

Video & Scriptwriting / Short-Form Video

Insert unexpected moments to stop scrolling and reset attention — scroll-stopping mechanics for retention recovery.

Difficulty: Advanced

Model: GPT-4 / Claude / Gemini

Use Case: Retention, Scroll Stopping

Updated: June 2026

Why This Prompt Exists

Attention drops predictably during short-form videos. Pattern interrupts reset attention, but most creators never insert them — leading to steady viewer drop-off.

You get:

- steady retention decline (no resets, viewers gradually leave)
- predictable, boring pacing (no surprises, no engagement)
- no visual or audio variation (same format, same energy)
- viewers scrolling away mid-video (attention lost)
- missed opportunity to re-engage dropping viewers

But pattern interrupts have predictable timing:

- visual interrupt: sudden zoom, color shift, text pop, different angle
- audio interrupt: sound effect, beat drop, silence, volume change
- pacing interrupt: sudden fast or slow motion, freeze frame

- content interrupt: unexpected fact, joke, or reveal
- perspective interrupt: POV shift, fourth wall break, overlay

Without interrupts, videos lose viewers steadily.

This prompt inserts pattern interrupts at optimal retention points.

The Prompt

Assume the role of a short-form retention engineer who designs pattern interrupts.

Your task is to insert unexpected moments that reset viewer attention.

Generate:

1. PATTERN INTERRUPT TYPES

Type	Description	Effect	Best Placement
Visual zoom	Sudden zoom in/out	Attention reset	Every 5-8 seconds
Sound effect	Unexpected audio cue	Startle, curiosity	Before key point
Text pop	Bold word appears	Information emphasis	On key word
Pace change	Fast → slow or reverse	Pattern break	Mid-video (10-15s)
Freeze frame	Pause action	Emphasis, suspense	Before reveal
Perspective shift	POV change, B-roll	Refresh visual	After explanation

| Fourth wall | Direct eye contact, "you" | Connection | After value point |

2. INTERRUPT TIMING MAP

Video Length	Interrupt Frequency	Placement (seconds)
15 seconds	2 interrupts	0:05, 0:10
30 seconds	4 interrupts	0:05, 0:12, 0:19, 0:26
45 seconds	6 interrupts	0:05, 0:12, 0:19, 0:26, 0:33, 0:40
60 seconds	8 interrupts	Every 7-8 seconds

3. PATTERN INTERRUPT SCRIPT MARKUP

****Original script:****

`The secret to better editing is using keyboard shortcuts. Most people click menus. That's slow. Learn the shortcuts and you'll edit 3x faster.`

****With pattern interrupts:****

`The secret to better editing is [ZOOM IN] keyboard shortcuts. [BEAT] Most people [TEXT POP: "CLICK MENUS"] click menus. [SFX: whoosh] That's slow. [FREEZE FRAME] Learn the shortcuts [ZOOM OUT] and you'll edit 3x faster.`

4. INTERRUPT PATTERNS BY CONTENT TYPE

Content Type	Primary Interrupt	Secondary	Frequency
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Educational	Text pop, zoom	Sound effect	High (every 5s)
Comedy	Sound effect, freeze	Fourth wall	High (every 3-5s)
Storytelling	Pace change, B-roll	Perspective shift	Medium (every 10s)
Tutorial	Zoom, freeze frame	Text pop	Medium (every 8s)
ASMR/Calm	Minimal, subtle shift	None	Low (every 15-20s)

5. INTERRUPT INTENSITY SCALE

Intensity	Visual	Audio	Pacing	Best For
Subtle	Soft zoom	Gentle rise	Slight slow	ASMR, calm content
Moderate	Zoom, color shift	Sound effect	Fast/slow change	Educational, tutorials
High	Rapid zoom, text pop	Loud SFX	Freeze + fast	Comedy, reaction
Extreme	Multiple changes	Multiple SFX	Chaotic	Comedy only

6. RETENTION RECOVERY PATTERN

Time	Action	Interrupt	Expected Retention Gain
0:00	Hook	None	Baseline 100%
0:05	Value point 1	Visual zoom	+5-10%
0:12	Value point 2	Sound effect	+5-10%
0:19	Value point 3	Text pop	+5-10%
0:26	CTA	Freeze + zoom	+10-15%

7. COMMON PATTERN INTERRUPT MISTAKES

Mistake	Why It Fails	Correct Approach
Too frequent	Overwhelming, annoying	Every 5-10 seconds max
Too subtle	No attention reset	Make interrupt noticeable
Wrong timing	After viewer already left	Interrupt before drop-off
No variety	Predictable interrupts	Rotate types
Distracting	Takes focus from content	Support, not overshadow

INPUTS:

Script (full or outline):

[PASTE SCRIPT]

Content type:

[EDUCATIONAL / COMEDY / STORYTELLING / TUTORIAL / CALM]

Target length:

[15 / 30 / 45 / 60 seconds]

Energy level:

[HIGH / MEDIUM / LOW]

RULES:

- Insert interrupts every 5-8 seconds for high-retention content
- Use visual interrupts (zoom, text pop, freeze) for educational content

- Use audio interrupts (SFX, beat drop) for comedy and reaction
- Match interrupt intensity to content energy (calm content needs subtle interrupts)
- Interrupts should support the message, not distract from it
- Test with viewers – if they notice the interrupts (negatively), reduce frequency
- Vary interrupt types – same interrupt repeated loses effectiveness

How To Use It

- Insert interrupts every 5-8 seconds for high-retention content — reset attention before it drops.
- Use visual interrupts (zoom, text pop, freeze) for educational content — they reinforce information.
- Use audio interrupts (sound effects, beat drops) for comedy and reaction — they amplify emotion.
- Match interrupt intensity to content energy — calm content needs subtle interrupts, comedy needs bold ones.
- Interrupts should support the message, not distract from it — every interrupt needs a purpose.
- Test with viewers — if they notice the interrupts in a negative way, reduce frequency.
- Vary interrupt types — the same interrupt repeated loses effectiveness over time.

Example Input

Script:

“Three things every freelancer needs to know before quitting their job. Number one: have six months of savings. Number two: find one consistent client first. Number three: automate your invoicing.”

Content type:

“EDUCATIONAL”

Target length:

“30 seconds”

Energy level:

“MEDIUM”

Why It Works

Most short-form videos have steady retention decline — viewers leave gradually because nothing surprises them or resets their attention.

This framework improves outcomes by forcing:

- pattern interrupt type classification (visual zoom, sound effect, text pop, pace change, freeze frame, perspective shift, fourth wall)
- interrupt timing map (optimal placement by video length)
- script markup for interrupts (ready-to-use notation)
- interrupt patterns by content type (what works for educational vs. comedy)
- intensity scale (subtle to extreme by content energy)

Failure modes this prevents:

- Steady retention decline (no resets, viewers gradually leave)
- Predictable, boring pacing (no surprises, no engagement)
- Viewers scrolling away mid-video (attention lost, not recovered)
- Same visual format throughout (visual fatigue)

This improves on: Linear, predictable video pacing. Pattern interrupts reset attention and recover retention.

Related to: SF-02 (Hook) for opening attention; SF-01 (Loopable) for ending retention.

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