

BUILD YOUR CREATIVE DREAM PROJECTS

WITH THESE FREE & AFFORDABLE TOOLS

by Lisa Lee

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WELCOME

Hi—I'm Lisa Lee, a multi-genre creator juggling comics, movies, and children's books. I've spent a lot of time figuring things out the hard way, so I put together this guide to share the tools that have actually helped me, from drafting scripts to building printables for my children's book series.

Aside from all the resources below, I also have a page on my website that indexes many of the articles I've found most helpful on my screenwriting journey: [Useful Links for Screenwriters](#)

Grab what you need, skip what you don't, and let me know how these products improve your workflow. Whether you're a writer, filmmaker, or illustrator, this toolkit is built to make your creative life a little easier.

Lisa



WHAT YOU'LL FIND INSIDE

WRITING SOFTWARE
& SCRIPTING TOOLS

PG 1

PLANNING,
ORGANIZATION &
NOTES

PG 2

PUBLISHING &
SUBMISSION
RESOURCES

PG 3

DESIGN &
ILLUSTRATION

PG 4

SOCIAL MEDIA &
MARKETING TOOLS

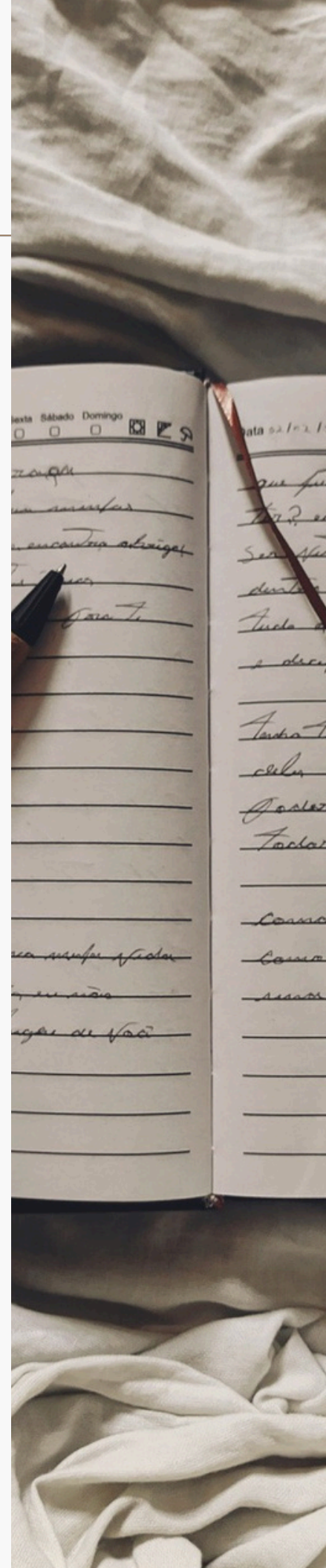
PG 5

FILMMAKING &
EDITING PLATFORMS

PG 6

BONUS: CREATOR
TOOLS & LINKS

PG 7



WRITING SOFTWARE & SCRIPTING TOOLS

WriterSolo (Free version of WriterDuet)

Free, unlimited scripts; local saves; imports/exports Final Draft, .celtx, .docx, and more. To access anywhere, store your script backups in a Google Drive or OneDrive folder.
WriterSolo Knowledgebase

WriterDuet (Free tier)

Cloud backup. Free plan lets you work on up to three scripts at once.
<https://www.writerduet.com/>

*These shortcuts work on both WriterDuet and WriterSolo: [Keyboard Shortcuts](#)

Trelby

Open-source, local backups only. When printing or exporting PDFs, it may default to A4 paper, giving you a lower page count than other software—just switch to Letter in settings for U.S. industry-standard counts.
<https://www.trelby.org/>

StudioBinder

Production management tools, sample scripts, and scriptwriting software—free plan includes one active script.
<https://www.studiobinder.com/>

Arc Studio (Free)

Two free scripts; cloud backups. The free version only has a browser app.
<https://arcstudiopro.com/>

OpenOffice / LibreOffice

Full-featured word processors. I've been using OpenOffice for several years as a free Microsoft Word alternative.

Google Docs

Universal, shareable documents. Useful for documents that you'll be sharing with other people—just share a link and anyone can comment or edit.

PLANNING, ORGANIZATION, & NOTES

Google Sheets

Spreadsheets. I use this for email lists, development slates, and marketing service comparisons.

Obsidian

Markdown-based vault. It has a high learning curve, so I currently only use it for note-taking and organizing film ideas, social media posts, blog posts, etc. I've heard of people who write novels in Obsidian or wikis for characters, fantasy worlds, role-playing games, etc.
<https://obsidian.md/>

Milanote

Visual boards. Great for moodboards, storyboards, research, outlines, beat sheets, etc. Free tier only allows 100 cards.
[Referral Link](#)

Rasterbator

Print large images across multiple pages. I've used this for screenprinting large T-shirt design files as well as oversized storyboards, like a Milanote board.
<https://rasterbator.net/>

PUBLISHING & SUBMISSION RESOURCES

Script Revolution

Free script uploads, community exposure, plus an optional supporter tier. Good for getting your script in front of indie creators such as producers and directors.

<https://www.scriptrevolution.com/>

Stage 32

Freenetworking platform with paid classes and webinars. Useful for networking with other creatives as well as getting critiques and advice. [Stage 32](#)

I reviewed it here: [Networking Review](#)

FilmFreeway

Browse and submit to festivals and contests.

<https://filmfreeway.com/>

DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION

PG 4

Canva and Adobe Express (Free)

Design tools for creating printables, social posts, video snippets, branding assets, etc. I have a premium Cava account, so I use it more often, especially when it comes to the image resizer. Before that, I mainly used Adobe Express.

Clip Studio Paint Pro and EX

Illustration, painting, animation, comic creation, etc. Not free, but it has a lengthy trial period. I use the PRO version for \$5/month, and the only features I wish I had from EX are the line art extractor and the ability to have all your webtoon pages on one file.

<https://www.clipstudio.net/en/>

GIMP

Open-source Photoshop alternative.

<https://www.gimp.org/>

Blender

Free3D modeling, 2D drawings, animation, and VFX. Create motion graphics, cartoons, or comic backgrounds, among other things.

<https://www.blender.org/>

SOCIAL MEDIA & MARKETING TOOLS

PG 5

Buffer *Schedule and manage posts for a variety of platforms.* The free plan allows three platforms. I currently only use it for Art Adventurers Instagram posts.

<https://buffer.com/>

Fedica

Analytics and scheduling for various social platforms. The free plan allows 9 accounts. I currently use this to handle most of my posts.

<https://fedica.com/>

Linktree

Gathers all your links on one page. A marketing student turned me on to this because of its ability to point people to all your links at a glance.

Linktree

Kit (Formerly known as ConvertKit)

Email marketing; provides a physical address for your newsletters. They have a free plan that is good for beginners who don't need more than one email automation.

<https://kit.com/>

Zoho Email

Free forever plan for up to five users. Create a custom email address to match your domain name.

<https://www.zoho.com/mail/zohomail-pricing.html>

Hostinger

Website hosting and building. Use their website builder if you don't plan to do anything complex with your site, like coding or integrating many apps. If you need a more complex builder, use their WordPress option when setting up your site.

Referral link

Weebly

Website hosting and building.

<https://www.weebly.com/>

ImageOptim Online

Optimize images for faster website load times.

<https://imageoptim.com/online>

FILMAKING & EDITING RESOURCES

DaVinci Resolve

Professional video editing and color grading—free version is industry-standard.

<https://www.blackmagicdesign.com/products/davinciresolve>

HitFilm Express

Beginner-friendly editing & VFX—current status may vary. I used this when it first came out as an Adobe alternative.

<https://hitfilm-express.en.softonic.com/>

Frame.io

Free plan allows two projects. Great for collaborating on film projects and managing all your film files.

<https://frame.io/>

Shot Deck

Great for finding movie stills; \$8 a month. [Shot Deck](#)

Some free alternatives:

- <https://shots.filmschoolrejects.com/search/>
 - <https://film-grab.com/>
 - <https://screenmusings.org/>
 - <https://movie-screencaps.com/>
 - <https://shot.cafe/>
 - <https://www.moviestillsdb.com/>
 - <https://frameset.app/stills>
-

BONUS: CREATOR TOOLS & LINKS

PG 7

ReadabilityFormulas / Flesch-Kincaid

Free sites to check what reading level your book is currently at:

- <https://readabilityformulas.com/readability-scoring-system.php>
- <https://goodcalculators.com/flesch-kincaid-calculator/>
- <https://datayze.com/readability-analyzer>

FutureLearn

Free courses on everything from Creative Arts to Study Skills, perfect for in-depth research into whatever topic you're writing about or learning a new skill:

<https://www.futurelearn.com/subjects>

Script Databases

- **Script Hive** (huge database; my first stop):
<https://sites.google.com/scripthive.com/scripthive/home>
- **SimplyScripts** (looks outdated but has many new scripts):
<https://www.simplyscripts.com/>
- **Script Slug**: <https://www.scriptslug.com/>
- **IMSDb** (also looks outdated but has new scripts): <https://imsdb.com/>
- **Script Reader Pro**: <https://www.scriptreaderpro.com/screenplays/>

YouTube Channels

- **Filmmaker IQ** (filmmaking tutorials): <https://www.youtube.com/@FilmmakerIQ/>
- **Film Riot** (allthingsfilmmaking): <https://www.youtube.com/@filmriot>
- **Eevi Jones** (children's book tips): <https://www.youtube.com/@EeviJones>
- **Craig D. Griffiths** (writing/screenwriting tips): <https://www.youtube.com/@craig.d.griffiths>
- **Go Draft** (advancedscreenwriting tips): <https://www.youtube.com/@TheGoDraft>
- **Nathan Graham Davis** (screenwriting course):
[NGD Playlist](#)

YouTube Channels

- **Matt Garvey** (comic creation): <https://www.youtube.com/@MattGarveyComics/>
He also has a book, *Making Your First Comic – A Step-by-Step Guide for Aspiring Comic Creators*, which I haven't read yet, but if it's even half as useful as his channel, you'll want to check it out.
- **J. Holt** (comic making): <https://www.youtube.com/@jholtillus>
- **Walter Ostlie** (webtoon creation): <https://www.youtube.com/@walterostlie>
- **The CG Essentials** (Blender tutorials): <https://www.youtube.com/@TheCGEssentials>

Nick Macari Not a YouTube channel, but still great information on writing/writing a comic:
<https://nickmacari.com/writing-craft/>

What's your #1 tool recommendation—let's swap notes!

Follow my journey at writelisawrite.com