

FIELD GUIDE / 2026 EDITION

The **Shot List** for a Walkthrough

The seven shots a building walkthrough needs, in what order, how long each should hold, the three habits that ruin a film, and a printable shot list.

START HERE

A walkthrough is a sequence, not a length

Almost every animation brief we receive specifies a duration. Ninety seconds. Two minutes. A duration tells the studio how long the file is and nothing whatever about what is in it — and a film assembled to fill a number is the most common way a large animation budget produces something nobody watches twice.

The useful unit is the shot. Decide the shots, decide their order, decide how long each one holds, and the length is the arithmetic that falls out at the end. This guide is that list.

Briefed as a length

- "About two minutes, flying round the building"
- Camera moves chosen at the keyboard, late
- Cut to the music, because nothing else decides it
- Nobody can say what any single shot is for

Briefed as a sequence

- Seven shots, named, in order, each with a job
- Camera moves agreed as a rough preview before any final frame renders
- The cut is decided before the expensive part starts
- Every shot can be defended or dropped on its own

We build and render the model in 3ds Max because it gives the better result. D5 real-time carries the animation and the economics — work that took roughly a week to render can come back in minutes.

DIM KUZMENKO, CO-FOUNDER, MAVERICK FRAME STUDIO

Which matters to you for one practical reason: when frames are cheap, changing a camera move is a conversation rather than a variation. Ask early whether your studio can show you the whole sequence rough before it commits to final frames. If it can, use that.



Maverick Frame production render.

THE SEQUENCE — PART ONE

The first four shots, and what each one owes you

This is the order a building reveals itself to a person who actually goes there. Audiences accept it without noticing, and resist any other order without being able to say why.

01 The approach

Must show: the building in its setting, from the direction people genuinely arrive from, with something of known size in frame.

Move: a slow push or a lateral drift — not a full orbit. **Hold:** roughly 5–8 seconds. This shot answers "where is it and how big is it", and if it fails, every shot after it is decoration.

02 The arrival

Must show: the entrance at human eye height, the approach surface underfoot, and the first thing a visitor would touch or read. **Move:** walking pace, straight in. **Hold:** roughly 4–6 seconds. Drop the camera to head height here. The height change from shot 01 is what tells the viewer they have arrived.

03 The threshold

Must show: the crossing from outside to inside, unbroken. **Move:** one continuous travel through the door or the glazing line, no cut. **Hold:** roughly 4–6 seconds. This is the single shot CGI can do that photography of an unbuilt building cannot, and the one most often cut for time. Keep it.

04 The key interior

Must show: the room the building is actually bought for, at its full ceiling height, with the main daylight source in frame. **Move:** slow, or none at all. **Hold:** roughly 6–10 seconds. The longest hold in the film belongs here. Let people look.

On the hold times

Treat them as a starting shape, not a standard. A long lens moving slowly reads as longer than the clock says; a wide shot with a lot happening in it reads as shorter. The number that matters is the one you agree after watching the rough cut. What the list gives you is a defensible starting point, and a reason to say no to a shot that has none.

THE SEQUENCE — PART TWO

The last three shots, and the three habits that ruin a film

05 The selling feature

Must show: the one thing this scheme has that the scheme down the road does not — the atrium, the terrace, the view line, the pool, the double height. **Hold:** roughly 5–8 seconds. If you cannot name this in a sentence before production starts, the film has no argument and no editing will give it one.

06 The reveal

Must show: whatever you deliberately held back — the roof terrace, the view out, the same space in evening light. **Move:** the one moment you are allowed to be theatrical. **Hold:** roughly 5–8 seconds. A film with nothing withheld until here is a list. A film with one thing withheld is a story.

07 The pull-back

Must show: the building back in its setting, ending on a stable frame. **Hold:** roughly 6–10 seconds, ending still. That last frame carries the logo, the URL and the call to action, so it must be composed for text, with quiet space where the type goes. Decide that before rendering, not in the edit.

WHAT KILLS A WALKTHROUGH	WHY, AND WHAT TO DO INSTEAD
Too many cuts	Short shots read as an advertisement for a product that does not exist yet. Fewer, longer shots read as a place. If a shot cannot hold four seconds, it is not a shot, it is a transition.
Drone-everywhere syndrome	Continuous aerial orbit is the default because it needs no decisions. It also shows a building the way nobody will ever see it. Use height for shots 01 and 07 and stay at human height in between.
Empty buildings	An unpopulated lobby, restaurant or office reads as closed, not as spacious. Populate at a density that matches the time of day you are showing, and say in the brief which time of day that is.
Cutting to the music	The track arrives late and the edit gets rebuilt to fit it. Choose the tempo family at the shot-list stage so the sequence and the sound were designed for each other.
No ending	Films that stop rather than end waste the only frame anybody screenshots. See shot 07.

THE FORM

Fill this in before you ask for a price

Send this instead of a duration. A studio quoting from a completed version of this page is quoting for your film; a studio quoting from "about two minutes" is quoting for an average one.

PROJECT _____ WHAT THE FILM IS FOR _____

ONE SENTENCE: THE THING THIS SCHEME HAS THAT OTHERS DO NOT _____

#	SHOT	HEIGHT	MOVE	HOLD	MUST SHOW
01	approach	_____	_____	___ S	_____
02	arrival	eye level	_____	___ S	_____
03	threshold	eye level	continuous	___ S	_____
04	key interior	_____	_____	___ S	_____
05	selling feature	_____	_____	___ S	_____
06	the reveal	_____	_____	___ S	_____
07	pull-back	_____	_____	___ S	_____

TOTAL _____ s (the length is the sum, not the brief)

PEOPLE density _____ time of day _____ SEASON / PLANTING _____

SOUND tempo family _____ END FRAME text goes _____

DELIVERY horizontal ___ vertical crop ___ silent cut ___ stills from film ___

Ask for the rough cut first

A grey, unlit, unfinished version of the whole sequence at the right timings. It looks like nothing and it is the most valuable thing you will see, because it is the last moment at which changing the order of shots is free. Approving a rough cut is approving the film; everything after it is quality, not structure.

The three extra deliverables to name now

A vertical crop cut from the same cameras, a version with no music for a client who wants their own, and a set of still frames pulled from the film at full resolution. All three cost very little if they are asked for before rendering and are a new job afterwards.

WORKING WITH A STUDIO

Cost, and how to brief it

Two things people ask us before anything else. Both answers are short.

COMMISSIONED WORK	FREELANCER	STUDIO
Single exterior still	\$100 – 300	\$250 – 600
Single interior still	\$120 – 350	\$300 – 700
Package, 5–8 views	\$600 – 1,500	\$1,500 – 4,000
Animation, per minute	\$1,000 – 3,000	\$3,000 – 8,000

Market ranges we are willing to publish. Turnaround and revision-round figures are deliberately not in this table: ours vary too much by project type to state as a benchmark, and an invented number here would be worse than none.

How to brief it — shorter is better

This is the opposite of what most people assume. Four things:

- What you need — **how many images, and of what**
- The plans and elevations, as they are
- A few reference images for mood and light
- One clear line on what the images are *for*

Inflating a small job into a fifty-page specification backfires: taken literally it comes out ugly, and it misleads the people doing the work. Tell them the intent and let the team that does this daily handle the detail.

The mistake that costs the most

The biggest failure we see is not choosing the wrong vendor. It is **timing**. People start looking only after the first supplier has already failed and the deadline is on fire, then choose in a panic.

Line up and vet rendering partners **before** you need one. One, ideally a few, briefed and ready to take work. It costs an afternoon now and saves a project later.

10+

YEARS RENDERING
VISUAL STORYTELLING

350+

BRANDS & AGENCIES
EMPOWERED GLOBALLY

95%

CLIENT
SATISFACTION RATE

40%+

OF OUR COMMISSIONS NOW
INCLUDE MOTION OR 360



MAVERICK
FRAME
STUDIO

When the image has to hold up, **talk to us**

We are a CGI studio: architectural and product rendering, 3D modelling, animation, 360 tours and VR. Ten years, 350+ brands and agencies, and the kind of work that still looks right when somebody counts the windows.

Send us the plans and a line on what the images are for. You get a scope and a price, and no obligation to use either.

START HERE

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SEE THE WORK

maverickframe.com/gallery

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Maverick Frame production render. · Cost ranges are market ranges as of 2026 and are not a quotation.

