

OOTC48 Filmmaking Rules

Here are all the rules to the making of your film for OOTC48, please read them. If these don't answer your questions, read the Challenge Rules. You will be able to ask questions at the Kickoff.

The OOTC48 Organizers may add to or amend these rules at any time prior to the beginning of the Challenge Weekend.

A. Times

The **Out Of The Cellar 48 Hour Horror Film Challenge (OOTC48)** will occur once a year in the month before the Out Of The Cellar Horror Film Festival.

OOTC48 will occur between a **Friday 7pm** Pacific Daylight Time and the following **Sunday 7:30pm** Pacific Daylight Time. This is the **Challenge Weekend**.

The participating group/team must complete its film/video work in time to submit it on **Sunday**, usually **by 7:30pm**.

All films received on **Sunday** (on-time) will be screened.

B. Creative Process

All creativity must take place during the **Challenge Weekend**. Any creative work in advance of the challenge weekend is prohibited. Creative work includes, but is not limited to:

- Writing the script
- Casting (of roles)
- Rehearsing
- Costume/Set Design
- Shooting
- Editing
- Sound Design
- Rendering
- Outputting to media

C. Preparation

The only work to begin prior to the **Challenge Weekend** is:

- Organizing Crew
- Organizing Cast
- Securing Equipment
- Scouting/Securing Locations

D. Footage

Every frame of your film **MUST** contain footage shot or created in the Challenge Weekend. This is "core footage."

"Supporting footage," or footage shot or created **BEFORE** the Challenge Weekend (including stock footage that is part of a special effect) may be placed over or under the core footage, as long as every frame of your film contains some amount of core footage and the assembling of the core footage with the supporting footage occurs during the Challenge Weekend.

Animation, titles, and special effects can be considered core footage if it is created during the Challenge Weekend. For simplicity of a first year, we are not allowing any AI created media at this time.

Supporting footage **MAY NOT** include people or other performers.

Still photos are permitted as core footage. The still photos do not need to be created during the Challenge Weekend. Note: Still photos created outside of the Challenge Weekend being used in a sequence to create the illusion of motion are not acceptable as core footage, but are acceptable as supporting footage.

You must have rights to any footage or photos used in your film. An OOTC48 Materials Release is required for all materials, photos, and/or footage not created in the Challenge Weekend.

E. Kickoff Event

Each participating team must have a representative at the OOTC48 Kickoff Event Friday, October 16, in Redwood City, CA.

- Prior to the Kickoff event, each group must submit a completed Team Leader's Agreement, signed by its team leader. A team may not participate without submitting this agreement.
- The genre of this challenge is **HORROR**. Each group will receive the sub-genre in a random drawing.

F. Required Elements

Each participating group will be assigned required elements that must appear in its film, such as a character, a prop and/or a line of dialogue.

- The required Character must be seen on-screen and it must be clear--either directly shown or by context--who the required character is. The Character name does not have to be said out loud or written on-screen.
- The required Prop must be seen on-screen. A picture of the required prop is also allowed.

- The required Line of Dialogue must be used verbatim. It may be spoken, sung and/or written. It may be in any language, though if it is unclear that it is the required Line, there must be a translation.
- To qualify as an Official Entry, each group's film must be in the HORROR genre and must contain all required elements within the official time limit and prior to the credits.

G. Volunteers

All cast and crew must be volunteers.

H. Animal Safety

Animal safety, like cast and crew safety, is an important part of OOTC48 filmmaking. Films that result in the death or mutilation of an animal may be disqualified.

I. Cameras

Any type of video or film camera may be used. There is no limit to the number of cameras.

J. Music Rights

Participating groups are encouraged to work with a composer and/or musicians to write and record music for the films. It is permissible for a participating group to use pre-recorded music; however, the participating group must have the rights to any music used in its film and must provide releases for all music used. As with music, pre-recorded sound effects are allowed, but you must have rights to use them.

Note: Song parodies (i.e., use of identifiable pre-existing compositions with new or altered lyrics or music) may not be included in the film without a signed release from the composition's rights holder. This rule applies without regard to whether the song parody arguably constitutes **fair use** under US or international copyright law.

K. Total Running Time

The finished film must be a minimum of 4 minutes in duration, and a maximum of 7 minutes in duration—not including end credits. In other words, the official running time begins after the required OOTC48 slates and ends prior to the end credits. The required slates and the end credits do not count towards the minimum time of 4 minutes. **The film story may not be longer than 7 minutes.** OOTC48 reserves the right to shorten any film that exceeds the maximum length for screening purposes.

L. Credits

Pre-film Required Slates

Before the finished film begins, the media should have...

- 5 seconds of black
- 5 seconds title card with: team name, title, sub-genre, city, and date
- 5 seconds title card with:

**This film was made for the
OOTC48 Horror Film Challenge 2026.
www.outofthecellarfilms.com/OOTC48**

- 2 seconds of black

Your film follows this.

Templates for these titles can be found in the OOTC Discord Server OOTC48 Channels. It is not required to use our templates, you may create your own as long as the timing and information remains the same.

Opening Credits

After the 2 seconds of black, some films start with opening credits. These are not encouraged, but if you use them, opening credits are considered to be part of the film, and therefore count against the seven-minute maximum. Additionally, if your film has opening credits other than simply the film's title (for example, the names of directors, actors, etc.), you must include one of the following:

- the text **"YOUR TEAM NAME presents"** immediately followed by **"an OOTC48 Horror Film"**

or

- the text **"an OOTC48 Horror Film"** immediately following the title of your film

Note: **"an OOTC48 Horror Film"** may be entirely lowercase (i.e., **an OOTC48 horror film**).

End Credits

Credits at the end of each film are limited to a maximum of 60 seconds. The 60 seconds is considered additional to the length of the film, as stated above. (That is, a film may be 7 minutes long, with an additional 60 seconds of credits, for a total running time of 8 minutes.) OOTC48 reserves the right to shorten any end credits that exceed the maximum length for screening purposes.

Bloopers and/or behind the scenes are permitted during or after the end credits adhering to the 60 second maximum length.

The end credits must include the words: **This film was made for the Out Of The Cellar 48-Hour Horror Film Challenge.**
www.OutOfTheCellarFilms.com/OOTC48

Slates And Credits After The Challenge

For any future screenings, online or otherwise, films should retain the pre-film title card that says: **This film was made for the Out Of The Cellar 48-Hour Horror Film Challenge 2026.**

www.OutOfTheCellarFilms.com/OOTC48

M. Required Media Formats

Maximum File Size: 2GB.

IMPORTANT: If your film does not conform to the submission requirements, it may be disqualified. Also, if your film cannot be viewed on OOTC48 equipment, it may be disqualified.

N. Submission Notes

- We recommend that you make sound levels relatively even throughout your film. (If your film has uneven sound or sound that peaks, it may be modified to protect the playback equipment.)
- Specs vary from theater to theater and are beyond the control of OOTC48. If your film is very dark, it may be difficult to see in some theaters.
- All films received on time the evening of the deadline will be screened, presuming they meet the eligibility requirements.

O. Production Documents

Each team must secure releases for talent, crew, music and locations (and any other applicable releases), which must be turned in to the Challenge organizers with the finished film/video. The film/video will not be screened before the OOTC48 Organizers receive the signed releases.

- Release forms can be found on the OOTC48 website.
- Completed release forms shall be uploaded to the OOTC48 Google Drive.
- Both written and electronic signatures are allowed.

P. Certification Statement

The Entrant must submit a Certification Statement with their completed Entry, certifying adherence to all Official Rules.

Q. Eligibility

To be eligible for the Festival, Entries must be the original work of the Entrant; must not infringe third-party's rights; must not contain pornographic material; may not contain defamatory statements about any person, company, organization or entity; may not invade privacy or other rights of any person, company or entity; may not in any other way violate applicable

laws and regulations; and may not contain any copyrighted elements (other than as owned by the Entrant and/or OOTC48).

Entries containing prohibited or inappropriate content as determined by the OOTC48, in its sole discretion, to be inappropriate will be disqualified. OOTC48 reserves the right to make the final determination as to which Entries are eligible. OOTC48 reserves the right to refuse to screen a film or to make an announcement at the screening regarding the content of the film. OOTC48 reserves the right to alter a film in order to remove or delete offensive or defamatory content.

R. No Pre-Screening Distribution

The Entrant should not distribute their entry/video in any way prior to it receiving its official OOTC48 premiere screening at the Out Of The Cellar Horror Film Festival. This includes uploading the video to any website or screening the film for groups of anyone other than the team. The Entrant is encouraged to make a trailer of their film and distribute that instead. This trailer should be no longer than 48 seconds.

S. Official Film Entry

To be certified as an **Official OOTC48 Film Entry**, each participating group's film/video production must follow all rules herein. The OOTC48 Organizers reserve the right to screen only certified **Official OOTC48 Film Entries**.

T. Entries Not Returned

No Entries (media or documents) will be returned.

U. Disqualification

OOTC48 may, in their sole discretion, disqualify Entries deemed to be inappropriate or otherwise non-compliant.

V. Using AI (Artificial Intelligence) in Your OOTC48 Entry

You may not use AI (Artificial Intelligence) in the creation of your film.