

ACTION SCENE EDITING TIPS



Here are some tips on how to cut video transactions for action scenes.

1. **Cutting on the Action to Maintain Continuity**

Action scenes maintain continuity of action by cutting on the action. This means you cut the clip on the action before you move to a different angle so that you get a seamless sequence of events. For example, you have a two shot of your hero punching the villain. You could cut the clip somewhere on him throwing the punch. The next clip could be a close-up of the villain getting smacked in the face with a loud sound effect or him reacting to the punch in slow motion, depending on where you chose to cut the initial punch.

2. **Maintain Screen Direction**

This means when you cut from clip to clip, the subject must always move in the same direction.

3. **Parallel Editing**

Parallel editing is a powerful technique. You cut back and forth between different story lines or actions so it appears that multiple events are happening simultaneously. It is a useful technique to create suspense, anticipation and anxiety, especially where the characters in the intense action packed scenes are fighting to protect the character from harm in the parallel scene and/or the villain is getting closer to the unsuspecting character in the other scene. It is often used in horror films, suspense thrillers, and action films.

4. **Thematic Editing**

Thematic editing uses rapid impressionistic sequence of shots and/or a montage of images to convey an emotion in a very short period of time.

Case Study: *The Fifth Element* - The Diva Dance

The Fifth Element was a blockbuster movie. It used the different action cutting techniques masterfully.

Click here to watch clips from the film: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n0qy3JHz6X0>. It is also available for viewing on the private membership website under the Case Studies tab in the navigation bar for this respective blog entry. This video is from *The Fifth Element*: the Diva Dance Scene. Notice how it makes use of the parallel editing technique to convey the simultaneous happening of two events and create suspense.

For a video tutorial of how to use the different editing techniques in action scenes, you can visit the following videos on Youtube and search more tutorials as you need them:

Editing Sound and Video to Heighten Tension: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NrSWHabOA2s>

Editing Tips for Fight Scenes In Premier: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mt7HZX2caAs>.