



The Art Elements 1

Shape + Pattern | project brief

Materials + Equipment (when working at home)

A3 or A2 paper, chalk pastels, various collage papers, pva or glue stick, scissors .

Project Brief

Types of shapes

- Natural // man made
- Regular // irregular
- 2D // 3D
- Abstract // semi abstract // representational – naturalistic or realistic
- Geometric // organic
- Transparent // opaque // translucent
- Positive // negative
- Coloured // patterned // textured
- Symbolic // non symbolic

Shapes work on 2 planes (in 2 directions) within a picture

1. Over the flat surface – Surface plane or vertical axis - The arrangement of Shapes affect the composition or [Visual balance](#) / 2D / flat surface plane.
2. Into the imagined depth of the picture – Pictorial space - The arrangement of Shapes give [illusion of space or depth](#) / 3D space

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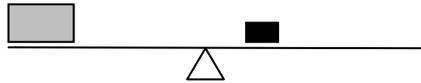
Step 1

Aim: To learn about 'Visual or Compositional Balance' and understand how shapes have a visual balance/counterbalance in a picture (on the 'surface plane' or 'vertical axis').

- Divide A2 paper into 6 thumbnail pictures (with an outline)
- Create simple collage compositions that demonstrates the ways in which the placement of different shapes within the surface plane will affect the Visual balance of a picture.
- Tear and cut pieces of black, mid-grey, yellow or red paper to make your collage.
- See the [Visual Balance](#) information sheet.
- Now create your own version.

Q: What is Visual balance?

A: The perceived weight a shape has or how quickly it will attract the viewer's attention.



The small black square has more visual weight than the larger light grey square. You can imagine the scale being fairly balanced. Darker colours visually feel heavier than lighter ones.

1. **Tone:** A darker tone will have more weight over a lighter shape
2. **Position:** The nearer the edge the heavier it will feel
3. **Colour:** The more saturated and brighter a colour the more weight or power it will have
4. **Shape:** Complex shapes have more power over simpler shapes
5. **Texture:** The more texture the more weight it will tend to have.
6. **Direction:** Diagonal lines (suggest movement and direction) have more power over static vertical or horizontal lines

Also be aware of how important pattern is in when creating pictures.

Pattern: Multiple objects will have more weight over a single large shape.

See my [Pinterest board](#) for examples of different types of pattern used in paintings.

Step 2

Aim: To create an abstract composition and further develop your understanding about how to create 'Visual or Compositional Balance' within in a picture (on the 'surface plane' or 'vertical axis').

Use Kandinsky's exploration of Visual or Compositional Balance to create your own abstract picture. See my [Pinterest board](#) for images of his work.

Notice how

- The shapes and colours are playful. Shapes are placed temptingly off-balance but then counter-balanced by a clever placement of another shape, line or colour.
- All the Shapes work in harmony (balance) around the visual centre or focal point of the composition.
 - Can you identify the visual centre? Ensure your composition has one too.

To create your own composition:

1. Work on A3 or A2 size paper
2. You will be following a process of starting with a perfect white paper = Balance
 - Adding a shape = putting the composition Off balance
 - Adding a 2nd shape = Re-balancing the composition
 - Adding a 3rd shape = putting the composition Off balance once again
 - Etc...
3. You will need to use all your knowledge of the Art Elements – line, colour, tone, texture, pattern, form, and what you learnt in step 1.
4. Use paper collage and chalk pastels.

TIP:

The more complex (the more variety of shapes you use) the more challenging it'll be and the more you'll learn. You can use a mix of flat shapes and a few 3D shapes (shade with chalk pastel) if you dare! But always take your lead from Kandinsky's paintings – use them to learn from.



Step 3

Aim: To further develop your understanding of 'Visual or Compositional Balance' along with creating a strong 'Spatial Depth' by interpreting real objects into a representational semi abstract composition of shapes and pattern.

Be inspired by Matisse's cut outs and Patrick Caulfield's paintings. See my [Pinterest board](#) for images.

Create your own collage art work based on Matisse and Patrick Caulfield.

- Set up a still life, a garden scene or local landscape or even a photograph (preferably one you have taken).
- Draw some thumbnail sketches using chalk pastels or pencil crayons.
 - Simplify what you see into simple shapes
 - Make sure your drawings have a distinct foreground, middle distance and background so you can play with spatial depth in your picture.
 - Pick your best thumbnail sketch
 - Use this as your basis for the paper cut outs and enlarge it to fill your A3 or A2 paper.
 - Use a variety of collage papers with flat colour (see Matisse' cut outs and Patrick Caulfield's paintings)
 - Make your own abstract or semi abstract composition paying careful attention to the visual weight, tones, colour relationships, and sense of pattern that you choose so the feeling of 'Spatial Depth' is enhanced as much as possible.
- Keep an eye on the examples of Matisse's collages and Patrick Caulfield's paintings on my Pinterest board as you want to learn from their work.

REMEMBER:

You are creating a well-balanced composition based on the principles you have learnt in part 1 and part 2 of this project and extending your learning by adding in the element of 'spatial depth'.

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Notes

- If you are working on this project after attending the Art Elements course remember to refer to your notes and remember all that you learnt in class.
- Remember you need to be thinking and applying all that you have learnt about the Principles of Art to help you create a coherent and visually strong 'finished' drawing or painting.
- Use the 'Leave a reply' form on my website to ask me any questions if you are working on this project at home, or sign up to attend the Art Elements course if you haven't already.

Good luck and enjoy!

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on my Facebook group**

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home and to share with your local group.**

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