



IMPACT. INFLUENCE. INSPIRE.

# SLIDE & VISUAL DESIGN GUIDE

Created By Our Friends At



(For the complete eBook, visit: [www.visme.co](http://www.visme.co))

A hand holding a pen pointing at a projector screen. The background is a blurred image of a projector with a bright light beam emanating from its lens. The overall color palette is warm, with reds and oranges.

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# Handle Text Like a Designer

## 1 POINT SIZE

Placing text on a slide may seem like a simple task, but it involves a number of important design choices that will affect the way your viewers perceive and process your message.

For starters, make sure to use uppercase letters for short titles and not complete sentences, as this makes them harder to read.

Business guru Guy Kawasaki also advises to use text with a point size no smaller than 30. For larger venues, such as a TED conference, there are presenters who use text as big as 72 to 120 points.

hello

30 pts.

hello

48 pts.

hello

60 pts.

hello

72 pts.

hello

120 pts.

“The first 30 seconds and the last 30 seconds have the most impact in a presentation.”  
*Patricia Fripp*



## 2 LEADING

Another common mistake is too little or too much space between lines, known as **leading**.

Most presentation tools allow you to adjust the leading so that your text can breathe. Since the default spacing between lines in presentation software is often too high, it's a good idea to modify it in accordance with your chosen font.

Take a look at how the slide on the left has too much leading, while the one on the right has too little. The leading applied to the slide in the middle is just about right.

### Positive Impacts of Smart Phones



- You can easily communicate with others as it is portable.
- Not only use for talking but also for shopping, taking pictures, etc.
- Made it easy to plan and schedule your daily routine.

Too little leading

### Positive Impacts of Smart Phones



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Too much leading

### Positive Impacts of Smart Phones



- You can easily communicate with others as it is portable.
- Not only use for talking but also for shopping, taking pictures, etc.
- Made it easy to plan and schedule your daily routine.

Just right



### 3 LIST YOUR FAVORITE FONTS

With so many fonts out there, it can easily become a time-consuming task to choose the best ones for your slide deck.

One way around this is to create a list of your preferred fonts for use in any visual presentation.

**Sans serif fonts** (which do not come with small lines at the end of strokes, unlike serif fonts) work well in presentations with small amounts of large text. For longer paragraphs of text, **serif fonts** are recommended as they improve readability.

Presentation guru [Garr Reynolds](#) lists some of his favorite fonts: Caslon, Garamond, Baskerville, Helvetica, Futura, Bodoni, Frutiger, Rockwell and Franklin Gothic.

You can create your own list by browsing through this selection of [free web fonts](#), as we've done here.

Rubik

Alegreya Sans

Libre Franklin

Cormorant

Playfair Display

Fira Sans



## 4 HOW TO PAIR FONTS

There are certain rules to keep in mind when pairing fonts. We've summarized them here with some visual examples.

### Use fonts from the same typeface.

One of the easiest ways to avoid design blunders is to choose fonts from the same font family. For example, by pairing a bold font with a thinner variation from the same family, you'll achieve just the right amount of contrast.

## Before

**Business Outlook**  
Economic Boom

## After

**Business Outlook**  
Economic Boom





## Before

Stick to two—max three—typefaces.

You might be looking too hard for just the right combination. Instead of overthinking it, just stick to two or three combinations and, above all, keep it simple.

### Business Outlook

#### Economic *Boom*

A period of significant output within a population. The period is marked by **productivity increases, sales increases, wage increases and rising demand**. An *economic boom* may be accompanied by a period of inflation.

## After

### Business Outlook

#### *Economic Boom*

A period of significant output within a population. The period is marked by productivity increases, sales increases, wage increases and rising demand. An economic boom may be accompanied by a period of inflation.



## Before

### Assign distinct roles to each font.

A good tip to remember is that consistency is crucial to a professional-looking design. One way to do this is to assign a role to each of the fonts used throughout your presentation. For example, you can use the same font for slide titles, another for body text, a third font for diagram labels and so on.

# Marketing Research

## Consumer research

Information for marketing research is collected from direct observation of the consumers, mail surveys, telephone or face-to-face interviews, and from published sources.

## After

# Marketing Research

## CONSUMER RESEARCH

Information for marketing research is collected from direct observation of the consumers, mail surveys, telephone or face-to-face interviews, and from published sources.





## Before

Choose fonts with the right personality.

Another key to pairing fonts is recognizing that each font has a personality and a mood. Don't make the mistake of pairing fonts that simply aren't meant to go together or don't match the visual theme of your slide deck.

### MARKETING RESEARCH

Consumer research

Information for marketing research is collected from direct observation of the consumers, mail surveys, telephone or face-to-face interviews, and from published sources.

## After

### MARKETING RESEARCH

CONSUMER RESEARCH

Information for marketing research is collected from direct observation of the consumers, mail surveys, telephone or face-to-face interviews, and from published sources.



## Before

### Avoid similar-looking fonts.

While fonts from the same family are meant to be used together, combining similar-looking fonts from different families can fail to achieve the right kind of contrast. If you want to understand why, think of how you'd look if you wore a navy blue blazer with royal blue pants—terrible combination!

# Marketing Research

## Consumer research

Information for marketing research is collected from direct observation of the consumers, mail surveys, telephone or face-to-face interviews, and from published sources.

## After

# **MARKETING RESEARCH**

## Consumer Research

Information for marketing research is collected from direct observation of the consumers, mail surveys, telephone or face-to-face interviews, and from published sources.



## Before

Create the right amount of contrast.

A key characteristic of any good design is contrast. One way to achieve this is to ensure there is enough difference in point size between your titles, sub-headers and body text. Another way is to vary the weight (or boldness) of the different fonts used. A third way is to combine a serif font with a sans serif or a distinct font with a more neutral one.

### Marketing Research

#### Consumer research

Information for marketing research is collected from direct observation of the consumers, mail surveys, telephone or face-to-face interviews, and from published sources.

## After

### **MARKETING RESEARCH**

#### *Consumer Research*

Information for marketing research is collected from direct observation of the consumers, mail surveys, telephone or face-to-face interviews, and from published sources.

# How to Choose the Perfect Colors

## 1 THE MEANING OF COLORS

Colors speak volumes all on their own. Color is so powerful, in fact, that it can [improve learning by up to 75 percent](#) and increase comprehension on a subject by up to 73 percent. While warm colors communicate energy, optimism and enthusiasm, cool colors send a message of dependability, professionalism and peace.

Within these categories, each color is associated with an emotion or concept, depending on the cultural context (while red can mean passion and love in the West, in China, it is associated with prosperity).





According to Smashing Magazine, some of the most common associations made in the West include:

<b>power</b> <b>sophistication</b> <b>mystery</b> <b>death</b>	<b>hope</b> <b>simplicity</b> <b>cleanliness</b> <b>goodness</b> <b>purity</b>	<b>love</b> <b>passion</b> <b>romance</b> <b>danger</b> <b>energy</b>
<b>intellect</b> <b>friendliness</b> <b>warmth</b> <b>caution</b> <b>cowardice</b>	<b>peace</b> <b>sincerity</b> <b>confidence</b> <b>integrity</b> <b>tranquility</b>	<b>authority</b> <b>maturity</b> <b>security</b> <b>stability</b>
<b>life</b> <b>growth</b> <b>nature</b> <b>money</b> <b>freshness</b>	<b>innovation</b> <b>creativity</b> <b>thinking</b> <b>ideas</b>	<b>royalty</b> <b>luxury</b> <b>wisdom</b> <b>dignity</b>

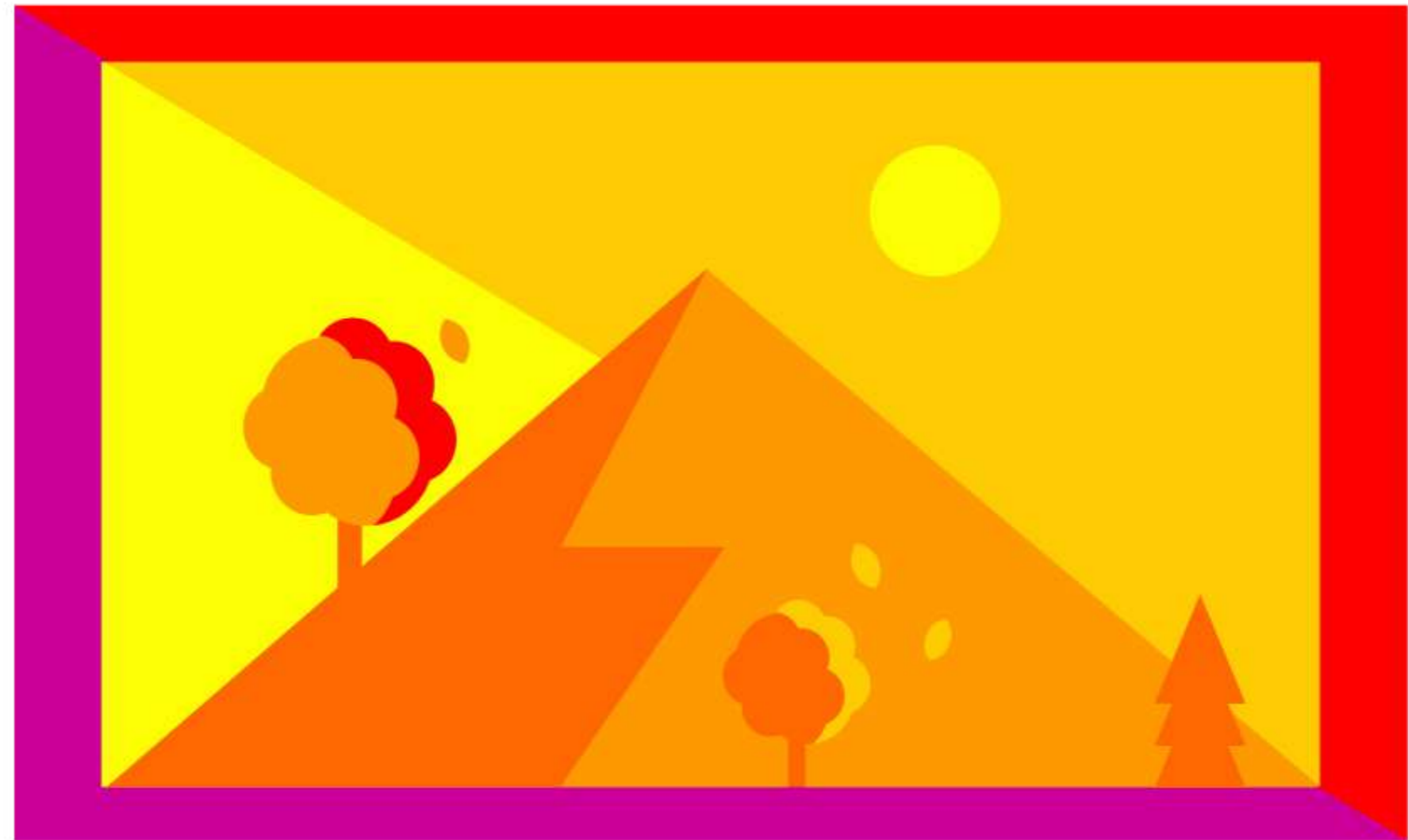


## 2 HOW TO COMBINE COLORS

Now that we've covered common color associations, we can go through the process for creating different color combinations. To do this, we must first learn the different classifications of colors, depending on their placement on the color wheel.

### Warm Colors

For example, the warm colors on the wheel are the reds, oranges and yellows:



Source







## Cool Colors

On the opposite side are the cool colors: the greens, blues and violets:



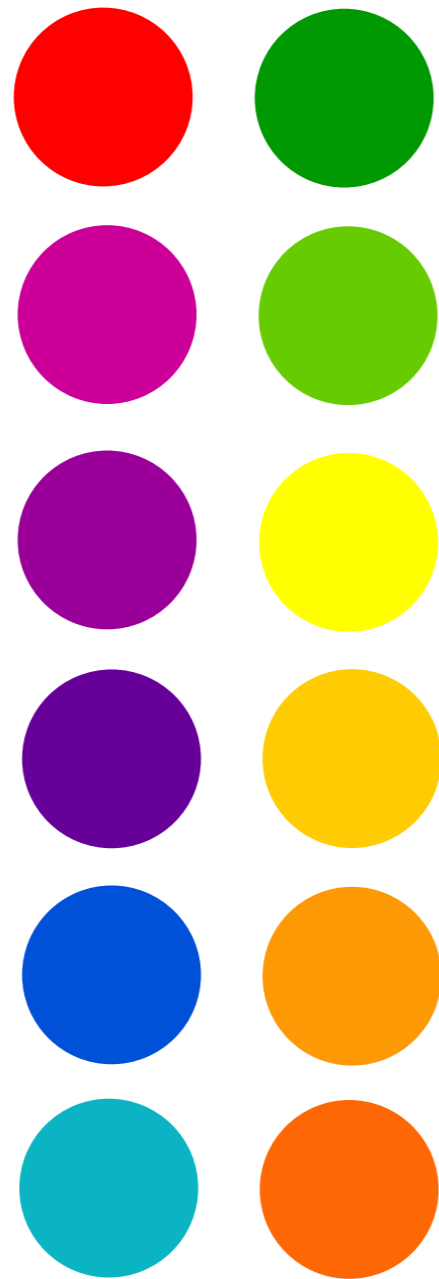
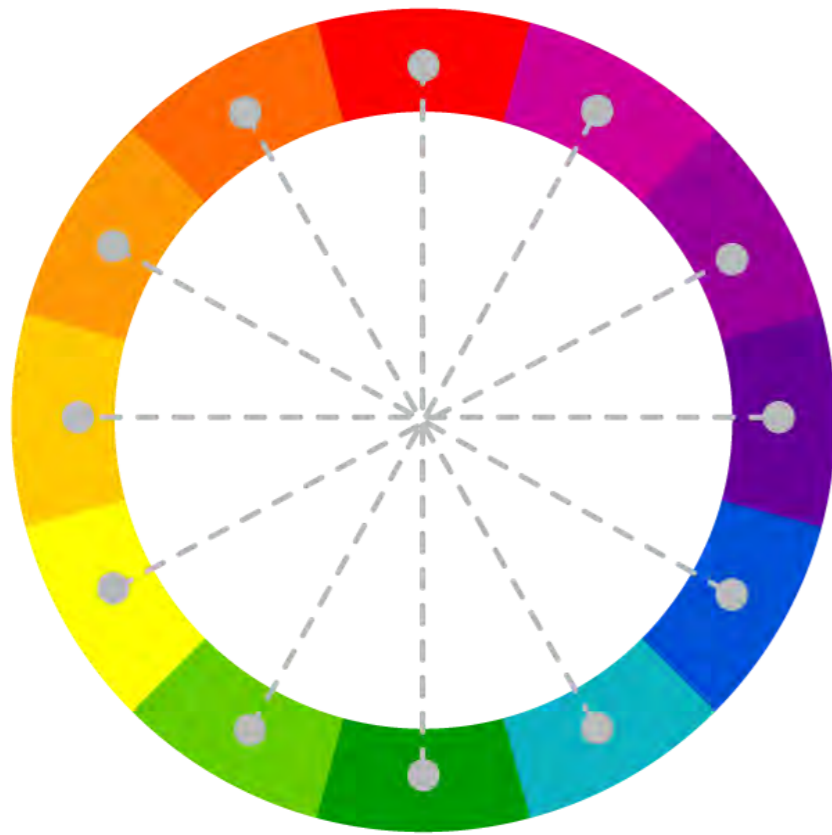
Source





## Complementary Colors

To create complementary color combinations, you must select two colors that sit opposite each other—such as a warm color like orange and a cool color like blue:



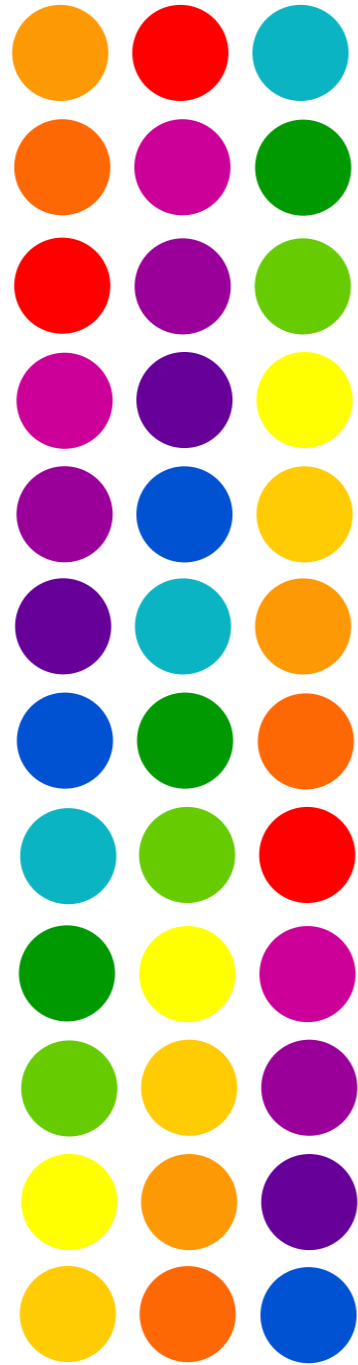
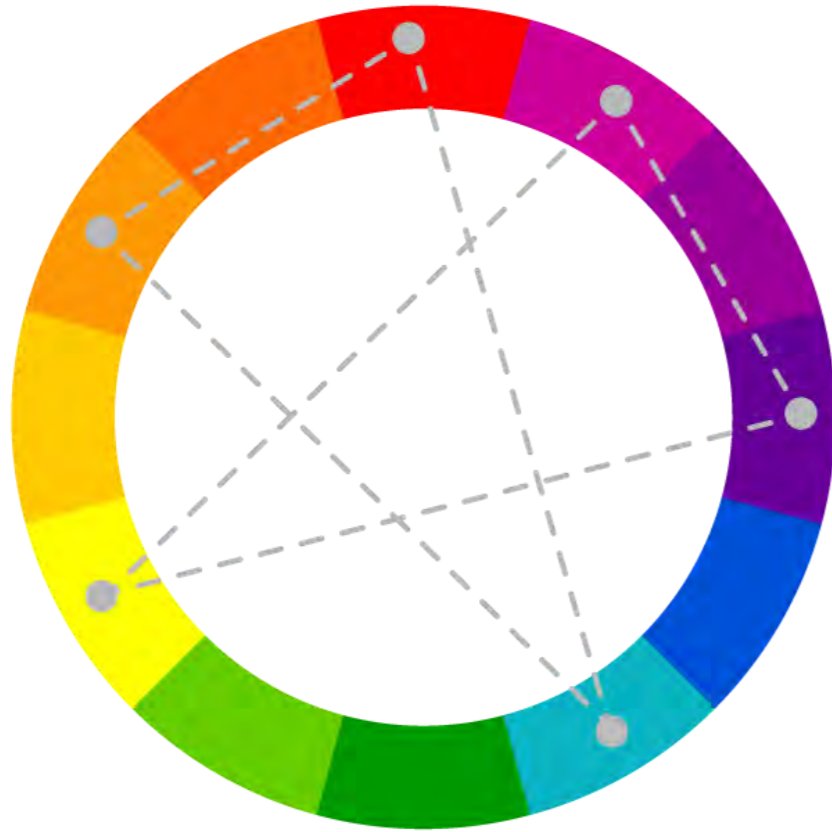
Examples of Complementary Colors



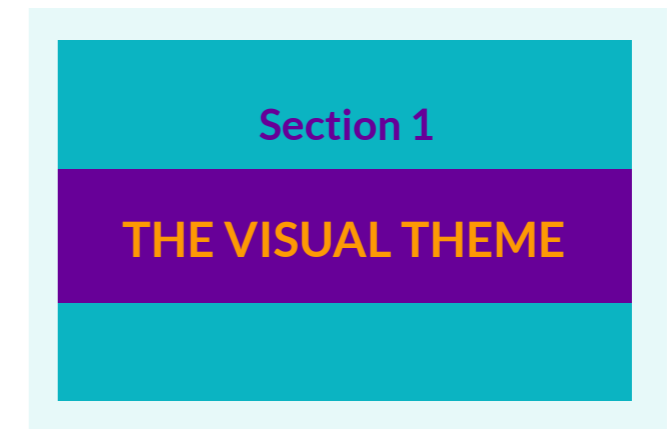
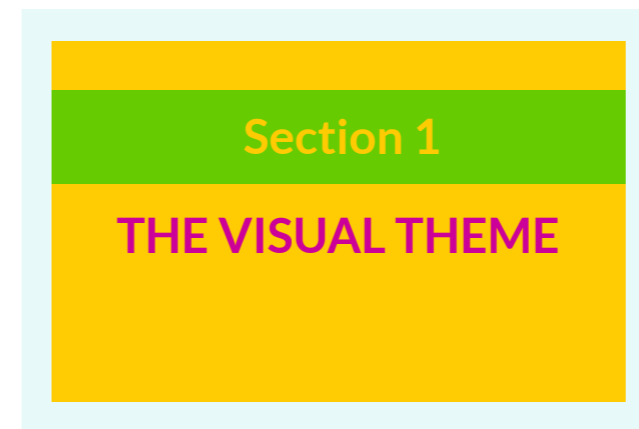
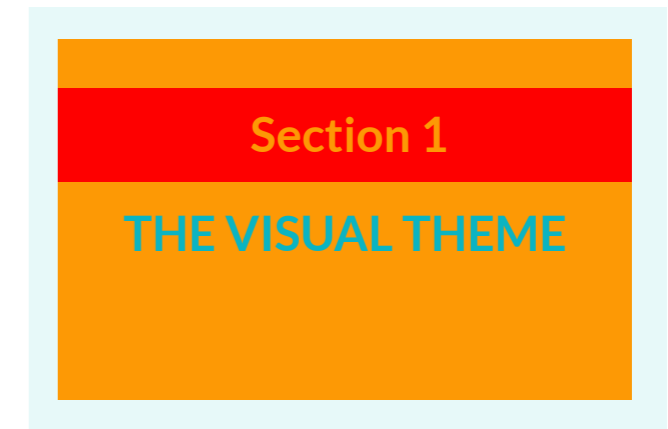
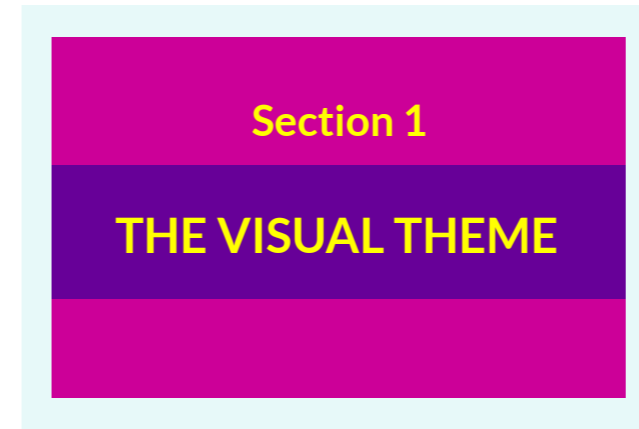


## Split Complementary Colors

To create complementary color combinations, you must select two colors that sit opposite each other, such as a warm color like orange and a cool color like blue:



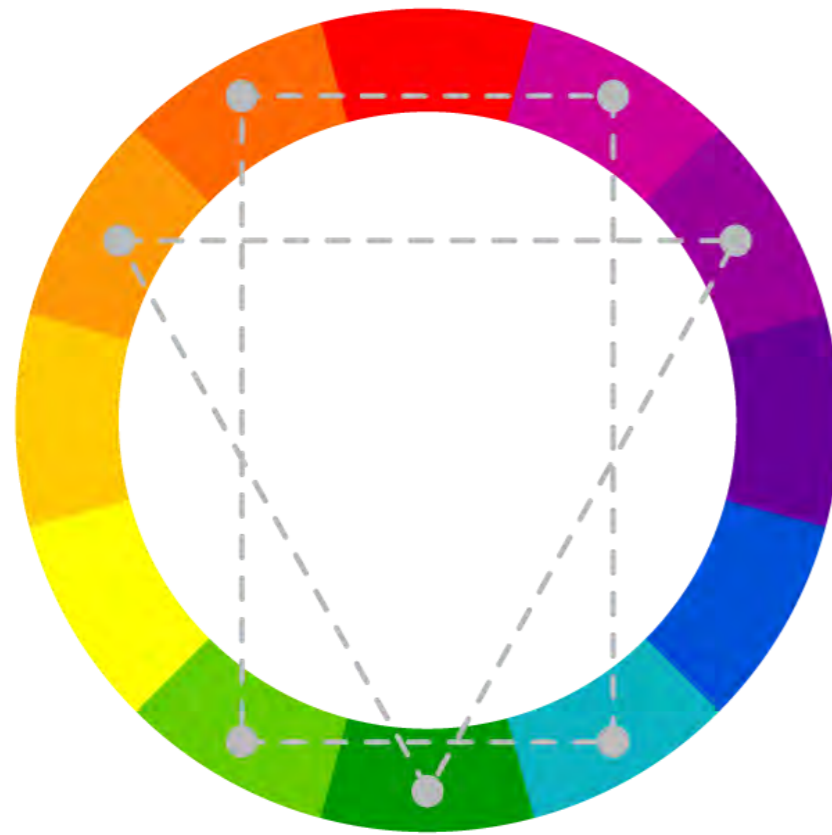
Examples of Split Complementary Colors



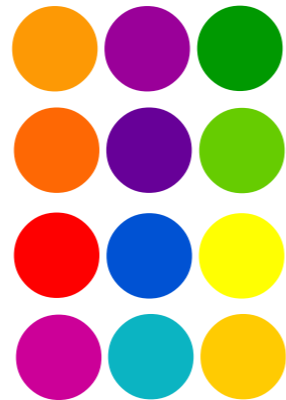


## Triads and Tetradic Color Combinations

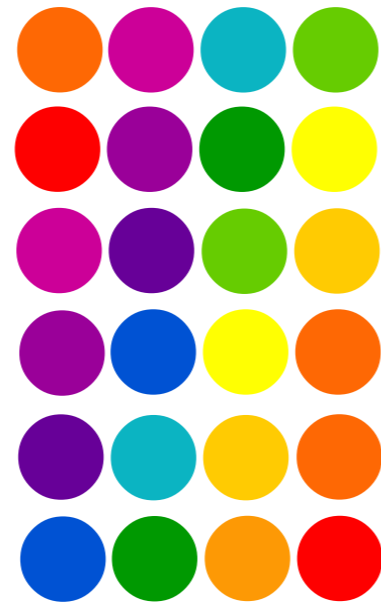
These color schemes use geometric shapes to choose and combine three or four different hues from the color wheel:



### Triads



### Tetradic



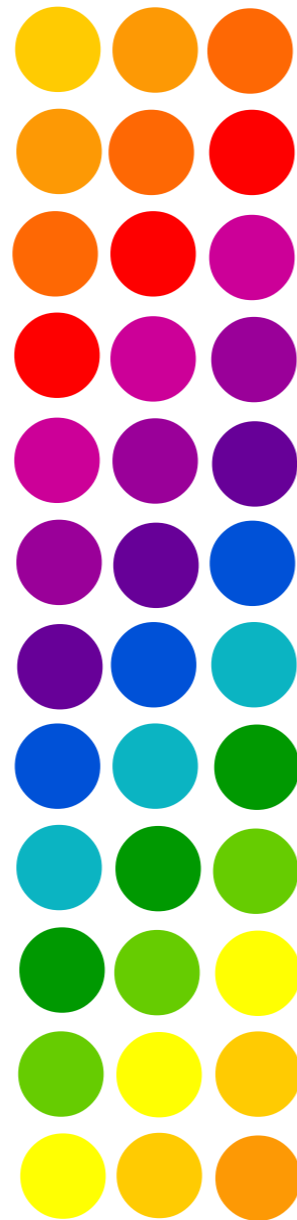
### Examples of Triad Colors





## Analogous Colors

These colors sit next to each other on the color wheel:



## Examples of Analogous Colors

**The Visual Theme**

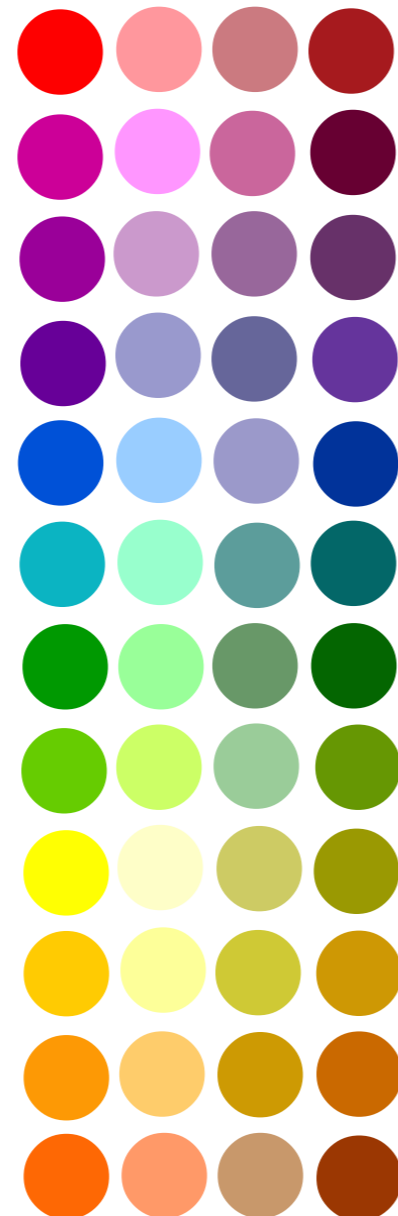
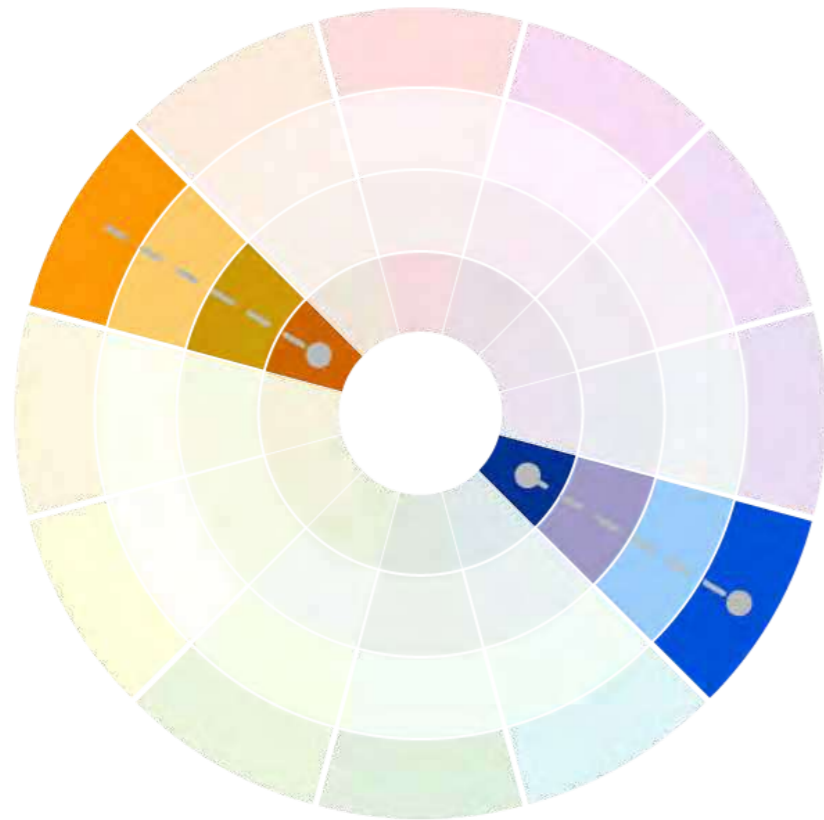
- 1 Choose Colors
- 2 Create a Metaphor
- 3 Select Fonts



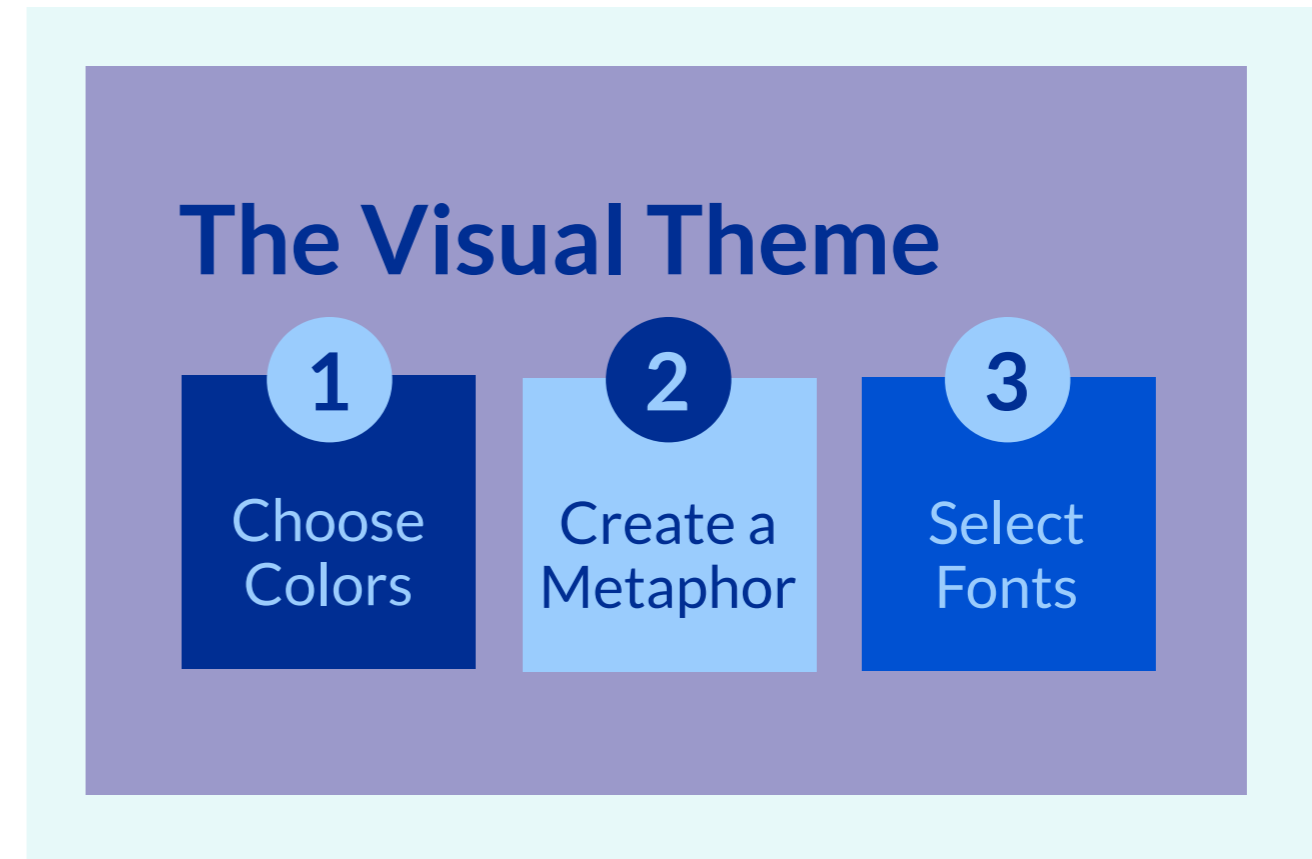


### Monochromatic Colors:

This type of color combination is made up of different tints, tones and shades of the same hue:



Examples of Monochromatic Colors



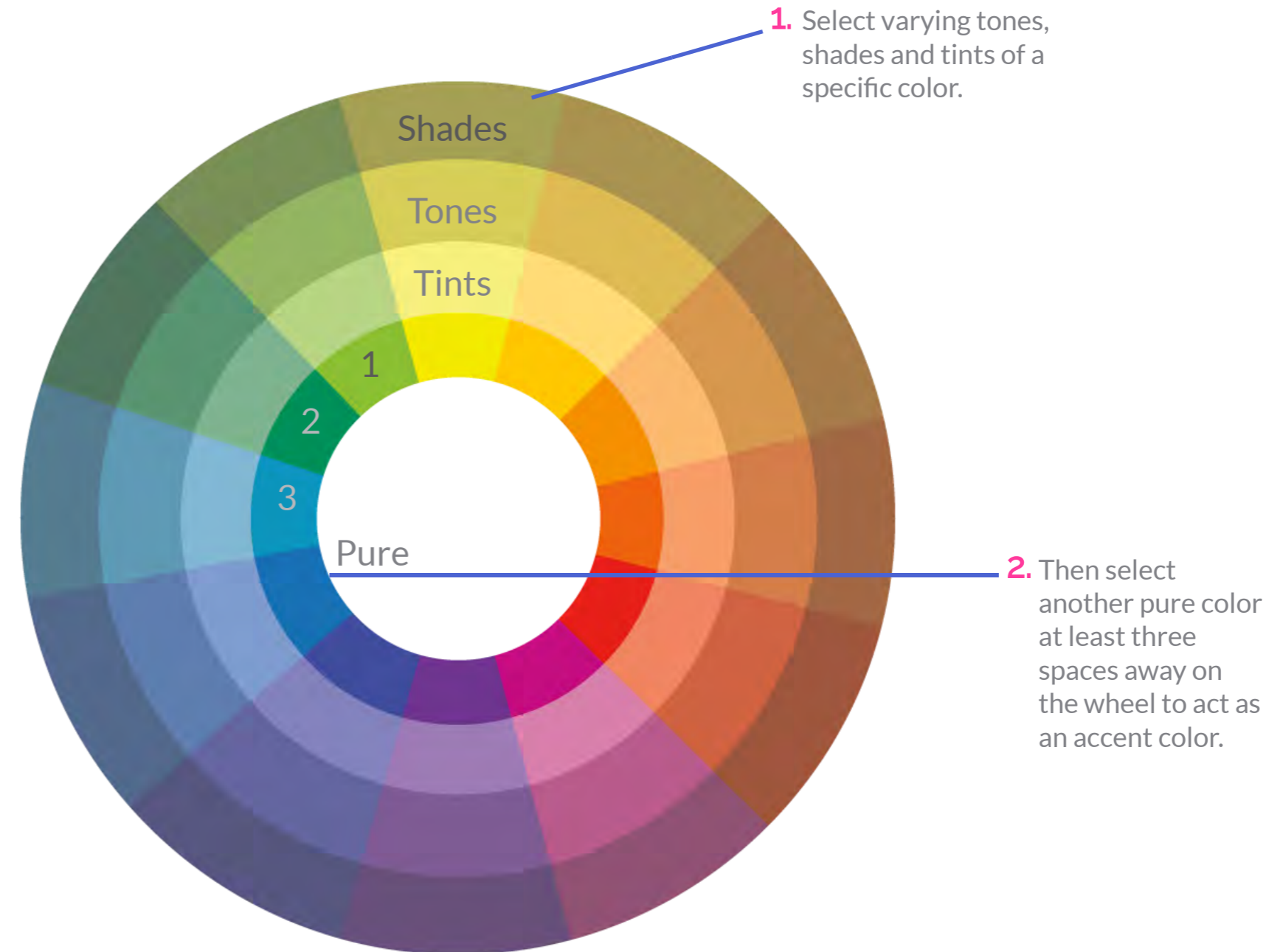




## 2 HOW TO CHOOSE THE IDEAL COLOR SCHEME

It's important to create **high contrast** to achieve the highest impact possible. Contrast is not simply about choosing different colors but selecting those that will create the most visual interest when placed side by side. An easy but effective way to create your own high-contrast color scheme is to select varying tones, shades and tints of a specific color (not the pure hue) and then select another pure color at least three spaces away on the wheel to act as an accent color.

If you're interested in learning more about how to create your own color schemes, you can read more about it [here](#).



Source



## Color Scheme Tools

If you don't have time to create your own color schemes, there are plenty of free color scheme generators such as:

- [Adobe Color CC](#)
- [Coolors.co](#)
- [Paletton](#)

Here are a few color schemes automatically generated by these tools:





## Keep It Simple

You've probably heard this before, but when it comes to design, less is usually more. Try to keep it simple and don't use too many colors. In general, three to four colors is sufficient for a presentation.

# IT WAS FIRST PROPOSED IN 1872.

Three years after completing the transcontinental railroad, Charles Crocker, a railroad executive, made a presentation to the Marin County Board of Supervisors in which he laid out plans for a bridge that would span the Golden Gate Strait, the entrance to the ocean from San Francisco Bay.





## The 60-30-10 Rule

An easy way to create a balanced slide deck is to stick to the 60-30-10 rule.

This means that if you've chosen three colors, as recommended previously, then you should devote 60 percent of the space to the primary color, 30 percent to the secondary and 10 percent to the accent color.



# The mobile photography revolution

The ability to show your images to the world on platforms such as Instagram has made mobile photography an incredibly vibrant genre.

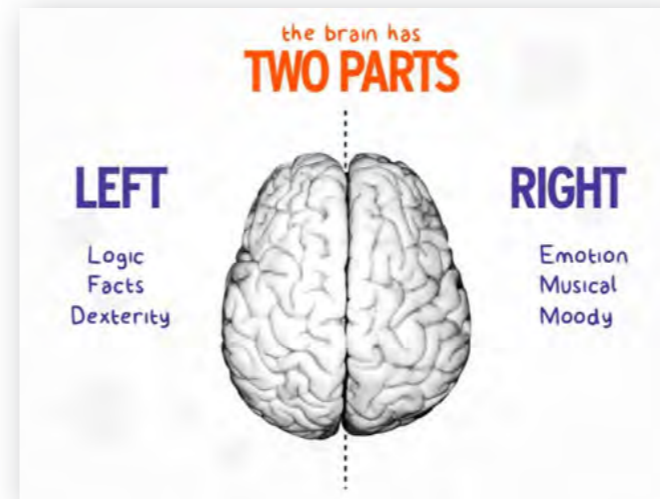




## Spread Content Out

Another simple rule is to spread your content out into bite-sized morsels throughout your presentation so that it is as easy to digest as possible.

Long gone are the days when you used to create presentations with 10 or 15 slides. Nowadays, engaging presentations that can be viewed in less than 3 minutes consist of 50 to 60 slides. Why? Because the lower the slide count, the more information you've probably crammed into each slide. On the other hand, the higher the slide count, the more visuals and the less words you've probably used to explain each concept.



Source

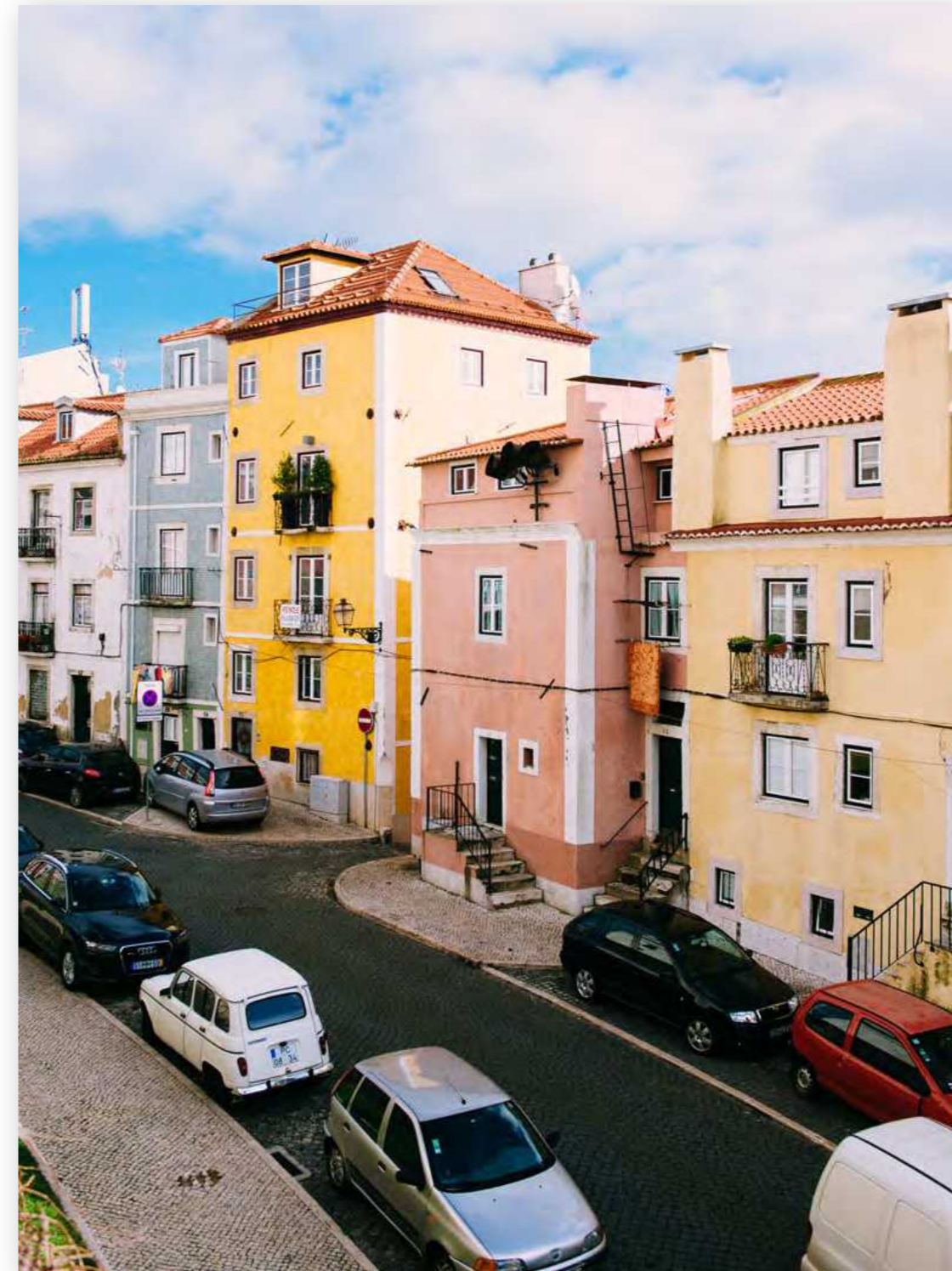


## How to Create Your Own Palettes

One designer's secret for finding just the right color scheme for your presentation is to use one of the color scheme tools listed [here](#) to create vivid color palettes from your favorite photos.

All you have to do is upload an image with a color scheme that evokes the emotions you're going for and then save the hex color codes generated by the tool.

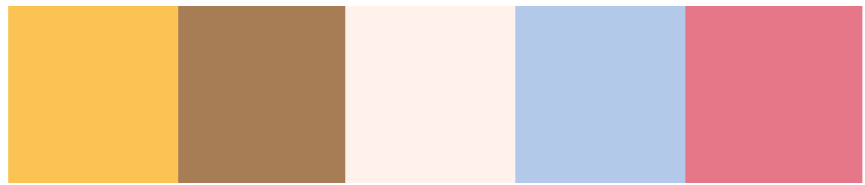
For example, we chose this image because of the way the colors convey calmness and warmth:







The tool Colors then generated this color scheme for us:



Pick colors from image ✕

#FBC354

Auto ✨ Collage 📁 OK



And this is how it  
looks on a slide:

## European Destinations & Vacation Spots



Lisbon, Portugal

It's said to be one of the  
oldest cities in the world  
and according to legend,  
Lisbon was founded by  
Ulysses on his journey back  
from the Trojan War.







## Adjusting the Color of Your Images

Sometimes stock photography suffers from a lack of contrast or unnatural lighting. If you feel the subject of the photo doesn't have enough "pop," you can play with the contrast and color to add visual interest and improve your image. This is also a great way to make the overall presentation style cohesive by matching the levels of color and contrast.

**BEFORE**



**AFTER**





# ALLEGORIES



life of a household



life of a city



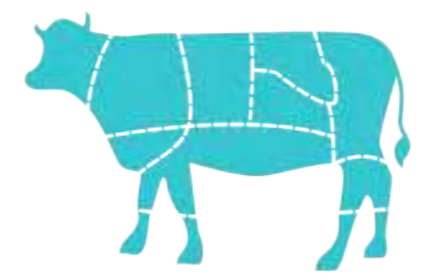
marathon



evolution



food chain



meat cuts



the playing field



factory



tool set



conveyor belt



road



the machine

# Putting It All Together





Now that you have all the different visual elements you need to create your own visually captivating presentation, it's time to combine everything into one harmonious design.

While you probably don't have time to learn all the theory behind every design principle, you can take a few minutes to get a quick overview of the most important concepts, which you can apply to almost any design, not just presentations.



“ Good design, when it's done well, becomes invisible. It's only when it's done poorly that we notice it. ”

*Jared Spool*



# How to Create Visual Hierarchy

The goal of a good visual design is to orient viewers' eyes in a specific direction.

The first step to doing this is creating a visual entry point into your design using a focal point. Then, you can provide a path for your viewers' eyes to follow by applying other rules such as visual hierarchy principles, which are used to organize design elements in order of importance.

This slide, for instance, does just this by varying certain characteristics, such as size, contrast, color, typography and spacing. Even a viewer not trained in graphic design can tell that the focal point is the penguin, and that viewers' eyes are then drawn to the words "stand out," followed by the rest of the text.



Source





Here are some ways you can apply visual hierarchy principles to your design to reinforce the main points of your message and guide your viewers through a visual story in the form of a slide.

# 1 SIZE OBJECTS ACCORDING TO IMPORTANCE

One way to indicate the relative importance of elements is to adjust their scale. The most important elements are usually larger and more prominent than less important ones. In an effective design, all elements shouldn't have the same visual weight; if so, they would all be competing for attention and the viewer wouldn't know where to look first. This series of slides, for instance, uses oversized text to create a dramatic effect and quickly draw attention to the main message.



Source



Source





## 2 CREATE AN ILLUSION OF DEPTH

By creating an illusion of depth ranging from a few inches to several miles, you can make certain elements in your design really “pop.” For example, you can blur the background image to make it clearly distinct from the foreground, thereby attracting attention to your text as the focal point of your slide.

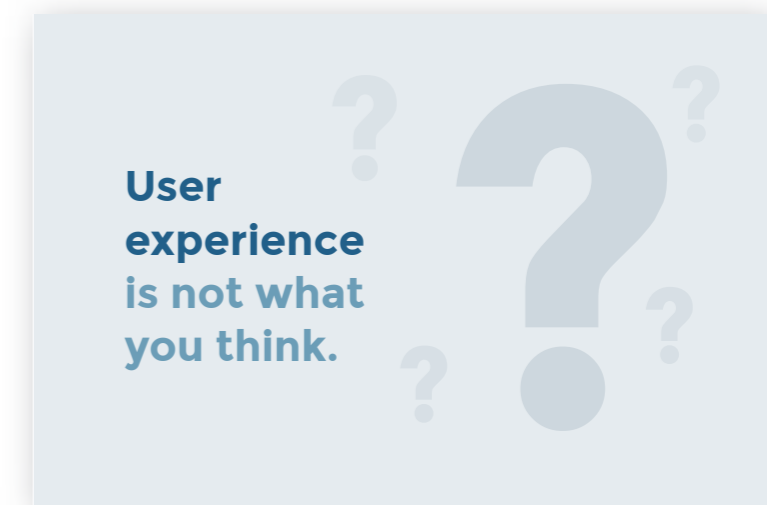
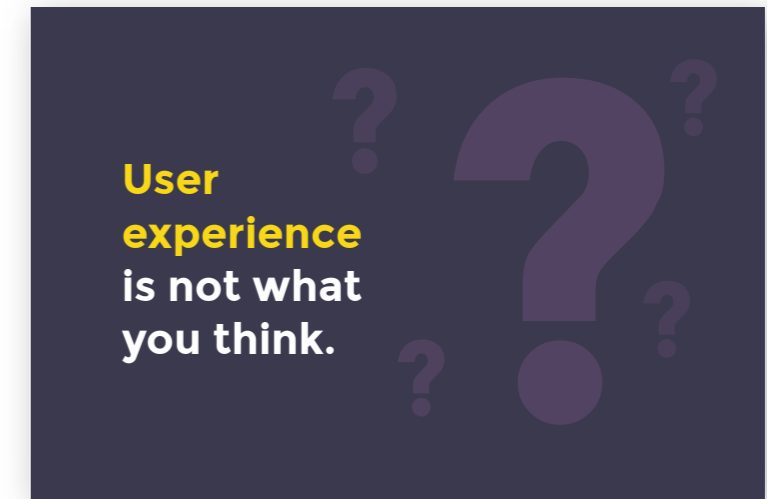
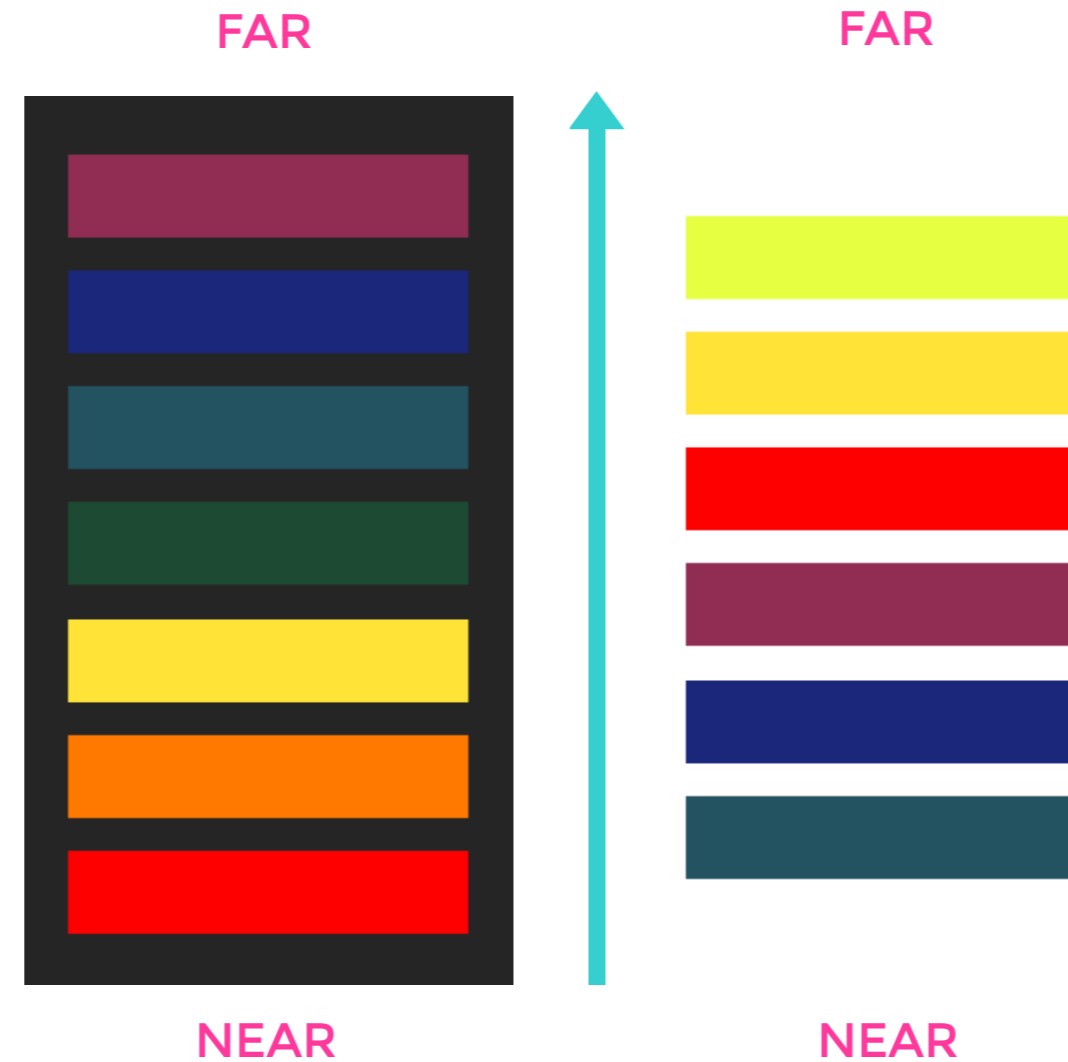






Color choice can even suggest distance. Warmer colors, such as red and yellow, advance into the foreground of a design with a dark background, while cool colors such as blue or green usually recede into the background. The opposite occurs with a design over a light background: Cool colors such as blue and green appear closer than warm colors.

Therefore, color choice can truly affect viewers' ability to identify a figure from the background within a design. Mixing warm and cool colors can create depth, just like perspective.





### 3 USE CONTRAST TO ATTRACT VIEWERS' EYES

Contrast is one of the most effective tools for making certain elements in your design stand out. As human beings, one of the first things our eyes notice is **difference**, whether this be a difference in color, shape, texture, size or position, among other things.

By nature, we tend to group similar objects together and differentiate between those that are dissimilar. Take, for example, these slides from real presentations. Our eyes are immediately drawn first to the object that stands out the most: the yellow words over a muted background. Our gaze then moves to the rest of the text, and finally to the elements in the background.



Source





In this slide deck, we see the same effect. Color is used to create contrast and thereby draw attention first to the text in an eye-catching red color and then to the black-and-white image in the background.



Source





## 4 USE ALIGNMENT TO DIRECT THE EYES.

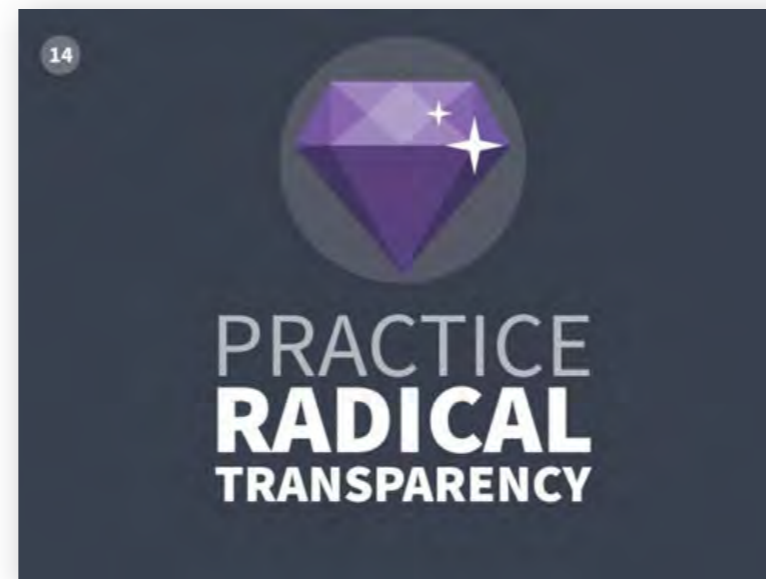
We've already covered how you can create direct viewers' eyes in a specific order by using [leading lines](#). Now, we will go over how you can use alignment to do the same.

Alignment is part of the structure by which elements are placed in a design. It dictates that visual components, whether they be text or images, are not positioned arbitrarily throughout a composition. For example, a typical page of text is aligned to the left, so that objects share a left margin.

Simple visual designs most frequently align in the center of the frame, a format that provides balance and harmony. But not all designs have to be perfectly symmetrical to be aesthetically pleasing.



Source





Take a look at how this slide draws viewers' attention first to the woman and then to the left-aligned text, and then back to the woman. The left-aligned text helps to balance the design, which is visually heavy on the right side.

Most Western readers are accustomed to reading from the left to the right side of a page. Therefore, designs featuring text are often aligned to the left margin in the same fashion.





But right alignments are also employed to provide balance to a design that may be more visually heavy on the left side.





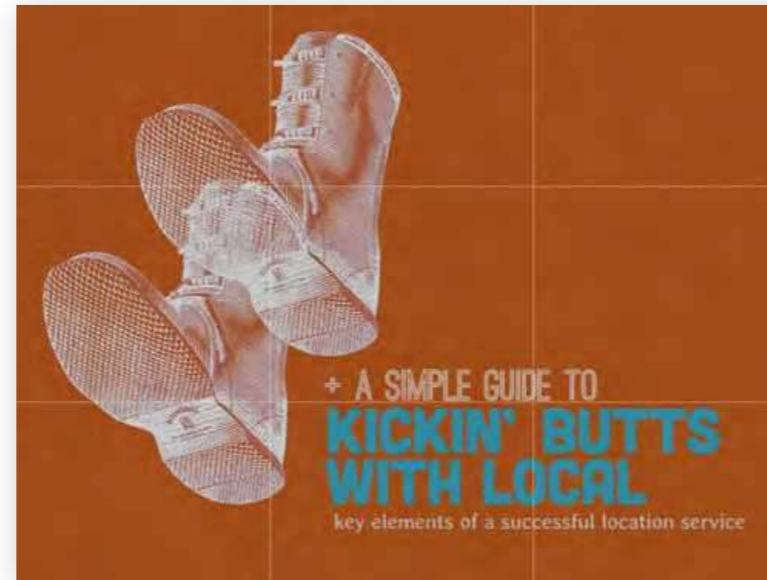


## 5 USE THE RULE OF THIRDS TO CREATE A FOCAL POINT.

Artists, photographers and graphic designers have long employed the **rule of thirds** to improve the overall balance of their compositions. The rule involves mentally dividing a composition into a grid composed of two horizontal and two vertical lines—or nine separate sections.

Important visual elements are placed along the lines, emphasizing the four points where the lines meet. Off-center compositions are generally considered more aesthetically-pleasing when compared to designs in which the main focal point is placed in the center of the frame.

Although not a principle that must be followed for each and every design, the rule of thirds is helpful for creating dynamic designs that are not completely centered and symmetrical.



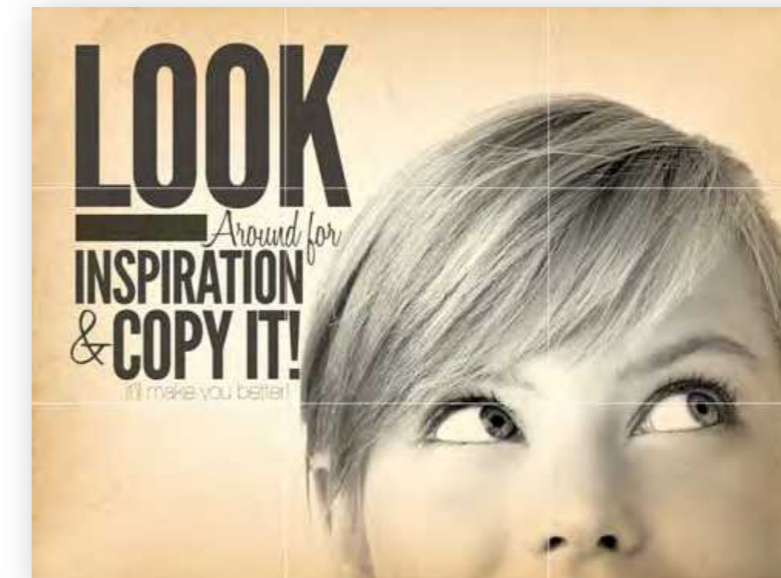
Source



Source



Source



Source



## 6 USE NEGATIVE SPACE TO EMPHASIZE KEY ELEMENTS.

You've probably heard this before, but **negative space** (or white space) is just as important to your design as the positive elements. It has many functions within a visual: It lets the readers' eyes rest; it gives room for visual pathways that the eye can follow; it draws attention to the main elements of your design; and it makes your design look clean, sophisticated and efficient.

Take a look at how the use of negative space emphasizes the key elements in these slides.



Source



Source



Source



Source

# How to Create a Coherent Design

Another characteristic of an effective design is that the individual elements that make it up are barely noticeable. Instead, what comes across loud and clear is the key message, communicated through words as well as dozens of small but deliberate design decisions.

Here are a few principles you can apply to make your designs more coherent and harmonious.



“The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”  
*Aristotle*





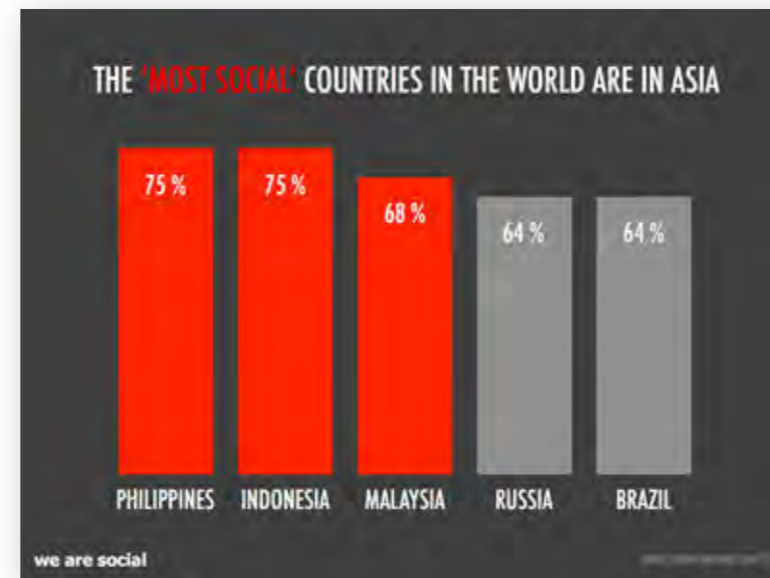
## 1 CREATE ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN ELEMENTS.

You can easily tie the elements of a design together by making them similar. For example, if you have a slide with three different types of elements, you can visually relate them by using the same color for each type. Even if elements of the same color are not close to each other on the slide, viewers will unconsciously group them together.

For example, look at how the use of orange in the first slide at the top creates an association between the word "pretender" and half of the human figure. Or how the use of the color white in the slide next to it differentiates a series of circles from those below. In the two slides in the second row, the use of the color red creates an instant association between the key words and their graphical counterparts.



Source



Source





## 2 SUGGEST A VISUAL CONNECTION THROUGH CLOSURE.

Another mark of a good slide design is the efficient use of space. In order to eliminate unnecessary details, designers often apply the **Gestalt principle of closure**, which is an effect that allows us to see complete figures even when some information is missing.

Take, for example, this slide design. Although we can only see part of an image, the viewer automatically fills in the rest of the details to create a complete picture

So, instead of trying to fit complete pictures of objects into your slides, simply display enough of it to conjure up the right mental image in your viewers' minds.

### All information provided



### Too much information missing



### Just enough information



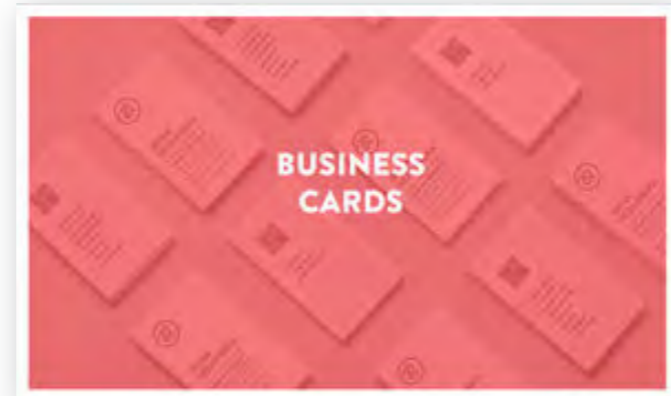




### 3 USE REPEATED ELEMENTS TO TIE YOUR DESIGN TOGETHER.

Another way to achieve a cohesive design is to repeat certain elements. This way, the viewer recognizes a visual pattern and knows what to expect next.

In this presentation design, for example, the same border style is seen on several slides, along with the same color overlays and style of icons.



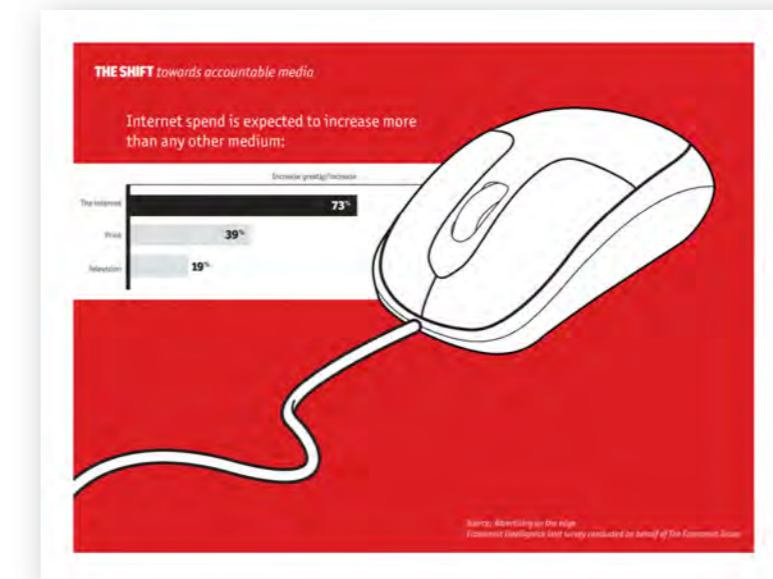
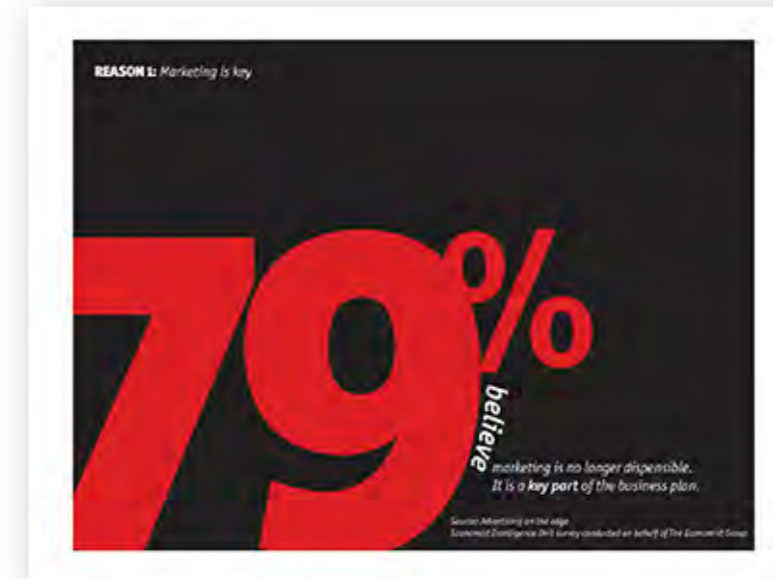
Source



This doesn't mean, however, that a decorative element such as a shape must appear in the same color and the same exact position on each slide. For example, you can create visual interest by inverting the color scheme of the introductory slide for each section or varying the placement of decorative shapes.



Source





## 4 USE PROXIMITY TO GROUP SIMILAR ELEMENTS.

Another important part of the visual grammar of your slide deck is the proximity of elements. Make sure to associate related elements by placing them near each other. For example, an image and its caption should appear near each other. If not, viewers will not make the proper association.

### BEFORE



### AFTER

## Pet Robots

Robot pets have the potential to be useful in many ways. Some robopets are being used to remind the elderly to take their medication. In Japan, robotic pets are being used as companions.



*AIBO is a series of robotic pets designed and manufactured by Sony.*