

ELEMENTS OF ART & PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

Elements of Art:

1. COLOR

Color (hue) is one of the elements of art. Artists use color in many different ways. The colors we see are light waves absorbed or reflected by everything around us. In nature, a rainbow is white light that is broken apart by the moisture in the air.

People discovered that white light can be broken apart using tools like prisms or spectroscopes.



The colors of the visible light spectrum are red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet.

White light consists of all of the colors mixed together. The color of an object depends on how it absorbs and/or reflects light. If an object absorbs all of the light wavelengths, it will appear black. If it reflects all of them, it will appear white. If an object absorbs all wavelengths except red, for example, it will look red.

Color has three properties:

1. Hue – the name of a color, such as red, blue, or yellow.
2. Value – the lightness or darkness of a color.
3. Intensity – the brightness or dullness of a color.

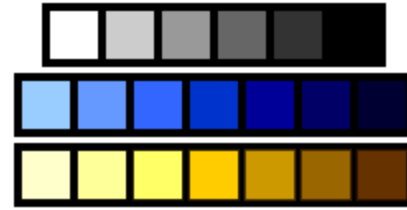
Colors are arranged in a circular format on a color wheel. Red, yellow, and blue are the primary colors. Violet, green and orange are the secondary colors.

Artists make use of different types of color schemes to create different effects.

- ✓ Complementary – colors opposite of one another on the color wheel
- ✓ Monochromatic – different values of a single color
- ✓ Analogous – colors that are side by side on a color wheel and share a hue
- ✓ Warm – red, yellow, orange
- ✓ Cool – blue, green, violet

2. VALUE

Value is the lightness or darkness of a color. You can get different values of a color by mixing its shades (adding black to a color) and tints (adding white to a color). A tone is created when gray is added to a color.



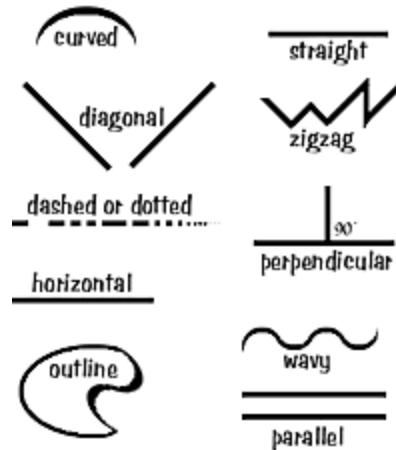
3. LINE

Line is one of the elements of art. You can find lines everywhere you look.

Line can vary in width, direction, and length.

There are many different kinds of lines. Here are some common lines:

- Horizontal lines – lines that run parallel to the ground, appear to be at rest.
- Vertical lines – lines that run up and down, seem to show dignity, formality, and strength.
- Diagonal lines – lines that signal action and excitement.
- Zigzag lines – lines that are made from combined diagonal lines, can create a feeling of confusion or suggest action.
- Curved lines – lines that express movement in a graceful, flowing way.

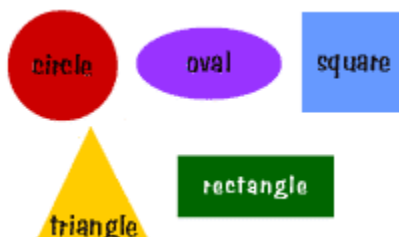


4. SHAPE

Shape is one of the elements of art. When lines meet, shapes are formed.

Shapes are flat and two-dimensional - height and width. Some shapes are geometric, such as squares, circles, triangles, rectangles, and ovals and using created using a ruler or drawing tool. Other shapes are organic or irregular and free-form.

These are geometric shapes.



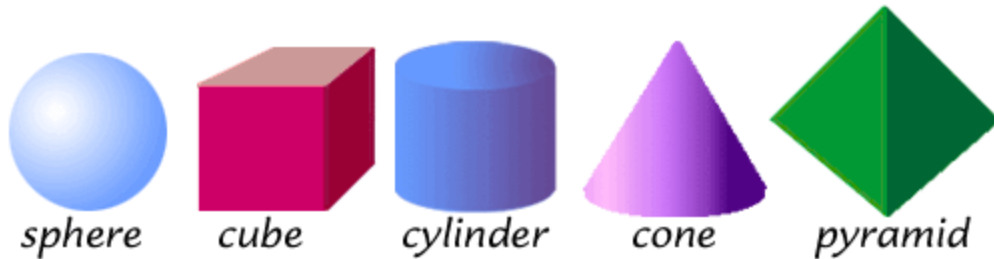
Organic shapes look like things from nature.



5. FORM

Form is one of the elements of art. Forms are three-dimensional—they have height, width and depth. Shapes are flat; forms are not.

Here are some common forms:

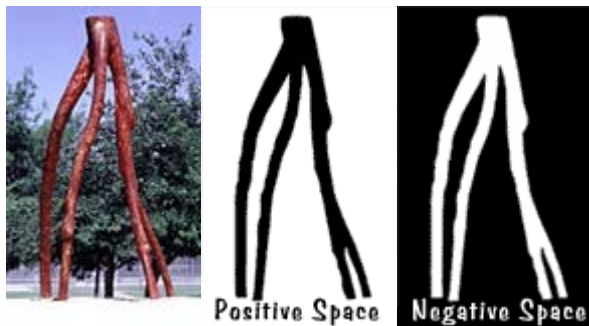


6. TEXTURE

Texture is one of the elements of art. Texture is the way something feels when you touch it – actual texture; examples, rug, clothes, wood, etc. Artists also create the illusion of texture in artworks such as paintings, drawings and prints – implied texture; created with elements such as pattern and line.

7. SPACE

Space is one of the elements of art. Space is an empty place or surface in or around a work of art. Space can be two-dimensional, three-dimensional, negative and/or positive.



You can easily see the positive and negative space in this sculpture.

Artists also create positive and negative space in two-dimensional artworks.

Positive space – the shapes or forms

Negative space – the empty spaces between the shapes or the background

Principles of Design:

1. BALANCE

Balance is one of the principles of art which describes how artists to create visual weight.

Artists think about how to make their works balanced by using elements such as line, shape, or color. There are several ways to balance an artwork:

Symmetrical (formal) balance means both sides of an imaginary line are the same.

Asymmetrical (informal) balance means each side of an imaginary line is different yet equal.

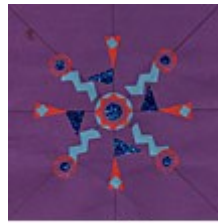
Radial balance means lines or shapes grow from a center point.



symmetrical
balance



asymmetrical
balance



radial
balance

2. CONTRAST

Contrast is one of the principles of art which creates excitement and interest in artworks. Two things that are very different have a lot of contrast. White and black have the greatest contrast. Complementary colors also have high contrast.

Artists use high contrast to make something show up. In *Wheatfields with Ravens*, Vincent van Gogh used high contrast colors to make the yellow wheat fields stand out against the dark blue sky.



Artists may choose low contrast for a softer look, as Claude Monet did in this painting of a bridge.



3. PATTERN

Pattern is one of the principles of art. Artists create pattern by repeating a line, shape or color over and over again.



Lines create patterns on the headdress of the Golden Effigy of King Tutankhamun. In "Water Lilies," Claude Monet repeats the pattern of water lilies floating on the pond.

4. RHYTHM

Rhythm is one of the principles of art. Visual rhythm makes you think of the rhythms you hear in music or dance. Artists create visual rhythm by repeating art elements and creating patterns.

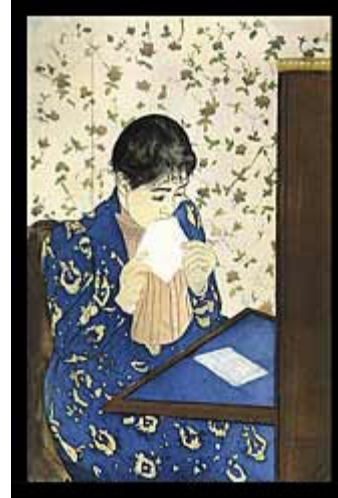


In Okazaki, Ando Hiroshige's bridge supports create a rhythm that leads your eyes through the landscape.

5. EMPHASIS

Emphasis is one of the principles of art. Artists use emphasis to make certain parts of their artwork stand out and grab your attention. The center of interest or focal point is the place the artist draws your eye to first.

In this painting, "The Letter," Mary Cassatt emphasized the envelope by painting it white against the dark patterns of the woman's dress. She also placed the envelope in the center of the painting to draw your eye to it.



6. UNITY

Unity is one of the principles of art. Unity is the feeling that everything in the work of art works together and looks like it fits.



Gustave Caillebotte used shape to create unity. Repetition of shape and color can make an artwork unified.

7. VARIETY

Variety is one of the principles of art. Variety occurs when an artist creates something that looks different from the rest of the artwork. An artist may use variety to make you look at a certain part or make the artwork more interesting.

Jasper Cropsey painted a large tree to create variety in his landscape, "In the Valley."

