

## Design Principles

Six basic design principles can help you create a quality presentation. These principles are *guidelines*, not rules. Creative graphic designers often “break the rules” to create interesting effects. However, the six principles can help you design a presentation that captures your audience’s attention and is easy to read and understand.

The six principles of graphic design are:

- **Alignment** makes your presentation easy to see and read. Well-aligned type and graphics complement each other without obstructing other elements.
- **Balance** sets the tone for a presentation. An even distribution of type and graphics can make a presentation more soothing or serious. An uneven distribution of type and graphics can make a presentation more active or amusing.
- **Contrast** directs the audience’s attention to a specific place or idea. Differences in size and appearance of type or graphics can create eye-catching contrast.
- **Proximity** uses space to show how type and graphics are related. Placing two elements close together suggests a close relationship or agreement. Placing elements far apart shows a weaker relationship or tension.
- **Repetition** helps the audience follow the logic of a presentation. If every type and graphic looks different, the audience may get lost quickly. If similar elements have the same look, the audience can follow along easily.
- **White space** gives the audience’s eyes a rest. If every inch of a presentation is filled with type or graphics, the audience may become overwhelmed. White space does not have to be white. It can be any color as long as the space is empty and the audience does not have to focus on it.