

Steven Shaviro  
shaviro@shaviro.com  
English 2450/Communications 2010

## CONCEPT GUIDE #3: EDITING

**180° rule:** In the continuity system, the camera must not cross the axis of action, but stay within the 180° semicircle defined by using this axis as the diameter.

**30° rule:** In the continuity system, if the camera moves in between shots, it must move by an angle of at least 30°, so as not to appear abrupt.

**Axis of action:** In the continuity system, an imaginary line that passes between the main actors in a scene, defining the circle used in the 180° rule.

**Continuity editing, continuity system:** A system of editing, institutionalized in Hollywood, and designed to create a coherent time and space and to convey the narrative as smoothly and “realistically” as possible.

**Crosscutting:** Editing that alternates between two series of actions, usually taking place at the same time but in different locations.

**Cut:** The break between two shots. The transition from one shot to another.

**Establishing shot:** A shot, usually from a distance, that shows the entire location and setting of a scene, and the places of the characters in relation to one another.

**Eyeline match:** Alignment of the glances of the characters shown in two succeeding shots, so that they appear to be looking at one another.

**Fade-in:** A dark screen gradually brightens into a shot.

**Fade-out :** A shot gradually darkens to black.

**Flashback :** A sequence that violates normal time order by taking place in the past, relative to the preceding (present-time) sequence.

**Flashforward :** A sequence that leaps forward to the future, violating normal time order.

**Graphic editing :** Editing that calls attention to formal patterns (shapes, colors, lines, etc.) that persist from shot to shot.

**Graphic match :** Two otherwise unrelated shots linked by graphic similarity or continuity.

**Insert :** A brief shot (often a close-up) filmed separately from the rest of the scene, and inserted during editing (often to convey a special emphasis).

**Invisible editing :** An editing style that does not call attention to itself, but tries to tell the story as simply and straightforwardly as possible. (Also see **Continuity editing**).

**Jump cut** : An abrupt cut that violates time continuity.

**Match on action** : Two shots linked together by the way an action that takes place in one shot continues smoothly in the next.

**Montage** : French for “editing”; often used to refer to an editing style that calls attention to itself, and emphasizes the discontinuities between the images.

**Montage sequence** : A segment of a film that conveys the passage of time or an ongoing process through a series of brief images.

**Narrative** : A story that is told (including the act of telling the story from a certain point of view).

**Nondiegetic insert** : A shot or series of shots originating outside the time and space of the actual narrative.

**Scene** : A segment of narrative, or series of shots, unfolding in a single space and time.

**Sequence** : A unified series of shots giving a complete stretch of action.

**Shock cut** : A jarring juxtaposition of unrelated images, via a cut from one image to the other.

**Shot** : A single, uninterrupted moving image. The basic unit of the film.