

# HANDOUT

## BALANCE

Balance is achieved by giving equal weight to two halves of a composition. The upper and lower halves of a composition should also be considered when thinking of balance, with weight somewhat heavier on the lower half of an artwork to keep it from appearing to fall forward.

### Terms Used to Define Balance

*Symmetrical (formal) balance* often results in a static composition

*Exact symmetry:* mirror images on two halves

*Asymmetrical (informal) balance* is somewhat livelier

*Radial balance:* all elements radiate from a central point

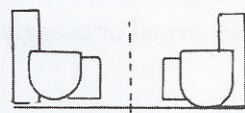
*Overall balance:* there is no specific focus or emphasis, yet balance is achieved with the use of design elements and principles such as color, line, shape, value, and repetition



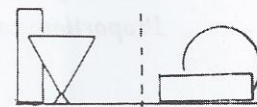
Apply balance to

Express the idea of rest or disquiet by using symmetrical or asymmetrical balance

Create a radial design that contains several objects



Formal Balance  
(Symmetrical)



Informal Balance  
(Asymmetrical)

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## PROPORTION

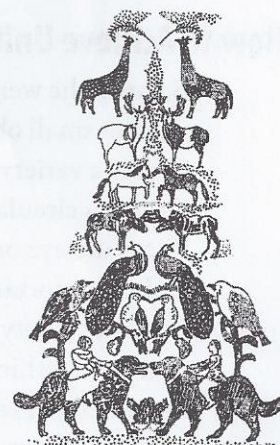
Proportion is the relative size and scale of one object to another within an artwork. It can also refer to realistic facial or figure proportions. The hands and head of Michelangelo's David were not in proportion to the rest of the figure, but expressed Michelangelo's vision of strength. Ideal proportions may look more pleasant, but stressing features that deviate from the norm yields more dynamic portraits.

### Definitions

*Facial proportions:* all faces have features that are relatively proportionate in everyone

*Foreshortening:* the portion of a human figure that is closest to the artist will be shown as much larger to create a three-dimensional object on a two-dimensional page

*Scale:* the relative size of objects and their relationship to everything within a composition



Cutout of Animals, Artist Unknown.