

# The SHOW Standard v2.1

## S · H · O · W

Modern Media Mastery / LMDC · R8rly Platform Content Classification Standard for Narrative and Creative Works Version 2.1 · July 2026 · CC BY-SA 4.0

Held in trust by r8rly.org · applied and verified on the independent r8rly.com. No rating can be purchased, suppressed, or altered by payment.

## What SHOW Is

SHOW is a four-axis content classification standard for narrative and creative works. It applies to any finished work regardless of how it was created — written by hand, collaboratively authored, AI-assisted, or fully generated. SHOW rates what the content contains. It is a reader and audience service, a platform tool, and a publishing standard.

SHOW is independent of production method. A human author and an AI-assisted author rate their finished work on identical terms. The standard classifies the work. It carries no implication about the creative process that produced it.

- **S — Spice** — Physical explicitness: on-page or on-screen intimacy and detail
- **H — Heat** — Emotional temperature: longing, romantic intensity, intimacy of soul
- **O — OMG** — Darkness of tone: heaviness, peril, grief, violence, psychological weight
- **W — WTF** — Transgression: taboo dynamics, wildness of content choices

Each axis is fully independent. High scores on one axis carry zero implication for any other axis.

## The Four Axes

### S — Spice (0–6)

Physical explicitness — on-page or on-screen intimacy and detail.

| Level | Label      | Content present                                           |
|-------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| 0     | Untouched  | Kissing only. Door fully closed.                          |
| 1     | Suggestive | Fade-to-black, implied intimacy.                          |
| 2     | Open-Door  | On-page intimacy with discretion. Sensation over anatomy. |
| 3     | Explicit   | Anatomically clear, multiple scenes.                      |
| 4     | Carnal     | High-frequency explicit scenes. Intimacy is load-bearing. |
| 5     | Hardcore   | Kink, BDSM, power exchange at standard intensity.         |

| Level | Label     | Content present                            |
|-------|-----------|--------------------------------------------|
| 6     | Saturated | Explicit intimacy is the dominant content. |

## H — Heat (0–5)

Emotional temperature — longing, romantic intensity, intimacy of soul. Fully independent of physical content. A story with zero Spice can carry maximum Heat.

| Level | Label    | Content present                                         |
|-------|----------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 0     | Cool     | Romance incidental or absent.                           |
| 1     | Warm     | Affection, light flirtation.                            |
| 2     | Glowing  | Attraction acknowledged. Lingering looks, first kisses. |
| 3     | Burning  | Slow-burn intensity. Yearning.                          |
| 4     | Blazing  | Vulnerable confessions, soul-bared scenes.              |
| 5     | Wildfire | The relationship is the spine of the story.             |

## O — OMG (0–5)

Darkness of tone — heaviness, peril, grief, violence, psychological weight. Fully independent of Spice. A grief memoir with no sexual content can carry OMG 5. An explicit erotic novel can carry OMG 0.

| Level | Label   | Content present                               |
|-------|---------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 0     | Light   | Sweet, cozy, comedy, family.                  |
| 1     | Shaded  | Mild angst, mild peril.                       |
| 2     | Dim     | On-page violence, dark themes with restraint. |
| 3     | Dark    | Captivity, stalker, trauma, MC/mafia, war.    |
| 4     | Black   | Transgressive, dub-con, brutality.            |
| 5     | Abyssal | Extreme — content-warning gated.              |

## W — WTF (0–10)

Transgression — taboo dynamics, wildness of content choices.

| Level | Label    | Content present                                |
|-------|----------|------------------------------------------------|
| 0–2   | Vanilla  | Conventional, no taboo.                        |
| 3–4   | Edgy     | Mild transgression, age gap.                   |
| 5–6   | Wild     | Step-relationships, captivity-coded, antihero. |
| 7–8   | Unhinged | Strong taboo, dub-con romantically framed.     |

| Level | Label         | Content present                           |
|-------|---------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 9–10  | Off the Rails | Non-con as central trope, extreme taboos. |

## Verified Explicit (R8rly Tier A)

"Verified Explicit" is a platform certification, not an axis level. Works carrying high-Spice content (typically Spice 5–6) may apply for R8rly Tier A certification, which verifies the classification, applies platform age-gating, and authorises the "Verified Explicit" designation alongside the R8rly Compass mark. Tier A certification is administered by the R8rly platform and is not part of the open CC BY-SA standard.

## The Axis Independence Principle

Each SHOW axis measures a fully independent dimension of content. A work can be:

- S0·H5 — No sexual content, maximum romantic intensity
- S6·H0 — Fully saturated sexual content, no romantic emotion
- O5·W0 — Devastating darkness, fully conventional narrative structure
- W10·O0 — Maximum transgression, no emotional darkness

Readers, platforms, and distribution systems read each axis as its own signal. No axis modifies the meaning of any other.

## Calibration Reference Set

All ratings are community-verified via R8rly.

| Work                           | S | H | O | W  |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|----|
| A Court of Thorns and Roses    | 2 | 4 | 3 | 4  |
| Fourth Wing                    | 3 | 5 | 2 | 5  |
| Haunting Adeline               | 4 | 4 | 4 | 8  |
| Captive in the Dark            | 4 | 3 | 5 | 7  |
| The Notebook                   | 1 | 5 | 2 | 1  |
| Redeeming Love                 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 2  |
| All Quiet on the Western Front | 0 | 1 | 5 | 3  |
| American Psycho                | 3 | 1 | 5 | 10 |
| The Road                       | 0 | 2 | 5 | 4  |
| Normal People                  | 3 | 5 | 3 | 2  |
| Twilight                       | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2  |

| Work                 | S | H | O | W |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Fifty Shades of Grey | 4 | 4 | 2 | 5 |

## SHOW and the Standard Family

| Standard | Function                 | Applies to                             |
|----------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| SHOW     | Content classification   | Any finished work, any creation method |
| VEIL     | Generation authorisation | AI-assisted creation sessions          |
| SCRIPTS  | Experience rating        | Reader/viewer/listener experience      |

SHOW and VEIL share axis vocabulary. The four SHOW axes (S·H·O·W) map directly into the VEIL generation envelope. SHOW is fully functional as a standalone standard.

## Applying SHOW

**Who rates a work:** The author or publisher applies an initial SHOW rating on publication. The R8rly community verifies and may adjust ratings through a structured review process. R8rly Verified ratings carry the R8rly Compass mark.

**How to display:** SHOW S3·H4·O2·W5 — standard inline format SHOW Verified S3·H4·O2·W5 — R8rly verified format with Compass mark

**Platforms implementing SHOW:** Any platform may implement SHOW ratings under CC BY-SA 4.0. Attribution required. The R8rly Compass mark and "R8rly Verified" designation remain protected and require platform certification.

## Versioning

| Version | Date      | Notes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.0     | May 2026  | Initial release. Four axes.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 1.1     | May 2026  | Calibration set expanded. Content tag framework added.                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 2.0     | June 2026 | VEIL axes separated into standalone companion standard. W scale expanded to 10. Spice scale expanded to 6. Standard family architecture formalised. <i>Erratum: this version also renamed the O axis to "Shadow"; that rename was rejected and never adopted.</i>           |
| 2.1     | July 2026 | Canonical correction: O axis confirmed as OMG — the S·H·O·W acronym is the standard. All level vocabulary aligned with the tables published on the R8rly platform (authoritative). "Verified Explicit" clarified as R8rly Tier A platform certification, not an axis level. |

## Citation

---

The SHOW Standard v2.1 · S · H · O · W Modern Media Mastery / LMDC · R8rly Platform · July 2026 · CC BY-SA 4.0

Companion standards: The VEIL Standard v1.0 — Generative Permission (CC BY-SA 4.0) The SCRIPTS Standard v1.0 — Experience Rating (CC BY-SA 4.0)

Free to use, implement, and build upon under CC BY-SA 4.0. Attribution required. Derivatives share-alike. The R8rly platform mark, R8rly Compass mark, and R8rly Verified designation remain protected and require platform certification.

*The SHOW Standard v2.1 · Modern Media Mastery / LMDC · July 2026 <https://r8rly.com/show>*