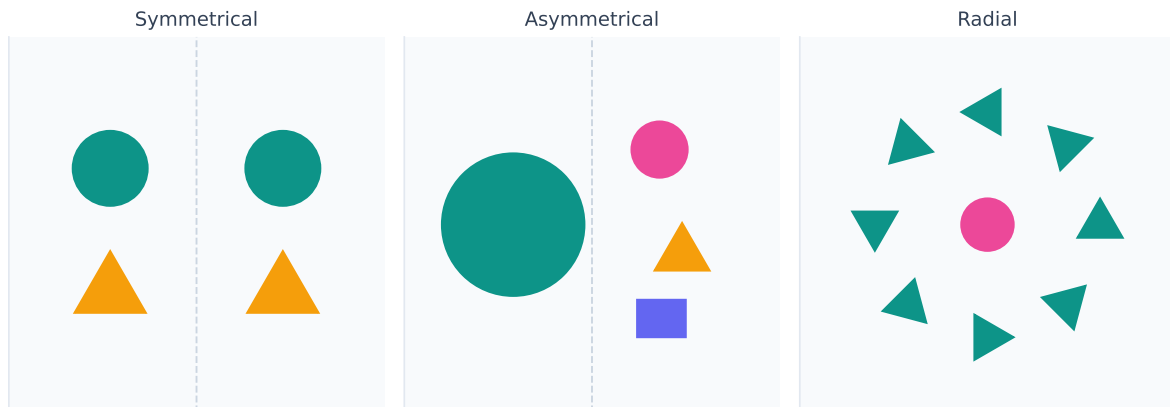


Principles of Design

AP 2-D Art and Design

Balance

The **principles of design** 设计原则 are the "rules" for arranging the elements of art. The first is **balance** 平衡—the visual distribution of weight so a work feels stable.



Symmetrical balance mirrors a central axis; asymmetrical balance weighs different elements; radial balance radiates from a centre

- **Symmetrical (formal) balance** 对称平衡 mirrors both sides of a central axis — calm and orderly.
- **Asymmetrical (informal) balance** 非对称平衡 uses different elements of equal **visual weight** 视觉重量—dynamic and lively.
- **Radial balance** 辐射平衡 arranges elements around a central point.

Visual weight is affected by size, colour, value, and position: a small bright shape can balance a large dull one.

Emphasis and Focal Point

Emphasis 强调 makes one part of a work stand out as the centre of interest —the **focal point** 视觉焦点, where the eye is drawn first.

- Emphasis is created through **contrast** —of size, colour, value, isolation, or placement.
- Leading lines and the rule of thirds help place a strong focal point.
- **Subordination** 从属 keeps other areas quieter so the focal point leads.

Contrast

Contrast 对比 is the difference between elements —it creates energy, variety, and readability.

- Contrast can be of value (light/dark), colour (complementary), shape, texture, or size.
- Strong contrast attracts attention and defines a focal point; low contrast unifies and calms.
- In design, value and size contrast create clear **visual hierarchy** 视觉层次.

Movement and Rhythm

Movement 动感 leads the viewer's eye through a work; **rhythm** 节奏 is the repetition that creates a visual "beat".

- Movement is the path the eye takes, guided by line, edges, colour, and placement.
- Rhythm types: **regular** (even), **flowing** (curving), **progressive** 渐进 (gradual change), and random.
- Repetition with variation keeps rhythm interesting rather than monotonous.

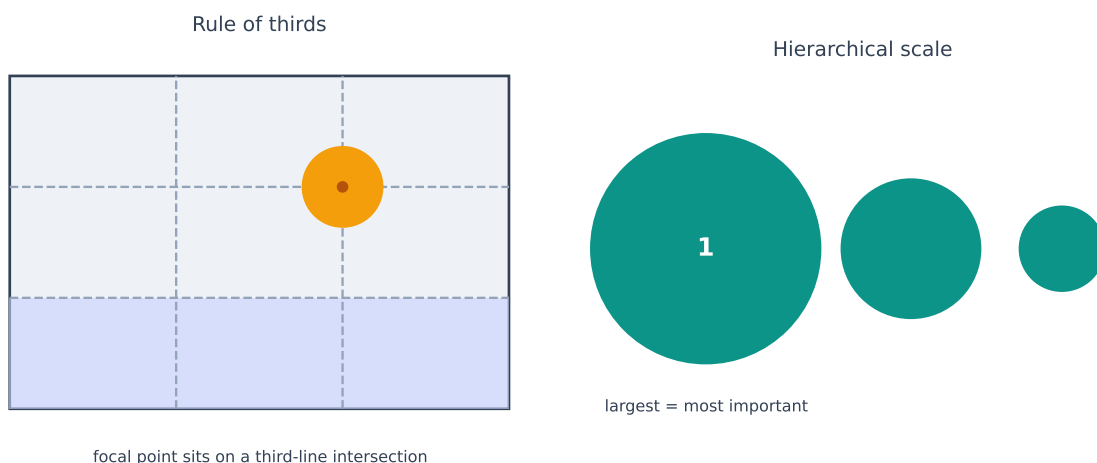
Pattern and Repetition

Repetition 重复 reuses an element; a **pattern** 图案 is the repeated element arranged in a predictable way.

- Repetition of shape, colour, or line builds unity and rhythm.
- A pattern is a repeated **motif** 母题—regular (a grid or tessellation) or irregular.
- Too much repetition feels monotonous; changing scale or colour adds variety.

Proportion and Scale

Proportion 比例 is the size relationship between parts; **scale** 尺度 is the size of an element relative to something else.



The rule of thirds places key elements on the third-lines; hierarchical scale makes the important element largest

- Proportion compares the sizes of parts within a work (head to body).
- **Hierarchical scale** 等级比例 makes the most important element the largest.
- Exaggerated or distorted proportion can express emotion or draw attention. The **golden ratio** 黄金比例 is a historic guide to pleasing proportions.

Unity and Variety

Unity 统一 holds a work together as a whole; **variety** 变化 adds interest so it is not dull. Good design balances the two.

- Unity comes from repetition, **proximity** 邻近 (grouping), and a limited palette.
- Variety is difference that prevents monotony. **Harmony** 和谐 comes from similar elements.
- The best works achieve unity **with** variety —order that still surprises.

Composition

Composition 构图 is how all the elements and principles are arranged within the **picture plane** 画面.

- The **format** 画幅 (portrait, landscape, square) shapes the design.
- The **rule of thirds** 三分法 places key elements along third-lines and their intersections.
- **Cropping** 裁剪 decides what is included and what is cut, changing emphasis and tension.
- A strong composition unifies the elements while creating a clear focal point —this is what the AP portfolio's 2-D skills are judged on.

Exam tips

- For every work, state which **principle** organises it —balance, emphasis, contrast, movement, or unity.
- Justify **balance** through **visual weight**, not just symmetry.
- Ensure one clear **focal point**, and name the **emphasis** technique that creates it.
- Aim for **unity with variety** —name the unifying device and the source of interest.
- Plan **composition** with the **rule of thirds** and thumbnails before committing.