Color

Color is the hue, value, and intensity that defines parts and sets off one area of design from another. **Hue** is the name of the color (red, blue). **Value** is how light or dark the color is (light blue, navy blue). **Intensity** is how bright or dull it is (4-H green, neon green).

Shape/Form

**Form** is the shape and structure of an item. **Shape** is two-dimensional and appears flat; **form** is three-dimensional with length, width, and depth. (A circle is a shape; a ball is a form.)

Texture

**Texture** is the surface quality of an item. It is how something feels when it is touched or looks like it would feel if touched (rough, smooth, soft, or hard).

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By learning and using the elements and principles of design, you will increase your understanding of how and why some things work together and some simply "don't look right."

Unraveling the Mystery of Design Elements and Principles in Clothing

**Elements of Design**

The elements of design are shape/form, color, texture, and line. These are the tools used by you and clothing manufacturers when a garment is designed and constructed to enhance your appearance.

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Principles of Design

The principles of design (rhythm, emphasis, proportion, balance, and unity) are how we use the tools (elements) to create looks (whole outfits, accessories, shoes, etc.) that are different or unique.

Rhythm

Rhythm leads the eye from one part of a design to another part, creating movement through repetition of pattern or color. Follow the flow of orange waves or white daisies in the examples below.

Proportion

Proportion refers to the relationship between parts of a design, such as the size of the clovers compared to the size of the shirts. The examples below show good proportion.

Unity

When things look right together, you have created unity. Unity includes clothing, all accessories, and you. Lines and shapes that repeat each other show unity (curved lines and curved shapes). Colors that have a common hue create unity. Texture also helps create unity (a soft texture with curved lines). Try to create a certain mood or theme—sporty, tailored, dramatic, casual—and keep the clothing and accessories in harmony with your coloring, your build, and your age. Then you’ll have unity.

Unity is a difficult principle to define. It is both a principle in itself as well as the goal for the overall look. What about the pink and green outfit? Is that a good example of unity? Notice the sundress with sandals in the picture. In your opinion, does that create "unity"?

Emphasis

Emphasis is the quality that draws your attention to a certain part of the design first (a logo or stripe, for example).

Balance

Balance makes the right and left side of a garment appear to be equal, even though they may not be exactly the same. If the two sides are the same, it is symmetrical balance. If the two sides are different in some way but still give the same weight, it is asymmetrical balance.