

DESIGN

Design is defined as the selecting and organizing of materials to fulfill a function. It is a conscious—not instinctive process.

There are four factors that influence design.

1. Function—what purpose will the object serve?
2. Materials—of what will the object be made?
3. Technology—how will the object be made?
4. Style—is the object appropriate and appealing to the user?

FUNCTION

The purest form of design is the creation of something that has never before existed. However, most design today is, in reality, redesign, or improving designs that already exist. Hopefully each change in a design is an improvement. Functional performance is the first test of design quality. The idea that "form follows function" suggests that the form of an object or space should reflect its intended use and fulfill its intended function.

MATERIALS

It is important that people be open-minded in the selection and development of materials. Plastics and metals are very much a part of the new materials we see in interior designs. The materials selected for any object must be suitable and able to fulfill the intended use.

TECHNOLOGY

Before the industrial revolution, everything was made by hand, which greatly limited the number of objects that could be produced. Industrialization eliminated that problem. In today's society, we do not limit our creations to the type of machinery we have. Instead, we decide what we want, then construct the machine that will produce the desired product.

STYLE

It is difficult to separate materials and technology from style. They all depend upon one another. However, styles vary greatly from one time period to another and indeed, from one home to another. Our lifestyles will determine the style of interior design we use. However, today's styles are an accumulation of all styles that have existed before, and include many new materials and technologies.

TYPES OF DESIGN

STRUCTURAL DESIGN

Structural design is an integral part of the structure itself—when the structure and design cannot be separated. Good proportion and safety are important.

DECORATIVE DESIGN

Decorative design involves the application of color, line, texture, or pattern to an object. Decorative design may be used to enhance a structural design or may be simply a work of art. For decorative design to be successful, it must meet the following guidelines:

1. Ornamentation should be suitable for the intended use of the item. It must not obstruct its use and function.
2. Decorative design should be appropriate for the materials from which the article is made. It should accent the shape and form of the object. The design should not make the object difficult to use. Materials should also coordinate with the intended use of the object.
3. Embellishment should be used to emphasize structural points. This can actually aid in the correct use of the object by calling attention to edges, handles, etc.
4. Decoration should be appropriate in size and amount to the object on which it is found.

The four types of design are:

1. Naturalistic—reproductions of natural subjects.
2. Stylized—a representation that simplifies the subject to emphasize the basic qualities.
3. Abstract designs—unrecognizable as a specific object or thing.
4. Geometric designs—a design made with the use stripes, plaids and geometric shapes.

Learning to evaluate quality design takes much practice. Even though a design may not be your personal preference, it can still be a good design. Design is all around us and we should take time to appreciate and evaluate the designs we see each day. In order to evaluate a design, one should become familiar with the ten components of complete design. They are broken into two groups, "elements" and "principles". The elements of design are **space, form and shape, line, texture, and color**. The principles of design are **balance, rhythm, emphasis, scale and proportion, and harmony**. We will discuss each of these components in detail during this unit of study.