

An Introduction to Graphic design

By Viraj Circar and Veena Sonwalkar

Basic Questions

- What is graphic design?
- How did it evolve?
- When did the profession come into existence?
- And why?

Definition

The term **graphic design** can refer to a number of artistic and professional disciplines which focus on visual communication and presentation.

Various methods are used to create and combine symbols, images and/or words to create a visual representation of ideas and messages.

All the pictures below are examples of Graphic Design



Bill Brant, *Nude*, 1952. Gelatin silver print.



Unlited



Gustav Klimt: *Salome*, 1909
Oil on canvas, 70 1/8 x 18 1/8 in.



Lorem ipsum dolor

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Sed venenatis euismod mauris. Praeae vitae dui. Ametis venenatis sem. Nullam nec nibh in ornare. Suspendisse laetitia. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Suspendisse non nibh. Nulla imperdiet, est nec pellentesque adipiscing, veli magna laoreet tortor, quis gravida orna est vel purus. Class aptent taciti sociosqu ad litora torquent per conubia nostra, per inceptos himenaeos. Mauris mauris. Malesa elit lorem, vehicula eget, dictum et, nuncum ornando, torpis. Cum sit magna!

Phasellus fermentum. Etiam adipiscing lacus quis orna. Ametis vitae magna et justo scelerisque semper. Suspendisse rutrum libero vitae est. Aliquam erat volutpat. Aliquam tellus quam aliquet et, pretium vitae, adipiscing et, orna. Suspendisse non nibh. Nulla imperdiet, est nec pellentesque adipiscing, veli magna laoreet tortor, quis gravida orna est vel purus. Class aptent taciti sociosqu ad litora torquent per conubia nostra, per inceptos himenaeos. Mauris mauris. Malesa elit lorem, vehicula eget, dictum et, nuncum ornando, torpis. Cum sit magna!

Nam scelerisque. Nam scelerisque gravida sapien. Nulla velliculidat nisi ac orna. Etiam neque lorem, aliquet sit amet, vehicula sit, tempus vel, neque. Aliquam erat volutpat. Etiam orna nisi, sagittis at, ultricies a, velliculidat ac, orna. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Maecenas auctor nibh quis risus. Sed euismod molestie ante. Phasellus facilisis est hacitae nunc.

Donec lorem dui, tempus sed, velliculidat at, lacinia vitae, ornis. Donec nunc orna, portitor quis, bibendum mattis, imperdiet et, orna. Vestibulum lacinia fermentum dolor. Suspendisse ultramagis ornandis risus. Praesent ac, tellus non est tristique auctor. Donec gravida est eget tellis. Mauris diam dolor, volutpat vel, imperdiet sed, portitor ma, augue. Donec vitae torpis. Etiam non idis. Donec biblandi elit orna. Cum scelerisque nuncupatibus et magnis dui parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Pellentesque ac leo vitae duique ornando gravida. Nunc eget risus mattis ornis lacibus lacibus. Suspendisse semper. Donec vel ornis.

Mauris ornando nibh sit amet tortor. Curabitur lacinia biblandi poris. Duis trucidant, elit et ornando dignissim, quam veli fermentum quam, sit tempus diam ornis mattis dui. Pellentesque orn sit, imperdiet vitae, bibendum ac, semper id, quam, Suspendisse biblandi, diam, ornando lacibus, veliculidat in auctor et, tellis, in ornand in orn sed orna. Donec, handent quam veli ornand. Vestibulum ut libero sit amet diam dignissim viverra. Duis orn. Sed curcus, turpis eget rhoncus lacibus, maene metus aliquam, maene, in mattis leo orn vitae quam.



When people need to necessarily express something, usually with an aim towards promotion or information dispensing, the focus becomes how best to do it.

Graphic design was born of art and technology (printing).

What does a Graphic Designer do?

When he gets a graphic design job, be it a poster design, book design, web design, advertising, he has to start with asking himself the following **fundamental questions**:

- What is the objective of the communication
- What **needs to be said first** and then next and then after that? (levels of hierarchy)
- How do you want the **eye to flow** through the page?
- What is the **tone** of voice?
- Who are you **speaking to**?

Fundamental Question 1: Objectives of the communication

What is the information that needs to be passed on? When the audience reads your book/webpage/ad what's he supposed to get out of it?



An advertisement and a newspaper have different objectives of communication.

Fundamental Question 2: What needs to be said first and then next and then after that? (hierarchy)

Once you have figured out what the objective of your communication is you'll want to think about what needs to be said first and foremost and what it should be followed by.



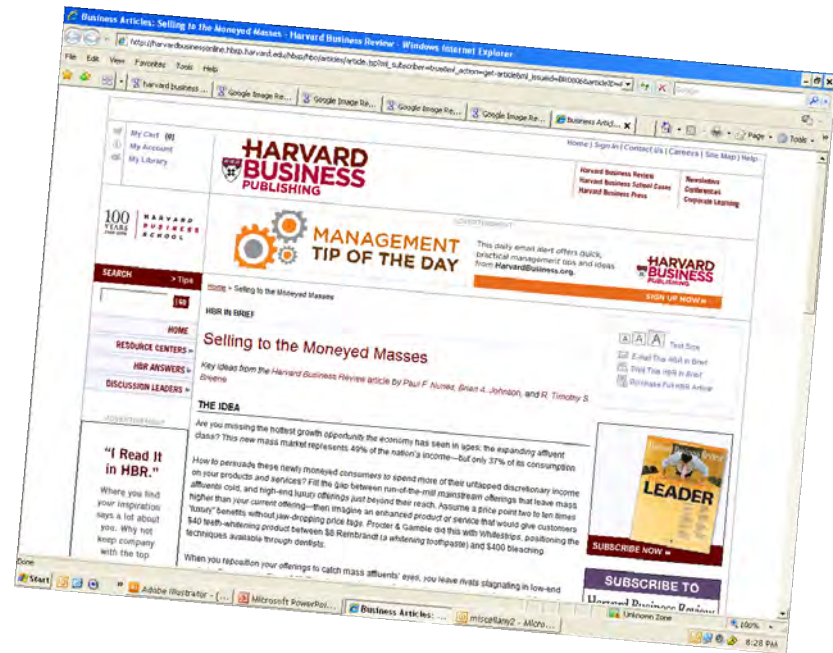
Fundamental Question 3: How do you want the user's eye to move around the page?

The hierarchy mentioned above, along with elements like color, contrast, size etc, will automatically make your viewers eyes go through the page in a certain way. This can be manipulated as per your intention.



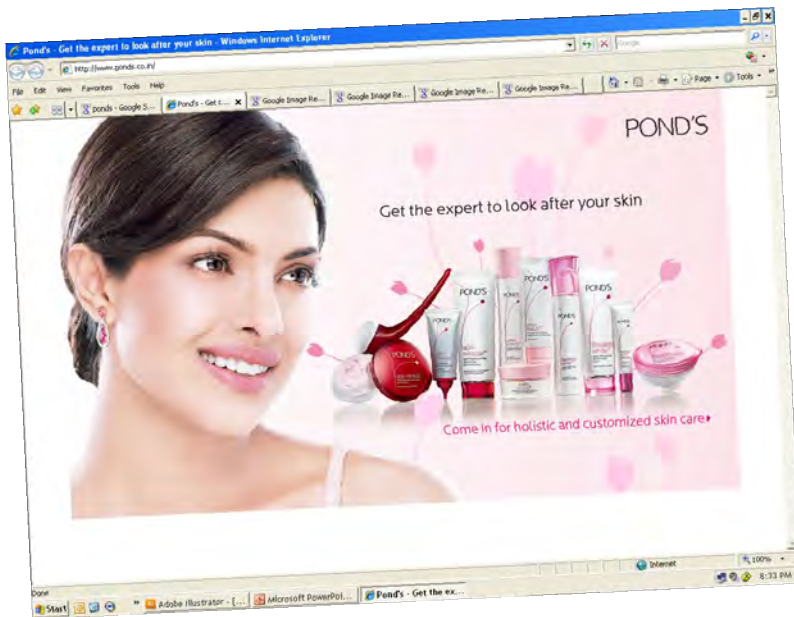
Fundamental Question 4: Who are you speaking to?

You have to be very sure about this as different people need to be spoken to differently, just the way it is in real life.



Fundamental Question 5: What is the tone of voice?

Only once you have got the above figured out can you think about the more external elements of your piece of work.



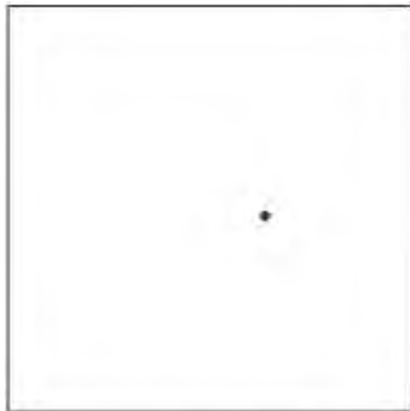
The solutions to these questions are tackled using the graphic designer's **tool kit**.

Broadly speaking, the following **tools** are available to him to solve the aforementioned issues:

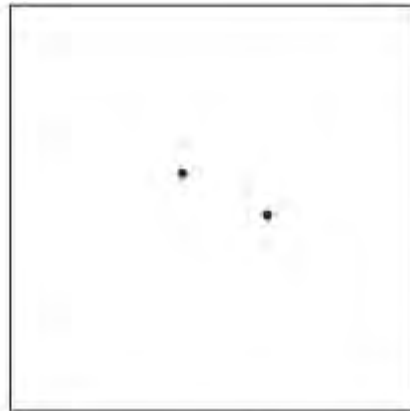
- Point
- Line
- Form
- Pattern
- Texture
- Space
- Size
- Typography
- Color
- Image

Point

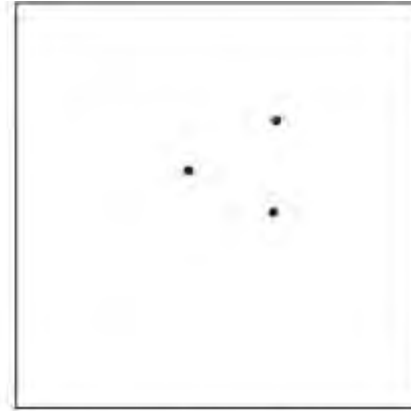
A point is the fundamental particle of graphic design.



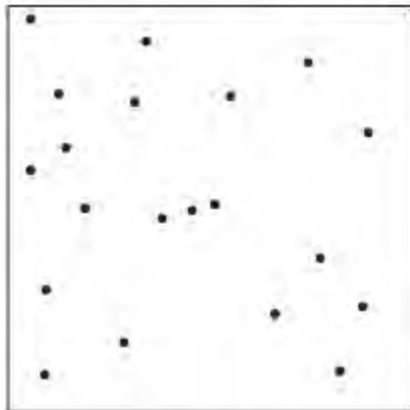
I see loveliness, I see a blemish, a mole or some kind of mark that's spoiling the sanctity of the whiteness



I see some connection between the two, I am reminded of a salt dispenser



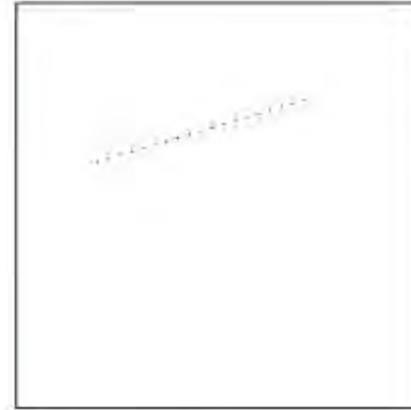
I see a pepper dispenser, and a triangle



I see random dots. I'm reminded of when I had measles



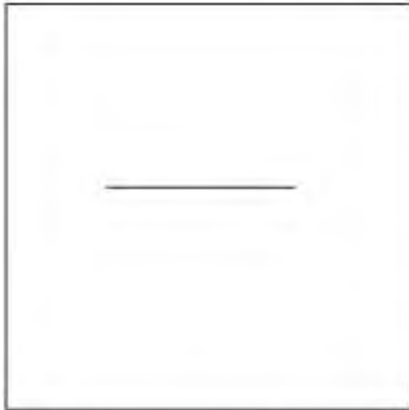
I see the constellation Orion



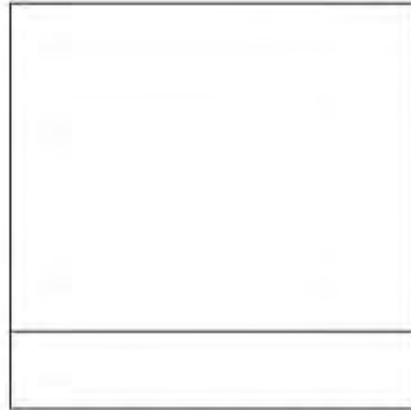
I see a diagonal line

The Line

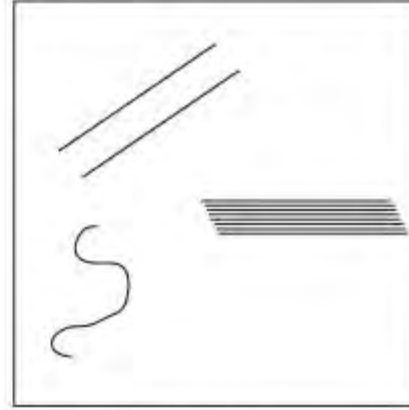
Line is any mark connecting two points.



Calm, subtraction, state of rest.



Two parts of the page, one bigger, one smaller.



Lazy line, speed and active line



Acting as a compositional tool leading the eye to a point.



Criss-cross lines create an impression of volume and light and shade.



Lines are used to organize information.

The Shape

Anything that has a width and a height is a shape.



It is a human tendency to make meaning out of a shape. In this case I recognise the profile of a man in the shape.



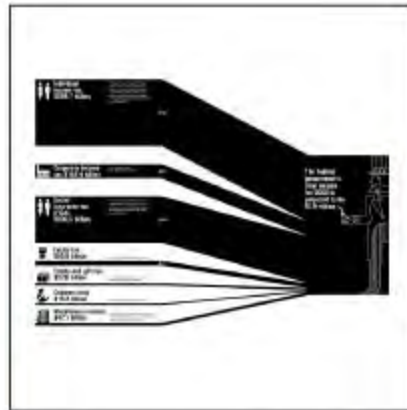
A geometrical shape and an irregular shape.



A three dimensional shape gives us an illusion of depth in the page and gives a shape a tactile quality.



It is important to note that the negative space is as important as the positive space.



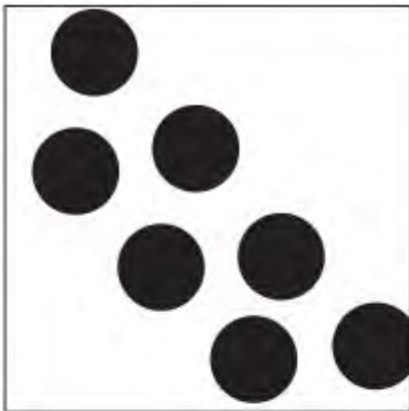
Here shapes have been used to organize information.



Shapes are used in icon design for their immediate cognition.

Pattern

Our tendency to make meaning an order will find a pattern in things.



Patterns are a way of making sure the user can comprehend the page system logically. For example the user understands that there will be a continuation of the pattern above even beyond the page.



When a grid is used to lay out a page the underlying network of lines organises the information for the viewer and helps him take in the information in logically



Branching and tessellations are two major types of patterns, both of which are used in organizing information.



Here pattern has been used to organize information logically.



Here the way pagination has been treated forms a pattern.



Here a repetitive pattern using colour and shape is used in textile design.

Texture

Texture is the look or feel of a surface. You can add richness and dimension to your layouts with texture. Visual texture creates an illusion of texture on a printed publication or web page.

- Texture can create mood and personality
- Provoke emotion



Texture is the illusion of a tactile quality. It is used to give a surface an expression.



In real life the raised surface of the buttons of a remote control are depressed to perform an action.



With new web RIA technologies this is emulated to give a flat surface a tactile quality.



A texture can be used to provoke an emotion.



Texture is used in printmaking and palette knife work in painting to create interesting surfaces.



Texture is used in collage art and installation art to create new meanings.

Space

Space is the distance or area between or around things.

Space separates or unifies, highlights, and gives the eye a visual rest.



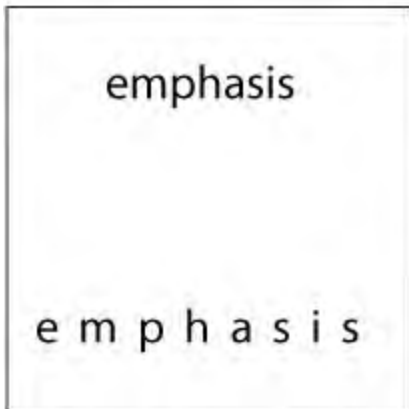
Space around bodies of text can make a page look lighter and reader friendly.



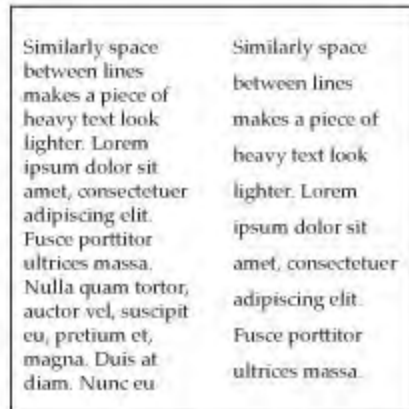
Here space has been used to create emphasis and structure and segment information. Grouping information using space reduces visual clutter too.



Here space has been used as a means of emphasising the subject of the photograph.



Space between letters can be used to create emphasis because the word is read more slowly.



Space can be used to make heavy text look lighter.



Here space has been used as an integral element in the layout of the page.

Size

Size is how large or small something is.

Size is very important in making a layout functional, attractive, and organized.

It shows what is most important, attracts attention, and helps to fit the layout together.



Size is important to create emphasis and heirarchy.



Here size has been used to indicate which feature is more important than the other. The different sets of sizes also organize information on the page into categories.



In the first slide of this presentation i had to use a lot of white and black to balance the mindtree logo. The red has a smaller size but a very heavy visual weight in this picture.

Type

Typography is one of the most important tools for a graphic designer.

Typography can take you back to a different time, set a mood, set a tone of voice, organize pages, create unity between objects etc.



Typography is used to make text legible and clear. Certain typeface are more readable than others. Choice of font, line spacing, line length are some functions to keep in mind when setting large amounts of text.



Stylized typography is used for creating distinctive logos. In this case the type has been inspired by roots of trees and work well with the image of the bird.



Type is used to evoke an era and an emotion.



Type is used to talk to different people differently.



Here type has been used to make organize a large amount of information.



Type is one of the primary elements in corporate identity.

Color

Color in layouts can convey moods, create images, attract attention, and identify objects.

When selecting colors for a publication or a web page, think about what you want the color to do and what is appropriate for your purpose.

The Psychology of Color	
Color	Associations
Reds	Energy, Passion, Power, Excitement
Oranges	Happy, Confident, Creative, Adventurous
Yellows	Wisdom, Playful, Satisfying, Optimistic
Greens	Health, Regeneration, Contentment, Harmony
Blues	Honesty, Integrity, Trustworthiness
Purples	Royal, Mystic, Beauty, Inspiration
Browns	Business, Positivity
Blacks	Finality, Transitional Color

Colour has the ability to immediately conjure up emotion



Colour is used to highlight important elements such as headlines and subheads.



Provoke emotion.



Colour is one of the most important elements in creating a corporate identity.



Colour can be used to represent ideology.



Knowledge of colour compliments and harmonies are used to create composition.

Image

Image is an essential part of graphic design.

Images can be of basically three kinds; Photographs, Illustration and paintings.

Images can be interpreted in many ways and cultural differences should be kept in mind when 'reading' an image.



Photographs can be of various kinds, the ones above are of the genre of fashion photography.



Photo journalism, also known as documentary photography.



Fine art photography which treats it purely as an art form.



Product photography



Illustration is a way of abstracting ideas and representing them. Technical drawing is often used in user manuals



And of course painting

Miscellaneous examples of usage of graphic design



Graphic design is the coming together of type and image to communicate something. It is essential for advertising.



Poster design



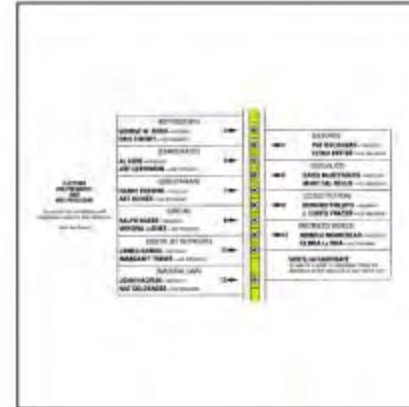
Signage and icons



Expressing oneself



Packaging



And Yes, Graphic Design can change the world.

COMPOSITION : The use of the PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

While using the tools we spoke about a designer that keeps in mind some principles of design that aid him in composing his work.

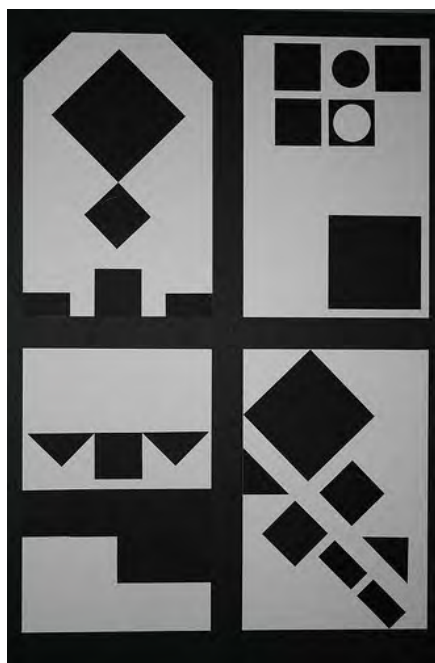
These **principles** are:

- Balance
- Rhythm
- Emphasis
- Unity

These principles of design help you to combine the various design elements into a **composition**.

Balance

Balance refers to the **distribution of visual weight in art**.
Visual weight may not be a 50-50 distribution on both sides of the page.



All the quadrants in the picture at left are balanced. Clockwise from left, they are **Symmetrically, Asymmetrically, Horizontally and Diagonally** balanced.

Each element on a layout has visual weight that is determined by its size, darkness or lightness, and thickness of lines.



All the images above are balanced.

Let us discuss how.

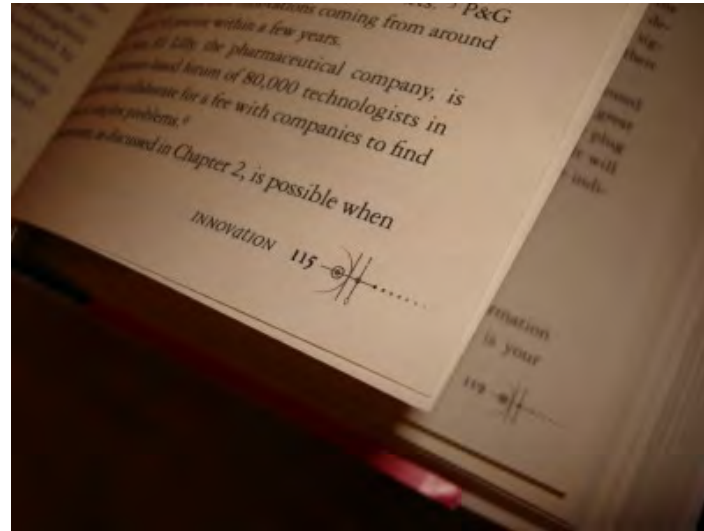
Rhythm

Rhythm is a pattern created by repeating elements on a page in an expected manner.

Repetition (repeating similar elements in a consistent manner) and variation (a change in the form, size, or position of the elements) are the keys to visual rhythm.

The screenshot shows the Digg homepage with a navigation bar at the top. The main content area is titled 'News & Videos' and features a list of news items. Two red arrows point to specific elements: one points to the 'Popular' tab in the navigation bar, and the other points to a news item titled 'Sex offender laws do more harm than good: report'. A sidebar on the right is titled 'Top 10 in All Topics' and lists various trending items.

The screenshot shows the 'Information Design Patterns' website. The main heading is 'INFORMATION DESIGN PATTERNS'. Below it is a 'PATTERN SEARCH' section with a grid of search results. The results are organized into categories like 'VISUAL PRINCIPLES', 'USER GOALS', 'GRAPHIC CLASS', and 'NUMBER OF DIMENSIONS'. A 'PREVIEW' window on the right shows a small diagram of a 'RING CHART'. The page also includes a search bar and navigation tabs like 'HOME', 'PATTERN SEARCH', 'FACT SHEET', etc.



Emphasis

Every page needs a focal point.

Emphasis is also known as dominance in graphic design. It is the first thing the eye sees.

Emphasis is used to create a hierarchy of what should be most important on a page.

ARTICLES • TOPICS • ABOUT • CONTACT • CONTRIBUTE • FEED

SEPTEMBER 11, 2007

LIST APART
FOR PEOPLE WHO MAKE WEBSITES

245

AN EVENT APART
coming to a city near you

T-SHIRTS
help your shame

A BOOK APART
coming soon

Search ALA
include discussions

Topics

- Home
- Content
- Design
- Progress
- User Stories

30 awesome HTML email templates

30 free email templates like this great one at Outlook 2007

JOE WOOD
Community @ Working
20 & counting
Community @ Working
See also on the
Blog

HOSTED BY
TEXTDRIVE
FOR INFO BY
happy cog

Get Out from Behind the Curtain
By SARAH S. NELSON

Client input: positive process or creative poison? Many designers would probably say the latter. But it doesn't go that way. Adaptive Path's Sarah Nelson shows how to create collaborative work sessions that take the clients' needs in hand while leaving creative control in yours.

Put Your Content in my Pocket, Part II
By CRAIG HOCKENBERRY

Screen size matters. And now that Apple is embedding mobile Safari in more iShods than the iPhone alone, it matters even more. Concluding his semi-regular two-part series, Craig Hockenberry covers the gnan and dirty details of designing and coding with the iPhone (and its brethren) in mind.

A List Apart explores the design, development, and marketing of web content, with a special focus on work standards and best practices. Explore our [archive](#) or [find out more about us](#).

FROM BUSES TO FROM: FIDING TO FORTYENT

ISSN: 1534-0295 Copyright © 1996-2007 A List Apart Magazine and the authors.

Cosmopolitan.com - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.cosmopolitan.com

Search

COSMOPOLITAN

HOME SEX & LOVE STYLE & BEAUTY HIT GUYS CELEB STYLE YOU, YOU, YOU FUN & GAMES COSMOLIKES

DAILY COSMO

DO GUYS THINK YOU HAVE GIRLFRIEND POTENTIAL?

This quiz will reveal if you're sabotaging yourself!

Quiz: Do Guys Think You're Interesting?

How are you perceived? Are you a real catch? Find out if you give guys the hook... or the slip.

Drama of the Day

Ever had a crush on a co-worker? One girl wants to know how to show up.

Cosmo Games

Play one of Cosmo's exclusive, free online games like "Big Time," "Hug and Kiss," "Bingo," and more!

Enter to Win a \$250,000 Sizzling Millionaire!

NEW STUFF

THE SEXIEST 2008 OLYMPIANS

Take the 2008 Olympics head-to-head, we set out to uncover the hottest American male athletes. Not only does each guy have the sexiest body, but some stars on this list also look damn good while competing. They give us all good reason to cheer!

PANTENE

get healthy volume

with Pantene

Microsoft PowerToys | Digglet design in L... | Cosmopolitan.com

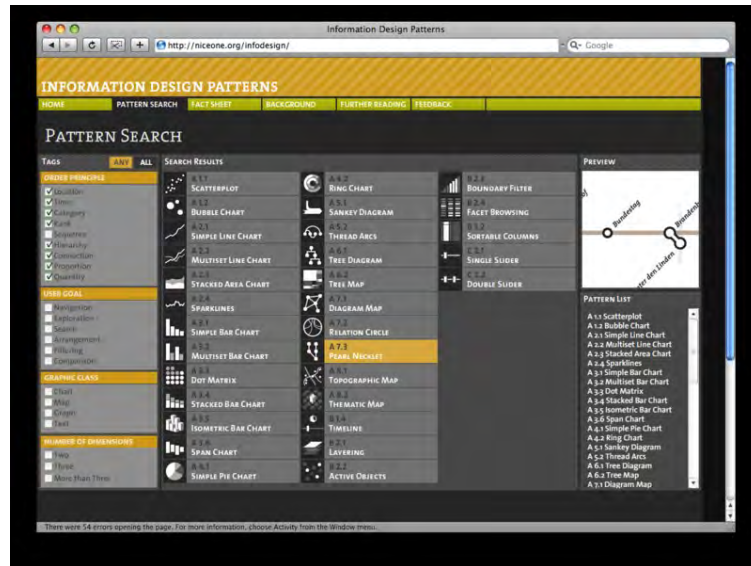


Unity

Unity helps all the elements look like they belong together.

Readers need visual cues to let them know the piece is one unit.

One should be consistent with fonts, sizes, styles, headers, footers etc.



GESTALT THEORIES

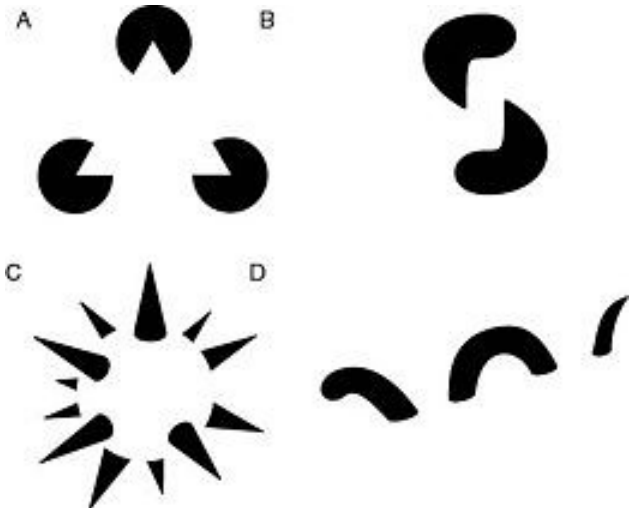
The Gestalt or 'whole form' theory sought to define the principles of perception.

These are innate mental laws that determine how we see images.

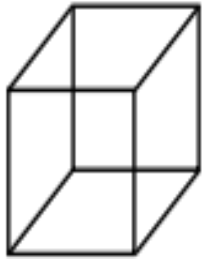
- Emergence
- Reification
- Multi-stability
- Invariance
- Closure
- Similarity
- Proximity
- Symmetry
- Continuity



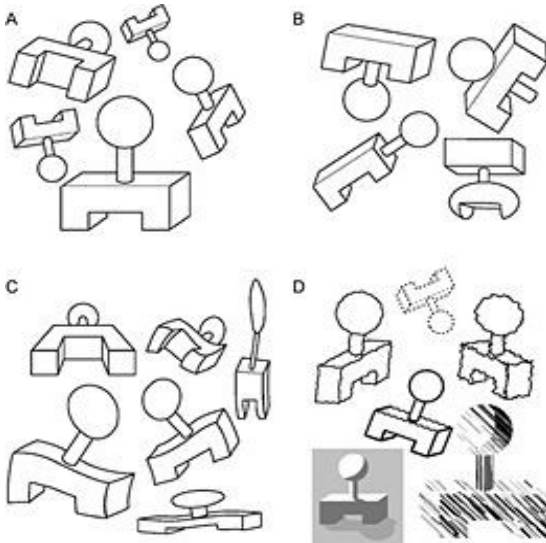
Emergence: The dog emerges from the other spots as a whole and not as individual parts.



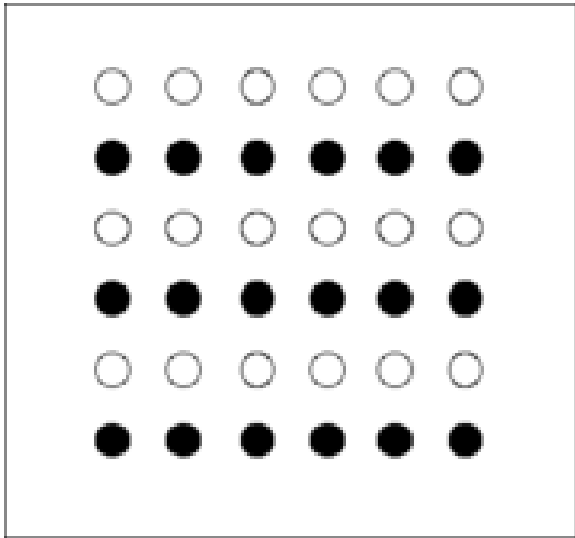
Reification: This is the 'constructive' aspect of perception, i.e. we draw shapes in our mind even though there is nothing actually drawn.



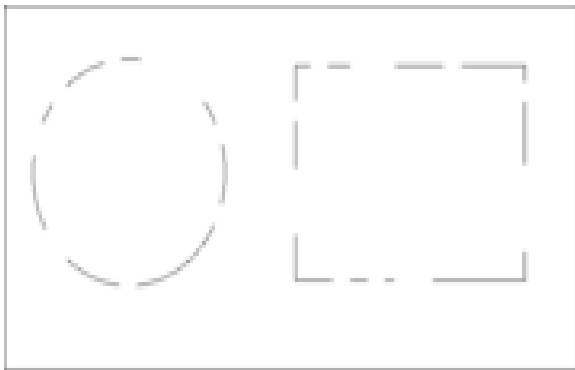
Multi-stability: The tendency for us to see a static image pop back and forth, or for us to see two images in one alternately.



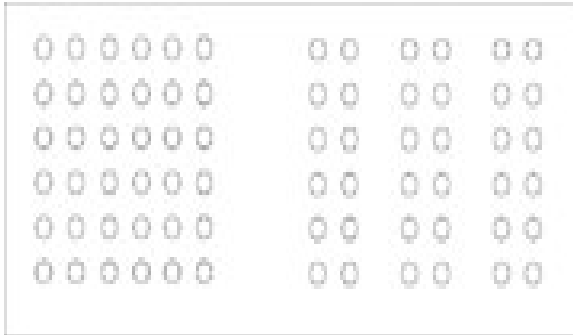
Invariance: We recognize simple geometrical objects irrespective of rotation, scale or translation.



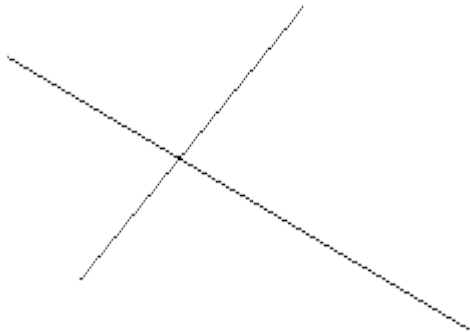
Similarity: The mind groups similar elements into collective entities.



Closure: We have a tendency to complete a regular figure.



Proximity: The mind groups elements into collective entities depending on their proximity.

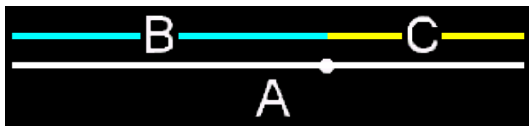


Continuity: We will see the lines crossing each other rather than two angles.

GOLDEN SECTION

The Golden Section is also known as the Golden Mean and the Divine Proportion. It is also known as the law of nature.

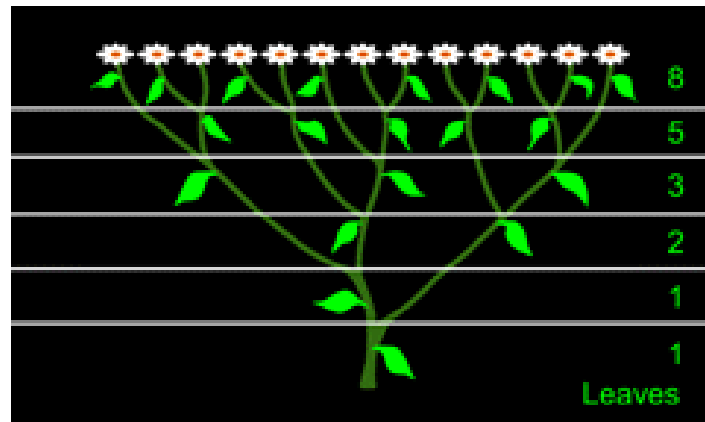
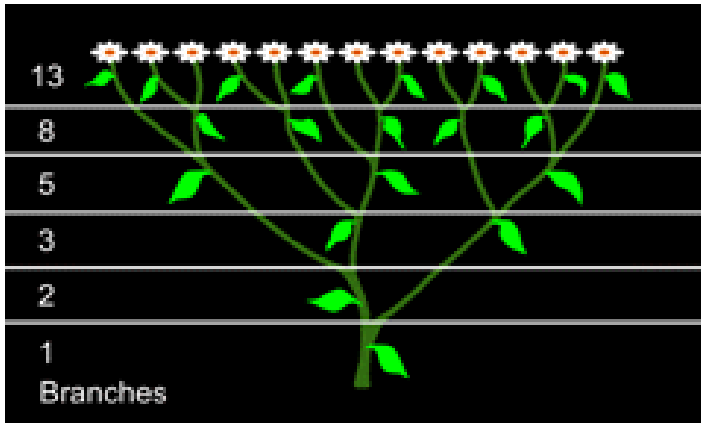
It is the ratio or proportion defined by the number Phi (1.618)



In the picture above A is 1.618 times B and B is 1.618 times C

The **Fibonacci series** of numbers are based on this ratio.

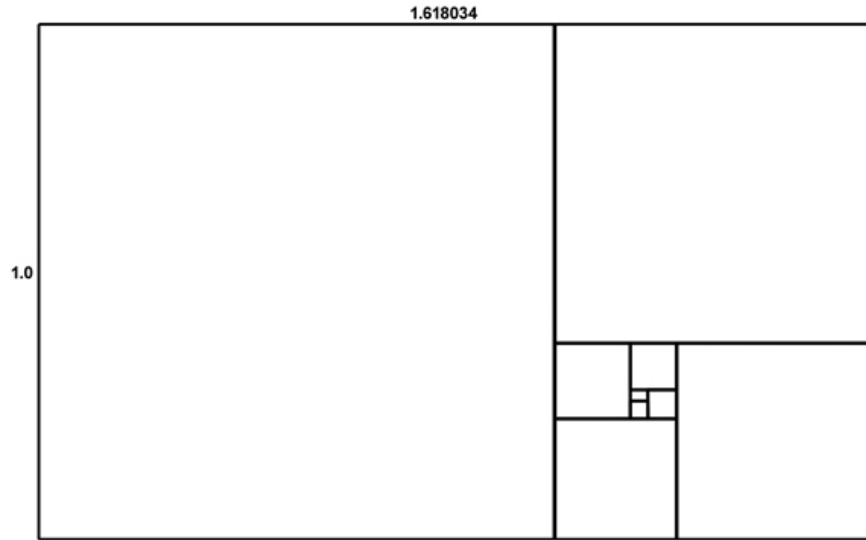
The illustration below shows how the Fibonacci series works in nature.



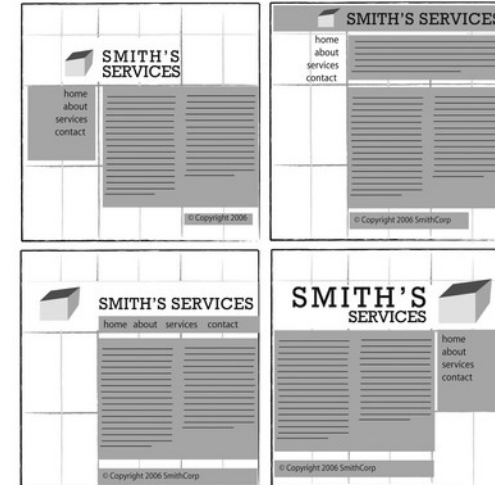
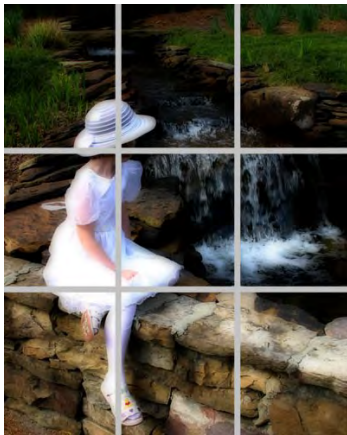
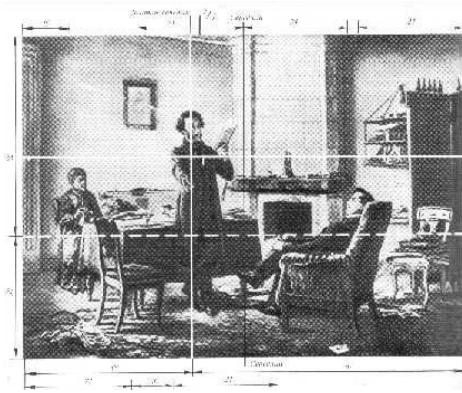
What does this mean in art and design?

The **rule of thirds** is derived from the golden section.

A golden rectangle is a rectangle whose sides have the ratio of 1:.62. Below, the entire figure is a Golden Rectangle. By dividing the large rectangle at the .618 position, we get a square and another Golden rectangle. And so on and so forth.

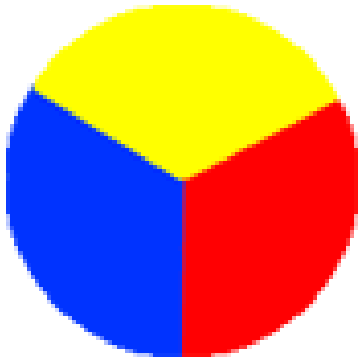


The rule of thirds in composition



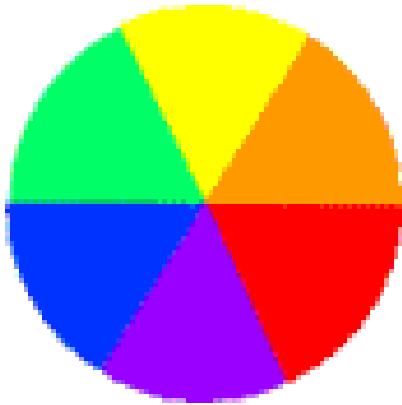
COLOUR THEORY

In traditional color theory, these are the 3 pigment colors that can not be mixed or formed by any combination of other colors.



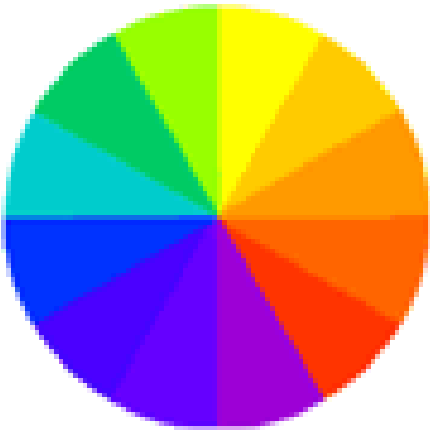
Red, Yellow and Blue are called **Primary Colors**.
All other colors are derived from these 3 hues.

Secondary Colors are colors formed by mixing the primary colors.



Green, Purple and Orange are formed by the mixing of the primary colors.

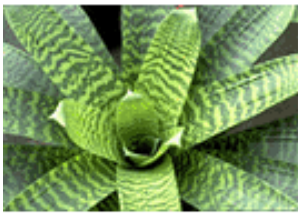
Tertiary Colors are colors formed by a primary and a secondary color .



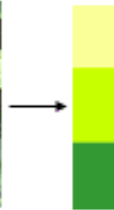
That's why the hue is a two word name, such as **blue-green**, **red-violet**, and **yellow-orange**.

Why do we need to know this?

Knowledge of Color harmonies and complimentary colors aid us in composition.



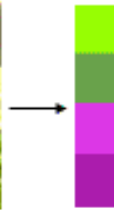
©Jill Morton - Color Matters



Harmonious Colors are colors that sit next to each other on the color wheel.



©Jill Morton - Color Matters

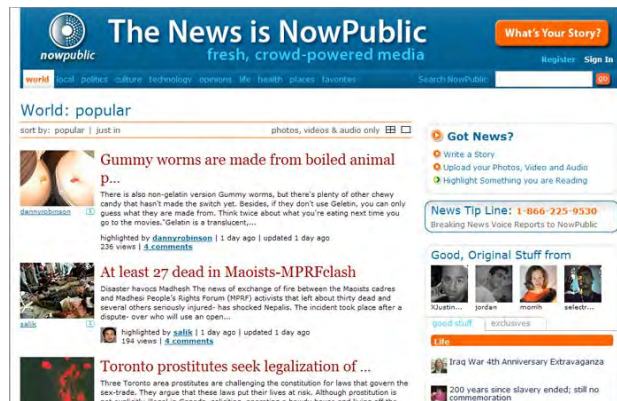


Complimentary Colors are colors opposite each other on the color wheel.

Use of color harmonies



Use of complimentary colors



Color against different colors

One color may look different against different colors.



Red appears more brilliant against a black background and somewhat duller against the white background. In contrast with orange, the red appears lifeless; in contrast with blue-green, it exhibits brilliance. Notice that the red square appears larger on black than on other background colors.



Here the smaller rectangle on the left appears to have a redder tint

Color Symbolism

The communicative properties of a color can be defined by two categories:

Natural associations and Psychological (or cultural) associations.



The color green can stand for both nature and Islam.

Color and corporate ID

The psychological aspect of color is the main rationale behind its use in corporate ID.

The other reason is that color is the first thing we perceive in any graphic element.

The Psychology of Color	
Color	Associations
Reds	Energy, Passion, Power, Excitement
Oranges	Happy, Confident, Creative, Adventurous
Yellows	Wisdom, Playful, Satisfying, Optimistic
Greens	Health, Regeneration, Contentment, Harmony
Blues	Honesty, Integrity, Trustworthiness
Violets	Regal, Mystic, Beauty, Inspiration
Browns	Easiness, Fecundity
Blacks	Finality, Transitional Color

