

Principles of Organization

Unity

Emphasis & Focal Point

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Structure of Art in 2D Design

- Components of Art - Analyzed by the Degrees of Representation
 - Subject Matter
 - Content
 - Context
 - Form
 - Elements of Design
 - Line
 - Shape & Space
 - Value
 - Texture
 - Color
 - (Type)
 - Principles of Organization
 - Balance
 - Emphasis & Focal Point
 - Rhythm
 - Scale & Proportion
 - Unity

Composition

- **Composition** in 2D Design is the overall arrangement and organization of formal elements on the two-dimensional surface.
- Line, shape, space, value, texture, color and type are the elements of design that make up a two-dimensional composition.
- A good composition utilizes these elements of design and follow the principles of organization to create a visually interesting and unified whole.

Why?

- Communication
- Create Order out of Chaos
- Foundation

Principles of Organization

- **UNITY**
- **EMPHASIS & FOCAL POINT**
- **SCALE & PROPORTION**
- **BALANCE**
- **RHYTHM**

Principles of Organization

Unity

Principles of Organization

Unity creates an integrated image in which all the elements are working together to support the design as a whole.

A **unified design** is greater than the sum of its parts; the design is seen as a whole first, before the individual elements are noticed.

Unity can be compared to harmony, integrity or wholeness.

Unity



Wayne Thiebaud, *Paint Cans*, 1990, Lithograph

- Unity means there is an agreement among all the elements in a design.
- All elements of the image belong together.
- All elements work together to create a harmonious image.
- If an image is not harmonious, elements appear separate or unrelated.
- The image to the left uses line, shape, and color, as well as an organized direction of these elements to create a harmonious & unified composition.



- The overall composition should be dominant over its individual parts.
- Unlike in a scrapbook, this collage utilizes images to create a unified composition rather than placing emphasis on each individual item.
- The content (idea) or subject matter of each individual image does not create **visual** unity. It is the visual elements and tools utilized that have the capability of creating a unified image.

What elements of design in this composition help unify the composition?



Robert Rauschenberg, *Charlene*, 1954

In this painting, visual unity is created with repeated shapes (rectangles), texture, and color.



Robert Rauschenberg, *Charlene*, 1954

This can be done in both representational and non-representational compositions.

Unity

CRAP

- Contrast
- Repetition
- Alignment
- Proximity

Contrast



Edward Hopper,
Hotel By a Railroad,
1952

Edward Hopper works with the contrast of light and dark
Look at the window, the man's head and the woman the controlled contrast create
a hierarchy that guides the eyes.



Repetition

Shifra Levyathan,
Colorful Neglect, 70x50cm

- Repetition means to repeat something.
- Repetition can be used with any element of design: line, shape, space, value, texture, color and type; and their characteristics, such as direction, character, etc.
- Repetition should not be used to create a predictable composition, but rather create a harmonious image.
- Create interesting variations when using repetition.

Alignment - The Grid



John Hilliard, *The Most Plausible Theory*, 1977

Proximity



Caravaggio,
The Calling of St. Matthew, 1604

To unify the figures sitting at the table, Caravaggio places them in **proximity** to each other. The small shapes of light against the black background belong to a group of objects. To place an emphasis on Jesus, he is set aside from the figures at the table.

Unity & Gestalt - Visual Perception



A **gestalt** is created because the mind simplifies and organizes information. It does this by grouping elements together to create new wholes.

Understanding how the mind groups elements helps us understand how **unity** can be achieved.

Gestalt Laws

Closure

Visual Grouping explains why incomplete figures are perceived as complete or whole.



Pragnanz

We organize our perceptions into the simplest possible experience. The Law of Simplicity.

Common Fate

Describes how objects moving together are perceived as belonging together.



Proximity

Objects near one another in space or time are perceived as belonging together.

Continuity

Objects aligned along a line or curve are perceived as belonging together, and we will perceive the simplest, smooth path, rather than a complex path.

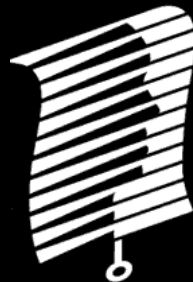


Similarity

Objects with similar characteristics, such as form, color, size, and brightness, are perceived as belonging together.

Figure/Ground

Refers to the relationship between positive elements and negative space. The eye separates whole figures from their background in order to understand what's being seen.



Symmetry

Explains our tendency to perceive symmetric objects as figures on a background.

Overview: Unity

- Harmony
- Visual Unity
- “CRAP-U”
- Continuation
- Repetition
- Alignment
- Proximity
- Gestalt

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Emphasis & Focal Point

Emphasis & Focal Point

A **Focal Point** is the location in a composition that attracts the viewer's attention and may repeatedly draw attention back to itself.

A **Focal Point** is where the artist has **deliberately** placed **emphasis** within their composition.



Edouard Manet, *Oysters*, 1862

Creating a Point of Emphasis/Focal Point

- Contrast
- Convergence
- Isolation
- Placement
- The Unusual



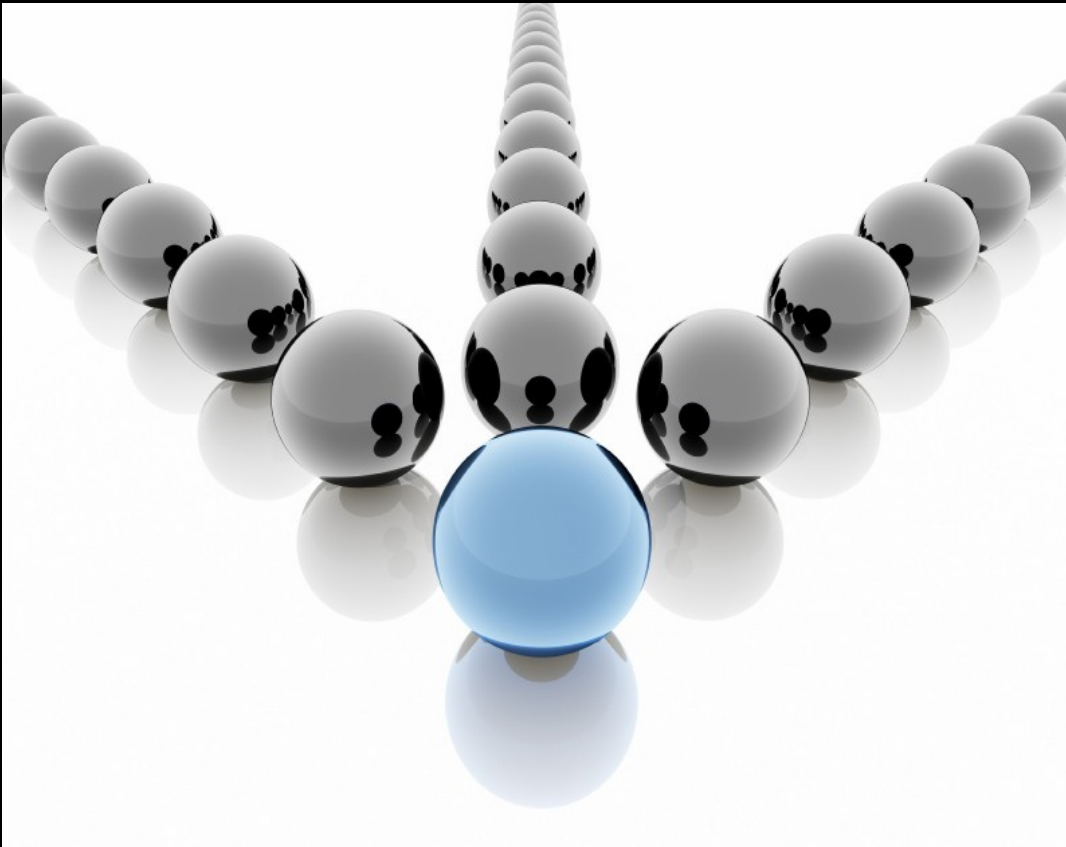
Contrast

Use of contrast.

It refers to difference.

Any specific type of difference in the composition can result in that element becoming a focal point.

Difference or contrast can be achieved by changing the characteristics of the Elements of Design: **line, shape, value texture, color** and Principles of Organization such as movement, direction, etc...



Convergence

Use implied lines to direct a viewer's eye to an object or element.

This technique is known as "convergence".



Isolation

Isolate an element from others.

Whenever one shape or element is separated from a group or area, it becomes isolated and in turn, becomes a focal point.



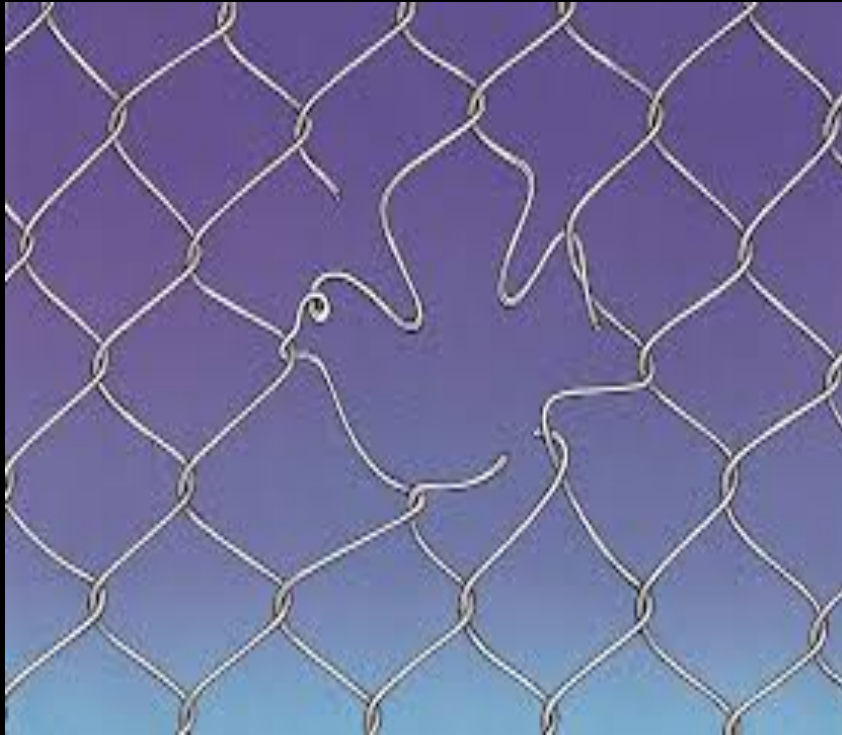
Placement

Objects that are placed in the center of the picture plane or near center, will become a focal point.

Most of the time, a non-centered focal point is preferred.

By placing an object or element just off center, you can make a focal point through placement without affecting the aesthetics of the artwork.

See [Rule of Thirds!](#)



The Unusual

Introduce an object or element that is unusual to the composition.

This element stands out and gets the viewer's attention.

Rule of Thirds

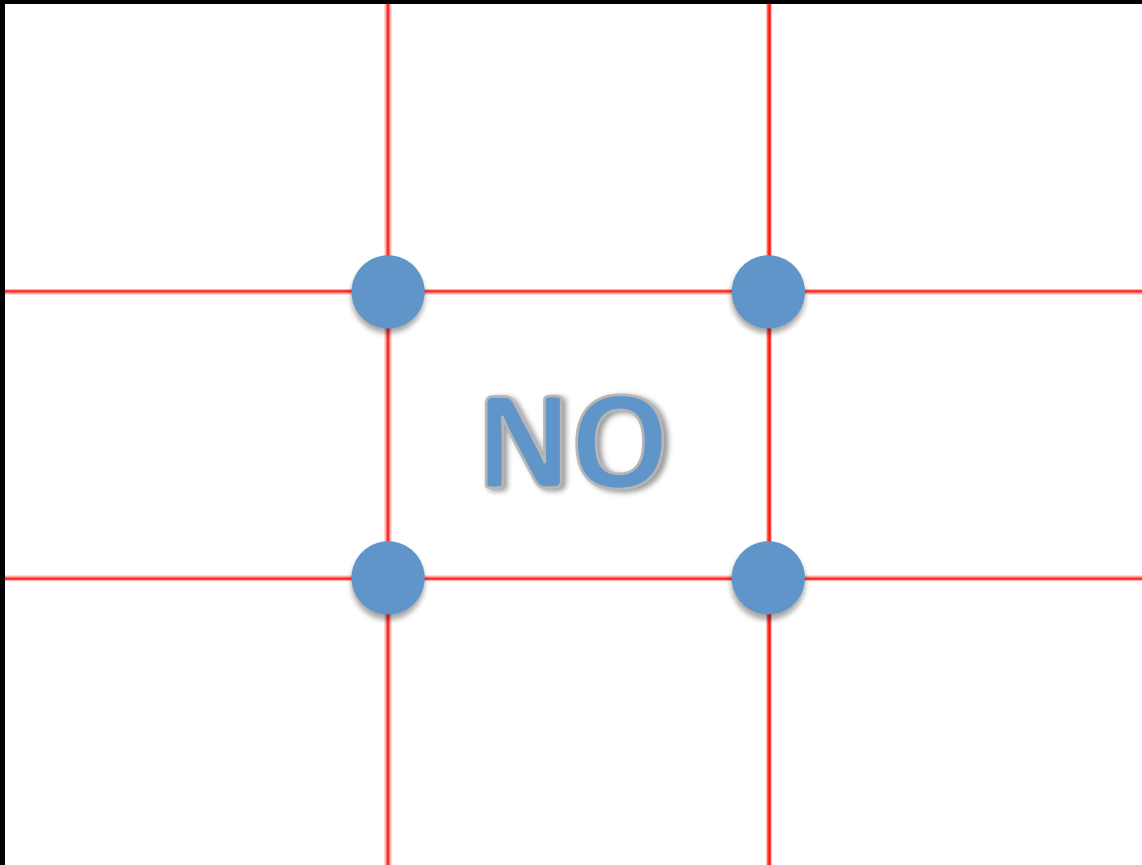
Rule of Thirds



<https://creativemarket.com/blog/2014/08/04/photography-15-great-examples-of-the-rule-of-thirds-in-action>

When the picture plane is divided into thirds both vertically and horizontally as a tool to arrange and organize elements of a composition. Important compositional elements should be placed along those lines or at their intersections.

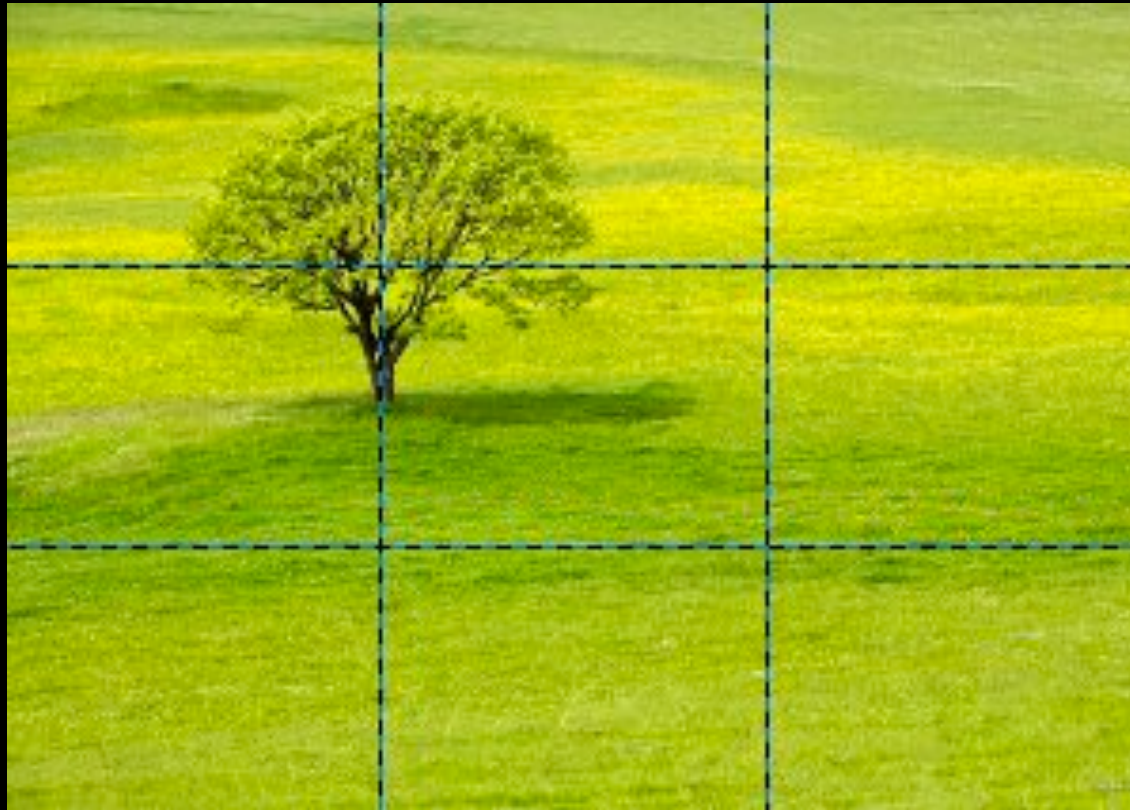
Rule of Thirds



Power Points: best placement for **Focal Point**

NO

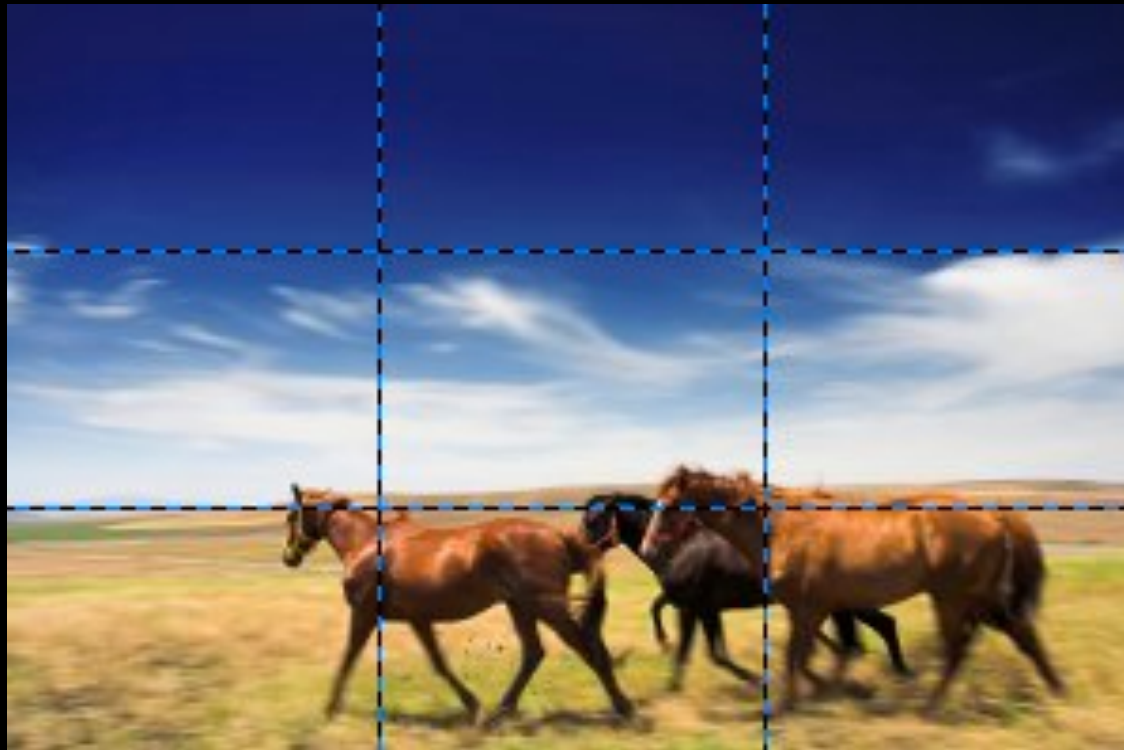
Avoid placing any strong elements in the center, this creates a static image and works against establishing a visual flow



Rule of Thirds

Place key elements of
your composition at
Power Points

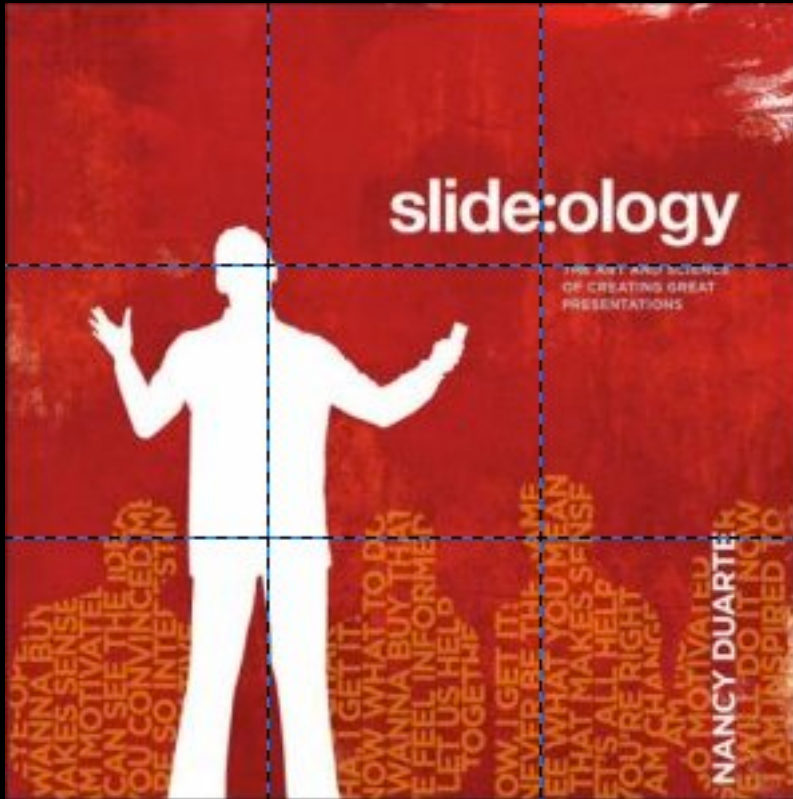
<http://sixminutes.dlugan.com/rule-of-thirds-powerpoint/>



Rule of Thirds

Place key elements of your composition at along **horizontal lines**

<http://sixminutes.dlugan.com/rule-of-thirds-powerpoint/>



Rule of Thirds

Place key elements of your composition at along **vertical lines**

<http://sixminutes.dlugan.com/rule-of-thirds-powerpoint/>



Rule of Thirds



Place key elements of your composition at along **Power Points** and **simultaneously** on **dividing** (vertical and/or horizontal) **lines**.

Visual Flow

Visual Flow



New York Central Yard
STIEGLITZ, ALFRED, b.1864-1946
The Artistic Side of Photography, 1910
9.7 x 12 cm, Photogravure

A good composition is designed to lead the viewer's eye around the picture plane.

Visual Flow creates movement and avoids stagnant areas.

Visual Flow can be created using **Unity** and **Emphasis & Focal Point**:

1. Proximity
2. Repetition
3. Continuation
4. Directional Line
5. Converging Lines
6. Value & Color

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Visual Flow



Albert Oehlen, *Descending Hot Rays*, 2003

Converging Lines & Directional Force

Visual Flow



Toby Ziegler, *Designated For Leisure*, 2004

Proximity, Repetition, Continuation, Directional Lines, Light Among Dark,
Color among Black and White, Large Among Small

Visual Flow



Jin Myerson, *Steeplechase*, 2004

Repetition, Continuation, Texture Contrast, Large Among Small, Recognition Interest

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