

Elementary stop motion animation with Sharbani Das Gupta

A little history. Excerpts from “The History of Stop Motion’ from stopmotionmagazine.com



The very first documented stop motion animated film is credited to J. Stuart Blackton and Albert E. Smith for Vitagraph’s *The Humpty Dumpty Circus* which was released in 1898. *The Humpty Dumpty Circus* was an animated film showing the day and the life in a toy circus. In 1907 a film titled *The Haunted Hotel* produced by J. Stuart Blackton became a huge hit. It showed moving furniture and demonstrated the basic technique of object animation.



Probably one of the most famous animators at this time is the legendary Willis O’Brien. His work on the film *The Lost World* (1925) was mind blowing for its time. He later produced the animation for one of film making’s biggest productions *King Kong* (1933). This propelled him into super stardom and would massively influence generations upon generation of stop motion animators throughout the world.



Television was a huge influence on stop motion productions since tv shows needed to be produced fast and with a very tight budget. In 1955 *The Gumby Show* would be produced and animated by Art Clokey and would go on to be a huge success. With its little green clay animated main character Gumby, the show would go on for many years and be the doorway to many careers in stop motion animation. The amount of animation produced during this time is mind boggling. Films such as *Star Wars*, *Empire Strikes Back*, *Dragon Slayer*, and *Robo Cop* would be filled with stop motion visual effects to the point.



By the early 90’s things started to fall apart in the stop motion animation industry. With the growth of desktop computers and the advancement of technology, handmade animation was quickly disappearing as the preferred medium of choice. The one film that put the nail in the coffin was *Jurassic Park*. *Jurassic Park* used metal armature puppets connected to a computer through wires to control the onscreen *Producers* all over started to abandon handmade everything from hand puppets and stop motion animation.

Traditional stop motion animation was saved by modern day computers and sophisticated software. Animators could instantly see their animation; the gloves came off and the new Renaissance of Stop Motion Animation had arrived.

INSTRUCTIONS.



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Next we will make your little pet rock come alive with playdoh ears and eyes and pipe cleaner limbs.

The construction paper will be pinned on to the shoe box for support. It will work as the backdrop as well as the stage for the action.

The lid of the box gets folded into a makeshift tripod for your phone camera.

Open the Stop Motion app on your phone.

Tap the + sign to add your new movie.

Tap the gear icon to set the frame animation rate. We are going to make ten second animation today and so will shoot about 60 frames. *(The human eye has shown to only be able to receive about 12 images per second. A smooth stop motion animation film needs at least 12 frames per second. Industry standard is 15'ps. Stop motion animators will often use each frame twice, so for a 30 second film you will need approximately 180 frames.)*

Tap the 4K icon and choose HD quality for the images. Tap Done.

Tap the camera icon and select the timer button. Set the timing for 5 seconds. This makes the phone shoot at a preset interval automatically without physically tapping the shoot icon.

Once we've finished shooting it is time to export the frames as a movie. You can edit it in iMovie if you like. You can also play it back as a loop or a gif.

Tap the back-arrow icon and then tap the icon for share. Once there, select the film you just shot and choose Export Movie and then Save Video.

Simple YouTube tutorials on how to use the free software to record and then edit in iMovie

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_M468S86HI

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0B9DDU-ruKI>