

PAPER LEAF

ELEMENTS

of DESIGN

These are the seven basic ingredients a designer works with. Knowing what each one does makes it much easier to build a **composition** that holds together.

COLOUR

Colour does a lot of work in a design: it sets a mood, signals what is **important**, and adds visual interest. Some colours feel warm and active, like orange and red, while others feel cool and calm, like blue and purple. It also helps to know the two main systems: CMYK (cyan, magenta, yellow, black) is used for print, and RGB (red, green, blue) is used for screens.



LINE



A **line** is a mark between two points. It can be straight, curved, or squiggly, in any weight. Designers use lines to stress a word or phrase, separate sections, connect one piece of content to another, and build patterns.

SHAPE



Put height and width together and you get a **shape**. There are three basic kinds: geometric (squares, circles, triangles), natural (leaves, animals, people), and abstracted (icons and symbols). Odd or less common shapes are good at grabbing attention.

VALUE



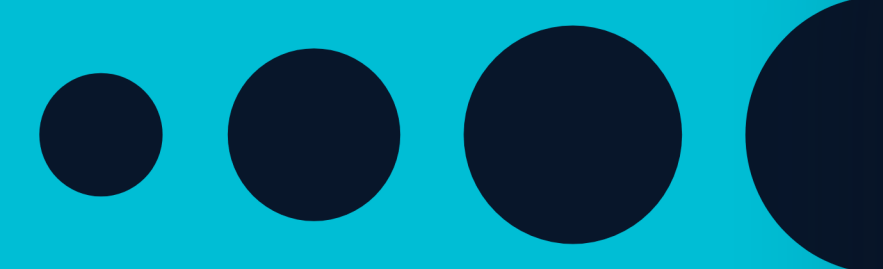
Value is how light or dark an area is. A gradient shows the full range, from black through every shade of grey to white. Use value to create depth, suggest light, lead the eye, and emphasise what matters.

TEXTURE



Texture is the look or feel of a surface. Tight stripes feel sharp and busy, while a fine grain feels soft and even. Printed material has actual texture you can feel, while screens can only imply it. Either way, it adds depth and interest.

SIZE



Size is how small or large something is, like a small shirt next to an extra large one. Contrasting sizes help show what is most important, add visual interest, and pull attention to one part of a design.

SPACE



Space is the area around and between the elements in a design. Use it to separate or group information. Good spacing gives the eye a rest, signals what is important, and leads the viewer through the layout.