Graphic Design: Tips & Tools for the Non-designer

mParks Conference 2018
My Background
Intro

➡️ Not a teacher. This is a first. Be gentle. Let’s journey together, treat it like a conversation, and break if necessary.

➡️ Theme for today: If you don't have it, “steal it”.
Basic Design Principles
What is Graphic Design?
Graphic Design is the process of visual communication, and problem-solving through the use of type, space, image and color.
7 Graphic Design Principles to Up-Level your Graphics

Free Cheat Sheet from http://mariahalthoff.com/
1 | Balance

Your graphics need to have a sense of balance. This isn’t to say that each side needs to be perfectly symmetrical, but the amount of visual weight on each side should feel cohesive and intentional to create this feeling of balance.
Cogitatur

Eseńcja Kultury w Mieście

Otwarcie 19.10.2006
Lech Janerka

Moore Caine

Flawless
2 | Proximity

Proximity is when you group related items together so that it is visually clear they’re related. This helps create organization within your graphic which causes information to be remembered more easily. Our brains love organization, so when a graphic is organized appropriately, it's both visually appealing and easier to consume.
Creative Services
For the Design-Challenged Developer

As a developer, you’re an extremely creative individual. Getting your websites to behave in Internet Explorer is proof enough...you are creative. Even so, you may not have the time or know-how needed to get the design of your site looking as clean as your code. That’s OK. I take design as seriously as you take your markup. Have a look around, and get in touch if you think we’d work well together.

Helen & Hard

Creative Created Site

---

Screenshot of Helen & Hard’s “About” page.
3 | Alignment

Every design element placed in your graphic should be visually aligned to something else on the page. Whether that's the side of the page, the edge of an image, the text that's above it, etc. Nothing should be placed arbitrarily on the page. This is probably the #1 beginner mistake I see in graphics and possibly the easiest to fix.
4 | Repetition

Repeating certain characteristics (i.e., fonts, colors, layouts, design elements, etc.) within your design will keep the design unified and cohesive. This then creates a visual theme that creates this unification and consistency. This is especially helpful when designing multiple related graphics or a multipage document because the repetition of design elements will tie them all together and make them feel unified and consistent. Repetition is also the number one way to create a recognizable brand identity.
5 | Contrast

If two items are not exactly the same, make them different. And it most cases, make them really different (while still keeping them within the same visual theme, of course). This creates more interest on the page and makes certain elements stand out among the rest. This also creates visual hierarchy, which aids in the organization of the graphic (we'll get to hierarchy in a second).
6 | White Space

“White space is the art of nothing” – I have no idea who said that but it wasn't me so I put it in quotes. Nonetheless, I thought it was a great way to describe this concept. White space is the absence of text and graphics. This can also be referred to as negative space and therefore, doesn't actually have to be white. White space can be whatever color the background is.
Hierarchy

The definition of hierarchy is "a system or organization in which people or groups are ranked one above the other according to status or authority." Hierarchy, when implemented, literally creates a path for your eye to move around the page. Yes, you can in fact control how the viewer consumes your graphics. Viewers will start with the most dominant feature of your graphic, then move to the next dominant, and the next until they've looked over the entire thing.
Tip

Don’t get intimidated by the concepts. Strip it down to some basics and start your journey there.
“Oh, I love that font.”
Fundamentals

- Type is fundamental part of design
- Type conveys emotion & mood
Fundamentals

- Less is more - keep it to two fonts per piece
- Use contrasting fonts for impact
- They can stand on their own as element
# Font Types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serif</th>
<th>Hand Drawn</th>
<th>Slab Serif</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>San Serif</td>
<td>Display</td>
<td>Comic Sans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Script</td>
<td>Retro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Four Questions

1. Is type appropriate? Keeping with the message?
2. When using more than one, do they contrast or conflict?
3. Is it the right size for message?
4. Is the type more on the timeless side or cheezy and dated?

Tip
Pick a couple styles for your brand and use them over and over again.
DaFont
Dafont.com

Google Fonts
fonts.google.com

Creative Market
creativemarket.com
Canva's Ultimate Guide to Font Pairing

https://www.canva.com/learn/the-ultimate-guide-to-font-pairing/
Tip

➔ Use Pinterest to search ‘free fonts’ and you will find a never ending supply.

I currently have 294 pins in Free Fonts Board
Design On a Dime
Canva Features

- Layouts for every occasion
- Stock images and illustrations
- Social media graphics
- Library of fonts
- Drag & drop editor
- Custom templates
- Customizable branding
- Photo editing
- Resize designs
- Branded templates
- Share photo folders
- Organize images into folders
- Upload fonts
- Transparent backgrounds
- Design folders

- Photo filters
- Stock vectors & photographs
- Icons, shapes & elements
- Presentations
- Multiple document types
- Graphs, mind maps, charts, & diagrams
- Collaborate with partners
- Color code thoughts & ideas
- Blog and website posts
- Cards and invitations
- Business cards
- Snapchat geofilter templates
- Business logos
- Share via email, text, messaging apps
- Publish for web & print

https://www.canva.com/
All the power of Canva + features to boost your productivity:

- Save your brand colors, logos and fonts
- **Magically resize your designs**
- Save your own brand templates
- **Organize your images into folders**
- Mix and match your designs
- **Upload your own fonts**
- Transparent backgrounds
- **Design folders**
- Design search

$12.95 per user / month
Free for 30 Days
Premium Features

- Hub storage for 50 images
- Sort Hub images
- Save, Export, Share
- Advanced touch up tools
- Primo effects, overlays, fonts
- Re-editable images, in Hub
- Top-shelf templates
- No ads

$72 Annually
App Features

Desktop Features
- Photo Editor
- Portrait Retouching
- Design Maker
- Collage Maker

Mobile Version
- Chrome Editor & Extension
Design Assets

Creative Market is a platform for handcrafted, mousemade design content from independent creatives around the world.

https://creativemarket.com/

Photos + Graphic Elements + Templates + Themes + Fonts + More
Tip

→ Sign up for free Creative Market account and get 6 free design every week.
A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words
Ansel Adams.

“There are no rules for good photographs, there are only good photographs.”
Tip

➔ Use original photography when possible.
➔ More authentic.
# Free Stock Photo Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authentic Photos</th>
<th>Stock Photos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative Space</td>
<td>Unsplash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death to the Stock</td>
<td>StockSnap.io</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo</td>
<td>Pixabay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picjumbo</td>
<td>SplitShire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stokpic</td>
<td>Life of Pix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaboompics</td>
<td>HubSpot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Startup Stock Photos</td>
<td>Pexels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freerange</td>
<td>Gratisography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LibreShot</td>
<td>Jay Mantri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fancy Crave</td>
<td>ISO Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Old Stock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/free-stock-photos](https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/free-stock-photos)
More Cool Tools
$8 ea

https://placeit.net/
10 Pack
$79
50 Pack
$139
Free templates to try

Professionally Designed Templates for Word, Publisher, PowerPoint.

Full line of print products, as well as, presentations. Fully customizable.

Precisely executed for output on printers or to display on screen.

www.layoutready.com/
Pixlr is an online photo editing tool. Web-based app used for moderate-level photo editing. You can create a new image, upload an image, or grab one directly from a URL location. Good for someone with basic Photoshop skills.
Free
Or $9.99 Per month

[Spark Logo]

https://spark.adobe.com/

Transform your ideas into stunning visual stories
Create impactful graphics, web pages and video stories in minutes with Spark’s free graphic design app.
PowerPoint based templates great for content creation, such as a manual, quick guide, or digital brochure.

https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/free-ebook-templates
Free

The JPEGmini Web Service is a free online service for optimizing your photos using JPEGmini technology. Reduce image size by up to 80%, without compromising quality - for faster website loading.

http://www.jpegmini.com/main/shrink_photo
Infographics

infogr.am

easelly

Piktochart

Canva
Think of yourself as a curator and collect the great work of others.
Good Design is as little design as possible. Simplify the Complex as much as possible.

- Dieter Rams
Good luck!

Enjoy the journey. Some of your best work is ahead of you!

__________________________

Chris Blunden
cblunden@fhgov.com
248-473-1800