

Script Annotation Legend Card

Keep this reference inside the front cover of your script. Pick a system, use one mark for one meaning, and leave room for the choices that arrive in rehearsal.

CORE MARKS

[	Cue line The line or action that triggers your entrance, line, or move.	/	Beat change Place between phrases where the thought or tactic turns.
//	Held pause A silence with dramatic weight, not a breath.	*	Emphasis Place above the word or syllable that needs a lift.
—	Physical action Underline the line where a specific action is tied to the text.	→	Entrance Flag another character entering in the outer margin.
?	Open choice A delivery, action, or question you need to test in the room.	D:	Director note A confirmed instruction or piece of blocking.

ADD WHEN NEEDED

Mark	Use it for	Where it goes
ˊ	A breath before the line.	Above the first word after the breath.
⸮	Run two thoughts together with no pause.	Link the last word of one thought to the first of the next.
←	Another character exits.	Outer margin, level with the exit.
M:	A move or blocking change.	Outer margin.
P:	A prop you pick up, hand over, or set down.	Beside the relevant line.
!	Come back to this after rehearsal.	Inner margin.
strike	A director-approved cut.	Through the text; do not erase it.

Three rules that keep the page readable

Start in pencil. Keep symbols and beat marks close to the text. Keep the outer margin for blocking and director notes. If one mark begins to mean two things, change it before it spreads through the script.

My Script Legend

Fill this card in once before table work. Keep the wording short enough to read at a glance from the wing or during a quick run-through.

What it marks	My mark	Where I put it
Cue line	_____	_____
Beat change	_____	_____
Held pause	_____	_____
Emphasis	_____	_____
Physical action	_____	_____
Entrance or exit	_____	_____
Open choice	_____	_____
Director note	_____	_____

Worked example

Use the core system to make the next action visible before you need it.

Line, as marked	Read-back
[REY: You still have the key. / I can see it in your hand.	The cue line is set; the slash marks the turn from accusing to naming.
JUNO: (not moving) ' I came to give it back.	Take a breath before the line so it lands as a decision.
→ MARA: (from the doorway) Am I early?	Flag the entrance in the margin a line early.
REY: No. //	Hold the silence after the refusal.
JUNO: What do you want me to say? ?	The delivery is still an open choice to test.

Use pencil until staging is confirmed. Keep cuts visible, date major changes, and update this card only when your system changes for the whole script.