How to Slate in an Audition

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A “slate” is an actor’s introduction before they launch into an [audition](https://www.backstage.com/magazine/article/audition-5110/). But it gets more complicated from there, especially as Zoom auditions and self-tapes have raised new questions around the slating process. And while stating your name may seem like a throwaway moment before the real work begins, nailing the slate can set the tone for your whole audition.

**What is “Slating”?**

“Slating” is the industry term for introducing yourself in an audition, whether it’s in-person, [virtual](https://www.backstage.com/magazine/article/how-to-do-a-zoom-audition-right-72972/), or [self-taped](https://www.backstage.com/magazine/article/guide-perfect-self-tape-1758/). The exact information you provide in a slate will depend on what the casting team asks for, but often includes your name, age and title/author of your monologue.

An actor’s slate is usually the first moment that casting directors see them outside of their [headshot](https://www.backstage.com/magazine/article/headshots-everything-need-know-5052/) or [demo reel](https://www.backstage.com/magazine/article/create-demo-reel-1-4847/), so it’s an important opportunity to make an impression. You’ll soon be diving into someone else’s words, so think of the slate as a small moment to showcase your personality. “Saying your name seems so simple, which is why many give it no real thought,” former casting director Carolyn Barry says. “[This can be a mistake](https://www.backstage.com/magazine/article/slate-best-first-impression-44350/) because the slate provides important information about who you are. It depicts confidence or a lack thereof, essence, a personality, and so much more.”

**How to Slate for an Audition**

You should slate as yourself with energy and professionalism.

Australian actor Lucy Fry approaches her slate like a scene. “I try to fill it with the same energy that I would any action as the character because focusing on energy, the breath, and the character makes it feel easier,” Fry explains. “It’s the only chance you ever get to look directly at the casting directors, so I try to channel the energy of the character with warmth and confidence so the people watching it can see the way the character sits in me through the eyes. I try to let myself be seen without pushing a fake smile or worrying about what anyone thinks.” Whatever approach you choose, the most important thing is that you’re comfortable while you slate.

Slating should also be considered a separate component of the audition process. In other words, take your time. Don’t rush into [your sides](https://www.backstage.com/magazine/article/what-are-sides-in-acting-72452/) or monologue; take a moment after finishing your slate. This gives the casting team a chance to catch up with you—and, more importantly, it gives you a moment to prepare for the work you’re about to do.

**What Should I Say in a Slate?**

There’s no standard formula for a slate—exactly what you say will depend on what the casting team or audition monitor requests. You’ll always be asked to state your name, but other information you may be asked to provide includes:

* Representation
* Present location
* Height
* Whether you’d be considered a local hire
* Age
* Union affiliation
* Character you’re auditioning for

For example: “Hello, I’m John Doe. I’m 5’10”. I’m with Top Tier Talent. I’m AEA and SAG-AFTRA, and I’m based out of Atlanta, Georgia.” The key here is to *follow directions exactly.*

No matter how you introduce yourself, it’s important to do so clearly and professionally. That’s not to say that you should treat this like a business interview, but just remember that the main purpose of a slate is to provide information. It’s important to be heard and understood.

**Slating Tips**

* Always approach the stage with confidence
* Clear enunciation and pace
* Stand center, on the downstage center plane
* Eye contact with casting directors
* Head bow after slate
* Wait to be instructed to begin