

timeinspace
Missy Anapolsky

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The basic tenets of design can be grouped into two categories: principles and elements. The principles of design are the overarching truths of the profession. They represent the basic assumptions of the world that guide the design practice, and affect the arrangement of objects within a composition. By comparison, the elements of design are the components of the design themselves, the objects to be arranged.

BALANCE:
SYMMETRICAL



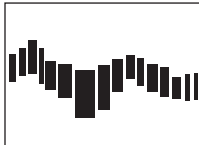
Balance Balance occurs when elements are equally distributed throughout the design. There are essentially two types of balance: *symmetrical* and *asymmetrical*. Symmetrical elements are arranged equally (mirrored) on both sides of a composition to suggest stability and peacefulness. Asymmetrical elements create a deliberate imbalance to suggest motion and activity. Asymmetrical compositions provide visual tension.

BALANCE:
ASYMMETRICAL



Rhythm Rhythm is a pattern created by repeating elements. Rhythm denotes the movement in the way that elements direct our gaze to scan the message for understanding or information. The term *sequence* is used to refer to the viewing order of the elements and to determine the flow of a multi-page publication such as a magazine or a book.

RHYTHM



Unity Unity is achieved when all elements in a layout look like they belong together. A viewer will always seek unity in a message. Without it, the viewer will lose interest. The concept of unity describes the relationship between the individual parts and the whole of a composition. It investigates the aspects of a given design that are necessary to tie the composition together, to give it a sense of wholeness, or to break it apart and give it a sense of variety. Unity in design is a concept that stems from Gestalt theory: the psychological process by which a viewer unites disparate design elements into a whole form that is other than the sum of its parts. Two such ideas are *grouping* and *figure/ground*. Grouping happens when elements are close together and visually appear as part of a group. Figure/ground occurs when a viewer can identify an object (figure) as a shape distinct from its background (ground). This perception is dependent on the design principle of contrast.

UNITY



RUBIN'S VASE

CONTRAST



Contrast Contrast stresses the visual differences in size (aka scale), shape, and color between elements to enhance a message. Contrast also draws and directs the viewer's attention to specific areas of information.

EMPHASIS



Emphasis Emphasis indicates the most important element on the page based on the message. It is the element that stands out and gets noticed first. The most emphasized visual element in a design is called a *focal point* because it attracts the viewer's attention first. Emphasis can be created by taking an element and making it bigger, bolder or brighter, by putting it in a contrasting color, or by surrounding it with white space.