

7

Elements of Art

The building blocks that structure every single work of art, piece of design or craft artefact.

1.



Line

A line is a mark or stroke, long in proportion to its breadth; an elongated dot is a line! Almost everything in our world can be interpreted in terms of Line: it is all around us. The artist, Paul Klee, once said that drawing was like taking a line for a walk.

2.



Shape

A shape is a two-dimensional, flat space, which can only have height and width, enclosed by a line. Shapes can be either geometric, for example, circle, square, etc., or organic and irregular like the shapes we observe in nature.

3.



Space

Space deals with the area around or inside shapes. 'Positive space' is the area occupied by an object and 'negative space' is the area around an object. This element is used to give the illusion of depth in a two-dimensional image, such as making an object look as though it is either near or far away.

4.



Tonal value

Tonal value refers to the degree of lightness or darkness, or shade, of an object or colour. Artists use this element to create the illusion of depth in two-dimensional shapes, by shading and adding shadow.

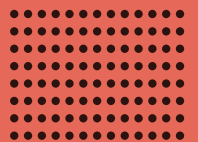
5.



Colour

Colour is all around us: light is reflected from objects to the back of the eye, where colour is registered in our brains. Colour has three main properties: hue, which is the name we give different colours; intensity, which relates to the vividness of the colour; and tonal value, which relates to the shade or tint of a colour.

6.



Texture

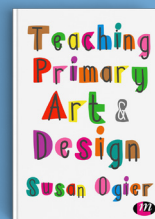
This element relates to how the surface of something feels, or might feel if you could touch it. For artists, this could mean either real surface quality, such as in a sculpture, or the illusion of surface quality, as represented through, for example, painting or drawing.

7.



Form

All objects that have three dimensions are examples of this element. 3D forms will have height, width, depth and volume. Forms can be viewed from all sides, either by picking them up or by walking around them.



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