

THE FILM FESTIVAL CHECKLIST

Questions to consider	Southern Shorts Awards	Other Festivals
<i>Do they have my specific genre, or would my film compete against films in other genres?</i>	15 distinct categories: • Action/Adventure • Animation • Comedy • Documentary • Drama • Fan Films • Horror • Made in Georgia • Mystery/Thriller • Musicals • Puppetry • Science Fiction/Fantasy • Web Series/Webisode • Western Plus • Review Only	Most lump everything into Drama or Documentary or they're only for specific genres like Horror. Drama is by far the most entered category, followed by Documentaries. But if your film is neither, then you will have a better chance submitting to a festival that has your specific category.
<i>Is my film new enough?</i>	We accept films regardless of their release date.	Most want films less than two years old.
<i>Do they have a theme?</i>	We do not ascribe to the 'theme' idea. Films must earn their way into our festivals based on scores alone.	Some festivals choose a different 'theme' each year such as "Family." But if your film doesn't fit, then you've wasted your entry fee.
<i>Are they annual or quarterly?</i>	We are seasonal, so we send out scoresheet and comments and have a festival screening every three months. With annual festivals, you may have to wait for almost a year to find out if you got in, and you won't get a scoresheet or judges comments.	Most film festivals are annual events, and no other quarterly festival offers as much as Southern Shorts Awards.
<i>Who are the judges?</i>	ALL of our Judges have an IMDb page or extensive experience in video/film production and all are listed by name, with credentials and a picture.	Many never tell you who judges your film, or if they have any experience or even connection to filmmaking other than the fact that they 'like movies.'
<i>What criteria are used to judge my film?</i>	Our judges use a score sheet to evaluate each film on a set of standard criteria: Originality, Screenplay, Direction, Acting, Cinematography, Editing, Sound Design, Music, Production Design and the judge's personal score.	Most tell you absolutely nothing about their judging process.

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<i>Do they guarantee to notify me if I don't get in?</i>	Every filmmaker receives their scoresheet and judges comments in an email sent to them directly, whether they get into the festival screening or not.	Some do not even bother to send out bulk emails notifying those who do not get in.
<i>How can I be sure that they will even watch my film?</i>	Our Scoresheet and Judges Comments are proof that 3 Judges have watched your film.	Without specific feedback about your film, there is no way to be sure.
<i>Do they give feedback?</i>	Every film submitted is viewed by 3 Judges and every one receives their scoresheet and Judges Comments, at NO extra charge.	A few other festivals do offer the option of feedback, by one person (usually with unknown credentials) but for an extra fee.
<i>Do they give you a scoresheet?</i>	Every submission receives a Scoresheet showing 3 judges scores in 10 categories.	There may be other festivals that do this for free, but we're not aware of them.
<i>Do they send you PDF certificates if your film, cast and/or crew win awards?</i>	Every film scoring at least 70 out of 100 receives an Award Certificate. Cast and crew members who receive total individual scores of 7 or higher will also receive certificates.	As far as we know, we are the ONLY festival in the world that does this for free.
<i>Who gets shown at the festival?</i>	The top 3 highest scoring award winning films in each genre are shown.	Varies depending on the way each festival judges their entries.
<i>Do they curate? (Show hand picked films they've invited.)</i>	Never. Every film shown at each of our quarterly festivals has earned their place on the screen by their score.	Many festivals will pick films they like and invite those filmmakers to show them, sometimes even paying them to show their film with money taken in from your entry fees.
<i>Are they a competition?</i>	We have two stages in our festival. The first is scoring each film, cast & crew individually, which is their scoresheet. We then tally all of the scoresheets to see which films make the top in their genre, so that part is a competition.	Varies greatly.
<i>Do they have Best of Show awards?</i>	Best Of Show trophies for Best Picture, Director, Screenplay, Actor, Actress, Cinematographer, Editor, Sound Design, Music, Production Design, Visual FX, Makeup FX and Costume Design.	Most do not.

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<p><i>Do they have an awards presentation?</i></p>	<p>We have a professionally produced, "Oscar's style" black-tie awards presentation. We show clips from each nominee, and winners get to make an acceptance speech.</p>	<p>Most are very low key to the point of being anti-climactic and very few put much effort into the presentation.</p>
<p><i>What are the awards?</i></p>	<p>All winners receive signed and sealed certificates with the Best Picture receiving a trophy.</p>	<p>Varies.</p>
<p><i>Do they video the awards?</i></p>	<p>We record and edit every online Zoom Awards Presentation then post them online and attending winners may request acceptance clips.</p>	<p>We are not aware of any other festival that does this other than major festivals like Sundance.</p>
<p><i>Bottom Line: Why should I enter my short film into your festival?</i></p>	<p>Out of the more than 8 thousand film festivals world wide, NO OTHER FESTIVAL gives you more bang for your buck than the Southern Shorts Awards, period.</p>	<p>Before entering any film festival, you should check out their website as well as the comments about them on Film Freeway. Obviously, the larger the festival the lower your odds of getting in.</p>
<p><i>What can I expect when I pay my hard-earned entry fee to your festival?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your film will be viewed by three judges. • You will receive a personal email with your film's scoresheet and Judges Comments around two weeks after the submission deadline for that season. • If your film, cast or crew have earned any awards, you will receive PDF Certificates of those awards. • If your film is accepted into the festival screening, you will receive a detailed email on what we need and how to proceed. • The currently online film festivals are usually held about a month after notifications. • Festival screening filmmakers who attend the Awards Presentation online will be able to give their acceptance speech. • Festival winners will be listed on our website along with the video of the Awards Presentation. 	<p>Varies greatly. Most will ignore you if you don't get in, or send you a patronizing letter to the effect of "good effort."</p>

