UX Laws

Law of Similarity

The human eye tends to perceive similar elements in a design as a complete picture even if those elements are separated.

Occam's Razor

Among competing hypotheses that predict equally well, the one with the fewest assumptions should be selected.

Principle of Closure

We tend to fill in gaps between elements to perceive incomplete objects as being whole.

Law of Common Fate

Objects with a common movement, that move in the same direction, at the same pace, are perceived as a group.

Miller's Law

The average person can only keep 7 (plus or minus 2) items in their working memory.

Dieter Rams Law

Good design is as little design as possible.

Uniform Connectedness

Elements that are visually connected are perceived as more related than elements with no connection.

Pareto Principle

The Pareto principle states that, for many events, roughly 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes.

Parkinson's Law

Any task will inflate until all of the available time is spent. The amount of work required adjusts to the time available.

Law of Past Experience

Under some circumstances visual stimuli are categorized according to past experience.

Jakob's Law

Users spend most of their time on other products so yours should work the same way as all the others they already know.

Aesthetic Usability Effect

Users often perceive aesthetically pleasing design as design that's more usable.

Von Restorff Effect

Predicts that when multiple similar objects are present, the one that differs from the rest is most likely to be remembered.

Serial Position Effect

Users have a propensity to best remember the first and last items in a series.

Doherty Threshold

Productivity soars when a computer and its users interact at a pace (<400ms) that ensures that neither has to wait on the other.

Law of Good Gestalt

Elements of objects tend to be perceptually grouped together if they form a pattern that is regular, simple, and orderly.

Law of Proximity

Objects that are near, or proximate to each other, tend to be grouped together.

Law of Common Region

Objects placed in the same area (usually enclosed by a box or other shape) are perceived as grouped.

Fitt's Law

The time to acquire a target is a function of the distance to and size of the target.

Center Stage Effect

When presented with an array of similar objects, we tend to prefer the one in the center.

Dual Coding Theory

Suggests that presenting information both verbally and non-verbally makes it easier to remember.

Figure Ground Principle

The size of an object and the contrast to its background help users distinguish both.

Law of Focus

Objects with a higher level of clarity receive a higher focus by the user.

Hanlon's Razor

Don't assume people are malicious; assume they are ignorant, and then help them overcome that ignorance.

Law of Similarity

Elements that are similar to each other tend to be perceived as a unified group.

Hick's Law

The time it takes to make a decision increases with the number and complexity of choices.

Law of Symmetry

Elements that are symmetrical to each other tend to be perceived as a unified group.