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Magdalene Pfister

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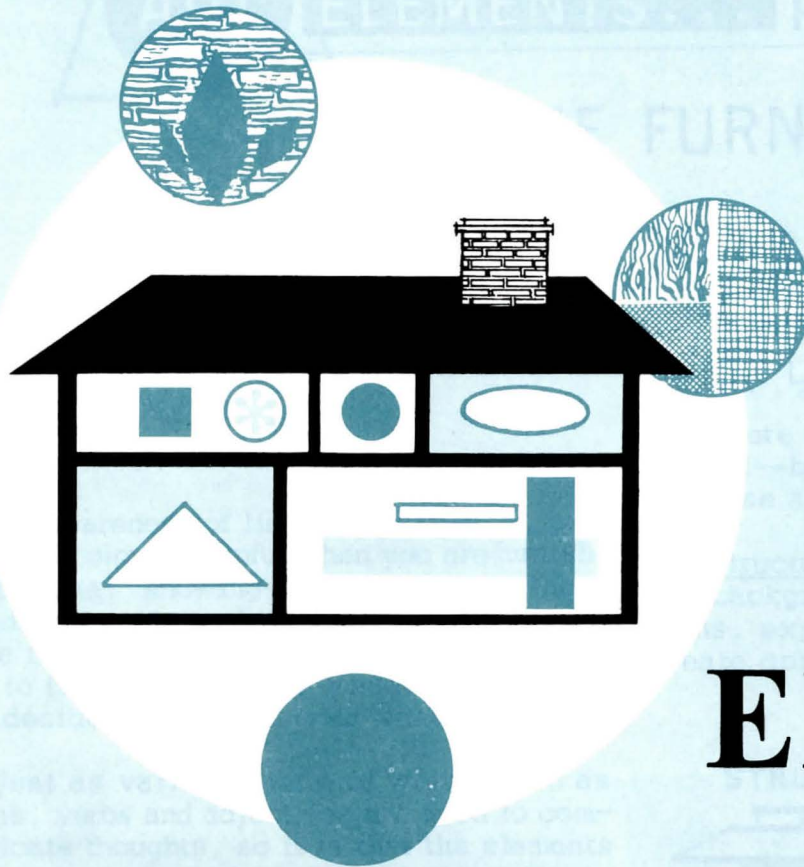
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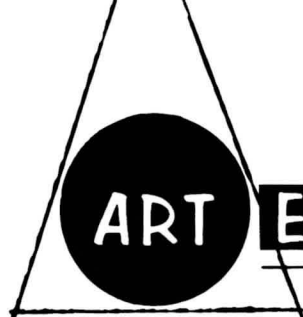
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Art Elements

related to home furnishing

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ART ELEMENTS... Related to

HOME FURNISHING

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An awareness of line, form, texture, pattern and color is helpful when you are furnishing a home. Knowing something about these visual elements and what they express will make it easier for you to select furnishings and to plan an attractive home. It will help you decide "what goes with what."

Just as various kinds of words such as nouns, verbs and adjectives are used to communicate thoughts, so it is that the elements of art give a visual idea, an impression or feeling. Carefully combined art elements contribute to the beauty of the home.

Every home expresses a spirit or atmosphere. For better or worse it conveys a feeling. The feeling produced may be formality or informality, restfulness or liveliness, hospitality or reserve, coziness or sophistication, confusion or monotony.

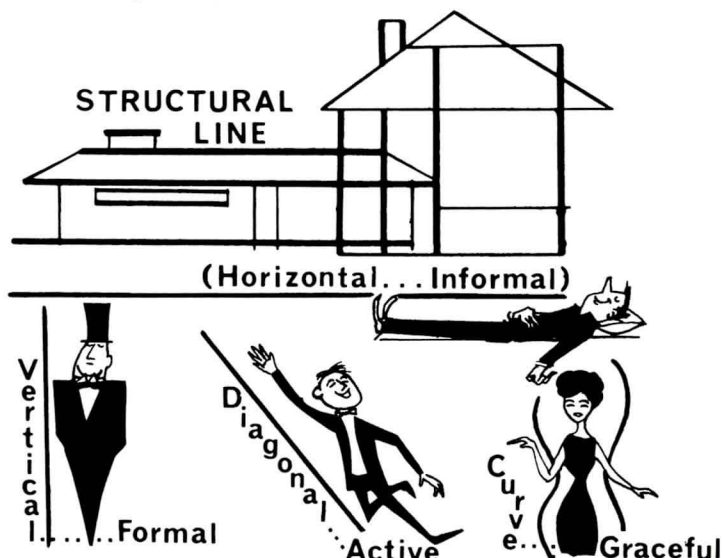
Knowing the decorative effect that suits you and your family will guide you in answering questions as to style of furniture, colors, or drapery fabric.

The art elements--line, form, color, texture and pattern--play a double role. They contribute the ingredients of furnishings and stimulate psychological reaction. Because of the dual role, an understanding of the elements is important. They tell us what to select and combine and help us achieve the effect we want.



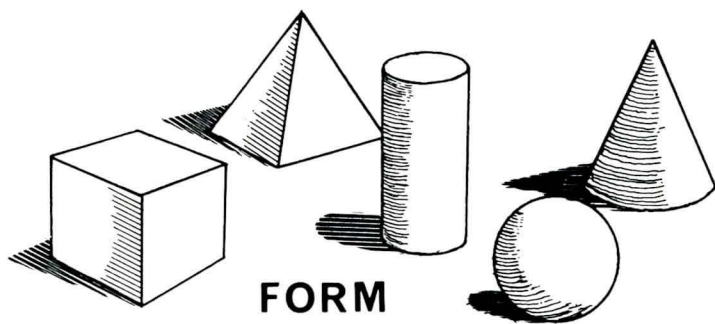
There are two basic lines--straight and curved--but many interesting combinations of these are possible.

Structural lines define shape or indicate the background. Decorative lines form patterns, express emotional quality and may create optical illusions.



The quality and direction of lines can express a mood or feeling.

Straight lines suggest simplicity and strength. When they are horizontal, they express comfort, relaxation and informality. When vertical they express formality and dignity. Diagonal lines are active and may seem restless. Straight lines are more classic than romantic. Curved lines are graceful, flexible, playful, feminine or they may be weak and unsteady.

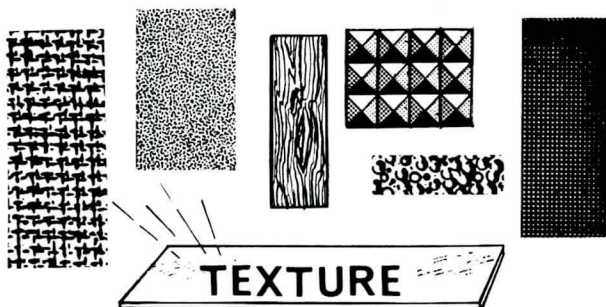


FORM

Form is three dimensional shape, mass or structure. Various forms include cubes, pyramids, spheres, cones and cylinders.

Good structural form is important. No amount of color, texture or decoration can make up for poor form. Good form is:

1. Simple.
2. Suited to its use.
3. Appropriate to the material from which it is made.
4. Well proportioned and pleasing to the eye.



Texture is the surface quality of an object--how it looks and how it would feel if touched. It may be rough, or smooth, coarse or fine, hard or soft, dull or shiny.

Well designed articles will show by their surfaces how they are made. Fake textures--these made to look like another, such as plastic made to look like wood are generally poor design. Texture serves in several ways:

1. Texture affects light reflection and thus effects the object's appearance. Very smooth materials, satins, mirrors and polished metals reflect light, making colors look clear and shiny. Coarser textures absorb light more unevenly, make colors look less bright and darker.

2. Texture affects our sense of touch. Rough and harsh, or too smooth and shiny or slippery may be unpleasant. We like those in between.
3. Texture affects maintenance and care. Smooth textures are easier to clean but show soil and dust more easily. Rougher textures show less but are harder to care for.
4. Texture is a source of beauty. Smoother textures and smaller scales call attention to the whole rather than parts. Bold, rougher textures and large scale call attention to themselves.



Applied



Structural
PATTERN

Pattern may be of two kinds: applied or structural. The grain of wood, the way brick, tile or stone is laid, the way fabric is woven, are examples of structural pattern. Applied pattern is added to enrich surface or to enhance form. Pattern may be of these types:

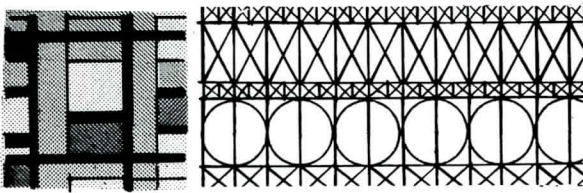
1. Naturalistic - designs are realistic and closely imitate nature - usually flowers, animals or scene.



2. Stylized - inspired by nature but made non-realistic by simplifying and conventionalizing.



3. Geometric - are based on geometric forms such as circle, triangle or rectangle.



4. Abstract - creation of the designer's imagination with little relation to objects we see.

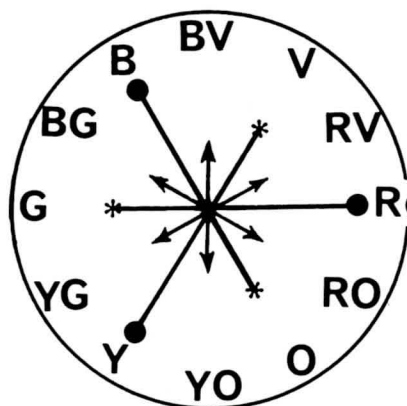


These are some desirable characteristics of applied decoration:

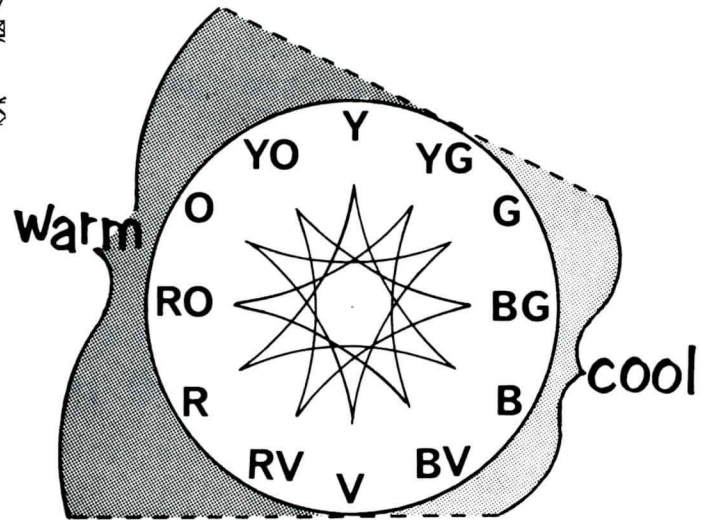
1. Enriches surface or enhances form without interfering with use of objects.
2. Adapted to suit materials or methods in applying design.
3. The background space as well as the foreground motifs should be pleasing.
4. Has individuality or character.

COLOR

Color has weight, temperature and movement. Colors may be heavy or light, hot or cool, forward or backward moving. These characteristics of color are known as hue, value and intensity.



Hue is the color name, such as yellow, red or blue green. Warm hues include those containing red or yellow. Cool hues are those with blue. Neutrals are black, white and gray.

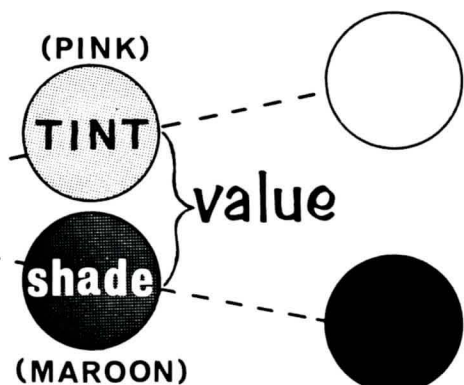


Some colors are heavy while others are light. This characteristic, known as value, ranges from light colors called tints to dark colors known as shades.

Intensity describes how bright or dull a color appears. Intense colors move forward while dull colors recede. When brilliant colors are used together they seem to vibrate.

Color affects our emotions. It can soothe or depress, irritate or charm.

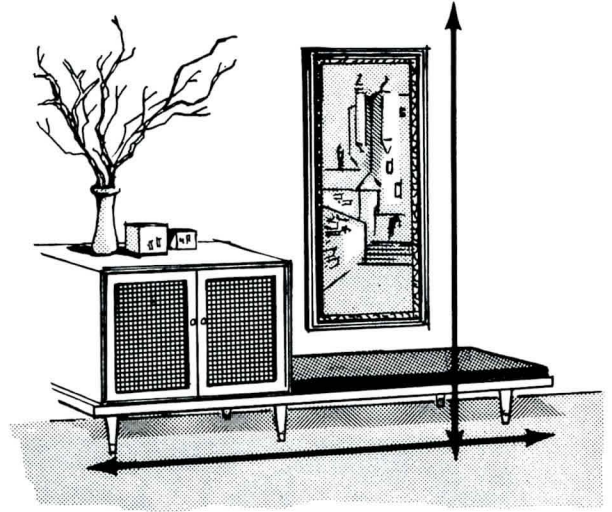
Medium dark colors are generally quieting. Dark colors usually give a feeling of dignity or repose. Strong contrast in value is stimulating.



Light colors make form seem larger. Contrast in value outlines form.

Bright colors are stimulating and attract attention. They increase apparent size of form. Dull or grayed colors are more quieting than bright colors. They seem to recede and attract less attention.

Warm colors advance more than cool colors of the same value and intensity.



THE USE OF Line IN HOME FURNISHING

The choice and combination of line may be the reason why one room seems restful and harmonious while in another there is tension, confusion and fatigue.

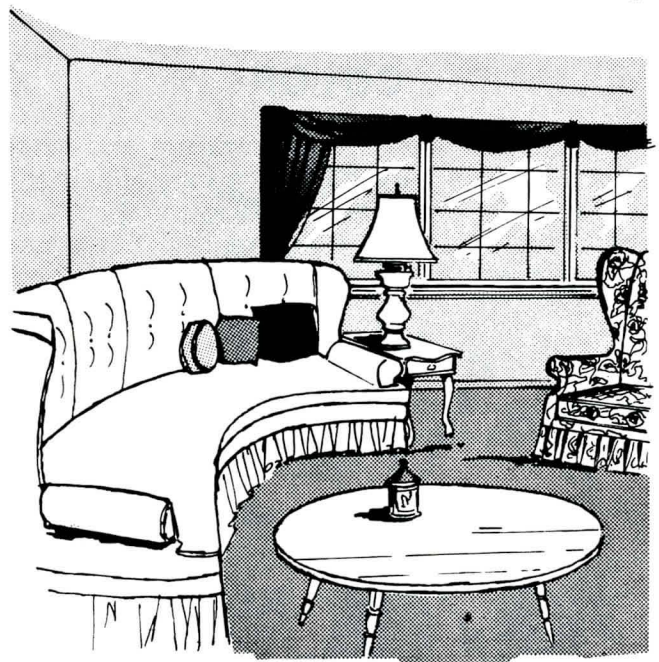
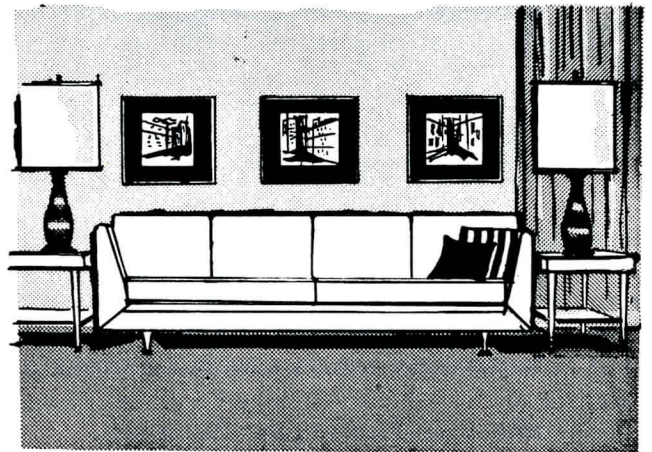
The kinds of lines you choose will depend upon the mood you want to express, the style of the room and the purpose for which it will be used.

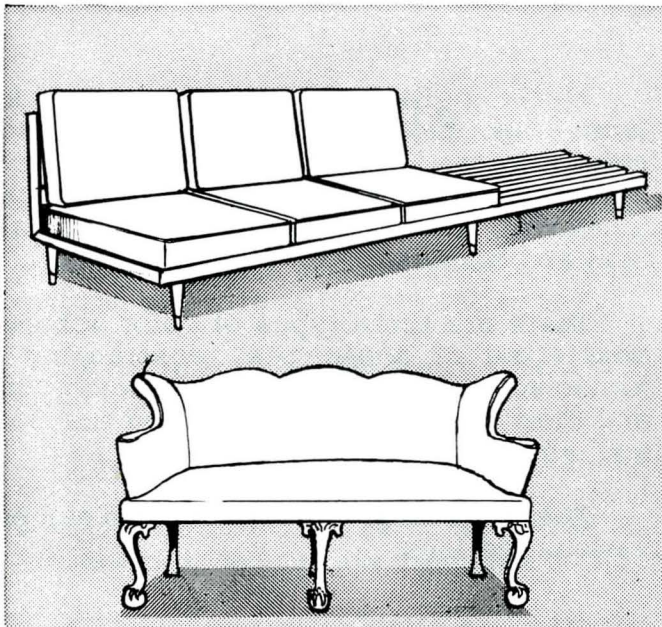
There will be pleasing combinations of both straight and curves but one or the other will predominate. When straight squared lines predominate a feeling of masculine strength results and if overdone may seem stiff and severe.

A predominance of curves results in feminine charm but if overdone will seem weak and fussy.

Diagonal and curved lines may serve as a transition that brings horizontal and vertical lines in relation to each other. If you know how to use line, the apparent proportion of a room can be changed.

Lines formed by the placement of furniture, window treatment or by grouping pictures or other accessories should be related to the existing lines.





Form in Home Furnishing

Well designed furniture is simple in form. Good form can be light or heavy in appearance, softened by curves or made severe by straight lines, but never clumsy or weak.

Form distinguishes the various historic styles or periods of furniture. Periods can be mixed with each other when forms are related.

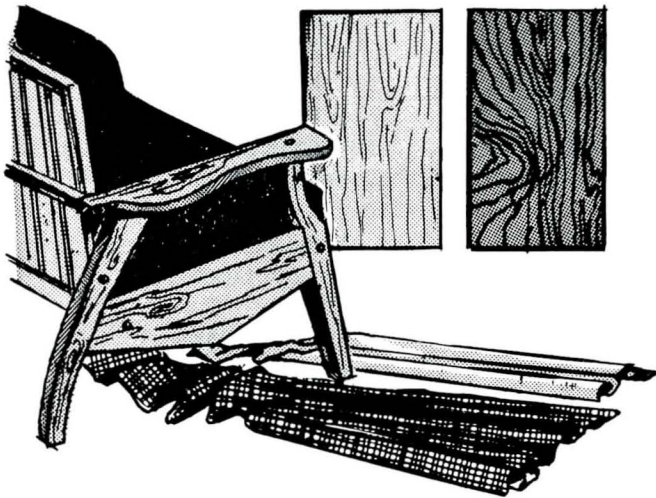
Simplicity of form is an aid to care and allows greater possibilities for furniture arrangement.

Texture in Home Furnishing

In home and room planning it is important to have a pleasing relationship of texture. For variety not all textures should be the same, but extremes are incompatible.

Many times the texture of woods is overlooked. Wood textures range from coarse, sturdy woods such as oak and ash, to the finest textures found in satinwood, mahogany and fruitwood. Oak and mahogany are too different to combine well, but walnut, which is medium texture, could be used with either.

The use and function of the article will determine its texture.

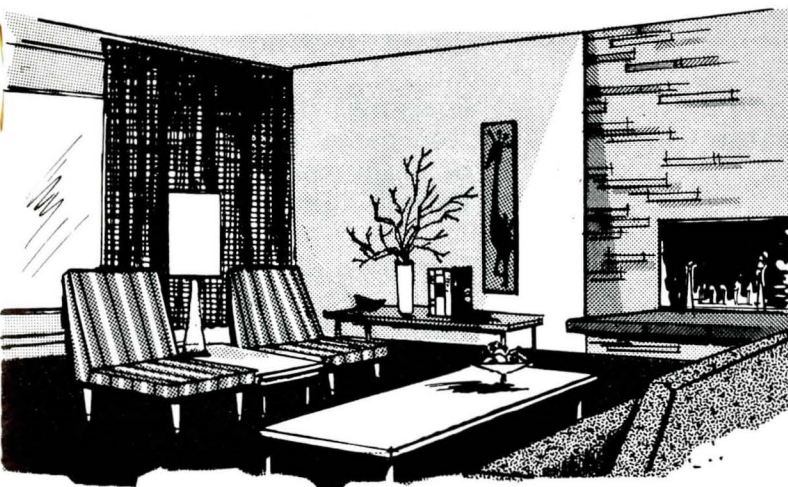


Pattern in Home Furnishing

Some rooms are dull and uninteresting because there is little pattern while others are restless and busy because of too much pattern.

Pattern is formed not only in printed and woven designs but it is formed by every object. The outline of an object makes a pattern on the wall; its shadow also makes a pattern.

To be a livable background for people and activities a room should have a larger proportion of plain surface to pattern surface. Generally, when a bold, patterned fabric, wallpaper or rug are used all other surfaces should be plain. When there is much structural pattern or pronounced textures in the home, the use of applied pattern should be controlled.



Color in Home Furnishing

Color is the element that perhaps affects us the most and in different ways. Since color is so personal, choose colors you enjoy, not necessarily those of current fashion.

Color creates mood; makes a room seem gay or restful, warm or cool. It can be used to unify furnishings, hide ugly shapes, accent points of interest, make a small room larger or a dark room lighter.

Walls, ceilings and floor coverings are large areas and generally should be in soft grayed colors. As such they are easier to live with and form a background which combines well with stronger colors in furnishings and accessories.

There are three types of color schemes consisting of analogous, contrasting or monochromatic colors. All may be successful and their use depends on you and the mood you wish.

These are ways colors can help express various feelings:

Effect	Color	Combined with these elements to achieve effect.
Formality	Rich colors or subdued cool colors.	Vertical lines, smooth textures.
Informality	Clear bright colors. Warm colors.	Horizontal lines, rough textures.
Hospitality	Warm colors, deep reds, rich browns.	Curved lines, rich textures.
Sophistication	Subdued background colors. Strong contrasts in value and intensity.	Straight lines, varied textures.
Quiet and Restful	Colors close in value. Cool colors. Soft muted colors.	Horizontal lines. Little pattern, dull or rough textures. Indirect lighting.
Gaiety	Warm colors. Clear bright colors. Contrast in value.	Diagonal lines, spirited patterns. Rough or shiny textures. Direct lighting.
Femininity	Soft, delicate pastels, dusty tints.	Curved and horizontal lines. Smooth textures. Floral patterns.
Masculinity	Strong, deep shades.	Straight, vertical lines. Plaids and stripes. Rough textures.

Art Elements in Nature

Nature provides many lessons in design which can serve as guides and inspiration in planning home furnishing. Colors, textures, patterns and lines are combined in nature so that the effect is endlessly satisfying.

If we look carefully we can make these observations:

Lines in nature are rarely stiff and straight. They are generally flowing. Look at clouds, streams and hills, a tree branch. The lines are sweeping and express movement or peace.

Color is varied. There are many tints and shades of the same color. There are many thousands of greens in outdoor scenes, in lawn, trees and shrubs.

Colors in the large areas outdoors are quiet and grayed, while bright colors are in smaller amounts--such as flowers. Darker colors are nearer the earth while the sky is usually lighter in value.

Looking at the relationship of bright to dull we see that most of the landscape is dull rather than shiny, but there are sparkles of brightness--such as the glitter of sunlight on the water.

Nature is abundant with patterns and texture. Every leaf is veined, every tree trunk textured. But one doesn't see this at first glance.

Though there is plenty of pattern, texture, line and color in nature, there is no monotonous repetition. Every leaf is different. In nature, as in good design, all elements are combined in an orderly way resulting in an interesting whole. There is tremendous variety but there is unity and, consequently, no confusion.

Art Elements in Interior Design

As in nature, the art elements do not exist in isolation. The most pleasing effects are those when the parts blend together giving a single impression. Unity with variety is a guide in achieving the feeling or atmosphere.

One type of line, form, color, texture and pattern will dominate but there will be variation for interest.

For sturdy, simple effect choose straight bold lines, blocky forms, coarse and rough textures, pine, oak or ash wood and strong colors. For an elegant, formal effect choose fine lines and curves, smooth, lustrous textures, mahogany, cherry, satinwood and rich colors.

SUMMARY of Effects of Art Elements

Type	(LINE)	Effect
Horizontal straight		Restful, quiet, informal, reduces apparent height.
Vertical straight		Dignified, masculine, formal, increases apparent height.
Broken straight		Animated, gay.
Diagonal		Dynamic, restless. Cater-cornered furniture placement reduces size of room.
Curved		Graceful, feminine, gay, cheerful, softens effect of straight lines.

(FORM)

Square - obvious proportion - tends to be uninteresting

Oblong - pleasing in ratios of 2:3; 3:5; 5:8

Triangle - lively, balanced

Circle - obvious shape - lacks interest

Oval - subtle - more interesting than circle

(TEXTURE)

Coarse, rough, loosely woven.

Informal, masculine. Increases apparent size and height. Softens light, keys colors together.

Smooth, satiny, tightly woven.

Formal, feminine, glossy. Decreases apparent size and height.

(COLOR)

Red, Orange, Yellow

Warm, hospitable, gay, informal, advancing reduces size of room - increases apparent size.

Blue, Blue Green, Blue Violet

Cool, reserved, receding - makes rooms appear bigger. Reduces apparent size.

Green, Violet

Neither warm or cool, advancing or receding.

White

Neutral - may be formal. Receding - increases apparent size.

Black

Neutral - sophisticated. Advancing - reduces apparent size.

Gold, Silver

Neutral - formal.

Copper, Brass

Neutral - informal.

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