

**THE BASIC ELEMENTS & PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN**  
**THE ULTIMATE WEB DESIGNER • BRAD HUSSEY**

## SIX ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

Although visual design on the web can be incredibly complex, all web designs boil down to 6 basic elements:

1. LINES
2. SHAPES
3. COLOUR PALETTE
4. TEXTURE
5. TYPOGRAPHY
6. FORM



# LINES

Help define shapes

Divide sections

Create separation

Typically have length,  
width & direction

Line



# SHAPES

Self contained areas

Composed of lines,  
values, colour and  
texture

All objects are  
composed of shapes

Shape





## COLOUR PALETTE

Three main colours  
used in this scheme

Differentiate shapes &  
items

Add depth & emphasis

Organize information

Evoke emotion & feeling



# TEXTURE

Gives illusion of how a surface feels

Doesn't have to be a real texture, like dirt, or paper

Used to either attract or divert attention

Muted texture to create focus on main content





# TYPOGRAPHY

Fonts

Size

Colour

Spacing

Alignment

Heading

Sub heading

Body



# FORM

Illusion of 3D objects

Add depth & texture to  
create 3D object

Used to accentuate a  
message, or provide  
visual appeal

3D text

3D graphic





# SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

While there are no official "industry standard" rules for visual design — as the beauty of a design purely depends on the audience — there are a set of widely accepted guidelines, or "principles", when it comes to visual communication. The basic principles boil down to the following:

1. BALANCE
2. RHYTHM
3. PROPORTION
4. SPACE
5. DOMINANCE
6. HIERARCHY
7. UNITY

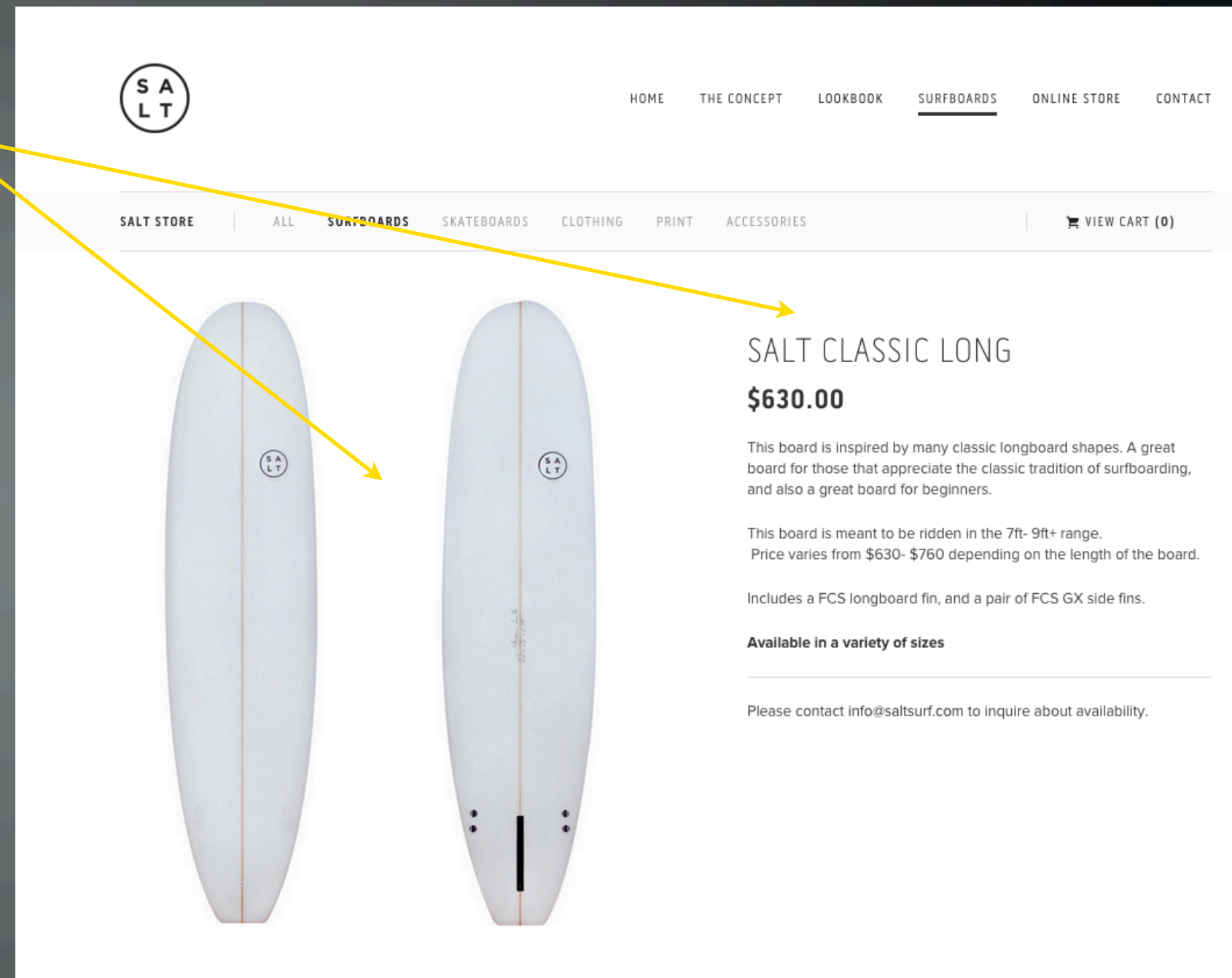
# BALANCE

Arrangement &  
distribution of objects  
to create meaning

Symmetric

Asymmetric

Balance





# RHYTHM

Repetition of elements

Creates movement

Can establish pattern  
and texture

Rhythm

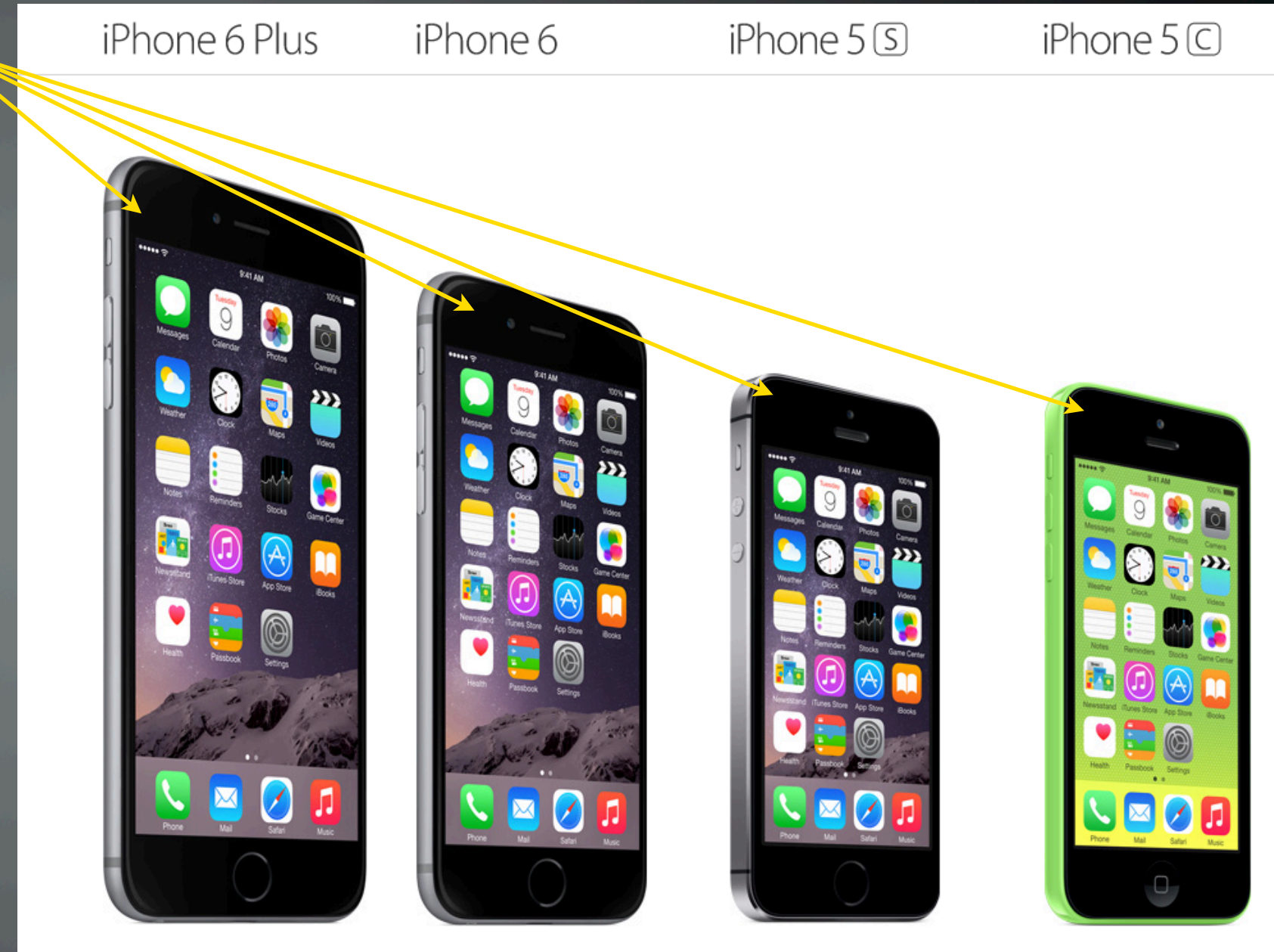


## Proportion

# PROPORTION

Also known as “scale”

Demonstrates how each item relates in size



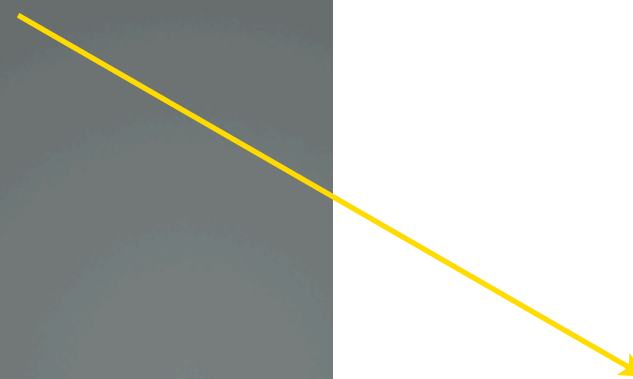


# SPACE

Also known as “white space”

Used to reduce noise, clutter, and increase readability

Space



# DOMINANCE

The focal point

Achieved through size,  
colour, shape, etc.

Used to communicate  
the primary message

Dominance





# HIERARCHY

Differentiates primary  
and secondary focus

Achieved through size,  
colour, & placement

Primary focus

Secondary focus

Tertiary focus

Google  
Canada

Google Search

I'm Feeling Lucky

Google.ca offered in: [Français](#)

# UNITY

The “big picture” of a design

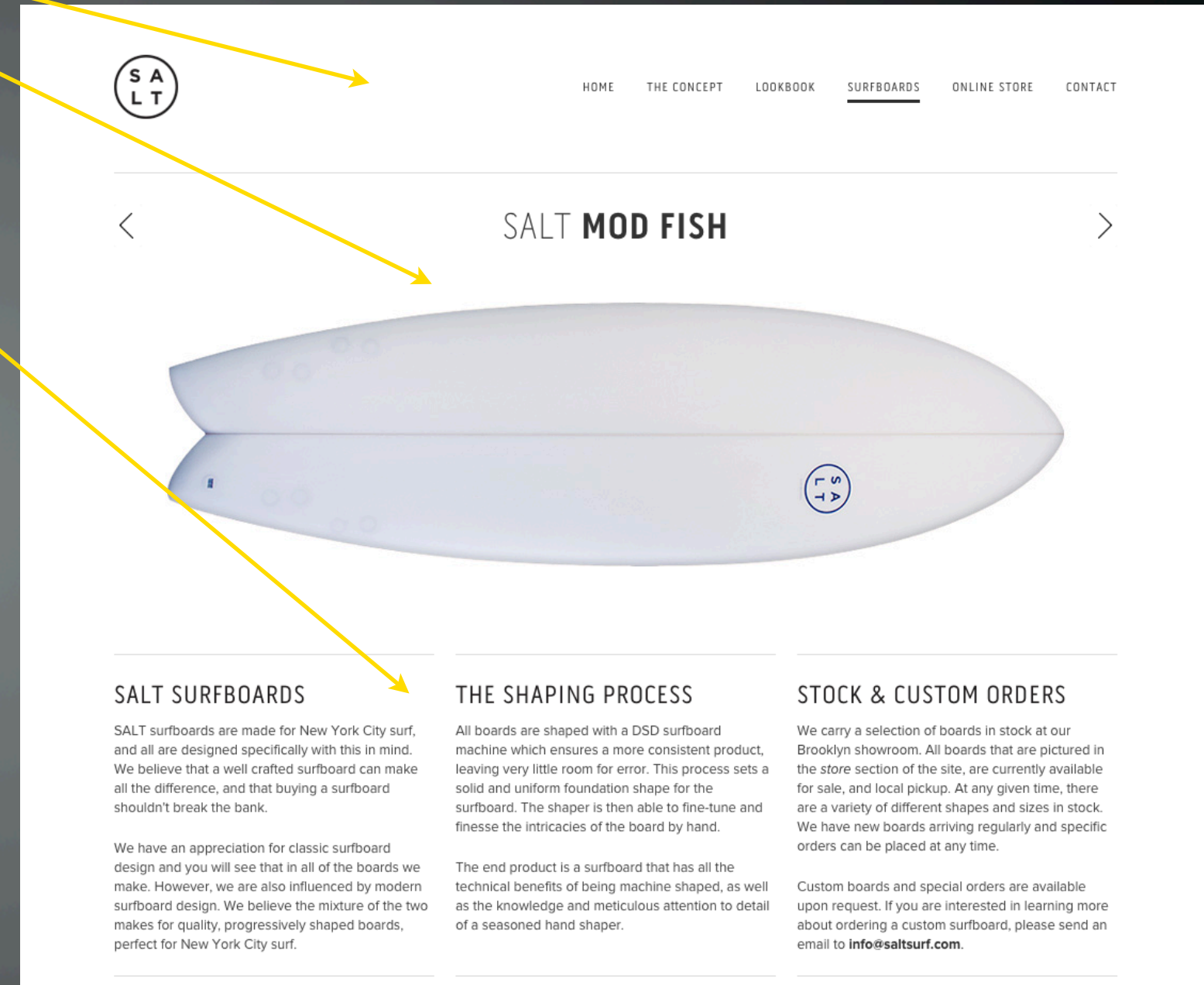
How all elements are related, or unrelated

The grouping of similar elements

Space

Dominance

Secondary info,  
all related





*GOT IT? LET'S MOVE ON.*

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