

STORYBOARDING

THE SIMPSONS

Part 2 by Chris Roman

WAY



Contents:

TRANSITIONS

FOCUS

Screen Direction Part 1

Screen Direction Part 2

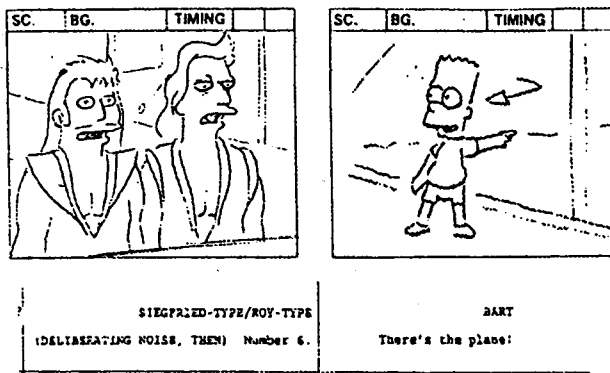
Screen Direction Part 3

Types of Shots (Wide/Med/CU)

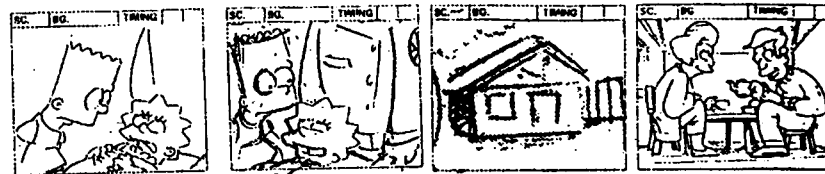
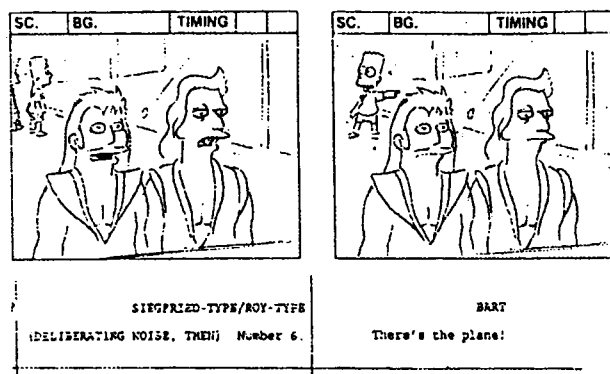
More Types of Shots

TRANSITIONS

One of the most important jobs of a good storyboard artist is to create smooth transitions between scenes! Don't just cut to the next scene, or to a new establishing shot...try and be creative!



two scenes happen in the same locale. Why break it up?

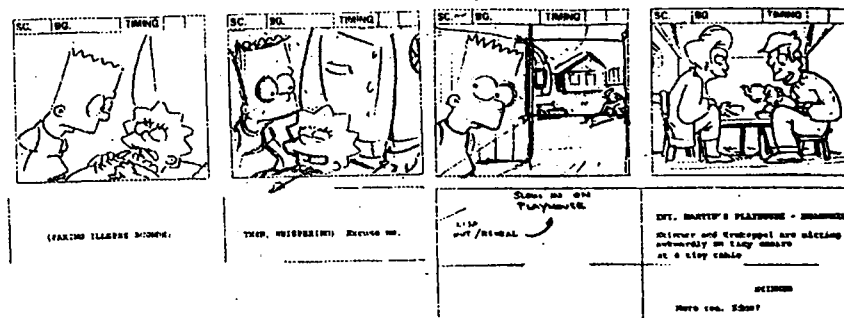


Again, these two scenes happen in the same locale. Why break it up? By cutting to an EXT. PLAYHOUSE shot, it breaks up the flow of the story.

EXT. BART'S PLAYHOUSE - BIRMINGHAM
Dr. Hibbert and Krabappel are sitting awkwardly on tiny chairs at a tiny table.

ACTION
How can I help?

But by PUSHING IN past Bart the flow is maintained, and yet we move into a new scene.



(FAKING DELIBERATE NOISE)

TRIP, MISPLACED! Excuse me.

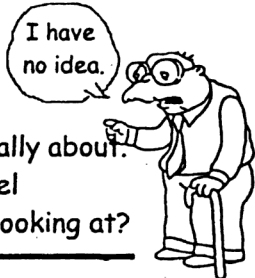
Slide in on Playhouse
LIP OUT / REVEAL

EXT. BART'S PLAYHOUSE - BIRMINGHAM
Dr. Hibbert and Krabappel are sitting awkwardly on tiny chairs at a tiny table.

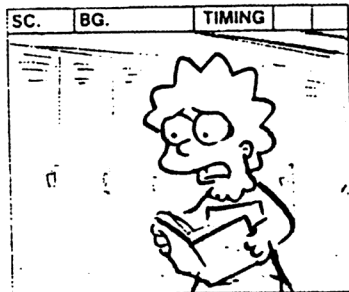
ACTION
How can I help?

FOCUS

What are we REALLY looking at?

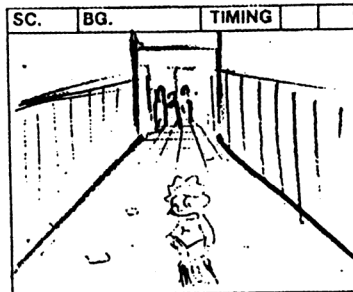


Think about each scene and what it's really about. Should we be drawn in? Or should we feel detached? Who or what should we be looking at?



LISA
But I should be the most popular girl in school.

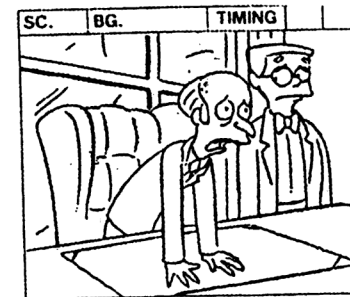
Lisa's just been snubbed by her classmates, even though having lots of extra-curriculars should make her popular...so she thinks. THIS SHOT shows Lisa, but who cares?



LISA
But I should be the most popular girl in school.

THIS SHOT emphasizes Lisa's aloneness by isolating her. PLUS it puts her below us, making her even more pathetic.

Sometimes the text alone can carry a scene, but it's up to you to find where you can enhance the FOCUS, literally and psychologically, with your composition!



BURNS
My money's all gone?

Burn's has just been told all his money's gone. Still, he's a powerful man...but not in this drawing. In fact, although he's in the center of the frame, he's competing for focus with Smithers, who's as big as Burns, and the ample background space visible.



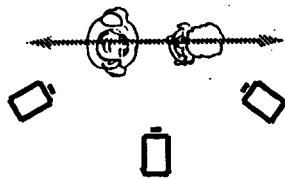
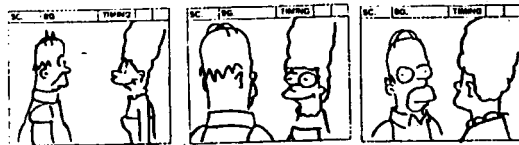
BURNS
My money's all gone?

Brad's revision makes Burns the clear focus, plus adds drama with an unshot on Burns; he's still powerful but his plea here is more urgent than in the other composition.

SCREEN DIRECTION

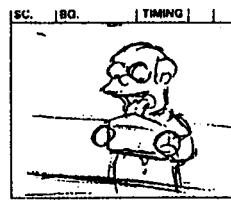
PART ONE: STAYING ON THE GOOD SIDE OF THE CAMERA LINE

Keeping the 'camera' from jumping the 'camera line' is the easiest thing to learn, easiest mistake to spot, but is still the most common mistake board artists make!

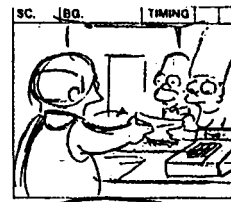


Whichever direction the characters are **FACING** at the beginning of a scene...the invisible eyeline between them is the **CAMERA LINE**. Crossing over that and seeing the characters from the opposite side is a **JUMP CUT** (a bad thing).

In live action...this line can be formed just by the directions the person's eyes are looking... but because animation deals with abstract two dimensional characters, the direction they **FACE** is the key factor.



This scene starts with the man behind the counter facing **LEFT**.



Then **SUDDENLY** he's facing **RIGHT!**

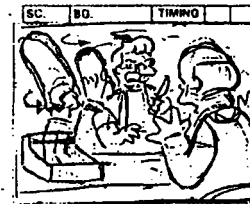
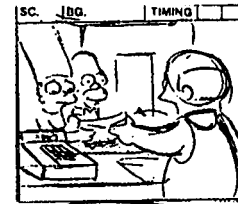
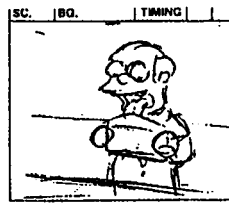


Jailbird comes in, making Homer turn to the **LEFT**.



But we cut to him **SUDDENLY** facing **RIGHT!**

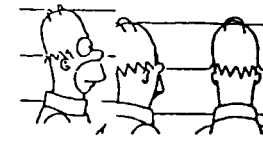
In this sequence, the camera's jumping all over the place! Even though no one actually moves anywhere in the room, it's harder for the viewer subconsciously to keep everything straight with the camera randomly jumping around.



By simply flopping the two middle panels, we keep the man behind the counter and Homer facing the right way...and it makes the scene much more comprehensible.



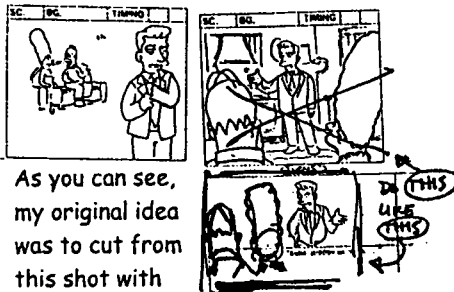
AN EASIER WAY TO REMEMBER THIS:
If the character is facing one direction in one shot, keep them facing that way in **EVERY SHOT** (unless you see them turn).



SCREEN DIRECTION

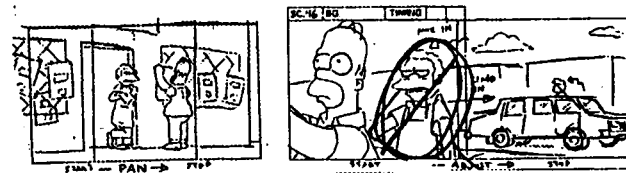
PART TWO: STAYING ON THE SAME SIDE OF THE SCREEN

This isn't as much a rule as crossing the CAMERA LINE, but it's just as helpful in keeping things CLEAR in your staging and storytelling.



As you can see, my original idea was to cut from this shot with Homer and Marge in the background, to a shot where the Security Salesman stands between them. IN theory, this would put him psychologically between them as well... **BUT**

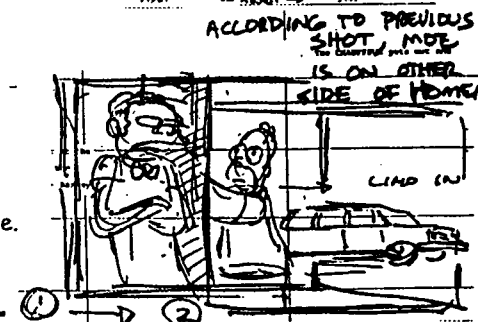
The scene would be better served by keeping the Homer and Marge TOGETHER, since the Sec. Salesman is playing against BOTH of them.



This scene starts out with Moe on the left and Homer on the right...and the next shot DOES work in the context of the scene. Homer is still facing left, and Moe doesn't start out in the scene. This allows for him to enter the frame now facing screen left...

BUT

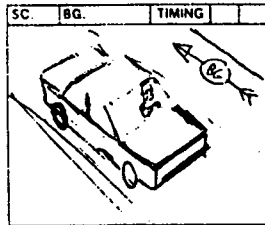
The cutting is smoother if we STAY on both Moe and Homer, keeping them both in the same spots in the frame relative to one another.



KEEP THE CUTTING CLEAN BY KEEPING THE CHARACTERS IN THE SAME RELATIVE SPACE IN SEQUENTIAL SHOTS... (NOT THE SAME SIZE (WHICH WOULD CREATE JUMP CUTS)).

SCREEN DIRECTION

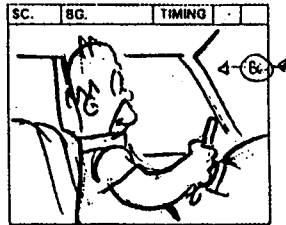
PART THREE: CONTINUITY IN MOVING DIRECTIONS



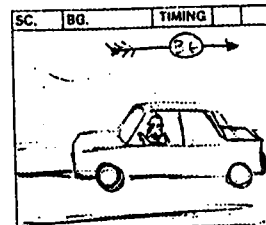
Psychologically speaking... LEFT TO RIGHT is more natural to the eye (we read that way).

Compositionally, keep some space in FRONT of the car or character in the direction they're moving; the viewer subconsciously needs to feel the character has someplace to go.

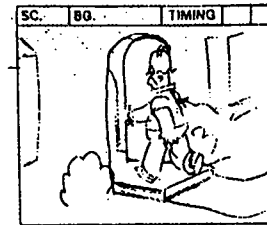
IN THIS SHOT, the car is moving left to right shown by the ARROW CALLING FOR THE BACKGROUND (BG) TO PAN BEHIND THE CAR FROM RIGHT TO LEFT.



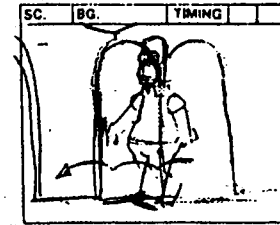
We cut to inside the car. The BG continues in the same direction- Right to Left...keeping Homer travelling LEFT TO RIGHT.



After a few scenes, Homer's on his way home. To emphasize that he's going home, the OPPOSITE of where he was going, he should now be travelling RIGHT TO LEFT.



Homer's back, and he's outside his house going in. He's STILL moving LEFT TO RIGHT, continuing the emphasis that he's going AWAY from wherever he'd been.

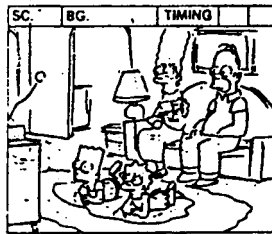


Inside, you keep Homer going LEFT TO RIGHT ...not just to continue the 'going home' feel, but also because Homer creates a

CAMERA LINE ALONG THE DIRECTION HE'S TRAVELLING!

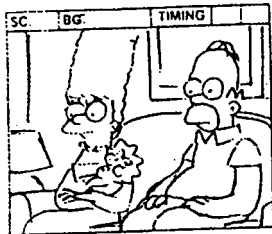


TYPES OF SHOTS



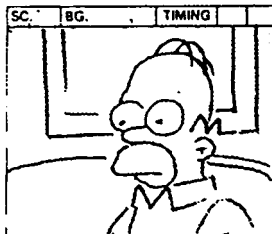
WIDE SHOT (also LONG or ESTABLISHING)

Composition showing **WHERE** we are, **WHO** is there, and where they are **IN RELATION TO ONE ANOTHER**. Simply staged to allow the viewer easy comprehension and acclimation. This shot is the most important shot of any sequence...all shots afterwards are based around it. It doesn't have to be the first shot of a scene, but it **MUST** happen at some point, otherwise the viewer will be disoriented.



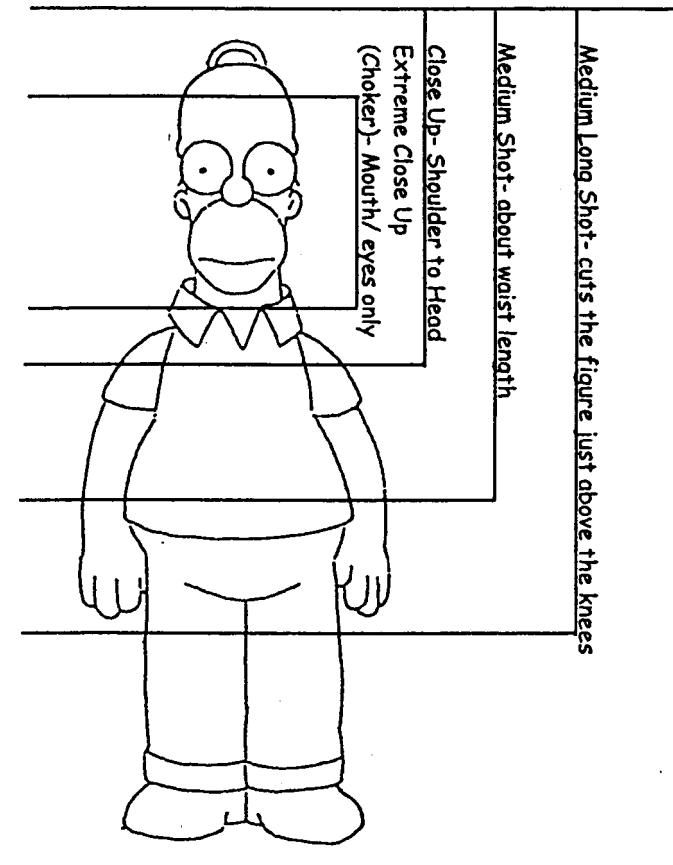
MEDIUM SHOT

Used when the characters become more important than the surroundings. Shows facial expressions **AND** gestures while continuing the relationships between one or two other characters.



CLOSE UP

This shot involves the viewer more, focusing on a particular character or object. Subtle facial acting is used, or there is text to be read, small details to be noticed. Close-ups involve minimal animation while being powerful images...just don't overuse them.

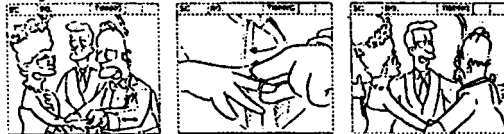


MORE TYPES OF SHOTS



INSERTS

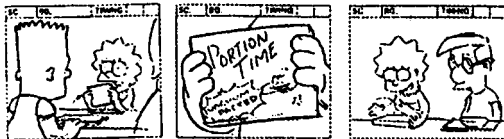
Full screen close-ups of actions, objects, text, or character's reactions placed as if inserted over a longer scene, or over another character's dialogue.



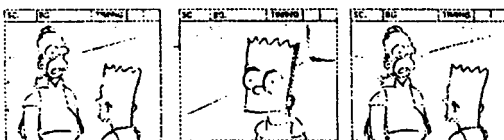
Inserted close-up of important action within a wider shot scene



Inserted close-up of important object linking two separate shots in the same location



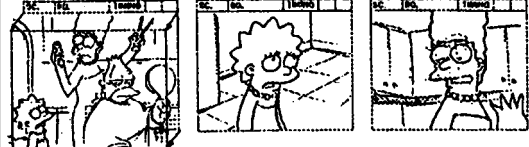
Inserted close-up of important object with text to be read



Inserted close-up of Bart's reaction to what Homer is saying (Homer's dialogue continues over shot of Bart)

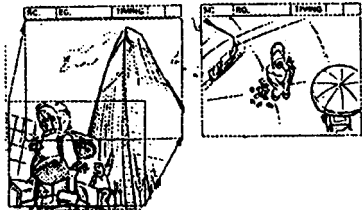
UPSHOTS and DOWNSHOTS

Upshots place the viewer beneath the focus and downshots place the viewer above, physically AND psychologically. Since most shots are straight on, upshots and downshots add variety and drama to scenes.



From the med. long shot we cut to a DOWNSHOT of Lisa, Marge's POV, which sets up the UPSHOT of Marge, Lisa's POV.

This UPSHOT accentuates the height of the World Trade Center, and the distance Homer must go. The DOWNSHOT on Homer, the virtual POV of the top of the tower, isolates Homer and makes him even more pathetic.



TILT/ DUTCH ANGLE

Used when wierd, violent, unstable, impressionistic or other novel views are needed.



TWIST IN to a tilt over-dramatizes a reaction to someone or something.

REVERSE SHOT



Normally, it's a bad idea to cross the CAMERA LINE...but sometimes rules can be broken, like in this scene. Here, we cut to a REVERSE ANGLE to see Homer & Marge's reactions. We can do this, because their locations in relation to Rev.Lovejoy were strongly established in the first shot.

When you choose your shots, think in terms of both the **DRAMATIC IMPACT** on the audience, and **VISUAL VARIETY!**



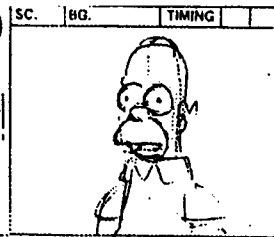
EVEN MORE

TYPES OF SHOTS



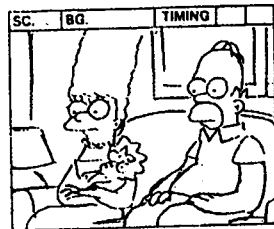
ONE SHOT

How basic can you get?
One person in the shot!
They're the focus!



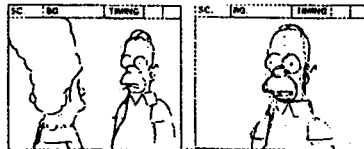
TWO SHOT

Two people,
usually with
dialogue relating
to one another.

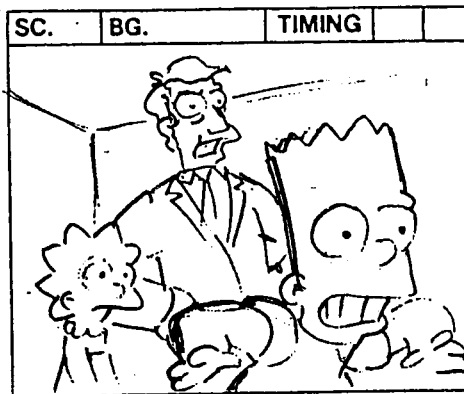


OVER THE SHOULDER (OTS)

Two shot
which puts
focus on the
character
facing camera, yet
still subconsciously includes the other character.
This shot sets up for the ONE SHOT, as if the
viewer has assumed the other character's POV.



THREE SHOT



Three characters in
a shot...duh!

STAGING IN DEPTH

As in this THREE SHOT, not
every composition needs to
be viewed from straight on!
Move the camera to angles
which create depth, placing
one or more of the characters
closer in the foreground, or
back into the background.

THIS THREE SHOT makes
Bart the focus by being face
front, but also closest to us.
But, because of the triangular
shape created, Skinner is in
power in the scene standing at
the top of the triangle.

USING THE AUX. PEGS TO CREATE 3 DIMENSIONS

Take advantage of auxillary pegs to
create multi-plane effects when
you think it might enhance the flow!
Use it to PAN IN characters during
a truck out (see example) or PAN OUT
a character the viewer is looking over to
truck into the character being spoken to
(OTS example- PAN OUT Marge as camera
TRUCKS IN to a ONE SHOT of HOMER)



PAN IN Bart



PAN IN Marge/Lisa
TRUCK OUT