

# Balance

## The Importance of 'BALANCE' in graphic design:

- **Designer's Goal:** To draw in a reluctant audience and captivate them with the story of the product they are advertising.
- Balance is part of the human condition – Our bodies have natural symmetry- we require balance in many facets of our lives (balance to stand up, to walk, and to function)
- The world struggles for balance and for power – and that is what is going on in advertising designs.
- This is why graphic designers aim to achieve either visual balance or a struggle for visual power in their ads.

## TYPES OF BALANCE:

- **Symmetrical Balance:**

- Involves balancing the **visual weight** of your composition.
  - According to a central axis (either horizontal & vertical symmetry)
  - According to a central point (radial symmetry).
- Symmetrical balance is a great way to manage your audience's attention.
- It is a very FORMAL type of balance.
- Although symmetrical balance is easy to implement, it is difficult to evoke an emotional response from your audience because it can look very "contrived" or "planned out".

- **Horizontal Symmetry:**

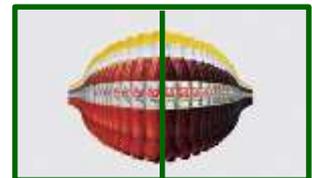
- Is where you balance your composition to the left and right of each other – *literally like a teeter-totter.*

- **Vertical Symmetry:**

- Is where you balance your composition on the top to bottom of a central axis.

- **Radial Symmetry:**

- Is where your design elements are balanced around a central point (like a *sunburst*).



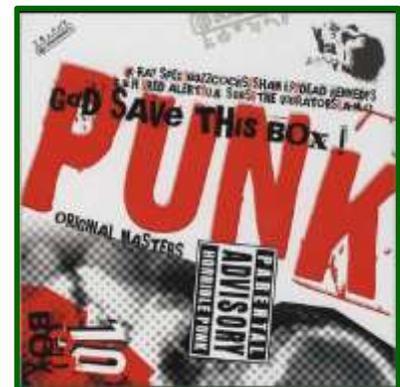
- **Asymmetrical Balance**

- Occurs when the **visual weight** of your composition is **NOT** evenly distributed according to a central axis or point.
- It is an INFORMAL type of balance.
- It is more difficult to achieve asymmetrical balance.
- METHODS:
  - A lighter design component can balance a heavier one by being further away from the center of focus.
  - Use color or texture to balance an asymmetrical design
- Asymmetrical balance is more likely to arouse an emotional response because the components of the composition compete for attention and this tends to create a sense of tension in the audience.



- **Discordant or Off-Balance**

- Sometimes off-balance or discordant design works well if it suits the purpose of the advertising message.
- Designs that are off-balance suggest motion & action.
- They make people uncomfortable or uneasy.
- If the content of your design is also intended to be uncomfortable or make people think, a discordantly balanced design can work well.



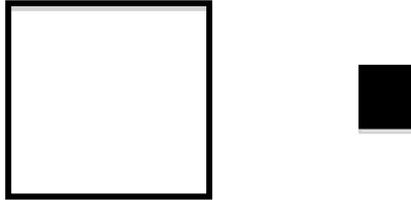
## **PROPERTIES OF BALANCE:**

The main properties of balance are: size, color, shape, value and position.

These properties influence how certain parts of the composition relate to other parts.

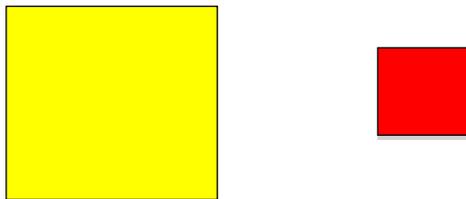
### **Size**

A large empty object has a lighter visual weight and so it can be balanced with a smaller filled or denser object.



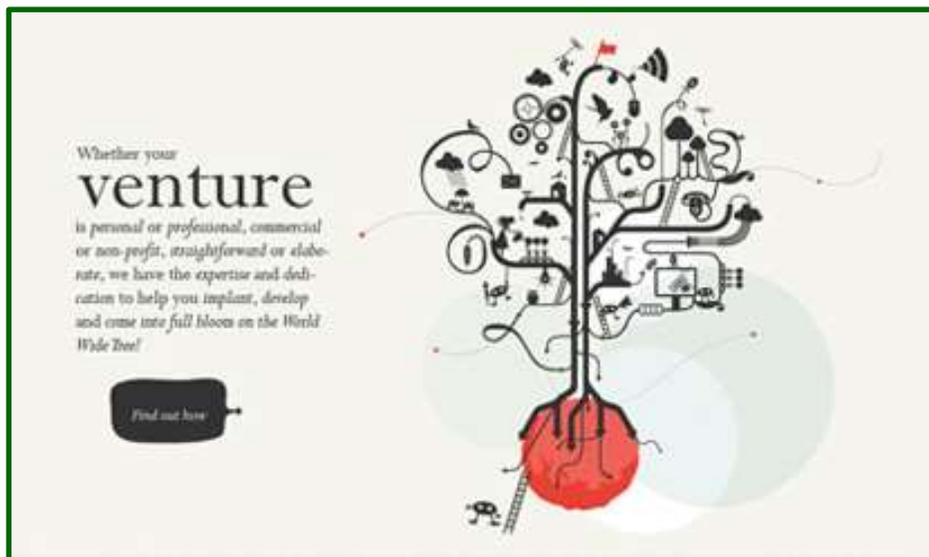
### **Colour**

The color of an object in a composition can make that object feel lighter or heavier. Bolder and darker colors are visually heavier than softer lighter colors – red is visually heavier than yellow because it demands the attention of your eye.



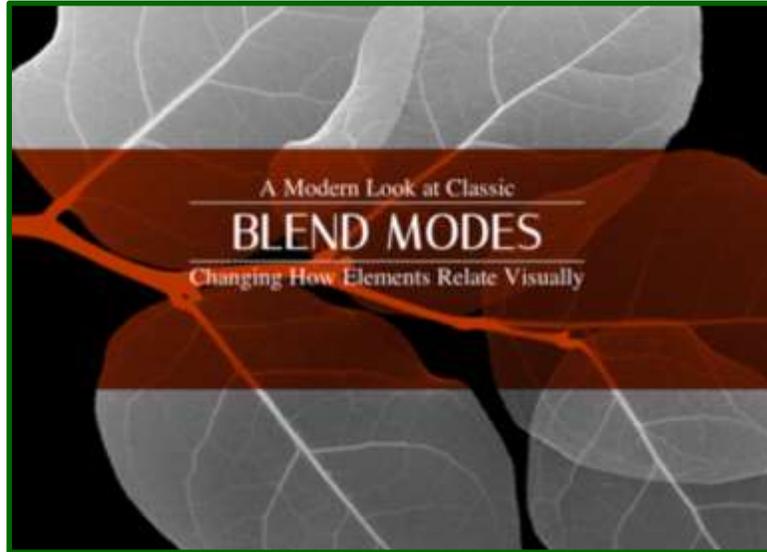
### **Shape**

The shape of elements in a composition can drastically alter the balance of a composition. A really squiggly or jagged shape is visually more interesting and therefore heavier than a shape with very clean straight lines. But rather than balancing a complex shape with another complex shape – creating confusion – balance the complex object with a clean but bolder shape.



## Value

Contrast can be a huge factor in compositional balance. *The higher the contrast of an object the heavier it becomes* and the lower the contrast of an object, the lighter it becomes visually. There is a couple of ways to resolve balance between high and low contrast objects; one great way is to offset the low contrast element with a contrasting background color or texture. You can also add simple borders, gradients and drops shadows to lower contrasting elements as well.

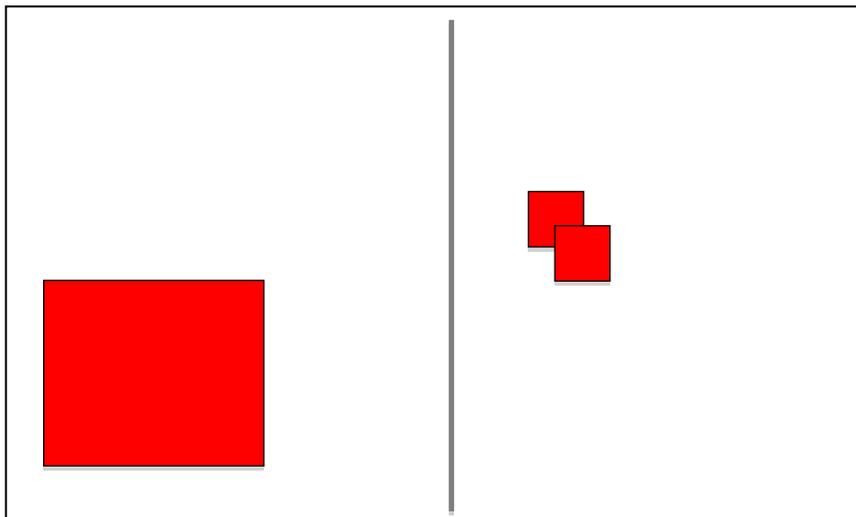


## Position

A large object is heavier than a small one, but the closer or further these objects are to the center axis the heavier or lighter they will be.

Objects closer to the center line weigh more than objects further away.

So, if you have a large red object close to the center axis you can either move it away from the center line or move the other objects closer to the center line.



## Balance: Learning Activity

### Activity #1.

1. Choose one of the above types of Balance
2. Create an advertisement for something that interests you using Photoshop or Photopea.com (a sporting good, an electronic device, clothing, food etc.) that uses that particular type of balance to convey the advertising message (which is obviously, buy this good/service).
3. Size: 8.5 x 11 (you can choose either a portrait or landscape orientation), 300 dpi.
4. Ad **must** have at least some colour in it.
5. Recall the **Alignment** lesson and the **Types of Layouts** lesson and incorporate what you have learned from those lessons in this assignment as well.
6. WRITE A SHORT PARAGRAPH (as a Google Doc. Word Doc) explaining the type of balance you have used in your ad and why you selected it to help you convey your advertising message.