



Dear Students

'Animation is certainly an appealing field to anyone who has spent hours doodling sketches of their favourite cartoon characters. But there's a difference between being a fan of animation and actually being suited for the job. The industry is both creative and technical, so it requires a unique blend of abilities. There is no one-size-fits-all description of a perfect animator, but there are definitely some common characteristics that many animators share.'

In this edition we will look at the personal requirements as well as educational requirements to become an animator.

- Martina

ANIMATOR

An animator is an artist. They use artistic techniques and technology to give life and movement to inanimate or created characters. They also create the backgrounds and environments in which these 'characters' live and interact and work closely with voice artists and musicians.

WHAT DOES AN ANIMATOR DO?

The work of an animator entails the drawing of a series of sketches or pictures which are assembled in a particular way and photographed, so as to give the impression of continuous movement when run through a projector.

Animators create animation and visual effects for films, video games, television, mobile devices, and other forms of media using illustrations and software programs. Adobe After Effects, Adobe Premiere, Autodesk 3ds Max, and Autodesk Maya are just a few leading software programs for animators. Animators also create graphics and develop storyboards, drawings and illustrations. They create, plan, and script animated narrative sequences, and assist with background design and production coordination.

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Animators create films for production companies, major animation studios and computer games companies. Animators only make the key drawings referred to as 'extremes'. These drawings on the animator's drawing board are necessary for showing the action-spacing instructions that guide the animator's assistant in doing the intermediate drawings needed to complete the depiction of the action. When all the drawings have been completed and assembled, the action is checked. Flipping through the pages will reveal any error in the action sequence, and the relevant drawing can then be corrected. The drawings are then photographed in sequence. Sound effects are mixed with speech on the dialogue track and combined with the optical negative for the final composite print.

SKILLS TO BECOME AN ANIMATOR

Technical animator skills: To give life to the characters, an animator needs to combine the artistic skills with practical skills. It is very important to have strong drawing skills because it is easier and faster to sketch your ideas on paper. Also, an animator needs to understand how the body moves and to be aware of the 12 principles of animation. Technical animator skills include audio/video editing and cutting-edge software's like Adobe Flash, 3D Studio Max, and more.



Graphic design skills: The main responsibility of an animator is to bring elements to life and for that it needs to have knowledge of graphic motion. Animators should know how to create figures, visual effects, and how to make animations more real to live.

Color Theory: All animations need colors. To be a successful animator you need to understand the color theory. You have to know how to use colors on your characters and what color you should use to express different emotions, feelings, etc. You have to think at what your animation want to communicate to the audience and to choose the perfect colors for that.

Sense of timing and spacing: An animator needs to use his knowledge of animation and to be able to move elements in order to create natural and soft movements. Also, he has to have a good sense of timing and spacing, to anticipate movements, to action and to react.

Analyzing skills: A good animator must pay attention at small details. These details, like where is the character looking, how fast the figure should move, an eye-blink, etc. make the difference and could give your animation a more professional look. A true animator will observe and analyze every detail of one individual, its expressions, the way they walk, etc. and everything that surrounds it.

Originality: It may takes years to develop your own style, but every animator should make their mark and create original animations that people will remember with pleasure. Make your art unique and so you make yourself known in this industry.

Besides all these major skills, animators should be able to cooperate with others colleagues, be reliable, responsible, creative, perseverant and innovative.

REQUIREMENTS

Secondary Education

Possession of a **HIGCSE/NSSCH** Grade 12 or equivalent qualification with matriculation exemption is required to be admitted to South African Universities. An HIGCSE/NSSCH or outstanding **IGCSE/NSSCO** Grade 12 or equivalent qualification is needed to enrol at South African Technikons. **UNAM** requires an HIGCSE/NSSCH/IGCSE/NSSCO Grade 12 or equivalent qualification with passes in five subjects and 25 points on the UNAM point evaluation scale.

Recommended subjects

Arts

Tertiary Education

A B.A. (Fine Arts) is offered by most South African Universities. Some Technikons in South Africa offer the **N. Dip.:** Fine Arts. Most of the actual training is, however, gained by in-service training.

The Department of Visual Arts at UNAM offers a B. A. degree with various majors in Visual Art, which could be an advantage as most of the actual training is gained through in-service training.

Welwitchia University offers a Diploma in Animation: This program prepares candidates for a career as an animator. This program relies heavily on drawing and composition, especially life drawing skills. Students will learn both traditional 2D animation and digital 3D animation. It is a stand-alone qualification of two (2) years duration. <http://www.welwitchiauniversity.com.na/>

Personality

A prospective animator must be artistically-inclined, skilful, and practical. He/she must be able to express his/her ideas in sketches and come up with new and varied ideas constantly.

Work Opportunities

Animators are employed in all forms of publishing, advertising, film-making, and television broadcasts.



“ The great thing about being an animator
is that you never stop learning! ”

INTERESTING THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT ANIMATION

1. The Oscar for Best Animated Feature was first awarded in 2001. The first winner was **Shrek**.
2. However Walt Disney was awarded an honorary Oscar in 1938 for **Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs**.
3. The first cartoon character to appear on a postage stamp was **Bugs Bunny** but the first to have a statue erected in his honour was Popeye.
4. In the film **101 Dalmatians**, every Dalmatian puppy has precisely 32 spots.
5. In the film **Monsters, Inc.** the big blue monster Sully had 2,3 20413 individually animated hairs.
6. When the singing duo Simon and Garfunkel first got together in the late 1950s they recorded under the name **Tom & Jerry**.
7. Tom [Good] and Jerry [Leadbetter] were also the names of the leading male characters in the very successful sitcom **The Good Life**.
8. **Beauty And The Beast, Up and Toy Story 3** are the only animated films to have been nominated for the Best Picture Oscar.
9. In **Who Framed Roger Rabbit**, Mickey Mouse and Bugs Bunny appear on-screen together. Their respective owners, Warner Bros and Disney, agreed to this on the condition that the two characters shared the exact same number of lines, and appeared on screen for the exact same amount of time, right down to the frame.
10. Iconic cartoon strong-man, **Popeye**, was created during the Great Depression in order to encourage people to eat spinach due to its high iron content, because many people could not afford meat, which was scarce at the time.

References : Careers in Namibia; Gostudy;

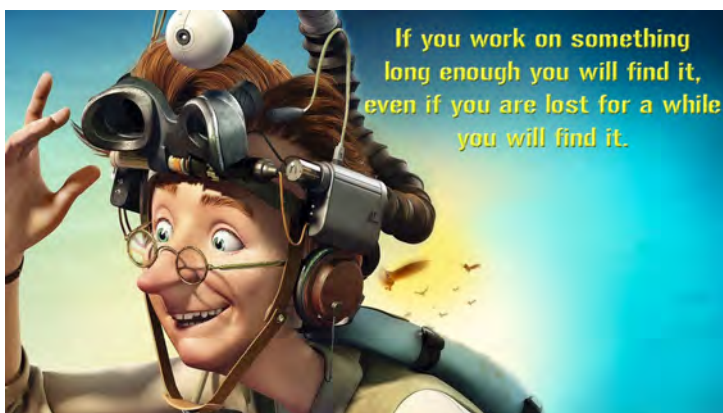
[https://marionettestudio.com/essential-animator-skills-required-to-become-an-animator/;](https://marionettestudio.com/essential-animator-skills-required-to-become-an-animator/)

<https://www.express.co.uk/life-style/top10facts/619160/Top-10-facts-animation>



"All the adversity I've had in my life, all my troubles and obstacles, have strengthened me... You may not realize it when it happens, but a kick in the teeth may be the best thing in the world for you."

WALT DISNEY



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