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Principles of design examples pdf

I'm not robot!

There's much debate over exactly how many principles of design exist. Some designers say 7, others 12, and still others somewhere in between. But when it comes to design principles, numbers aren't the important thing. Principles of design give designers a set of guidelines for how to design visually appealing compositions that create wonderful user experiences. By following basic principles of design like hierarchy, balance, unity, and variety, you can create digital products and graphic designs that people love to use. The 11 principles of design every graphic designer should be familiar with: HierarchyBalanceAlignmentEmphasisProportionMovementNegative SpaceContrastRepetitionVarietyUnity Art by Anton Kakhidze Visual hierarchy is a vital part of good design. If everything on your page looks like it has the same importance, then nothing appears important. You need to use visual cues to tell people what to pay attention to first, second, third, etc. Create visual hierarchy through things like scale (the relative size of elements) and color. Typographic hierarchy can be created by using different typefaces, sizes, and font weights. The point is to make sure the most important element on the page stands out among the rest. Art by Outcrowd Balance within a composition can be achieved in a couple of different ways. Symmetrical balance is the most straightforward. It's achieved when elements on either side of a central vertical axis are basically the same. For example, two text blocks on either side of the page would create symmetrical balance, even if the content of those blocks wasn't identical. Asymmetrical balance is achieved when the elements on either side of a central vertical axis aren't the same. For example, you might have a large image on one side balanced out by prominent text on the other. It can also be achieved when the vertical axis that divides two elements isn't placed directly in the center of the page. In that case, the narrower element should have a "heavier" visual weight than the wider one to achieve a balanced look. Whichever type of balance technique you use, the result should feel right. It should give the viewer a sense of harmony and not make them feel uneasy. Art by Cedrick Lachot Alignment refers to how text or graphic elements are lined up on a page. This can refer to their alignment in relation to the entire composition (left, center, or right-aligned) as well as their alignment to one another. When elements aren't aligned properly, especially in relation to one another, it adds a sense of chaos to the composition. It looks haphazard and messy. When it comes to this principle of design, be sure to align elements properly in relation to one another, and be consistent with the alignment of various elements, such as always centering headlines. Art by Vladimir Gruev Emphasis is the part of a design that catches the eye of the user—a focal point, in other words. Ideally, this should be the most important part of the design, whether that's the headline, an image, or a CTA. But that doesn't always happen. Inexperienced designers may inadvertently emphasize the wrong parts of the page, creating confusion on the part of the user. Be sure to emphasize the parts you want your users to look at first. You can do this through things like scale, white space, color, shadow, pattern, or other techniques. Art by Outcrowd Proportion, also referred to as scale, is the relative size of objects within a design. Elements that are larger in relation to others will stand out more and appear to have more importance to users. Smaller elements appear less important. Use proportion to create visual interest by drawing the viewer's eye to particular visual elements within your design. Just keep in mind that too much of a difference in the scale of items can make the smallest items get lost entirely, or make the largest ones appear comically large. Art by Stefano Peschiera Movement refers to the way a user's eyes move across your composition. Dynamic designs encourage lots of eye movement, while static ones encourage less. The best designers can, to an extent, control which elements users focus on by placing them along the path of the most natural eye movement patterns. It's important to familiarize yourself with the most common eye movement patterns, F- and Z-patterns, and the layer cake pattern. F- and Z-patterns are more common on image-heavy pages, while the layer cake pattern is facilitated by lots of text with headings and subheadings. Art by Jason Kirtley Negative space in a design, also called white space, is space that has no design elements (other than possibly a background color or subtle pattern or texture). As a design principle, negative space is essential because it gives the elements in your composition room to breathe. Without white space, pages look cluttered and are hard to navigate. Be sure to leave some space around elements on your pages, especially the most important ones. This white space makes them stand out more and facilitates a better user experience. Get inspired: 3 ways to use negative space in logo design Art by Imran Ashraf Contrast can be achieved through color, shape, size, or similar properties of elements, and refers to the differences between them. Color contrast is often the first thing people think of, but differences in the sizes of elements, their shape, or some other property also create contrast. Contrast serves two very important functions. First, it allows you to make elements stand out from one another. A complete lack of contrast would result in a design that's simply a single background color with no other visible elements — not exactly a functional design. A design where you can see different elements automatically has some level of contrast. The second important function of contrast is accessibility. Sufficient contrast between elements, especially text and its background, is vital for creating an accessible design. People with vision impairments can have a difficult time reading text on a screen that is too small or does not have sufficient color contrast. There are accessibility tools available for checking that your designs have sufficient color contrast for accessibility purposes. Art by Giorgi Grdzelishvili Repetition refers to using the same or similar elements throughout your design, either in regular or irregular patterns. It's used to reinforce certain elements while also providing a sense of unity and continuity to your design. Repetition can be used to create rhythm, which helps move users through your designs. Employ repetition in simple ways—such as using the same icons throughout, in background patterns, or through things like styling all of your photos in the same way. Experiment with repetition, particular irregular repetition, to create movement, but beware that too much regular repetition can have the opposite effect and make your design feel static. Art by AGILITY Variety is the spice of life, right? The same goes for design. While repetition adds a sense of harmony to your design, variety keeps it interesting and prevents users from getting bored. Create variety by adding unique or unexpected elements to your designs. Variety can be used to draw the user's attention to specific elements or areas of the design, and make them stand out. Art by Lola Kekenadze Unity gives a design and sense of harmony, both visually and conceptually. Unity is important because it makes users feel at ease while navigating your design. Everything appears to be in its proper place and there are no jarring elements that stand out in a negative way. Unity can be created in a number of ways. The primary methods are through: Proximity — Elements close to one another appear to be a unified groupAlignment — Elements aligned with one another appear to be relatedRepetition — Elements that are repeated often create a sense of unity, especially if that repetition is done in a regular pattern. Art by AR Shakir Learning and following established design principles in graphic design allows you to create more cohesive designs that delight users and offer exceptional user experiences. Disregarding these principles of design should be done with caution, and only after you have a thorough understanding of them and the purposes they serve. If we want to create beautiful designs, we need to know what the principles of design are. Art and graphic design share the same design principles, and learning how to use them can help us improve our work. In this article, we present you with a list of design principles, giving you a better understanding of how they work and why they matter. And we also provide you with plenty of beautiful design examples, to illustrate the main points. The 10 Principles of Design Article Overview: 1. Alignment in Graphic Design The first principle of design that we are going to discuss is alignment. # Lining things up, or not? Alignment refers to how different parts of a design are lined up in relation to each other. But don't forget that you can deliberately break the alignment to grab attention! # Helps to organize and avoids clutter Without alignment, the elements on your design will look disorganized, confusing, and cluttered. For example, look at the poster below. The designer wanted to create some movement, but suddenly almost nothing is aligned. As a result, the viewer gets dizzy from the dancing lines. Design by Kirsten Erwin # Improves scanability Alignment is very important, as it guides the eye and improves the scanability of content. Look at the example below – the text is divided into numerous aligned columns, which organize the content and everything looks neat: Design by Luiza Medeiros # Creates a connection between parts and a sense of unity Not in the last place, alignment in design creates a connection between the different parts of your design. Even though we can't read the text in the following example, the alignment helps us to navigate. There is no doubt which picture belongs to which block of text. # How it is achieved – grid, center, and edge alignment People often use a grid to organize the parts of their design around it. Often, design software offers premade grid setups, so you are ready to start designing. Of course, the grid is not visible in the final result, but the alignment created is very noticeable: Design by Fahd Tohry Alignment can be centered and edge. Usually, the designer will pick one of them to organize the elements. See the example below: Now that we've discussed the main points of the alignment principle, here are some more inspirational designs: 2. Hierarchy in Graphic Design The next principle of design is the hierarchy. Basically, hierarchy is the arrangement of different parts of the design, by size and color, to imply importance. Emphasis is more or less the same – which design elements we choose to stand out, and which we "keep down". Hierarchy is an important principle in art and design because it directs the viewer's attention and helps him focus. Here is how to apply hierarchy and emphasis: # Vary size to increase/decrease the visibility of images/text Enlarging an object's size is the best way to guide attention. The biggest text and pictures will immediately catch the viewer's eye, whereas the smallest shapes will be seen last. Hierarchy is easily applied by the use of titles, headings, subheadings, and body text. The first thing the reader should immediately see is your title. That's why it's significantly larger than other elements in your design. As you can see in the following example, the title (heading) is the largest and boldest, as well as the photo. Secondary to that is the body text. Highlighting the price also shows its importance in the design. # Use color and contrast to highlight important parts Imagine you have a block of text in black and a certain part is in red color. The red will draw the eye because it's a different color from the main text. Designers often use contrasts between different colors to attract attention and imply what's the most important part to look at. You can find inspiration for some great color combinations in the dedicated article. You will be armed with some powerful color combinations to create contrast in your design. Here are some more beautiful designs to show you the hierarchy and emphasis principles put into practice: 3. Contrast in Graphic Design The next principle of design, contrast, is closely connected to hierarchy and emphasis. Contrast can be achieved by varying shapes, colors, scale, and layout. # Make certain parts pop Using contrast in your design work shows the viewer what is important in your design and what is secondary. Here a very simple example of the contrast between a white label with product info and a colorful background: Design by Round # Creating depth Contrast also creates depth in your design – elements with lower contrast "fade away" and parts with high contrast "pop" and move to the foreground. Design by Jevelin # Accessible design Sufficient contrast is also crucial for accessible designs. Accessible design means, that people with visual impairments can still read and properly see your content. Some people might find it hard to read the following body text, because of poor contrast between the text and background color: And here are our suggestions for how a good contrast looks like: Lavva by Gander 4. Scale and Proportion in Graphic Design Scale and proportion have to do with how different parts relate to each other – by size. # Creating separate sections by varying size Scale and proportion help you perceive information in separate sections and help with creating structure. Look at the following example and try to analyze how the scale principle was applied: # Scale and proportion play a big part in creating contrast Elements of different sizes help in creating contrast. Notice the different font-weight and sizes in the following example. Because it is primarily a text-based design, there is a need of creating a contrast between the different sections. And one of the ways this is achieved is by scale and proportion. Design by AlfianBrand Have a look at these beautifully designed pieces, all of them taking into account the scale design principle: 5. Proximity in Graphic Design The eye perceives elements placed close to each other as a group. Or, if they are visually connected somehow (fx. by color and shape), the eye again perceives them as a whole. That's the principle of proximity. # It helps to organize People use this principle of design to organize different parts of the design and to increase readability. Notice how the products below are organized – their name, price, and description are deliberately placed close to each other. This way, they are perceived as a group: # Creates focal points You can imagine that grouping and creating visual connections will also help you in creating focal points. You can arrange your elements so that certain part stands out by simply using the proximity principle: Design by Superherojs Here are some more examples of the proximity design principle in action: Flip by Alles Blau 6. Balance in Graphic Design Think of the balance principle as a scale. If you put too many things on one side, the scale won't be balanced. # Keep your scales even It's aesthetically pleasing for the eye to have parts of a design, equally placed from both sides of an invisible centerline. There are 2 ways to do that: # Symmetrical balance This is when the elements on both sides of the centerline are similar in size and volume (weight). Because it's the easiest to achieve, symmetrical balance can become boring. But here is a good example of a symmetrical balance: Maxim Shkret # Asymmetrical balance This kind of balance is bolder, can bring interest and surprise to a design. The equilibrium in asymmetrical balance is achieved by contrasting 1-2 big shapes to numerous smaller shapes. In the next example, you can see that there is one big photo, balanced by 2 smaller ones on the right: Let's see some more examples of balance in design: 7. Color and Pattern in Graphic Design The next two principles are color and pattern. # We are good at detecting patterns We often see patterns in nature – a pattern is simply a repeating element – color, shape, form, texture. A pattern is very pleasing to the eye and we are wired to look for patterns around us. In the following example, we can notice a pattern of little lines, but that's not the only pattern – we also notice a repetition in color. We also find a pattern in font thickness (weight), again helping us to perceive the different pieces as one coherent design: Design by arithmetic   # Pattern as a set standard A pattern can be a repeating object, but also can mean "a set standard". For example, we are used to looking for navigation menus – at the top of a web page. Set standards help us navigate quickly and users are happy to have them! Have a look at some more beautiful designs, using the color and pattern principles of design: 8. Space in Graphic Design One of the most important principles of design is space. Why? Because no one likes to be in a room, cramped with furniture, even if the furniture is exquisite itself. # Breathing room for your design The space principle deals exactly with that – giving room for the different elements to breathe: # Bond. James Bond. Space. White Space. Often when we say "space" in a design context, we actually mean white space – the blank space, not filled with elements. White space eases the eye and can be used to divide different sections of your information into blocks: # Offer information piece by piece, step by step If you don't use enough space, then you are going towards the other design principle – proximity. All the elements in proximity will be viewed as one and you might not want that. Most likely, you want nicely divided blocks of content. Literally, the white space is missing in this example: # Cleanliness Adding negative space to your designs also creates a sense of cleanliness, purity, and high quality. That's why this design principle is a crucial one. But it's also one of the easiest to apply and elevate your design/work. Here is how designers used space to enhance their work: 9. Movement in Graphic Design The next principle of design we are going to look at is movement. Movement is placing the parts of a design in such a way, that they guide the eye and create interest. # Movement – leading the eye with invisible lines This can be achieved by creating invisible lines with elements. White space creates a rhythm of the movement principle in action. Try to find the invisible lines and where they are pointing to. 10. Harmony and Unity in Graphic Design And the last design principle – harmony combines all the other principles into one. This time, we take a look at looking at the individual parts, but the design as a whole. Harmony is achieved with the following methods: 1. Perspective This method combines proximity, space, and movement – harmonious design requires a sense of distance between the elements. 2. Similarity, continuation, repetition This method is making sure that we have similar elements in our design, binding the design together. 3. Rhythm and repetition Simply put, rhythm in design is the use of recurring elements – it can be created with color, size, the position of elements. For example, your body text can be one color (black) and your subheadings – another color (teal). That way you create a rhythm in your design and help the viewer digest the information easier. To better illustrate these methods, all put into action, look at the following examples: Hey Jane by Kati Forner Applying Principles of Design into Practice The principles of design can be incredibly useful if considered at the beginning of a project. They can save a lot of hours later, trying to battle with your design and make it look good. Don't worry -it might take some time to start applying the design principles with confidence. Because it's not innate knowledge, be patient and enjoy the process! We hope this article inspired you and that it will serve as a starting point for further learning! Here are a few more articles you might enjoy:

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