GRAPHIC DESIGN<101>   ELEMENTS<4>
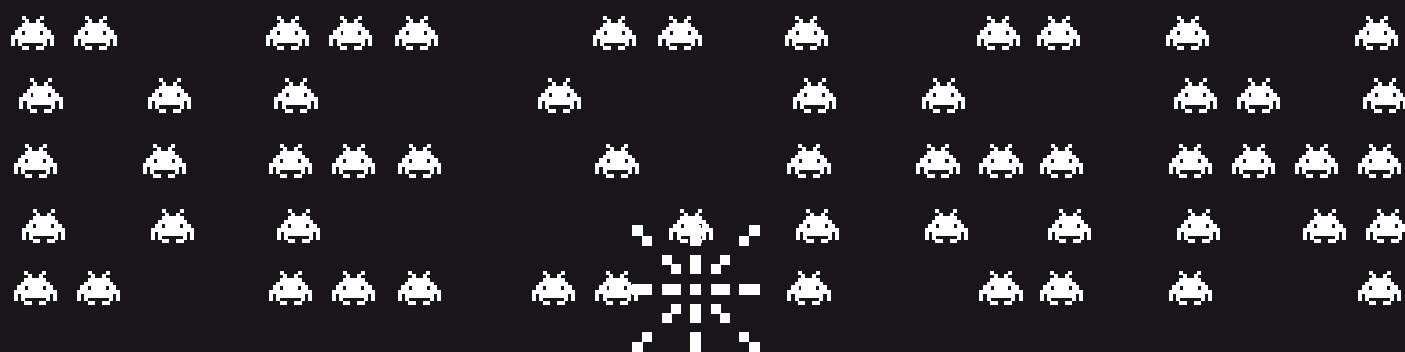## LINE   TYPE   SHAPE   TEXTURE

EMIL JOENSSON

Line

The line is usually present in every design, even if it is a solid border of 1px or a dotted one of 5px. Every website has lines, but the minimalistic style which became more popular in the past couple of years tries to erase the lines from the layouts, or at least to decrease the use of them.

The lines can be long, red, straight, thin, blue, dashed, short, black or curved, they are all into the same category. They are most of the time used for delimitation between different sections of a design, or are used to direct a viewer's vision in a specific direction.

The lines can create different effects and visual impact. While a thick, bold line draws attention because of its visual power, the thin lines tend to go the other way. The color has an impact too, dark colors are easier to see and draw more attention than light or pale colors.

And this is not all. The style of a line can also influence the way the user sees it. This style can easily be defined through CSS and can be solid, dotted and dashed among others. The solid lines have a different impact than the dotted ones, because they are more imposing.

Many years ago solid lines were very popular because they determined the style of the design: rigid, solid and organized. The web changed in the past years and this style is not very popular anymore, especially for designers' portfolios and other pages with a strong need of a personal touch.
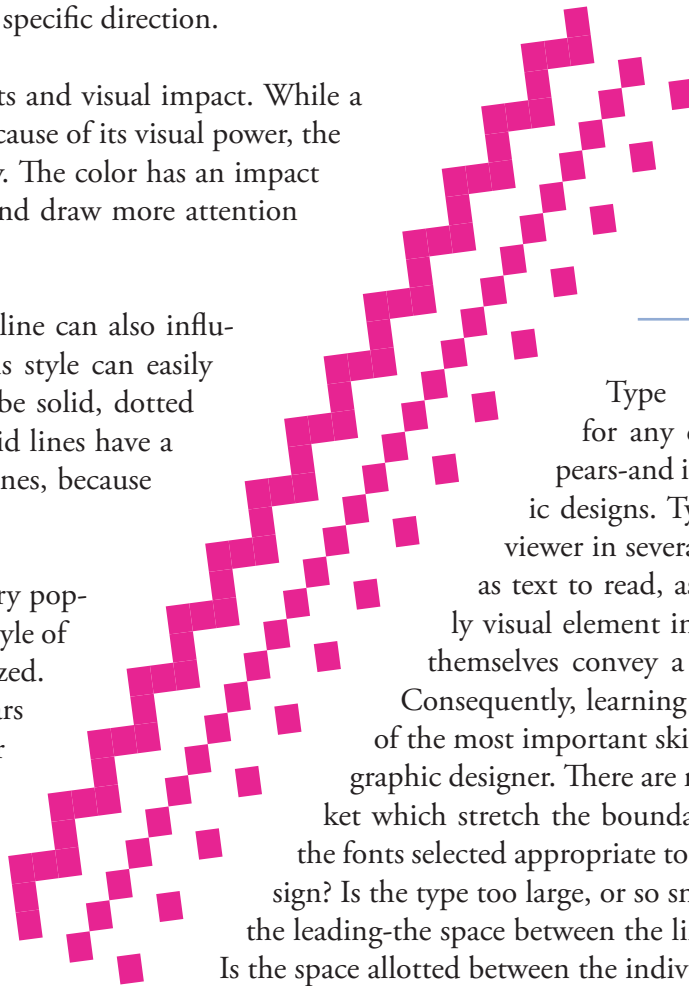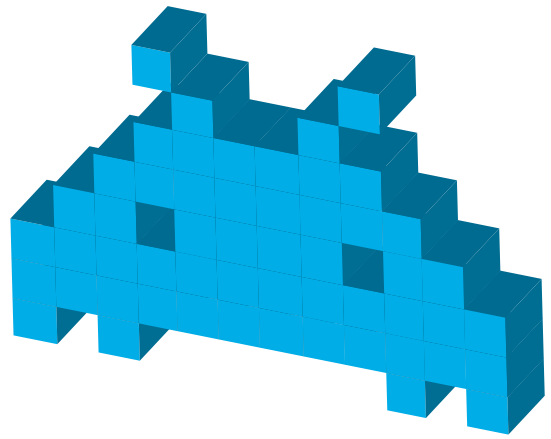
Type

Type is a crucial element for any design in which it appears-and it is used in most graphic designs. Type is perceived by the viewer in several ways simultaneously: as text to read, as shape, and as a purely visual element in which the letterforms themselves convey a feeling or a meaning. Consequently, learning to use type well is one of the most important skills you can develop as a graphic designer. There are many fonts on the market which stretch the boundaries of good taste. Are the fonts selected appropriate to the concepts of the design? Is the type too large, or so small you can't read it? Is the leading-the space between the lines of type-appropiate? Is the space allotted between the individual characters of type (tracking or kerning) correct?

Using type well means using it appropriately to communicate, taking into consideration the various ways it will be perceived by the viewer. When you've used the character of a visual symbol-the typeface itself-to convey the meaning of the written word, you've effectively used type to solve a problem. When type is used well, it may even stand alone-without any accompanying illustration or photograph. Some of the best designs are simple type solutions.

When type is used poorly, however, it is difficult to look beyond it, also it often interferes with the intended message.
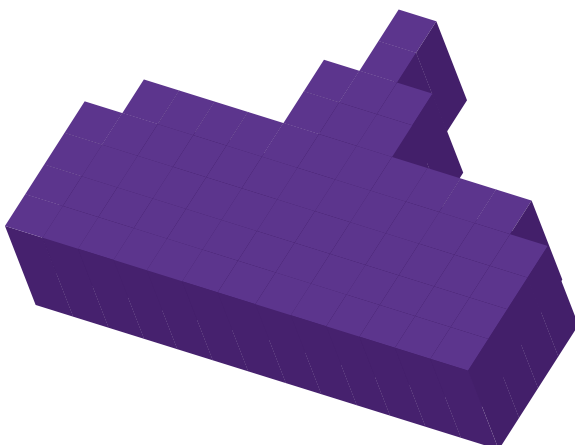
shape

The shape, or the form, is the second most used element of a
web design. They are actually lines combined in different shapes.
The forms are still popular and this is because if there is something
that needs to stand out, forms are one of the ways to do it. There can be
circles, squares, rectangles, triangles or any other abstract shape; most of the de-
signs include at least one of these. Minimalistic designs use it a lot, because they are
often based on illustrations and drawings. The old style of designing websites included
shapes too, so they remained popular throughout the time and will probably continue being
like that.

Like lines, shapes are also associated by the human mind with different movements.
For example, circles are associated with movement and nature, while squares are
often seen as structured, basic designs. Just like with the lines, the color, style,
background or texture of a shape can totally change the viewer's percep-
tion.

textures

The textures were not very popular a couple of years ago, but they
tend to become more and more used. They replaced (or compete with,
if we can call it a competition) the single-colored backgrounds. Textures can
look similar to solid background colors, but if they are analyzed closer, small but
effective differences can be noticed.

Texture styles include paper, stone, concrete, brick, fabric and natural elements,
among flat or smooth colors. Textures can also be subtle or pronounced and can
be used sparingly or liberally. They work with pretty much everything. Even
if they do not seem important, the textures can totally change a website
and offer a totally different visual impact.

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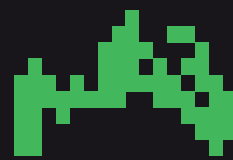
GAME OVER

END CREDITS

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GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR NEXT ASSIGNMENT!!!