


Basic Layout Concepts



**TYPOGRAPHICAL**  
HIERARCHY

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**Design is based on a set of rules and strict principles.** When used properly these guidelines help control the viewer's attention on your work. Successful design establishes an order, in a creative fashion, to the information provided. Random design gains poor results.

# Achieving successful order to your layout designs requires:

utilizing formal design principles & primary design elements.

## 4 Basic Design Principles:

- 1 Balance
- 2 Contrast
- 3 Value / Color
- 4 Unity

Notice David Dabner establishes 8 Design Principles in the textbook. You will find every reference book on this subject rearranges the concept to suit their theories.



**Balance** controls the information flow and enhances the atmosphere of a project.

A conservative product would use a formal sense of balance, with less movement around the dimensions page.

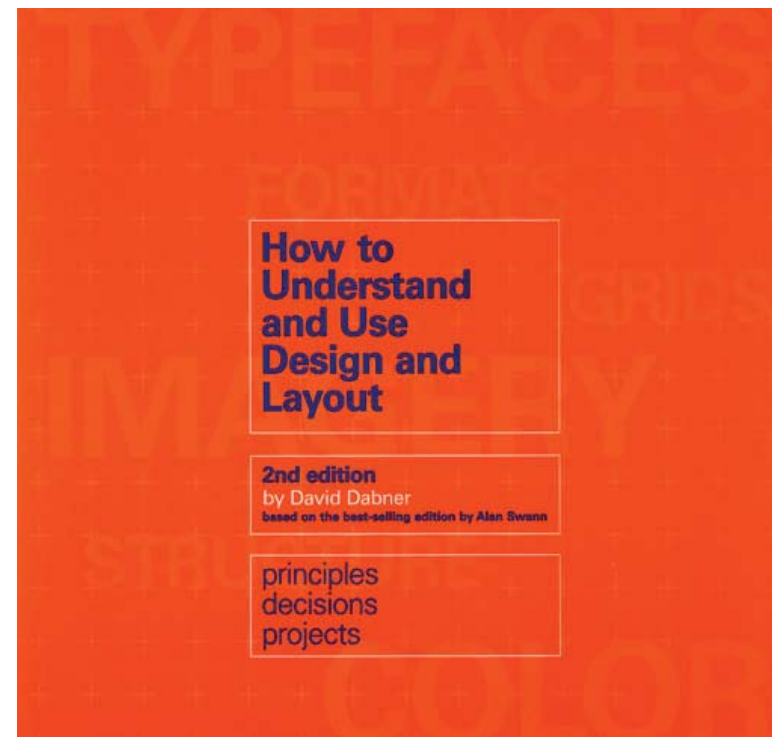


In the top example the negative space balances out the acrobat's figure, and controls the movement of the viewer to the text below.

Likewise the negative energy balances out the size of the text; both are equal in dimensions.

The bottom example shows the same concept with the two main divisions of the page equally balanced with placement of elements. White space strategically balances the awkward size of the right hand paragraph.

**Contrast** adds impact to a design. Combining polar opposites on the page surprises the viewer, keeps their attention.



**Color** conveys mood and emphasis.

**Unity** is provided when the order of the page and the different elements work together.

In addition unity is provided in the manner your elements are assembled within invisible guidelines or grid. Everything should line up exactly on an established grid.

Notice how everything on the quarter page ad connects with the invisible grid. In a promotional series of same-sized ads for the coffeehouse, each would utilize the same grid and same alignment within the dimensions. A page layout system is established.

**A page layout system includes:**

- drafting a grid for the elements used on the page/ad
- developing consistency for headlines, subheads, body copy (and if necessary: captions, page numbers, navigation bar)



# JAVah

**L**orem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Morbi hendrerit quam sit amet massa. Cras tellus quam, luctus in, cursus sit amet, lobortis nec, lorem. Aliquam pharetra. Aliquam erat volutpat. In eu ligula eget odio iaculis ultricies. Proin sagittis mi id massa. Cras vel pede vitae turpis vehicula consequat. Cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus. Aliquam pharetra. Aliquam erat volutpat. Ars longa vita brevis. Cras tellus quam, luctus in, cursus sit amet, lobortis nec, lorem. Aliquam pharetra.

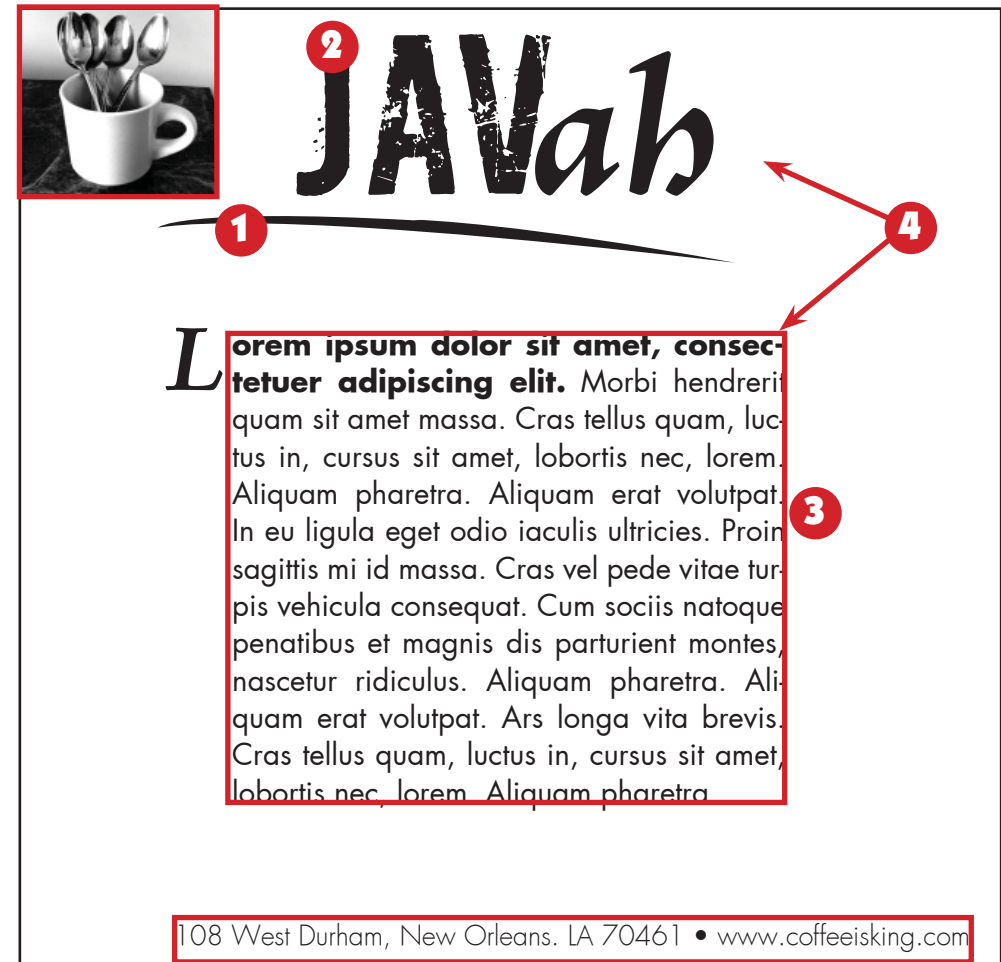
# Achieving successful order to your layout requires:

utilizing formal design principles & primary design elements.

## 4 Basic Design Elements:

- 1 Line:** controls elements, organizes dimensions
- 2 Texture:** creates mood; physical paper/printed text
- 3 Shape:** creates motion, organizes elements  
*see pages 14–19 in Dabner's book*
- 4 Type:** creates mood, displays shape, adds energy  
*see pages 66–73 in Dabner's book*

**Images and additional graphics or illustrations** could be grouped as an additional Fifth Element.



**All letterforms in a heading** need not be the same style or family. Utilize only recognizable fonts. (JAV is a font based on a modified Univers.)



RECKONING MUSIC DVDS

# Play Time

Dime-novel songs punctuated by 50-point words on \$20 DVD By Jesse Jarnow

## THE DECEMBERISTS

A Practical Handbook [KILL ROCK STARS]★★★★

The Decemberists' evocation of an elementary-school play—first on the cover art to 2005's *Picuresque*, and now as the overriding theme of their *Practical Handbook* DVD—is at least as strategic as it is whimsical. An arty conceit, for sure, it also allows them a starting point of both shambolic modesty and unabashed cuteness. Both serve as something to transcend as well as a shield for frontman Colin Meloy's grand ambitions. If the lat-

ter fail, as they sometimes do—hey, it still comes off as innocent. But if they succeed, as they do far more often, it's a pretty good conceit for a band.

During the frustratingly un-indexed live set leading off the DVD, this conceit plays both roles. Taped in its native Portland, the band takes to the stage in vague period-dress, Meloy in a candy-striped music-hall blazer, bassist Nate Query in bowler cap and suit, etc. From there, it's up to Meloy's songs. When the music matches his lyrics (such as with the charging Victorian bolero that sustains staggering rhymes like "pachy-

derm?" "passenger'd" on "The Infanta"), the costumes are legit, and The Decemberists' music is straight steam-punk thrill. Elsewhere, like on the pedestrian folk-rock strum of "We Both Go Down Together" and the precious "I Was Meant For the Stage," Meloy's quaint phrasings make the costumes seem downright comy. (Though the band's supremely mannered stage-trashing is also kind of charming.)

ed fantasies like "Leslie Anne Levine" (haunting, and simply so) and, later, overstated fantasies like

"The Mariner's Revenge Song" (which entails stage props and audience participation). And to contrast the performance, there is a pleasant enough documentary, Aaron Stewart-Ahn's *Paris Before the War*, which chronicles the



recording of *Picuresque* without probing too deeply into the band's music.

If there is a tension in The Decemberists' existence, it is one between being literate and literary. Most often, the band seems satisfied with the former, and that's a fine decision. Rock 'n' roll—even earnest, well-read rock 'n' roll—isn't necessarily meant to be anything but ecstatic. Attempting to do otherwise—that's a challenge. When The Decemberists meet it, they are utterly exhilarating. When they don't, you just applaud and smile, like at every other school play you've ever attended.

—JESSE JARNOW—

Jesse Jarnow has written for the *London Times*, *Rolling Stone*, *Salon.com*, the *Associated Press* and many others. He blogs about B-sides, books and baseball at [jessejarnow.com](http://jessejarnow.com), and occasionally writes fiction.



EP: Jimmy Cables, Chris Funk, Colin Meloy, John Moen, Nate Query

## NICK CAVE & THE BAD SEEDS

The Abattoir Blues Tour

[MUTE]★★★★

Nick the Dark Vicar takes his gothic sermons to the masses

There aren't many artists capable of releasing a career-defining work 13 albums into the game, but Aussie goth king Nick Cave is one such exception. In 2004, Bad Seeds co-founder Blixa Bargeld threw in his lot with *Einstürzende Neubauten* full time. The band's subsequent album—*Abattoir Blues/The Lyre of Orpheus*—was its first studio double recording and marked the high-water point of Cave's post-Birthday Party output. The supporting tour never made it to the U.S., which is part of what makes *The Abattoir Blues Tour* such

a vital document, comprising two CDs of live material culled from various European dates and two DVDs capturing the tour's most fiery evenings (including a sold-out performance at London's Brixton Academy). And while the now-requisite rendition of



Cave live favorite "The Mercy Seat" goes missing, the set does include a near-complete performance of both studio discs (replete with backing from the London Community Gospel Choir) and Cave at his vicar-strength best, preaching almighty fire and brimstone while fearlessly cataloguing the darkest depths of human depravity. *Bad Scoopa*

## U2

Achtung Baby: A Classic Album Under Review

[SEX INTELLECTUAL]★★★★

U2's landmark 1991 release analyzed song-by-song

Falling at the midpoint of the band's career and arriving at the moment when it was most in need of reinvention, U2 may never make another album as pivotal as *Achtung Baby*. At least that's the premise proposed by the series of journalists interviewed for this 68-minute documentary, and they make an undeniably solid case by establishing the unique historical con-



text that produced what remains the band's most experimental release. Its relocation to Berlin, its flirtations with European dance music, its newfound willingness to explore the shades of grey surrounding love and faith—all of these are explored exhaustively to establish the idea that the album is the band's most complex and nuanced release. Even so, the lack of interview footage with any of the band members and the almost exclusive reliance on live and video footage causes the tone of the film to wax overly academic at times. It's likely that most U2 fanatics will know most of the points being discussed anyway, but for the neophyte, it's hard to find a better introduction to one of the definitive releases of the '90s. *©Matt Fink*

PHOTO BY AUTUMN DE WILDE

# HIPHOP ROCKS

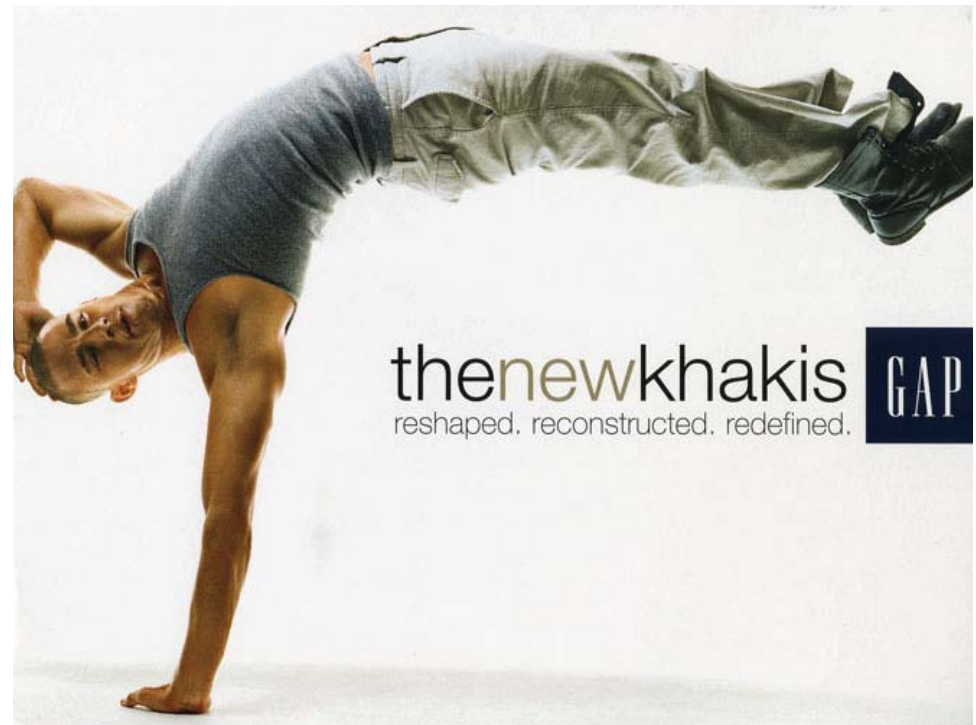
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THE NEW FRONTIER.

AFTER 150 YEARS  
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**YO-YO**  
music that matters to him

We sat down with Yo-Yo Ma in Boston to talk about the artists who have inspired him and the music that has changed his life. Growing up in Paris, he loved Edith Piaf; discovered Bobby McFerrin while driving around Germany on tour and will always revere the simplicity and sublimity of Glenn Gould's 1955 performance of Bach's "Goldberg Variations."

**MA**

“It's gorgeous Beethoven, full of ideal sentiments. It just makes your hair stand on end because it's so powerful. One of the reasons I chose this piece, with this combination of musicians, is that both Leon Fleisher and George Szell are musical heroes of mine. There was an extraordinary chemistry between the two of them. George Szell was an Old World conductor, a paternalistic figure to Leon, and Leon was this young hotshot American pianist. And when they made music, it was absolutely magical. For people who don't know Beethoven, I think this movement, interpreted by these musicians, is a wonderful introduction.”



—Yo-Yo Ma on Leon Fleisher  
Second Movement from the album *Beethoven, Piano Concertos No. 2 & 4*, Leon Fleisher, Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell

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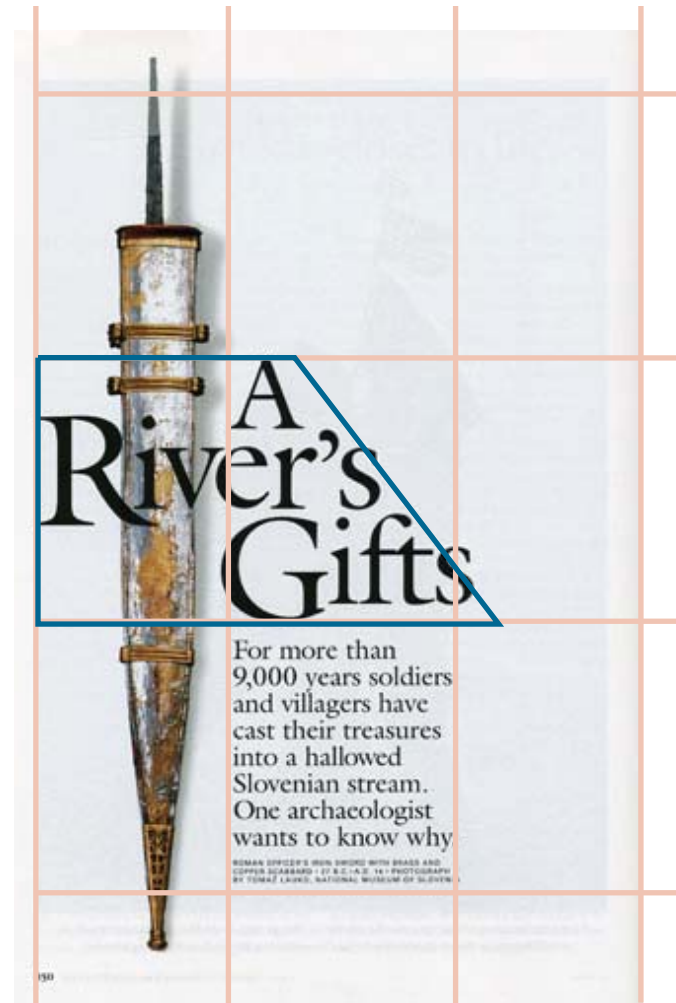
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THE QUICK  
BROWN FOX  
JUMPED OVER  
THE LAZY DOG

THE QUICK  
BROWN FOX  
JUMPED OVER  
THE LAZY DOG

**Alignment** places critical emphasis on a design and likewise helps convey mood. Aligning type creates shape. The more definite the shape the stronger the design. Centered text is considered weak. It creates irregular shapes.

THE QUICK  
BROWN FOX  
JUMPED OVER  
THE LAZY DOG



In this example to the left, notice how the designer broke the heading into a staggered shape. What prevents this from resulting in a weak design, the alignment of the text has a slanted edge — or a faux left justification.

The larger point size used for the upper-case R and G play into the designer's plan, reinforcing the proposed alignment.

Likewise, the photo's vertical shape echoes the left justified text beside it.

**THE QUICK**

BROWN FOX

JUMPED OVER

THE LAZY DOG

THE QUICK  
BROWN FOX  
**JUMPED OVER**

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**BROWN FOX**

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THE QUICK  
BROWN FOX  
JUMPED OVER  
**THE LAZY DOG**

**Obviously, the eye instinctively jumps** to bolder, larger text. Above are examples of a heading utilizing Gill Sans, 36pt and 48pt/leading 43pt.

As a designer you choose what will be the emphasis on the page, and where the reader will begin the process of interpreting the work.



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sale items.**

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**If you remember this ad from last week**, only the headline is established with a sense of dominance to the page. All other sections of the ad remain in the same size and in the same style. There is no grid system in place whatsoever.

## To sum up:

01. Design is based on a set of rules and strict principles.  
Random design is weak.
02. Achieving successful order to your layout designs requires:  
utilizing formal design principles & primary design elements.
03. Four Basic Design Principles:  
Balance: controls information flow, enhances page/ad  
Contrast: adds impact to design, surprises viewer  
Value / Color: conveys mood and emphasis  
Unity: provides order to page; assembles elements in hierarchy
04. Page layout system includes: grid, consistency with all elements
05. Four Basic Design Elements:  
Line: controls elements, organizes dimensions  
Texture: creates mood; physical paper/printed text  
Shape: creates motion, organizes elements  
Type: creates mood, displays shape, adds energy
06. Type Hierarchy Guidelines:
  - alignment places critical emphasis on a design or headline
  - bolder, larger text helps control viewer's eye
  - individual letterforms can be generated at larger sizes  
or can be a unique font itself
  - it is preferred for you to utilize recognizable fonts
  - aligned type creates a shape
  - text that is centered has a weak shape
  
  - uppercase letters are harder to read, slowing reading speed;  
never use capitals in long pieces of copy
  - experiment with kerning; kerned type has a more defined shape
  - control leading, tighter leading adds emphasis
  - DO NOT STACK TYPE
  - do not mix more than two or three typefaces together
  - use one typeface family in various weights
  - do not mix serifs with serifs; do not mix sans-serif with sans-serif