A movie starts with one or more production logos (also called vanity plates) that brand the movie.

By contrast, a title sequence is particular to the movie and starts to set viewers' expectations for period, location, style, and mood.

The titles may be combined with establishing shots.

Images in closing credits may continue the story.

Credits can be followed by a stinger (also "credit cookie" or coda) that adds a joke or sets up a sequel.

**General principles**
The best way to learn the principles of title design is to pay attention to them at the start and end of television programs, movies, and videos. Note however that the television and movie industries have differing styles, partly due to television’s preference for serials rather than one-offs, and to the generally larger budget available for movie title and credit sequences.

Don’t make your titles and credits too large. They should occupy no more than the middle third of the screen width.

For multi-line titles – and all credits – roll them up from the bottom so that they appear as people read them. For single line titles, if you feel you really have to move them in from the side of the screen, make sure it’s the right side of the screen so that, again, people can read them as they appear.

Use easily readable typefaces – that is, not what is referred to as “decorative” fonts. People who read more slowly, or whose first language is not English, may miss information. Keep the words on screen for a reasonable time. Keep the movement of text simple and consistent. Don’t vary speed or location. Also consider viewers with vision problems. Make sure the color of words and background contrasts well.
Two column credits are generally right justified for the left column (the job titles) and left justified for the right column (people’s names). The gutter between the two columns is generally centered on the screen.

An alternative to scrolling credits up the screen is to wipe them with an element that echoes something in the preceding animation. An example of this is at the end of one of the New York Times episodes of Modern Love – https://vimeo.com/89646442 – where the animated smoke wipes the credits.

Examples

Resources
An excellent resource for title design (though only images are available for the free subscription) is http://www.artofthetitle.com/. You can also find title examples and title designer interviews at http://motionographer.com/.

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