finally the director will shout ‘Action’ signalling to the actors to begin.

Once the take is over and ready to be done again or move on:

* The director will shout ‘Cut’ meaning that the shot is over and for the camera and sound to stop recording. Here, script supervisors will inform the director of any continuity and the sound/camera operators, technical issues. This may require a retake and the process is repeated.
* Once all the footage for a scene is done the director shout ‘Wrap’ or ‘Moving On’ and the next scene is set up.

Once the day of shooting is over, it is up to the director to approve the following days shooting schedule and then call sheets for actors and crew will be distributed for the next day. At the end of the day, the director, producers, department heads and occasionally the cast and crew will watch the footage back that they have shot that day; also known as Dailies. A normal workday is 14-18 hours long and can take anywhere from 20 days to a year to film a film. Once the production has wrapped, the production office will arrange a wrap party for cast and crew for their efforts and contribution to the film.

**Post Production**

Post Production is the process after principle photography has wrapped in which the footage is edited together. Using an edit decision list (**EDL)** the editor can find the footage needed and then proceed to cut it together. In this process the editor will collaborate with the director after each shooting day to analyse the raw footage shot that day and after a discussion, the editor will know of the directors intentions for the particular scene, giving the editor an idea of how to assemble the footage together.

There are usually three cuts of the film to be made. The first will be the ‘Rough Cut’ or ‘Editors Cut’. This is the first cut of the film to be made. Due to it being the first cut made, it will most likely run longer than the final cut of the film and contain scenes that may be cut later on to shorten the length of the film or because the cut scene would have slowed the pace of the film down. Once the film has been cut and edited it will go to picture lock and then go through audio mixing. Audio mixing is the process in which a sound editor will edit together the sounds heard on screen. There are typically 4 categories of sounds that will be mixed together. They are: Dialogue, Ambience, Music and Sound Effects.

The second cut of the film will be the ‘Directors Cut’. This is the cut in which the director goes through the film with the editor and they will refine and edit the film again to how the director envisions the film. During this editing process, plot holes may be discovered, resulting in scenes being added to explain. Sometimes, whole scenes may be missing which can lead to re-shoots occurring to fill them in. Shots and scenes can be extended or shortened, replaced with other shots completely or changed slightly. The process will result in the final film being the director’s cut and will usually run longer than the editor’s cut of the film.

The final cut is the cut overseen by the producers who are there to represent the production company or the film studio. This cut of the film will have content removed that may cause controversy for the company or that will make the film breech the film rating it has been given. Occasionally, the films director has disagreed with the film studio resulting the director disowning the film and no longer being connected to it during its release. This results in the film being released with the director ‘Alan Smithee’, who has 78 director credits. Some directors, such as Stanley Kubrick, Quinton Tarantino, The Coen Brothers and Time Burton, have something called ‘Final Cut Privilege’ meaning that they have the final say over how the film look when released despite film studios wanting to remove explicit content. However, the director’s final cut must not breech the rating agreement. Stanley Kubrick’s *Eyes Wide Shut* had to have extras digitally added n to obscure a graphic sex orgy scene that raised the rating to an agreed R- rating to an NC-17.

**Distribution**

This is the final stage in which the film is distributed to cinemas for release. Promotional posters, trailers and pictures are released to the press and TV so that the film gathers and audience before its release. Some films do not get a cinema release and go straight-to-dvd or become available to download online. After its run in the cinema, the film will be released on DVD, Blu Ray or on digital download, completing the filmmaking process.