

Elements and Principles of Art

The Elements of Art - We can think of the **elements** as the basic visual material with which to make art. It is hard to imagine anything visual without the use of one or more of these elements.

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

Line - is an element of art that 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.

Shape - an enclosed space defined by other elements of art. Shapes may take on the appearance of 2 dimensional or 3 dimensional/3D objects.

Colour - Is an element of art with three properties:

Hue - the name of the colour, e.g. red, yellow, etc.

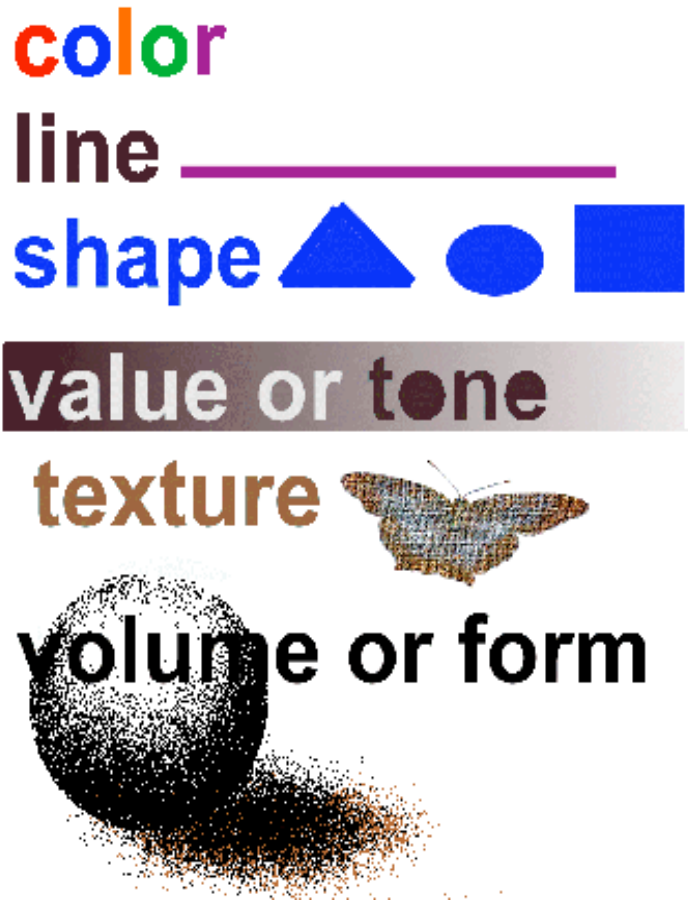
Intensity - or the purity and strength of the colour such as brightness or dullness.

Value - or the lightness or darkness of the colour.

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.



The Principles of Art - We can think of the **principles** as ways to work with and arrange the elements.

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.

Contrast – refers to the arrangement of opposite elements (light vs. dark colours, rough vs. smooth textures, large vs. small shapes, etc.) in a composition so as to create visual interest, excitement and drama.

Balance - is a sense of stability in the body of work. Balance can be created using repetition of the 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, colours 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.

