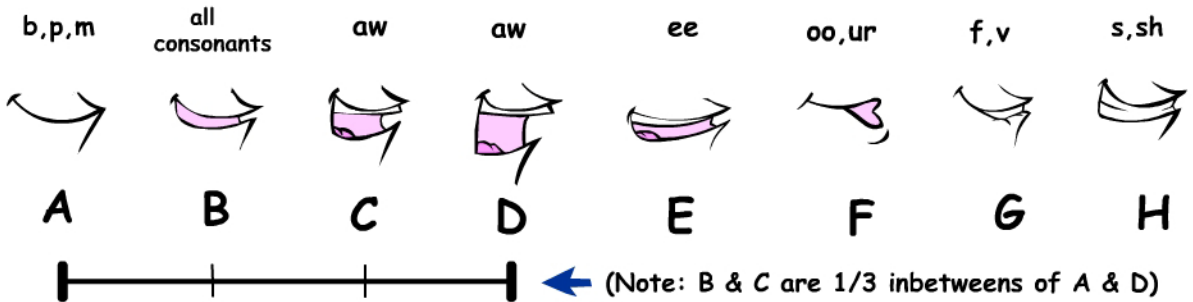


Character Animation Fundamentals

Brought to you by the Capilano College Animation Dept. toons@capcollege.bc.ca

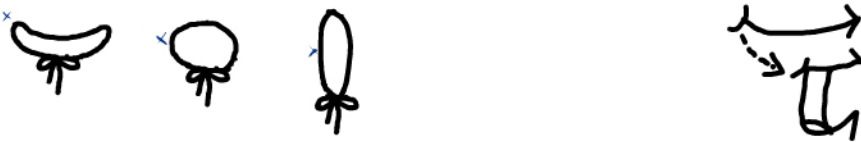
Animating To Dialogue

Listen to your voice track a lot, to be able to feel the acting in the voice. Act out the scene yourself to get the body movements down. Exaggerate, but also be aware of overacting. Make thumbnail sketches for complex actions (so you remember them). Pose and animate the scene. Don't worry about lip sync until the figure is done.



Dialogue Theory

1. "Pop" the mouth open, but inbetween it closed. Watch live action dialogue to see this principle in action. It's actually how people talk.
2. On most characters, avoid "hinging" the mouth. The corners of the mouth should move forward as the mouth opens. Think of the mouth perimeter as a string...when you pull at the bottom, the sides move inward.



3. Be sure to hit the vowels "bang on" or up to three frames early (depending on your frame rate.....but never late!
4. Memorize the "names" of the standard mouths (A-mouth, B-mouth). Having names will help you be able to identify a specific mouth for a specific sound.
5. Try to avoid "clicking" teeth (having them pop in occasionally and then disappear). The upper teeth are fixed to the skull and don't really move.

Lip-sync is important, but not as important as have the right "body-sync"... i.e. strong poses, good acting and body movement in synch with the dialogue.

Character Animation Fundamentals

Digital Animation - Digi-314 - Animation Timing & Principles

Animating To Dialogue: Lip Assignment

Once the dialogue is broken down, the animator decides which mouth positions to use. There is a standard procedure for this which guarantees accurate lip synchronization.

Assigning Mouths to Dialogue

1. Remember the "Pop open, inbetween closed" rule. Look for the big vowels first (the ones that are on for four or more frames) and the b, p, and m sounds (which would use the A mouth). Assign these mouths first.
2. Work out the "inbetween" mouths second. Remember to inbetween the mouth closed. If you don't have time to get back to a B mouth from a D mouth, change the D mouth to a C. F mouths usually need tweens, too. See the example below to understand lip assignment theory.
3. Don't assign mouths literally. Try this: put your fingers on your lips as you speak and "feel" the mouth positions. See how the mouth kind of skips over some sounds? Copy your own mouth positions.

1	WH	F
2		
3	INB	
4		
5	A	
6		
7	P	F
8	U	B
9		
10	T	
11		
12	TH	D
13		
14	TH	C
15		
16	A	B
17		
18	A	
19		
20	T	
21	TH	C
22		
23	E	INB
24		
25	R	F
26		
27	Ne	
28		

the "ooh" mouth precedes the vowel.

Sometimes you'll need to create tweens

the closed "A" mouth is early by 2 frames.

the "B" mouth can remain for "T" and "TH".

there is enough time to allow us to go to a "D" mouth. Otherwise, we would have only opened the mouth to a "C".

Example of "inbetweening closed".