

THE ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

ELEMENTS

- **POINT:** A point takes form as a dot, a visible mark that can focus, pierce, penetrate, or pucker.
- **LINE:** Lines can organize, direct, separate, be expressive, suggest an emotion or create a rhythm. Lines can join items or divide them.
- **PLANE:** A plane is created by connecting straight and or curved lines. A plane can take on the form of any shape.
- **VOLUME:** On a 2D application you can perceive 3D space or volume using color, transparency, layering, overlapping, and angles.
- **COLOR:** Often described as hue. There is an entire science dedicated to the study of the effects of color and the sociological implications of color. *(Attribute)*
- **SCALE:** Relationship between objects is often defined by their size. This is often called proportion. *(Attribute)*
- **SHAPE:** Anything that has a height and width has shape. There are simple shapes and complex shapes. *(Attribute)*
- **TEXTURE:** This defines a surface. Patterns and repetition can create textures. *(Attribute)*

PRINCIPLES

- **BALANCE:** The division of visual space can be described as symmetrical or asymmetrical.
- **EMPHASIS:** An element in a composition draws the focus of the viewer through use of the elements of design. There are often hierarchies within a composition.
- **RHYTHM/PATTERN:** Pattern, sequence, flow, movement. All of these are create a rhythm in a composition.
- **UNITY:** Relationships between elements form in the mind of the viewer.
- **CONTRAST:** Visual differences in elements using shape, scale, value, and/or color is described as contrast.
- **TRANSPARENCY:** Creates dense, layered imagery built from veils of color and texture. It can contribute to the meaning and visual intrigue of a work.
- **LAYERS:** Are simultaneous, overlapping components of an image of sequence.
- **HIERARCHY:** Is the order of importance within a piece. Hierarchy gives the user a clear path of how you want them to flow into the design.
- **FIGURE/GROUND (AND FRAMING):** Figure (form) and Ground (background) or positive/negative space can create visual energy to an image or mark.
- **GRID:** Is a network of lines that can encourage the designer to vary scale but have a well-structured piece.