Set Up Your Movie:

☆ Before the first movie begins, players should each pick an Actor Playbook and name their actors. These are their characters for the entire campaign, movie after movie. Each Actor Playbook may only be chosen once, so no duplicates. Pick moves, stats, names, etc. for your Actors.

1. The players and Director pick one of the Scripts that suits the genre of action film they want to portray.

2. Determine who is the Lead. If this is your very first movie, either select amicably or roll dice to see who gets to be the Lead. If it's not, the Actor with the highest Star Power is the Lead; roll in case of a tie. Remember, everyone gets a turn at being the Lead before anyone gets a second turn. This supersedes the Star Power rule.

3. Each player, starting with the Lead, picks exactly one move from the list for the chosen Script. Each move, unless otherwise noted, may only be chosen twice across the group, i.e. only two people in a group can pick the same move.

4. Each player picks a gear set for his or her character. At the same time, name your character for the duration of the movie. Obviously, this is different from the Actor's name. My real name is Ian, my Actor is Chase Buzzington, and he's playing Malcolm Powerstein in this movie. Why pick your names now, after your gear? Because gear has the potential to clarify details about your character. If you decide to pick the SWAT gear in a cop movie, you might pick a "tough" sounding name, while a more standard gear loadout might have you thinking in more muted terms.

5. Choose highlighted stats. Each character has two for the duration of a given movie. The first one is always the primary stat listed on a character's Actor playbook. The other is entirely up to the Director. This is to represent the Director telling the actors to emote more, drop more one-liners, etc. Every 10+ rolled on either of a character's highlighted stats nets that character a tick.

6. The Director makes the initial pick for Villain from the Script's list. The players then approve or reject the choice. With the Villain chosen, the Director should assign details to him or her: gender, name, specific motivations and techniques. Remain flexible about this and sketch broadly.

7. Each player determines a relationship with the person on his or her left. Each Script has some sample relationships provided in a 2d6 format but, seriously, don't automatically roll this. This is for ease of use only. Pick one. Even better, make one up when it's your turn. Mix all three techniques, if you want.

8. Discuss these relationships in more detail. If two players are siblings in the cop movie, what does that mean? Are they both cops? Is one a former mobster trying to go good? Do they like each other or just tolerate each other? Remember, the characters are good guys. They can use questionable techniques, but nobody should be an outright bad guy, at least when the movie starts.

9. You should now have a hazy Point A (the characters, their relationships, and movie genre) and Point Z (the Villain's type/motivation and movie genre). Begin to fill in the remaining blanks and elaborate on relationships. Try to formulate the first big action scene and how to work it in as soon as possible.

10. Name your movie. This is kind of a big deal. Just as action movie characters tend to shoot for cool only to hit absurd with their names, so should your movie. What's in a name? A whole lot, actually. What's cool about the movie's name in the context of a roleplaying game is that it can really spark ideas about how things should evolve. Commando implies something very different than Deadly Prey, yet both are about lone military badasses stuck in bad situations.

11. Players and Director should roughly estimate how many sessions they want the movie to take. AMW is designed for 1-3 sessions per movie, but you can do deep dives on individual movies and keep a single Script in use for many, many sessions. Whatever's decided, it shouldn't be viewed as immutable. Rather, consider it a target length which will inform how aggressively the Director frames the scenes. If it's a one-shot, the Director is going to have to keep things moving at a much faster pace than he or she would with a three session game.