

# About the seven **PRINCIPLES OF ART**

The *elements* and *principles* of art are the foundation of the language we use to talk about art.



The **PRINCIPLES OF ART** (balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, pattern, rhythm, and unity/variety) represent how the Elements of Art (line, shape, color, value, form, texture, and space) are used by an artist to create a painting, drawing, or other work of art. Not all of the principles need to be used in every piece, but many principles are intertwined, which means the use of one can influence the effect of another.

Read more about each of the principles below and have fun practicing the words on the pages that follow!

**BALANCE** is the visual weight of the elements of the composition. Balance can be achieved in three ways:

1. **Symmetry** Both sides of a composition have the same elements in the same position, as in a mirror-image, or the two sides of a face.
2. **Asymmetry** The composition is balanced due to the contrast of any of the elements of art. For example, a large circle on one side of a composition might be balanced by a small square on the other side
3. **Radial symmetry** Elements are equally spaced around a central point, as in the spokes coming out of the hub of a bicycle tire.

**CONTRAST** is the difference between elements of art in a composition, such that each element is made stronger in relation to the other. Examples include negative/positive space and complementary colors placed side by side.

**EMPHASIS** is when an area of the composition is visually dominant and commands the viewer's attention.

**MOVEMENT** is the result of using the elements of art to move the viewer's eye around and within the image.

A sense of movement can be created by diagonal or curvy lines, either real or implied, by edges, by the illusion of space, by repetition, by energetic mark-making, and other techniques.

**PATTERN** is the uniform repetition of any of the elements of art. Classic patterns are spirals, grids, and weaves.

**RHYTHM** is created by movement implied through the repetition of elements of art in a non-uniform but organized way. Unlike pattern, which demands consistency, rhythm relies on variety.

**UNITY/VARIETY** is created when all the elements fit together comfortably. Too much unity creates monotony; too much variety creates chaos. You need both.

The above descriptions are based on [The 7 Principles of Art and Design](#) by Lisa Marder (May 2019).





## Principles of Art

# WORD SEARCH

R	N	K	K	C	O	M	P	L	E	M	E	N	T	A	R	Y
E	A	G	L	P	K	B	B	A	P	R	U	A	R	H	P	E
P	N	O	X	C	A	N	B	M	F	W	M	L	O	M	F	F
E	J	T	V	G	S	N	V	F	K	G	U	N	I	T	Y	N
T	N	U	H	F	Y	C	H	A	H	V	P	A	R	M	Z	P
I	H	P	S	O	M	N	B	B	N	R	H	Y	T	H	M	A
T	H	Z	J	S	M	E	A	C	C	O	N	T	R	A	S	T
I	C	U	S	Y	E	G	L	O	D	M	T	P	A	E	L	T
O	V	M	Y	J	T	A	A	N	O	R	M	I	K	M	W	E
N	A	Z	M	X	R	T	N	S	M	A	Y	M	C	P	R	R
T	R	X	M	S	Y	I	C	I	I	X	L	O	O	H	R	N
M	I	W	E	A	N	V	E	S	N	D	R	V	L	A	G	S
R	E	B	T	E	Y	E	S	T	A	V	A	E	O	S	P	L
Q	T	Y	R	P	P	T	A	E	N	J	D	M	R	I	K	I
D	Y	M	Y	D	U	G	P	N	T	Q	I	E	H	S	R	T
C	A	X	H	Z	M	O	H	C	E	U	A	N	V	E	L	O
P	O	S	I	T	I	V	E	Y	Q	G	L	T	O	B	Q	I

LOOK UP AND DOWN AND ACROSS TO FIND THESE HIDDEN WORDS ABOUT  
THE PRINCIPLES OF ART

Asymmetry   Balance   Color   Complementary   Consistency  
 Contrast   Dominant   Emphasis   Movement   Negative  
 Pattern   Positive   Radial   Repetition   Rhythm  
 Symmetry   Unity   Variety





## Principles of Art

# WORD SEARCH

Unscramble these words about the Principles of Art  
(HINT: They are the same as the Word Search)

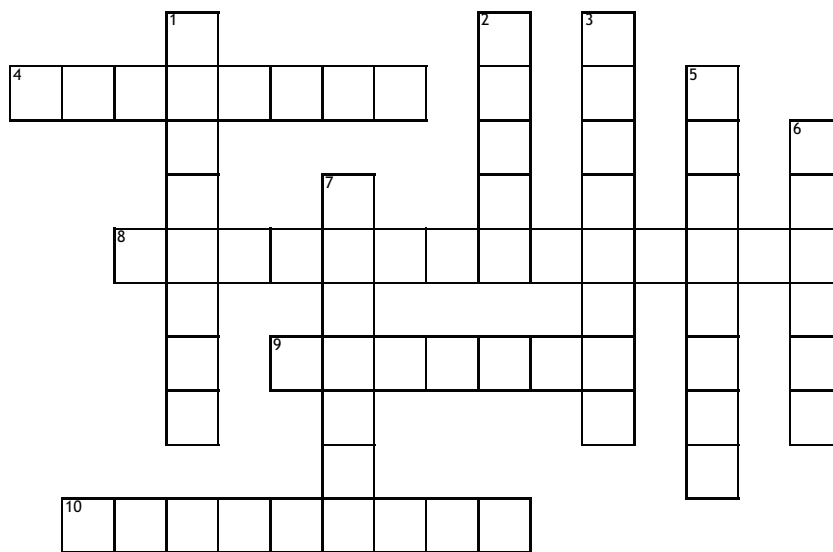
1. AYSTMREYM \_\_\_\_\_
2. ACBENLA \_\_\_\_\_
3. OLOCR \_\_\_\_\_
4. LEOTCYPEMRMNA \_\_\_\_\_
5. ICCSOENNYST \_\_\_\_\_
6. OATNTSCR \_\_\_\_\_
7. ANDITONM \_\_\_\_\_
8. SHMIPeAS \_\_\_\_\_
9. OVEETMMN \_\_\_\_\_
10. ENIATVEG \_\_\_\_\_
11. TRATPEN \_\_\_\_\_
12. IEISTVOP \_\_\_\_\_
13. DIRALA \_\_\_\_\_
14. ITOIENTPER \_\_\_\_\_
15. RYTMHH \_\_\_\_\_
16. ESMTRYMY \_\_\_\_\_
17. TINYU \_\_\_\_\_
18. TAERVIY \_\_\_\_\_





# Principles of Art

## CROSSWORD



### Across

4. Type of balance: mirror image
8. Type of balance: elements around a central point (two words)
9. Repetition of shapes, lines, or colors
10. Type of balance: contrast of elements

### Down

1. Center of interest
2. All the elements fit together comfortably
3. The path a viewer's eye follows
5. Difference in values, colors, textures, and shapes
6. Movement implied through the varied repetition of elements
7. Visual weight of the composition's elements

1 Emphasis 2 Unity 3 Movement 4 Symmetry 5 Contrast 6 Rhythm 7 Balance 8 Radial Symmetry 9 Pattern 10 Asymmetry