

A person is shown from the chest up, sitting at a wooden desk and drawing with a black pen on a piece of paper. The desk is cluttered with various art supplies, including a watercolor palette, several tubes of paint, and a bottle of ink. In the background, there is a bookshelf with colorful books and a potted plant. The overall scene is a creative workspace.

# Design Elevation

## Mini Workshop

Elevate your designs and create your own  
profitable design business



## Design Elevation Mini Workshop

In this guide, we are going to look at the essential building blocks for creating elevated designs and they are the elements and principles of design. These are the foundations you are taught if you go to art or design school and are the basics for you to create successful artwork.

When you are designing, there is so much to consider that it can feel overwhelming. Sometimes you can tell that something isn't working the way you'd like but you don't know how to fix it.

It's by considering the elements and principles that will allow you to elevate your designs.

Make sure you have this guide handy as you work your way through mini workshop so you can refer to the definitions for each of the elements and principles of design.

# ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

## What are the elements of design?

To put it simply, the elements are the structure of the design. They are what the design is made up of and what you use within the design.

We are going to be looking at the definitions for each of the elements.

The elements are:

- Line
- Direction
- Colour
- Value
- Shape
- Form
- Space
- Size
- Texture

# ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

## LINE

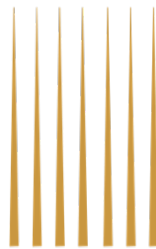
In its simplest form, a line can be a mark between two points on a surface or it can create an edge where two ends meet. For example the outline of a shape.

Line is a very versatile element. It can be used to create outlines, shapes, and direction as well as to create textures to objects.

Let's have a look at some of the different ways that line can be used.



Direction



Width



Length

**Direction-** You can change the direction of a line. For example you can have vertical, horizontal or diagonal lines.

**Width-** You can change the width of a line. For example you can use thick lines, thin lines or tapered lines.

**Length-** You can change the length of your line. For example you can have long continuous line, short length of line or small dashes of line

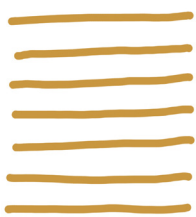
# ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

## DIRECTION

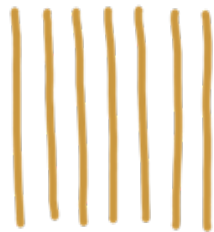
Direction is the course along which the line or object moves.

Some of the different ways you can use direction are horizontal, vertical, diagonal, curved and zigzag.

Changing direction is a really simple way to add extra interest to your design.



Horizontal



Vertical



Diagonal



Curved



Zigzag

# ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

## COLOUR

Colour is such an important element within a design and can be often the reason someone is attracted to your design or not. It can really make or break a design so working on this element is really important.

The colour which also can be referred to as hue will set the mood, light and depth of a design.

Colour is such a huge topic but to break it up simply, colours can be broken up into Primary, Secondary, Tertiary and Earth colours.

Primary colours are red, blue and yellow and they can't be mixed from other colours

Secondary colours are made by mixing combinations of two primary colours together.

By mixing red + yellow you create orange

By mixing blue + red you create purple

By mixing blue + yellow you create green



Primary



Secondary

# ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

## COLOUR

Tertiary colour are those that sit between the primary and secondary colours

If we look at the colour wheel, you can see they are yellow-orange, red-orange, yellow-green, blue green, red-purple and blue-purple

Earth colours are made by mixing two secondary colours together and they result in earthy colour ranges.

The best way to gain a great understanding of colour is looking at the colour wheel. In this training will be going over the basics for using colour as an element of design but it really is a huge topic that you I recommend you taking the time to learn more about.



Tertiary



Earth

# ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

## VALUE

Value refers to the lightness or darkness of a colour and this is how you're going to add depth and interest to your designs.

You can create value in 2 ways. One is by creating a tint and the other is by creating a tone.

A tint is created by adding white to a colour. For example if you added white to red you would end up with pink.

In comparison, if you add black to a colour you get a tone. For example if you add black to red you would create dark red

The value of a colour can be broken into high (light tones), mid (intermediate tones) and low (dark tones).



Tints



Tones



High

Mid

Low



# ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

## SHAPE

When you think of shapes your mind probably goes straight to squares, triangles, circles and rectangles but shapes can be in many different forms.

Shapes can be geometric, organic or abstract in form.

Shapes such as triangles, squares, and rectangles are geometric shapes that are uniform and regular.

Organic shapes are those that appear naturally in the world. These are shapes you see in nature for example a leaf or flower petals.

Abstract shapes in comparison use a minimalist representation of reality. They take the most basic and recognisable aspects of a real life shape and abstract the way it's represented.

A great example of this is logos. For example, the female or male logo on toilet doors.



Geometric



Organic



Abstract

# ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

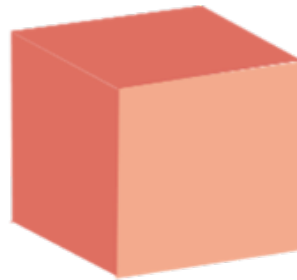
## FORM

Form refers to the mass of an object and usually describes an object that is 3-dimensional. It is how a shape occupies the space.

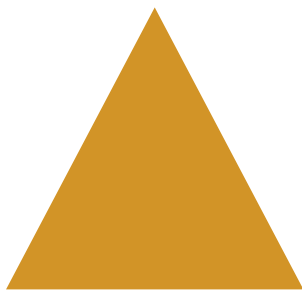
For example a square is a shape while a cube is a form. In 2-D art, form can be represented through using light and shadow.



2D



3D



2D



3D

# ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

## SPACE

The next element we are going to look at is space.

Thinking about the space within your design and the way you place your elements within the space is really important.

The positive space is the space your subject matter takes up in your composition and the negative space is the space around that.

The negative space would be considered the background space.



Positive Space



Negative Space

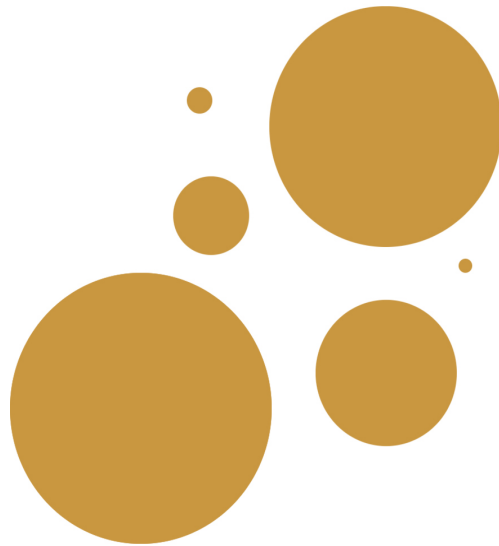
# ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

## SIZE/SCALE

Size or scale refers to the relationship between one object to another.

That is how big or small an element is in relation to other objects within a design.

Size will help you allow an element to stand out or to give it importance.



# ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

## TEXTURE

Texture refers to the surface quality of an object. For example, rough, smooth or bumpy.

Texture can be real or implied.

Real texture is a surface that when touched has a textural quality to it e.g. a smooth surface or a rough surface.

Implied texture is a surface that looks like it's textured but is not and that is what we use in digital art. For example wallpaper that's made to look like concrete.

Texture allows you to add depth to a 2D surface and help create interest to your art



Real



Implied

# PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

## What are the principles of design?

The principles tell us how we should organize the elements.

They are the methods used to organise or arrange the structural elements within a design.

The principles are:

- Balance
- Contrast
- Repetition
- Rhythm
- Harmony
- Unity
- Proportion
- Emphasis
- Variety

# PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

## BALANCE

Balance refers to the weight of the composition in relation to how the objects are placed.

The two main forms of balance are symmetrical and asymmetrical. Symmetrical designs are equally balanced from the centre point e.g. your face is symmetrical.

Asymmetrical designs are designs which use unequal weighted elements. For example, one side might have a visually heavy element and it could be balanced on the other side with multiple light elements

Symmetrical designs will often appear quite predictable and stable whereas asymmetrical designs are more visually interesting and dynamic.



Symmetrical



Asymmetrical

# PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

## CONTRAST

Contrast refers to the difference between two or more objects within a design and it allows us to emphasize or highlight different elements and add visual appeal within your design.

That could be anything from contrasting colours, shapes, sizes or textures and is great to add a lot of interest to your design.

On the example on the left we can see a contrast in size, colour and shape and on the right, a strong contrast in colour using black and white





# PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

## REPETITION

Repetition is created by recurring design elements.

It is reusing the same or similar elements throughout a design.

It can be done in a number of different ways, for example repeating the same colours, shapes, textures or design motifs.



# PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

## RHYTHM

Rhythm is the movement of design elements at regular intervals. It creates a sense of movement throughout the design.

For example, repeating lines, shapes, colour or other elements that allow a path for your eye to follow and create a sense of flow.

There are different types of rhythm.

A random rhythm is when elements are repeated without any regular interval.

A regular rhythm is when elements are of a similar size and length and are spread out at predictable intervals.

A flowing rhythms are natural patterns and are when a elements occur at organic intervals for example like a zebra stripe. This can typically seen in nature like in the sand in this image

And a progress rhythm is when there is a gradual change in the way the elements are repeated. For example, the elements slowly getting smaller or a colour gradient.



Random



Regular



Flowing



Progressive

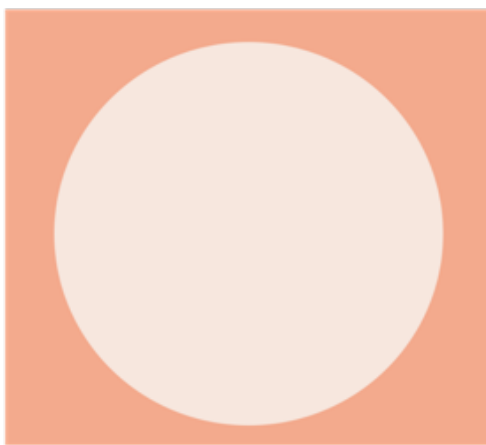
# PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

## HARMONY

Harmony describes a peaceful relationship between the elements of the design. For example, that could be a harmonious colour scheme.

It creates cohesiveness by stressing the similarities of separate but related parts

You can see how the shapes are different on the image on the left but they work harmoniously together and the shapes and colours on the right all work together and on the right harmony is created through the colour palette used



# PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

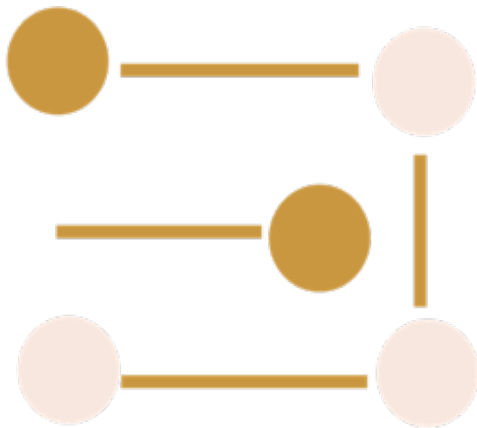
## UNITY

Unity is created by the elements of the design having a harmonious relationship together. The individual design elements combine together as one.

If you want to achieve unity you need to think about selecting elements that work and appear as if they belong together and it suggests coherence, oneness and completeness.

Unity is all about separate parts working together.

You see on the left the different element of line and circular shapes are working together unified way and on the right there are shapes of different sizes that are working together in a unified way.



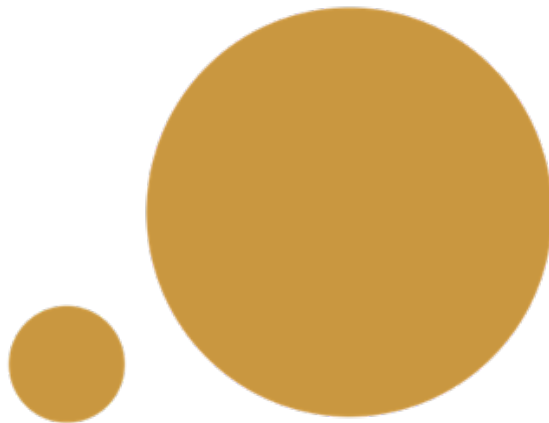
# PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

## PROPORTION

Proportion is the relationship between the scale and size of one design element to another and will give a sense of size.

You need to think about the visual size and weight of the elements within the composition and how they relate to each other.

For example large elements versus small elements and thinking about how they work together and relate to one and other in the space



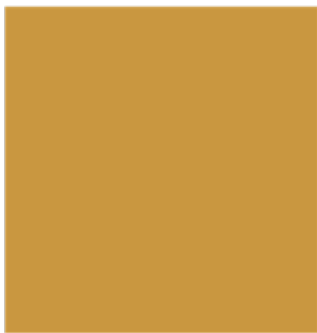
# PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

## EMPHASIS

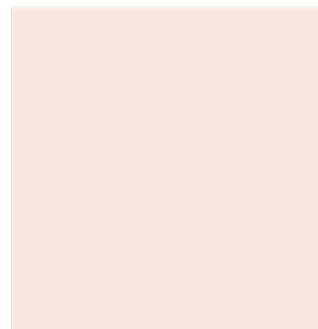
Emphasis or dominance occurs where a particular area of a design or design element stands out and gets the viewers attention more than other areas.

A dominant element will draw your eye to that part of the design. You can create emphasis through your use of the elements of design.

For example through size, shape or colour. In the example on the left you can see emphasis used through size and on the right through colour



Size



Colour

# PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

## VARIETY

Variety refers to elements that are different or dissimilar and creates interest within a design and will hold your viewers attention by keeping them visually engaged.

Variety will create visual interest to a design and without it a design can appear monotonous, stagnant, predictable or boring.

You can create variety in many different ways for example through variation of colour, shapes or motifs. In the examples here you can see variety through colour, size and shape



Colour



Size



Shape

# NOTES

