








Guide to Stop-Motion Animation

There are many different options or approaches to making stop-motion animation. Choose which is best for you or which software, hardware and materials you may have access to.

	<p>Plot or Story</p> <p>First try to decide what your animation is going to be about. What is the basic idea? Will you tell a story with a beginning and end or something more random? Maybe just create the effect of something moving, like an everyday object?</p>
	<p>Material for Animating</p> <p>Decide what you will use for your basic material that will be animated. This could be modelling clay models, cut-out paper or card, photographs or pictures cut from old magazines, toy figures, even webcam images of people or objects.</p>
	<p>Plan a Storyboard</p> <p>Decide in advance roughly what will happen in your animation. Use a storyboard to plan the scenes but remember each scene will probably need several animation frames. Use sketches and notes to make a good plan.</p>
	<p>Set, Props and Characters</p> <p>Draw, build or create anything you need for your animation. This could be a set on paper or card; alternatively build a backdrop inside a box (such as an old shoebox) to help it stand up. You could print out a background for more realism or use 'green screen' software if you have it. Will you make 3D characters from clay or need to draw or cut them out? Additional props should be created or collected and be ready for beginning to animate.</p>
	<p>Choose a Camera</p> <p>Find out what type of camera you are able to use. You could use tablet device with a built in camera; you may have access to a webcam (many laptops have a forward-facing camera built in but a portable webcam attached by usb wire is easier to move and position); or you could use any regular digital camera and transfer pictures to the computer when taken.</p>
	<p>The Animation</p> <p>Once you have everything set up, take a few photos as initial frames before you start making any movements or adjustments. When you are ready to start moving your character or object, only adjust by a few millimetres each time and aim to take 10-12 frames for each second of animation.</p>
	<p>Finishing Touches</p> <p>After completing your frames, make sure you view and edit your movie for best effects. Add titles or soundtrack and save your project as a movie file so it can be played on any media player or device.</p>