

ILLUSTRATION TERMINOLOGY

Annotation: notes written around the margins of a sketch to help communicate details and contextual information to the art director, client, and illustrator.

Beats: in animation, beats refer to the crucial moments that happen across a story. Most key art is made for story beats.

Bleed: when an illustration's composition reaches one or more edges of the picture frame and beyond, it "bleeds" off the edges of the page. Also called full-bleed when the image reaches all sides of the frame or page.

Chapter Illustration: an illustration placed within a text to correspond with that section or page's contents. Classic novels with chapter illustrations will often feature one or more illustrations per chapter, focusing on the most poignant and memorable moments.

Colophon: a statement at the end of a book, typically with a printer's emblem, giving information about its authorship and printing.

Colour Mock-up: A refined, but not 'final' colour composition, similar to a refined sketch, that has all of the colours and details visible for an art director or client during the development phase of a project.

Colour Script: a linear or circular line of colours that correspond to different moments in a story in chronological order. Typically provided to art directors in animation, the colour script gives the viewer a sense of how the mood and events determine the colour palettes that are used across a story's timeline.

Composition: the strategic arrangement of figures, objects, and environments within a picture frame, with attention to shapes, contrast, perspective, and scale.

Contextual Clues: imagery within a composition that alludes to or references concepts, or events that are not obvious or visible in the artwork. They help to tell another part of the story beyond the immediate moment, and deepen the viewer's understanding of the story.

Contract: a binding and negotiable agreement between illustrator and client, which outlines specific information about the work to be done: deliverables, pay, deadline, usage rights, fees, royalties, and other legal matters.

Copyright: a personal right to the work you create, copyrights exist the moment the work is complete, and are acknowledged in legal matters like contracts, and cases of plagiarism.

Crop/Cropping: a term used for the intended borders of an illustration, or an action of changing the position of the edges of a piece for better composition and/or formatting.

Deadline: a designated time that some or all deliverables are due for a project. A deadline does not mean the time at which to complete a project, but the time that the project must be delivered to the client or art director.

Deliverables: a term for the itemized works that define a project, which could be one or many things. Deliverables are the parts of the project that are sent to the client or art director.

Dimensions: the length of each side or diameter of a work of art. The dimensions of a US letter-sized piece of paper are 8.5 x 11 inches.

Editorial Illustration: an illustration created to better express an idea from the text, usually used in a book, magazine, newspaper, or web resources.

Feature Illustration: the primary image in a newspaper, magazine, or publication, and it will usually take up a 1/2 or full page.

Floating text: text that is placed over the top of an illustration, commonly seen in children's picture books. Illustrators are responsible for knowing where to adjust their compositions to accommodate floating text, so the image doesn't compete with the writing.

Image Framing: the outer edges of an illustration that will be visible in its final format.

Genre: an area of interest that is known in popular culture, for example: Kawaii, Horror, Sci-fi, Fantasy, Propaganda, Cartoon, Superhero Comics, Historical, etc. An illustrator's style will often reflect one or more popular genres.

Gutter: the space where two facing pages meet in the center of a book. Illustrators are responsible for knowing how imagery will cross the gutter in a spread, and plan accordingly to not have important things like faces, text, or specific details cross it. In comics, *gutter* is also the term for the varying-sized space between panels on a page.

Infographic: an illustration that communicates data, such as a graph, chart, map, or sequence. Used primarily in marketing, tourism, and commerce.

Isometric: a spatial illustration that does not use the traditional one- or two-point perspective. Often seen in traditional Asian paintings, in technical drawings and 3D blueprints, and in background design in animation and games.

Key Art: an illustrated "scene" from a story, a term often used in animation to visualize important moments in a script.

Left/Right Facing Pages: terms for the two pages in a book layout that make up one spread.

Masthead: a term in publishing for the list at the top of a magazine, newspaper, or periodical that includes the names of editors, writers, and owners, as well as the title of the newspaper or magazine. You'll usually find the masthead on one of the first few pages.

Narrative: the features of an image, or the conceptual way that an illustration tells a story.

Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA): a signed agreement between illustrator and client where the illustrator agrees to keep their project a secret from anyone outside the workplace. Most often signed for popular cartoons, movies, and videogames.

Neutral View: the viewpoint in an illustration that places the viewer at human-head-height, looking straight forward. Often used by illustrators, but not always very interesting.

On-Spec: work that is created by an illustrator without promise of compensation. "Spec-Work" (work done on-speculation) for clients is often frowned upon, but is common in art competitions.

One-Sheet: In the entertainment industry, a one-sheet is a single illustration that summarizes a product for publicity and sales. Movie posters, video game case covers, and board game boxes are all considered one-sheets.

Pacing: in comics and graphic novels, pacing describes the rhythm or speed that a reader moves through each panel and page. Illustrators are responsible for successful pacing in comics throughout the scenes of their stories.

Panel (comics): a term in comics and graphic novels referring to the individual boxes within one page or spread that feature sequential moments in the story line. One page may contain many comic panels.

Perspective: the height, angle, and distance at which a viewer sees objects in an image.

Proof of Concept: evidence, typically derived from thumbnail sketches or a mock-up project, which demonstrates that a design, story, project proposal, etc., is feasible.

Royalties: recurring monetary rewards from the ongoing sales of a publication, based on a percentage of the sale price. Illustrators will usually be given a percentage of the sales from a book they have illustrated.

Safe Margins: margins created along the borders of an image that define the inside area of that image where text, figures, action, and specific details are not at risk of being cropped from trimming. Typically used in publication, post cards, playing cards, and posters.

Scale: the size relationship between figures and forms within an illustration, or the size of an illustration compared to the viewer. Unexpected or dramatic scale differences in an image can often create a more interesting piece.

Series: a number of illustrations (usually three or more) that feature work all relating to one theme, story, or concept.

Sketch Iteration: the generation of multiple sketches to explore different ideas pertaining to one or more illustrations. Sketch iteration is a kind of “thinking out loud” with your pencil.

Splash Page: a comic book, website, magazine, or publication page that is mostly or entirely taken up by a single image.

Spot Illustration: an illustration used by itself, usually to accompany text, but not as large as a feature illustration. Spot illustrations will usually be smaller (less than a quarter-page), take less time to create, and be valued at a lower price than a feature.

Spread: a single illustration that spans two facing pages of a book, newspaper, or magazine. Also a design/layout term for the larger frame created by two facing pages.

Substrate: the surface that artwork is made on, or printed onto. Paper, canvas, board, etc.

Thumbnail Sketch: a small sketch, done loose and fast, to capture the main forms and design elements of a composition. An iterative process, thumbnails are often done in large quantities, as a way of getting all of the best possibilities for a composition out on paper.

Turn-sheet: one page that shows an “orthographic” view of a character or object turning in space. There are usually 3 or 4 angles shown (front, side, 3/4, back), and a variety of expressions, costumes, or configurations (if it has moving parts).

Usage Rights: the specific ways that a client can use an illustrator’s work. different fees are established as more uses are defined by the client. Usage rights will always be stated in a contract.

Variant: an alternate version of an image. This could mean a change in colour palette, imagery, or entire composition, and sometimes created by multiple artists. For example, popular comic publishers will hire different illustrators to make variants of one comic cover.

Visual Development: a broader term for “concept art,” visual development is the artwork made by illustrators whose job is to create original content for the entertainment industry: characters, hardware, props, backgrounds, etc.

Visual Flow: the way a viewer's eye travels around a work of art, leading from one piece of information to the next. Good visual flow comes from good composition, and makes a viewer spend more time with the work.

Voice Bubble: a round or rectangular box, often outlined, that creates a blank background for floating dialogue in a comic or graphic novel, and points to the mouth of the speaking character.