



Sora 2 Short-Form Playbook

A practical field guide to prompts, continuity and the finished cut.

100

ORIGINAL HOOK TEMPLATES

50

PROMPT TEMPLATES

From the VideoForge production records.
Native portrait. Deliberate cuts. Honest review.

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Make the first short

A small complete edit teaches more than an unreviewed batch.

1 Write the visible promise

Choose one object, one mechanism or one fictional turn. Write a one-sentence hook whose answer fits in the finished video. For a store concept, promise a look or a mood; do not invent a product benefit. For education, record a source before writing the explanation.

2 Plan three picture jobs

The opening presents the question or action. The middle adds one fact or consequence. The ending pays it off. These are editorial jobs, not mandatory equal-length clips. A short object teaser may need only two useful shots; a longer genre reel needs enough real visual change to carry its idea.

3 Lock the reusable details

Write the style, subject description, setting, key-light direction and palette once. Copy them exactly into related shots. Choose native 9:16 before generation. A landscape source cannot be treated as a portrait source simply because an export crops it.

4 Review the opening first

Start with one approved take budget. Inspect the source at native size: shape, mechanics, face, hands, framing and actual action. An attractive but incorrect shot is a rejection. Commission or prepare continuation only after choosing an opening worth continuing.

5 Build around actual timing

If there is narration, time the real audio. Choose source windows by actual speech and action. Burn concise captions in the edit; do not ask the video model to manufacture readable marketing copy.

6 Inspect the complete export

Check the picture without captions, then the full mix. Verify that audio survives every cut, captions fit, the payoff lands and the last frame is intentional. Keep the native master and a separate delivery derivative.

7 Archive the reason

Save the prompt, model or deployment, date, source file, chosen frames and rejection notes. Record why a take was selected. The next iteration should answer a specific question, not merely spend another generation.

Write what a camera can see

Prompt structure is a way to remove ambiguity, not a reliability guarantee.

Set the look, then the scene

Begin with a restrained style description. Name the subject, actual material or costume, setting and what occupies the frame. Prefer concrete nouns over broad praise. 'A shallow ceramic bowl on pale wood' is easier to inspect than 'a beautiful luxury product scene.' [D2, O]

Give the camera one job

Specify framing, one movement and useful depth of field. A locked medium close-up can make a tiny action readable. Avoid requesting an orbit, a zoom and a crane move in the same brief. Lens language steers appearance; it is not proof of a physically simulated lens.

Give the subject one action

Write a visible sequence in counted beats: the object tilts once and rests; the listener lowers their gaze and holds. A short clip cannot reliably carry a complex entrance, exchange, transformation and exit. If it fails, first reduce the action and freeze the camera.

Keep lighting causal

Name where the key comes from, how much fill you want and a small palette. Repeat that logic across cuts. A left-lit room that becomes right-lit without a reason can read as a different place. More adjectives will not repair that mismatch.

An annotated example

Style: restrained studio still life.

Scene: a plain ceramic cup on pale wood, no lettering.

Camera: locked close-up, rim in focus.

Action: one soft shadow crosses the cup; cup stays still.

Light: broad window key from left; cream, clay, walnut.

Sound: low room tone, no speech.

The important constraints are observable. Whether the result follows them must be checked.

Set the container outside the prose

The prompt describes content. In the recorded lane, duration and dimensions are request settings, not a promise created by writing '1080p' or 'longer' in the prompt. The template library keeps requested duration separate so you can adapt to the endpoint you actually have.

Product mood

Use only what the picture shows. These lines make no product-performance claims.

H001 A little [texture] for your [time of day].

Open on the material already catching light.

H002 Your [daily ritual], in [color] and light.

Show a single object in an uncluttered scene.

H003 One [object]. A quieter [setting].

Let background movement settle around the object.

H004 For the moment between [activity] and [activity].

Show the pause; do not promise a benefit.

H005 Meet [material] at golden hour.

Make the named material visible and accurate.

H006 A closer look at [visible detail].

Use a restrained macro reveal of that detail.

H007 Set the scene in [three colors].

Keep those colors consistent across the cut.

H008 The [object] stays. The light moves.

Lock the object and use one light transition.

H009 Make room for a little [mood].

Choose an ordinary setting with one focal object.

H010 From [wide view] to this one detail.

Cut to a detail genuinely present in the wide.

A shot with a job

Fill the brackets. Keep the visual brief separate from the edit notes.

P01

8s SOURCE · NATIVE PORTRAIT

Ceramic in moving light

Scene · Restrained studio product mood. An unbranded [ceramic object] with [verified finish] rests on a [surface]. Frame for portrait with clear caption space and a plain background.

Camera · Locked medium close-up, 50 mm look, shallow focus on the rim.

Action · Start with the rim already lit. A soft band of window light crosses it once; the object remains still. Hold the final composition.

Light · Window key from left, gentle fill; [three-color palette].

Sound · Quiet room tone, no speech or score.

Fill · Object, actual finish, surface and three colors.

Edit · Place a descriptive mood hook over the opening; cut before the light becomes repetitive.

Reject · Changing glaze, moving silhouette, invented lettering.

Lesson basis: D2, D8. Original, untested template.

P02

8s SOURCE · NATIVE PORTRAIT

Fabric edge

Scene · Tactile product study of unbranded [fabric item] in its actual [weave and color], draped over a plain wooden edge. Only fabric and the support are visible.

Camera · Slow sideways slide, close-up, 85 mm look; keep the same edge in focus.

Action · A single soft fold lifts slightly in a breeze, then settles. Preserve the weave and seam pattern throughout.

Light · Broad side light from right, soft shadows; cream, [fabric color], warm wood.

Sound · Faint cloth rustle and room tone; no voice.

Fill · Real material and seam detail from the product description.

Edit · Match the settling fold to a wider shot; add text afterward.

Reject · Material melting, seam duplication, unsupported fabric features.

Lesson basis: D2, D3. Original, untested template.