

# The Unofficial Rules of Great Web Design

# GOALS

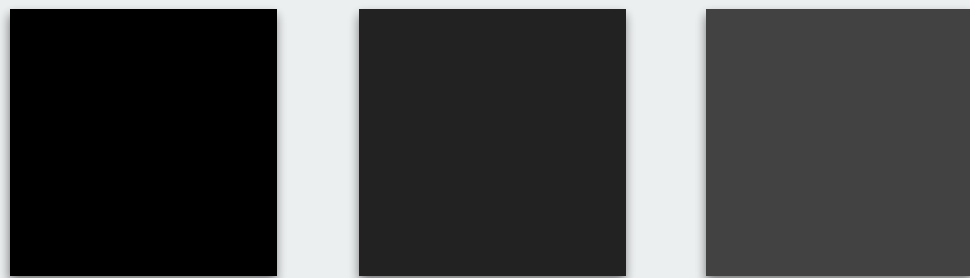
1. **Design better.** What makes a good design? What makes a bad design?
2. **Design faster and easier.** Use less guesswork to find "what looks good."
3. **Design in a flexible way.** Make it easy to change your design elements later.

# Best Practices: Design and Usability

# CONTRAST: BLACK AND WHITE

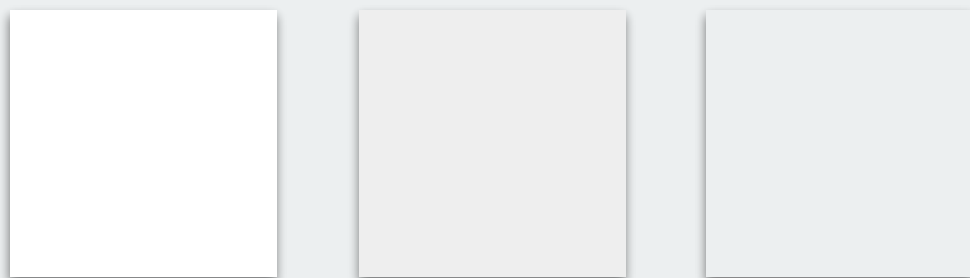
**Avoid using 100% black (#000) for text or backgrounds.**

Instead: dark gray (#222 or #333).



**Consider using off-white instead of 100% white (#fff).**

Instead: light gray (#eee) or "clouds" (#ecf0f1).



# COLOR

**Adobe Color CC:** <https://color.adobe.com/create/color-wheel/>

Tool for finding complementary colors, analogous colors, color shades, etc.

**Color Theory for Designers:** <http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2010/01/28/color-theory-for-designers-part-1-the-meaning-of-color/>

3-part series explaining color theory in web design.

# READABILITY: TEXT

- **Color.** There should be high contrast between text and background colors.
- **Font sizes.** The text should be easy to read at a distance.
- **Line height.** Recommended ratio: 1.6.
- **Paragraph and heading margins.** This is the space below paragraphs and headings. Recommended: at least as tall as one line of body text.



Fast, professional web design.  
Secure and fully managed hosting.

## Frustrated by slow designers?

You're not alone. It often takes months for other web designers to finally finish building your website – after many delays and extra charges.

## Choose a more efficient web designer.

- You can work with us in real time, so you can see changes instantly.
- You can choose from half-day, full-day, or custom design packages.

## Worried about getting hacked?

You're probably using cheap shared hosting. And you're likely not equipped to handle technical work such as security, upgrades, and fixes.

## Rest easy with fully managed hosting.

- Fast and reliable hosting for optimum site speed and uptime.
- Security and monitoring to keep your site from getting hacked.

# FONTS

- The font should be easily legible. Avoid script fonts, except in logos.
- Default web fonts (Arial, Times New Roman, etc) make your site look old.
- **Google Web Fonts** are high quality and (relatively) easy to set up.
- Some of my favorites: Dosis, Lato, Montserrat, Nobile, Noto Sans, Open Sans, Oswald, Oxygen, PT Sans, Questrial, Raleway, Roboto, Ubuntu, Yellowtail.
- Absolutely do not use: Comic Sans, Lobster, or Papyrus.
- Use the CSS properties **letter-spacing** and **font-weight** for more variation.

**How a Web Design Goes to Hell:** [http://theoatmeal.com/comics/design\\_hell](http://theoatmeal.com/comics/design_hell)





## Is The Secret To Becoming Your Best Self... Hidden In Your Body?

Your body holds a consistent and predictable map to your success and inner power. My upcoming e-course, "The Body-Psyche Breakthrough" will show you how tap into this secret map to become your best self. In 5 easy lessons you will discover how your subconscious emotions sabotage your success.

You will learn how to dissolve those blocks and unlock your true potential. Enter your email address to receive *free* access to this new course as soon as I release it.

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We all unconsciously trap negative emotions in our bodies. By using simple steps to dissolve those emotional blocks, you can live a happier and more fulfilling life. The guided meditations in Body-Psyche will show you how.

**Mark David Fourman, Founder of Body-Psyche**

# HEADINGS: H1, H2, H3, ...

Heading tags show importance and establish a hierarchy for your content.

- **Heading tags are important for SEO.**
- H1 should be bigger than H2, H2 bigger than H3, etc.
- There should be noticeable visual differences between heading levels. Usually this is done with font size, but other attributes can work too.
- Example: Your body (paragraph) text has a font-size of 1.6rem. You might have your H1 font-size as 4.8rem, H2 as 3.6rem, and H3 as 2.4rem.
- Every page should have **one (and only one) H1 tag**, preferably at the top.

# PARAGRAPHS

Most people don't want to read a "wall of text." Add some variation.

- **Never center large blocks of text**, and try to avoid them in the first place. Generally, don't center any text that wraps on to more than one line.
- **Justified text** (where both sides of paragraphs line up) rarely looks good.
- **Golden Ratio Typography Calculator:** <http://www.pearsonified.com/typography/>. As a general rule, don't go past 800px wide for body text.
- **"Walls of text"** can be broken up with headings, bulleted lists, bold, links, images, highlighted boxes, etc.

# MINIMALISM

"Above the fold" is becoming less and less of a "rule."

- **Use whitespace** generously around the outside.
- **Use padding** generously between elements. Give them "breathing room."
- **Use the following sparingly:** top-level navigation items, social sharing buttons, ads, form fields. The more clutter you have, the more things there are to distract your visitors from your website's goal.

# CALLS TO ACTION

- Use a large button with a strong, high-contrast color. It should **stand out** from your content and design.
- Don't use too many different calls to action. Ideally, just one per page.
- The text you use is important. Use "Send" instead of "Submit", use "Join" instead of "Subscribe", etc.



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# CONTRAST AND CONSISTENCY

- Use **contrast** in shape, size, and color for **distinct** elements.
- Use **consistency** in shape, size, and color for **related** elements.
- Group and align related elements.
- Don't use too many different colors, fonts, and font sizes.
- **GoodUI:** <http://goodui.org>

# ICONS AND GRAPHICS

**Font Awesome:** <http://fontawesome.github.io/Font-Awesome/>

Icon fonts scale and can be changed with CSS. They are faster to use in design than creating, modifying, and uploading images. Also in Shortcodes Ultimate.

**Unsplash:** <https://unsplash.com>

Resource for high-quality, attribution-free photos.

**Pixabay:** <http://pixabay.com>

Resource for high-quality, attribution-free photos.



# Flat Design

# WHAT IS FLAT DESIGN?

- Two-dimensional, with no added effects: drop shadows, gradients, etc.
- Simple shapes, no/minimal use of rounded corners and borders.
- Typography, color, and graphics become more important.
- Typically sticks to a certain color palette.
- Usually minimalist.

# YOUR KEY METRICS IN ONE PLACE

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DATA MATTERS

# flatuicolors.com



# WHY FLAT DESIGN?

- It's easier to stick to an existing color palette than creating a new one.
- Following these principles makes your design elements less likely to clash.
- When you use flat design with best practices for design and usability, you end up with **fewer choices to make** - a good thing!

**Principles of Flat Design:** <http://designmodo.com/flat-design-principles/>

**Almost Flat Design:** <http://www.matthewmooredesign.com/almost-flat-design/>

# Responsive Design

# WHAT IS RESPONSIVE DESIGN?

- A website design that **adjusts to any screen width**: desktop, mobile, and everything in between (there are a lot of different sizes to accommodate).
- You should not have to scroll horizontally or zoom in to read the content, you just scroll vertically down the page.
- Large navigation menus are typically replaced with a "**hamburger menu**" that you click on to open up the navigation items.





# CURATED CITY GUIDES FOR TRAVELERS, NOT TOURISTS.





# CSS MEDIA QUERIES

Media queries apply CSS properties at certain screen widths.

```
@media only screen and (max-width: 767px) {
```

```
  #header {
```

```
    width: 100%;
```

```
  }
```

```
}
```

```
@media only screen and (min-width: 480px) and (max-width: 767px) {
```

```
  aside.sidebar {
```

```
    display: none;
```

```
  }
```

```
}
```

# EMs AND REMs

- Common units of measurement are px (pixel), em (em), pt (point), and rem (root em).
- Pixels are a fixed/absolute size. Also: in (inch), cm (centimeter), pt (point), etc.
- Ems are relative to the current element.
- Rems are relative to the root element (html).
- Font sizes using relative measurements are much easier to adjust for responsive design.
- **Best practice: use ems or rem for font-size.**

# ADJUSTING FONT SIZE

Set your HTML font-size to 62.5% for easier calculations (**10px = 1em or 1rem**).

```
html {  
    font-size: 62.5%;  
}
```

Then you can adjust all text as the screen width gets smaller.

```
@media only screen and (max-width: 767px) {  
    html {  
        font-size: 50%;  
    }  
}
```

# Fancy Effects

# FANCY EFFECTS

Fancy effects often require a combination of HTML5, CSS, and JavaScript.  
Recommendation: use existing tools instead of building them from scratch.

- **Hover states:** Use the CSS pseudo-class hover and the opacity property.

```
a img:hover {  
    opacity: 0.5;  
}
```

- **Fly-in animation:** Use the Shortcodes Ultimate plugin.
- **Parallax scrolling:** Use the Extra Shortcodes add-on (a paid add-on for Shortcodes Ultimate).

# WORDPRESS PLUGINS

**My Custom CSS:** <https://wordpress.org/plugins/my-custom-css/>

Backend menu for adding CSS without editing your theme files.

**Shortcodes Ultimate:** <https://wordpress.org/plugins/shortcodes-ultimate/>

Gives you a ton of shortcodes: buttons, icons, boxes, tabs, columns, fly-in animations, popups, and more.

Insert Shortcode button in the editor so you don't have to remember syntax.

**Extra Shortcodes Add-On:** <http://gndev.info/shortcodes-ultimate/extra/>

More shortcodes for parallax sections, testimonials, content sliders, etc.

# CSS RESOURCES

**W3 Schools:** <http://www.w3schools.com>

Great basic reference site for CSS and other code - HTML, PHP, JavaScript, etc.

**CSS-Tricks:** <https://css-tricks.com>

Great in-depth resource for intermediate/advanced CSS.

# VIDEO BACKGROUND: EXAMPLE HTML

```
<video id="video_background" preload="auto" autoplay="autoplay" loop="loop"
muted="muted" width="300" height="150" style="">
```

```
<source src="https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/example/video.mp4"
type="video/mp4" />
```

Video not supported

```
</video>
```



# VIDEO BACKGROUND: EXAMPLE CSS

```
video::-webkit-media-controls {  
    display:none !important;  
}
```

```
#video_background {  
    height: auto;  
    left: 0px;  
    min-height: 100%;  
    min-width: 100%;  
    overflow: hidden;  
    position: fixed;  
    top: 0px;  
    width: auto;  
    z-index: 0;  
}
```

# THANKS!

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