

Discover Design Elements

Featured at Fiber and Fabric Camp

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IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
University Extension

What Are Design Elements?

Think of design elements as the ingredients in making a “great recipe” or work of art.



Why Do We Need Design Elements?

The elements of design are important to everyone who works in textiles and clothing, home interiors, woodworking, photography, landscaping, architecture, foods, and the visual arts.



Elements of Design

Line

Lines can be horizontal, vertical, dotted, zigzag, curved, straight, diagonal, bold, or fine.

Lines can show direction, lead the eye, and outline an object.

What type of lines do you see in this exhibit?



Elements of Design



Shape

Shapes are made by connecting lines.

Circle, square, triangle, and freeform are words used to identify shapes.

What shapes do you see?

Elements of Design



- **Color**

Color is described with the words hue, value, and intensity.

Hue = name of the color

Value = lightness or darkness of a hue/color

Intensity = brightness or dullness of a hue/color.

Elements of Design

Texture

Texture is the surface quality of an item. It's how something feels when touched, or looks like it would feel if touched. Search for ways to add texture to your projects. Texture adds variety and interest.

What texture do you see in this exhibit?



Elements of Design

Space

Space is the area between and around objects.

The space around objects is often called negative space.

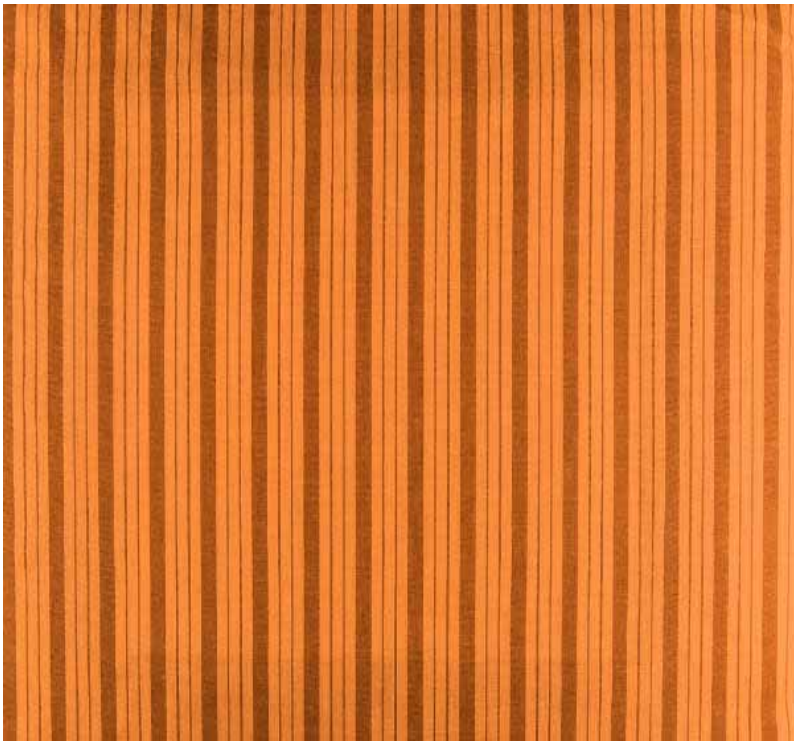
Space can also refer to the feeling of depth.

What is the main object and what is the negative space?



Master Design Elements

Master design elements



This is a sample of corduroy fabric. It is used in clothing and in home furnishings.

*What design element does this fabric best show?
Color, shape, line, texture or space?*

Master Design Elements

This is a woven sample made from fabric feed sacks like burlap.

What design element does this sample best show?

Color, shape, line, texture, or space?



Master Design Elements

These are knitted shrugs.
Easy to make and fun
to wear.

*What design element do
the shrugs best show?*

*Color, texture, line,
shape, or space?*



Master Design Elements



This a a chess set made by a 4-H'er.

What design element does this sample best show?

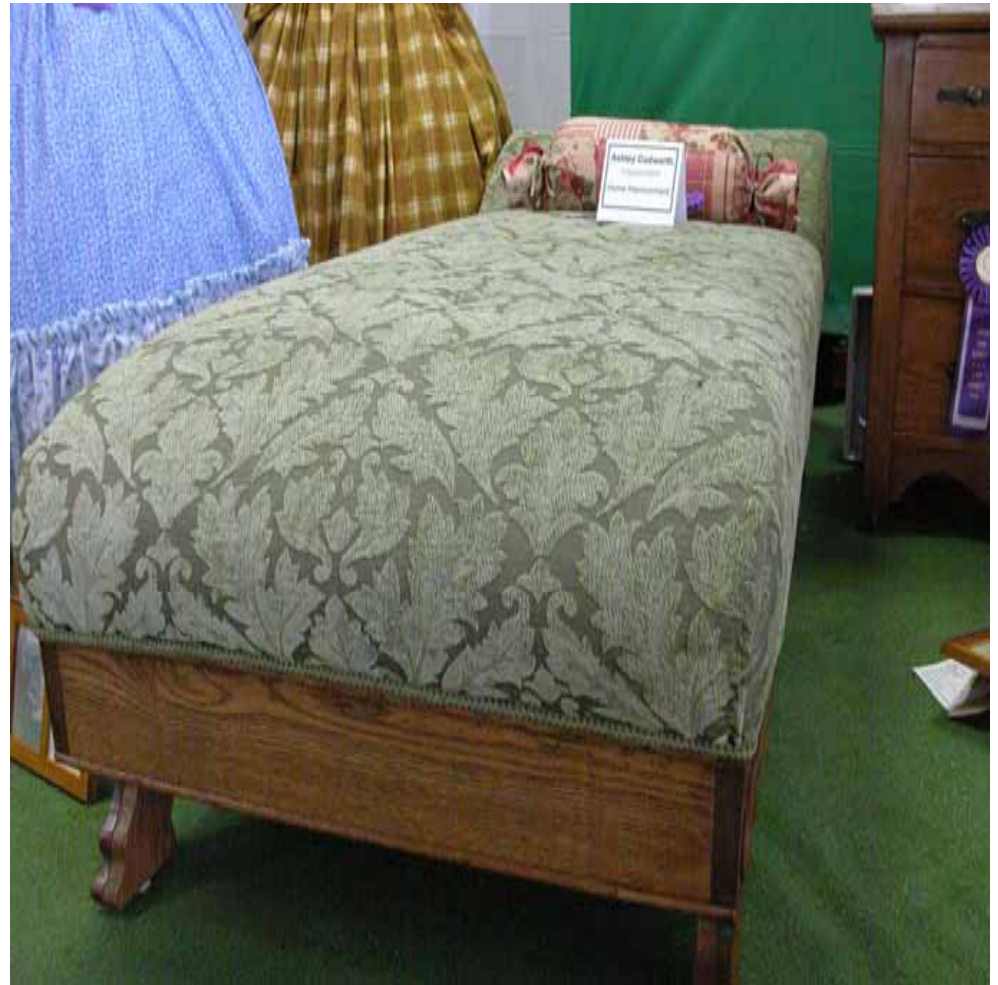
Color, shape, line, space, or texture?

Master Design Elements

This is a daybed reupholstered and refinished by a 4-H'er. Look carefully at the sage green fabric.

What design element does this best show?

Color, texture, space, shape or line?



Try the elements

Look at a picture or object.

1 - Describe the **lines**.

Are they horizontal, vertical, dotted, zigzag, curved, straight, bold or fine?

2 - Tell about the **shapes**.

Circle, square, triangle, and freeform are words used to identify shapes.

3 - What **colors** are used?

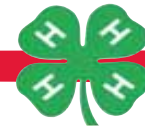
4 - Describe the **texture** of an item. (Is it rough, smooth, soft, etc.)

5 - Describe the **space**. Space is the area between and around objects. The space around objects is often called negative space. Space can also refer to the feeling of depth.

Adapted from handout by Janet Martin, Youth Specialist.

Want To Know More?

- Visit your local extension office and ask for
- 4H 633 [Color](#)
- 4H 634 [Design - Exploring the Elements & Principles](#)
- Publications are also available at
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/pubs/Masterlist.html#4-H>



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