# **Alignment Principles in Graphic Design**

## **Alignment in Design**

The term **alignment in graphic design** has its origins in the literal version of the term, which means that various items are arranged about the borders or edges of the working area. In graphic design, specifically, alignment refers to the correlation of graphics and text concerning the various edges of the design canvas. Alignment works, in principle, by placing visual elements in such a way that they line up in composition. Alignment is used to organize elements, group elements, structuralize elements, connect elements and create a balance between elements.

Alignment is an important concept and serves as one of the principles of graphic design. Aligning elements in graphic design helps designers organize different elements in their composition, giving the design a definitive structure and creating balance. Using alignment well in a design can result in a clear, professional, and sharp finished product.

## **Types of Alignment**

There are several types of alignment in graphic design. They include edge alignment, horizontal alignment, vertical alignment, mixed alignment, visual alignment, and justified alignment.

### **Edge Alignment**

**Edge alignment** determines the placement of elements about the edge of the page or canvas. Edge alignment organizes the different elements in a composition based on their relationship to the left, right, top, or bottom of the page. Simply stated, Edge alignment determines the placement of elements in relation to the edge of the page or canvas. It can mean the elements are aligned to the left side or right side, but it can also mean they are aligned to the top or bottom of the page.

There are, however, four types of edge alignment; left edge alignment is where elements of graphics are aligned on the y axis, right-aligned edge alignment sticks elements of text table or pictures to the right axis, and top alignment aligns elements to the far top of the x-axis, and finally Bottom aligned which sticks its graphics to the bottom of the x-axis.

### **Horizontal Alignment**

**Horizontal alignment** in design is when the texts for the graphics of the canvas or the page are aligned to the left, right, or both edges of the page. In horizontal alignment, the center line used in aligning elements runs from the top of the page to the bottom. Most texts are usually aligned horizontally, and there are four major types of horizontal text alignment; Center, Justified, left, and right alignment.

### **Vertical Alignment**

Unlike all the other types of alignment existing independently, Vertical design has to coordinate with the other types for it to be used successfully. It defines the origin of the items and fills it all the way to the edges of the canvas. Vertical alignment aligns graphics from the top or the bottom of the page, and it mostly follows the height of the page as opposed to horizontal alignment, which is concerned with the page's width. Most document designs use vertical alignment since it allows the titles or the heading of the body to be easily adjustable without additions or subtractions of manual brakes. Vertical alignment also has four major types; top aligned, bottom aligned, Justified or centered alignment.

### **Center Alignment**

Center alignment in graphic design involves aligning elements around a midpoint. The elements are placed in the center of the page, but the edges of the elements entirely placed differ in width. The imaginary central lines that provide a basis for center-aligned texts have a specific pattern, and if it runs from the top of the page to the bottom, then it is considered a horizontal alignment. However, when it runs from the left to the right side of the page, then the content is automatically vertically aligned.

Logo designs largely employ center alignment to create professional [graphic designs](https://study.com/learn/lesson/what-is-graphic-design.html). Center alignment, however, has disadvantages like tiring the readers and draining their interests due to the centralized texts. They make reading harder for the intended market, and small texts are preferred over large paragraphs.

### **Mixed Alignment**

In mixed alignment, different elements are combined and aligned professionally in various ways. It can be done by misaligning a part of an aligned design or intentionally breaking an alignment to create a professional design. Mixed alignments give a graphic designer the chance to play with different layouts and grids while still creating a design that is of visual interest to the users. One of the major areas in mixed alignments is the use of grids, which offers endless alignment options. Mixed alignments are the perfect way of keeping users interested in checking out website content as it gives the users fresh perspectives to focus on as the designs are created.

### **Visual Alignment**

Visual or optical alignment is not technically aligned as it uses the human eye to align a text until it looks satisfying. Visual alignment is common in typographic alignment as no mathematical approach can be used to measure a satisfactory outlook. At least one element in the design may have features that end up looking misaligned when placed in technically correct alignment, which can make the work look awkward or sloppy. Deliberately shifting that element, even if misaligned, can create the illusion of proper alignment.

### **Justified Alignment**

Justified alignment in graphic design spaces out items equally, and it tries to occupy the canvas from both ends. It provides a neater look to text since it gives them the right shape and also creates equal margins on both sides of the text. Justified alignment is mostly used in professional documents since the unit is a more organized approach than the other alignment principles. However, it is not as widely used as the other design principles since the appearance of the designs is subject to change under various conditions.

## **Application of the Alignment Design Principles**

Alignment is one of the most important design principles as it helps create an organized and professional design. The most common alignment design principle is the right-aligned and left-aligned. One of the major applications of the alignment Design principles is the use of grids to align in Mixed alignment. Mixed alignment can be defined as the designs that are created with an intent of a post to look more dynamic, free, or playful. Using a grid in mixed alignment breaks down the mixed alignment into easier steps, therefore more achievable since designers use it to create an invisible structure used to place the visual elements perfectly.

With the help of a grid, individuals can create a mixed alignment where all the elements or groups of elements in their composition are clearly aligned, but different groups will be aligned in different ways.

The main purpose of using the grids is to ensure accuracy and consistency in the choice of alignment where a large piece of design is being worked on.

## **Examples of Alignment in Graphic Design**

There are several examples of alignment in graphic design. They include edge, mixed, vertical, center, justified, visual, and horizontal alignment.

* Edge alignment determines the placement of elements about the edge of the page or canvas.
* Horizontal alignment in design is when the texts for the graphics of the canvas or the page are aligned to the left, right, or both edges of the page. Unlike all the other types of alignment existing independently, Vertical design has to coordinate with the other types for it to be used successfully.
* Center alignment in graphic design involves aligning elements around a midpoint.
* In mixed alignment, different elements are combined and aligned professionally in various ways.
* Visual or optical alignment is not technically aligned as it uses the human eye to align a text until it looks satisfying. Justified alignment in graphic design spaces out items equally and tries to occupy the canvas from both ends.