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# DESIGN PRINCIPLES for the SCRAPBOOK PAGE

## {LESSON SEVEN} Design Principle of Flow

### visual flow

When you can incorporate visual flow into your scrapbook page design, you'll guide the viewer's eye through it, revealing what's important along the tour.

### take a step back

In order to talk about the sixth design principle in this class—flow—we need to step back.

Let's go back to **contrast**—to that idea that we all routinely scan our surroundings looking for things to put together, for patterns that help us make sense of what we're seeing. Our eyes are drawn to the things that stand out.

Let's go back to **repetitions** – to how repeating things like colors, images, and materials connects the elements of



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## combine design principles to make flow

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the page to one another and contributes to design unity.

Let's go back to **emphasis** – to how you cue the viewer to what's important depending upon what you emphasize. Remember that when one item is emphasized above all others, the viewer knows where to start taking in the story of your page.

Let's go back to **alignments** – to the idea that when two elements are aligned they are connected—even if they're not next to one another.

It's all intertwined. Using these design principles as you put together a scrapbook page will enable you to create a flow. By that I mean it will enable you to guide the viewer's eye on a path around your page.

Why do this? So you can show the viewer what's important.

When visitors come to my home, I really don't want them seeing into the bathroom that's next to my front door. I want them to look straight in to my home—to the big windows overlooking the river. So . . . I keep the bathroom door shut (or at least I try to) and I have spots of color leading the eye right over to those windows. Right now it's a series of yellows—a large planter, a yellow vase, and a wide bowl.

## tools for creating flow | natural tendencies

The human eye (and mind) will follow the natural order of things. The eye will follow:

- a sequential pattern
- the eyes of the people in your photos
- a line of perspective
- implied motion in your photo

**The direction your subjects look will direct the viewer's eye.** On

“Holiday Shopping,” a

downward diagonal flow is created by the direction in which the girl holding the shirt looks. Her image is the most closely cropped, it's linked with the title, and it's a relatively bright spot on the page. Also, we're accustomed reading pages starting in the top left corner where this photo is placed. Thus, it's a natural starting point for the viewer of this page. The viewer's eye should follow her gaze, down to the embellishment and title and down to the photo at bottom right and it's embellishing details. An embellishment cluster at top right brings the eye back up and around.

**A line of perspective can direct the viewer's eye.** On “For Love,” the diagonal of the horizon divides the photo into light and dark and makes a line our eyes follow--right down to the photo and title at the bottom of the cluster and then onto the rest of the page elements.



## tools for creating flow | natural tendencies

**The viewer's eye will follow a sequence.** You can set up a sequence as simply as by arranging similar shapes in a pattern. On "Is the Shortcut Shorter?" six identically-sized photos are lined up across the page and draw the eye through their story. This horizontal flow is amplified by the title placement. The beginning is at top left and the end is at bottom right. To read it, the eye will move across the page. One more thing to think about (in the natural tendency category) is that those who read left-to-write and top-to-bottom are prepared to move their eye in this pattern.



On "Cause and Effect" there are several ways in which a sequence is set up:

- a series of aligned photos moving horizontally across the page
- a sequence of numbers
- arrows pointing the way

Combine an understanding of these natural tendencies with good use of design principles and you'll be offering guided tours of your pages with no problem.



## tools for creating flow | design principles

**Use contrast and repetition to catch the eye and direct it.**

These two design principles--contrast and repetition--are the easiest to use for creating eye-catching spots that incorporate connecting repetitions and that the eye around the page, thus creating flow.

On “Ride for 2,” three clusters--each including cork and the color yellow stand out and are connected to one another, thus creating flow on the page.



## tools for creating flow | design principles and the visual triangle

**Create flow in a visual triangle pattern.** When you have three spots on your page that stand out, you create a visual triangle that catches the eye and takes it on a tour around the page. In design, odd numbers of objects are more interesting to the eye than even numbers of objects. An odd number of objects can be arranged both symmetrically and asymmetrically. Three is the odd number that is most frequently used in all kinds of design. Just for a start, look for it in architecture, home decor, and floral design.

Repetitions of green (which contrast with the background) create a visual triangle on “Tender Boy” that moves from title to bottom right to low on the left edge of the page.



On “Glass,” three repetitions of circles (and the color green) create a visual triangle that moves from top left to side right to side left.



## tools for creating flow | design principles and diagonal draw

**Create flow in a diagonal pattern.** Composing a photograph so that your subject is at a diagonal almost always makes a more compelling shot--and we saw that on “For Love” earlier in this lesson. The same principle can be applied to the arrangement of pieces on the page. Note: the diagonal line does not need to be literal. Rather, you just need to set up at least two points along your diagonal that stand out.

A diagonal moving from top left to bottom right is created on “For Real Neighbors” by the placement of embellishments, title, and journaling above and to the left of the photo cluster and then below and to the right of the cluster.



## tools for creating flow | design principles and z-flow

**Create flow in a z-flow pattern.** If you read a language that's written left-to-right, your eye is used to moving in a z-pattern: it begins at the left, proceeds to the right, and then comes back again to the left. Since the brain already looks for patterns that flow this way, you can place items on your scrapbook page on a z-path to successfully guide the viewer's eye through it.

In "1st Fine Day," the "1" in the title is emphasized by its bold red color and its size and by the fact that it contains the page journaling. The eye moves across the three photos at page top and then comes back over to the beginning of the bottom strip of photos – and then across (left-to-right) again.





## tools for creating flow | design principles and circular flow

**Create flow in a circular pattern.** When you arrange your page elements (and the points that stand out and draw the eye) in a circular flow, you keep the viewer cycling through the page. On “We Love the Sunny Days,” the photos are the dominant elements on the page. Their arrangement along with a triangle of white spots draws the eye clockwise around the page—and around again, and again.

### summary

We’ve now made it through six principles of design you can use for making great looking scrapbook pages! And we wrapped up with a great principle—flow—because it calls upon you to put everything you’ve learned so far to work. In the next lesson we’ll begin focusing on the key parts of a scrapbook page.

