

Principles of Design

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What are the principles of Design? The principles apply to the overall layout, look and feel of your design. They are simple principles that have been in design for many years. Such principles include: balance, proximity/unity, alignment, repetition/consistency, contrast, and white space. If they are used correctly you will have a successful design.

- Balance is about the arrangement of elements on a page. Balance terms use are symmetrical (similar on both sides of the page) or asymmetrical (different on both sides). Balance plays a large role of the weight of a page. Meaning if it's heavy on the bottom or on the top or right or left. There are many techniques of balance such as using letters to determine the layout. "I" design symmetrical design reads from top to bottom, "Z" design reads from top left to bottom right. The reader normally reads from top left to bottom right. So most important elements will be situated on the top left.

- Proximity/Unity is all about the relationship of parts to the design. It's about the placement of the item and how unified it ties into the design. It's the spatial distance between your elements.

- Alignment is about how you would align your elements on a page. On your layout you could use a 3 column page to help you with alignment or a center line to keep the balance. Similar to a parking lot, using painted lines to align the cars. Example: photos in a layout are evenly aligned, but some with a variation of tilt.

- Repetition/Consistency is the use of elements that repeat to formulate consistency. It's similar to using a certain pattern throughout a design or a color theme. This is very important when designing advertising packages. Consistency is KING. People like repetition and could easily relate to it. Example: creating a corporate logo and using it on all your pieces.

- Contrast is the similarities or differences of elements on a page. If your page has too much contrast that means elements may be too dark and too light or too large and too small. If a page has even contrast then elements are proportionate and colors aren't too overpowering.

- White Space is basically known as breathing room for your eyes to rest. Heard of the saying "less is more." Well white space breaks the clutter of a design. White space not necessarily need to be white, it's just larger areas taken up by a certain colors.

Utilizing these principles will help you organize your design's layout and in-turn making it much easier for the reader to follow.