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# Making Comics: Storytelling Secrets Of Comics, Manga, And Graphic Novels



## Synopsis

Scott McCloud tore down the wall between high and low culture in 1993 with *Understanding Comics*, a massive comic book about comics, linking the medium to such diverse fields as media theory, movie criticism, and web design. In *Reinventing Comics*, McCloud took this to the next level, charting twelve different revolutions in how comics are generated, read, and perceived today. Now, in *Making Comics*, McCloud focuses his analysis on the art form itself, exploring the creation of comics, from the broadest principles to the sharpest details (like how to accentuate a character's facial muscles in order to form the emotion of disgust rather than the emotion of surprise.) And he does all of it in his inimitable voice and through his cartoon standâin narrator, mixing dry humor and legitimate instruction. McCloud shows his reader how to master the human condition through word and image in a brilliantly minimalistic way. Comic book devotees as well as the most uninitiated will marvel at this journey into a onceâunderappreciated art form. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 starsÂÂ See all reviewsÂ (155 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

Want 3 of the best-ever books on the general topic of comics? Here they are! (each generally sold separately)1.\**Understanding Comics*- A \*landmark\* & bestselling examination of the medium. A comicbook on comics! While I try not to use the "genius" label \*too\* liberally, with *Understanding Comics* it really seems to fit(!). 5 Stars!2.\**Reinventing Comics*- Maybe his best \*looking\* book (in my opinion), it's basically split into 2 sections: The 12 Revolutions in comics; and then basic

Internet/Computer/Web Comics. It's the least popular & practical in the Trilogy, yet I still really like it! 4-1/2 Stars.3.\*Making Comics- It's like Understanding Comics refined, as well as a "hands-on" introduction to the medium. It's the thickest book of the three, dealing with the most critical questions involved in the comics creating process. Since making comics basically means writing with pictures, McCloud begins with this. How many panels do we need? What should they contain? What's the clearest way to communicate our ideas? He first helps us with these things, and then moves to our real center of interest: characters! How to create and illustrate interesting characters is a central theme throughout. Once we establish our pictures & characters, words can be added to complete our ideas. He explains various ways to do this, basically refining his ideas in Understanding Comics. Perspective is only barely touched upon here; most books similarly briefly mention it. He explains that it's a difficult yet necessary part of the picturemaking process, and that it can actually be quite fun(!). He also touches on eastern/western differences in comics, explaining how & why Japanese methods are still gaining in influence.

When it comes to artwork, I am at the stick figure level. My talents for making visual art, whether painter, comic book artist or whatever, are, at best minimal. At first glance, therefore, it might seem that I am not the right audience for a book like Scott McCloud's Making Comics. I am, however, a long-time comic book fan. The advantage to Making Comics for a drawing layman like myself is the same as watching a "making of" documentary of a movie (or listening to a DVD commentary). You gain a better understanding of what you are looking at. Unlike a painting, comic strip writing is a sequential art, a depiction of a series of pictures that, typically with text, tell a story. McCloud gets into the narrative aspects of comics writing immediately with a chapter on writing with pictures in which he discusses how the sequence of pictures (or panels) typically relate to each other. For example, panels can go from moment-to-moment, depicting a single action as a series of moments (like showing a baseball player swinging a bat. A different panel transition is action-to-action, showing a subject doing a series of actions (panel one shows the player hitting the ball, two shows him running, three shows his sliding, etc.). Besides these choices of moment, there are also choices of frame (essentially, point of view), choice of image, choice of word and choice of flow. McCloud also goes into how to draw people, how to blend word and picture, how to build worlds, and, in the only chapter that is really specific to actual artists, what the tools of the trade are. There is a lot in this book, and it's all told with McCloud's easy going narrative where a depiction of himself guides us through all the ideas.

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