



# The Elements of Graphic Design

By Alex W. White

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This very popular design book has been wholly revised and expanded to feature a new dimension of inspiring and counterintuitive ideas to thinking about graphic design relationships. The Elements of Graphic Design, Second Edition is now in full color in a larger, 8 x 10-inch trim size, and contains 40 percent more content and over 750 images to enhance and better clarify the concepts in this thought-provoking resource. The second edition also includes a new section on Web design; new discussions of modularity, framing, motion and time, rules of randomness, and numerous quotes supported by images and biographies. This pioneering work provides designers, art directors, and students--regardless of experience--with a unique approach to successful design. Veteran designer and educator Alex. W. White has assembled a wealth of information and examples in his exploration of what makes visual design stunning and easy to read. Readers will discover White's four elements of graphic design, including how to: define and reveal dominant images, words, and concepts; use scale, color, and position to guide the viewer through levels of importance; employ white space as a significant component of design and not merely as background; and use display and text type for maximum comprehension and value to the reader. Offering a new way to think about and use the four design elements, this book is certain to inspire better design.

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## The Elements of Graphic Design By Alex W. White Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

### Review

"White sets out key concepts of space, unity, page architecture, and typography for the benefit of other designers, art directors, and students ... A clear introduction; recommended for anyone learning or reviewing graphic design." --*Library Journal*

"Alex W. White provides one of the clearest and most thoughtful introductions to graphic design that I've read. This book is also one of the few to really demystify the idea and use of white space in design—a topic that at once confuses young designers and causes seasoned clients to curl their lips with disdain. Read and learn."

—*Alexander Isley, Lecturer at Yale Graduate School of Art, past President of AIGA NY*

"The Elements of Graphic Design's first edition has been one of the most useful books on the details of design and effective visual communication. The second edition is certain become a standard in every design studio library."—*Sharon Werner, founder of Werner Design Werks*

"An expert educator, Alex W. White has purified the fundamentals of graphic design into a vigorous and all-embracing book. No matter what stage of your design career, this second edition of *The Elements of Graphic Design* is, or ought to be, required reading."—*Kevin Smith, AIGA awards recipient, Professor at Parsons, The New School for Design*

### About the Author

, professor of graphic design at the Hartford Art School at the University of Hartford, specializes in publication design. Author of the bestseller

, he lives in New York City.

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### Chapter 1: Space is emptiness

*fill up a place, which may be better ... when I  
have made it empty. – William Shakespeare  
(1564–1616), As You Like It*

Emptiness is an essential aspect of life. It is the unavoidable opposite of fullness, of busyness, of activity. It is the natural and universally present background to everything we see. Emptiness is silence, an open field, a barren room, a blank canvas, an empty page. Emptiness is often taken for granted and thought best used by filling in. It is generally ignored by all but the few who consciously manipulate it to establish contrast, to create drama, or to provide a place of actual or visual rest. It is best used as counterpoint to filled-in space. Composers and architects use it. Painters, photographers, and sculptors use it. And designers use it. The most important step toward sensitizing yourself to using space is first seeing it. Gregg Berryman writes in his *Notes on Graphic Design and Visual Communication*, "Everyone 'looks' at things but very few people 'see' effectively. Designers must be able to see. Seeing means a trained super-awareness of visual codes like shape, color, texture, pattern, and contrast. These codes make a language of vision, much as words are building blocks for verbal language." Being trained to see more critically is best guided by a teacher, but such training relies on exposure to excellent art and design samples.

### **The figure/ground relationship**

The single most overlooked element in visual design is emptiness. The lack of attention it receives explains the abundance of ugly and unread design. (*Ugly* and *unread* describe two separate functions of design which occasionally occur at the same time. *Ugly* refers to an object's aesthetic qualities, an evaluation of whether we *like* the object. *Unread* is infinitely more important, because an unread design is an utter failure. A printed document, regardless of its purpose or attributes, is never intended to be ignored.) Design elements are *always* viewed in relation to their surroundings. Emptiness in two-dimensional design is called white space and lies behind the type and imagery. But it is more than just the background of a design, for if a design's background alone were properly constructed, the overall design would immediately double in clarity and usefulness. Thus, when it is used intriguingly, white space becomes foreground. The emptiness becomes a positive shape and the positive and negative areas become intricately linked.

### **Users Review**

#### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Mark Copeland:**

The ability that you get from *The Elements of Graphic Design* will be the more deep you rooting the information that hide inside the words the more you get interested in reading it. It doesn't mean that this book is hard to comprehend but *The Elements of Graphic Design* giving you excitement feeling of reading. The article author conveys their point in a number of way that can be understood through anyone who read this because the author of this e-book is well-known enough. This book also makes your own personal vocabulary increase well. Making it easy to understand then can go to you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We recommend you for having that *The Elements of Graphic Design* instantly.

#### **Jennifer Jones:**

The actual book *The Elements of Graphic Design* has a lot info on it. So when you check out this book you can get a lot of benefit. The book was compiled by the very famous author. The writer makes some research ahead of write this book. This kind of book very easy to read you may get the point easily after perusing this book.

#### **Dennis Johnson:**

Precisely why? Because this *The Elements of Graphic Design* is an unordinary book that the inside of the publication waiting for you to snap the idea but latter it will surprise you with the secret the item inside. Reading this book adjacent to it was fantastic author who have write the book in such awesome way makes the content inside easier to understand, entertaining approach but still convey the meaning totally. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this ever again or you going to regret it. This unique book will give you a lot of gains than the other book possess such as help improving your expertise and your critical thinking method. So , still want to delay having that book? If I had been you I will go to the reserve store hurriedly.

**Rose Bennett:**

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