



# Do's and DOH!'s

## of Creating Graphics for Video



### HOMER SAYS...

- **DON'T make lettering too small.** Even though it may be readable on the computer monitor, quality is degraded when going to video tape.
- **DO use contrast in lettering.** Light text on a dark background or dark text on a light background will work best. Avoid using text that is similar in value/color to the background.
- **DON'T use too many fonts.** One or two fonts is plenty, **anything more runs the risk of appearing** *disorganized* and **competing for attention.** For more variety, use variations on a font: **extended**, condensed, **bold**, *italics*, ALL CAPS, lower case.
- **DO use drop shadows and outlines** to make text stand out from the background.
- **DON'T place items too close to the edge of the frame.** Remember to leave about 10% - 15% of empty space around the edges for the TV safe area.
- **DO paraphrase or abbreviate** text for the screen when appropriate. Unless you are close-captioning a program, graphical information should supplement what is being heard, not dictate it word-for-word.
- **DON'T use too much color** in text. Black, white or yellow is best.
- **DO leave titles up on screen long enough for viewers to read.** A good rule of thumb is that a title should appear for the amount of time it takes to read it out loud twice.
- **DON'T use hard to read fonts.** Avoid any typeface that is too thin, too fancy or too small. **Bold typefaces without serifs work best.**
- **DO use a shape behind titles** if the background is too busy. A black rectangle behind a title can help it be more readable.
- **DON'T overuse capitals.** TYPING EVERYTHING IN ALL CAPS IS THE VISUAL EQUIVALENT OF YELLING AT THE VIEWER.
- **DO be consistent with your design.** Once you develop a "look", use the same treatment for all graphics throughout the program. Save time by creating one graphic with the look you want, then copying that page for the rest of the graphics.
- **DON'T cover someone's face with titles.** Position the title in the lower third of the screen, or in empty areas of the frame. Keep this composition in mind when shooting, to leave enough room for titles.
- **DO steal design ideas** from other shows you see on TV, especially news.
- **DON'T use heavily-saturated colors**, especially reds. Saturated colors will bleed on video.