Proximity

Items relating to each other should be grouped close together. When several items are in close proximity to each other, they become one visual unit rather than several separate units. This helps organize information and reduces clutter.

Contrast

The idea behind contrast is to avoid elements on the page that are merely similar. If the elements (type, color, size, line thickness, shape, space, etc.) are not the same then make them very different. Contrast is often the most important visual attraction on a page.

Alignment

Nothing should be placed on the page arbitrarily. Every element should have some visual connection with another element on the page. This creates a clean, sophisticated, fresh look.

Repetition

Repeat visual elements of the design throughout the piece. You can repeat color, shape, texture, spatial relationships, line thickness, sizes, etc. This helps develop the organization and strengthens the unity.
The Four Basic Principles of Design-
Proximity, Contrast, Alignment, Repetition

Proximity Examples

Bad:

Mr. Morris
Teacher

Deady Middle School

2500 Broadway        Houston, Texas  77012

713-845-7411

Better:

Mr. Morris
Teacher

Deady Middle School

2500 Broadway        Houston, Texas  77012

713-845-7411
Student Activity Sheet

The Four Basic Principles of Design-
Proximity, Contrast, Alignment, Repetition

Contrast Examples

Bad:

Mr. Morris
Teacher

Deady Middle School
2500 Broadway
Houston, Texas 77012
713-845-7411

Better:

Mr. Morris
Teacher

Deady Middle School
2500 Broadway
Houston, Texas 77012
713-845-7411
The Four Basic Principles of Design—
Proximity, Contrast, Alignment, Repetition

Alignment Examples

Bad:

Mr. Morris  
Teacher

Deady Middle School  
2500 Broadway  
Houston, Texas  77012  
713-845-7411

Better:

Mr. Morris  
Teacher

Deady Middle School  
2500 Broadway  
Houston, Texas  77012  
713-845-7411
Repetition Examples

Bad:

Mr. Morris
Teacher

Deady Middle School
2500 Broadway
Houston, Texas 77012
713-845-7411

Better:

Mr. Morris
Teacher

Deady Middle School
2500 Broadway
Houston, Texas 77012
713-845-7411