

**Week 7**

# **Parallel Action**

# Parallel Action

An effect created when **two or more actions in (usually) two or more different locations are presented by CROSS-CUTTING** between them. This alternating between actions suggests to the viewer that they are taking place at the same time.

Also called PARALLEL EDITING.

# Parallel Action

Parallel action ends when an **Action Link** brings the separate pieces of action together.

# Parallel Action

Parallel action ends when an **Action Link** brings the separate pieces of action together.

Remember this – an **Action Link** signals the end of parallel action.

# Parallel Action

**U.S. film director D.W. Griffith was one of the early proponents of the power of editing — mastering cross-cutting to show PARALLEL ACTION in different locations.**

**Griffith's work in the 1910's was highly regarded by Soviet filmmakers and greatly influenced their understanding of editing.**

# Parallel Action

**Examples abound! Parallel Action is in nearly all films. Simple examples are:**

# Parallel Action

- **Strangers on a Train** (play clip)

# Parallel Action

- **Strangers on a Train**
- **It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World**



# Parallel Action



*It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*

Storyline **1**

# Parallel Action



*It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*

Storyline **2**

# Parallel Action



*It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*

Storyline **3**



# Parallel Action



*It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*

Storyline **4**

# Parallel Action



*It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*

Storyline **5**

# Parallel Action



*It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*

Storyline **6**



# Parallel Action



*It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*

Storyline **7**

# Parallel Action



*It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*

Storyline **8**



# Parallel Action



*It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*

Until an **Action link** brings them all together again

# Parallel Action

**Check out the following short parody on the IKEA store, which mixes continuity editing with parallel action – can you see the difference?**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aiBt44rrslw#t=34>

# Parallel Action

**By the way, your job this week is to take YOUR short story (or a different one) and create a story that contains parallel action. Use your imagination. Make it fun and make the parallel action fit with the rest of the story.**

**Specifics to follow.**

# Continuity

Hollywood ideal

Continuity

# Continuity

## Hollywood ideal

#1 Do not confuse the audience

# Continuity

## Hollywood ideal

#1 Do not confuse the audience

#2 Do not upset the audience

*#2B (unless you mean to)*

# Continuity

## Hollywood ideal

#1 Do not confuse the audience

#2 Do not upset the audience

*#2B (unless you mean to)*

#3 Do not draw attention to the process

*#3B (unless it's part of the look)*

# Continuity

**It's easy to mess up continuity on these:**

Continuity



# Continuity

**It's easy to mess up continuity on these:**

- direction of action
- props
- clocks, time of day
- consumables (beverages, etc.)
- wardrobe (oh, so easy)
- make-up and effect make-up
- lighting
- doors
- what else?

# Continuity

**Do not confuse/upset the audience**

# Continuity

**Do not confuse/upset the audience**

**Movement**

matching action

# Continuity

**Do not confuse/upset the audience**

## **Movement**

matching action

## **Position**

props/extras

gestures

walking cadence

# Continuity

**Do not confuse/upset the audience**

## **Movement**

matching action

## **Position**

props/extras

gestures

walking cadence

## **Time**

ellipsis (omission of / jump in time)

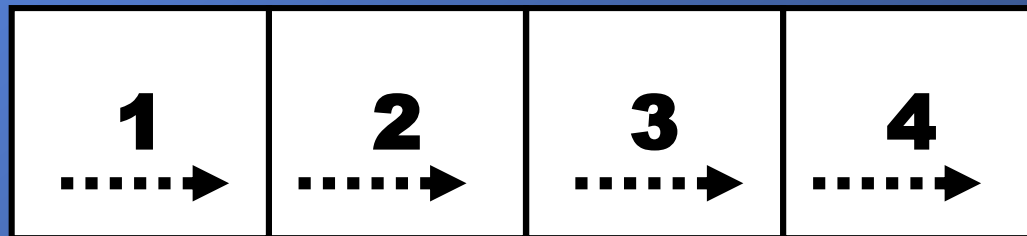
logical off-screen time

exit/entrance

# Continuity

Do not confuse the audience

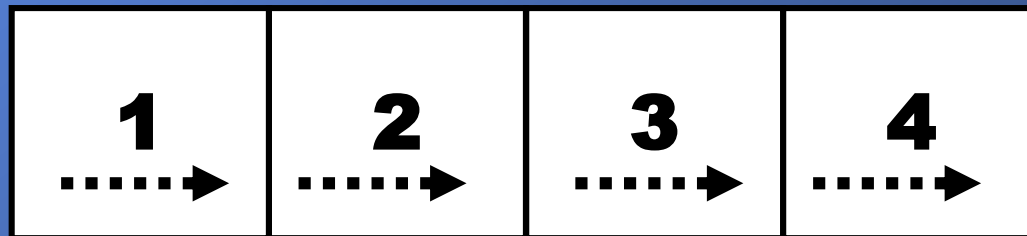
Screen direction



# Continuity

**Do not confuse the audience**

**Screen direction**  
movement/action



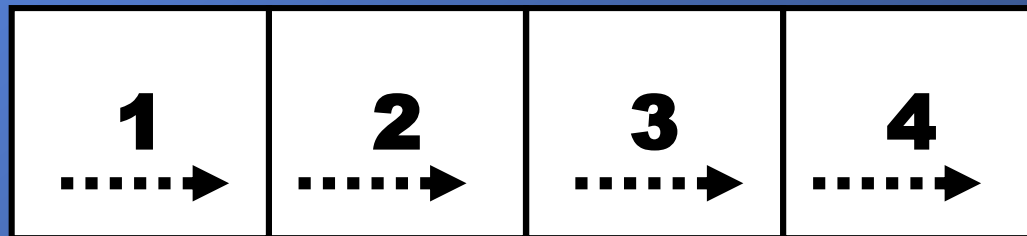
# Continuity

**Do not confuse the audience**

**Screen direction**

movement/action

consistent geography



Continuity



# Continuity

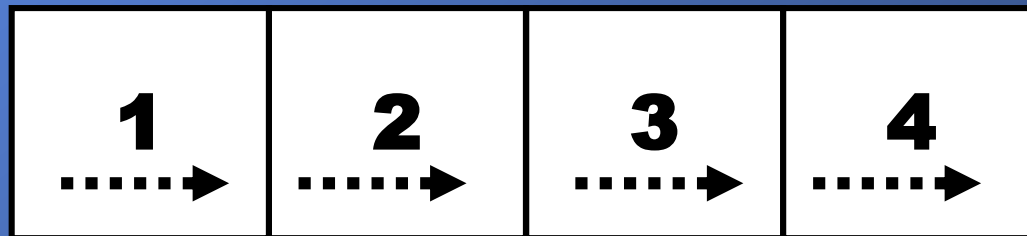
**Do not confuse the audience**

**Screen direction**

movement/action

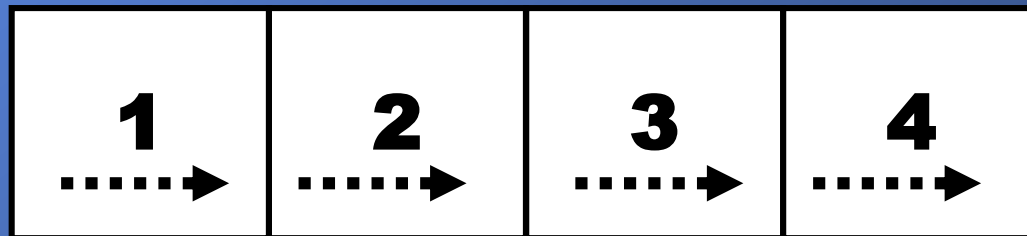
consistent geography

exiting off frame



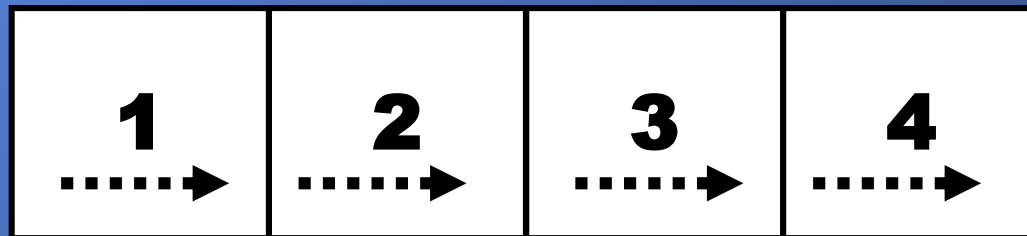
# Continuity

Screen direction exceptions



# Continuity

**Screen direction exceptions**  
reverse with landmarks

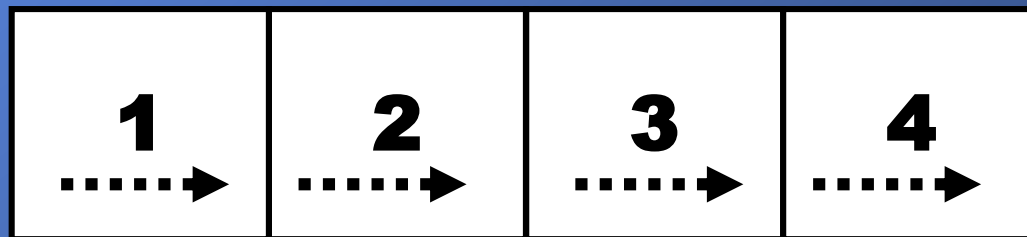


# Continuity

## Screen direction exceptions

reverse with landmarks

change direction on camera



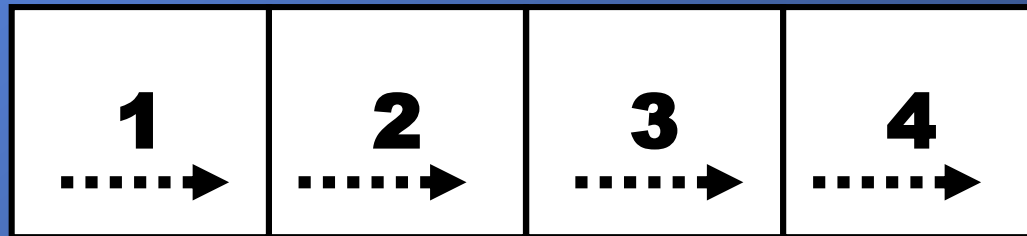
# Continuity

## Screen direction exceptions

reverse with landmarks

change direction on camera

camera moves across stage line



# Continuity

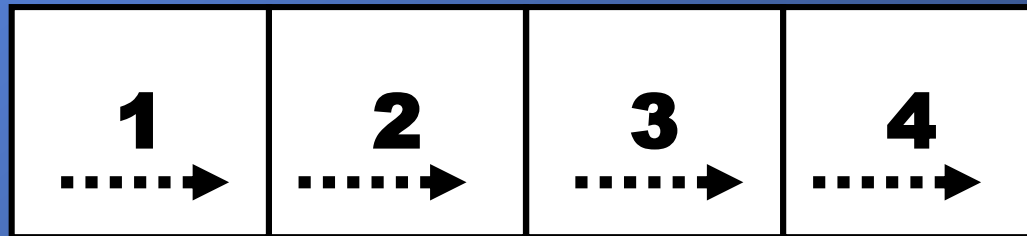
## Screen direction exceptions

reverse with landmarks

change direction on camera

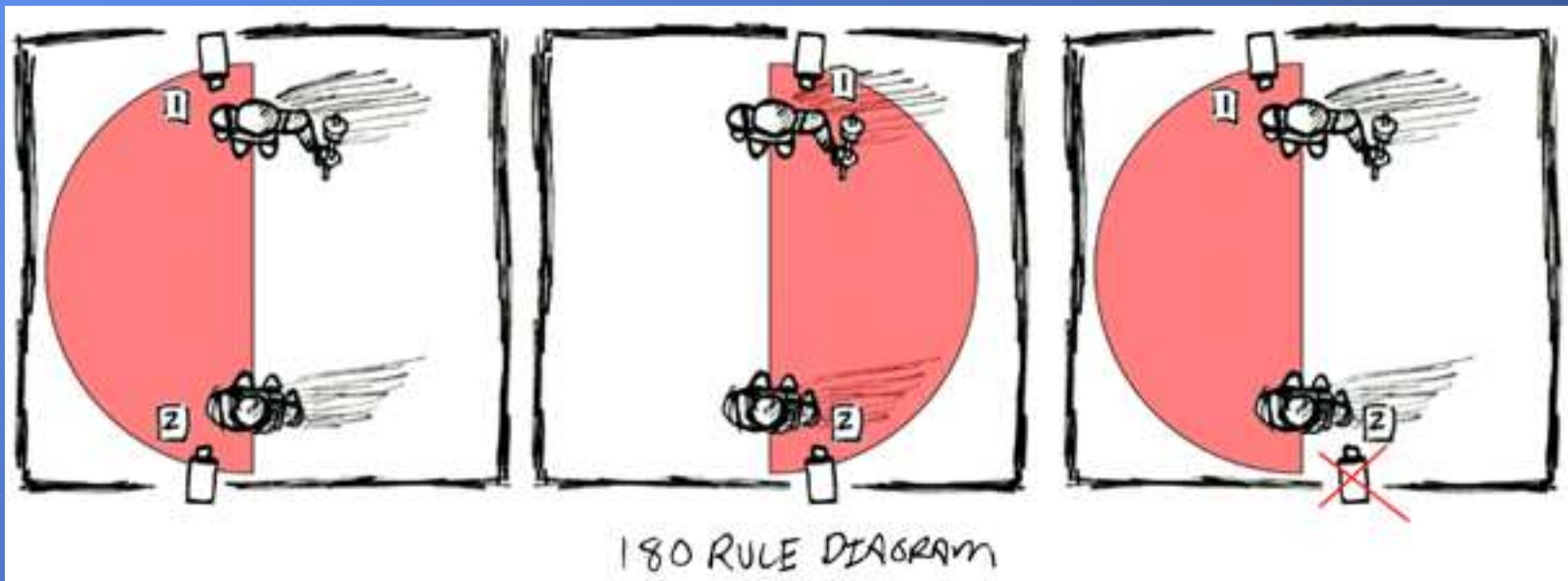
camera moves across stage line

cut to neutral shot



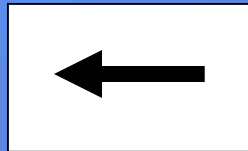
# 180° Rule / Stage-line

*Stage-line* is an imaginary line drawn along the “line of action” in a scene. Generally, by keeping camera positions on one side of this line, anywhere along a **180° arc**, one maintains proper screen direction, eyelines, and orientation. Hence, the 180° rule. (play Harakiri1962Duel clip)



# Continuity

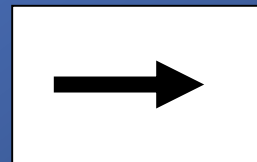
## 180° Rule / Stage-line



This action appears RT to LT



This action appears LT to RT





## 180° Rule

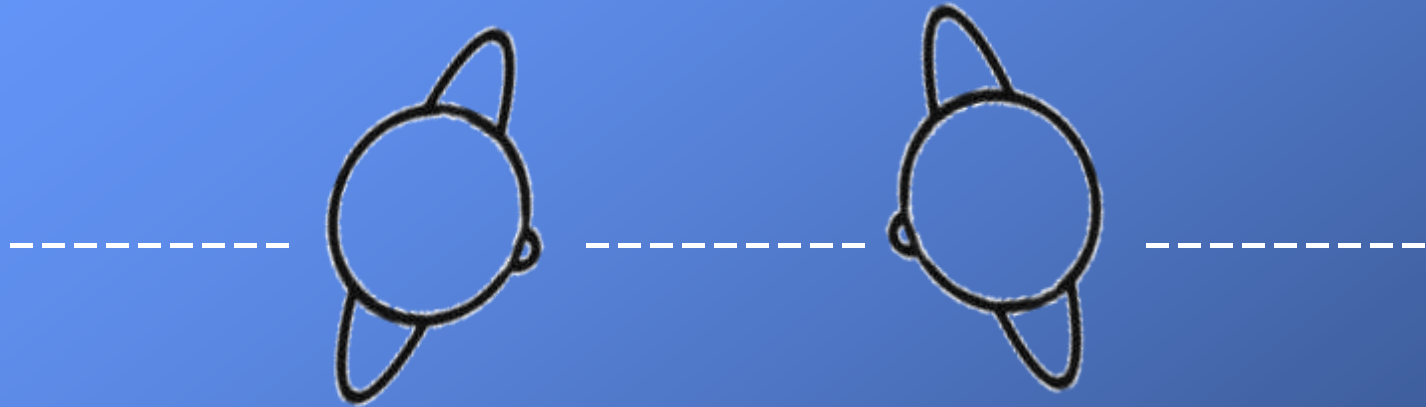


## 180° Rule



**Draw an imaginary line between characters' noses**

## 180° Rule

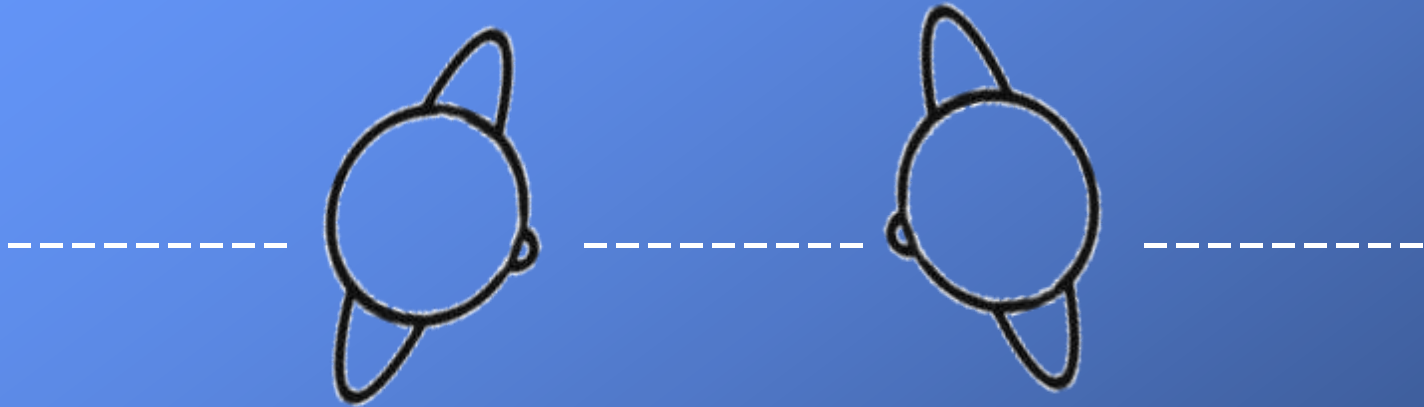


**Draw an imaginary line between  
characters' noses**

**This is your *Stage-line***

1. master shot

## 180° Rule

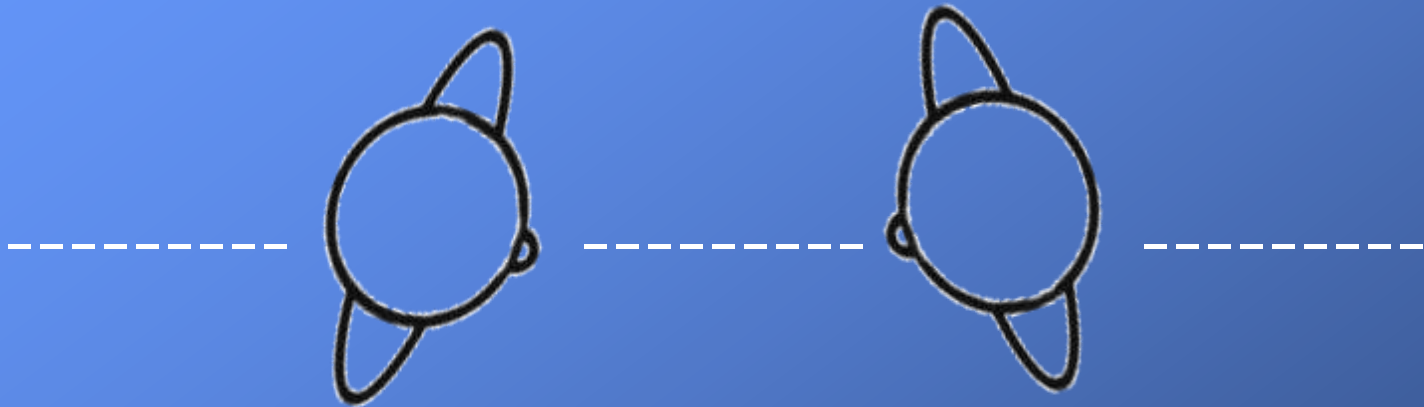


1. V

**Keep your camera on one side of this stage-line**

1. master shot
2. coverage / CU

## 180° Rule



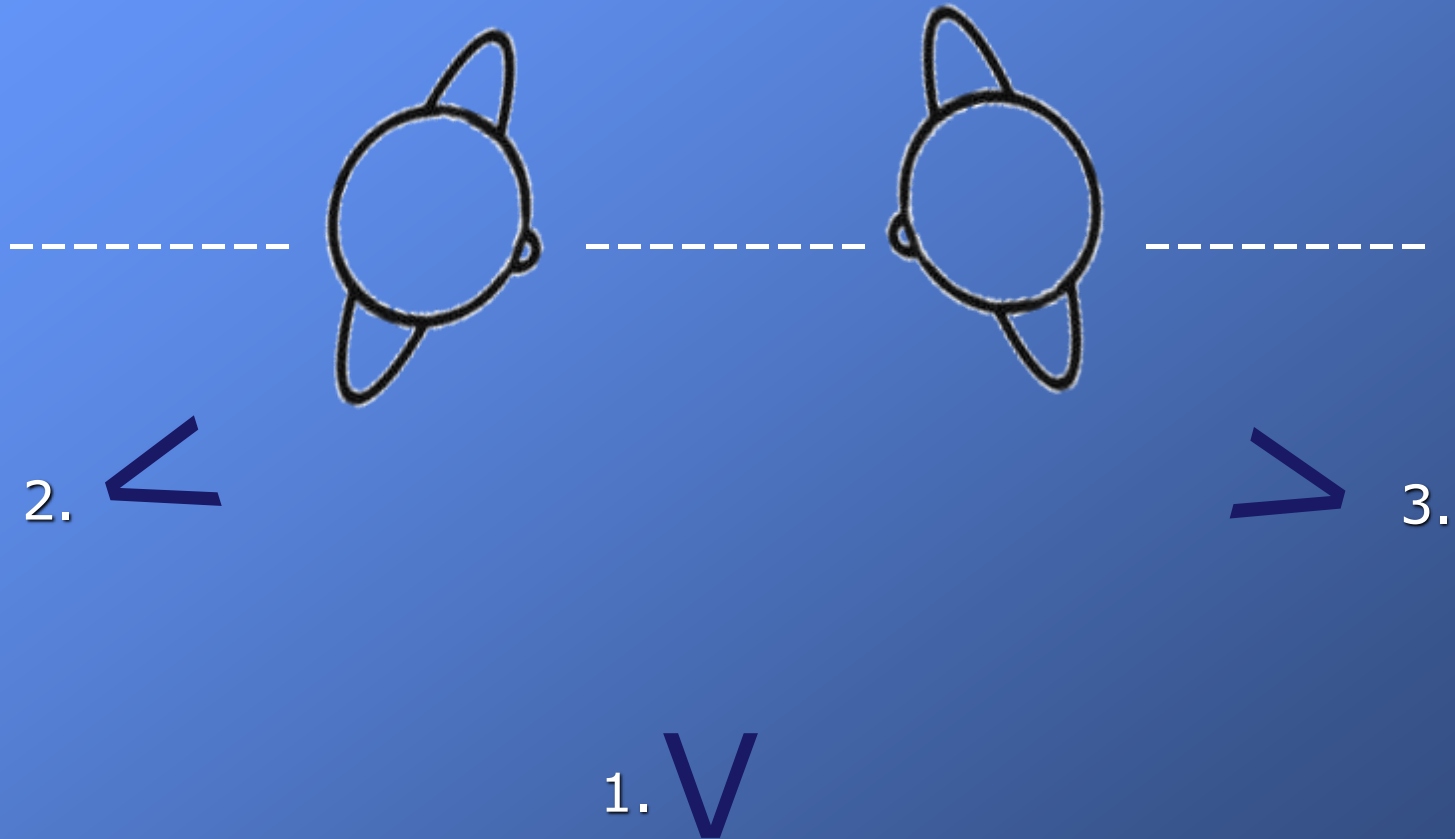
2. 

1. 

**Keep your camera on one side of this stage-line**

## 180° Rule

1. master shot
2. coverage / CU
3. coverage / reaction / answer / matching



**Keep your camera on one side of this stage-line**



# Continuity

**180° Rule determines:**

- direction of action
- relative geography
- spatial relationships
- looks and eyelines

# Continuity

**180° Rule Exceptions**

# Continuity

## **180° Rule Exceptions**

When it doesn't confuse the viewer!

# Continuity

## 180° Rule Exceptions

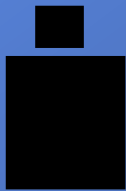
When it doesn't confuse the viewer!

- cut on action
- established geography
- neutral intermediary shot  
such as a *cutaway* or  
other stage-line neutral shot

# Continuity

**30° “Rule” to improve cut**

Change camera position / angle by  $>30^\circ$

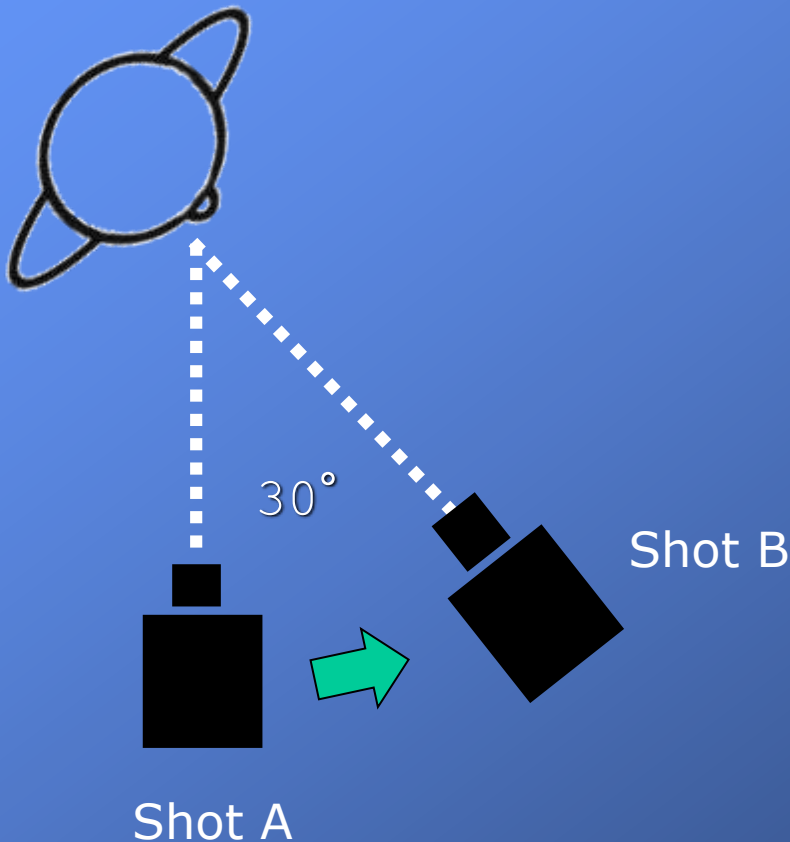


Shot A

# Continuity

**30° “Rule” to improve cut**

Change camera position / angle by  $>30^\circ$



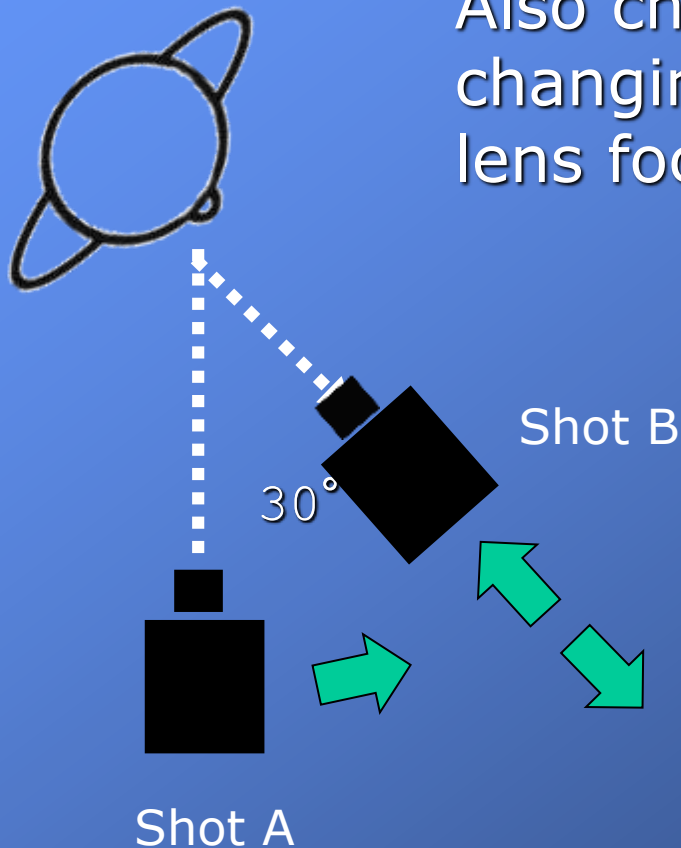


# Continuity

## 30° “Rule” to improve cut

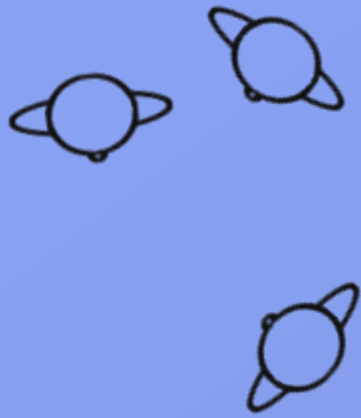
Change camera position / angle by  $>30^\circ$

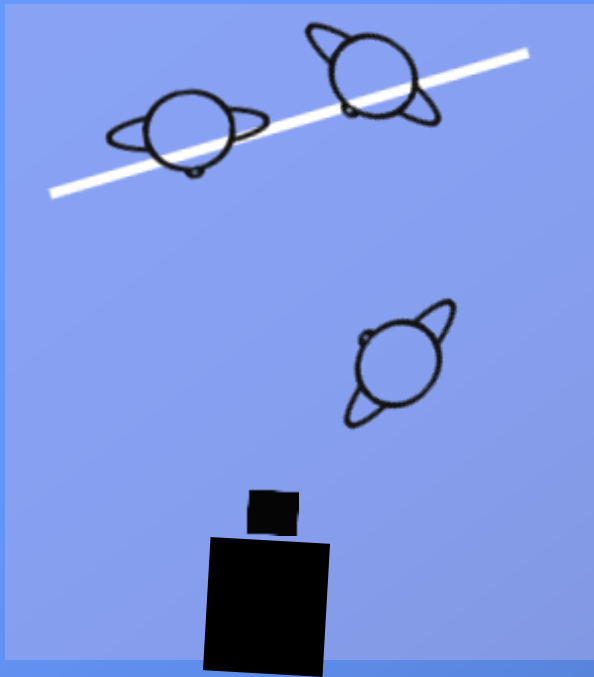
Also change *image size* by changing distance to subject and lens focal length.



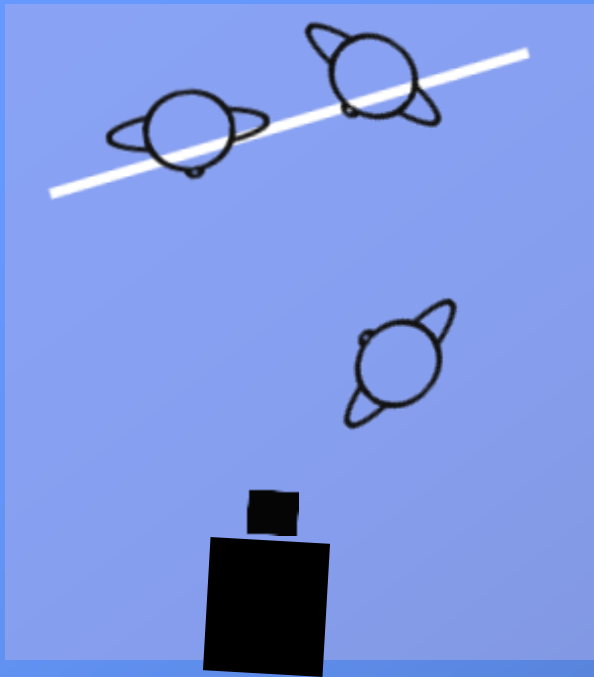
# Continuity

Simple scene from “Sideways”...





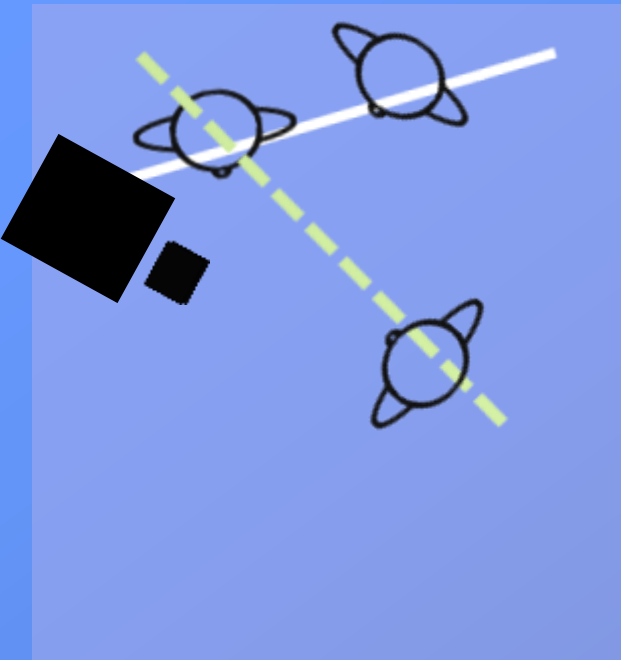
**Primary stage-line**



## Primary stage-line

Where can you put the camera if you want a shot of the vintner?

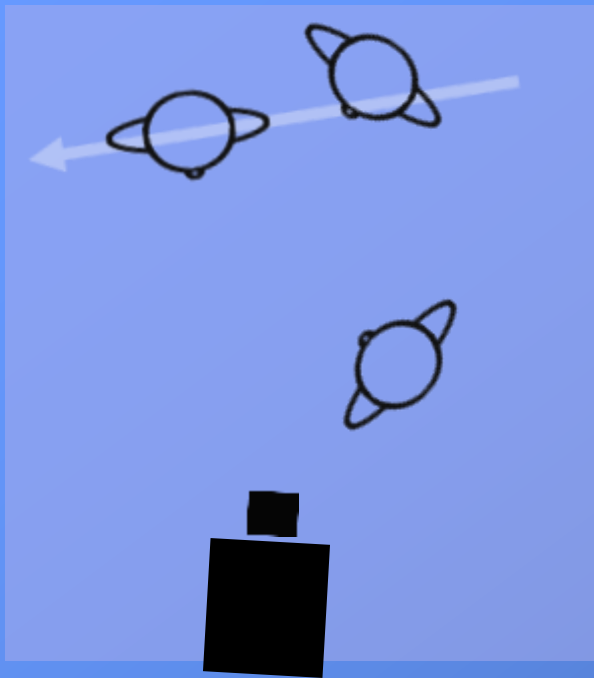




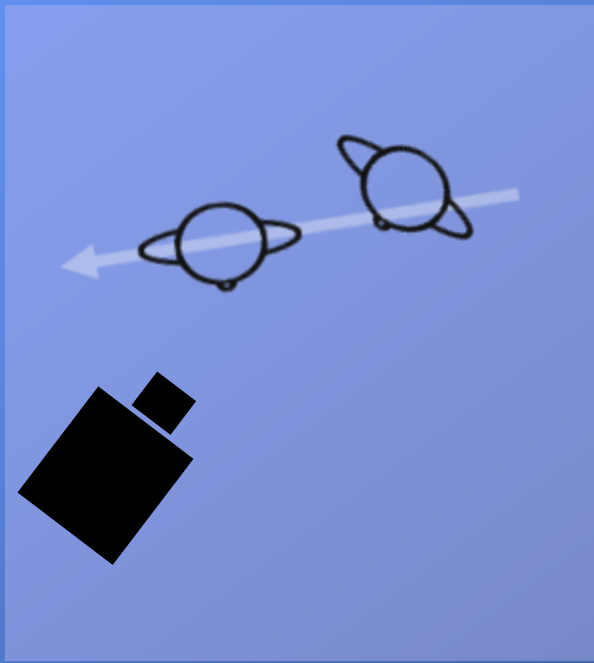
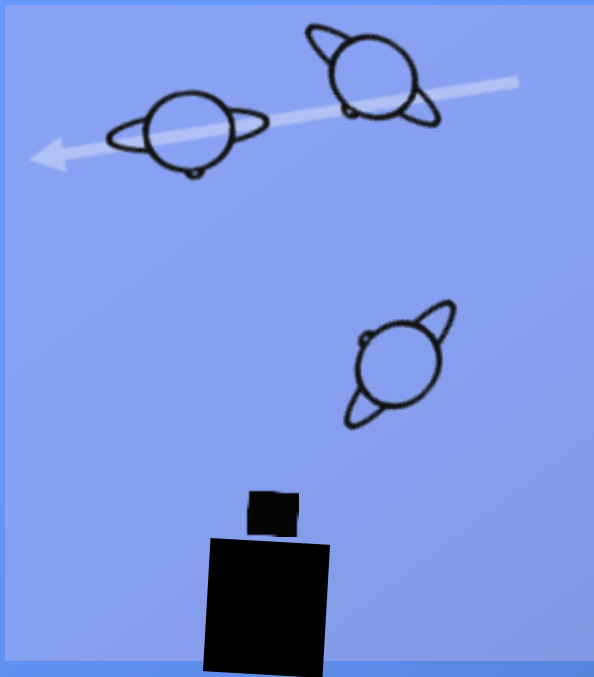
**Primary stage-line**

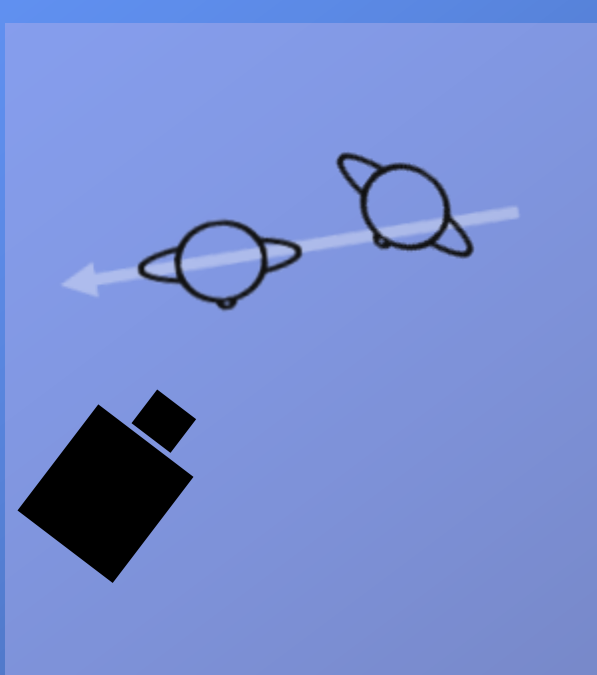
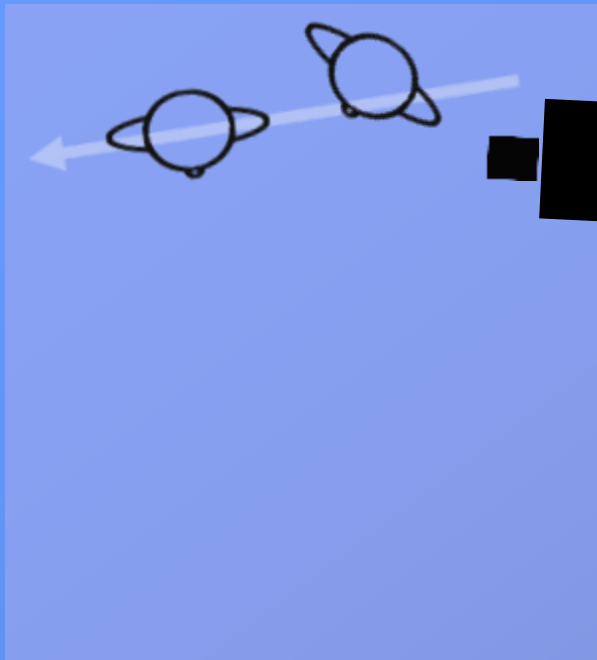
**Secondary stage-line**





**It plays out like this, starting with a 3-shot...**







# **Week #7 :**

## **1. Viewing/Analysis:**

# **Week #7 :**

## **1. Viewing/Analysis: *Cell 211***

# **Week #7 :**

## **1. Viewing/Analysis:** ***Cell 211***

**Concept: Parallel Action**



# **Week #7 :**

## **1. Viewing/Analysis:** ***Cell 211***

**Concept: Parallel Action**

## **2. Production:**

# **Week #7 :**

**1. Viewing/Analysis:**  
***Cell 211***

**Concept: Parallel Action**

**2. Production:**  
**Still Film #2**

# **Week #7 :**

**1. Viewing/Analysis:**  
***Cell 211***

**Concept: Parallel Action**

**2. Production:**  
**Still Film #2 -*parallel action***

# **Week #7 :**

## **2. Production: Still Film #2**

**Content: Parallel Action**

**Format: Power Point**

**Specs: approx 16 frames +/-**

**Aspect: 16:9**

**B&W**

**Minimum HALF NEW frames,  
consider reshooting all**