



Symphonic

13 inch PERSONAL TELEVISION

MENU

VOLUME ▲

CHANNEL ▲ ▼

POWER



ICE BREAKER

*Is Tears of the
Kingdom is an
original game?*



Symphonic

13 inch PERSONAL TELEVISION

MENU

VOLUME ▲

CHANNEL ▲

POWER









Character Design

and their role in games



Symphonic

100% PERSONALITY



MENU ▽ VOLUME △ ▽ CHANNEL ▲ POWERED



Attendance por favor!



*Do it or the mole-men will teach you how to
crochet (it's a special type of hell)*



What is Character Design?

Naive

- *Action:* Drawing a picture of the character
- *Goal:* Telling the audience what the character looks like

Accurate

- *Action:* Create the actual character
- *Goal:* Visually presenting behavior, personality, and aesthetic



Character Drawing



Character Design



*Character
Design*

*Character
Drawing*



*When drawing a
character...*

*draw with the character's
behaviors and functions in
mind!!*



ACTIVITY PART 0:

Come up with an idea for a character!

Can be a list of ideas...

Or you can actually try drawing something!

*Try combining an emotion, an action, and
gameplay ideas*

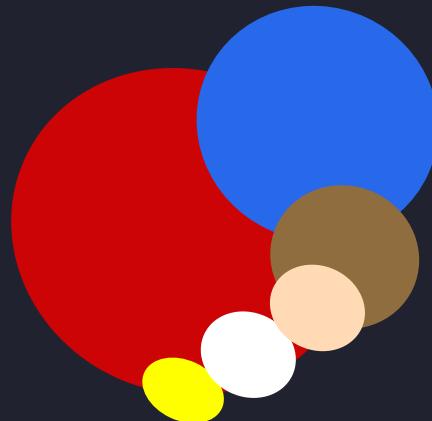


*What makes **Good** Character Design?*

Silhouette



Palette



Exaggeration



Silhouettes



Silhouettes

*Good design means a **recognizable** silhouette...*

*A **recognizable** silhouette...*

- *uses a **shape language motif***
- *contains 1-2 **unique shapes***



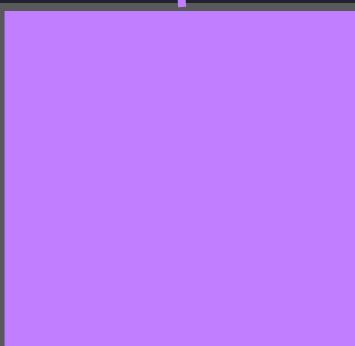
Shape Language

Using shapes to show personality traits

Sturdy Supportive

Strong Stubborn

Rigid Trustworthy



Soft Squishy

Bouncy Friendly

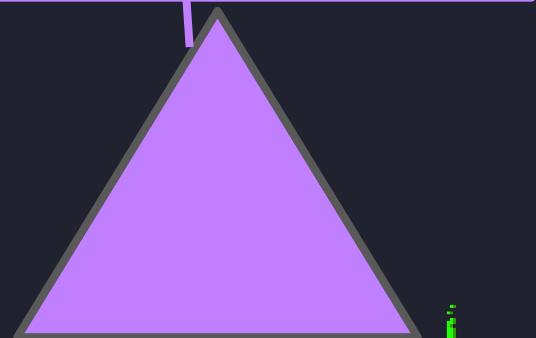
Happy Fluid



Sharp Dynamic

Intense Directional

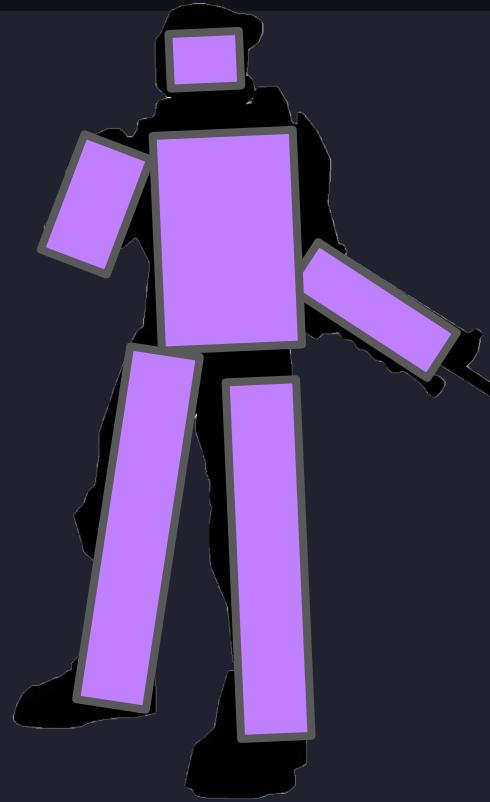
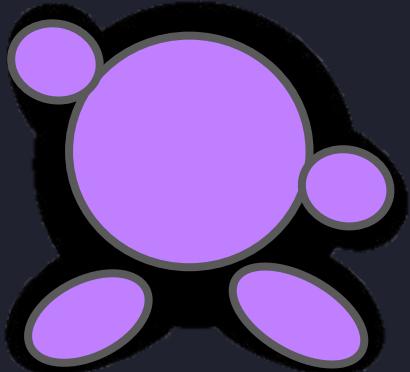
Edgy Dangerous



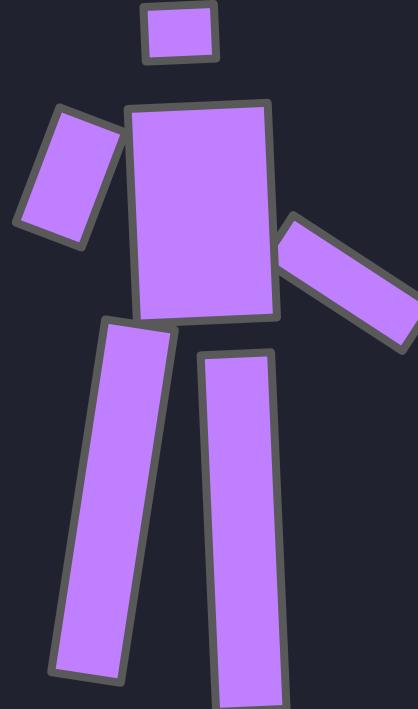
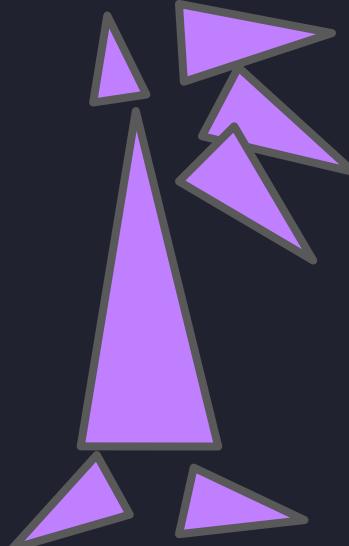
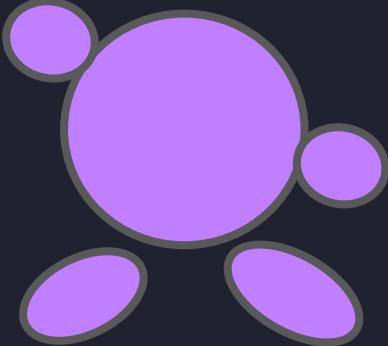
Good Design uses a shape motif



Good Design uses a shape motif



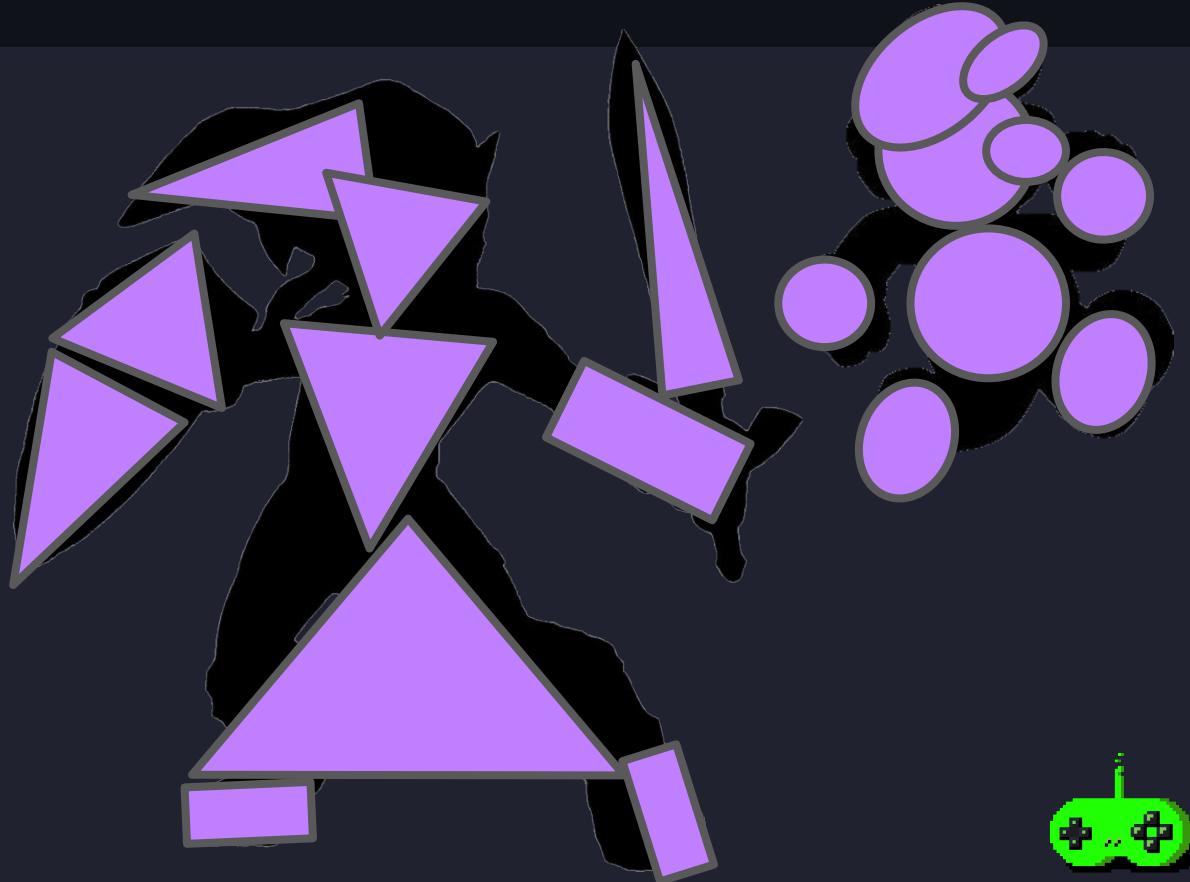
Good Design uses a shape motif



Good Design uses a shape motif

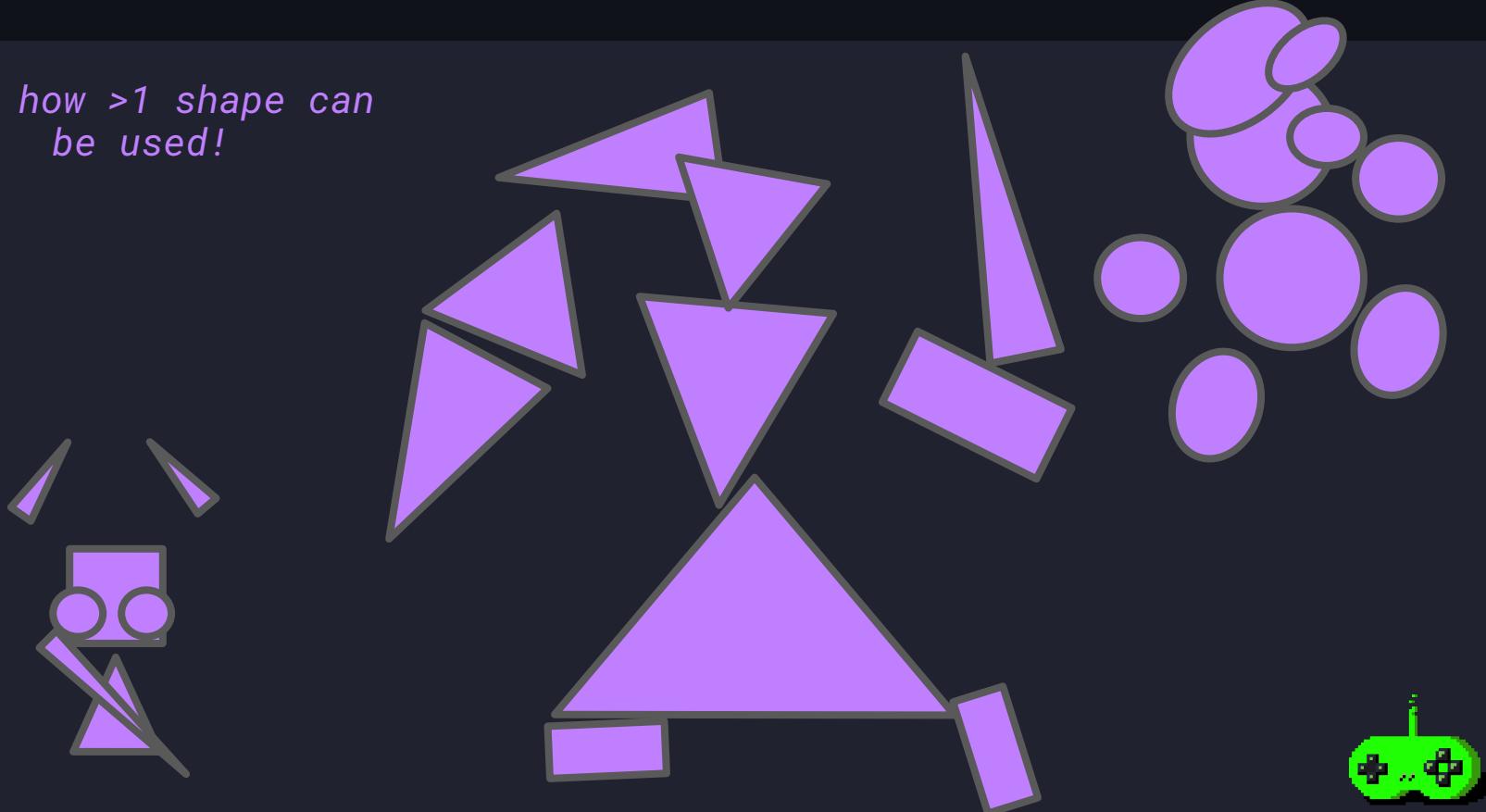


Good Design uses a shape motif



Good Design uses a shape motif

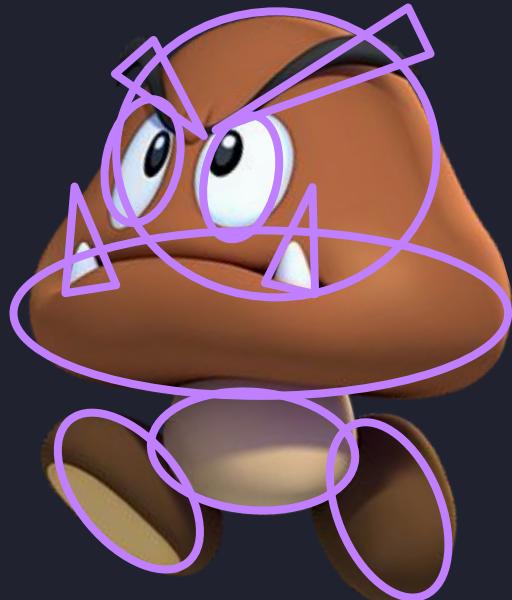
*Note how >1 shape can
be used!*



In-Depth Example:



In-Depth Example:



7/11 shapes: *Circles*
4/11 shapes: *Triangles*

Circles make him cute...
but TRIANGLES make him
DANGEROUS!



In-Depth Example:



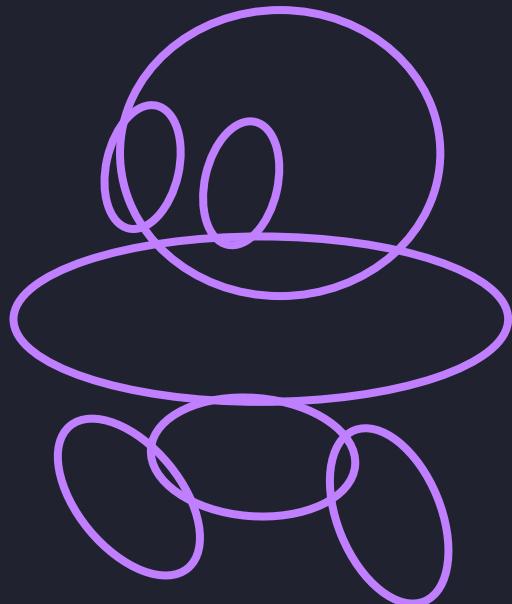
7/11 shapes: Circles

4/11 shapes: Triangles

*Circles make him cute...
but TRIANGLES make him
DANGEROUS!*



In-Depth Example:



7/7 shapes: ***Circles***

?/? shapes: ***amogus***

Circles make him cute...

but TRIANGLES... oh never mind!



In-Depth Example:



Just changing a few shapes...



In-Depth Example:



*You can get a totally
different character!*



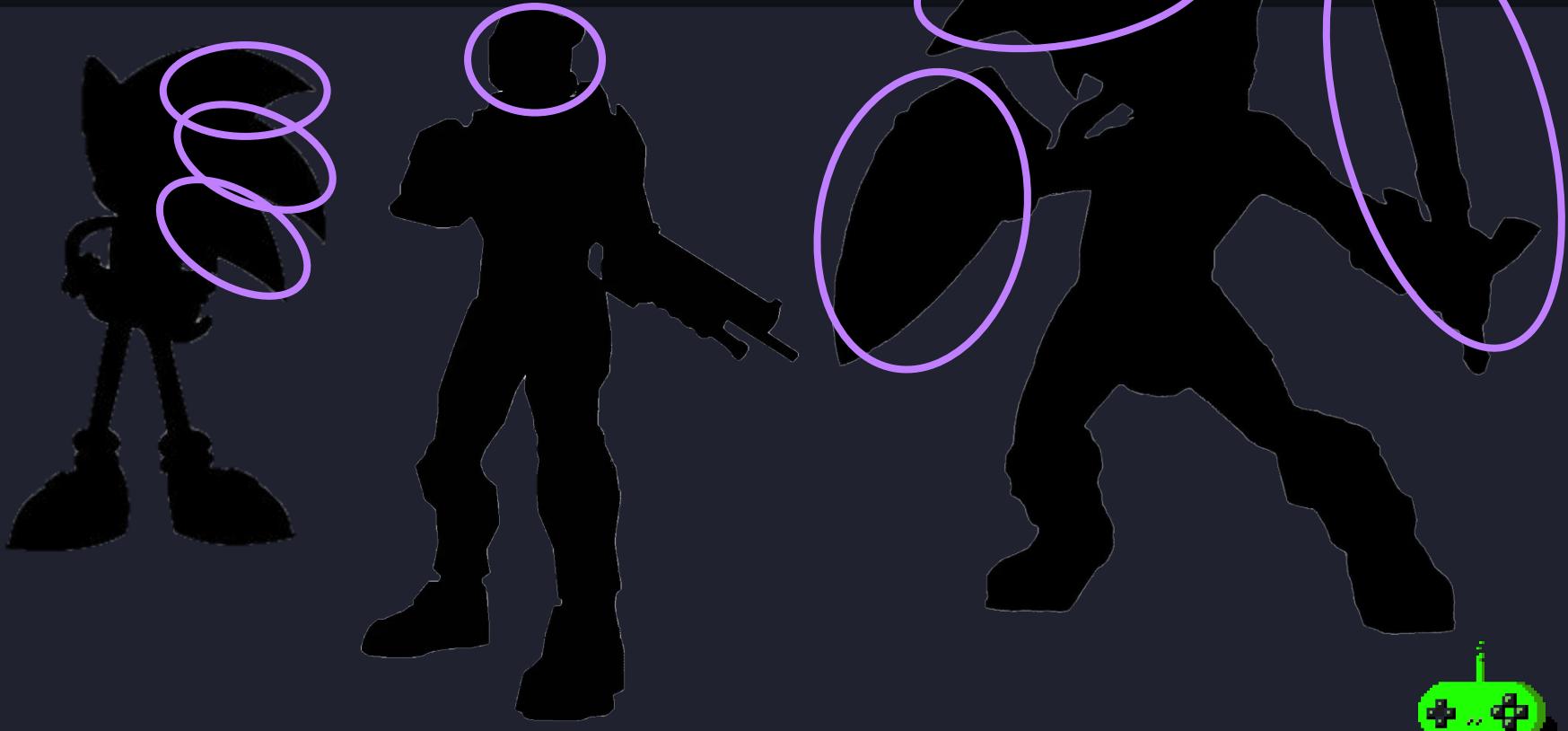
In-Depth Example:



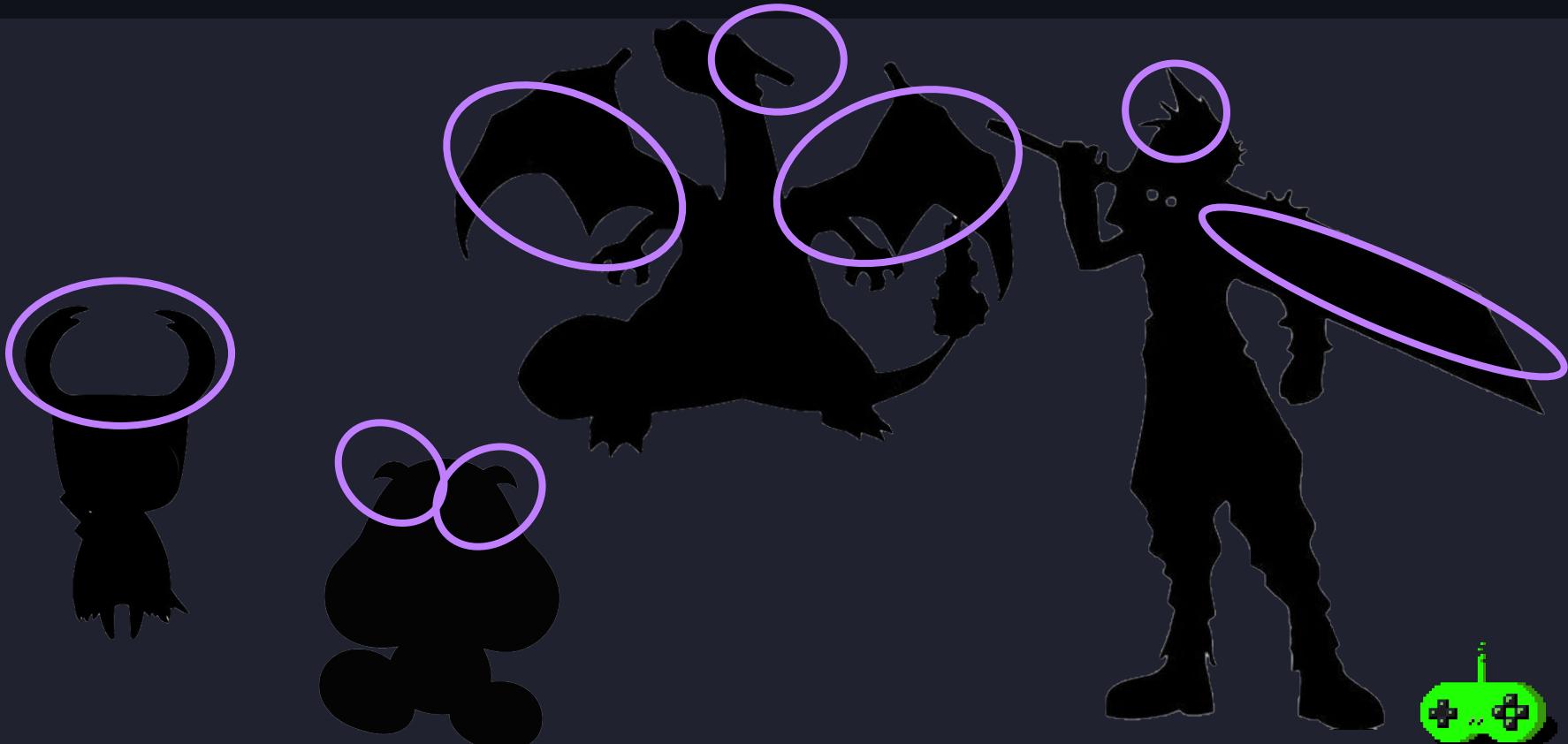
*You can get a totally
different character!*



1-2 Unique Shapes



1-2 Unique Shapes

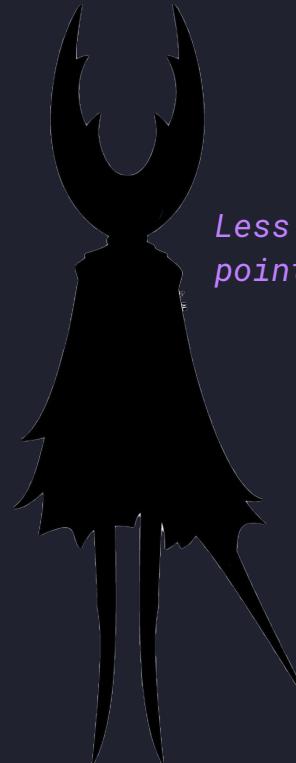


Pro Tip: Use shape properties on each other!

Such as *making triangle points more circular!*



*More curved points
feels more friendly!*



*Less curved, more angular
points... more scary!*



Pro Tip: Use shape properties on each other!

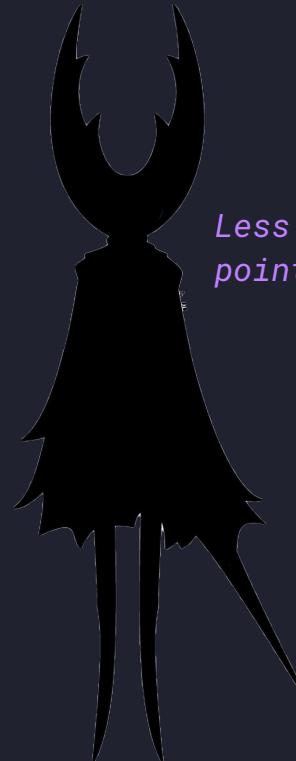
Other examples:

Beveling square edges

Adding edges to circular shapes



*More curved points
feels more friendly!*



*Less curved, more angular
points... more scary!*



Silhouettes Summary

Good silhouettes will...

*Employ a **shape motif***

*Contain 1-2 **unique shapes***



*TLDR; they
pass the
“Who’s that
Pokemon?! ”
test*



*TLDR; they
pass the
“Who’s that
Pokemon?! ”
test*



ACTIVITY PART 1:

Use the rules of silhouettes to start a character design!

- 1) Clear Shape Motif***
- 2) 1-2 Unique Shapes***



Palette



Palettes

*Good design means a **simple color palette***

*A **simple color palette**...*

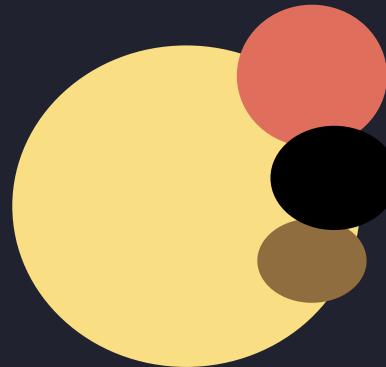
- *uses a **color hierarchy***
- *uses **color theory** to create **harmony***
- *showcases a **clear theme** using **color language***



Color Hierarchy

*Step 1) Choose a **dominant color***

Step 2) Choose other colors to support



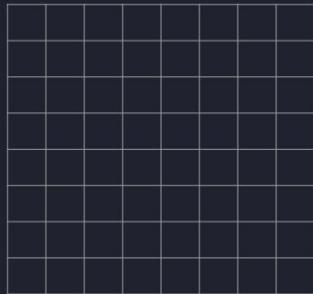
Color Hierarchy



Color Hierarchy (Historical Significance)

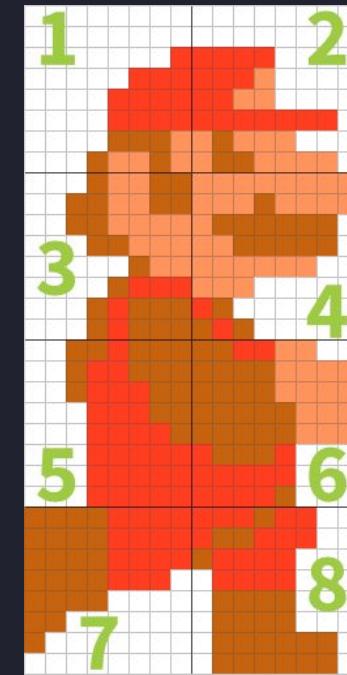
Consoles used to have severe color limits

Ex: The NES



Sprites were made in units of 8x8 grids...

*Each grid can ONLY contain 4 colors
(3 solids, 1 clear)*



Color Theory

Color theory is the study of how colors work together and affect emotions

*The color wheel,
one of the most
important maps
for an artist*



*Good designers
understand the
basics of color
theory!*



Color Theory

Color theory is the study of how colors work together



Your *primary* colors,
RED **BLUE** **YELLOW**



Color Theory

Color theory is the study of how colors work together and affect emotions



Your **secondary** colors,
ORANGE GREEN PURPLE

(made by mixing 2 primaries!)



Color Theory

Color theory is the study of how colors work together and affect emotions



*Your **tertiary** colors*

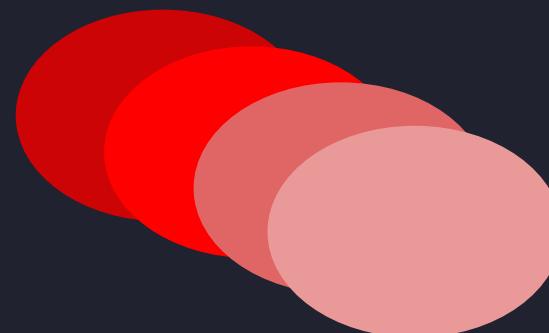
(made by mixing one primary and one secondary)



Color Theory

You want to use the relationship between these colors to create a color harmony

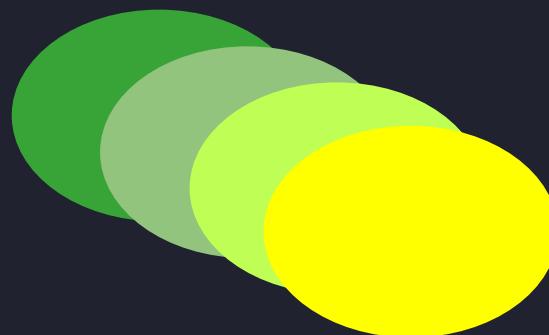
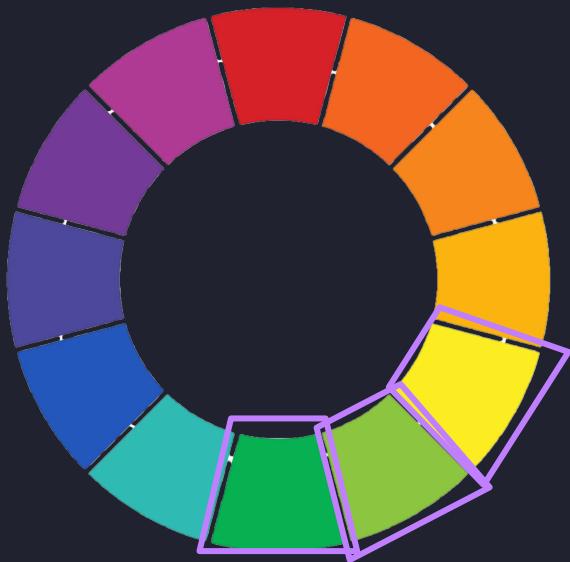
Monochromatic



Color Theory

You want to use the relationship between these colors to create a color harmony

Analogous



Color Theory

You want to use the relationship between these colors to create a color harmony

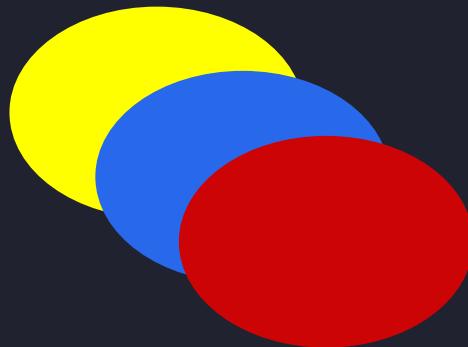
Complementary



Color Theory

You want to use the relationship between these colors to create a color harmony

Triadic



Color Theory

*Too many colors can create **color disharmony!***

Chaos!



????



Color Theory

You want to use the relationship between these colors to create a color harmony



Color
Harmony



Color Language/Symbolism

Using the symbolism of colors to give more story!

Passion, Danger, Power

Warmth, Freshness, Creativity

Caution, Energy, Happiness

Nature, Illness, Wealth

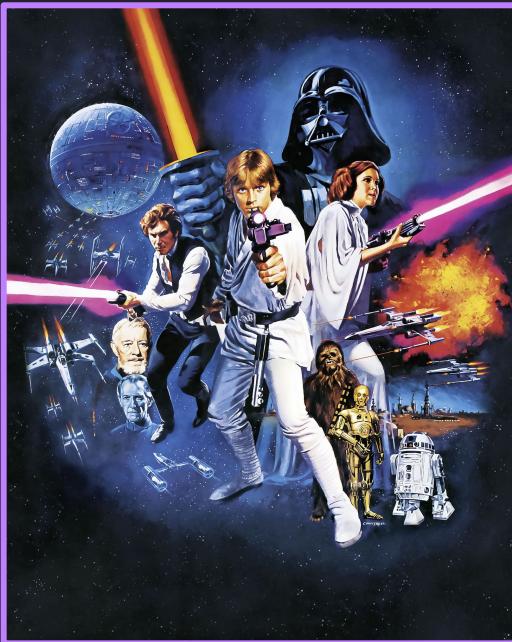
Depth, Sadness, Calm

Royalty, Wisdom, Mystery



Color Language/Symbolism

Classic Film Example:



Color Language/Symbolism

Classic Film Example:



A New Hope

*Brooding,
greedy,
selfish,
rough exterior,
heart of gold*

**Symbolized
via...**

*His dark
vest over
his white
shirt*



Color Language/Symbolism

Classic Film Example:



Empire Strikes Back

*Loyal,
selfless,
dedicated,
kind exterior,
heart of gold*

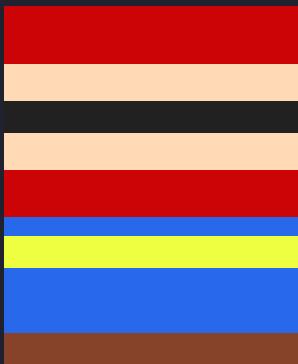
Symbolized via...

*Only having his
pure white
shirt at his
most vulnerable
moment*



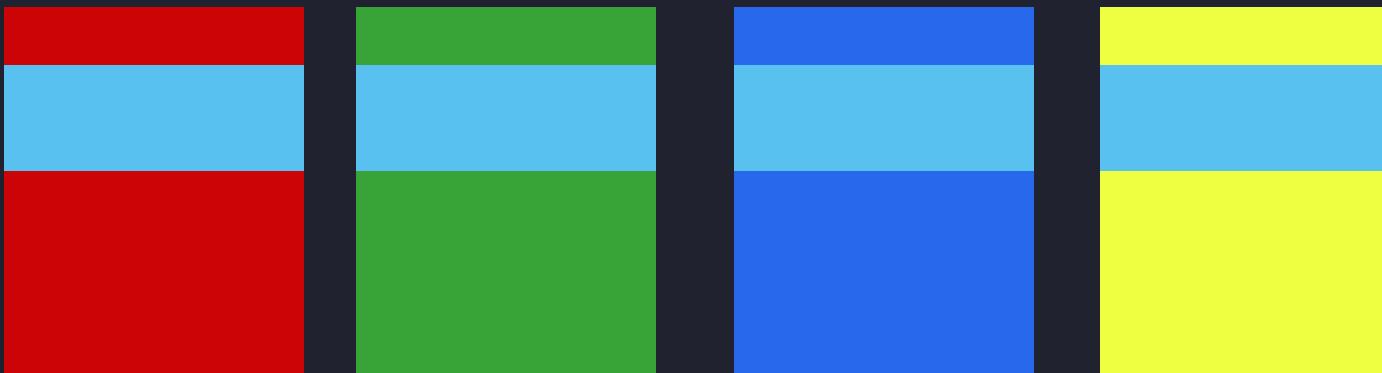
Good Design has Recognizable Colors

You should be able to take your character, turn them into blocks of colors, and still recognize them!



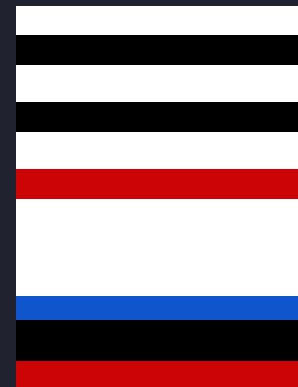
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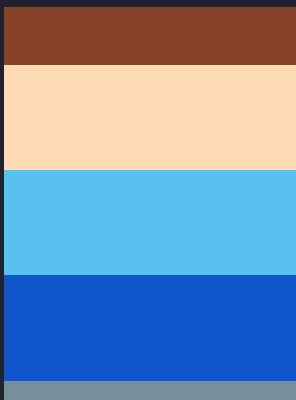
Good Design has Recognizable Colors

You should be able to take your character, turn them into blocks of colors, and still recognize them!



Good Design has Recognizable Colors

You should be able to take your character, turn them into blocks of colors, and still recognize them!



Palette Summary

Good color palettes will...

*Employ a **color hierarchy***

*Use basics of **color harmony***

*Use color to **tell story***



ACTIVITY PART 2:

Use the rules of color to pigment your character!

- 1) *Clear color hierarchy*
- 2) *Use of theory*
- 3) *Use of symbolism*

eXX-aJ-ERR-aSHUN
(exaggeration)



Exaggeration

*Good design means a **clear exaggeration***

*A **clear exaggeration**...*

- expands on simple **core concepts**
- uses **poses** to signify character



Core Concepts...

What the core concepts are differ from thing to thing, but a core concept will...

EVOKE EMOTIONAL REACTION



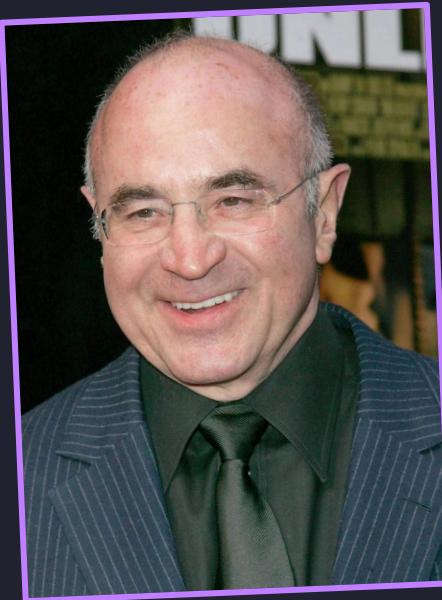
Core Concepts...



*A good designer...
is a good observer*



Core Concepts...



Core Concepts...



Big nose?

**BIGGER and
ROUNDER**

Fancy mustache?

**BIGGER and
FANCIER**

Portly Stature?

MORE PORTLY



Core Concepts...



Big nose? WHY?

More friendly!

Fancy mustache? WHY?

More identifiable!

Portly Stature? WHY?

More jovial!



Core Concepts...



Angled nose?

MORE ANGEL

Wistful blonde?

MORE BLONDE,

MORE WIND

Athletic Frame?

MORE ATHLETIC



Core Concepts...



Angled nose? WHY?

More heroic!

Wistful blonde? WHY?

More youthful!

Athletic Frame? WHY?

More immersion!



Core Concepts...



Chiseled face?

MORE CHISEL

Long braided hair?

LONGER

MORE BRAID

Muscular Stature?

MORE MUSCLE

MORE CAPE



Core Concepts...



Chiseled face? WHY?

More grown!

Long braided hair?

WHY?

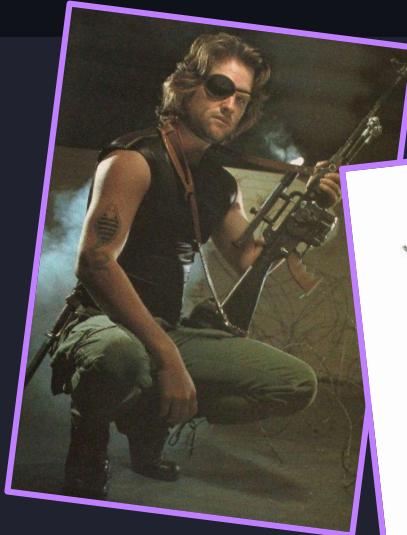
More powerful!

Muscular Stature? WHY?

More dangerous!



Core Concepts...



Core Concepts...

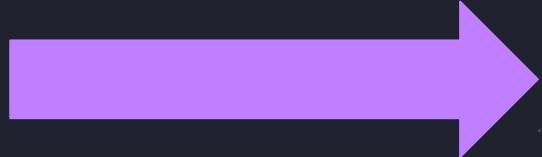


Core Concepts...



Poses!

*Good designs have **clear poses** that enhance a character's personality and function!*



*Good but very
stationary...*

*Ready for
action!*



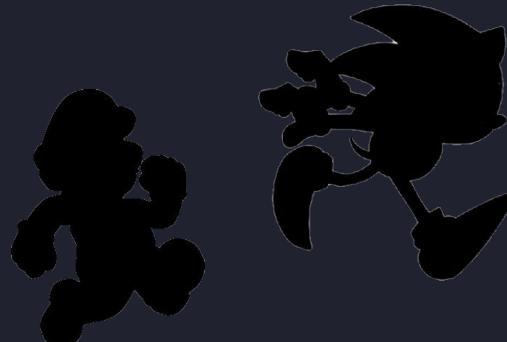
Poses!

*Think of a **keyword** that ties to your character's **gameplay**, and show it through **pose**!*

“Sword Fight”

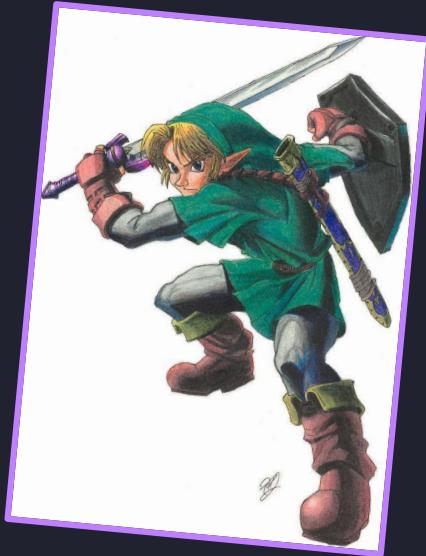


“Running”



Poses!

Ask yourself, what does this character do? Show it through pose!



"Swordsman"



"Martial Artist"



"Gunner"

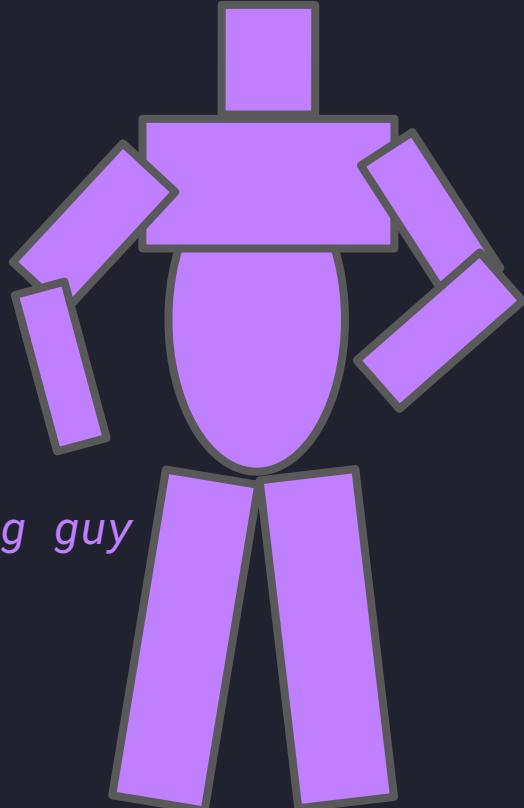


Poses!

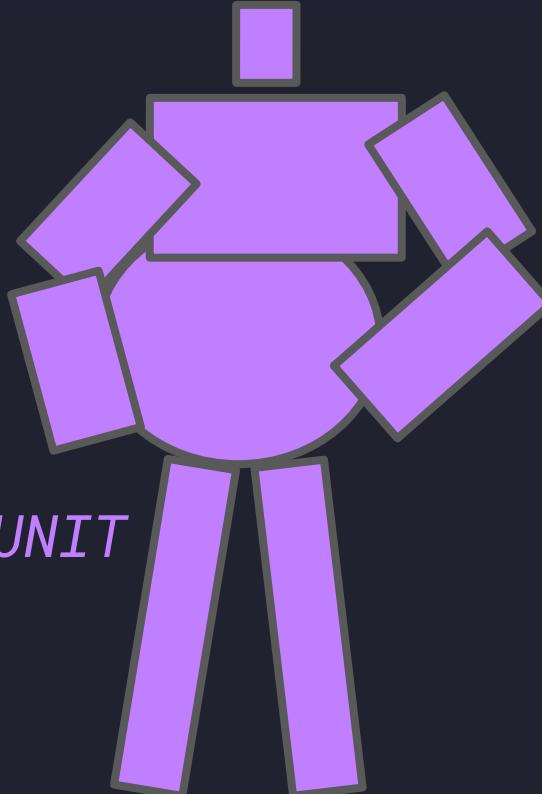
*Ask yourself, how does this character **feel**? Show it through pose!*



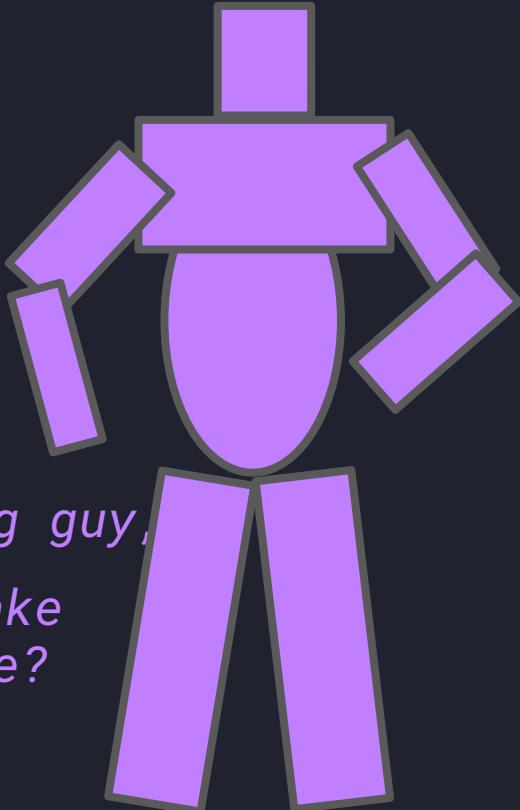
Pro Tip: Exaggerate shapes to help!



A MEGA UNIT



Pro Tip: Exaggerate shapes to help!



Normal big guy,

*How make
unique?*

*Divide into 3
parts:*

HEAD

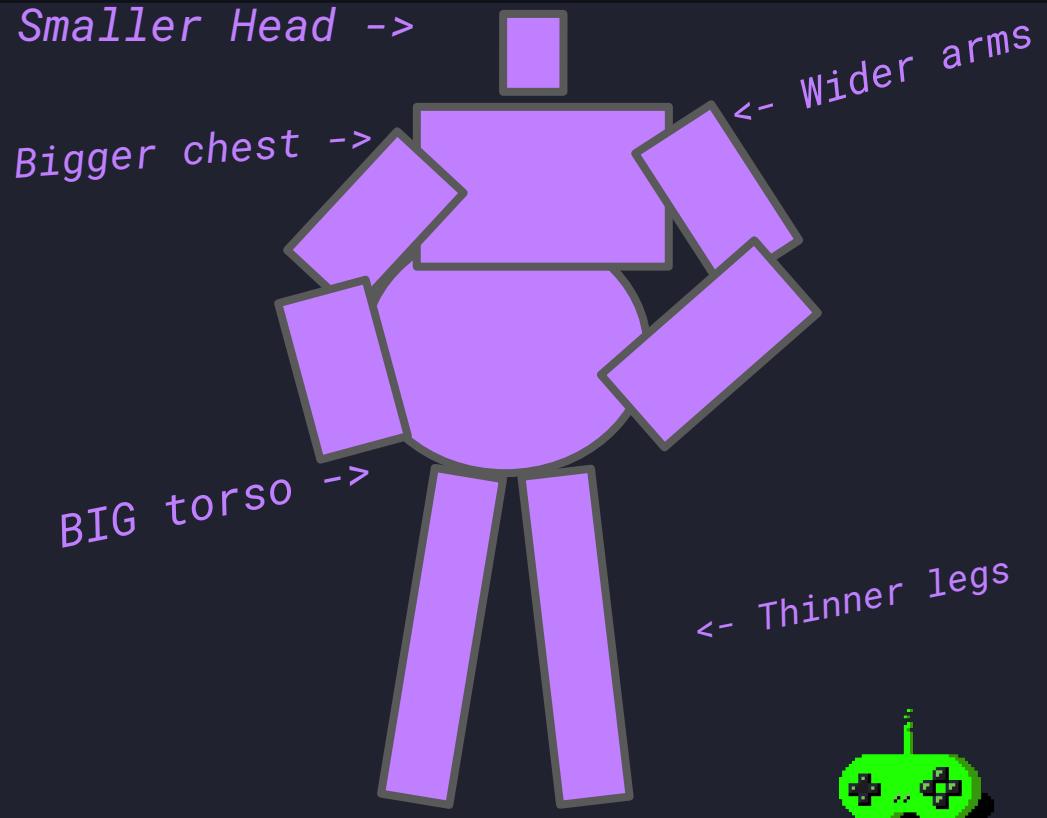
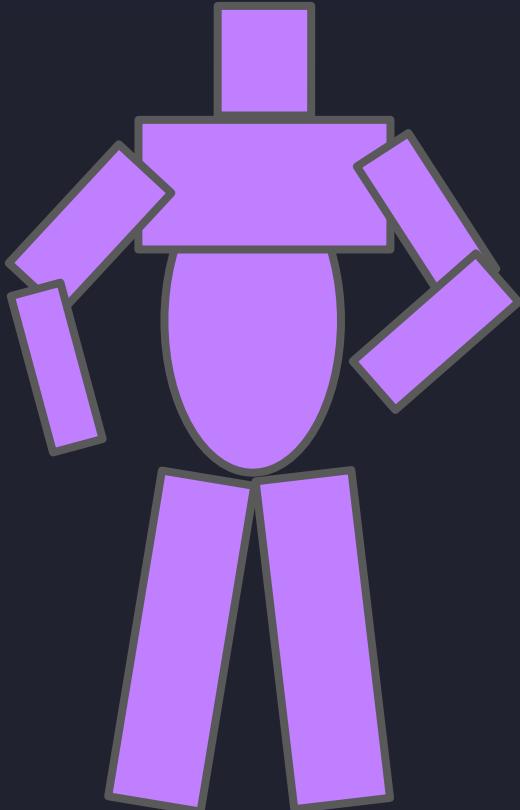
TORSO

LEGS

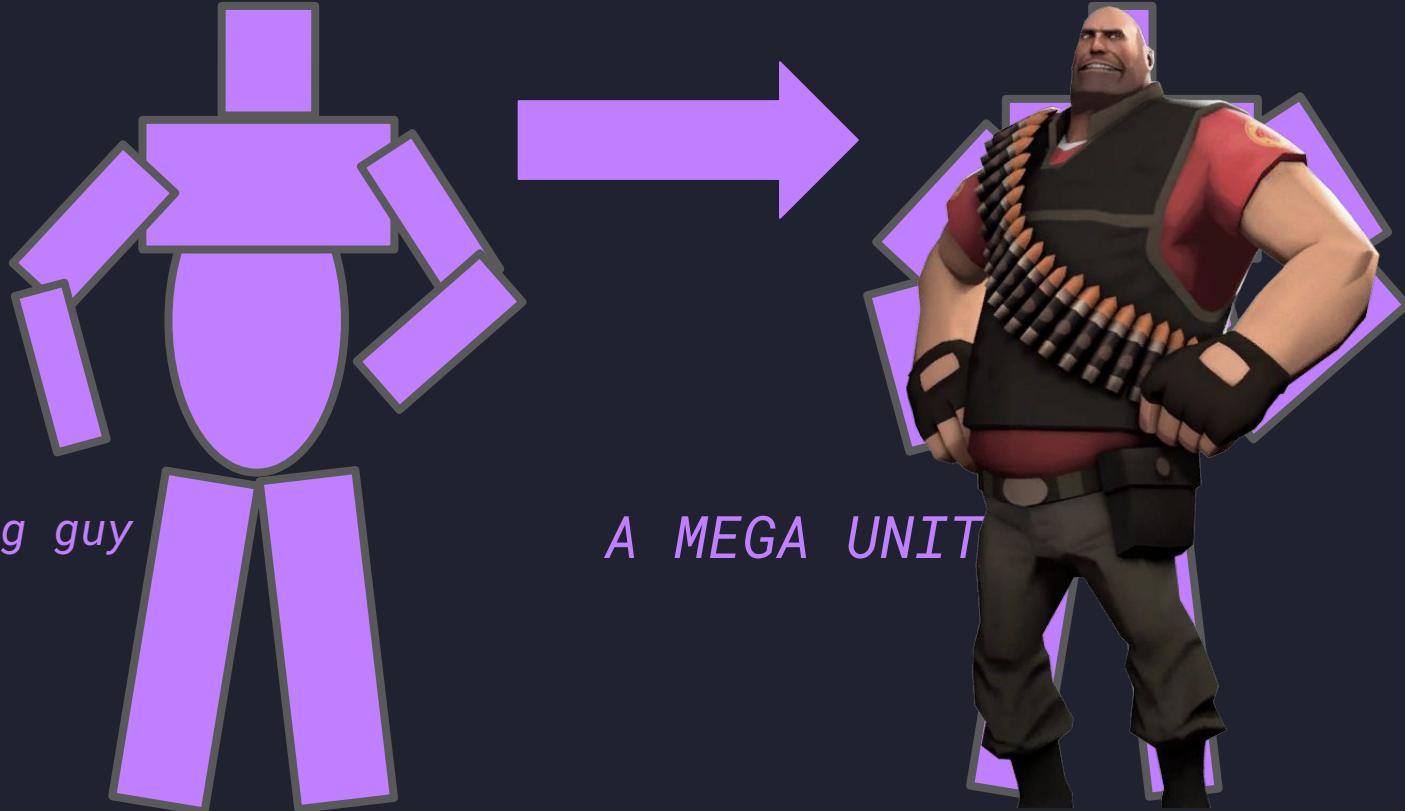
*Exaggerate
each part...*



Pro Tip: Exaggerate shapes to help!



Pro Tip: Exaggerate shapes to help!



ACTIVITY PART 3:

Use the rules of exaggeration to continue your character design!

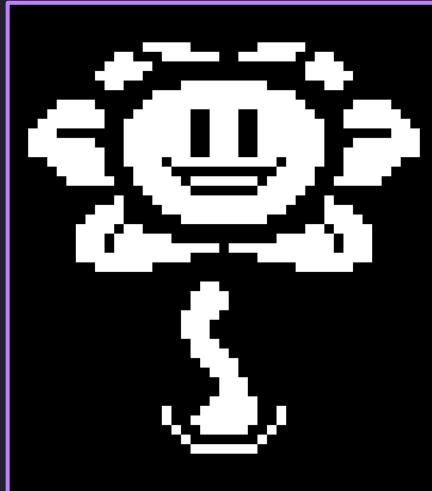
- 1) *Exaggerate core features*
- 2) *Use real-life inspiration*
- 3) *Use a telling pose!*

Final Tips



Think in terms of the WHOLE game!

*Good design is **cohesive** with the rest of the game's style, exceptions should be rare and purposeful*



You



*The guy she says
to not worry about*



*Think in terms of the **WHOLE** game!*

*Super Smash Bros is the **BEST** example of this*



Think in terms of the WHOLE game!



Think in terms of the WHOLE game!

Good design tells a clear story and function

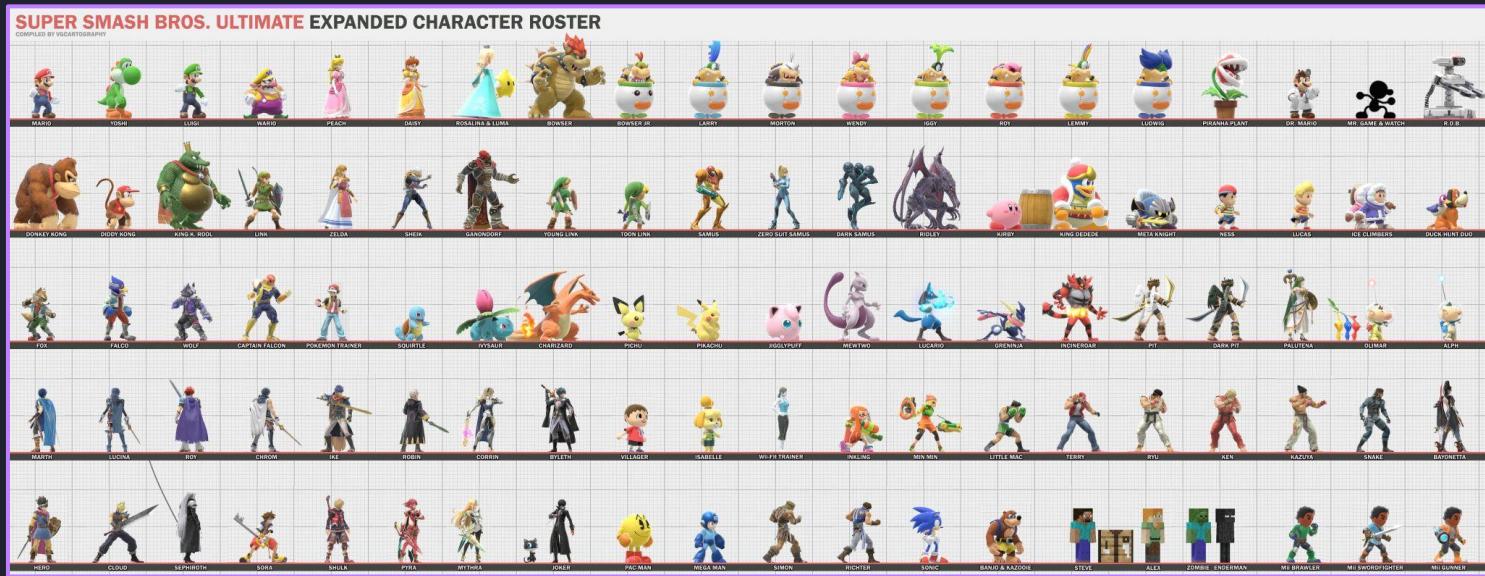


Goomba is supposed to be the opposite of the super mushroom!



Think in terms of the WHOLE game!

Have variety in lineups (shapes and heights)! Super Smash Bros is another fantastic example of this



Summary



What makes Good Character Design?

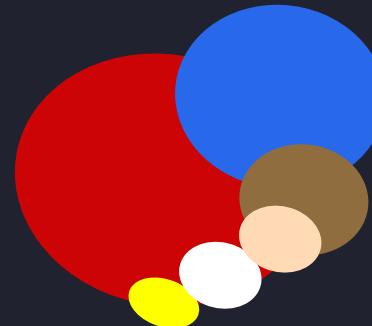
A recognizable **silhouette** that...

- uses a **shape language motif**
- contains **1-2 unique shapes**



A simple **color palette** that...

- uses a **color hierarchy**
- uses **color theory** to create **harmony**
- showcases a **clear theme** using **color language**



A clear **exaggeration...**

- expands on **simple core concepts**
- uses **poses** to signify character



*What makes **Good** Character Design?*

*Limiting yourself to few shapes, colors,
exaggerations/inspirations*



*What makes **Good** Character Design?*

When the design can visually tell you who that character is



ACTIVITY PART 4:

Finalize your design as much as you can, showcase to others!



Citations

nesdev.org/wiki/Limitations (*Art Limitations in Older Games*)

waltdisney.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/T%26T_ShapeLang_v9.pdf (*Shape Language*)

colormatters.com/color-and-design/basic-color-theory (*Color Wheel*)

interaction-design.org/literature/topics/color-theory (*Color Theory*)

interaction-design.org/literature/topics/color-symbolism (*Color Symbolism*)

youtube.com/watch?v=PDjdquhVHU4&list=PLgKCjZ2WsVLS04Zq-JuJzGvhTe10qRSZ5 (*Sakurai on Poses and Silhouettes*)

youtube.com/watch?v=A6Rbb5sK4nI&list=PLgKCjZ2WsVLS04Zq-JuJzGvhTe10qRSZ5&index=16 (*Sakurai on Scale*)

youtube.com/watch?v=8wm9ti-gzLM (*Good v Bad Character Design*)

youtube.com/watch?v=3VQl0scK5HM (*Quick Guide to Character Design*)

youtube.com/watch?v=euTe191sAWq (*Using Inspirations for Design*)

youtube.com/watch?v=BgniQUnuuGo (*Quick Guide to Character Design 2*)

youtube.com/watch?v=z0Hr2_uX73o (*Character Design in Delicious Dungeon's Storytelling*)

