

The Grid: A Structural Basis For Organization

A grid consists of two or more periodic patterns that are overlaid or placed next to each other (most often at 90 degree angles, but sometimes at various degrees such as 30, 45 or 60). The grid is used as a foundational design element for book covers, magazine layouts, newspapers, brochures, textile and wallpaper patterns. Grids are used by artists and designers as both compositional devices and as a means of recognizing proportions. The golden section and dividing the picture plane into thirds are also common ways to create proportional relationships within a composition.

Types of Grids:

Expanded/Compressed Grid: Intervals, spaces or motifs consistently and gradually become larger or smaller from a designated starting point. (For example: a grid using the Fibonacci sequence to space the intervals may start small and progressively “expand”, beginning with 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13...etc. or “compress” beginning with 13, 8, 5, 3, 2, 1).

Planar Grid: Intervals, spacing or motifs are structured to increase and diminish in size, supporting the illusion of advancing or receding elements. This grid depicts the illusion of perspective and alludes to realistic interior or exterior structure and space.

Progressive Grid: Intervals/spaces either remain consistent or vary in a repeated sequence according to a specific formula.

Overlapping Grid: Possesses a motif that overlaps an existing grid at regular intervals. Two or more grids can also be overlapped in a single composition.

Arbitrary Grid: Intervals, spacing or motifs are less regular and not necessarily based on logical geometric progressions. These types of grids are often less obvious to the viewer.

Part One: Three Sample Grids

Create three sample grids on a 6" x 6" format based upon the following criteria:

01. Create a linear (lines only, no shapes) Expanded or Compressed Grid that compresses or expands using the Fibonacci sequence to determine the grid intervals. Think about compositional placement of your lines on the picture plane. You may scale the Fibonacci sequence by using $\frac{1}{4}$ " or $\frac{1}{2}$ " increments to create your grid template:

Fibonacci	1	1	2	3	5	8	13
$\frac{1}{4}$ " increments	$\frac{1}{4}$ "	$\frac{1}{4}$ "	$\frac{1}{2}$ "	$\frac{3}{4}$ "	$1\frac{1}{4}$ "	2"	$3\frac{1}{4}$ "
$\frac{1}{2}$ " increments	$\frac{1}{2}$ "	$\frac{1}{2}$ "	1"	$1\frac{1}{2}$ "	$2\frac{1}{2}$ "	4"	$6\frac{1}{2}$ "

02. Create a linear Planar Grid that shows perspective. Create spatial depth by supporting the illusion of advancing or receding elements with this grid.
03. Create a Progressive Grid that employs a constant spacing interval with a directional shift and an interpenetrating design. Begin by exploring a motif that can be easily repeated. Experiment with the progressive orientation of your motif and then add an interpenetrating element. This grid should incorporate line and shape as well as both black and white values.

Mount the printed 3 Sample Grids on one black presentation board (8" x 22" will work well). Label with the Assignment name and Your Name.

Part Two: Final Grid Design

Create a final grid that incorporates the following:

- Line
- Shape
- Line as Value
- Spatial depth
- Abstract Texture/Patterning through Repetition.

Your final grid composition should be a balanced, unified and sophisticated. Be mindful of the formal elements of design: Harmony (repetition and rhythm, Gestalt Principles), Variety (contrast), Balance (visual weight distribution), Proportion, Dominance, Movement and Economy. Also consider your overall composition: the importance of both the positive and negative space, opportunities for the Golden Ratio/Fibonacci sequence.

Your final design should be printed 10" x 10" and mounted on 12" x 12" black presentation board. Label with your name only. This project will be done in Adobe Illustrator.