

Elements and Principles of Design

According to artist and instructor Edgar Whitney the main things to consider when painting are the elements of design and the principles of design. The elements are the tools and the principles are the rules. The seven elements contained in a painting are: line, value, color, texture, shape, size and direction. There are eight principles to use in handling the seven elements of design. They are: unity, conflict, dominance, repetition, alternation, balance, harmony and gradation. These eight principles together with the seven elements are the fifteen most significant words a painter has. With them he can think, plan, build, organize, express himself and communicate.

--- Excerpts from "Learn Watercolor the Edgar Whitney Way" by Ron Ranson.