

Editing—The Control of Expectation

“Editing is not a technical process. Its an artistic process. Its about storytelling”

Raymond Chandler

Shot to Shot Relationships

The coordination of one shot to the next, with the purpose of unifying moving images graphically, rhythmically, spatially, and temporally.

4 basic areas of choice and control for good shot to shot continuity

Graphic relationships

Rhythmic Relationships

Spatial Relationships

Temporal Relationships

Transitions

Cuts

Dissolves

Fade-in

Fade-out

Wipes etc...

Graphic relationships

Component of all motion projects. Editing decisions based on the differences or similarities in the compositional qualities of the shots. Smooth continuity/sharp contrast?

Patterns of light and dark (contrast)

Point, line, plane

Movement and stasis

Scale

Figure/ground relationships

grid

Hierarchy

Colour

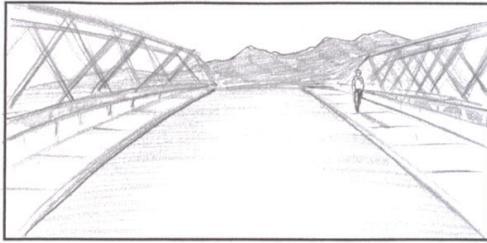
Balance

What are the consequences of these decisions formally and conceptually?

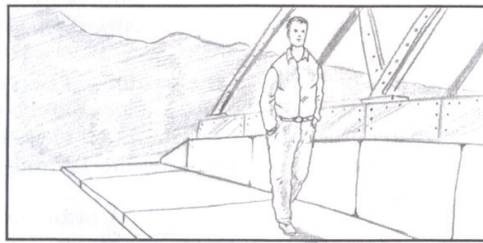


Some Compositional Techniques

Camera height, dramatic angle, extreme angles, canted angles; positioning (ie. birds-eye-view) movement (pans, tilts, dolly, tracking, crane, zooms); interior framing and multi-layered action



Master/Establishing Shot



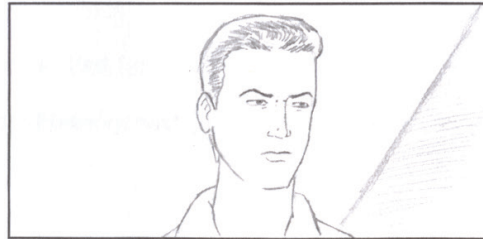
Full Shot



Medium Shot



Medium Close-up



Close-up



Extreme Close-up

Master Shot/Establishing Shot

All action in a scene from beginning to end

Wide or Full (WS)

A shot framed so that it encompasses much if not all of the action. Whole body, subject encompassed within frame.

Medium Shot (MS)

A shot framed from the waist or chest up through to the top of the head.

Close Up (CU)

A shot framed tightly usually on the face and neck of the subject.

Extreme Close-up (ECU)

A magnified view of a whole object causing it to fill the entire frame.

Rhythmic Relationships

When you adjust the length of shots in relation to one another, you are controlling the rhythmic potential (tempo, patterning) of editing.

- Each Shot's length corresponds to a duration upon screen (or playback).
- One video second = 29.97 fps
- A shot can span one frame or thousands occupying many minutes of playback time.
- The duration and placement of each shot and audio piece determines the structural rhythm of your sequence. The duration and placement of each sequence and scene within the larger whole determine the overall rhythm of your movie.

Associational Forms (psychoanalytic, poetic, music videos, commercials, title sequences)

Examples:

Meshes of the Afternoon by Maya Deren (1943–59)

Cityscape Ryan Larkin (1965)

Begone Dull Care Norman McLaren (1949)

Spatial and Temporal Relationships

By placing two shots together, you have the ability to juxtapose any two points in space and time and create an association or relationship between them. Plot construction (how “real time” in story is constructed). Example: Hitchcock loves bikinis

Or in documentaries the use of stock footage from different times/locations or the decision to group together two opposing talking head interviews.

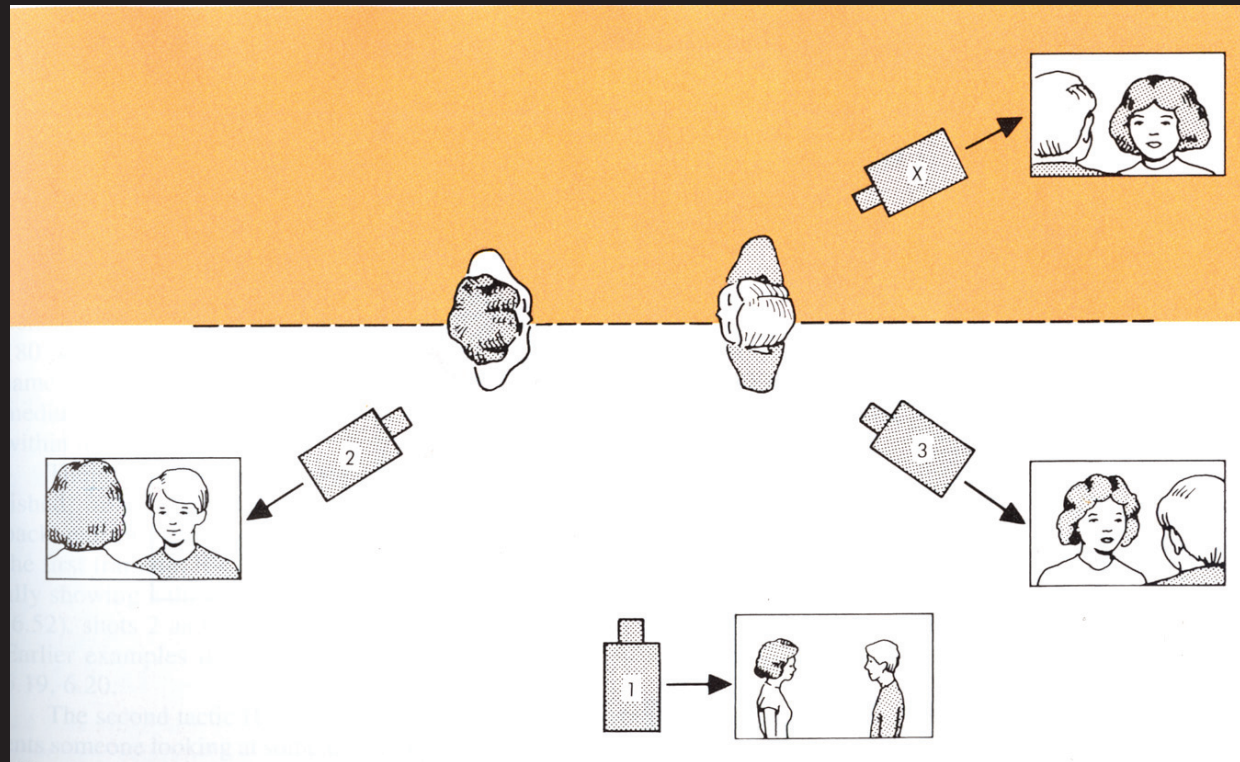
Continuity Editing—Convention

Eyeline matching—When a scene calls for back and forth between shots of characters, their sightlines must match or characters will be looking in wrong direction. Techniques of perspective—ie.POV. Be careful to match movement with eyelines.

Match Screen Direction—If characters or objects move out of the right side of frame, they need to enter next frame on the left.

Action matching—Shots coordinated so that actions overlap (ie. Going through a door)
Shoot overlaps of action—hold and repeat action. Follow “30-degree rule”

180 degree rule/axis of action



How to observe it:

1. Shoot all the shots you need on the same side of the line.

How to break it:

1. Establish a new line by having the characters and/or the camera move.
2. Shoot a “cutaway”
3. Break it deliberately—for effect

Big Picture

You must be clear about your end goal. You must know what your movie is about. You must know where you want to go.

Micro level

You must know what each scene and sequence is about and the role each shot and sound.

How to select a shot

1. Dramatic quality ie. is acted/experienced/felt the best
2. Action that most clearly tells the story
3. Pace
4. Technical quality

More critical—camera lighting sound composition continuity

Less critical—hair make up wardrobe etc...

5 Reasons to cut

1. To move the story forward
2. The shot you're in no longer carries the action
3. To impart information to the audience that is clearer in another shot
4. You want to show/see something different
5. Respect for the footage and the shot

When not to cut

1. You think you should
2. The shot's sooooo beautiful
3. The shot took all day to get and cost a million dollars
4. The director wants it
5. You're the editor, you're supposed to make cuts

Murch—“The Rule of 6”

Emotion

Story

Rhythm

Eye Trace

2D Plane of screen

3D space of action

Digital Editing Workflow

Plan your edit

- What is the final output? Tape Film DVD other
- Aspect Ratio, formats, preferences
- Filing system according to project needs
- What digital media will you be working with?
- Storage and back up

Gather/Capture your Media

- Digitize, import, organize

Build your story, organize your story

- Assembly edit

.....

Trim your story

- Rough cut to fine cut

Add Transitions

.....

Add text and effects

Finish Audio—Sound edit, mix and integrate with picture

Output Specifications

Archive—Easily accessible

Signs of a student film (and how to move beyond them)

1. Movie starts with a shot of an alarm clock and/or ends with a shot of main character waking up. (It was all just a dream) **Solution:** commit to your idea.
2. Audio as an afterthought (I'll think about the sound later). Music as a mind-numbing "blanket," rather than used in conjunction with visuals, other sound effects, maximum controlled effect. **Solution:** create meaningful sound and image relationships. Pay as much attention to how sound will work to articulate your ideas as visuals.
3. Excess reliance on "plot" revealing medium shots. Emphasis on plot cutting techniques, rather than emotive effects of editing.
4. Cutting on dialogue changes, overlaps=complexities of meaning
5. Minimal art direction
6. Trying to make video look like film (ie. film grain filter) rather than maximize and capitalize on the strengths of video, digital media.
7. Effects for no reason. Emphasis of style over substance. Careful, consideration of meaning of each compositional element, (ie. Colour within frame, balance, patterning, activity, even attention to form in terms of features of actor's, interview subjects' faces)