THE ABCs OF ART

THE ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

Compiled, organized, and added to by ❤️M.C.Gillis
Dedication

This is dedicated to all learners & teachers of art.

Introduction

The elements & principles of art, also known as the elements & principles of design, open our eyes to the beauty that is in us & all around us. The elements & principles of art are the building blocks of understanding & creating art that expresses and moves us. That is the reason I call them the ABCs of Art. Just as the letters of any alphabet are fundamental to understanding that language, the elements & principles of art are fundamental to understanding the language of art.
# The ABCs of Art

**The Elements & Principles of Design/Art**

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Elements of Art

Line

Shape & Form

- circle
- triangle
- square
- rectangle
- moon
- free form
- sphere
- pyramid
- cube
- oval
- semi-circle
- trapezoid
- heart
- leaf

Color

- Cool Colors
- Warm Colors
- Neutral
- Tints
- Shades

Texture

- Smooth
- Rough
- Hard
- Soft Bumpy
- Jogged
- Woven

Space

- Smaller in the distance
- Filled the whole paper
- Shows perspective
- Overlapping shapes

Value

- Range of light to dark
- Contrast = light against dark

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Contact artist, mo@expandingheart.com, to give feedback.
Line, shape and color
Are elements of art.
Texture, space and value
That’s where I start.

When I use what I know,
As an artist, I will grow.

Line, shape, and color,
Texture, space and value...
are the
Elements of Art.
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Line

Contour (outline)

Lines can be used to show
movement....

Lines can be used to show
mood....

More words to describe lines....

- Lazy
- Bold
- Light
- Broken
- Energetic
- Shy
- Dark
- Continuous
- Flexible
- Rigid
SHAPE AND FORM
(forma y forma)

GEOMETRIC (geometrica)
- Sphere (esfera)
- Pyramid (pyramide)
- Cube (cubo)
- Square (cuadrado)
- Rectangle (rectángulo)
- Oval (óvalo)
- Circle (círculo)
- Triangle (triángulo)
- Trapezoid (trapezoide)
- Diamond (diamante)
- Star (estrella)
- Pentagon (pentágono)
- Heart (corazón)
- Semi-circle (medio-círculo)
- Hexagon (hexágono)
- Octagon (octágono)

ORGANIC/FREE FORM/NATURAL
(orgánico) (forma libre) (natural)
- Cloud (nube)
- Leaf (hoja)

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Use as a worksheet. Color & fill in empty areas. Use colored page for help if needed.

COLOR

This is a color wheel.

YELLOW (AMARILLO)

GREEN (VERDE)

ORANGE (ANARANJADO)

RED (ROJO)

BLUE (AZUL)

PURPLE or VIOLET (MORADO)

COLOR SCHEMES (PLANS)
are ways I can use color to improve my art work.

PRIMARY □□□□ RAINBOW □□□□□□
SECONDARY □□□ WARM □□□ COOL □□□
COMPLEMENTARY □□□□ NeteorAL □□□□

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COLOR THEORY

Color is an element of art.

Every time I use color, I am creating a color scheme.

This is a color wheel.

The most common color schemes are listed below.

Primary... 

Secondary... 

Warm... 

Cool... 

Complimentary... 

Analogous... 

Rainbow... 

Intermediate... is a color term I need to know. It is the color in between the primary and secondary colors on the color wheel.

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TEXTURE

SMOOTH  ROUGH

HARD  SOFT

WOVEN  BUMPY/LUMPY

JAGGED/IRREGULAR  RIDGED
SPACE

DRAW BIG

FILL THE WHOLE PAPER

LINES OFF THE PAPER

PLACEMENT IN RELATION TO HORIZON

SMALLER IN DISTANCE LARGER CLOSER UP

DARKER CLOSER UP LIGHTER FARTHER AWAY

OVERLAPPING

FOREGROUND (near space)

MID GROUND (middle space)

BACKGROUND (far space)

POSITIVE SPACE the objects or subject in the work of art, not the space around them

NEGATIVE SPACE the "empty" space around the subject or objects

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BIG is BEAUTIFUL!!!

DRAW BIG

FILL THE WHOLE PAPER
Use this page as a worksheet. Fill in the empty areas yourself. Look at the colored value page for help.

**VALUE**

**IS THE RANGE OF LIGHT TO DARK.**

A VALUE SCALE SHOWS THE CHANGE OF LIGHT TO DARK.

VALUE CHANGES WITH BLACK & WHITE

VALUE CHANGES WITH COLOR

SHADING APPLIED TO OBJECTS:

- Ink Pencil Ink Pencil Ink Pencil
- Shading with cross-hatching
- Shading with stippling

TINTING WITH COLOR

SHADING WITH COLOR

TO A LITTLE BIT OF COLOR, ADD INCREASING AMOUNTS OF WHITE TO CHANGE THE VALUE.

[these are blending techniques]

CONTRAST = TO SHOW UNLIKENESS (SOMETHING DIFFERENT, OPPOSITE, OR DISSIMILAR)

LIGHT AGAINST DARK

- BLACK & WHITE
- COLOR

PATTERN AGAINST NO PATTERN

- BLACK & WHITE
- COLOR

BACKGROUND

- Detailed, busy, active space
- Simple space

I WILL LOOK FOR VALUE AND CONTRAST, BOTH NATURAL AND MAN-MADE, IN MY ENVIRONMENT.

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Principles of Art

Pattern
Repetition of the elements of art

Emphasis
Focus - Main idea
What “grabs” your attention

Variety
An assortment of lines, shapes, colors and other elements of art in the art work

Unity
How the elements work together, fit together, so the art work looks complete

Balance
Symmetrical
Asymmetrical
Radial
Same design on both sides of a midline.
A balance that is not even

Rhythm & Movement
A regular repetition of the elements of art to create a sense of rhythm and/or movement

Proportion
How parts fit together to make a whole - Size relations
(Includes scale, monumental, miniature, exaggeration...)

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PATTERN

IS THE REPEITION OF THE ELEMENTS OF ART OR ANYTHING ELSE.

PATTERNS OF LINES

PATTERNS OF SHAPES

Non-objective design Portrait Landscape Leopard City

PATTERNS OF COLOR

Rainbow Flower Butterfly Clothing Wallpaper

Birds flying in formation are a pattern.
Cars stopped in traffic makes a pattern.

Music has patterns.

Mathematics has patterns.

Inhale, exhale. Inhale, exhale. Breathing is a pattern.

Jumping jacks are a pattern.

PATTERN IS EVERYWHERE!
If I look carefully, patterns I see.
Man-made, in nature, and patterns in me.
Pattern is a principle.... a principle of art.
I see it, say it, use it. Yes, I am art smart.

Can I use anything to make a pattern?
Yes... you can.

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EMPHASIS

FOCUS - MAIN IDEA - WHAT “GRABS” MY ATTENTION?

A beautiful flower growing in a grey, dismal setting.

It can be to make a point or for a message.

It can simply be used as a design element.

An non-objective design.

The light at the end of a tunnel

A house that stands out from the rest

A flower with more detail in the center draws our eyes to the center.

STOP

And think about what I want. Now is the time to set goals.

Big lettering draws our focus.

Fast movement in a still setting grabs our attention.

Loud noise draws our attention.

Shiny, bright things like jewelry attract our attention.

Peace!!!

I will notice what “grabs” my attention in my day to day travels.

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VARIETY IS A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF THINGS.

VARIETY SHOWS CONTRAST.

THERE IS NO END TO THE VARIETY IN NATURE AND MAN-MADE THINGS.

A Variety of people
A Variety of insects
A Variety of pens
A Variety of flowers
A Variety of emotions
A Variety of buildings

People can have a variety of ideas about the same thing.

I will notice the limitless variety all around me.

That's the most beautiful work I've ever seen.
That's not the art!
I wish I could paint like that.
Hmmm.
My baby could do this.

That might be worth a million dollars.
I wonder what everyone is thinking.

I wonder what the artist was trying to say.
I wouldn't pay 2 cents for that.

Add detail.

Using a variety of elements & principles of design adds detail and interest to a work of art.
UNITY

UNITY SHOWS WHAT THINGS HAVE IN COMMON, HOW THEY ARE ALIKE.

UNITY IS THE THING THAT JOINS THE PARTS TOGETHER.

SAMENESS... ONENESS...

Uniforms show we are joined as a team.

In art, the elements work together, fit together, in the artwork so it looks complete (some art looks more unified than other art).

Repetition of line, shape or color can unify an image.

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**Balance**

**Symmetrical**
I create symmetrical balance when I evenly place images on both sides of a mid-line.

**Asymmetrical**
I create asymmetrical balance when I balance by size and weight and variety of images, but not evenly from the mid-line.

**Radial**
I create radial balance when I repeat shapes and images evenly from the center outward.

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RHYTHM AND MOVEMENT

A REGULAR REPEITION OF THE ELEMENTS OF ART CAN CREATE A SENSE OF MOVEMENT/RHYTHM.

Trees blowing in the wind...

Non-objective design...

People marching...

The day has a rhythm to it. Sunrise ... sunset...

The city has a rhythm.

RHYTHM IS ALL AROUND US.

The ticking of a clock is rhythm.
Proportion is the size relationship between two or more objects. It can be how the parts fit together to make a whole.

Scale  Proportions of the head  Exaggeration

A change in proportion can change the way we look at things. Accurate proportions are used more when creating realistic images. Distorted proportions are used more for cartoons and imaginary images.

I approximate and think about volume when I work with proportions. It's math. I mentally measure size, shape, mass, weight and volume.

Halves  Thirds  Fourths  Sixths  Eighths  Tenths

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