Design Element Shape

To understand and apply the design element Shape.
Shape

- Shapes are a basic element of design. They are made up of closed contours and three dimensional objects placed in the design.
- Shapes are used to convey meaning and organize information
There are three basic types of shapes:

- geometric shapes
- organic shapes
- abstract shapes
Use of Shapes in Design

• Shapes in Web design can be used in many ways:
  – add interest to a design
  – sustain interest
  – organize or separate elements
  – direct the eye through the design
Geometric Shapes

- Geometric shapes are what most people think of when they think of shapes.
Organic Shapes

- Organic shapes are shapes that are found in nature, but they are also shapes of man-made items. Most organic shapes in Web pages are created with images. Some examples of organic shapes are:
  - Leaves
  - butterflies
Abstract Shapes

- Abstract shapes are those that have a recognizable form but are not "real" in the same way that natural shapes are. For example, a stick-figure drawing of a dog is an abstract dog shape, but another dog in a photo is a natural shape. Some examples of abstract shapes are:
  - alphabet glyphs
  - icons
  - symbols
Positive and Negative Shapes

- A shape will be either
  - positive: we call the figure or foreground shape positive and the focus of the picture, it is often called the subject matter (usually)
  - Negative: this is usually an empty shape or space and is the background or surround of the subject matter
Geometric VS Organic

What shapes do you recognize?
Realistic VS Abstract
Spatial characteristic of shape: Pictorial Depth

in realistic work

in abstract work
Perspective & Shape

size: larger objects appear closer, smaller shapes appear farther away.

vertical location: higher objects appear farther away
Psychology of shapes

• circle = protective or infinite
• also, eternity, connection, community, wholeness, endurance, movement, safety, perfection, power, energy, integrity, perfection, completeness, home, restriction
• refers to the feminine: warmth, comfort, sensuality, and love, wholeness and unity
Psychology of shapes

- square = stability, equality, solidity, security, rationality and honesty
Psychology of shapes

- triangle = tension or conflict or action
- also, energy, power, balance, law, science, religion.
- refers to the masculine: strength, aggression, dynamic movement, self-discovery and revelation
Psychology of shapes

• spiral
  – expressions of creativity, process of growth and evolution
Some exceptional examples
Some exceptional examples
Some exceptional examples
The Shape Game

I will display three posters.

• One shows images of the following types of lines: vertical, horizontal, slant, curve, wavy, zigzag, and curlicue.

• The second shows types of geometric shapes: circle, oval, square, rectangle, triangle, trapezoid, parallelogram, pentagon, hexagon, and octagon.

• The third shows a variety of organic shapes, some recognizable (such as a banana shape,) and some not.
Instructions

1. Begin with a pencil or pen and 4 sheets of paper.
2. You will create 4 scenes or abstract compositions, one at a time.
3. Each student is given a turn to call out any shape or line they want from the selection on the posters.
4. All the class must use that shape or line in their current drawing. If someone calls out a line or shape you had not planned to use in your drawing, you must figure out some way to use it anyway.
5. You have 30 seconds to include the line or shape before the next one is called.
6. After six lines/shapes are called, set aside the current drawing and start a new one.
7. When all four drawings have been started, pick the one of the four that you like best and complete the image in ink or color.
8. You may add new lines or shapes to this drawing, but do not mark out the original lines/shapes.
9. Turn in all four of your pages, stapled together. Make sure your name is easy to find on one or all of them.