

One-Act Tips

Writing Your First One-Act Play

(You've Got This!)

Got a story? A feeling? A moment you can't stop thinking about? That's a play waiting to happen. You don't need experience. You don't need fancy words. You just need to start.

WHAT IS A ONE-ACT PLAY?

A short play (usually 20–30 minutes)

One main problem

A small cast

One big moment that changes something

Think: short + focused + powerful

START HERE!

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One main problem

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Think: short + focused + powerful

CHARACTERS = DRAMA

Every character should:

Want something badly

Get in someone else's way

Have a voice that sounds like a real person

DIALOGUE RULES (VERY IMPORTANT)

People don't say exactly what they mean

Short lines > long speeches

If it sounds weird out loud, fix it

Silence can be powerful too

Plays are meant to be heard, not read quietly.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

One setting is enough

One main conflict is plenty

Start late (skip the backstory)

End with a choice, reveal, or realization

You don't need a happy ending—just an honest one.

FIRST DRAFT TRUTHS

It will be messy

That's normal

You are not "bad" at this

You can't revise what you don't write.

FINAL TIP

Read your play out loud.

Then read it again.

Then let someone else read it.

That's how plays get better.

YOU BELONG HERE.

Your voice matters. Your story matters. Now, write the play.

[SUBMIT YOUR ONE-ACT HERE!](#)