

# How to Compose a Comics Frame

A frame or box in a comic represents a moment in your story, like a link in a chain. The frame is organized in a way that fits in logically with the other frames that make up the strip, tier or page. Just as painting or in filmmaking, composing a frame usually follows certain rules.

## Using the Background and Foreground in a Frame

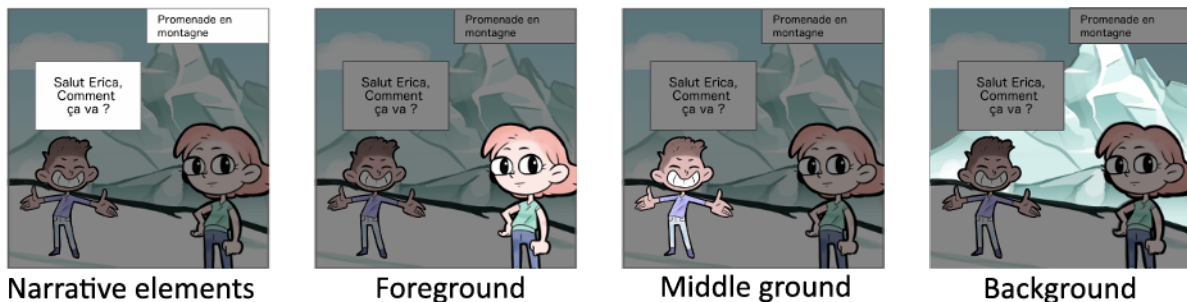
Frames are organized into grounds, or layers, that determine the distance between the reader and what's in the picture.

The background is the part of the frame that is the furthest away from the reader's point of view. That's where the setting is usually placed.

The middle ground, sometimes just described as "in between," is, as its name implies, in the middle, between the background and the foreground.

The foreground is where elements that closest to the reader are placed.

Narrative elements, like speech bubbles and onomatopoeias, are placed in front of the foreground so they will be easy to read.



## "Framing" a Frame

By changing the angle and distance of the reader's point of view, framing changes the way the subject of the frame (usually an object or character) is featured in the story.

- Long shot, or establishing shot: This is the most panoramic point of view. The elements in the image are seen from far away, meaning that the characters are barely visible. The emphasis is on the setting. It's a good way to introduce a new sequence or to show where the action is taking place.
- Medium shot: Now we can see the characters from head to toe; we get a better sense of what's going on.
- Three-quarter shot: The image closes in on the characters from the waist up, focusing readers' attention on their gestures.

- Close up: By zooming in very close to a character or other element, the setting virtually disappears. The focus is on the emotions expressed by the expression on the character's face or some other detail.

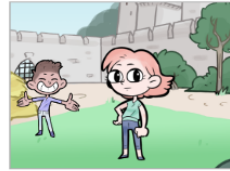
Switching between different shots, perspectives and points of view makes the storytelling more dynamic.



Long shot



Medium shot



Three-quarter shot



Close up