



*How to*

# START YOUR ACTING CAREER

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO START YOUR  
ON-CAMERA ACTING CAREER

RUSS RANDALL





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*IN THIS E-BOOK, WE'LL COVER HOW TO START A CAREER IN ACTING IN FILM AND TELEVISION. WE'LL GO OVER THE BASIC STEPS REQUIRED FOR ANYONE INTERESTED IN BECOMING PART OF TELLING STORIES IN FILM & TV.*





## RUSS RANDALL

Veteran acting coach, Russ Randall, has been a performer, producer, teacher, writer, and director in the dramatic and cinematic arts for over 25 years. He has applied his creative teaching techniques to kids, teens, and adults of all ages. His love for the dramatic arts has been the driving passion that led him to found Final Act Drama. As an actor, he has appeared on networks like Fox, Discovery, ID, Lifetime, American Heroes Channel, and in films & TV shows. As a Director / Producer, he has created numerous commercials, short films, episodic TV, corporate, industrial, and educational videos.

LET'S GET STARTED



A portrait of actor Ryan Gosling. He is wearing a dark blue suit jacket, a white dress shirt, and a dark tie. He has short, dark hair and is looking directly at the camera with a slight, thoughtful expression. His right hand is raised towards his chest, with fingers slightly curled. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

**“I’VE LEARNED  
IT’S IMPORTANT  
NOT TO LIMIT  
YOURSELF.  
YOU CAN DO  
WHATEVER YOU  
REALLY LOVE  
TO DO,  
NO MATTER  
WHAT IT IS.”**

**-Ryan Gosling**



# 01

## INTRODUCTION

### Anyone can become an actor if...

they put their full effort into developing their acting skills and then do the networking and business development needed to connect with those needing their new skills. There is not some exclusive club that only “those people” are in. The acting world needs all ages, shapes, sizes, races, looks and voices. I have trained over 1,000 actors over my many years of teaching and I have never been proven wrong. Now, let’s be honest to say that not everyone who has started has had the same resolve or put the amount of work in that is required to break into the industry.

And not all of us have a look, size, or age to be a leading man or woman in the latest blockbuster. Not all of us are going to “make it big” and earn millions and millions of dollars. But, there is a place for everyone who develops strong acting skills. Be sure to ask yourself, “Why do you want to act?”

If you just want to be famous, then you are most likely to be disappointed at every level of your career. But if you want to be a part of the story telling process, then acting might just be your thing. Your individual situation may only allow you to pursue acting as a hobby or part time, but you can be an actor for the rest of your life!

Here are some steps you can take to get started:

## 02 BE PROACTIVE & MAKE YOUR FIRST STEP

You've taken a good step by connecting with Final Act Drama. Now, keep moving forward. Bob and Betty sit on the couch watching their TV thinking, *"I've always wanted to be an actor! I can do what they are doing. I'm talented! I'm ready when Steven Spielberg knocks on my door asking me to star in his latest film."* Don't be Bob and Betty! Take a proactive step and look into what it takes to be an actor in film and television! This could mean looking for an acting coach, finding local classes, and researching what it takes to become an actor! Whatever it is, **START NOW** and actively work towards your goal!



## 03 DEVELOP YOUR ACTING SKILLS

Acting is a craft that requires practice and training. Consider taking private actor lessons, acting classes, attending workshops, being in school plays, or joining a local theater group to improve your skills and gain experience. Final Act Drama works with individuals from 5 to 95 who are wanting to get into the acting business. We teach you the fundamental and advanced on-camera acting skills you need to be successful. Working with one of our veteran acting coaches in one-on-one private sessions online vastly shortens your learning curve and gets you cast much sooner than wandering around trying to figure it out on your own. [www.FinalActDrama.com](http://www.FinalActDrama.com) Contact us to find out more!

You can also look for smaller projects to act in. Student films are a great experience for the student and developing actors. Film competitions are another good opportunity to improve your craft, make more connections, and get yourself noticed by people in the industry. You won't buy a new car for what you make, but you will be making investments in your career that will eventually pay off.

# 04

## HEADSHOT, RESUME, REEL

While you are getting your training, create a portfolio that showcases your acting abilities, including headshots, a resume, and demo reels. Get a PROFESSIONAL headshot! The sooner, the better. You need to position yourself as the solution to the casting director's problem of "Who is going to play this character?" The headshot is the first impression that agents, managers, casting directors, and producers get of you. Make it a good one! Getting a professional headshot separates you from the "wannabe" people who are not investing in their career. A professional headshot says you are a pro.

On the back of your headshot should be your resume. Your acting experience might be limited or non-existent, but that's OK.

Everyone starts with no credits, but having the actor training credits says that you are investing in your career and you may be worth a look or an audition for a smaller role.

A demo reel is a short video clip that showcases your acting abilities and can be used to demonstrate your range and versatility. This is nice to have, but don't record one too soon during your training or you might "tip your hand" that you are not ready yet.

Remember, the purpose of the headshot, resume, and reel are to "Get you the Audition!" Once you get the audition, it is your next job to nail the audition and book the job. Be prepared! If you need a headshot, give us a call and we will connect you with a great photographer to take good care of you!





## 05 GET OUT THERE AND NETWORK

Though acting is an artistic craft, it is also a business. Your potential business! Build relationships with other actors, directors, producers, and casting directors. Once you have developed your acting skills and abilities, you can reach out to people who need your skills and start finding opportunities to act in real projects. Attend industry events and make connections that could lead to future opportunities. Join social media groups to hear about film and TV projects that are casting soon. Identify your state film office and follow their postings about work that is going on in your region. But your biggest connection to projects that are casting for good roles is to...





## 06 FIND REPRESENTATION

Once you and your acting coach are feeling good about your acting and auditioning skills, you have a professional headshot and resume, and you have the time flexibility to work on a project, then research and reach out to talent agents to represent you. A talent agent will help you find auditions and negotiate contracts for you. Keep in mind that reputable agents and managers typically charge a commission between 10% to 20% on any work you book. Reputable agents should not ask for money up front. They get paid when you get paid. Be considerate and treat your agents well. They are helping you reach your goals. Typically, agents will be involved with providing talent for the better principle and supporting roles of a project that pay well. Online casting sites typically have more “lower hanging fruit” of small roles and day players. But keep an eye out any legitimate project that is casting and submit yourself if needed.



## 07 BE A BACKGROUND PLAYER OR EXTRA

Rarely do inexperienced actors jump right into speaking roles on major shows or films. But you can get good experience by working as a background player or extra. Being the “fuzzy blur” in the background of a shot might not seem like you are using your new found acting abilities to their fullest, but it is a good opportunity to be on set, learn the flow of a shoot, learn the lingo, understand what crew members do, and make a few bucks along the way. Expect to be there for long hours (between 10 and 12, or more) and to hurry up and wait. There is a lot of downtime with background work, so bring something to read or do to pass the time while in holding. Occasionally, you might be used as a featured extra and be more involved in the scene and actually in focus in the shot! Casting for background is frequently done through different casting directors or agents, so research to know who’s list you need to be on for background roles.



A portrait of George Clooney, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. He is wearing a dark jacket over a green t-shirt. The background is a dark, textured wall.

**“  
The only  
failure is  
not to try.  
”**

- George Clooney

# 08 AUDITIONING TO BOOK THAT ROLE

Audition for roles in community theater productions, student films, or independent films. This will help you gain experience and build your resume. Auditions can be live at a casting office or could be a self tape that you record in your own home. Be ready to submit your headshot and resume when you see a casting call. If you are selected for an audition, get to it IMMEDIATELY. Turnaround time on audition requests are typically short notice so get used to fitting your prep and audition in and around your busy life. Research the role and character well and go with what your gut says is the “truth” of the character. Be honest with the emotions of the character and deliver your lines in a conversational tone only to those other characters in your scene. Don't over project! Audition and forget it! Don't torture yourself or over analyze how you did or wait by the phone. Move on to your next audition. They will find you if they want you. Audition, Audition, and Audition!

It is also important to note that you don't need to take every audition that is offered to you. It is ok to say, “I'm not available for this project. Thank you for considering me.” You don't have to give your reason if you don't want to. The project might conflict with you personal or religious standards. Establish what projects are acceptable for you to be a part of early in your training so you don't get stuck in a sticky situation. Contrary to popular belief, you don't have to take your clothes off in order to get noticed.

I have an actress friend who didn't ask enough questions about the role she was cast for. When she got to set, and found that she was to play the “Town Fluzie” and that she would be physically kissing many different men on set, this wife and mother had to apologize and back out of the role immediately. They had to recast the role, which caused the production company time and resources. Do your research on the overall project and ask all the questions to know exactly what you are getting into.



## Keep Auditioning!

# 09 BE PERSISTENT

The acting industry is challenging and competitive, so it's important to stay positive, persistent, and resilient. Keep honing your skills, building your resume, and networking to increase your chances of success. Most successful actors will tell you their story of how they finally achieved their goal of becoming a full-time actor. Those stories typically are filled with lots of tough times, rejection, financial hardships, and self-doubt. Many times actors have said to themselves and family that this audition is my last one and then I am going back home to get a "real 9-5 job", only to finally land a role that springboards their career into high gear. Here are some thoughts from actors who "made it".



"If I get rejected for a part, I pick myself up and say 'OK, not today, maybe tomorrow i will get this other part or something.'" - Liam Neeson

"Perseverance is failing 19 times and succeeding the 20th." - Julie Andrews

"Don't be afraid to fail. It's not the end of the world and in many ways it's the first step toward learning something better and getting better at it" - Jon Hamm



# 10 START NOW!

It is never too early or too late to start acting. Life is short and you don't want to get to the end of your days and wish, "What if?" If acting in film and television is something that you have always dreamed of, then start NOW! Don't wait until it is convenient or when you have time because that time will never come.

If you need help getting started, reach out to Final Act Drama and one of our veteran acting coaches will help you get started down the path toward your dream of becoming an actor. Starting your acting career is tough, but if you stick with it, do the hard work, and be persistent, you will find your place in the acting industry. Good luck! Now....

## GET TO WORK!

# Final Act Drama

Final Act Drama is your one-stop for actor and voice-over training and services. If you want to learn what it takes to become an actor or voice actor, then training with Final Act Drama is your first and last stop!



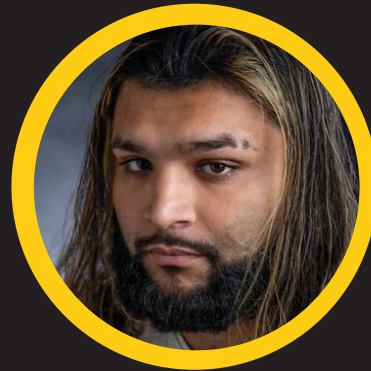
## FILM ACTOR TRAINING

Final Act Drama offers acting courses, designed to prepare an actor for commercials, feature films, and TV performances. Learn fundamental acting skills like character development, improvisation, movement, and speech dynamics. Are you trained to deliver on set when you hear the word....."Action!"



## VOICE OVER TRAINING

For those who have always wanted to be the voice of an animated character, record Radio or TV commercials, narrate books, introduce movie trailers, or be the voice of one of a million companies, services, brands, or products, HERE IS YOUR CHANCE!



## ACTOR HEADSHOTS AND RESUME

Final Act Drama works with Russ Randall Photography to provide professional headshots for actors. We will also help you develop your resume in industry format. Any professional actor needs to have great headshots. Don't sell yourself short!



## MEDIA PRODUCTION

Final Act Drama Productions will create your digital media marketing content, find your customers, and deliver your content directly to them. The purpose of marketing is to reach your target audience and communicate the benefits of your product or service — so you can successfully acquire, keep, and grow customers.

# TESTIMONIALS

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ 5 STAR REVIEWS



RUSS RANDALL IS AN ACTING COACH WITH A PLAN TO HELP YOU LEARN AND HELP YOU IMPROVE AS AN ACTOR. I WALKED IN THINKING I KNEW (AT THE VERY LEAST) THE BASICS, BUT I LEARNED EVEN MORE THAN WHAT I THOUGHT I ALREADY KNEW! RUSS IS OPEN TO IDEAS, AND CONSTRUCTIVE, AND TAKES THE TIME WITH YOU AS AN INDIVIDUAL. I AM VERY APPRECIATIVE OF ALL THE KNOWLEDGE I'VE GAINED! LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING TO LEARN EVEN MORE! ASHLEY REED – ACTRESS



WITH FINAL ACT DRAMA, YOU GET ALL THE TOOLS YOU NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS AMAZING INDUSTRY. AFTER MY FIRST SESSION OF CLASSES, I WAS ALREADY LANDING ROLES AND STEADILY BOOKING JOBS. I'M SO THANKFUL TO HAVE SUCH AN INCREDIBLE PROGRAM BE AFFORDABLE AND ATTAINABLE. SIGN UP NOW AND START WORKING TO MAKE YOUR DREAMS A REALITY! AMY SAMUEL - ACTRESS



FINAL ACT DRAMA IS A GREAT PLACE FOR STARTING YOUR ACTING CAREER OR REFINING YOUR SKILLS. RUSS RANDALL IS INCREDIBLY KNOWLEDGEABLE AND PATIENT, AND HE MAKES THE PROCESS INCREDIBLY EASY. I HAVE HAD COACHING SESSIONS WITH HIM AND HE ALSO MADE THE HEADSHOT PROCESS A COMFORTABLE AND EASY EXPERIENCE. RUSS WORKS HARD TO MAKE SURE YOU GET THE BEST TRAINING AND THE BEST PICTURE OF YOURSELF. I HIGHLY RECOMMEND WORKING WITH FINAL ACT DRAMA IF YOU HAVE ANY DESIRE TO GET INTO ACTING. ANDREW HUTCHINGS - ACTOR



RUSS RANDALL IS A PHENOMENAL ACTING COACH AND PHOTOGRAPHER! I HAD A BLAST WORKING WITH HIM, LEARNING ONE-ON-ONE VIA ZOOM AND IN PERSON, AND CREATING PROFESSIONAL PHOTOS FOR MY ACTING PORTFOLIO AND RESUME. I HIGHLY RECOMMEND RUSS TO ANYONE WANTING TO START ACTING OR WHO WANTS ADDITIONAL ACTING LESSONS AND QUALITY PHOTOS. ELIZABETH BRECKENKAMP - ACTRESS

# THANK YOU FOR READING!



## RUSS RANDALL

ACTOR, ACTING COACH, SCREENWRITER,  
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