

# Freelancer Scope Firewall

Checklist + email scripts to stop scope creep before it eats the week. Instant digital toolkit — not a service.

How to use: run the five-box checklist before you reply. Paste a macro. Do not start work until the next written step is agreed.

## 1. The five-box Scope Firewall

|                                    |                                                                                |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ■ What is the one outcome?         | Finished result in one plain sentence. Not a feature list.<br><br>Notes: _____ |
| ■ What is explicitly not included? | Name the boundary while the request is still friendly.<br><br>Notes: _____     |
| ■ Who decides it is done?          | Approver, number of review rounds, handoff point.<br><br>Notes: _____          |
| ■ What changes the estimate?       | Inputs or decisions that require a new quote.<br><br>Notes: _____              |
| ■ What is the next written step?   | Date, owner, and a clear reply — not vibes.<br><br>Notes: _____                |

## 2. Soft rules (pin these)

- No work starts on an unwritten expansion.
- Friendly requests still need a written next step.
- If the five boxes are blank, you are not ready to say yes.
- Pause politely when scope drifts mid-project.

## 3. Email macros (copy / paste / edit names)

### A — Soft decline / defer

Hi {Name},

Thanks for thinking of me on this. Right now I can't take on extra scope without reshuffling other deadlines.

If you'd like, I can send a short quote for this as a separate item — or we can park it until {date}.

Either works on my side.

Best,  
{You}

## B — Confirm scope before starting

Hi {Name},

Before I start, I want us aligned on the written scope:

- Outcome: {one sentence}
- Included: {bullets}
- Not included: {bullets}
- Approver / reviews: {who / N rounds}
- Timeline: {date}

Reply "confirmed" (or note changes) and I'll begin.

Thanks,  
{You}

## C — Change request mid-project

Hi {Name},

This looks like a change from the agreed scope ({original outcome}). Happy to help – it will need a small change order so the calendar stays honest.

Option 1: Add it for {price / hours}, new ETA {date}.

Option 2: Swap it for {item} currently in scope.

Option 3: Park it for a later phase.

Which do you prefer?

{You}

## D — Freeze until written

Hi {Name},

I want to keep quality high, so I'm pausing new work on this thread until we write the updated outcome and what's out of scope.

I've attached / pasted a short checklist. Once you reply with those five answers (or confirm my draft), I'll restart immediately.

Thanks for helping keep this clean,  
{You}

## E — Definition of done (proposal paste)

Definition of done for this engagement:

1. Deliverable: {file / URL / event}
2. Acceptance by: {role}
3. Review rounds included: {N}
4. Out of scope (examples): {list}
5. Anything beyond this is a new quote.

## 4. Definition-of-done worksheet

Fill once per project. Paste into the proposal or kickoff email.

| Field                             | Your answer |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Deliverable (one sentence)</b> |             |
| <b>Acceptance owner</b>           |             |

|                                            |  |
|--------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Review rounds included</b>              |  |
| <b>Explicit exclusions</b>                 |  |
| <b>Estimate triggers (new quote if...)</b> |  |
| <b>Next written step + date</b>            |  |

## 5. Honesty notes

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