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One of the first animations ever were the Shahre-Sukteh and the Vitruvian man, which both hinted at movement. In 1824, the Thaumatrope was the first object that could imply movement (through optical illusion) between two images. Phenakitoscope was a device that came after, it was a spinning disk that had to be used in the mirror, and its spin gave it the illusion of movement. Afterward, there was a device called the Zoetrope which had you put the disk inside a device, and when it spun, you watched the animation through the slits. In 1877, the Praxinoscope was invented as a sort of improvement to the Zoetrope. It had mirrors in the middle which reflected the strip of the animation, creating an illusion of movement which was easier and clearer to see. Steamboat Willie was the first frame by frame animation, done on paper, called cel animation. This started the golden age of animation, and created world-recognizable films such as Bambi and Snow White and The Seven Dwarves. After this, rotoscoping, a form of animation that is drawing over moving film, became popular, a notable example of this being an animation called “Rainbow Dance”. In 1957, limited animation was used to create simple and looping animations, which was often cheap and quick to make. “Yellow Submarine” was a notable animation piece commissioned by the Beatles, it used cel animation, rotoscoping, and stop frame with cut outs. Stop motion / claymation was also a significant part of animation, Aardman’s work is very smooth and natural-feeling. In 2015, is when we get into more modern animation. Most shows use Toon Boom as an animating software, it’s cel animation digitized essentially. In 1995, Toy Story was the first computer animated film. 3D has evolved since then, and is what most studios use today to create film, mostly because it is quick and cheap.

12 Principles of Animation:

1. Squash and stretch talks about how objects, people, and expressions should be squashed or stretched to give an illusion of weight or material, and so also make the animation not feel rough, but natural.
2. Anticipation gives the audience a visual cue of what will happen next. A character should have a pre-movement or extra still frame before doing an action, to not only give anticipation to the movement, but to make the movement seem powerful.
3. Staging helps the audience something to focus on, one at a time. More than one main focus point should not happen at the same time, this can confuse the viewer for where to look at.
4. There are two ways of animation, pose to pose and straight ahead. Pose to pose is when you draw a beginning pose, and a pose at the end of the movement, this helps the animation be consistent. Straight ahead is kind of like “winging” an animation, useful for inconsistent objects, like fire.
5. Follow though, drag, and overlapping action all describe a secondary movement in a main action, like hair following a head’s movement.
6. Slow in and slow out talks about how an action should have more frames in the beginning of the action and the end, making the animation slower and therefore more natural.
7. Arcs are helpful as they help a movement feel natural and smooth, not robotic.
8. Secondary action, like overlapping action, are actions that happen before the main action, to emphasize it.
9. Timing is regarding how much frames you put in between your actions. More frames means slower, but less frames means faster. Less frames doesn’t always mean less smoother, or unclean.
10. Exaggeration in animation helps convey a character's emotions better to the viewer!
11. Solid drawing helps show weight, balance, and volume. It helps the viewer feel like your character is in a 3D space.
12. Appeal is very important to make your character stand out to the audience. When making a character appealing, you also want to keep in mind all of their details, as overdetailed characters are very hard to animate and keep track of all of the details.