The voice-ready script template

Write scripts that AI voices read naturally, at the right length, the first time. Fill in each box, keep to the word budget, then paste the script into your voice tool.

1. Pick your length: word budgets

Budgets assume a calm, clear pace of about **145 spoken words a minute**, a natural rate for narration. Faster voices need fewer words for the same time.

Format	Target length	Spoken words	Scenes
Short / Reel	under 30 s	45–60 (about 70 at most)	3–4
Short explainer	60 s	about 145	5–6
Standard video	8 min	about 1,160	14–20
Deep dive	12 min	about 1,740	20–30

2. The template

Hook: first 3 seconds (10 words or fewer)

The single most useful or surprising line. No greeting, no "in this video". Example: "You're paying for something your phone already does free."

Promise: next 5–10 seconds

What the viewer will have by the end. Example: "In the next eight minutes, you'll set up three automations that run on a free plan."

Body: one idea per scene

Scene 1 · point → proof (a number, a name, a result) → what it means for the viewer

Scene 2 · ...

Re-hook every 60–90 seconds in long videos: "But here's the catch...", a contrast or a number.

Payoff and question

The line people would screenshot, then a choice question: "Free plan or Starter: which fits how you work?"

Writing for AI voices: 12 rules

1. **Short sentences.** One idea each. Long sentences make AI voices rush or drop emphasis.
2. **Punctuation is direction.** A full stop is a pause; a comma is a breath. Use them where you want them, and drop dashes and brackets, which voices read unpredictably.
3. **Write numbers the way they are spoken** when it matters: "about ten thousand", not "~10k".
4. **Spell out symbols:** "per cent", "dollars a month", "and", not %, $/mo, &.
5. **Acronyms:** letters you want spelled get spaces or dots ("A. P. I."); words you want spoken stay whole ("NASA").
6. **Hard names:** respell them phonetically in the script you paste ("Kah-pee-tal"), but keep the correct spelling on screen.
7. **No stage directions** in the text ("[pause]", "(laughs)") unless your tool documents that feature.
8. **Paragraph breaks** between scenes give natural, longer pauses.
9. **Questions go up, statements go down.** End a line with a question mark only when it is a real question.
10. **Read it aloud once yourself.** If you stumble, the voice will too.
11. **Generate in sections** (one scene at a time) so a fix costs one line, not the whole script.
12. **One voice per video.** Switching voices mid-video sounds like a different channel.

Pronunciation fix sheet

Write on screen	Paste into the voice tool	Why
GPT-4o	G. P. T. four oh	Model names are often misread
$22/mo	twenty-two dollars a month	Symbols get skipped or misread
vs.	versus	Abbreviations read as letters
2026	twenty twenty-six	Years can be read as a number
e.g.	for example	Avoid Latin abbreviations

Before you publish: licence and credit checklist

Licence (check every time)

- ☐ **Does your plan allow commercial use?** Monetised videos are commercial. Example: on ElevenLabs' pricing page the Commercial License is listed from the Starter plan up, not on Free (checked 6 Nov 2026; plans change, so check the current page).
- ☐ **Cloned voice?** Only your own voice, or one you have clear written permission to use.
- ☐ **Platform rules:** read your platform's current policy on AI-generated or altered content and disclose it where the rules require.
- ☐ **Music and sound effects** made in the same tool can have their own licence terms. Check them separately.

Credit maths in one line

> **Characters ≈ words × 5.8** (an average English word plus its space). On credit-per-character voice tools,
> **monthly credits ≈ words per video × 5.8 × videos per month × 1.2** (20% spare for re-takes).
> Example: two 8-minute videos a week ≈ 1,160 × 5.8 × 9 × 1.2 ≈ 72,700 credits a month.

Use the free calculator at **techpings.com/voiceover-calculator** to do this for your own schedule and see which plan fits.

Free alternative

Open-source voices (for example Kokoro-82M, Apache-2.0 licence) run on your own computer with no credits. Quality is good for narration and there is no monthly limit, but you need a reasonably modern computer and some setup.

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