

Topic 90

Practices of Photography

In film and video, a **cutaway shot** is the interruption of a continuously filmed action by inserting a view of something else. It is usually, although not always, followed by a cut back to the first shot, when the cutaway avoids a jump cut. The cutaway shot does not necessarily contribute any dramatic content of its own, but is used to help the editor assemble a longer sequence. For this reason, editors choose cutaway shots related to the main action, such as another action or object in the same location.^[4] For example, if the main shot is of a man walking down an alley, possible cutaways may include a shot of a cat on a nearby dumpster or a shot of a person watching from a window overhead.

Similarly, a **cutaway scene** is the interruption of a scene with the insertion of another scene, generally unrelated or only peripherally related to the original scene. The interruption is usually quick, and is usually, although not always, ended by a return to the original scene. The effect is of commentary to the original scene, frequently comic in nature.

The most common use of cutaway shots in dramatic films is to adjust the pace of the main action, to conceal the deletion of some unwanted part of the main shot, or to allow the joining of parts of two versions of that shot. For example, a scene may be improved by cutting a few frames out of an actor's pause; a brief view of a listener can help conceal the break. Or the actor may fumble some of his lines in a group shot; rather than discarding a good version of the shot, the director may just have the actor repeat the lines for a new shot, and cut to that alternate view when necessary.

Cutaways are also used often in older horror films in place of special effects. For example, a shot of a zombie getting its head cut off may, for instance, start with a view of an axe being swung through the air, followed by a close-up of the actor swinging it, then followed by a cut back to the now severed head. George A. Romero, creator of the Dead Series, and Tom Savini pioneered effects that removed the need for cutaways in horror films.

In news broadcasting and documentary work, the cutaway is used much as it would be in fiction. On location, there is usually just one camera to film an interview, and it's usually trained on the interviewee. Often there is also only one microphone. After the interview, the interviewer will usually repeat his questions while he himself is being filmed, with pauses as they act as if to listen to the answers. These shots can be used as cutaways. Cutaways to the interviewer, called noddies, can also be used to cover cuts.

A **jump cut** is a cut in film editing in which two sequential shots of the same subject are taken from camera positions that vary only slightly. This type of edit gives the effect of jumping forwards in time. It is a manipulation of temporal space using the duration of a single shot, and fracturing the duration to move the audience ahead. This kind of cut abruptly communicates the passing of time as opposed to the more seamless dissolve heavily used in films predating Jean-Luc Godard's *Breathless*, when jump cuts were first used extensively. For this reason, jump cuts, while not seen as inherently bad, are considered a violation of classical continuity editing, which aims to give the appearance of continuous time and space in the story-world by de-emphasizing editing. Jump cuts, in contrast, draw attention to the constructed nature of the film.

A **match cut**, also called a **graphic match** (or, in the French term, *raccord*), is a cut in film editing between either two different objects, two different spaces, or two different compositions

in which objects in the two shots graphically match, often helping to establish a strong continuity of action and linking the two shots metaphorically.

Cutting on action or **matching on action** refers to film editing and video editing techniques where the editor cuts from one shot to another view that matches the first shot's action. Although the two shots may have actually been shot hours apart from each other, cutting on action gives the impression of continuous time when watching the edited film. By having a subject begin an action in one shot and carry it through to completion in the next, the editor creates a visual bridge, which distracts the viewer from noticing the cut or noticing any slight continuity error between the two shots. A variant of cutting on action is a cut in which the subject exits the frame in the first shot and then enters the frame in the subsequent shot. The entrance in the second shot must match the screen direction and motive rhythm of the exit in the first shot.