

So you want a job in film and television?

There are huge numbers of young people competing for very few jobs. It is difficult to stress exactly how competitive film and television work is, but a good guide is that 9 out of 10 actors are out of work at any given time.

Up until recently you had to be a member of the actor's union Equity to get a professional acting job– and you were allowed an Equity Card only after you had worked professionally for some time. Thankfully this catch 22 situation no longer exists, although *the film and television industry remains a very closed shop to all but the most dedicated and well connected.*

Only 6% of actors earn more than £30,000 per year. A recent survey found that nearly half of those working in the UK film and television industry earned less than £6,000 a year from the profession.

Many actors and film makers work for very little, especially at the beginning of their careers. Most jobs are short term. Many experienced actors and film makers need to do other work to supplement their income.

If you are you still interested in film and television work after reading the above information, then you clearly have the strong commitment necessary to begin a career in film and TV. However, commitment on its own is not enough.

How can I get a career in film and television?

You need specific training and experience in film and TV.

Most of the careers below require formal training, usually in the form of academic courses. Entrance to courses will depend on relevant exam results at post-16, and auditions (for actors)

Depending on your chosen career, you will also need experience in screen-acting or film-making. You should begin making films right now and start compiling material for your showreel. Your showreel is a vital piece of equipment for the actor and film-maker, showing future employers your skills and range. As your career progresses, your showreel will also develop, tracking how your skills and experience develop over time

Whatever your chosen career in film and television, ACT 2 CAM is one place you can access help to get to the next level, offering new skills, vital experience and showreel material to help you on your way to success.

Here is ACT 2 CAM's list of top 10 tips on how to become a successful working screen-actor or film-maker:

1. Decide now if you really want to do screen-acting or film-making. You have to be dedicated. If you are, then read on.
2. Start getting experience in front of and behind the camera, right now! Build up a showreel of your work. Follow every opportunity to make films. The better the

quality, the more professional you come across and the more likely you are to get noticed.

3. Enrol in a screen-acting or film-making classes. Join your local **ACT 2 CAM** group and MAKE FILMS NOW! Visit www.act2cam.com or www.thebigfilm.co.uk for more information.

Get expert training on screen and behind the camera. Good actors and film-makers study their entire lives. Good classes are run by professional teachers and industry experts with enhanced CRB checks.

4. Seek out and mix with like-minded people. There are plenty of ambitious young actors and film-makers out there. Make opportunities to meet industry professionals whenever possible. "Who you know" is extremely important.
5. Promote yourself. Send your showreel and CV with a brief cover letter to all the casting directors and agents in your area. Follow up with postcards every four to six months, updating them on your current film projects.
6. Seek out work. Read the trade papers regularly, as well as online publications. The Stage, The Knowledge and Production and Casting Report are just 3 of the many resources out there. Make sure you know what is being filmed and where, and get your showreel directly to directors and producers whenever possible, requesting work.

7. Get yourself where the work is. Make sure you are in the right place at the right time. Find out about auditions and screen-tests in your area. Look out for film-festivals and media competitions.
8. Be realistic. Know that you can be successful even if you don't become famous. There are very many people wanting to get into in film and television. Do not expect too much too soon.
9. Persevere. Keep going, and believe in yourself. There will be times when you will need to ask yourself that question #1 again Is this what you really want?
10. Give yourself the best possible chance. The competition is huge, and the opportunities are few and far between. You have to make sure you have the experience, the skills and the showreel when that opportunity arrives.

Information source: www.act2cam.com