

Filmmaking Techniques for Demo Reel Project:

PART 2

Try creating **any 2 or more** of these more complicated Dolly and Movement techniques. Add them to your demo reel with the right title. Other pages are just here for further information explanation of some of the techniques you know like Zoom and ECU.

For example, you might do a series of shots with different camera heights (would count as 1)

Notice the explanation of Pull Focus which gives you a bit of an idea of what that is.

Some of these shots are hard to do without a really good dolly or a crane. That just means that “guerilla” film-makers have to be more creative and ingenious!!!

ZOOM

What does it look like?

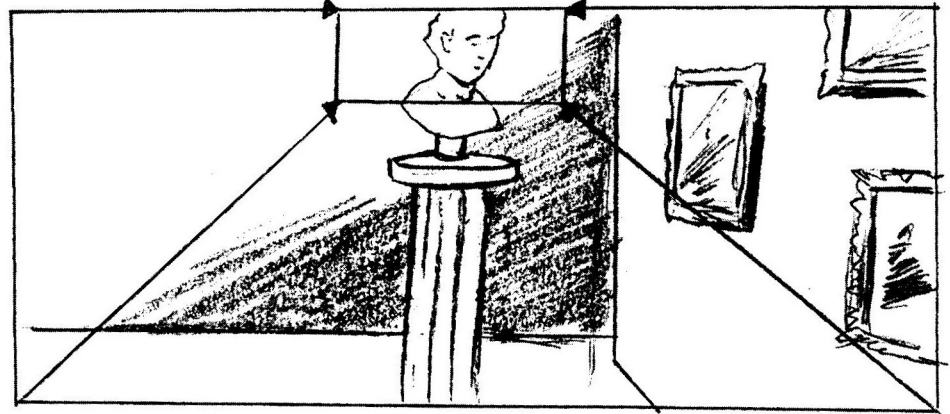
The focal length of a camera lens determines the distance that the camera can "see." Zoom lenses allow the focal length to be gradually changed. With a Zoom, the frame may transition from a wide shot to a close-up without ever moving the camera.

The *Zoom* is considered an unnatural technique because our eyes aren't able to incrementally change their focal length. Because of this, *Zooms* are often used for effect.

A very slow Zoom can be a subtle alternative to a dolly movement in locations where there is no room to rig a dolly and track. A very fast *Zoom*- a whip zoom-can be used to draw attention to objects in a scene.

Where can I see it?

The Color of Money uses both fast and slow zooms in many scenes. The Wild Bunch showcases Zoom many different kinds of zooms-slow, fast, short, extended, zoom in, and zoom out.



CAMERA HEIGHT

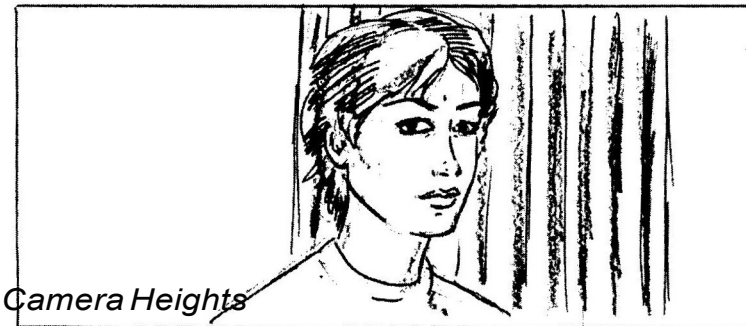
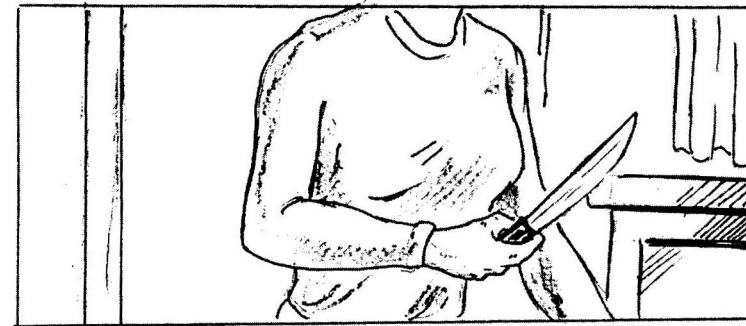
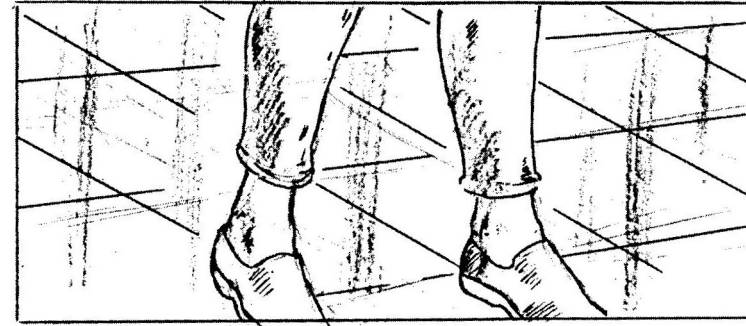
What does it look like?

The height of the camera has a considerable effect on the meaning of a shot.

If you only show a person's feet, there is a mystery—who are they? This is a very common technique. If you show their upper body but not their face, you discover more about them (they might be doing something with their hands), but you still don't really know who they are. Finally, when the camera is brought up to eye level with the actor, the mystery is resolved and the character is revealed.

Where can I see it?

Rosemary's Baby-near the end, in the scene where Rosemary is carrying a knife. The camera alternates *Camera Heights* to show different aspects of her emotional state. Her feet, the knife in her hands, and a close-up of her fear and anxiety all heighten the effect of the scene.



Camera Heights

EXTREME CLOSEUP

What does it look like?

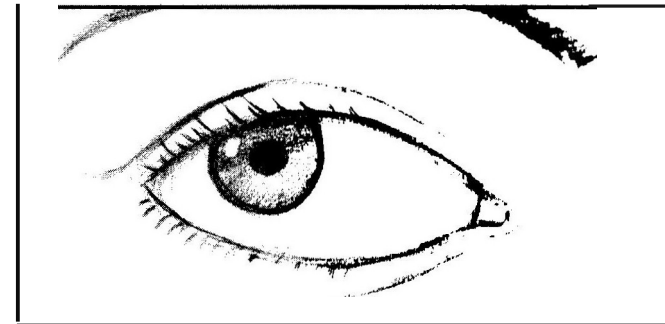
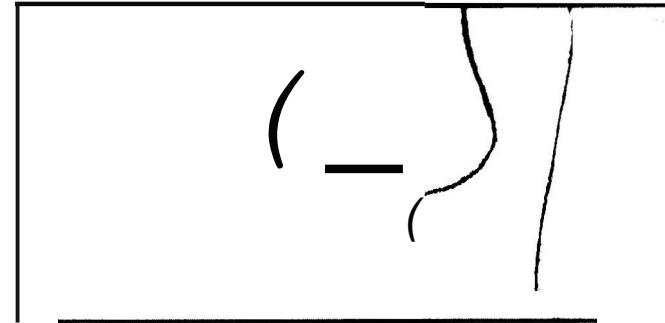
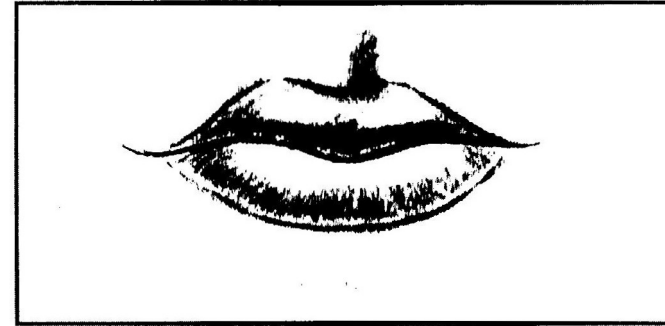
An *Extreme Close-Up* is simply a magnified view of a small object, causing it to fill the entire frame.

Extreme Close-Ups are effective because we are not used to seeing an abnormally magnified level of detail. By filling the frame with a singular feature, the audience's attention is drawn to that subject, to the exclusion of everything else.

Extreme Close-Ups can be used to emphasize a particular scene or a sequence of dialogue. For example: if a character is nervous, the director might cut to an *Extreme Close-Up* of the actor wringing his hands or shifting her eyes.

Where can I see it?

In U Turn, *Extreme Close-Ups* are frequently cut in at odd intervals with the action and dialogue. In The Fifth Element, we see an *Extreme Close-Up* of Leeloo's eye opening as she discovers the horrors of war.



Extreme Close-Ups

TILTED HORIZON

What does it look like?

Tilted Horizon simply involves tipping the camera slightly to the side in order to increase the tension in a scene.

Also known as a Dutch angle or a canted shot, this technique is most effective when there are strong horizontal and vertical lines that the non-uniform camera angle enhances.

Because our eyes are used to seeing everything straight up and down, the diagonals that result from *Tilted Horizon* tend to attract our attention.

Where can I see it?

Tilted Horizon is used extensively throughout The Third Man.



Tilted Horizon

DRAMATIC ANGLE, EXTREME ANGLE, BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

What does it look like?

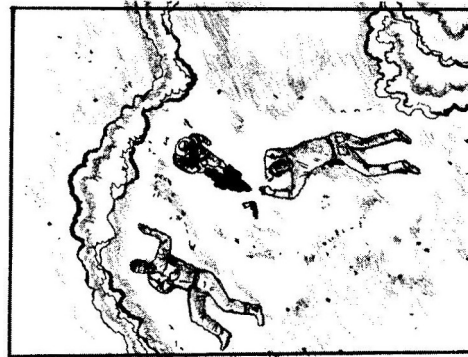
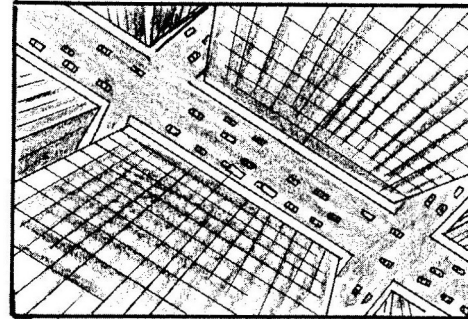
A *Dramatic Angle* adds to the emotional impact of a scene. A low camera angle makes characters and objects seem tall and powerful. A high camera angle gives the characters a diminished feel—as if the audience is looking down on them.

An *Extreme Angle* is a magnified version of a *Dramatic Angle*. An extreme low angle might start below the feet of a subject, staring up into the sky. An extreme high angle could be the view from the top of a tall office building, looking down on the insignificance of humanity.

A *Bird's-Eye View* is an *Extreme Angle* in which the camera is positioned directly above a scene, facing straight down.

Where can I see it?

The Crow uses many *Extreme Angles* to achieve the aesthetic of a comic book, a medium which commonly exaggerates angles and perspective. In Terminator 2: Judgment Day, many of the sequences with the Terminator are shot from a low angle. This technique enhances his image of strength.



Dramatic Angles

PULL FOCUS

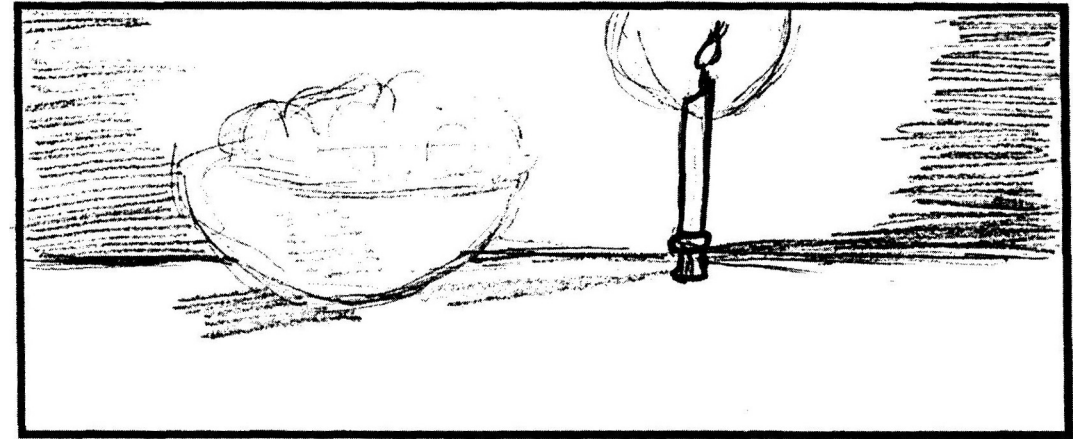
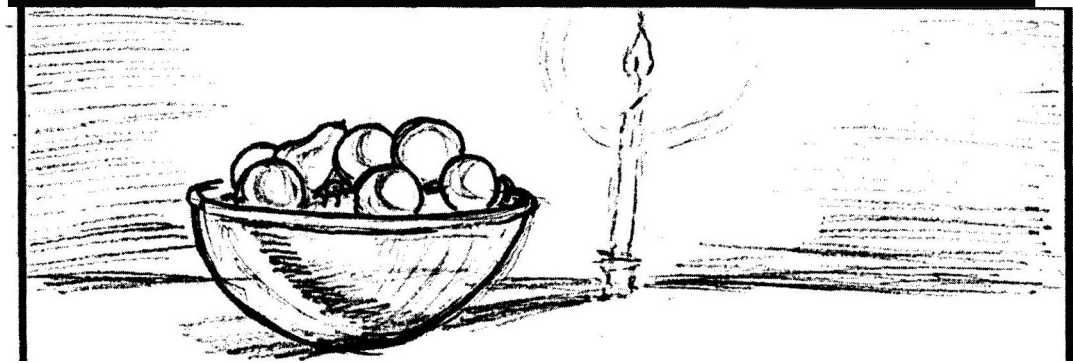
What does it look like?

Pulling Focus is considered a natural camera technique. Like our eyes, which pull focus whenever we look at objects that are at different distances in our field of vision, it changes our focus.

We can either be focused on something close up or on something far away. Since we don't have the ability to focus on both at the same time, our eyes must *Pull Focus* to compensate.

When making a film, *Pulling Focus* is often necessary because most camera lenses don't keep the entire scene in focus. As the camera moves around, a crew member called a "focus puller" will adjust the focus to match whatever the camera is looking at.

To conceptualize this technique, consciously focus on objects at different depths as you look around.



Pull Focus

DISCOVERY

What does it look like?

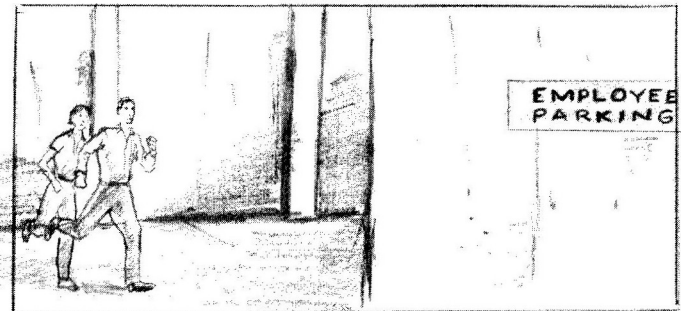
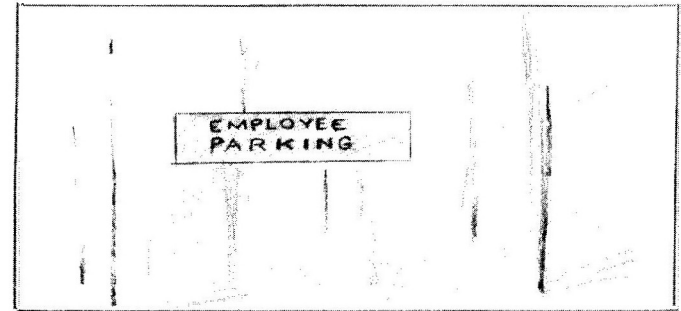
A *Discovery* includes any shot that begins away from the action and then a camera movement that reveals a scene.

A common example of this technique occurs when the camera begins behind an obstacle that obscures an audience's view. The camera then moves out from behind that obstacle to discover the true subject of interest.

Another example of *Discovery* is a camera shot that starts out looking at nothing in particular; then, gradual movement reveals the action.

Where can I see it?

In The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly, the camera discovers Clint Eastwood by moving across the barrel of his rifle to his face. In Four Weddings and a Funeral, the camera reveals a bedroom and then moves to discover the lovers in bed. In Goodfellas, the camera swings around from the back of Ray Liotta's head to discover his face as he testifies in court.



Discovery

CHARACTER DOLLY

What does it look like?

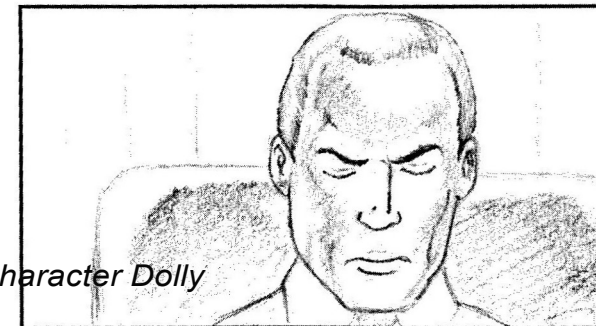
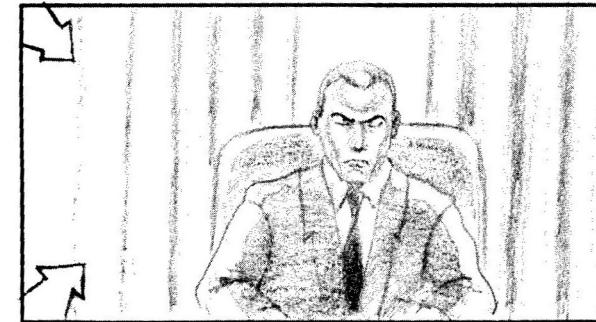
A *Character Dolly* is a forward camera movement that focuses on one or more characters in a scene. It is commonly noted in screenplays as "Push In."

The camera starts out with a wide shot of an actor and is pushed forward, reaching for the actor's close-up and beyond. This cinematic technique adds tension to the scene, acting like a magnifying glass on the character's emotional state. The actor doesn't have to be saying anything for the *Character Dolly* to be effective.

The speed of camera movement can greatly alter the emotional effect of this technique. A very slow *Character Dolly* will subtly highlight the scene's emotional qualities. More flamboyant films use a faster version for a comic or exciting effect.

Where can I see it?

Perhaps the most recognizable personification of the *Character Dolly* is in *The Godfather: Part II*. To end the film, Coppola simply moves the camera slowly towards a contemplative Michael Corleone, leaving the audience with a lasting impression of the character. Steven Spielberg uses this technique in many of his films.



CONTRACT DOLLY

What does it look like?

A *Contract Dolly* moves the camera forward as an actor walks toward the camera at the same time, making a simple action more dramatic. Combining two opposite actions increases the intensity of the character's forward movement.

If the camera can't be moved, an equally dramatic effect can be achieved when the actor walks toward the camera, and the camera tilts up to keep the actor's close-up in frame.

Where can I see it?

Contract Dolly is used during an airport chase scene in *Face/Off*. In *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, a distraught Indiana Jones runs up to the camera, demonstrating a modified version of this technique.



DOLLY UP, DOLLY DOWN

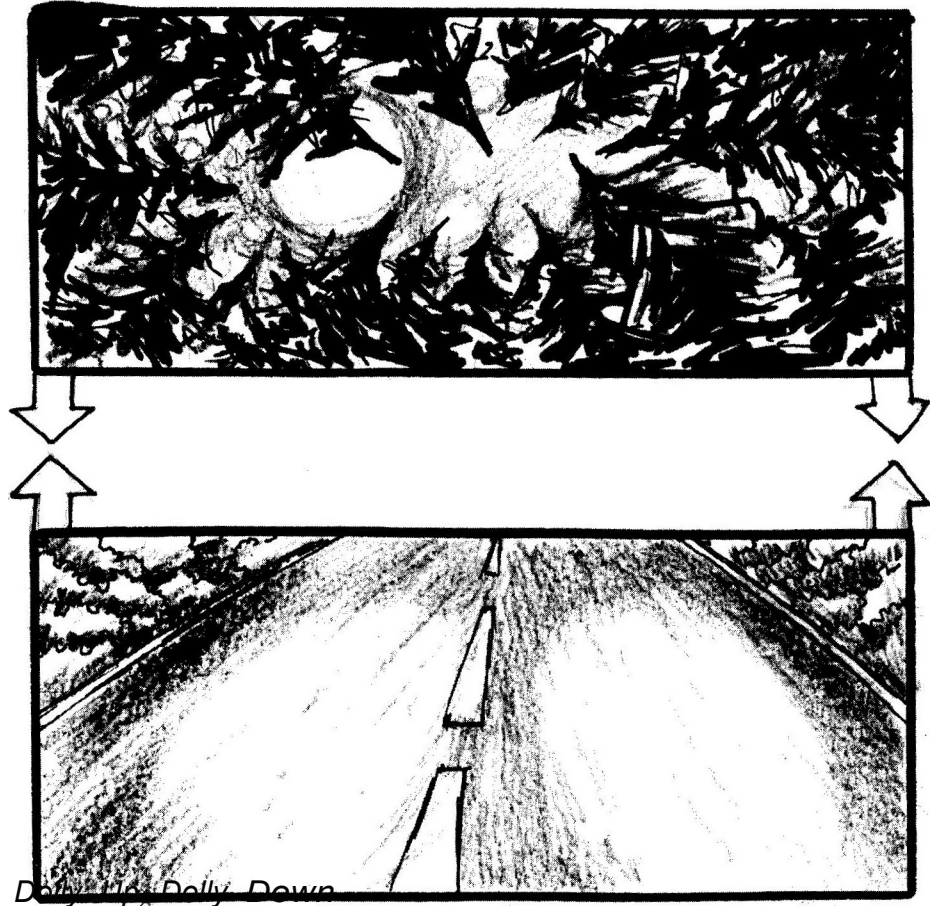
What does it look like?

When a camera is moved around, the angle of the camera makes an impact on the meaning of the shot. Most dollies are fairly level as they follow the characters onscreen.

Dolly Up and *Dolly Down* are specialized techniques. When the camera is moved, it's tilted unusually high or low. *Dolly Up* emphasizes the height and vastness of a character's surroundings. *Dolly Down* can transform the ground rolling by into a cinematic event.

Where can I see it?

At the beginning of La Femme Nikita, *Dolly Down* is used as the camera traverses the streets of France. At the end of Terminator 2: Judgment Day, *Dolly Down* shows the seemingly endless highway flowing by. Near the beginning of Rashomon, *Dolly Up* looks up toward the trees as the woodsman walks through the forest.



EXPAND DOLLY

What does it look like?

With *Expand Dolly*, the camera follows an actor who is moving away. As the camera moves forward, the actor walks faster than the camera—distancing himself from the audience.

Expand Dolly adds finality to a scene, and is a nice setup for a transition or a fade.



Expand Dolly

PULL BACK REVEAL

What does it look like?

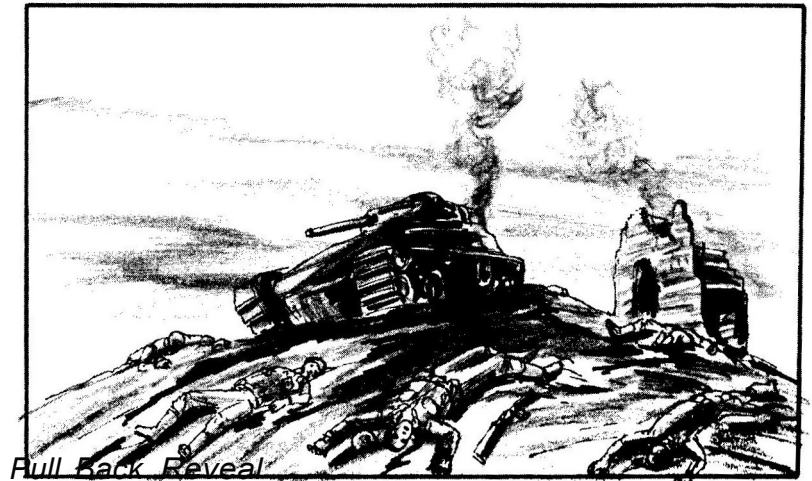
With *Pull Back Reveal*, the camera moves backwards to reveal the true extent of a scene.

This technique gradually expands our understanding of a character's surroundings by revealing more of the character's world as the camera moves farther away.

Where can I see it?

In *Goodfellas*, the camera pulls back from a cross on Ray Liotta's neck as he arrives for a date. In *Cinema Paradiso*, the camera pulls back from a burned out movie theater to reveal the crowd looking on.

In *The Exorcist*, the camera pulls back from a mother yelling on the phone to reveal her daughter listening in the hallway. At the end of *Citizen Kane*, the camera pulls back to reveal the vast amount of possessions that Kane collected over the years.



Full Back Reveal

PULL BACK RETRACTION

What does it look like?

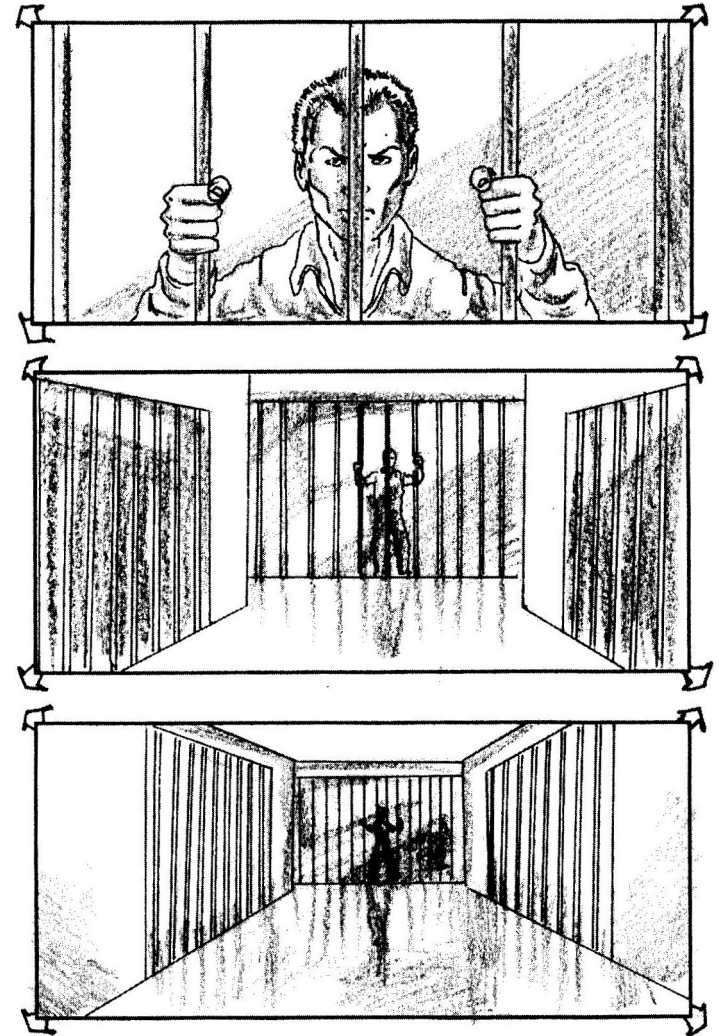
With *Pull Back Retraction*, the camera faces a scene and moves backwards.

The purpose of the camera movement is not to reveal anything new, but to distance the audience emotionally from the actions occurring onscreen.

Where can I see it?

Pull Back Retraction can be seen in The Bride Wore Black. The camera pulls back as one of Julie's victims suffocates in a storage compartment. As the camera pulls back, the trapped man's hopelessness is emphasized. At the end of La Strada, the camera pulls back from the Strong Man crying at the beach. This allows us to distance ourselves gradually from the character, allowing the film to end. This technique is similar to slowly turning down the volume to end a song.

In The Graduate, the camera pulls back from Ben at the bottom of the swimming pool as he contemplates his future. At the end of Poltergeist, the camera slowly pulls back from the television set that has been left outside.



Pull Back Retraction

SPIN AROUND

What does it look like?

Spin Around involves circling the camera around the scene in progress, creating a dizzying kinetic effect. You might also hear this referred to as a "360° Dolly."

Spin Around is simple, and it adds positive motion and energy to a scene. The camera doesn't have to move very fast for this to be effective.

Where can I see it?

In The Untouchables, the camera *Spins Around* the characters at dinner after their first successful raid. In The Color of Money, the camera *Spins Around* the pool table as the characters compete.

In The Matrix, the camera *Spins Around* a telephone as the characters are transported into their virtual existence. You can also see this in The Crow, when Sarah talks to Eric in his apartment after he's been resurrected.



Spin Around

VERTIGO

What does it look like?

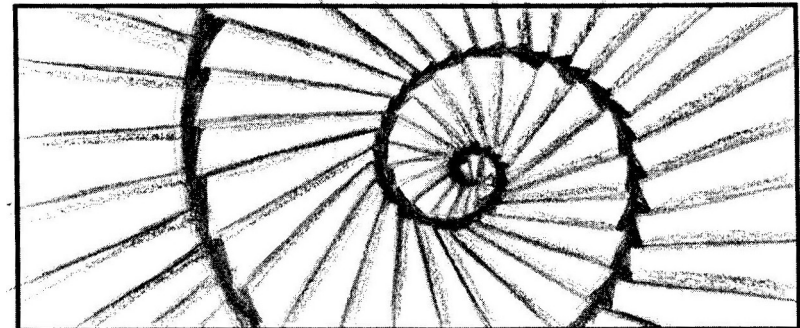
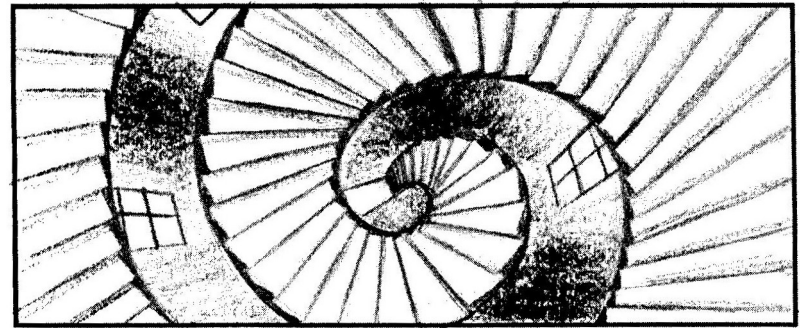
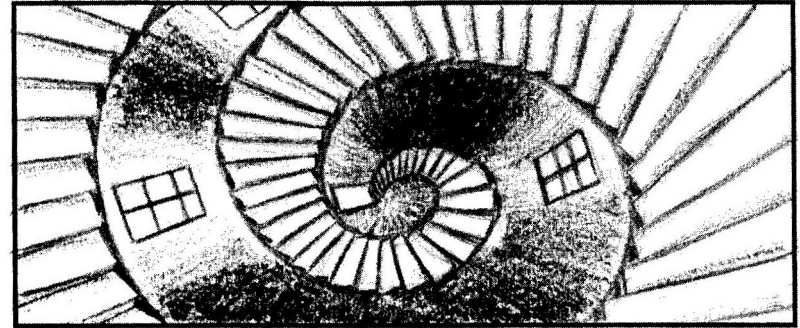
Commonly referred to as a "Dolly Zoom," *Vertigo* exaggerates perspective, but keeps objects in the center of the frame at the same apparent size. This is achieved by moving the camera forward while zooming out at the same time, or by moving the camera back and zooming in.

This technique is used to create the effects of dizziness, confusion, ecstasy, boredom, or surprise.

Where can I see it?

Watch Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo*, in the end where James Stewart tries desperately to conquer his fear of heights. In *Jaws*, when Martin Brody sees the shark attack at the beach. In *The Mask*, Cameron Diaz's sexy character steps into the room, and Jim Carrey and his co-star suffer the effects of *Vertigo*.

A very slow *Vertigo* is used near the end of *Goodfellas*, when Ray Liotta and Robert DeNiro sit across from each other in the diner.



Vertigo

MECHANICAL

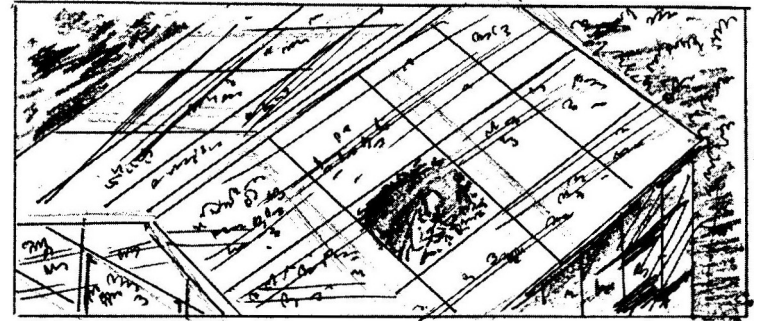
What does it look like?

Mechanical techniques include the use of devices that allow filmmakers to create unique and interesting camera movements. These are easier to conceptualize when we can move as the camera does-which is possible if a device has a platform that we can sit or stand on.

Cranes and Jibs are the most common examples of mechanical devices. Each of these devices has a mechanical "arm" on which the camera is mounted. This arm hinges on a pivot that frees the camera to move through space, allowing the creation of sweeping, dramatic camera movements.

There are many other specialized mechanical devices available. Each device creates a unique type of motion that alters the audience's perception of a film in some special way.

1



2.



Crane Sequence

Notes: