Perception, organization, Gestalt view, Types

**Perception** is the process by which **stimulation of the**[**senses**](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Sense)**is translated into meaningful experience**. Brain interprets [sensory](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Sense) [information](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Information) to give it **meaning**. Perception is the process of acquiring, interpreting, selecting, and organizing sensory information.

**Perceptual organization**

Using sensory information as raw material, the brain creates perceptual experiences that go **beyond what is sensed directly**. **Familiar** objects tend to be seen as having a **constant shape,** even though the retinal images they cast change as they are viewed from different angles. Perceptions have the **quality of constancy**, which refers to the tendency to sense and perceive objects as relatively stable and unchanging despite changing sensory stimulation and information.

Once we have formed a stable perception of an object, we can recognized it from almost any **position, at almost any distance, and under almost any illumination**. A white house looks like a white house by day or by night and from any angle. We see it as the same house. The sensory information may change as illumination and perspective change, but the object is perceived as constant.

**Constancy**

* *Size constancy :* The **perception of an object** as the **same** regardless of the **distance from which it is viewed**.
* *Shape constancy:* is the tendency to see an object as the same no matter what **angle** it is viewed from.
* *Color constancy* : is the inclination to perceive familiar objects as retaining **their color** despite changes in sensory information.
* *Brightness constancy:* perception of brightness as the same, even though the **amount of light reaching the retina changes**.

Size, shape, brightness, and color constancies help us better to understand and relate to world. Without this ability, world would be very confusing.

**Perception is categorized as internal and external:**

* "**Internal perception**" ("**interoception**") tells us what is **going on in our b**odies. We can sense where our limbs are, whether we are sitting or standing; we can also sense whether we are hungry, or tired, and so forth.
* "**External perception**" or "sensory perception," ("**exteroception**"), tells us about the world outside our bodies. Using our senses of [sight](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Sight), [hearing](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Hearing), [touch](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Touch), [smell](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Smell), and taste, we discover [colors](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Color), [sounds](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Sound), textures, and so forth of the world at large.

External perception

**Perception of movement -** The perception of movement is a complicated process involving both **visual information from the retina and messages from the muscles around the eyes** as they follow an object. The perception of movement depends in part on movement of image across the retina of the eye. Motion perception is the process of inferring the **speed** and **direction of objects** and **surfaces** that move in a visual scene given some [visual](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Visual_perception) input

**Space perception -** process through which humans and other organisms become aware of the **relative** **positions** of their own bodies and objects around them. Space perception provides cues, such as **depth** and **distance**, that are important for movement and orientation to the enviournment

**Depth and distance - Sensory cues** indicate the distance at which objects in the environment are located from the perceiving individual and from each other. Such sense [modalities](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/modalities) as **seeing** and **hearing** transmit depth and distance cues and are largely independent of one another. Each [modality](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/modality) by itself can produce consistent perception of the distances of objects. Ordinarily, however, the individual relies on the collaboration of all senses which known **as** [**intermodal perception**](https://www.britannica.com/topic/intermodal-perception).

**Time perception - subjective experience of**[**time**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Time), which is measured by someone's own perception of the duration of the indefinite and unfolding of events. Here perceived time interval between two successive events is referred to as **perceived duration**. Another person's perception of time cannot be directly experienced or understood. Time perception is a construction of the brain that is manipulable and distortable under certain circumstances.

**Gestalt psychology**

Perception involved more than simply combining sensory stimuli. This belief led to a new movement within the field of psychology known as **Gestalt psychology**. The word *gestalt*literally means **form or pattern**, but its use reflects the idea that the *whole is different from the sum of its parts*. In other words, the brain creates a perception that is **more than simply the sum of available sensory inputs**, and it does so in predictable ways. Gestalt psychologists translated these predictable ways into principles by which we organize sensory information.

**Pattern perception**

Our perceptions are based on perceptual hypotheses: **educated guesses that we make while interpreting sensory information**. These hypotheses are informed by a number of factors,

**Subjective** - personalities, experiences, and expectations. & **Objectives** – **1) Figure-ground relationship** - Ability to **discriminate** among different **figures** and **shapes**, occurs by following the principles, 2) **Proximity:** This principle asserts that things that are **close to one another tend to be grouped together** 3) **Similarity:** To group things in our visual fields. According to this principle, things that are **alike** tend to be grouped together For example, when watching a football game, we tend to group individuals based on the colors of their uniforms. When watching an offensive drive, we can get a sense of the two teams simply by grouping along this dimension. 4) **Continuity:** The law of continuity suggests that we are more likely to perceive **continuous**, **smooth** flowing lines rather than jagged, broken lines. 5) **Closure:** The principle of closure states that we organize our perceptions into complete **objects rather than as a series of parts**.

Theoretical principles

The school of gestalt practiced a series of **theoretical** and **methodological** principles that attempted to redefine the approach to psychological research. This is in contrast to investigations developed at the beginning of the 20th century, based on traditional scientific methodology, which divided the object of study into a set of elements that could be analyzed separately with the objective of reducing the complexity of this object.

The theoretical principles are the following:

* **Principle of Totality**—The conscious experience must be considered **globally** (by taking into account all the **physical** and **mental** aspects of the individual simultaneously) because the nature of the mind demands that each component be considered as **part of a**[**system**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/System)**of dynamic relationships.**
* **Principle of**[**psychophysical**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychophysical_parallelism)[**isomorphism**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isomorphism_(Gestalt_psychology)) – A [correlation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Correlation) exists between **conscious** **experience** and [**cerebral**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_brain)**activity**.

Based on the principles above the following **methodological** principles are defined:

* **Phenomenon experimental analysis**—In relation to the Totality Principle any psychological research should take **phenomena** as a **starting point** and **not** be solely focused on **sensory** **qualities**.
* **Biotic experiment**—The school of gestalt established a need to conduct *real experiments* that sharply contrasted with and opposed classic laboratory experiments. This signified experimenting in **natural situations**, developed in real conditions, in which it would be possible to reproduce, with **higher**[**fidelity**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fidelity), what would be habitual for a subject.