

# Film studies

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Transitions Film Studies, an Introduction by ED SIKOV Transitions Films are made up of series of individual shots that filmmakers connect in a formal, systematic, and expressive way. One of the reasons directors assemble movies from hundreds if not thousands of shots is because film cameras can hold only a limited amount of celluloid film, which is not enough for a feature-length motion picture (Sikov 2010, pg. 55). Importantly, narrative films compress time considerably by leaving out the boring parts of the stories. A long story could conceivably take exactly two hours to tell on film. To do this, a filmmaker is required to carve up the action into discrete shots and re-assemble them coherently to hold the audience's visual interest (Sikov 2010, pg. 55).

The simplest transition is the cut. A director films a shot (the basic unit of filmmaking) and has it developed. He/she films subsequent shots and have them developed as well. The director trims each shot down to the wanted length, and attaches the strips of film together with a piece of tape. This implies that the director has cut from one shot to another using celluloid. The same effect can be created electronically with two shots taken in the video without the need for a tape. Editing is a human activity, unlike the camera's mechanical recording of images, editing is quite specifically a matter of active decision making the product of human choice. Cameras can only record while directors and editors cut out the unwanted parts. Other important transitions include the fade-in and fade-out; the iris-in and iris-out; the dissolve, and the wipe. However, these effects are mostly used as transitions from scene to scene or from the final shot of one scene to the first shot of the next scene (Sikov 2010, pg. 56-58).

## Bibliography

Sikov, E. (2010). Film studies an introduction. New York, Columbia University Press.