Name: _____ Date: _____

Zendaya, Credits and the Work of Producing

Reading level 13 · 1352 words

A credit is a claim printed on a screen, and it is worth reading carefully. Zendaya's record holds two producing credits across ten years. In May 2014, Disney Channel announced that she would headline K.C. Undercover and receive a co-producer title. In 2024, she was one of four producers listed on the tennis film Challengers. The two credits come from a television announcement and a film's producer list. This book asks what such titles are meant to mean, and what a credit cannot tell you, using her career and public dates. Her first big series, Shake It Up, premiered in November 2010.

The Producers Guild of America publishes a code of credits for feature films, and it is the closest thing the business has to an official dictionary of the job. It says an executive producer's credit applies, in the cases where that person is not the main producer, only to someone who has made essential contributions, which can include finding the money early or getting the rights to the story. A line producer has primary responsibility for the budget and logistics of the production, from pre-production through completion. A co-producer or line producer reports directly to the primary producer. An associate producer is a support role. The code covers feature films, so television may differ. Keep that in mind. The same word can cover quite different work from one project to the next.

Television has its own words. A showrunner is the top-level executive producer of a series, and executive producers have been likened to the chief executive of a series. K.C. Undercover was created by Corinne Marshall and executive-produced by Rob Lotterstein, who also executive-produced Shake It Up, the earlier series that starred Zendaya. Her title sat beside theirs as co-producer. What that title covered on the show is not in the announcement, which only says she would headline and co-produce. She was a lead actor and a co-producer at once, and that began in 2014.

The schedule of a series can be read from public dates. Disney Channel announced the order for K.C. Undercover on May 8, 2014, and the announcement said production would begin that summer in Los Angeles for an early 2015 premiere. The first episode aired on Sunday, January 18, 2015, at 8:30 p.m. Eastern. By this book's count, that is 255 days from announcement to broadcast, a little over eight months, and the series was shot with more than one camera, which is called multi-camera. Several cameras record a scene at the same time, from different spots. It is a short stretch, and anyone can check the count on a calendar.

Multi-camera shooting is a choice with results. In the usual description, the outer cameras take close-ups while the center ones take wide shots, and the method suits shows that need a live audience. Single-camera shows are shot in takes and set-ups, often out of order. The

action is not played in time order, so it does not suit a live audience. The first method is closer to theater, because a performer plays the whole scene from start to end, while the second is closer to how films are made, where one performance is built from many pieces. Each one asks an actor to prepare in a different way, so the choice shapes the work itself.

Film production has five stages: development, pre-production, production, post-production and distribution. Shooting is only the third, and the filmmaker typically shoots the script out of sequence and repeats shots as needed. A call sheet, which is the daily schedule for cast and crew, tells each person the exact time to be on set, and it is usually prepared by the first assistant director or the production team. A line producer's job, in the Guild's words, is the budget and logistics, so the length of a shoot is more than a trivia number. Each day means paying a crew and using a set and a lot of gear, so a longer shoot means more days of all three.

The public record lets us measure those calendars, with a caution. The figures below count the days between the listed start of main filming and the wrap. They do not count only the days when cameras rolled, so they overstate the working days. Dune, March 18 to July 26, 2019, is 130 days. Dune: Part Two, July 18 to December 12, 2022, is 147 days. Dune: Part Three, July 8 to November 11, 2025, is 126 days. Spider-Man: Brand New Day, August 3 to December 19, 2025, is 138 days. Each is a count of days between two dates, not a count of days when cameras rolled. All of these dates are as listed in the films' reference entries. The first Dune film opened on October 22, 2021, and the second on March 1, 2024.

Challengers is the awkward case, because the sources disagree. One report, published in May 2022 while the film was still being shot, said the cast and crew worked in the Boston area from April to the end of June, around the Back Bay and East Boston neighborhoods. Another listing gives main filming as May 3 to June 26, 2022, which would be 54 days apart, or about eight weeks, but the two accounts differ. The more solid fact is the preparation. Tennis.com reported on October 19, 2022 that Zendaya trained for three months with coach Brad Gilbert. A shoot's start date can be counted in more than one way.

Films are often shot under working titles, which are names used only while the film is made. The first Spider-Man film in which she appeared filmed as Summer of George, the second as Fall of George and the 2025 shoot as Blue Oasis. The Dune: Part Two shoot used several countries. Spider-Man: Brand New Day began filming in Glasgow, with soundstage work at Pinewood Studios. Main filming of Dune: Part Two was in Hungary, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates. There was a pre-shoot in Italy, and a second unit filmed desert footage in Namibia. In the Guild's wording, planning across that many places falls under budget and logistics.

Children on sets have their own rulebook, and California's is public: for ages 9 to under 16, a stay at the place of work may last nine hours, with five of work, at least three of schooling on

school days and an hour of rest, with a certified studio teacher holding the right credentials and a permit asked for by both child and employer. Ages 6 to under 9, for example, and 16 to under 18 have different caps. These are California rules as printed on the state's own pages, and other states differ. Another book in this library reads that rulebook through another young actor's career.

Awards sit on top of the work. The Television Academy's page lists two Emmy Awards for Zendaya for lead actress in a drama series, won on September 20, 2020, at age 24, and on September 12, 2022, at age 26, by this book's count from a September 1 birthday. The 2020 ceremony was held without an in-person audience because of the pandemic, and the 2022 ceremony was held live at the Microsoft Theater in Los Angeles. The Academy says she is the youngest to win that category twice, a claim that holds through November 2026 and that a younger two-time winner would end. Actors vote for acting awards.

As of November 2026, the public record lets us trace a career in dates: a sitcom in 2010, a co-producer title in 2014, films shot over months, such as Spider-Man: Homecoming, which began June 20, 2016, and wrapped October 2, 2016, 104 days apart by this book's count, and a producer's name on a film in 2024. What the record cannot show is how any one producer spent a day. A credit says a person was part of the team that made a thing, and no more. Dune: Part Three, shot between July 8 and November 11, 2025, is scheduled to open in theaters on December 18, 2026, a date that could still change.

Questions

1. According to the Producers Guild's code for feature films, what is a line producer mainly responsible for?

A. Writing the script
B. Choosing the actors
C. Budget and logistics

2. Why does the book say the shoot lengths "overstate the working days"?

A. Cameras do not roll on every calendar day
B. The films were shorter than reported
C. Actors work only on weekends

3. In "main filming," what does main mean?

A. Early
B. Last
C. Chief

4. What does the book say about the Challengers start date?

A. Every report agrees on May 3
B. Reports differ

C. The shoot lasted a full year

5. What would end the Academy's "youngest to win twice" claim?

A. A younger actor winning that category twice

B. Another ceremony being held

C. A new Emmy host

Words to know

credit: name on screen

logistics: organizing supplies

overstate: say too much

certified: officially approved

credentials: teaching qualifications

Answer key: Zendaya, Credits and the Work of Producing

1. C. Budget and logistics
2. A. Cameras do not roll on every calendar day
3. C. Chief
4. B. Reports differ
5. A. A younger actor winning that category twice