

free things you can do for your acting

Everybody goes through times when there isn't a lot of broccoli in the crisper, for whatever reason. But that's no reason to stop doing work to develop yourself as an actor.

Here are some terrific things you can do to feed your creative soul or hone your craft while you're waiting for the financial picture to change.

- 1. Read.** Acting is about bringing the word to pulsing, transfixing life. So getting to know said written word better is never a bad idea. Read books about acting, read biographies of actors. read great novels, read pulp novels, read poetry, read the newspaper. There are plenty of options. But in our media-saturated world, spending some time reading is never a bad idea, and if helps you develop your sensitivity to the extraordinary expressive power of language, that's even better.
- 2. Study the Alexander Technique.** Wait, what? I thought you said this was a list of free stuff? The Alexander Technique is pricey high-end body-mind integration training. How do I get it for free? Well, it happens that there is an [Alexander Technique Training Institute](#) in Los Angeles, where people train to become teachers of the Alexander Technique. And such institutes often need people to serve as subjects for the teachers-in-training to practice on. So give them a call, and offer them the use of your body for their pedagogical purposes. There's a good chance you'll learn invaluable things about said body, for a song.
- 3. Meditate.** Practice the fine art of paying attention. There are all kinds of places to learn to meditate in Los Angeles. [Here](#) is one of my favorites, but there are many others.

4. **Study Pilates.** What does Pilates have to do with my acting? Well, acting as I teach it involves what Pilates people call core awareness. The actor's awareness should rest in the abdominal core, in order to achieve true visceral activation and the radiance that comes with it. Pilates is a great way to work on that, because Pilates is about learning to use your abdominal core muscles in everything you do. Literally: everything. There are lots of how-to videos on Youtube, such as [this one](#).
5. **Journal.** "It's so funny, you go to acting school thinking you're going to learn how to be other people, but really it taught me how to be myself. Because it's in understanding yourself deeply that you can lend yourself to another person's circumstances and another person's experience."—Lupita Nyong'o
So get going! Writing a journal is a great way to develop intimacy with yourself, an invaluable asset for an actor.
6. **Read aloud.** Pick up some Shakespeare. Pick up some poetry that speaks to you. Read it aloud. Read it to yourself. Read it to your dog. Read it to your roommate. Read it to anyone who will listen. Savor the sounds of the words and the rhythm of the sentences.
7. **Improv.** Look on [Meetup](#) for an Improv group near you, and join in the fun.
8. **Make a game out of being rejected.** Like [this guy](#).
There will never be any shortage of people to reject you. If you have the nerve to do this one, your future as an actor looks bright.
9. **Go to the zoo.** Ok, this one isn't quite free. But if you can scrape together \$20, there are worse ways to spend it. Studying and learning to imitate animals is a hallowed form of actor training, and is wonderful for shedding inhibitions and exploring physical possibilities.

I'm sure there are others, and I'll add them as I think of

them. But there should be some things here to get you started.