

DESIGN BASICS

CHAPTER 1 - DESIGN PROCESS

Design = To plan or organize

Synonym = plan

*“Design is essentially
the opposite of chance.”*

The design process involves seeking
visual solutions to problems.

***Creative Visual Problem Solving =
Effective Visual Communication***

T - F “There are no rules in design!”

The arts are called “creative fields” because there are no predetermined correct answers.

There are guidelines, though.

“However, the ‘no rules’ phrase does not mean that all devices are equally valid and visually successful.”

“Design practices and criteria have been developed from successful works.”

In other words you should look at and learn from the work of other designers.

Look at what has worked and what has not worked.

CONTENT AND FORM

2 concepts exist simultaneously and interact.

Content –

The subject matter, the story, or info the that the artwork/design tries to communicate.

(Content = What is being said.)

Form –

The purely visual aspect. How it looks. Measurable.
Described in terms of elements and principles.

(Form = How it being said.)

Look up the word root
and similar words.

Content

Form

“Aesthetic”

When a piece does not have a message,
the artwork is just for ‘aesthetic’ purposes.

(In other words, it’s just meant to **look nice.**)

“beauty”

Pure abstraction has a very legitimate role in art.

Most art is supposed to be a **form** of visual communication.
(Especially in graphic design and web design.)

“Aesthetic” the aspect of “beauty”
separate from content or message.

Is all design a form of visual communication?

no

a well designed chair

a well designed room

how about :

good design - through form - enhances function

function can be : communication

function can be : expression

function can be : any experience or use

most often : practical

As a designer you are a problem solver.
Successful solutions are visually effective,
and communicate ideas.

What is the problem at hand.

Goals - What is to be achieved?

Content - What is to be included?

Format – Size, color, medium, etc...

Style – Illustration, Abstract, nonobjective, etc...

Schedule – When must it be finished?

A successful design communicates an idea...
and or enhances the clarity of communication.

The Creative Process:

Thinking - Looking - Doing

You don't have to do these in order.
They can happen in any order or at any time.
(and can be repeated)

Thinking - Looking - Doing

Concept - Observe - Action

Idea - Compare - Implement

1. Thinking About the Problem.

Precisely what is to be achieved?

(What specific visual or intellectual effect is desired?)

Are there visual stylistic requirements?

(Illustrative, abstract, nonobjective, and so on?)

What are the physical limitations?

(Size, color, media...)

When is the solution needed?

2. Thinking About the Solution

How can the concept be shown?

STEPS IN THINKING:

Make a list of ideas (symbols)
that could represent / convey the theme or idea.

Quickly sketch them.

Expand the list - discussion or research.

Narrow the list down to a few ideas.

How will your idea be conveyed in a unique or original way.

Audience - who is going to see your design?
(a consideration of function)

“FORM FOLLOWS FUNCTION”

“Communication is least ambiguous when the relationship between form and concept is clear and uncluttered.”

What this famous quote expresses is:

The shape / form of an object should come after (be a result of) designing it to work correctly (function).

Thursday follows Friday

RECENT EXAMPLES OF “UPDATED DESIGNED FORMS”

can openers - scissors

baby bottles

pens - toothbrush

Bigger Handles!

ergonomic chairs

IKEA - sells pleasing functional forms
(aesthetically designed products for the home or office)

II. LOOKING

Resources / References for Form and Content

NATURE - Bones, animals, landscapes, etc...

HISTORY - Events, other artworks and artists,
vernacular images etc...

CULTURE - TV, society, fashion, etc...

OTHER - ?

Visual Training (and Retraining)

Visual Training often relies
learning and **relearning** ways to look at things.

A good designer should sees things in ways that
the average viewer may not.

They have “insight”.

“Look Again”

Part of this is looking from different angles
at different times through a different set of lenses.

III. DOING: THINKING WITH MATERIALS / TOOLS

Doing starts with visual experimentation...
and with visual “play” ...

Two Points of view:

Materials / Tools are lifeless until given shape by a creator.

Materials / Tools by their own potential create their end.

Thinking with Materials / Tools:

Ways to do this include:

Trial and Error

Intuition

Application of a System
(set of limitations or rules)

Doing and Redoing:

Revision is necessary.

Starting over is sometimes necessary.

Doing can take on a life of its own.

**Revision - Refinement - Modification -
Corrections - Edits - Variations**

*allows for an idea to grow
beyond the obvious or familiar*

IV. CRITIQUE: CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

Critique is a VERY important part of design.

Forms of critique

Self – Critique - self dialogue

Review by peers or classmates

Dialogue with a Professor

A Model for Critique:

Description –

A verbal or spoken account of what is there.

Analysis –

A discussion of how things are presented.
Including thoughts of how things are contrasted or different.

Ex: Bigger than, brighter than, to the left of

Interpretation –

What is the meaning, implication,
or effect of the piece.