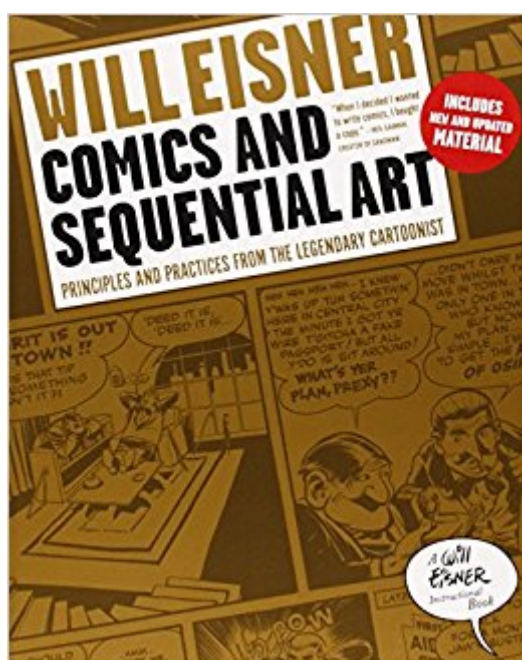


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# Comics And Sequential Art: Principles And Practices From The Legendary Cartoonist (Will Eisner Instructional Books)



## Synopsis

"Comics and Sequential Art is a masterwork, the distillation of Will Eisner's genius to a clear and potent elixir." —Michael Chabon, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay*. Will Eisner is one of the twentieth century's great American artists, a man who pioneered the field of comic arts. Here, in his classic *Comics and Sequential Art*, he refines the art of graphic storytelling into clear, concise principles that every cartoonist, comic artist, writer, and filmmaker needs to know. Adapted from Eisner's landmark course at New York's School of Visual Arts, *Comics and Sequential Art* is an essential text filled with invaluable theories and easy-to-use techniques. Eisner reveals here the fundamentals of graphic storytelling. He addresses dialogue, anatomy, framing, and many other important aspects of the art form. Fully updated and revised to reflect current practices and technology, including a section on digital media, this introduction to the art of comics is as valuable a guide as it was when first published.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Based on the popular course Eisner taught for several years at New York's School of Visual Arts, this lovingly written book on visual storytelling contains an accumulation of his ideas, theories and advice on the practice of graphic story-telling and the uses to which the comic book art form can be applied. Whether you're a film student, literature student, artist or simply a fan of good storytelling, you'll love this book filled with Eisner's cartoons. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable

edition of this title.

Indispensable technique from the mind of the master cartoonist who developed them. --Jeff Smith, creator of Bone  
"There isn't a comics artist alive who hasn't benefited from Will Eisner's masterful work and formidable vision. --Scott McCloud, author of Understanding Comics  
"When I decided I wanted to write comics, I bought a copy of Will Eisner's Comics and Sequential Art and studied it. If I were starting out today, with all the books on comics and graphic novels out there, I'd still begin with this book. --Neil Gaiman, creator of Sandman"

Much like Graphic Storytelling and Visual Narrative by the same author I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book. Will Eisner has been acknowledged and proven himself as one of the greatest. He has left us with a visual legacy that most comic book artists strive to live up to. And he's kind enough to share his thoughts and philosophies with us. I thank him and take off my (virtual) hat.

"Comics & Sequential Art" is based on a course Will Eisner taught at New York's School of Visual Art although originally this work was written as a series of essays that appeared randomly in "The Spirit" magazine. Eisner provides a guide book to the "principles & practice of the world's most popular art form, and while it is of interest to those of us who read comic books it is clearly intended to be of use to aspiring comic book artists (and writers, albeit to a lesser degree). One way of measuring the book's success is to note that I have the 24th printing of a work that was first published in 1985 (and expanded in 1990 to include print and computer), but then the fact that the book was written by Eisner and uses dozens of examples of his own art work to evidence his points, as well as drawings done specifically for the book, is enough to tell you this is something special. There are eight lessons in Professor Eisner's syllabus: (1) Comics as a Form of Reading looks at the interplay of word and image in comic books that has created a cross-breeding of illustration and prose, including the idea of how text can be read as image, which shows the sense of detail Eisner brings to his subject. (2) Imagery begins with the idea of letters as images and develops a notion of how the "pictograph" functions in the modern comic strip as a calligraphic style variation. The key subject here is that of images without words. (3) "Timing" considers the phenomenon of duration and its experience as an integral dimension of sequential art, with Eisner drawing (literally) a distinction between "time" and "timing." This chapter looks at framing speech and framing time, with Eisner making his points in the textual part of the chapter and then providing a series of comic book pages evidencing different features he wants to emphasize. (4) The Frame is

a major chapter that examines in detail the sequences segments called panels or frames, with Eisner emphasizing the idea that these frames do not correspond exactly to cinematic frames because they are part of the creative process and not the result of the technology. Eisner examines encapsulation, the panel as a medium of control, creating the panel, the panel as container, the "language" of the panel border, the frame as a narrative device, the frame as a structural support, the panel outline, the emotional function of the frame, the "splash" page, the page as a meta panel, the super-panel as a page, panel composition, the function of perspective, and realism and perspective. This chapter is not half the book, but it is close, and it basically tells you everything you ever wanted to know about a panel in a comic book. When you are taking into account the meaning of the border of the panel, then you know this is a comprehensive examination of the subject under discussion. The rest of the book deals with what you put in those panels: (5) Expressive Anatomy provides a micro-Dictionary of Gestures before covering your options in drawing the body, the face, and the body and the face. As an extended example Eisner provides his complete "Hamlet on a Rooftop," which does the "To be, or not to be" soliloquy. (6) Writing & Sequential Art talks about the relationship between the writer and the artist (whether they are two separate people or not), and various story telling elements. There are several choice examples on the application of words and the various ways then can add meaning to a series of panels, and practical examples of how writers and artists work together to create comic book stories. (7) Application (The Use of Sequential Art) makes a distinction between the functions of sequential art as instruction and as entertainment. This leads to a discussion of not only the graphic novel and technical instruction comics, but story boarding for commercials and films as well. (8) Teaching/Learning, Sequential Art for Comics in the Print and Computer Era lays out the range of diverse disciplines involved in comic books, laid out in a structured typology (categorized under psychology, physics, mechanics, design language and draftsmanship). Eisner also briefly shows what adding a computer to the process means for creating comic books. There is an inevitable comparison to be drawn between Eisner's "Comics & Sequential Art" and Scott McCloud's "Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art," but I really see the two books as being complementary. Although you obviously can shift back and forth between perspectives, McCloud is looking at the medium from the reader's point of view and Eisner is more concerned with the creative process. Eisner has praised McCloud's book as "a landmark dissection and intellectual consideration of comics as a valid medium," which is a fundamental assumption of Eisner's work here. The primary value of "Comics & Sequential Art" is for professional and amateur artist, but students and teachers, and even mere comic book fans, can benefit from a serious and comprehensive examination of the art of funny books.

I found this due to Neil Gaiman's short article reflecting on Will Eisner's death. Gaiman mentioned that when he began considering graphic novels, this was the go-to book he started with, and it is immediately noticeable as to why it was. The format of the book itself is easy to read - the thing is quite large, though its overall weight is low, so it's still easy to read even with neck and shoulder problems like I have. The information is arranged into sections that build off of one another, so you get a clear understanding to the process of making sequential art, and the updates for online comics were added very thoughtfully, instead of being shoehorned in. I've been taking my time reading the book, so that I absorb as much as I possibly can from it. I've also been looking at various comics that I own, and at online comics I enjoy, and picking them apart with each chapter, so that I have a very practical grasp of everything Eisner is discussing in the book. Despite it being a book, I almost feel like I'm sitting in a class being taught by Eisner, which is what I believe he was trying to do with the book. I'm looking forward to getting the rest of the books in the series (there are two more, linked on the product page) once I finish with this one. I plan on reading it twice, and then having it on hand when I start working on my own graphic novel. It really is a must have for any comic writer/artist!

The package arrived as advertised.

A great read. Helped with getting in sight towards sequential storytelling. Would have been 5 stars, but the book arrived in poor quality. The front cover and some of the first few pages were bent.

Some of the page-to-page layouts and transitions are needlessly tough to follow, but after a while you figure it out. It's a mental exercise that becomes very annoying when you pick up the other books in this series that suffer the same issue.

A friend borrowed this and lost it. I had to replace it. An excellent view into the depths of comics.

great

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