

# Principles of Design

Fashion Class  
Thornton High School



# Principles of Design

-  Balance
-  Proportion
-  Emphasis
-  Rhythm



# Balance

- Denotes equilibrium
- Steadiness among parts of a design
- Visual distribution of weight
- Makes a feeling of rest / lack of movement
- Color – warm and dark colors appear heavier than cool and light colors
- Large amounts of tints or neutrals balance smaller areas of shades or bright colors.



# Types of Balance

## ■ Formal Balance

- 1. symmetrical
- 2. design details are divided equally
- 3. most common type of balance
- 4. is the simplest
- 5. is the least expensive to produce

## ■ Informal Balance

- 1. is asymmetrical
- 2. design details are divided unequally
- 3. usually achieved with diagonal lines and off-center closings
- 4. should not look heavier on one side than the other
- 5. more unusual and more interesting



# Proportion

- Is the spatial, or size, relationship of all of the parts in a design to each other and to the whole garment.
- The size of all the parts of an outfit should be related.
- Is determined by how the total spaced is divided.
- Is not as pleasing when all areas are exactly equal in size.
- Unequal parts are more interesting.



# More on Proportion

- The ideal body – 8 heads tall with  $\frac{7}{8}$  of it below the head.
- The proportions have  $\frac{3}{8}$  of the total figure from the waist to the top of the head.
- The remaining  $\frac{5}{8}$  of the body is from the waist to the soles of the feet.
- Fashions that flatter the natural figure are pleasing and remain in style.



# Accessories and Proportion

- These should be in proportion to the garment and body build.
- Large belt is fine on a tall person, but would be out of proportion on a small person.
- A woman with a big body frame wouldn't look good carrying a small, tiny purse.
- Consider the design of the fabric.
- Large prints – would overpower a small person.
- A tiny print would be lost on a large person (would make the person look even larger).



# Emphasis

- A focus of interest in a particular area of a design.
- The emphasis is the center of attention of an outfit.
- All of the other parts of the design are not as important.
- Without an center of interest – outfit is monotonous and looks not planned.



# More on Emphasis

- Emphasis can be used to draw attention to an attractive personal feature.
- Usually it is used to draw attention to the face.
- Achieve this with contrasts of colors and textures.
- Light, bright colors and shiny textures attract attention.



# Other Tips

- Use a large item or a group of small items to achieve emphasis.
- Accessories such as belts, scarves, or neckties can add emphasis to a plain outfit.



# Rhythm

- To get a feeling of continuity or easy movement.
- The pleasing arrangement of the design elements.
- You can make rhythm through repetition, gradation, transition, opposition, or neutral.
- Repetition just repeats lines, shapes, or colors.



# More on Types of Rhythm

- Gradation means there is a gradual increase or decrease of similar elements.
- Transition is made when a curved line leads the eye over an angle.
- Example is when there is a line that is curved and the eye has to change directions abruptly.



# Harmony

- Is pleasing visual unity.
- It is very tasteful when all parts within the whole garment is created.
- You get the feeling that all parts of the outfit belong together.
- Use your clothes and accessories as an art and a science to your best personality



# Seven Body Types

## Tall and Thin

-  Ideal model shape
-  Choose gathered or pleated full skirts, flared or wide-legged pants, horizontal stripes and seams.
-  Multicolored outfits with bright, patterns and prints are good.
-  Can wear almost all fabrics, especially heavier ones.
-  Should avoid tight, straight dresses or severely tailored lines.



# Tall and Heavy

- Garments should have simple lines.
- Garments need little decoration.
- Choose subtle or muted prints.
- A-line skirts that end below the knee are a good choice.
- Pants should have straight or only slightly flared legs.
- Details at the neck can be used to draw attention to the face.
- Avoid loud prints, checks, plaids and stripes.



# Short and Thin

- Also called “petite” people.
- Choose soft, fluid, lightweight fabrics.
- Small scale prints and smooth textures are the best.
- Unbroken vertical or diagonal lines are the best.
- Shirtwaist dresses and business suits look nice.
- Avoid bulky textures, large prints, plaids, large pockets and large cuffs, and heavy accessories are overpowering.



# Short and Heavy

- Choose garments that give illusions of height.
- Lots of vertical lines will slim and give height.
- Empire, A-line, or narrow silhouettes are good.
- If a belt is needed – thin belt of a matching color.
- High heels help – but not extremely high heels – out of proportion.
- Avoid two-piece suits, two-colored garments, pants with cuffs, turtlenecks, double-breasted jackets, and clunky shoes.
- Don't wear wide stiff belts.
- Clothes that are too tight make this person look as if they have outgrown their clothes.



# Top Heavy

- Called the “inverted triangle.”
- Has a large upper body in proportion with the lower body.
- Choose simple, slim tailored shirts or long cardigan jackets with a vertical feeling over the top part.
- V-necklines are flattering, open collars with a lapel, and slim sleeves are good.
- Top – dark, plain fabric / bottom – bright or light patterned fabrics.
- Avoid horizontal lines at the chest, low yoke or smocking at the bustline, clingy or shiny fabrics on the top, high or fussy necklines and large collars.
- Do not wear short full sleeves or breast pockets. These give the illusions of width across the chest and upper arms.



# Thick Middle

- Waist is similar to the chest and hips.
- Not really well-defined waistline.
- Choose unfitted garments like over blouses, empire lines, tunics, and long sweaters.
- Garments that hang slightly loose from the shoulders are good.
- Keep fashion details above the waist.
- Pants can be flared.
- Avoid clingy styles, clothes with fitted waistlines, or tight belts.
- Don't wear baggy or bulky garments around the middle, and avoid wearing clothes that have bold prints or horizontal lines.



# Hip Heavy

- Called the “triangular” figure.
- The broad hips are large in proportion to the upper body.
- Choose garments with vertical lines going up to the neckline.
- Skirts and pants should fit neither tightly or with too much fullness at the hips. Pants should NOT taper at the bottom.
- Wide belts and horizontal bands at the hipline are bad. Patch pockets below the waist are not a good choice. Long full sleeves with big cuffs are NOT good.
- Tight skimpy tops make the hips look larger.



# General Guidelines

- Pockets that have the shape of vertical or slanted slits are slimming.
- Yoke across the bodice front appears to broaden the shoulders.
- Wide cuffs at the wrist make arms look shorter.
- V-lines at the top of a vertical line to give sloping shoulders an upward lift.
- Use raglan sleeves seam lines to soften or modify the square shoulders.
- For rounded shoulders, wear set-in sleeves.

