

Minimum Equipment Need for Stop Motion

Written by Marc Spess

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A Russian made Krasnogorsk 3 16mm camera.

Basic equipment is crucial in animation. You will need these things minimum for your project. A few lights, and a digital still, web camera, or 16mm camera to capture all the animation, along with film. Its important to have a good tripod that goes along with the camera. A projector is handy as well if you can still find one. Otherwise you will need to have it transferred to VHS or DVD so that you can view all your hard work.

The costs can add up fast. So its a good idea to do some research on these things before jumping in. Your local library is a good starting point, and the yellow pages are good as well. Sometimes people sell these cameras very cheap. Super 8 is still affordable, and it is a good idea to start out with a super 8 camera if you plan to use film. Webcams and free stop motion software such as Helium Frog or Anasazi makes it cheaper than film and you can get instant results.

Some notes on purchasing a film camera is to look for one with a zoom lens, and a reflex viewfinder. That means that you can see through the lens on the camera to line up your animation. The non reflex types are bad because you can not accurately do this, and can have the camera pointed on something other then your animation, and waste a lot of time. Also you want one that has an auto exposure meter built in to save you some money. If you don't get one with this option, you will have to buy a light meter to set the exposure on the camera manually. Lastly, and most importantly, it has to have single frame capabilities.

You will also need a few more things as time and money allows. A basic tool set with saws, screw drivers, wire cutters, a drill, hammer and dry wall screws can go a long way for making puppets and sets. Glues, epoxies, duct tape and clamps will hold your materials together. Found items at garage sales such as old tables can be used as work benches, and you can even buy most of what you need second hand. Basically anything can be done cheaply in stop motion even on a low budget. And why would you want to pay a lot for a work bench that you are going to drip clay and paint on anyway?

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*We now recommend using only digital equipment to save money. we have an extensive page on the subject [here](#).

