

THE 12 PRINCIPLES OF ANIMATION

menu

How do animators breathe life onto a blank canvas? How do they get us to laugh at Pascal, sympathize with Carl, and feel the longing of Ariel wanting to be part of your world? How do they make us believe that the things they've rendered are actually alive?

To answer any of these questions, one must first understand the 12 principles of animation. Made famous by two of Walt Disney's legendary Nine Old Men, Ollie Johnston and Frank Thomas, the 12 principles of animation have become an essential must-learn for all aspiring and working animators in the industry today.

Squash & Stretch:

The squash and stretch principle gives the illusion of weight and volume to a character as they move. This is done by expanding and compressing the character's body. To see the principle in action, take a look at this scene from the Pixar short *Day and Night*. Notice how as the two characters dance around, their shapes compress ever so slightly and then stretch back into shape. As a result, we as an audience actually believe that they are dancing because we see the impact that gravity has on their bodies.

Anticipation:

Anticipation is used to let the audience know that a major action is about to take place. To do this, animators will often work in a smaller action or two, right before the major action to signal that something is coming. Notice how Thumper draws back his leg before breaking into a run? This is anticipation in action!

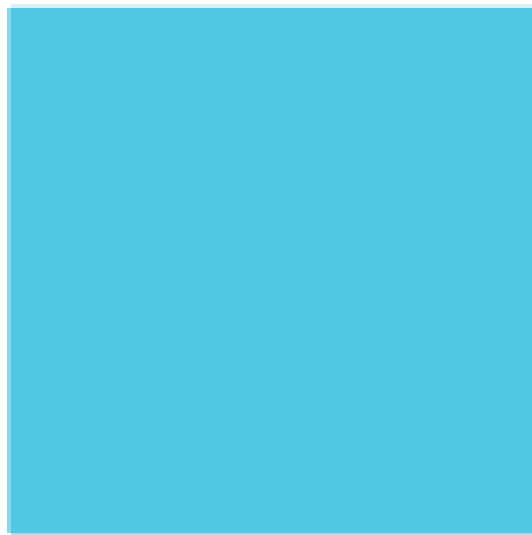
Staging



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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

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