



Elements of Design

Good design is the aesthetic/visual organization and structure of abstract elements into an arrangement, pattern, or composition. The elements are:

1. **Line:** Visually alters the environment to create a shape; pattern, space, movement and/or an optical illusion with thick, thin, smooth, long, short characterization
2. **Space:** Existing within certain limited and measurable boundaries
3. **Form/Shape:** Two-dimensional flat forms, having only length and width, are usually described as shapes, while three dimensional have length, width and height
4. **Size/Scale:** Refers to the relationship of size in a design to the size of the observer or user with four kinds: Normal, Intimate, monumental and shock scale
5. **Light and Value:** Light is a supportive medium with the amount reflected by a surface is known as value and difference between two different surfaces is known as contrast
6. **Texture:** Both a tactile and visual surface quality which may be rough or smooth, soft or hard with resultant light being reflected unevenly by the surface
7. **Colour:** Has three dimensions; Hue -includes red, green or blue, Value -describes lightness or darkness, and Intensity -describes the brightness or dullness

Principals of Design

Design is governed or controlled by **FIRST ORDER PRINCIPLES** which prescribe inherent or fundamental relationships:

1. **Diversity/Variety:** Opposite of unity, giving some sense of contrast, conflict or complication by limiting elements; using other principles, grouping, or enclosure
2. **Repetition:** A repeat of design elements possibly showing rhythm
3. **Contrast:** The difference between two elements, usually with respect to light reflection
4. **Proportion:** Relationship between all parts of the design to each other and to the whole
5. **Direction:** Movement within the design using elements and principles of design

Which, in turn, are subject to or influenced by **SECOND ORDER PRINCIPLES** that are considered and applied to co-ordinate the forces of the inherent relationships:

1. **Dominance (emphasis):** That which leads the eye first to the most important part of the design and then to other areas using sizes; background, character, and directional lines
2. **Balance:** Closely related to proportion, which is the quality that creates a sensation of equilibrium, a feeling of stability due to the equal tension of weights on both sides of the composition through symmetrical, asymmetrical and/or radial characteristics
3. **Rhythm:** It implies an expected sequential movement of perception, a pattern through repetition; radiation, and or graduation

To achieve the ultimate **THIRD ORDER PRINCIPLES** which affect our sense of aesthetic beauty (taste/appreciation).

1. **Unity (harmony):** A quality of oneness or wholeness
2. **Order:** Organization of the design as to have a sequence which is pleasing to the design