

# Decorating: Elements and Principles of Design

**Unit:** Interior Design & Furnishings

**Problem Area:** Designing and Decorating Basics

**Lesson:** Decorating: Elements and Principles of Design

- **Student Learning Objectives.** Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objectives:

- 1 Explore the elements of design.**
- 2 Analyze the principles of design.**

- **Resources.** The following resources may be useful in teaching this lesson:

E-unit(s) corresponding to this lesson plan. CAERT, Inc. <http://www.mycaert.com>.

“7 Elements of Interior Design,” *Launchpad Academy*. Accessed July 12, 2019. <http://www.launchpadacademy.com>.

“The Four Basic Principles of Design,” *Darnell, Paula*. Accessed July 12, 2019. <http://www.liveabout.com>.

Houzz. <http://www.houzz.com>.

“How to Use Basic Design Principles to Decorate Your Home,” *Lifehacker*. Accessed July 13, 2019. <http://www.lifehacker.com>.

Kelly-Plate, *Today’s Teen*, 7th ed. McGraw-Hill, 2003.

Lewis, Evelyn and Turner, Carolyn. *Housing Decisions*. 9th ed. Goodheart-Willcox Company, Inc., 2006.

Wikipedia. <http://www.wikipedia.com>



## ■ Equipment, Tools, Supplies, and Facilities

- ✓ Overhead or PowerPoint projector
- ✓ Visual(s) from accompanying master(s)
- ✓ Copies of sample test, lab sheet(s), and/or other items designed for duplication
- ✓ Materials listed on duplicated items
- ✓ Computers with printers and Internet access
- ✓ Classroom resource and reference materials
- ✓ Fashion Magazines

## ■ Key Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

- ▶ abstract form
- ▶ asymmetrical balance
- ▶ balance
- ▶ color
- ▶ color wheel
- ▶ curved line
- ▶ diagonal line
- ▶ emphasis
- ▶ form
- ▶ formal balance
- ▶ free form
- ▶ geometric form
- ▶ golden ration
- ▶ gradation
- ▶ harmony
- ▶ horizontal line
- ▶ hue
- ▶ informal balance
- ▶ line
- ▶ mass
- ▶ opposition
- ▶ primary colors
- ▶ proportion
- ▶ radiation
- ▶ realistic form
- ▶ repetition
- ▶ rhythm
- ▶ scale
- ▶ secondary colors
- ▶ shape
- ▶ space
- ▶ symmetrical balance
- ▶ tactile texture
- ▶ tertiary colors
- ▶ texture
- ▶ transition
- ▶ unity
- ▶ vertical line
- ▶ visual texture
- ▶ volume

## ■ Interest Approach. Use an interest approach that will prepare the students for the lesson. Teachers often develop approaches for their unique class and student situations. A possible approach is included here.

*Place several pictures of a kitchen family area in a home. Ask students to choose the room that they like the best and also the room that is least appealing to them. Ask students to write a summary of the two rooms they chose. As the class goes over the notes of the elements and principles of design have the students highlight everything in their summary that refers to the two*

rooms that is an example of an element or principle of design, good or bad. As a class look at some of these and discuss the good examples and evaluate how they can use this information when decorating a room themselves. Display VM–A.

*TEACHER NOTE: There is a differing of opinion on exactly what are the elements and principles of design. The art world, architects and housing industry and fashion all group these terms as best fits their work. Even within any group there is some difference. We have chosen the most common terms used but you should make your students aware there is variety here.*

## CONTENT SUMMARY AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

**Objective 1:** Explore the elements of design.

**Anticipated Problem:** What are the elements of design? How does an individual use the elements of design?

- I. There are 5 elements of design; line, form, space, texture and color. The elements of design give an individual a fundamental basis to start with when working in design. The elements are tried and true and provide a place to start for even the most novice designer. Most people struggle when trying to make their home give the look they want. The use of the elements of design, or the principles of design, can make sure that the finished design in the home is pleasing to the eye.
  - A. **LINE.** A **line** is created when two dots are connected. A line is used to give a path for the eye to follow. There are four major lines used in design; curved, diagonal, horizontal and vertical. Each line provides a different effect on the design. By learning the effects these lines provide, the designer has the ability to use this information to produce a certain look. A line can be used to make the model appear taller, shorter, thinner or heavier. Good use of lines can be used to place emphasis on ones best features or hide ones flaws. Lines are used to guide the eyes across a design, the way the eye moves depends upon the type of line used. The use of different types of lines in decorating will provide a variety of different effects in the rooms being designed.
    1. **Curved lines** are lines that give a softer more relaxed feel to a design. A curved line is used to draw a circle or oval. A curved lines gives a feeling of calming and restful effect. Curved lines give a softer feel to the room. A couch with a curve back gives a softer, more feminine feel than one that has a straight back.

2. **Diagonal lines** are lines that provide a feeling of excitement and interest. A diagonal line on a garment can make the design appear to move forward, this makes the person wearing the design appear larger and more impressive. Diagonal lines provide interest and add excitement to the room. A single wall with diagonal wallpaper can be a focal point to the room and sometimes the whole home.
  3. **Horizontal lines** move the eyes across a design providing width. Horizontal lines run parallel to the horizon. Horizontal lines can be used to make a smaller person appear larger and then would also make a larger person appear smaller. Information like this allows a person to enhance attributes and hide flaws.
  4. **Vertical lines** move the eyes up and down a design, these lines providing height. Vertical lines are perpendicular to the horizon. A vertical line gives the feel of strength. A design with a vertical line can give the illusion of height and can make a room appear taller than it is.
- B. **FORM**. A **form** is the shape of an object. The shape or form is the outline of the object, when talking about form we are also seeing the volume and mass of an object. Volume is the amount of space an object occupies while mass of an object is weight or feeling of weight. A form is a shape that often appears to be an illusion achieved through;
1. **Abstract form** rearranges a recognizable object, so it may have traits that look real but have been altered. Abstract form is often thought to be contemporary. Abstract forms frequently give a more blurred or stylized form.
  2. **Free form** is a random sense of freedom. Nature is a good example of free form. Free form is unfamiliar and difficult for some people to use.
  3. **Geometric form** is the use of circles, spheres, squares, rectangles, cones, and triangles to create shapes.
  4. **Realistic form** is the true representation of materials. When an item can be recognized for what it is, it is realistic.
- C. **SPACE**. A **space** is the area around a form, it is the area in-between the lines. Think of space as giving a pause in the design, this space can then become the focal point or a relief from a busy design. Think of the different effect a buffalo check vs a gingham check on a chair. Small spaces between repeated designs give a different look than large spaces between repeated designs.
- D. **MASS**. **Mass** is the amount of pattern or objects in a space. The term mass is referring to how empty or crowded a space appears. In smaller home it would be beneficial to have lower mass in the rooms as it will then give the appearance that the rooms are larger. In a very large home have more mass may help make the house look and feel more like home.
- E. **TEXTURE**. **Texture** is the casual or tactile surface characteristic of a piece. Texture is the surface characteristics one can see or feel in a garment. The texture can be the way a garment or textile feels or the way it appears to feel. Fabric is often used to give texture to a design, soft, rough, stiff or bumpy. Different people react differently to texture, some like a lot of texture with a wide mix of different

surfaces while others like to keep it simple using only one texture. Texture adds to the visual look of the design. Too few textures in a design or outfit can make the look appear to be monotonous and displeasing. A mixture of too many textures can also be too much and appear displeasing, finding a balance in the mix of textures is important. Textures can be furry, shiny, smooth, rough, hard, soft, etc. Textures can make an outfit appear to be warm and cozy or sleek and modern. Texture creates variety in an outfit.

Texture choices can be used to enhance body parts. A thick fabric can add thickness to the garment and the person wearing the garment. In the same thought some fabrics can reduce body bulk. A good use of texture can draw attention to the body parts that a person would like others to focus on.

1. **Tactile texture** is the way a surface feels when touched.
  2. **Visual texture** is the appearance of and how the viewer perceives it. Fabric patterns often create different visual textures than the actual tactile texture. This difference is created through the use of colors, patterns and depth in the fabric and the design.
- F. COLOR. **Color** is all possible combinations of the hues on the color wheel. The **color wheel** is a circle with 12 triangles holding the primary, secondary and tertiary colors. The **hue** is the name of a color. Colors (hues) are placed on a color wheel showing the primary, secondary and tertiary colors.
1. Primary Colors
    - a. **Primary colors** include red, blue and yellow
    - b. Primary colors are equal distance apart on the color wheel.
  2. Secondary Colors
    - a. **Secondary colors** include violet, green and orange
    - b. Secondary colors are equal distance between a primary colors.
  3. Tertiary Colors
    - a. **Tertiary colors** include blue-green, red-violet, yellow-orange, yellow-green, red-orange, and blue-violet.
    - b. Tertiary colors are created by mixing a primary color with a secondary color.

TEACHER NOTE: There is much to learn about color so it is included in a separate lesson, **LESSON FCSR D1–3 is APPLY COLOR CONCEPTS**, this is a full lesson that provides all the information you need to teach color).

**Teaching Strategy:** Many techniques can be used to help students master this objective. Have students work in groups of three. Have them cut out magazine pictures (teacher needs to provide the magazines) of various rooms and find a good example of each of the elements of design. Have them write a statement as to why they think they are seeing a good example of the element. Also have the students find an example of poor choices of use of the elements of design and do the same for these. Turn in answers to instructor, discuss in class. Display VM–B, VM–C, VM–D VM–E and VM–F.

## Objective 2: Analyze the principles of design.

**Anticipated Problem:** What are the principles of design?

II. The principles of design include balance, proportion and scale, emphasis, rhythm, and harmony and unity.

A. BALANCE. **Balance** gives the feeling of equal weight.

1. **Symmetrical balance** is when one side of a design is a mirror reflection of the other. Symmetrical balance is when you divide a garment horizontally or vertically and the two halves will be the same. An example of symmetrical balance would be a fireplace mantle that has a mirror in the center and the exact same vases on each side of the mirror equal distance from the mirror. Symmetrical balance gives a design a more formal look. Symmetrical designs are often used in dress clothes or formal rooms like the living room or dining room.
2. **Asymmetrical balance** is when the two sides of a garment or outfit are different in size, form, texture or color. There are a variety of ways in which to add balance to an asymmetrical grouping. A single large picture can be balanced with two smaller pictures. Groupings in three will not give a formal look but a more formal appearance and still feel balanced.

B. PROPORTION and SCALE. **Proportion** is the relationship of one part to another part and the whole of the design. **Scale** refers to the overall size of a design in relationship to the actual form. Proportion is one of the most important principles when used effectively.

The **Golden Ratio** is a number: 1.61803398, often known as the divine ration. The **Golden Mean** is finding the midway point between  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the length of an object. This ratio is always pleasing to the eye.

C. EMPHASIS. **Emphasis** is the point of interest in a design, it is what the eye travels to first when looking at an object. The emphasis is known as the focal point. An example of emphasis may be a flag on a shirt.

D. RHYTHM. **Rhythm** is the feeling of movement, leading the eye around the garment or outfit. Movement is created by repeating one or more designs, this repetition allows the eyes to move through the design. Rhythm can be accomplished by repeating colors, shapes, or points of interest. Rhythm can be integrated into design by gradation, repetition, radiation, opposition, or transition.

1. **Gradation** is created when a design element is gradually increased or decreased. An example of gradation would be the pictures on the wall continue to get larger. Often wallpaper will work with a gradation in the design.
2. **Repetition** is a type of rhythm created with the recurrent use of objects, shapes, space, light and /or color. Repetition is the easiest way to use rhythm in a room and can be achieved by using like lines in furniture. Repetition captures the eye and then the eye will follow the repetition to the point you want it to.



3. **Radiation** is created when the design is arranged in rays from the center point out.
  4. **Opposition** is created at the intersection of two right-angle lines.
  5. **Transition** is created by using curved lines that carry your eyes from one area to another.
- E. HARMONY and UNITY. **Harmony** is the feeling that all parts of a design belong together. This does not mean that all things match, it means that all parts are pleasing to the whole. When grouping pieces one needs to consider style, shape, color and size. Variety is important but often works best if all parts have something in common. Sometimes when the decorator feels that they have brought all their favorite pieces together the room can still feel really wrong, this is often because there is no unity in the pieces so it is important to incorporate something either color or a pattern to add harmony to all the pieces.

**Teaching Strategy:** Many techniques can be used to help students master this objective. Assign LS–A. Display VM–G, VM–H, VM–I and VM–J.

- **Review/Summary.** Use the student learning objectives to summarize the lesson. Have students explain the content associated with each objective. Student responses can be used in determining which objectives need to be reviewed or taught from a different angle. If a textbook is being used, questions at the ends of chapters may also be included in the Review/Summary.
- **Application.** Use the included visual master(s) and lab sheet(s) to apply the information presented in the lesson.
- **Evaluation.** Evaluation should focus on student achievement of the objectives for the lesson. Various techniques can be used, such as student performance on the application activities. A sample written test is provided.

## ■ Answers to Sample Test:

### Part One: Matching

1. f
2. d
3. j
4. i
5. b
6. c
7. g
8. h
9. a
10. e

## Part Two: True/False

1. T
2. F
3. T
4. F
5. F
6. T

## Part Three: Short Answer

1. Symmetrical design has a mirror image on each side of center point while asymmetrical design has the objects distributed unequally from the center point. (Examples will vary.)
2. Elements of design are line, form/shape, space, texture, color. (Examples will vary).
3. Principles of design are balance, proportion/scale, emphasis, rhythm, and harmony/unity.



# Decorating: Elements and Principles of Design

## ► Part One: Matching

**Instructions:** Match the term with the correct definition.

- |            |               |
|------------|---------------|
| a. line    | f. proportion |
| b. form    | g. scale      |
| c. space   | h. balance    |
| d. texture | i. emphasis   |
| e. color   | j. rhythm     |

- \_\_\_\_ 1. Relationship of parts to the whole
- \_\_\_\_ 2. The surface characteristics that you can see or feel in a garment.
- \_\_\_\_ 3. Repetition of movement
- \_\_\_\_ 4. Center point of interest or focal point.
- \_\_\_\_ 5. The shape of an object.
- \_\_\_\_ 6. Area around a form.
- \_\_\_\_ 7. Size of object in relation to its actual form.
- \_\_\_\_ 8. State of equilibrium.
- \_\_\_\_ 9. Created when two dots are connected.
- \_\_\_\_ 10. All possible combinations of the hues on the color wheel.





# COLOR WHEEL

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The use of color is the cheapest way to decorate.



# CURVED LINE

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Curved lines give a relaxed feeling.





# HORIZONTAL LINE

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Horizontal lines add width.



# VERTICAL LINE

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Vertical lines add height.





# TACTILE TEXTURE

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How would these pillows feel?



# VISUAL TEXTURE

How do you think the table would feel just from looking at it?



# SYMMETRICAL BALANCE

What is symmetrical balance?





# GRADATION

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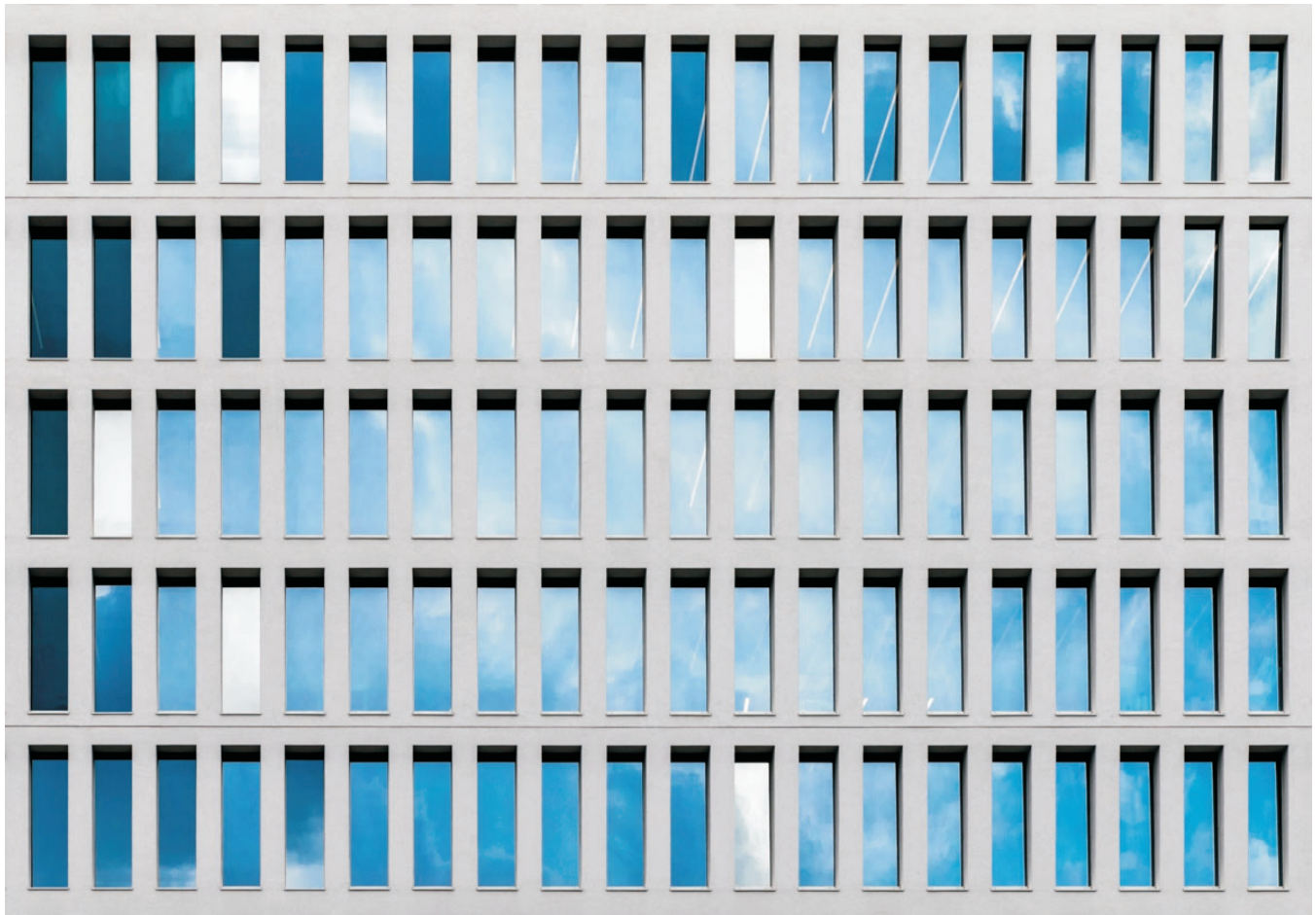
Gradation moves the eye through the room.



# REPETITION

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Where is the repetition in the picture?



# HARMONY

Harmony is important for a good look.





# Balance in Design

## Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to demonstrate knowledge and use of balance in design.

## Objectives

1. Identify types of balance
2. Explore design programs or sketching

## Materials

- ◆ Sketch Up (if available)
- ◆ Art paper
- ◆ Sketching materials
- ◆ Fabric, glitter, miscellaneous materials for design work

## Procedure

1. Refer back to instructions on design programs or sketching.
2. Provide one wall in a family/living room setting.
3. You are to decorate the wall twice. The first wall you decorate should have a good example of symmetrical balance. The second time you repeat the same wall you are to decorate it using asymmetrical balance. Place the furniture in the room so the wall looks complete.
4. Use coloring materials and other miscellaneous materials to complete your design work.
5. Turn in your finished product, making sure to label your two walls.
6. Your design will be displayed in the classroom.
7. Make sure your name is on your design.

