

PRO WRESTLING TERMINOLOGY:

1. Kayfabe: (Kayfabe is often described as the suspension of disbelief)

The illusion and the portrayal of staged elements within professional wrestling (such as characters, rivalries, and storylines) as legitimate or real.

2. Babyface: (or "Face")

The hero or good guy/gal.

3. Heel:

The villain or bad guy/gal.

4. Turn: (Face Turn / Heel Turn)

A character switches from good to bad or vice versa.

Examples: A betrayal, redemption arc, or dramatic alignment shift.

5. Tweener:

A morally ambiguous wrestler who is neither a face nor heel (an in-between), also sometimes describes a heel who is usually cheered or a face who is usually jeered, especially when two faces or two heels face each other.

5. Over:

A wrestler is "over" when the crowd loves (or hates) them a lot.

Examples: When a PC/NPC is so loved or hated they start influencing the crowd or arena, sell lots of merch, fans do their catchphrase or emotes and get more fame.

6. Cut a Promo:

A wrestler's speech to hype a match, taunt opponents, or win over the crowd.

7. Pop:

A big cheer or reaction from the crowd.

Example: Triggered when PC/NPC do something epic—can grant Bardic Inspiration or Advantage!

8. Heat:

Negative reaction from the crowd—boos, hate, tension.

Example: The villain can get powered up from heat, or the crowd boos PC/NPC loudly granting Disadvantages.

9. Work:

A staged or scripted move or storyline.

Example: When something "looks" real but isn't, like a fake betrayal, injury or promo.

10. Shoot:

When something real happens in a match (e.g., real injury or real emotion).

Example: A PC/NPC goes off-script. Chaos ensues.

11. No-Sell:

When a wrestler doesn't act like an opponent's move hurts them.

Example: A wrestler ignores a hit unless a charisma check makes them "sell it".

12. Bump:

Taking a fall or being hit dramatically.

Example: A PC/NPC can "take a bump" for flair (and maybe a bonus reaction from the crowd).

13. Workrate:

The pace, intensity, and "technical skill" of a match.

Example: High-dex or spellcasting combos between multiple wrestlers at once. Think "combo meter."

14. Botch:

A move that goes wrong or fails in a noticeable way.

Example: Rolling a 1 on a suplex attempt? That's a botch, the crowd might laugh, groan or even chants (You can't wrestle!).

15. Finish (or Finisher):

The final/ special move that ends a match.

Example: A big spell, ability, crit, or combo that wins the fight. Bonus points for shouting a catchphrase!

16. Angle:

A storyline. An angle usually begins when one wrestler attacks another (physically or verbally), which results in revenge. An angle may be as small as a single match or a vendetta that lasts for months or even years.

17. Card:

The lineup of the matches that will be staged at a given venue for a given performance/ event. The card is generally performed in a roughly inverse order to the way in which it might be printed for posters or other promotional materials. The major matches between well-known opponents are said to be "top of the card" or the main event and generally go on last, while the preliminary matches between lesser-known opponents are said to be the "undercard".

18. Book:

To determine and schedule the events of a wrestling card. The person in charge of setting up matches and writing angles is a "booker". It is the wrestling equivalent of a director. A booker can also be described as someone who recruits and hires talent to work in a particular promotion.

19. Audible:

A message delivered from backstage, either to the referee (using their earpiece) or the commentary team (using their headsets) instructing the wrestlers and other on-screen talent on what to do, usually in order to work around a botch or injury by changing the match on the fly.

20. Push:

The worked rise of a wrestler's status in the eyes of the fans. Compare burial

21. Burial:

Also bury and buried.

The worked lowering (relegation) of a wrestler's status in the eyes of the fans. The opposite of a push.

22. Cross-promotion

Also known as Forbidden Door.

An event which occurs when two or more rival promotions put together one card or wrestling event. Some promoters have used cross-promotion style angles to further interest. Cross-promotion dates back to the early days of wrestling as challenges between rival promoters in the same area often occurred.

23. Feud:

A staged rivalry between multiple wrestlers or groups of wrestlers. They are integrated into ongoing storylines, particularly in events which are televised. Feuds may last for months or even years or be resolved with implausible speed, perhaps during the course of a single match.

24. Going Into Business For Him/herself:

When a wrestler starts working for their own benefit rather than the mutual benefit of themselves and their opponents or partners, typically by refusing to sell or by saying something not agreed to in a promo. A type of shoot.

25. Jobber:

A wrestler who routinely loses in order to build the credibility of other wrestlers.

26. Receipt:

A term for returning a particularly stiff move back to a wrestler. This is usually done when one wrestler is being legitimately hit by his/her opponent's blows, and the wrestler being hit will send a legitimate move or hit back to the opponent as a wordless reminder to not hit so hard. Can also be used to refer to other aspects of the wrestling presentation, such as going into business for him/herself in a promo.

27. Swerve:

A sudden change in the direction of a storyline to surprise the fans. Often, it involves one wrestler turning on an ally in order to join a supposed mutual enemy. Swerves frequently start feuds between the former allies. This also refers to when a booker leads fans to believe that something is going to happen (or someone could appear) at a show, before doing something entirely different.

29. Worked Shoot

The phenomenon of a wrestler seemingly going "off script", often revealing elements of out-of-universe reality, but actually doing so as a fully planned part of the show.

30. X signal:

A signal used by referees during a match to indicate that a wrestler is unable to continue and may need medical attention. The referee will cross their arms and, if necessary, point to the injured wrestler. Since many fans are aware of the significance of the signal, and with referees often now having direct communication with producers backstage, it is now sometimes used in kayfabe fashion, to sell a storyline injury.

31. Cash in:

The event is named after the Money in the Bank ladder match, a multi-person ladder match in which participants compete to obtain a briefcase that contains a contract for a championship match, which can be "cashed in" at a time and place of their choosing within the next year.

32. Gimmick:

The character portrayed by a wrestler. Can be used to refer specifically to the motif or theme evoked by a character, as indicated by their name, costume or other paraphernalia, or to refer to any aspect of the worked presentation, sometimes negatively (e.g., a gimmick match, which can also have an event based on it, such as WWE Hell in a Cell, referred to as a gimmick event/PPV).

33. Gorilla position:

The staging area just behind the curtain where wrestlers come out to the ring, named after Gorilla Monsoon, who could often be seen standing there during WWF/WWE PPVs

34. Mark:

A wrestling fan who enthusiastically believes or behaves as though they believe professional wrestling is not staged, or loses sight of the staged nature of the business while supporting their favorite wrestlers. The term is often used pejoratively, for example to refer to people who have little or no knowledge about the business, which to an insider can refer to all wrestling fans.

35. Smark: (Smart Mark)

A Mark but they are very knowledgeable about the true nature of Pro Wrestling but they still enjoy it as normal fans.