VARIATIONS ON A THEME

There are as many ways to animate a jump as there are different types of characters, attitudes, and situations in which your character happens to be jumping. We've been working on a very basic jump, but by varying the different component poses we can create an infinite variety of jumps. As long as we follow the same basic foundation of poses, our jumps will still have a strong sense of weight, energy and believability.

NEUTRAL OR STARTING POSE(S)

Maybe this is the "settle" or "reaction" pose from a previous action, maybe Squash is jumping to dodge another flying vegetable, or maybe he's a hero ready to jump into action. Poses tell a story, and so your first pose should set up the "story" that you're trying to tell. Experiment with different starting poses with different "attitudes" for the character to adopt. Remember that this phase of the movement can be made up of more than one key pose, and could be a small action in an of itself, like a reaction to an oncoming missile that needs to be dodged.

ANTICIPATION

You might want to work out your main action before you plan your anticipation. An anticipation is always a move in the opposite direction of the main action, and should reflect the attitude and intention of the character coming from the neutral and moving through the action. Maybe he swings his arms back to then swing up to assist the jump, maybe he starts on one foot, etc...

ACTION

These poses, especially the poses at the top of a jump with a lot of ease on them, will communicate much about the physics, attitude, and "story" we're trying to communicate with our jump. Is he scared or heroic? Is he jumping with one leg or two? Arms up or down? Is he having fun or is he tired? Does he close his eyes or look up as he jumps?
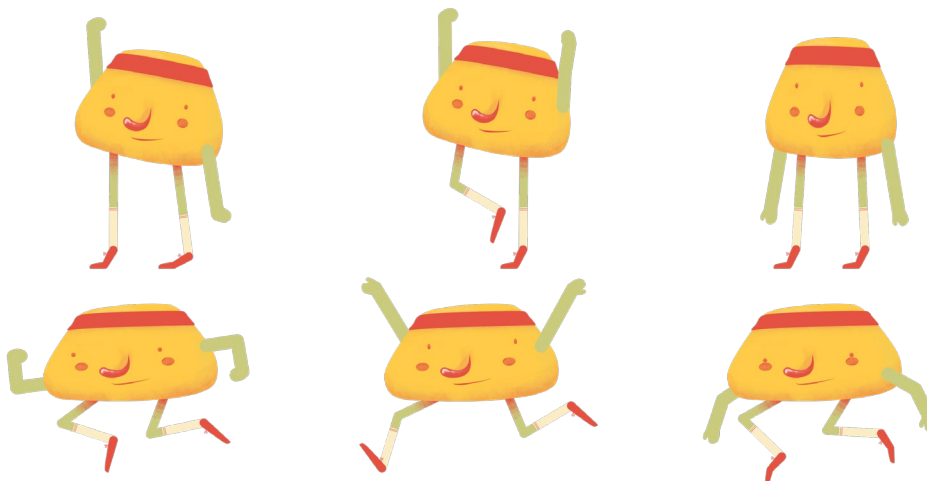
REACTION / RECOIL / FOLLOW THROUGH

This should reflect and relate to the attitude and motion of the action. Again, experiment with how different poses communicate a different sense of the physics, ideas and emotions in the jump.

SETTLE / NEUTRAL / ENDING POSE(S)

Where we end communicates as much as where we began, and might be leading us forward to more movement and story. Keep in mind that these poses could be the starting or anticipation poses for the next motion! What do these poses communicate about what just happened, and what might happen next?

THE MISSING LINK

What we can't show you in a PDF is the second half of creating variations of your jump which is the **timing.** Remember that it's the interplay between the poses and the timing that make our animation come alive, so as we vary poses, so must we vary our timing. Experiment with different timings and how different poses are effected by shifts in timing. What timing best supports the ideas and attitudes in your poses?