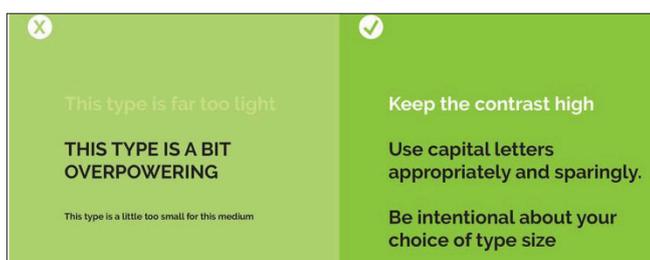# Easy Guide to Good Design

COLOUR

Generally less is more in good design, and this goes for both colour and fonts. Avoid rainbows - chose 2-4 complementary colours, (such as Blue and Orange, Green and Red, Purple and Yellow) or Analogous colours for the easiest colour palette. Complementary colours are opposite each other on the colour wheel, Analogous are next to each other.

Complementary   Analogous
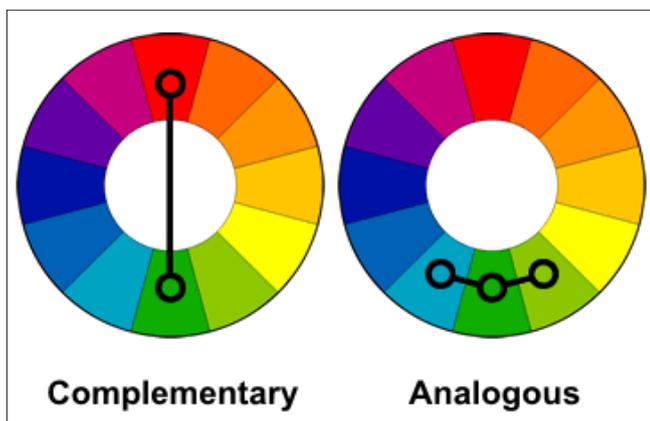
Avoid clashing colours such as green text on red, as this can strobe and is difficult to read, particulary for people with colour blindness. Also choose a dark colour for your main blocks of colour and a light one for highlights or text background boxes (such as yellow).

Think about the legibility of your text when choosing colours. Use black or dark colours for text on light backgrounds and white and light text colours for dark backgrounds.

This type is far too light

Keep the contrast high

THIS TYPE IS A BIT OVERPOWERING

Use capital letters appropriately and sparingly.

This type is a little too small for this medium

Be intentional about your choice of type size

Find out more on [Colour Theory](#)

FONTS

As with colours, good designs tend to be restricted to one or two font families (font families include bold typeface, italic, regular, etc). For screen use, sans serif fonts such as Helvetica and Arial are easier to read, for print, serif fonts such as Times and Palatino are better for readability. [Google fonts](#) provides free web-safe fonts that you can use for your website. This means that what you design is exactly what your reader will see, no matter what computer or system they use.

Sans serif and simple fonts are good for for body text and bold headings. However if you want to use a decorative font (such as the font used in the title above) use this only for small areas of text, such as the page headings and pull quotes. Make sure the 'personality' of the font matches your content - ie don't use a grunge font for a wedding invitation. And never, ever use Comic Sans. Unless you are designing anything for a daycare centre.

Find out more on [Typography](#)

LAYOUT

People's eyes wander, especially if a text block is dense and long. Generally the best line length is a minimum of 6 words per line. Basically two or three column layout (as is here) works well online or in print.

People's eyes also unconsciously look for alignment and notice if a paragraph is indented. Sometimes this works to attract the eye to a certain place in the layout, other times it just looks like a total mess. Make sure your text boxes and images are in alignment, and your design will look a lot

more professional. Leaving white space (also known as negative space) around elements in your design will also help people to read your webpage easily.

See examples of **layout and alignment**

HIERARCHY

Visual hierarchy refers to the order of elements in design, both text and graphical. Most cultures read from the top down and left to right. Most people scan a page first, in either a 'Z' pattern or an 'F' pattern.

To make the most of a Z pattern read, put your most important information along the top (such as your page title) and links, and then next level information below. See the below diagram to see the information order:
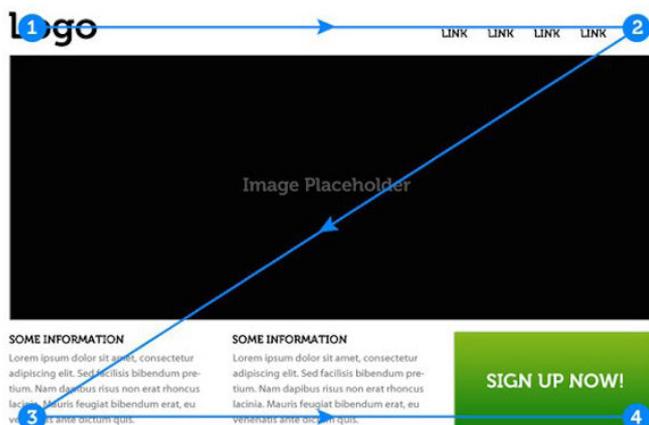
F pattern reads generally apply to text-heavy pages like articles. A reader scans down the left side of the page looking for interesting keywords in left aligned paragraphs, and then continue reading across if the sentence is interesting.

You can use this in design by aligning important information left, using sub-headings, bullet points and pull quotes to attract attention.

Heatmap reader tracking from Nielsen Norman Group

People also read in order of font size - a big bold heading in 72pt will attract attention before a regular heading in 40pt. This principle will even override the top-down rule: if your 40pt heading is at the top and the 72pt heading below, they will read the bigger font first. Make sure your text is read in the order you want by using big bold headings (eg, 72pt), followed by smaller bold subheadings (eg 40pt) and finally smaller text for your body copy (12-14pt).

This also assists people with vision impairment, as e-readers read out the text according to the heading tag the webpage gives it. Heading tags range from <H1> for the page title down to <H6> for the smallest size heading. body copy is tagged as <p> for paragraph.

This is referred to as Accessibility, which is designing for readers with a disability, such as vision impairment, blindness, autism, epilepsy and dyslexia. Always add a caption or alt text tag on any images you use. Alt text is a HTML tag that is embedded in your image that provides a brief description of what your image depicts.

See more on **visual hierarchy**
See information on **accessibility**

Easy Guide to Good Design

IMAGES

Like fonts and colours, again with images less is more. Choose a 'hero' shot for your main page image - this means the image that you think is the most appealing, powerful and relevant for your content.

There are a number of things to remember when choosing an image:

Quality - make sure the image is in focus, and if you are choosing it for the main banner image, it will have to be able to make an impact, as it will be the main focal point of your page.

Relevant - The image must integrate and support your written content, and be relevant to the subject topic.

People - Shots of people can be very engaging, particularly if they are making eye contact with the viewer. Its also a good way to show diversity and inclusion in your website if you need to engage with a wide audience.

Authentic - People can spot a stock photography image fairly easily. Try to avoid using images that you think are 'fake'. Raw Images that create an emotional response will encourage audience engagement more than a heavily styled image.

Find tips on image selection

CONSISTENCY

Above all, maintain consistency throughout your design. Consistency tells your reader that all your pages belong together.

Keep to your colour palette and font choice throughout the whole website. Make sure your images have the same look and feel about them and don't swap over halfway through. For example, if you use a series of moody dramatic weather shots, don't include a funny cartoon about meterologists. Keep the same layout and alignment, unless you have a good reason to change.

MORE INFORMATION

OVERVIEW - https://elearningbrothers.com/blog/10-top-graphic-design-tips-beginners/

OVERVIEW - https://www.canva.com/learn/design-rules/

COLOUR - https://www.lifehacker.com.au/2014/10/learn-the-basics-of-color-theory-to-know-what-looks-good/

FONTS - https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/beginning-graphic-design/typography/1/

GOOGLE FONTS - https://fonts.google.com

LAYOUT - https://www.printwand.com/blog/basic-alignment-principles-in-graphic-design-with-examples

ACCESSIBILITY - http://lindalindhorst.com/blog/5-tips-for-designing-with-accessibility-in-mind/

HIERARCHY - https://99designs.com.au/blog/tips/6-principles-of-visual-hierarchy/