

## Video & Scriptwriting / Scene Direction

Specify where characters look and what it communicates — visual relationship mapping for professional scene direction.

Difficulty: Advanced

Model: GPT-4 / Claude / Gemini

Use Case: Visual Relationship Mapping

Updated: June 2026

Why This Prompt Exists

Where a character looks tells the audience who has power, who is hiding something, who is in love. Most scripts ignore eye lines entirely — leaving actors to guess.

You get:

- characters staring at each other for entire scenes (static, unnatural)
- eye lines that don't match power dynamics (confusing)
- no avoidance or intimacy cues (relationship unclear)
- actors looking at nothing (no intention, no subtext)
- missed opportunities for non-verbal storytelling

But eye lines have specific meanings:

- direct eye contact: confidence, intimacy, confrontation, honesty
- avoiding gaze: submission, guilt, hiding, discomfort
- looking away/down: shame, sadness, thinking, lying

- looking up: hope, prayer, thinking, pleading
- glancing (quick, repeated): suspicion, attraction, nervousness
- watching from distance: power, observation, threat, longing

Without eye line direction, non-verbal storytelling fails.

This prompt specifies character gaze for emotional meaning.

The Prompt

Assume the role of a director who specifies eye lines for emotional storytelling.

Your task is to determine where characters look and what it communicates.

Generate:

## 1. EYE LINE CLASSIFICATION

Gaze Direction	Emotional Meaning	Power Dynamic	Best For
Direct eye contact	Confidence, intimacy, confrontation, honesty	Equal or dominant	Arguments, confession, connection
Avoid eye contact	Submission, guilt, hiding, discomfort	Submissive	Lying, shame, nervousness
Look away	Distraction, rejection, thinking	Avoidant	During argument, when hurt
Look down	Shame, sadness, submission, thinking	Submissive	Apology, defeat, grief

| Look up | Hope, prayer, thinking, pleading | Vulnerable |  
 Desperation, inspiration |  
 | Glance (quick) | Suspicion, attraction, nervousness | Uneasy |  
 Sneaking a look, checking |  
 | Watch (sustained) | Power, observation, threat, longing | Dominant  
 or distant | Villain watching hero, longing |

## 2. POWER DYNAMICS THROUGH EYE LINES

| Power Configuration | Dominant Character Gaze | Submissive Character  
 Gaze |  
 |-----|-----|-----  
 ----|  
 | Clear hierarchy | Direct eye contact | Avoids or looks down |  
 | Equal | Mutual direct eye contact | Mutual direct eye contact |  
 | Contesting | Staring contest (holds gaze) | Breaks first, looks away  
 |  
 | Secret power | Looks away (hiding) | Looks away (unaware) |

## 3. GAZE PATTERNS BY RELATIONSHIP

Relationship	Primary Gaze Pattern	Secondary	When to Use
Lovers (happy)	Mutual direct, soft	Glances	Intimate moments
Lovers (conflict)	Avoidance, looking away	Quick glances	
Fighting, tension			
Strangers	Avoid eye contact	Brief glance	Public spaces
Rivals	Staring contest	Glances when other not looking	
 Competition |

| Boss/Employee | Employee looks down/away | Boss direct | Power imbalance |  
| Suspicious | Repeated glances | Watching from distance |  
Uncertainty, danger |

#### 4. EYE LINE PROMPT TEMPLATE

`[Character] looks [direction] at [target]. Emotional meaning: [meaning].`

**\*\*Example:\*\***

`Jamie looks down at the floor. Emotional meaning: shame, cannot face Alex.`

#### 5. EYE LINE SEQUENCE PATTERNS

Pattern	Sequence	Emotional Arc
Avoid → Direct → Avoid	Hiding then confronting then retreating	
Fear to courage to shame		
Direct → Look away → Direct	Confident then defeated then resolute	
Overconfidence to crisis to determination		
Glance → Direct → Hold	Sneaking then confronting then committing	
Curiosity to courage to certainty		
Watch → Look away → Watch	Observing then hiding then observing	
Suspicion to avoidance to obsession |

#### 6. CAMERA RELATIONSHIP EYE LINES

Camera Gaze	Emotional Effect	Best For
Character looks at camera (direct address)	Intimacy, confession, audience as confidant	Soliloquy, documentary
Character looks just off camera	Conversational, realistic	Dialogue scenes
Character looks at something off screen	Curiosity, mystery	Reveals, suspense
Character looks at nothing (empty)	Dissociation, shock, despair	Trauma, grief

## 7. COMMON EYE LINE MISTAKES

Mistake	Why It Fails	Correct Eye Line
Constant eye contact	Unnatural, confrontational	Break gaze naturally
No eye contact ever	Avoidant, disconnected	Establish when important
Looking at wrong person	Confusing power dynamic	Match gaze to relationship
Eye lines that don't match words	Contradiction without purpose	Intentional contradiction only
Actors looking at camera	Breaking the fourth wall unintentionally	Keep eyeline off camera unless intentional

INPUTS:

Scene description:

[PASTE SCENE DESCRIPTION]

Character relationship:

[E.G., "Lovers breaking up", "Rivals competing", "Parent and child"]

Power dynamic:

[E.G., "Equal", "One dominant", "One hiding power"]

Emotional beat (from SD-01):

[E.G., "Confession", "Accusation", "Reconciliation"]

RULES:

- Direct eye contact = confidence, intimacy, confrontation, honesty
- Avoiding gaze = submission, guilt, hiding, discomfort
- Looking down = shame, sadness, submission, thinking
- Looking up = hope, prayer, thinking, pleading
- Glances = suspicion, attraction, nervousness
- Watching from distance = power, observation, threat, longing
- Break eye contact naturally (constant staring is unnatural)
- Match eye lines to power dynamics (submissive looks down)
- Use eye line changes to show emotional shifts (avoid → direct → avoid)
- Rehearse eye lines specifically (actors need precise direction)

How To Use It

- Direct eye contact = confidence, intimacy, confrontation, honesty.
- Avoiding gaze = submission, guilt, hiding, discomfort.
- Looking down = shame, sadness, submission, thinking.
- Looking up = hope, prayer, thinking, pleading.

- Glances = suspicion, attraction, nervousness.
- Watching from distance = power, observation, threat, longing.
- Break eye contact naturally — constant staring is unnatural and confrontational.
- Match eye lines to power dynamics — submissive characters look down, dominant characters hold gaze.
- Use eye line changes to show emotional shifts — avoid → direct → avoid shows fear to courage to shame.
- Rehearse eye lines specifically — actors need precise direction, not general notes.

Example Input

**Scene description:**

“A manager confronts an employee about missing deadlines. The employee knows they’re at fault.”

**Character relationship:**

“Manager (supervisor), Employee (reports to manager, feels guilty)”

**Power dynamic:**

“Manager has clear authority; Employee is submissive”

**Emotional beat:**

“Accusation, guilt, shame, resolution”

Why It Works

Most scripts ignore eye lines — leaving actors to guess where to look, missing the non-verbal storytelling that reveals power and relationship.

This framework improves outcomes by forcing:

- eye line classification (direct, avoid, look away, look down, look up, glance, watch)
- power dynamics through eye lines (dominant vs. submissive gaze)

- gaze patterns by relationship (lovers, strangers, rivals, boss/employee)
- eye line sequence patterns (avoid → direct → avoid, etc.)
- camera relationship eye lines (at camera, off camera, at nothing)

**Failure modes this prevents:**

- Characters staring at each other for entire scenes (unnatural, confrontational)
- Eye lines that don't match power dynamics (confusing relationship)
- No avoidance or intimacy cues (relationship unclear)
- Actors looking at nothing (no intention, no subtext)

**This improves on:** Undirected eye lines. Strategic gaze direction reveals power, emotion, and relationship.

**Related to:** SD-02 (Blocking) for movement; SD-04 (Subtext) for what's unsaid.

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