

Elements of Design

<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Variable</u>
Point	Smallest mark	Dot size
Line	That which connects two points; series of points; can divide, penetrate, enclose, or define space; can direct motion, force, opposition, shape	Weight in "point size", mm; Solid, broken, straight, curved, etc.
Shape	Closed line or area of color (three or more points define it) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic: plane, triangle, circle, cube, cone, sphere, etc. • Geometric: described with line and arcs • Organic: more "fluid", "natural"; "complex" 	Solid, shaded, etc. (not necessarily closed or bounded shape, a shape may be implied by the elements around it—Silhouettes, etc.)
Volume	Illusion of figure existing in three-dimensions	Mass, weight, body, balance, etc.
Value	Lightness/darkness of color or gray tone	Light to dark
Hue/color	Chroma of a color (a visible bandwidth of electromagnetic spectra)	Ultraviolet, blue, cyan, green, yellow, orange, red, infrared, and everything in-between...
Space	The area in which all elements set; illusion of depth	Flat to three-dimensional
Texture	Use of or illusion of tactile surface or surface qualities of material	Flat to rough, variegated, etc.

Principles of design

Relationship	Proximity and properties between two or more elements
Proportion	Relative difference in size of elements
Contrast	An abrupt shift, creates drama
Movement	Causing viewer's eye to move around composition picture plane; rhythm, flow
Static	Not causing eye to move about page
Balance	Distribution of elements which visually equal each other to create overall, even feeling
Symmetry	Balance where on half of the image is a mirror reflection of the other in weight and tone
Asymmetry	Structure of balance that is unequal in both position and intensity, but is overall balanced
Dominance	One element with stronger visual attraction than others
Hierarchy	Priority or order of dominance of elements in a composition
Variety	Use of multiple elements with different attributes to produce visual diversity
Opposition	Use of extremes, creates excitement or tension
Economy	Distillation, editing an object or composition, broken down to basics, minimal-ization
Transition	Orderly progression from one element to another; can imply direction, movement, flow
Rhythm/Repetition of shape	Reoccurring Use of similar element or theme

Categories:

Signs are always more abstract compared to what it represents (a concept or action), and usually *not* visually similar to what they are referring to. More discrete and specialized than symbols, signs' main functions work in one set of circumstances only, or context specific. Signs may be of universal meaning or arbitrarily assigned by the creator or artist. (arbitrary assignment of triangles for hazard symbols on road signs, etc.)

Symbols refer to something *more* abstract (like a concept) than it represents. That is they refer to something larger, outside of the symbol itself. (i.e. a corporate logo, an icon standing for larger concepts). A symbol not only evokes the essence of what it is referring to, and is general and universal (pictographs and international road signs).

Pictures can be somewhat or very much more abstract than what it refers to. They may be very abstract references to the meaning or concept implied (or intended), and very complex, though never a replica of real experience.