

**IMPORTANT: The principles of art are the building blocks, arrangement or use of the elements of art.**

i.e.: shapes are arranged to create a balanced composition,  
texture or line can be arranged to create a pattern

## **Elements of Art**

Contour or Line: defines the edges of shapes and forms. It may be two or three dimensional, descriptive (such as cross hatching), implied (created by a group of objects), or abstract.

Shape: is an area enclosed by line. It is two dimensional, can be geometric, as a square, or organic.

Mass or Form: is three-dimensional. It occupies space, such as a cube, or gives the illusion that it occupies space.

Plane: an area of a two-dimensional surface having determinate extension and spatial direction or position

Volume: a shape in three dimensions. A shape given three dimensions has volume.

Space: is the illusion of objects having depth on the two-dimensional surface, such as a drawing of a book on a table. Linear perspective is used. In landscapes, space is indicated by aerial perspective, objects in the distance fade as they recede.

Texture: is the actual surface feel or the simulated appearance of roughness, smoothness and many in between.

Value: is the lightness or darkness of a surface. It is perceived in terms of varying levels of contrast. Although often referred to when shading, it is important in the study of color.

## **Principles of Art**

Pattern: refers to the repetition of an element which creates a visual beat.

Rhythm / Movement: these refer to the suggestion of motion using various elements, such as line or shape.

Proportion/Scale: Proportion is the size relationship of parts to a whole and to one another. Scale refers to relating size to a constant, such as a human body.

Balance: is the way in which the elements are arranged to create stability in a work of art. It is referred to as symmetrical, asymmetrical, or radial. Two small objects may balance a large one. For example, a large tree on one side of a drawing may be balanced by two or three smaller ones on the other side in a composition.

Unity: is achieved when the components of a work of art are perceived as harmonious, giving the work a sense of completion.

Emphasis: refers to the created center of interest, the place in artwork where your eye first lands. It does not have to be in the center, and usually is not in the center.