



SAVE THE CAT! BEAT CHECKLISTS

1. OPENING IMAGE (1%)

- Make it visual
- Show your hero's flaw manifest in some way
- Establish the tone of the story

2. SETUP (1-10%)

- Establish your hero and who they are
- Show the status quo world
- Show your hero's flaws
- Introduce your hero's external goal (wants)
- Show the "Things That Need Fixing" (problems)

3. THEME STATED (5%)

- Directly relates to your hero's flaw and what they need to learn
- Stated by a secondary character
- Is ignored by the hero

4. CATALYST (10%)

- Something happens to the hero
- The hero can't go back after this event
- Sends the story in a new direction
- Forces the hero out of the status quo

5. DEBATE (10-20%)

- Sum up the hero's reaction to the catalyst with a question
- Show the hero's resistance to change OR:
- Show the hero preparing for the Break into 2

6. BREAK INTO 2 (20%)

- Hero makes a proactive decision to break into 2
- Identify how the hero is doing something new or going somewhere new
- Introduce a new, upside down world that's very different from the status quo
- Hero's motivations driven by what they want, not what they need (fixing things the wrong way)

7. B STORY (22%)

- A new character who will represent or teach the hero the theme AND:
- Is a product of the Act 2 world



8. FUN & GAMES (20-50%)

- Show how the hero is faring in the Act 2 world (upward/downward)
- Give the hero ups and downs along their path
- Show how the hero is pursuing the external goal
- Deliver on the promise of the premise
- Illustrate how different Act 2 is from Act 1

9. MIDPOINT (50%)

- Show a false victory or false defeat
- The hero gets or loses something they want
- Something happens that raises the stakes and turns the story in a new direction
- Show a subtle shift from wants to needs

10. BAD GUYS CLOSE IN (50-75%)

- Show the hero on an upward or downward path
- Internal bad guys apply more pressure
- A new or modified goal is introduced, in response to the Midpoint

11. ALL IS LOST (75%)

- Hero hits rock bottom
- Internal and external bad guys are at fault
- Hero loses something important to them
- There's a whiff (hint) of death

12. DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL (75-80%)

- Hero reflects on/reacts to everything that's happened
- Hero is worse off than at the start of the story
- Hero has some kind of epiphany or realization that will lead to the real change

13. BREAK INTO 3 (80%)

- Show the hero making a proactive decision to change the right way
- Identify how the hero has changed and learned the theme
- Create an Act 3 world, which is a synthesis of the Act 1 and Act 2 worlds

14. FINALE (80-100%)

- Fix the problems from Act 1 and Act 2
- Prove that the hero has learned the theme and conquered their flaw
- Show the hero experiencing difficulty and dealing with conflict

15. FINAL IMAGE (100%)

- Make it visual
- Show how the hero or someone has been changed or transformed by the story
- Illustrate how the hero is different from the Opening Image