

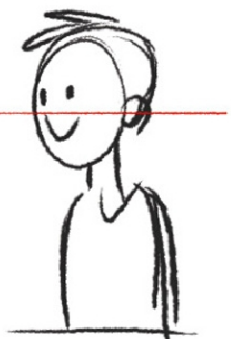
Storyboard Guide: Staging and Cutting

Simple Tips

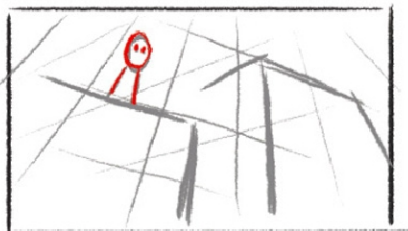
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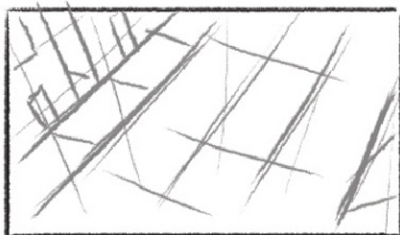
GENERALLY KEEP THE CAMERA JUST BELOW THE EYE LEVEL.



-UNLESS IT'S A POINT OF VIEW SHOT (POV)

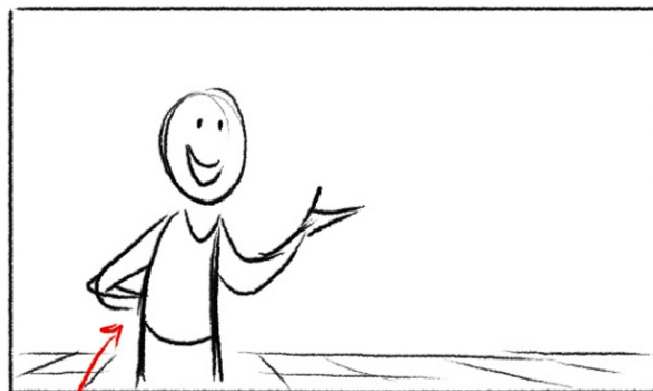


FIRST YOU SEE A CHARACTER LOOKING THEN CUT TO HIS POV



(POV)
DOWN SHOT

YOUR MAIN JOB IS JUST TO "NOT CONFUSE THE AUDIENCE". PICK THE SIMPLEST SHOT THAT GETS THE STORY POINT ACROSS.



FOCUS MORE ON WHAT YOU SHOW THAN HOW YOU SHOW IT

IF THIS GUY IS DOING SOMETHING INTERESTING, THAT'S WHAT REALLY MATTERS. PICK THE CLEAREST SHOT SO PEOPLE CAN FOLLOW THE STORY.

WORK YOUR WAY IN AND OUT SLOWLY. DON'T ERRATICALLY CUT IN AND OUT. IT STARTS TO CONFUSE PEOPLE AND MAKES THEM "SEA SICK".



CLOSE

MED

WIDE



Storyboard Guide: Staging and Cutting

Framing / Cutting on Action

GENERALLY YOU ONLY CUT TO REVEAL NEW INFORMATION. OTHERWISE DON'T CUT



CUT IN BECAUSE YOU NEED TO SHOW THE EMOTION

AND FEEL FREE TO REUSE SHOTS OVER. DON'T FEEL LIKE YOU NEED A NEW SHOT EVERY TIME YOU CUT. REMEMBER, IT'S THE CLEAR STORY THAT COUNTS.



CUT OUT TO SHOW SOMETHING NEW. LIKE IF YOU NEED TO SHOW HIS HANDS



CUT WIDER IF YOU NEED TO SEE A FULL BODY ACTION



OR WIDER IF YOU WANT TO REMIND THE AUDIENCE OF THE LOCATION.

YOUR STORY GUIDES THE CUTS.

CUT ON ACTION WHEN YOU CAN. HAVING A LITTLE BIT OF MOVEMENT WILL HELP THE CUT. STUDY FILMS AND LOOK FOR LITTLE BITS OF MOVEMENTS RIGHT BEFORE A CUT



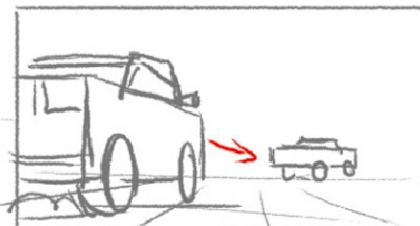
2 PEOPLE IN A CAR



REACHES FOR SHIFTER



CAR STARTS TO MOVE FOR A SPLIT SECOND

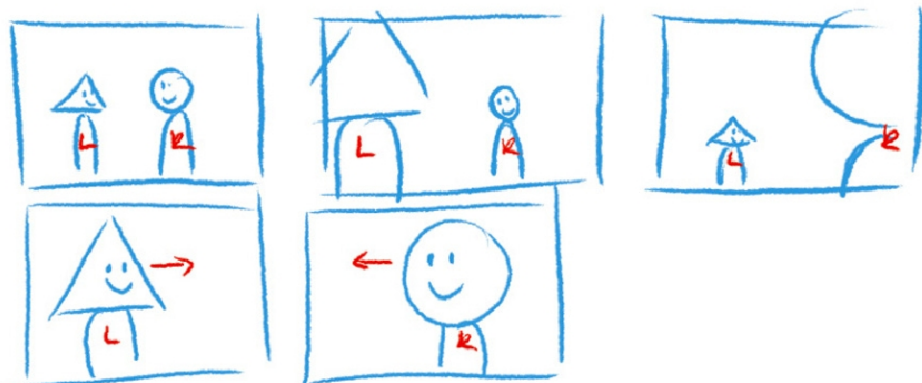


CUT TO NEW SHOT OUT SIDE AS CAR IS JUST STARTING TO MOVE.

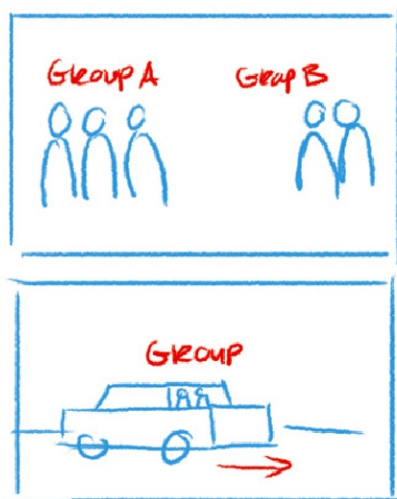
THIS HAPPENS ALL THE TIME IT MAKES CUTS VERY SMOOTH.

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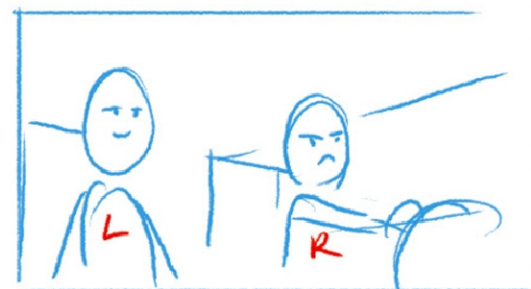
Screen Direction & Staging Groups



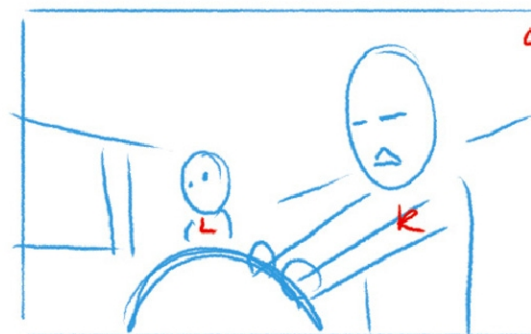
KEEP YOUR SCREEN DIRECTION IN ORDER TO NOT CONFUSE THE AUDIENCE. IF SOMETHING IS ON THE LEFT, KEEP IT ON THE LEFT AND VICE VERSA.



IF YOU HAVE GROUPS OF THINGS LIKE TWO GROUPS OF PEOPLE, OR PEOPLE IN A CAR, WHEN YOU ARE WIDE ENOUGH TO SEE THE BIG GROUPS KEEP A SCREEN DIRECTION BUT, IF YOU CUT INTO THE GROUP YOU CAN CREATE NEW SCREEN DIRECTION "INSIDE THE GROUP."



CUT INSIDE THE GROUP

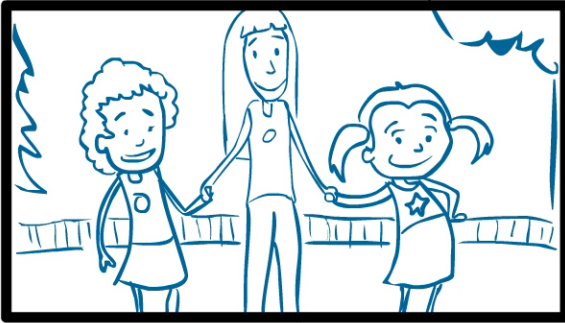


NOW I CAN CUT TO THE OTHER SIDE "INSIDE" THE CAR GROUP. BUT IF I CUT BACK OUT OF THE CAR, THE GROUP IS STILL GOING RIGHT

The closer in similarity two shots are (cutting to each other), the more chance you have of it being a bad cut. Unless you're going for a 'dramatic effect', it's wrong, you'll have to change it.

Here's an example:

Sc



Sc

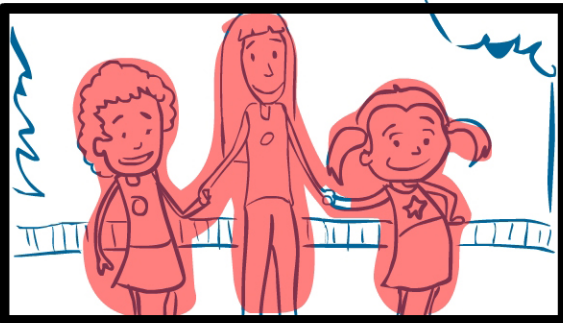


This is a very common choice that I would label more on the 'wrong' side of things.

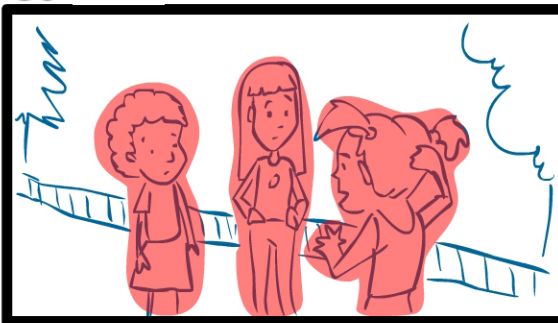
Cutting from a 3-shot to another 3-shot can be risky business.

Especially when the characters have remained relatively the same size with similar silhouettes

Sc



Sc

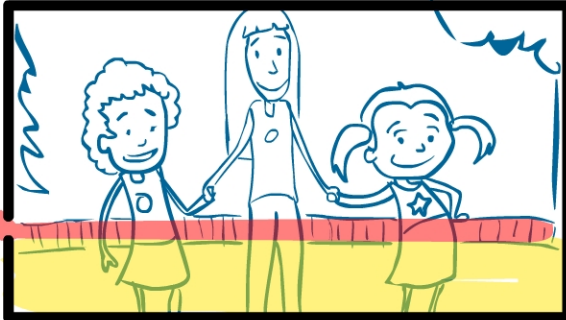


If the silhouettes are so similar when you cut, the characters will 'pop' or 'jump' to the new pose and it creates weirdness.

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Here's where a board artist had placed a cut between two of his scenes.

Sc 12



Sc 12



The characters change ever so slightly, yet the background changes more. It goes from a straight horizon line to a diagonal one for seemingly no reason. Since the shots are so similar, you didn't need to do a cut here at all.

Stay there and just continue to pose out the action. Or make some other choices if that tells the story better. Maybe starting on a 2-shot of the girls on the left is better. Then the girl with pony tails could walk in. Or keep the 3-shot and cut to a close-up.

A very rough rule of thumb for people just starting out (and this is **not** a steadfast rule by any means) is the more you vary the shot choice from cut to cut, the less chance you have of 'bad cutting'.

So a 3-shot to a 3-shot is risky. But a 3-shot to a close-up isn't. Or a 3-shot to a 2-shot isn't. The more variation in the number of characters and shot size, the smaller the chance of a 'jump' in the cut.

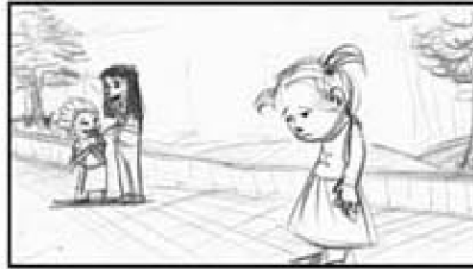
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Here's a little sequence with two cuts. We have a 3-shot to another 3-shot, then to a 2-shot. I wouldn't say these cuts are 'wrong' but there are probably better choices.

Sc 12



Sc 13



Sc 14



Sc 15



The first is still a 3-shot to a 3-shot. But it is different than our first example because the size of the girls does change. Since they are in the same position and only their sizes change, it does create that 'pop/jump' again. They 'pop' bigger and smaller respectively. Not the best choice.



Storyboard Guide: Staging and Cutting

Nothing cures awkward cutting better than the good old CLOSE-UP.
Unless of course your whole storyboard is made of 90% close-ups...then for shame!
But that's a whole other problem.

So we have our 3-shot. Then we cut to the hook-up pose of pony tail girl.

Sc 12



Sc 13



Sc 14



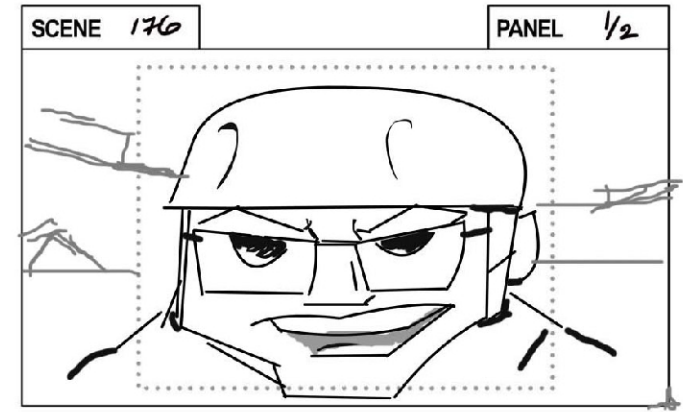
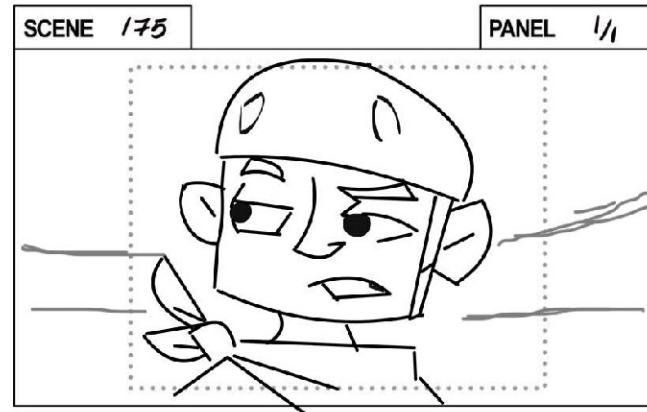
Then we pose her out. She gets sad, she leaves.
(That S/A means 'same as' the previous background.
A real labeling time saver.)

Then we can cut to this 2-shot of the other girls and all is well in the world.
Again, in the original board, these girls would have 'jumped' as well.
They would suddenly get bigger but with their full bodies in both shots.
That is a recipe for a jump cut as well. Too similar.

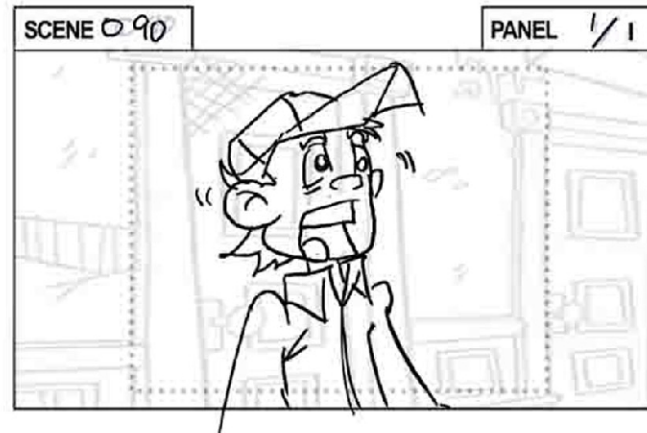
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More jump cut samples.

Going from a 1-shot to another 1-shot with the same fielding, chances are it will be a jump cut. The silhouette is too similar.



BG changes and where did the other characters come from? You need to match the background, create HOOK-UP poses, and maintain continuity.



The hook-up pose is the glue that holds the cartoon together. If you cut from one character (or more) to a different scene entirely, you don't have to worry about the hook-up. It doesn't apply.

But when you cut to a scene with one character (or more) to the next scene with the same character(s), then you have to hook-up the poses. Which means the character's pose in the last frame of the first scene and the first frame of the next one should basically match.