

PRINCIPLES OF ART & DESIGN

The principles of art are the ways artists arrange the elements of art.

UNITY & VARIETY:

Unity refers to how the design elements or parts relate to the whole in a finished piece. When distracting elements are removed you attain more unity.

Unity also refers to the visual linking of various elements within the piece. Unity without variation can be uninteresting compared to unity with diversity.

Variety is created when elements are changed. Repeating a similar shape but changing the size can give variety and unity at the same time. Keeping the same size but changing the color can also give variety and unity at the same time. In a visual composition, there are many ways you can change something while simultaneously keeping it the same.

Harmony is a way to achieve unity by combining similar, related elements together for a visually satisfying effect.

RHYTHM & MOVEMENT:

There are two types of **rhythm**: 1) *Flow*-usually indicated by elements like lines or the elongation of forms. 2) *Beat*-the repetition of one or more elements within an artwork.

Movement refers to the devices used by the artist that lead our eyes through an artwork. The direction of lines, shapes or other elements can express a lot of movement- "dynamic" or very little movement- "static".

Gradation can add interest and movement. Gradation is a gradual transition or transformation of an element. For example, a gradation from dark to light values will cause the eye to move along a shape.

PROPORTION:

Refers to the size relationships within a composition (from part to part or parts to whole). The **Scale** is the size relationships based on a unit of measurement. It can feel monumental, life-size, miniature, normal, exaggerated or idealized.

BALANCE: The consideration of visual weight and importance, the stability/structure in the work of art.

- Symmetrical Balance: Both sides are similar in visual weight and mirrored/reflected.
- Asymmetrical Balance: Both sides are similar in visual weight but *not* mirrored.
- Radial Balance: elements are arranged around a center (ex- daisy, sunflower, etc)

EMPHASIS: The "Center of Interest" controlling dominance, influence and importance. The area that the eye keeps returning to in a work of art.

REPETITION & PATTERN:

Repetition refers to repeating a design element (color, tone, texture, line, shape, etc) throughout an artwork. An all-over repeated design creates a **pattern**. A **motif** is a 2D pattern. While giving unity, repetition without variation can become too predictable or the same. By adding variation to pattern, unity is maintained and the work can become more interesting. Even small repetitive details benefit from variation.

CONTRAST:

Contrast is the juxtaposition of opposing elements such as: opposite colors on the color wheel (red/green, blue/orange, etc.), contrast in tone or value (light/dark) or contrast in direction (horizontal/vertical). High Contrast is a dramatic difference in elements while low contrast is a subtle difference.

Consider the Elements of Art like the notes used in music. The principles are like the musical arrangements or combinations of the notes that make the finished piece of music.

Both Musical & Artistic Compositions consist of elements and principles that express and communicate ideas & feelings.

Consider the function and significance of how artists decide to use the elements & principles of art to convey meaning or content.