

Elements and Principles of Art

Elements of Art

Point/Pixel A point is the most basic element of design. It is a single mark in space that has position, but no extension. Often we see points grouped together to create line or form.

Line is an element of art which refers to the continuous mark made on some surface by a moving point. It may be two-dimensional, like a pencil mark on a paper or it may be three-dimensional (wire) or implied (the edge of a shape or form) often it is an outline, contour or silhouette.

Form is an element of art that is three-dimensional and encloses volume. Cubes, spheres, and cylinders are examples of various forms.

Shape is an enclosed space defined by other elements of art. Shapes may take on the appearance of two-d or three- objects.

Color is an element of art with three properties:

- 1) Hue, the name of the color, e.g. red, yellow, etc.
- 2) Intensity or the purity and strength of the color such as brightness or dullness
- 3) Value, or the lightness or darkness of the color.

Texture refers to the surface quality or "feel" of an object, such as roughness, smoothness, or softness. Actual texture can be felt while simulated textures are implied by the way the artist renders areas of the picture.

Space refers to the distance or area between, around, above or within things. It can be a description for both 2 and 3 dimensional portrayals.

Value describes the lightness or darkness of a color. Value is needed to express Volume.

Principles of Art

Emphasis in a composition refers to developing points of interest to pull the viewer's eye to important parts of the body of the work.

Balance is a sense of stability in the body of work. Balance can be created by repeating same shapes and by creating a feeling of equal weight.

Harmony is achieved in a body of work by using similar elements throughout the work; harmony gives an uncomplicated look to your work.

Variety refers to the differences in the work; you can achieve variety by using difference shapes, textures, colors and values in your work.

Movement adds excitement to your work by showing action and directing the viewer's eye throughout the picture-plane.

Rhythm is a type of movement in drawing and painting. It is seen in repeating of shapes and colors. Alternating lights and darks also give a sense of rhythm.

Proportion or scale refers to the relationships of the size of objects in a body of work. Proportion gives a sense of size seen as a relationship of objects, such as smallness or largeness.

Unity is seen in a painting or drawing when all the parts equal a whole. Your work should not appear disjointed or confusing.