Graphic Design

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What?

Why?

How?

Graphic Design

What is graphic design?

Why does it matter?

How? Design Principles

"Most people make the mistake of thinking design is what it looks like. People think it's this veneer – that the designers are handed this box and told, 'Make it look good!' That's not what we think design is. It's not just what it looks like and feels like. Design is how it works."

Steve Jobs

Good design facilitates function

- Ramp and stairs co-existing in Robson square in Vancouver. ("stramp") In practice the ramp is too steep and has been criticized for it, but the idea itself is a beautiful combination of function, aesthetics, and inclusivity.

Good design facilitates function

Bad design gets in the way

Bad design gets in the way

Bad design gets in the way

- Frank Gehry's Stata center is an example of form over function; MIT even sued him for it!
- The iconic Juicy Salif by Philippe Strack is incredibly famous, but as many have discovered, it is a very poor juicer. Philippe Starck himself said "It's not meant to squeeze lemons, it is meant to start conversations"

Design != Art

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Design is not art.

Design needs to serve a purpose, whereas art is about expression.

Designs have to solve problems, while art provokes thought and emotions.

Art is perceptual, while a design is rational.

Design that prioritizes aesthetics over functionality is poor design, but it could be great art!

Graphic Design can enhance
or hinder communication

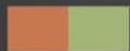**If you quickly glance at these bottles, what do you think these products are?**

This is another example where graphic design hinders instead of enhances communication because the typography is fighting against the message.

Design Principles

Design principles are "rules of thumb";

heuristics that help us make design decisions

CONTRAST
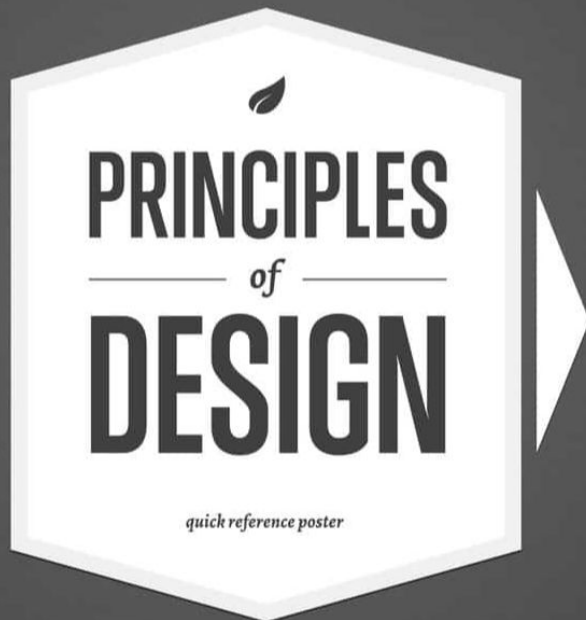
COLOR

TONE/VALUE

SIZE/SHAPE

DIRECTION

Unique elements in a design should stand apart from one another. One way to do this is to use contrast. Good contrast in a design – which can be achieved using elements like color, tone, size, and more – allows the viewer's eye to flow naturally.

To the left, you can see 4 ways to create contrast in your design.

REPETITION

Repetition breeds cohesiveness in a design. Once a design pattern has been established – for example, a dotted border or a specific typographic styling – repeat this pattern to establish consistency.

The short version?

Establish a style for each element in a design and use it on similar elements.

PRINCIPLES
of
DESIGN

quick reference poster

ALIGNMENT

Proper alignment in a design means that every element in it is visually connected to another element. Alignment allows for cohesiveness; nothing feels out of place or disconnected when alignment has been handled well.

PROXIMITY

Proximity allows for visual unity in a design. If two elements are related to each other, they should be placed in close proximity to one another. Doing so minimizes visual clutter, emphasizes organization, and increases viewer comprehension.

Imagine how ridiculous it would be if the proximity icons on this graphic were located on the other side of this document.
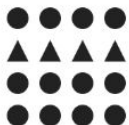
Gestalt Principles

Good Figure
Objects grouped together tend to be perceived as a single figure. Tendency to simplify.

Proximity
Objects tend to be grouped together if they are close to each other.

Similarity
Objects tend to be grouped together if they are similar.

Continuation
When there is an intersection between two or more objects, people tend to perceive each object as a single uninterrupted object.

Closure
Visual connection or continuity between sets of elements which do not actually touch each other in a composition.

Symmetry
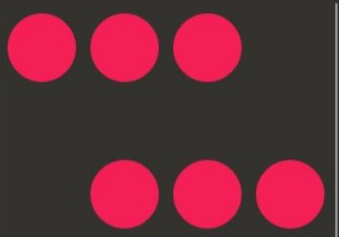The object tend to be perceived as symmetrical shapes that form around their center.
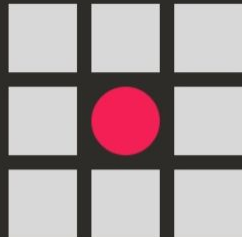
ALIGNMENT

CONTRAST
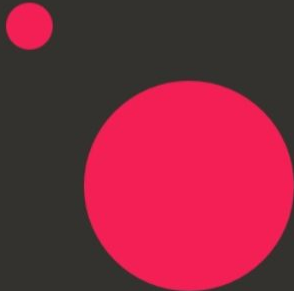
REPETITION

BALANCE

PROXIMITY

PROPORTION

HIEARCHY

MOVEMENT

Balance

Balance is the distribution of the visual weight of objects, colors, texture, and space. If the design was a scale, these elements should be balanced to make a design feel stable. In symmetrical balance, the elements used on one side of the design are similar to those on the other side; in asymmetrical balance, the sides are different but still look balanced. In radial balance, the elements are arranged around a central point and may be similar.

Emphasis

Emphasis is the part of the design that catches the viewer's attention. Usually the artist will make one area stand out by contrasting it with other areas. The area could be different in size, color, texture, shape, etc.

Movement

Movement is the path the viewer's eye takes through the work of art, often to focal areas. Such movement can be directed along lines, edges, shape, and color within the work of art.

Pattern

Pattern is the repeating of an object or symbol all over the work of art.
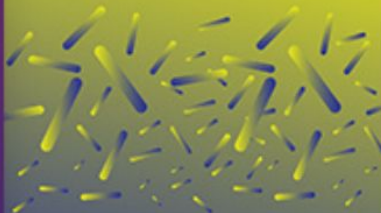
Proportion

Proportion is the feeling of unity created when all parts (sizes, amounts, or number) relate well with each other. When drawing the human figure, proportion can refer to the size of the head compared to the rest of the body.

Rhythm

Rhythm is created when one or more elements of design are used repeatedly to create a feeling of organized movement. Rhythm creates a mood like music or dancing. To keep rhythm exciting and active, variety is essential.

Variety

Variety is the use of several elements of design to hold the viewer's attention and to guide the viewer's eye through and around the work of art.

Unity

Unity is the feeling of harmony between all parts of the work of art, which creates a sense of completeness.

Lots of overlap

- Emphasis, Proportion, Scale are allways to apply Contrast
- Repetition creates Unity and Harmony
- Similarity is basically Repetition
- Proximity is a way to create Grouping
- Symmetry is a way to create Balance
- Gestalt is not a principle, but a group of principles
- Color is not a design principle, but a design element
- …and so on

We are going to focus on the following:

- Contrast
- Repetition
- Alignment
- Proximity
- Simplicity