

Shooting in sequence

2024

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What is a sequenced?

In video production, a sequence refers to a series of shots or scenes that are combined to create a cohesive narrative or convey a specific message. A sequence can range in length and complexity, and it serves as a building block in the overall structure of a video or film.

Sequences are used to advance the storyline, develop characters, and evoke emotions. They often consist of multiple shots that are carefully edited together to create a fluid and continuous flow. Each shot within a sequence has a specific purpose and contributes to the overall meaning and impact of the scene.

In addition to the visual elements, sequences often include sound design, music, and other audio elements to enhance the storytelling. The combination of visuals, audio, and editing techniques work together to create rhythm, pacing, and emotional resonance within a sequence.

Using a greater number of shots in a sequence can significantly enhance the production value of the final product. The deliberate sequencing of shots can have an impact on the audience and this technique proves to be especially effective in conveying specific feelings, establishing locations, and highlighting finer points. For example, a montage of quick cuts showcasing a character's journey can heighten a sense of excitement or provide a glimpse into their emotional state.

Sequencing shots can be instrumental in emphasizing important details or presenting subtle nuances. By isolating and magnifying specific elements, filmmakers can draw the audience's attention to vital information or provide key insights into a character's mindset or motivation.

Types of shots

Plan each element of your sequence. You need a minimum of 3 shots, consisting of a variation of:

- Wide Shot (WS)
 - Generally used to establish a location or broad setting.
 - You can see the subject and their surroundings.
- Medium Shot (MS)
 - The activity of the person or thing in action, framed from approximately the waist up.
 - You can see body language and facial expressions.
- Close Up (CU)
 - Framed to see the expression on the face or a specific detail for emphasis.

- Extreme Close Up (ECU)
 - Also known as a macro shot.
 - Focused on fine details and textures of the subject drawing the viewer's attention to an important element in the scene.

Tips for shooting in sequence:

1. The wide shot should show the whole action - which (if repeatable) should be recorded from beginning to end. It's a great way to block out the sequence.
2. Shoot a variety of shots, WS, MS, CU of the action. Achieved by changing your lenses or zooming in/out.
3. Physically move the camera position. Directly head-on of the subject, over the shoulder of the subject, side profile, high angle, low angle, all framed with a combination of shot types.
4. Overlap action. Shoot the same action from different angles with different types of shots.
5. More CU's. Close-up shots are always great transition shots for getting into a sequence and leaving a sequence. They are often used as a way to fix a continuity problem or help you cross the axis.
6. CU of your subjects' face, and ECU of eyes can be powerful.
7. Always shoot the sound within the frame - anything could be a potential sound up!
8. Allow subjects to enter the frame or leave the frame at the end, acts as a natural wipe or cut point.
9. Be creative. Experiment with trying new things; the more angles you try the more options you have in the edit. Things might not work, but you never know until you try.
10. Only move within a shot, such as zooming and panning and titling, unless it intentionally helps the story otherwise these shots often are choppy to cut on camera movements.
11. Avoid crossing the axis. By keeping the camera on one side of an imaginary **axis** between two characters, the first character is always framed right of the second character. Moving the camera over the **axis** is called jumping the line or **crossing** the line; breaking the 180-degree rule by shooting on all sides is known as shooting in the round.