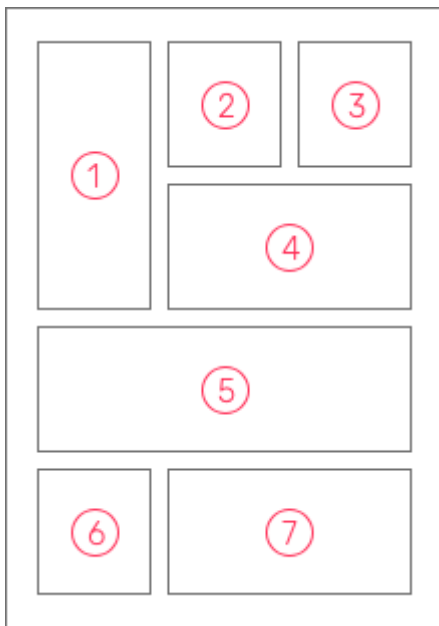


How to Compose a Comic-Book Page

A comic-book page should be structured in a way that makes it reader friendly. That structure is called composition. There are a few things to bear in mind when you compose a comic-book page.

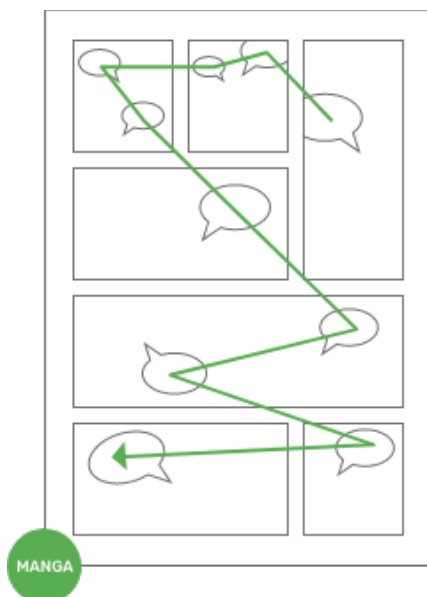
Reading Direction for Frames

For comics from the western world, we read the pages from left to right and from top to bottom. So we start at the top left and finish at the bottom right.



Reading Direction for Manga

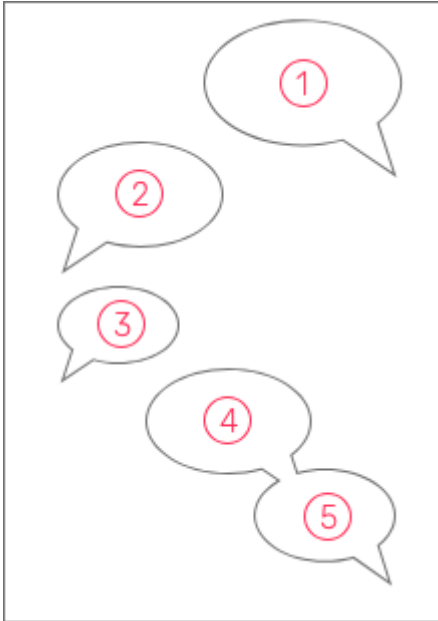
Watch out! Manga are read from right to left and from top to bottom. So the reading direction is a mirror image of the direction for comics from the western world.



Reading Direction for Speech Bubbles

Speech bubbles are read in a similar way to frames. We start by reading the highest one, and then the dialogue unspools from top to bottom.

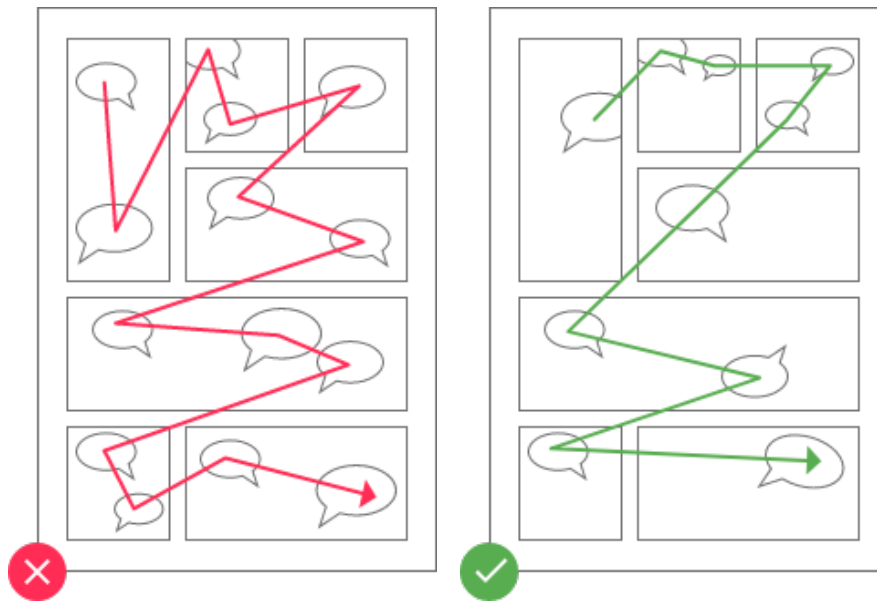
The schema below illustrates the reading direction for bubbles on a page and in a frame:



The Reading Path

Once you have composed your page, it is a good idea to trace a line from one speech bubble to the next, in the order that you want people to read them. That line, which readers' eyes will follow, is known as the reading path.

If the path zigzags around too much, reading it will be annoying. In that case, you should consider rearranging where the speech bubbles are placed.



The picture on the left shows a poorly constructed reading path; readers' eyes will follow the one on the right instinctively.

A Few Ideas to Get Started

To improve your reading path, it's better to place onomatopoeias and captions along the path created by your speech bubbles.

It's also a good idea to place your most important drawings, like your characters or action scenes, along the path, in order to optimize it.

Bear in mind that it's better not to overload a page with too many frames or bubbles in order to keep the reading smooth.