

Design - the structure of Art

The Elements of Design are the basic components used to produce a work of art. They are the building blocks of art.

Line - Continuous mark made on some surface by a moving point which shows direction and defines shape. The tool and the surface on which you draw affect the line quality.

Shape - An enclosed space defined and determined by other art elements such as line, color, value and texture. Shape is 2 dimensional - if depth is added, you create form.

Organic - Natural shapes

Geometric - Man made shapes, regular shapes of math.

Positive shapes - key components in a drawing (where something is)

Negative shapes - empty space, space around objects.

Positive and negative shapes share an edge.

Form - An element of art that is 3 D - has length, width and depth and encloses volume. Cubes, spheres, pyramids and cylinders are examples.

Texture - Surface quality or "feel" of an object. It's smoothness, roughness, etc..

Actual texture – how something really feels

Visual texture - is creating a texture in a work of art that looks as if it "feels" a certain way.

Value - The lightness or darkness of a color. Also present in black and white.

Space - The distance or area between, around, above, below or within things (can be 2D or 3D) the positive space is the object; the negative space is the area around the object.

Color - Element of art with 3 properties: hue, value and intensity. Color is reflected light.

The Principles of Design give us different ways of using the elements in a work of art.

Balance - The way art elements are arranged to create a feeling of stability in a work.

Symmetrical - the sides are identical

Asymmetrical - equal weight but unidentical sides.

Radial - balanced in all directions as it comes from a central point

Emphasis - A way of combining elements to create one or more centers of interest in a work. Draw attention to a certain area.

Harmony/unity - Combining elements to accent their similarities and bind picture parts into a whole. Often achieved through repetition and simplicity, also color.

Contrast/Variety - makes use of many different hues, values, lines, textures and shapes to create interest and achieve intricate and complex relationships in a work of art.

Proportion - the size of one thing as it relates to the other things in the picture

Movement - Combining elements to produce the look of action or to cause the viewer's eye to sweep over the work in a certain manner.

Rhythm - Combining elements to produce the look and feel of movement. Organized repetition of visual movement.

Other Drawing Vocabulary:

Composition - The way elements are arranged in a drawing. Parts put together to make a whole.

Format - The edges of the paper's surface that one is drawing on. Format controls composition.

Center of interest - the area of the composition that receives the most emphasis.

Contour - the outline of an object - not the same as contour drawing.

Gesture drawing - a quickly sketched drawing that shows position or movement

Contour drawing - a slow and detailed drawing made without lifting the pencil and including all of the details as you go.

Freehand drawing - drawing using no mechanical tools.

Sketch - a beginning drawing using causal, free pencil strokes.

Overlap - to extend one object over another in a drawing

Perspective - showing distance in an artwork or seeing and drawing the correct position of an object.

Medium - the material used to produce an artwork

Tools - the objects used with a medium to produce artwork such as an eraser, ruler, paintbrush.

Shade - using a pencil to draw in shadows and highlights that are seen on an object. The same thing as modeling.

Realism - making things in a drawing look as lifelike as possible.

Still life - an arrangement of inanimate objects such as bottles, fruit, flowers, etc.

Background - The part of the composition that is behind the center of interest.

Middle ground - The part of the artwork where the center of interest is usually located

Foreground - The part of a composition that falls in front of the center of interest.

Highlight - a spot of brightness on an object usually caused by reflected light

Portrait - picture of a person

Landscape - A drawing or painting of an outdoor scene.

Foreshortening - The change in shape of an object that leans or turns away from the viewer.