

Duties of an Assistant Director

An assistant director, like every other person, is very important if not crucial to the production process. They need to be very organized as a person, because of their many focuses that they need to take during production. An assistant director should also be authoritative, a team leader, motivator, able to work long hours, able to pay close attention to detail, good at multitasking, planning ahead, working long hours, and prioritizing tasks. They are like a right-hand for the director and have many responsibilities that will help lighten the load for the director, as he/she should be focusing on the creative process. Throughout the day they keep track of daily progress in the production schedule, prepare call sheets daily, and maintain the order on the set. They also breakdown scripts, making note of aspects that need to be paid attention to. When creating a schedule they would take input from different department heads, including the director and producer. They would also need a list of all locations from the locations manager, or the production coordinator would have it. They are also responsible for the health and safety on set or location, and would need to take precautions to make aware of the hazards to others. Being an assistant director has been seen as a stepping stone to directing in the past, Alfred Hitchcock was an assistant director. However now, usually an assistant will transition to a production manager or producer rather than a director now. They may also start by gaining experience as a runner on a film set, or by working in a production office before becoming a third assistant director, then a second assistant director. Usually this role is broken down since it consists of so much. There can be the first assistant director, second assistant director, the second second assistant director, third assistant director, and additional assistant director. There is also the production assistant which is lower on the crew in terms of pay and authority. A major responsibility of the assistant director is to "call the roll", which means to call out a series of cues to ensure that cast and crew know what is going on during production. This ensures that everyone knows their specific role and when to complete it. They use specific saying to make what they say more efficient, such as "waiting on", "final checks", "quiet on set", "turnover", "roll sound/camera", "action", "cut", and many other things. The assistant director is like a bridge between the Director and cast/crew.