DIGITAL IMAGE PROCESSING: DIGITAL IMAGING FUNDAMENTALS

Contents

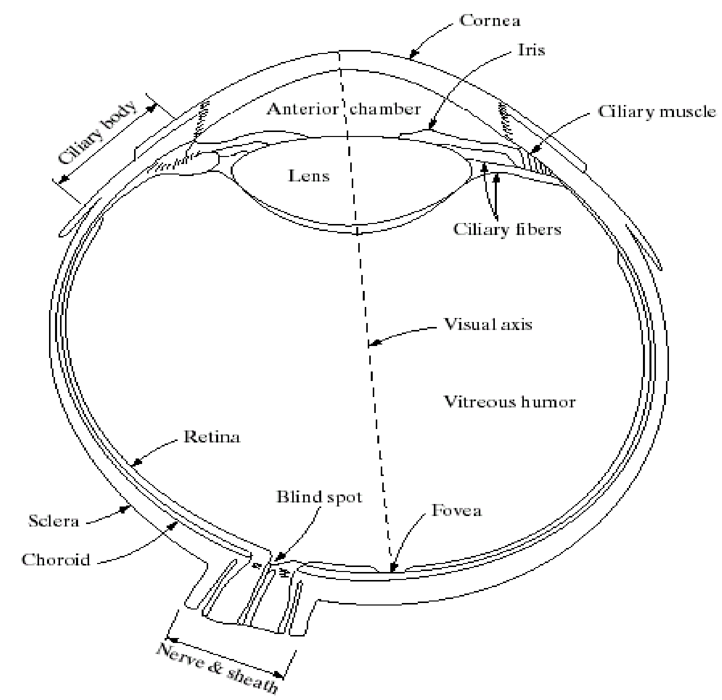
- This lecture will cover:
  - The human visual system
  - Light and the electromagnetic spectrum
  - Image representation
  - Image sensing and acquisition
  - Sampling, quantisation and resolution

Human Visual System

- The best vision model we have!
- Knowledge of how images form in the eye can help us with processing digital images
- We will take just a whirlwind tour of the human visual system

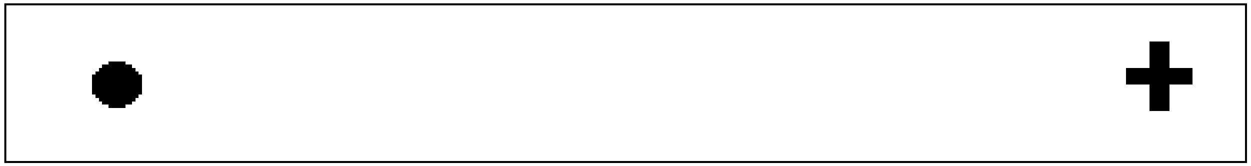
Structure Of The Human Eye

- The lens focuses light from objects onto the retina
- The retina is covered with light receptors called *cones* (6-7 million) and *rods* (75-150 million)
- Cones are concentrated around the fovea and are very sensitive to colour
- Rods are more spread out and are sensitive to low levels of illumination



Blind-Spot Experiment

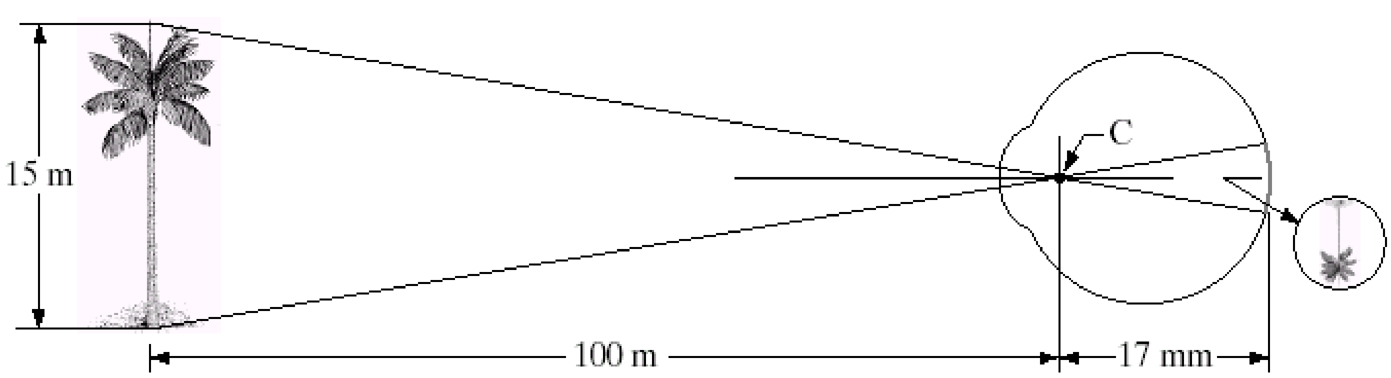
- Draw an image similar to that below on a piece of paper (the dot and cross are about 6 inches apart)



- Close your right eye and focus on the cross with your left eye
- Hold the image about 20 inches away from your face and move it slowly towards you
- The dot should disappear!

Image Formation In The Eye

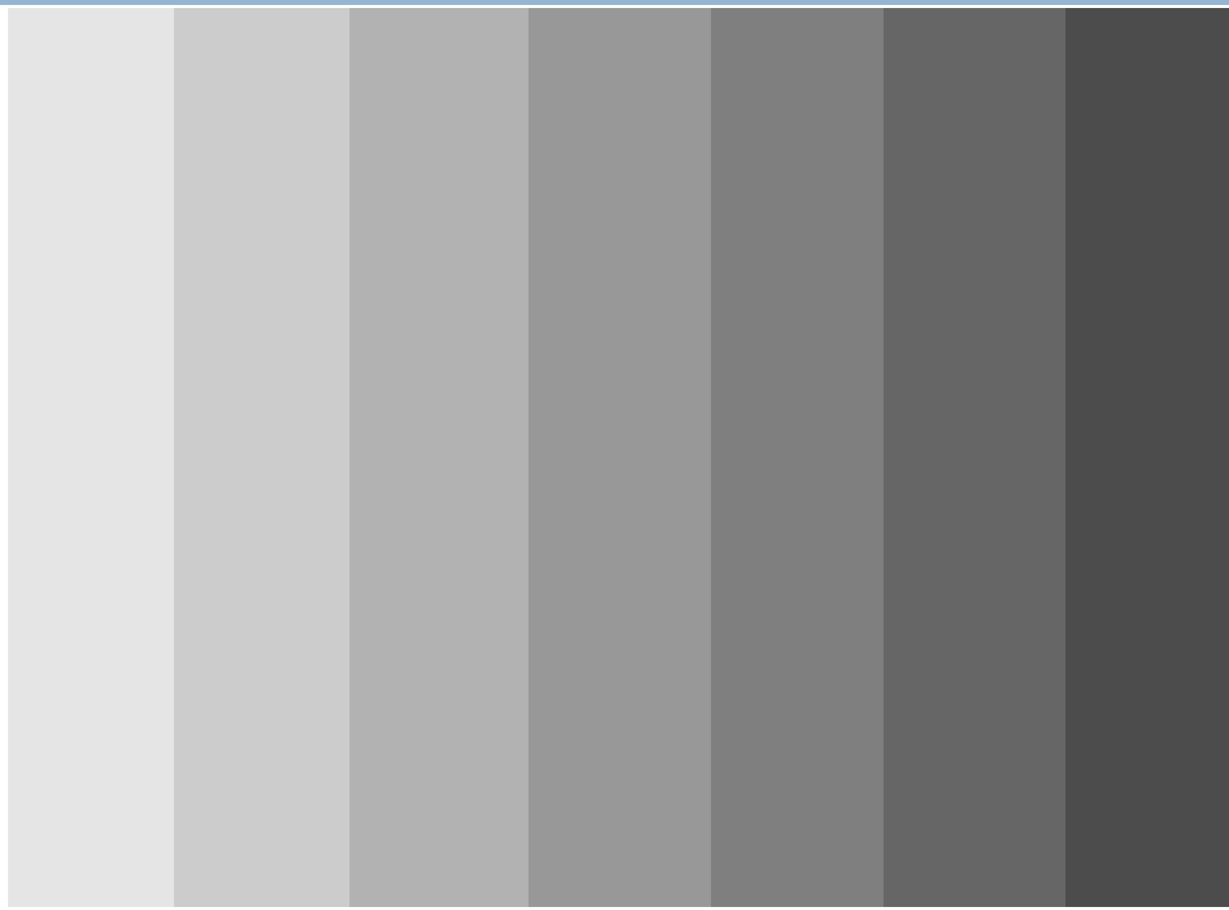
- Muscles within the eye can be used to change the shape of the lens allowing us focus on objects that are near or far away
- An image is focused onto the retina causing rods and cones to become excited which ultimately send signals to the brain



Brightness Adaptation & Discrimination

- The human visual system can perceive approximately 10^{10} different light intensity levels
- However, at any one time we can only discriminate between a much smaller number – *brightness adaptation*
- Similarly, the *perceived intensity* of a region is related to the light intensities of the regions surrounding it

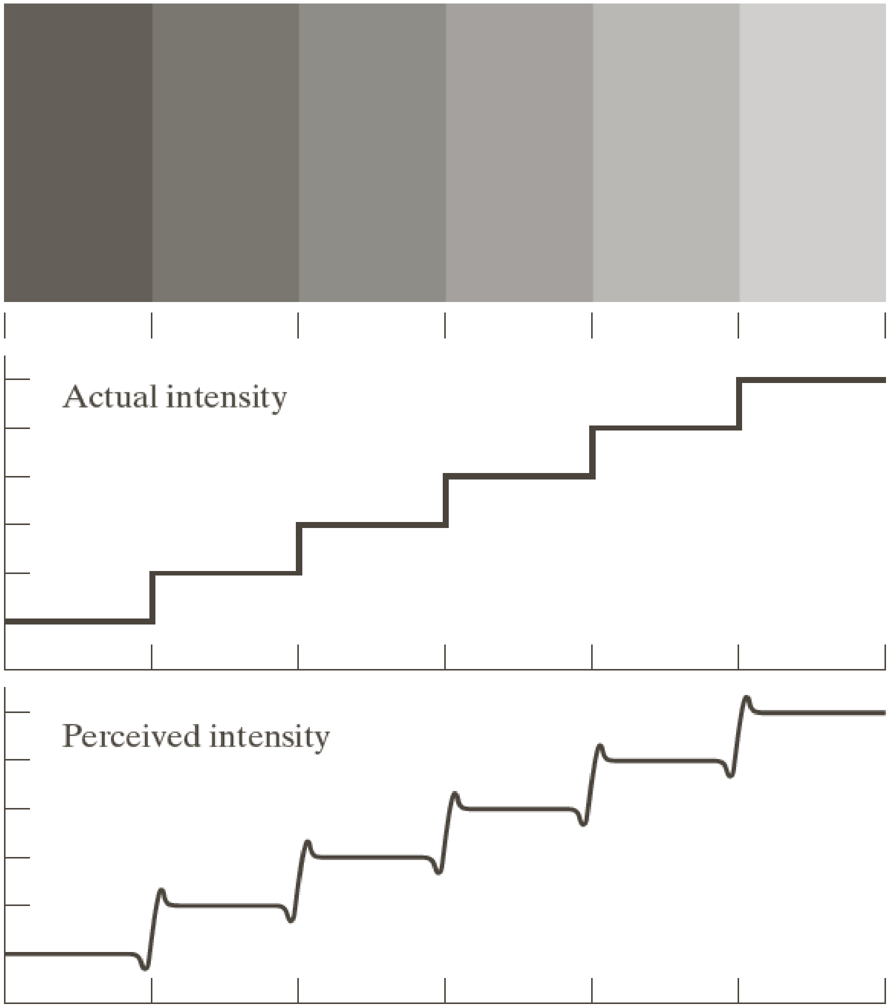
Brightness Adaptation & Discrimination (cont…)



An example of Mach bands

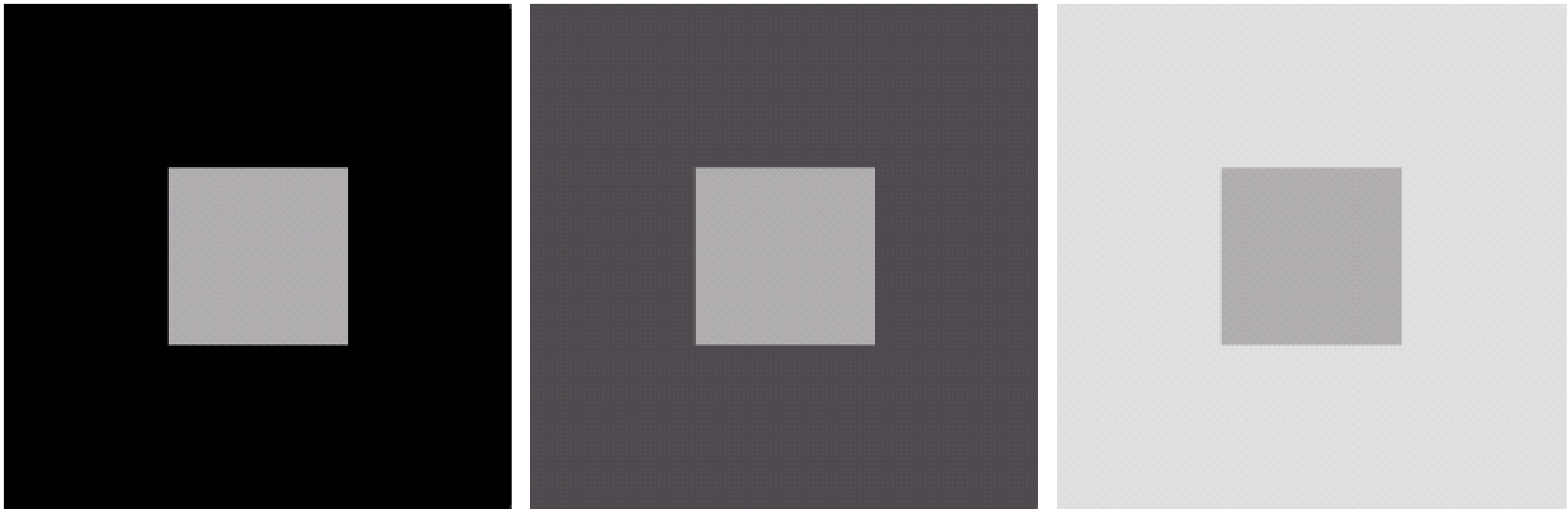
Images taken from Gonzalez & Woods, Digital Image Processing (2002)

Brightness Adaptation & Discrimination (cont…)



Images taken from Gonzalez & Woods, Digital Image Processing (2002)

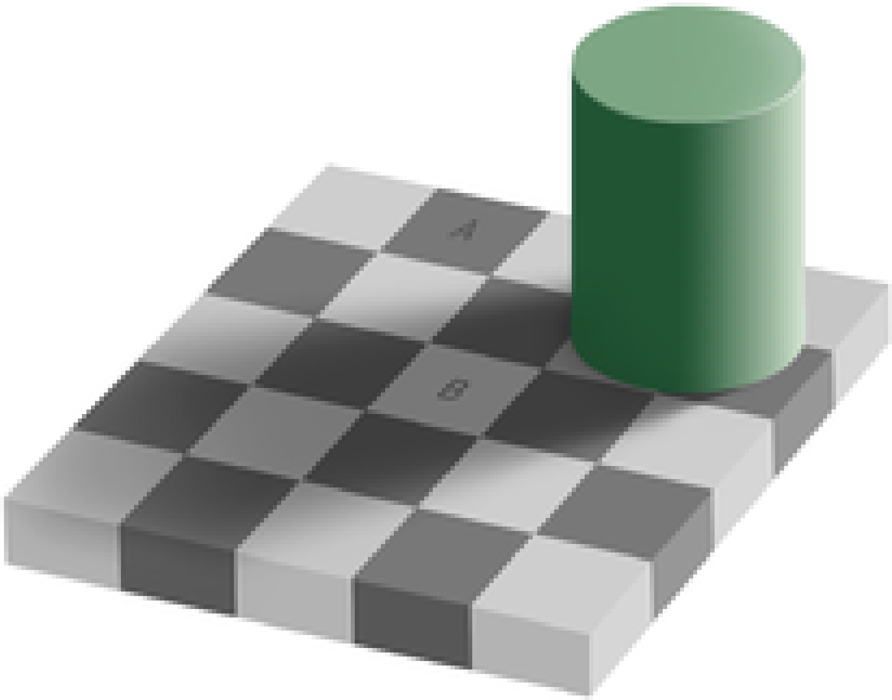
Brightness Adaptation & Discrimination (cont…)



An example of *simultaneous contrast*

Images taken from Gonzalez & Woods, Digital Image Processing (2002)

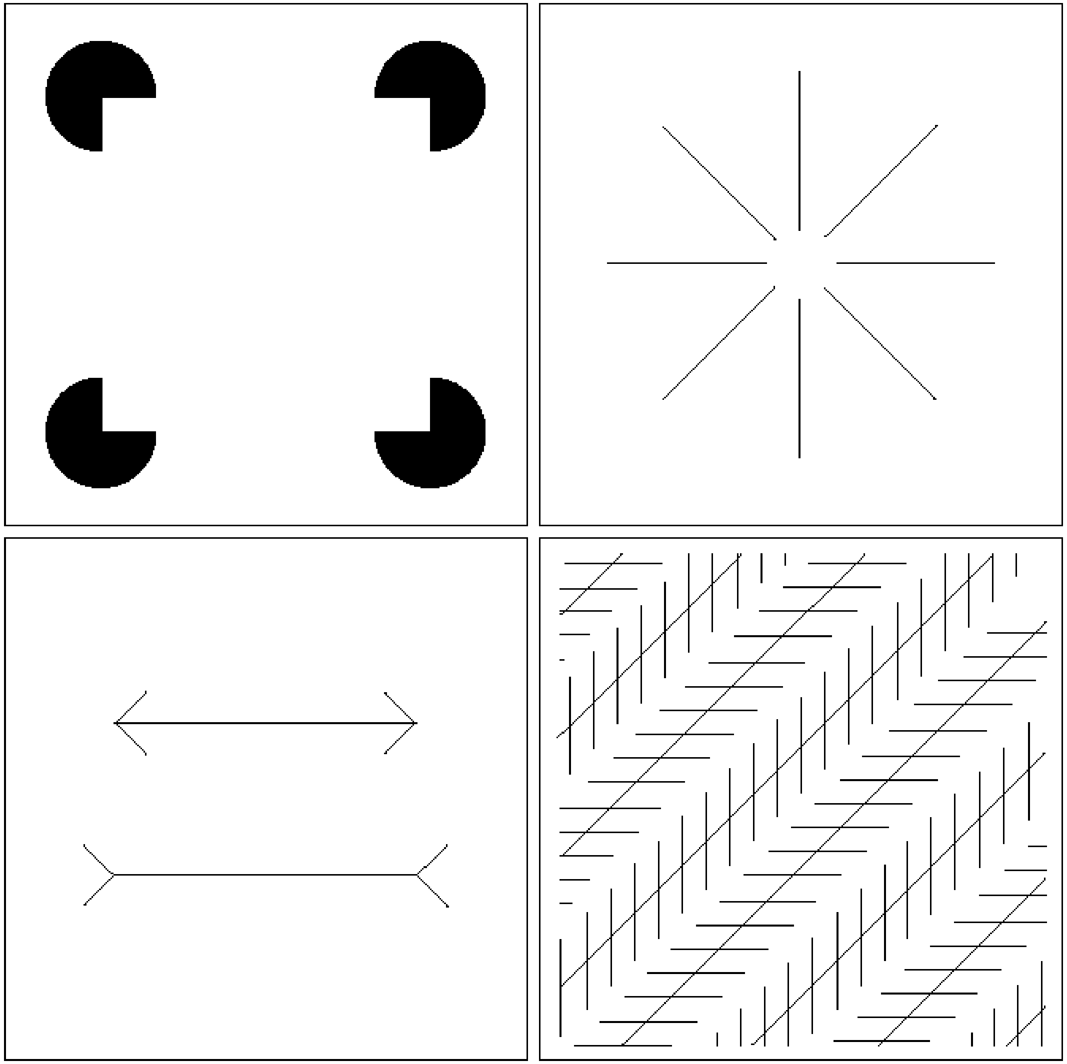
Brightness Adaptation & Discrimination (cont…)



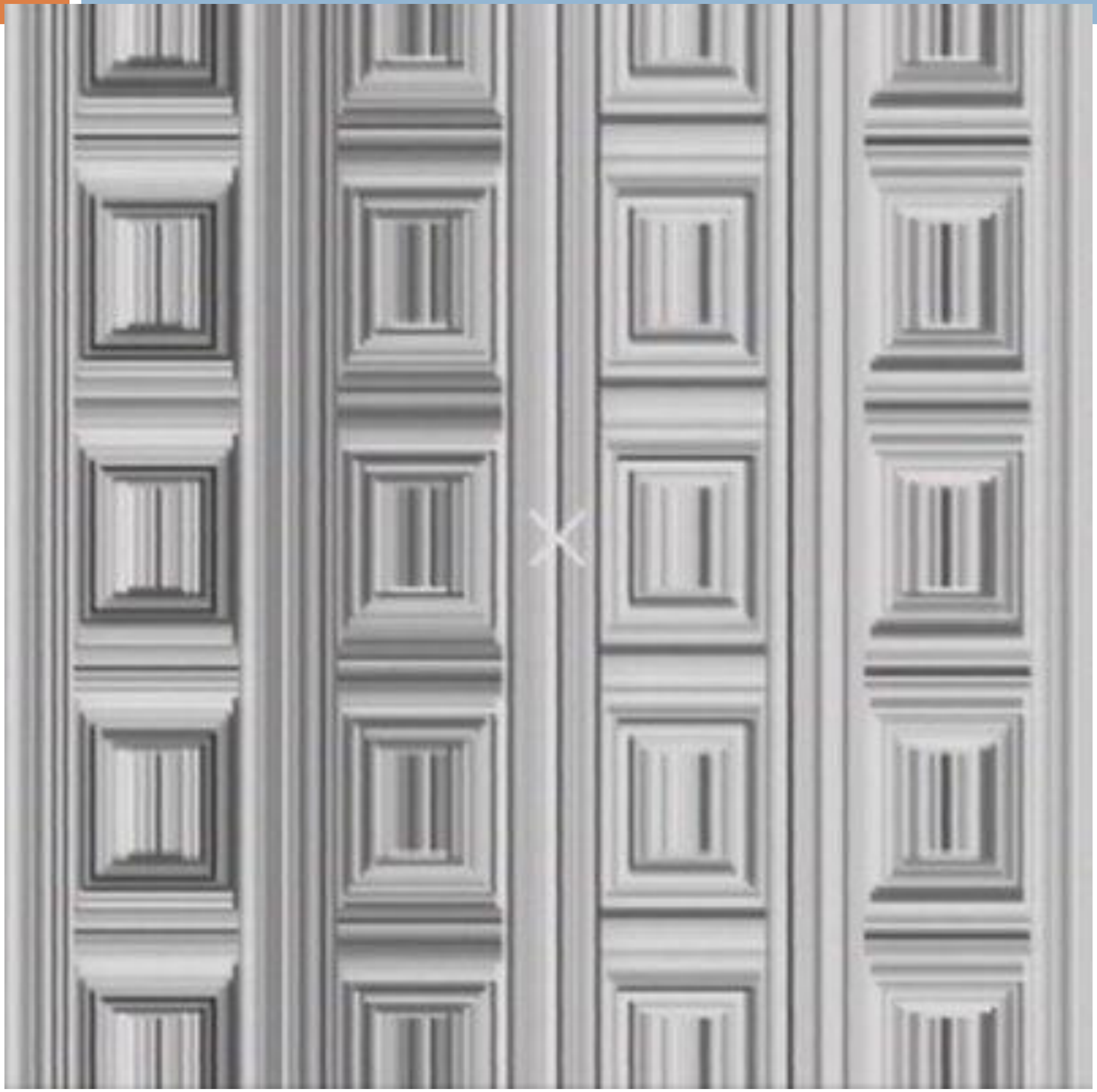
An optical illusion. The square A is exactly the same shade of gray as square B

Optical Illusions

- Our visual systems play lots of interesting tricks on us



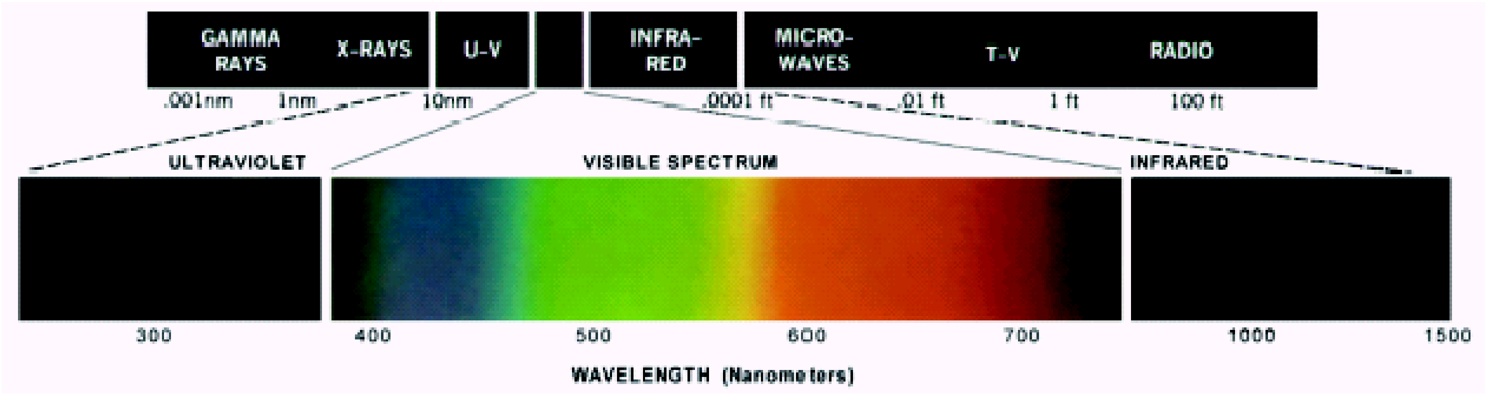
Optical Illusions (cont…)



Stare at the cross in the middle of the image and think circles

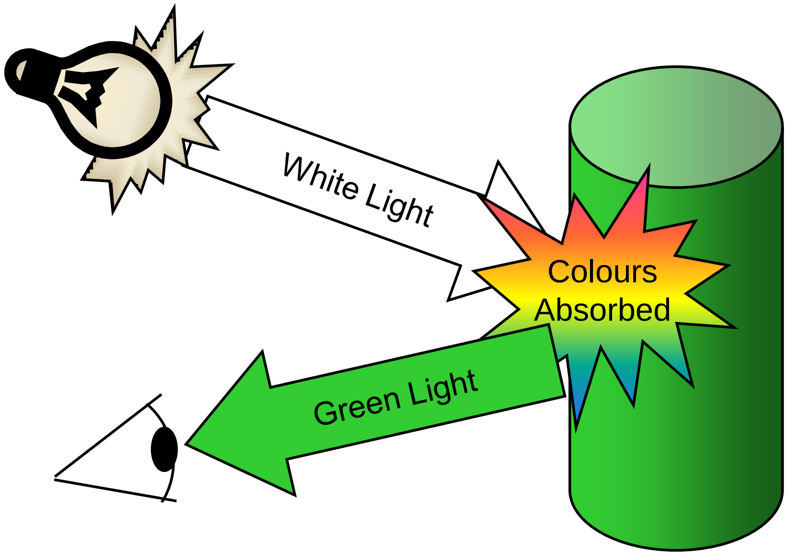
Light And The Electromagnetic Spectrum

- Light is just a particular part of the electromagnetic spectrum that can be sensed by the human eye
- The electromagnetic spectrum is split up according to the wavelengths of different forms of energy



Reflected Light

- The colours that we perceive are determined by the nature of the light reflected from an object
- For example, if white light is shone onto a green object most wavelengths are absorbed, while green light is reflected from the object



Sampling, Quantisation And Resolution

- In the following slides we will consider what is involved in capturing a digital image of a real-world scene
  - Image sensing and representation
  - Sampling and quantisation
  - Resolution

Image Representation

- Before we discuss image acquisition recall that a digital image is composed of M rows and N columns of pixels each storing a value
- Pixel values are most often grey levels in the range 0-255(black-white)
- We will see later on that images can easily be represented as matrices

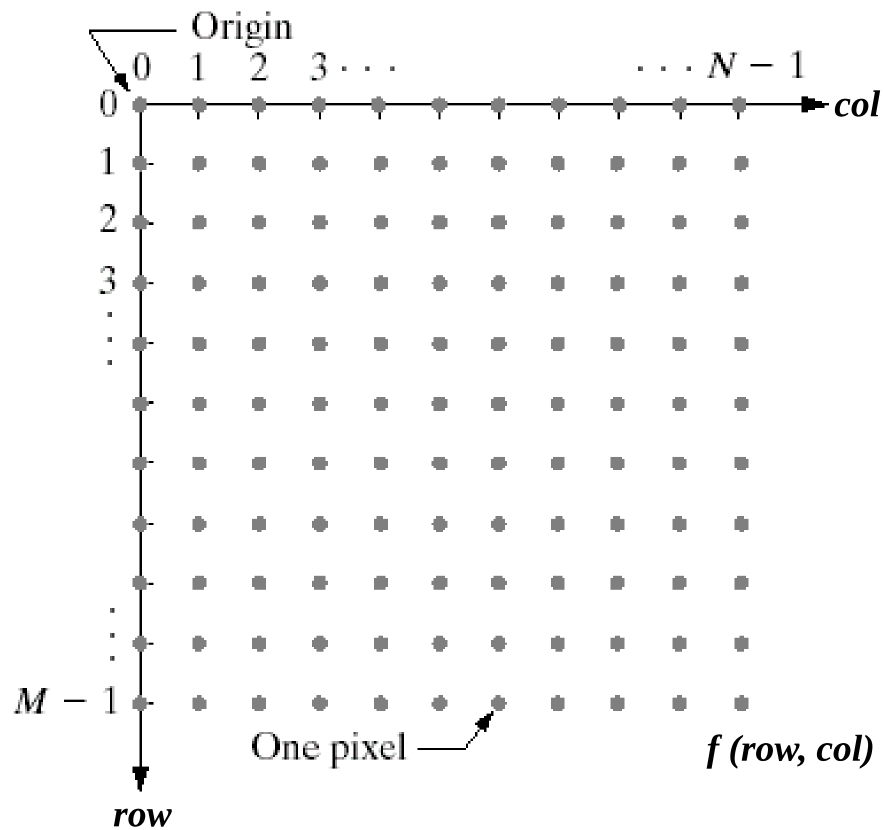
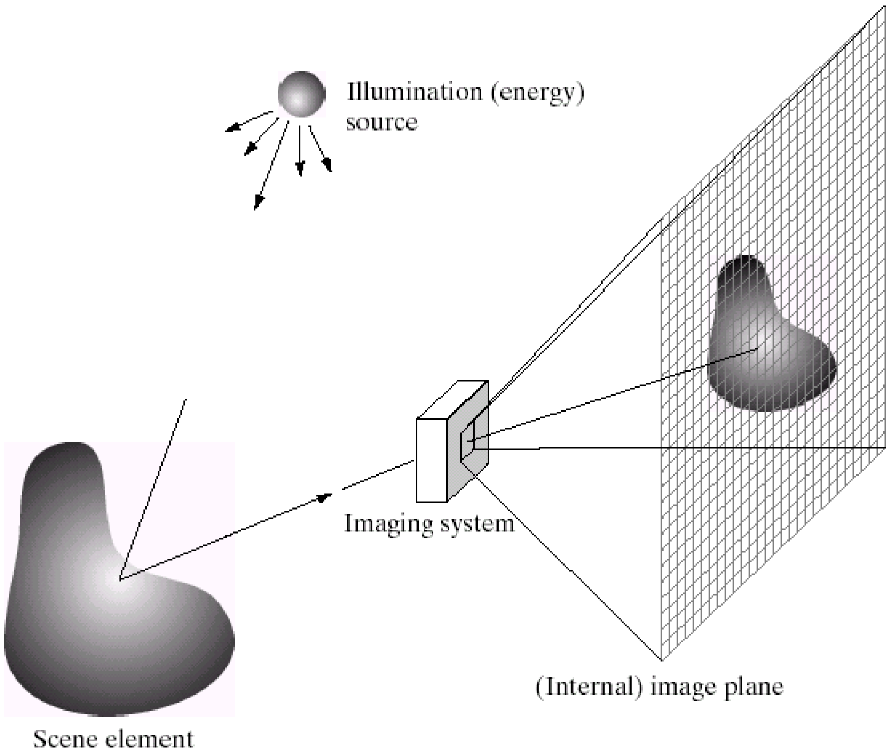


Image Acquisition

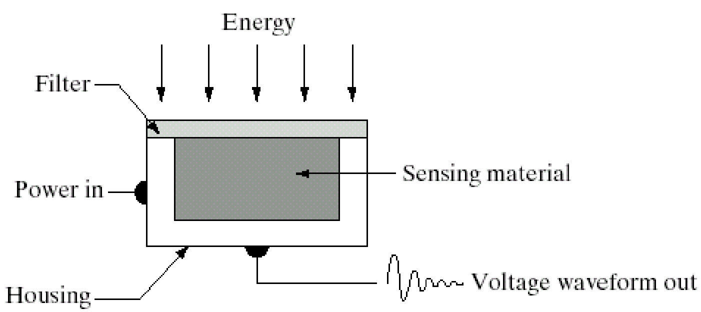
- Images are typically generated by *illuminating* a *scene* and absorbing the energy reflected by the objects in that scene



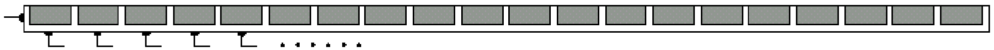
– Typical notions of illumination and scene can be way off:
- X-rays of a skeleton
- Ultrasound of an unborn baby
- Electro-microscopic images of molecules

Image Sensing

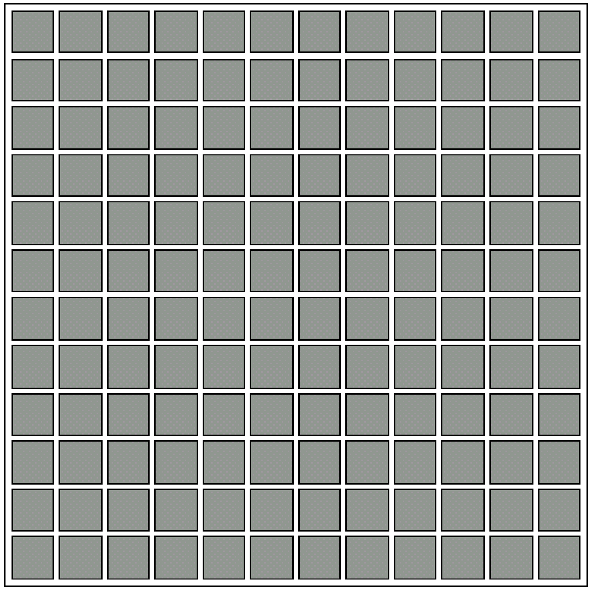
- Incoming energy lands on a sensor material responsive to that type of energy and this generates a voltage
- Collections of sensors are arranged to capture images



Imaging Sensor



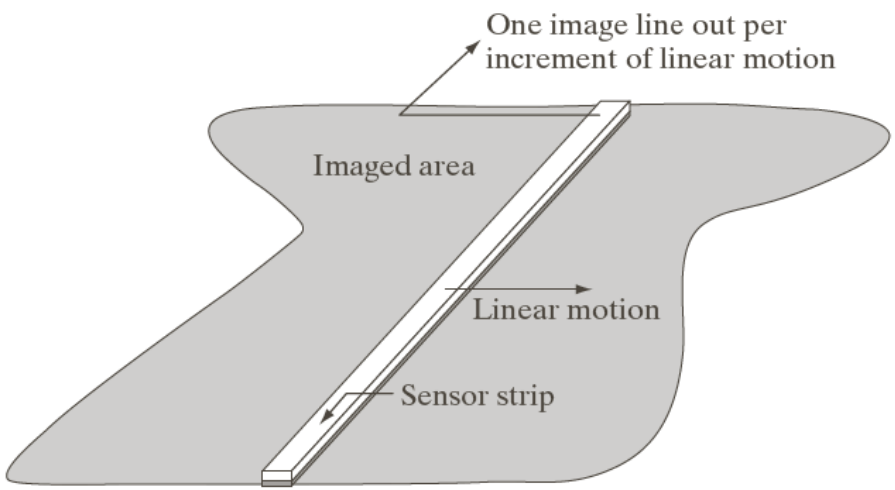
Line of Image Sensors

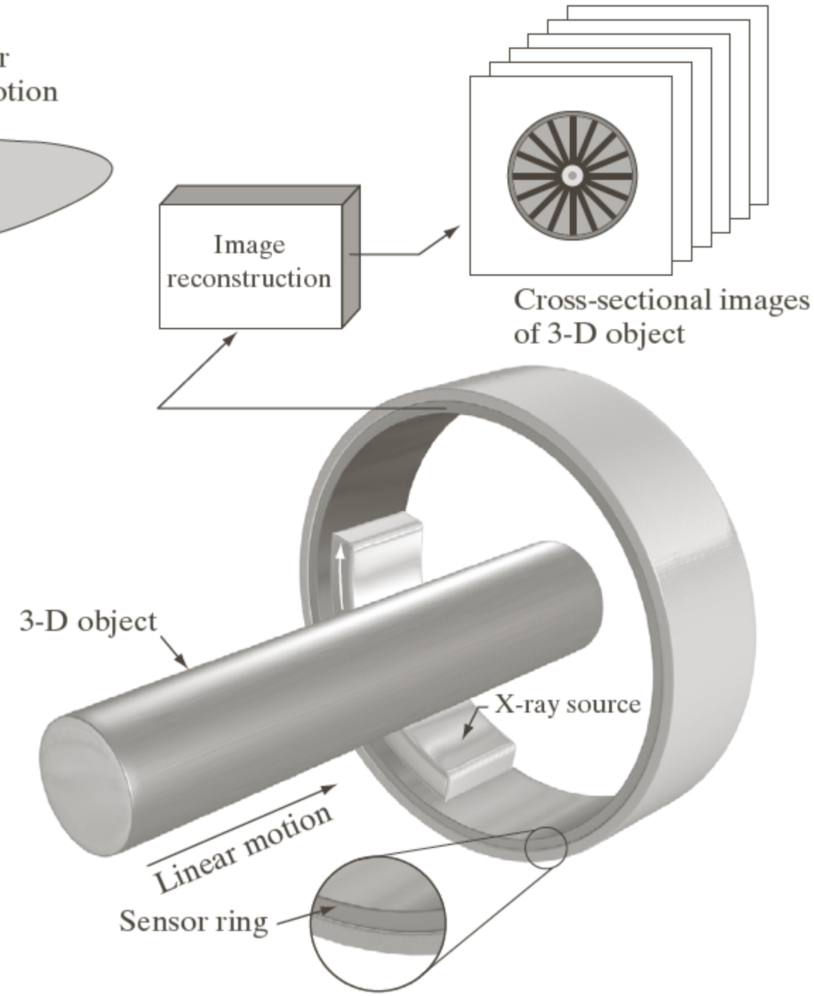


Array of Image Sensors

Image Sensing

Images taken from Gonzalez & Woods, Digital Image Processing (2002)

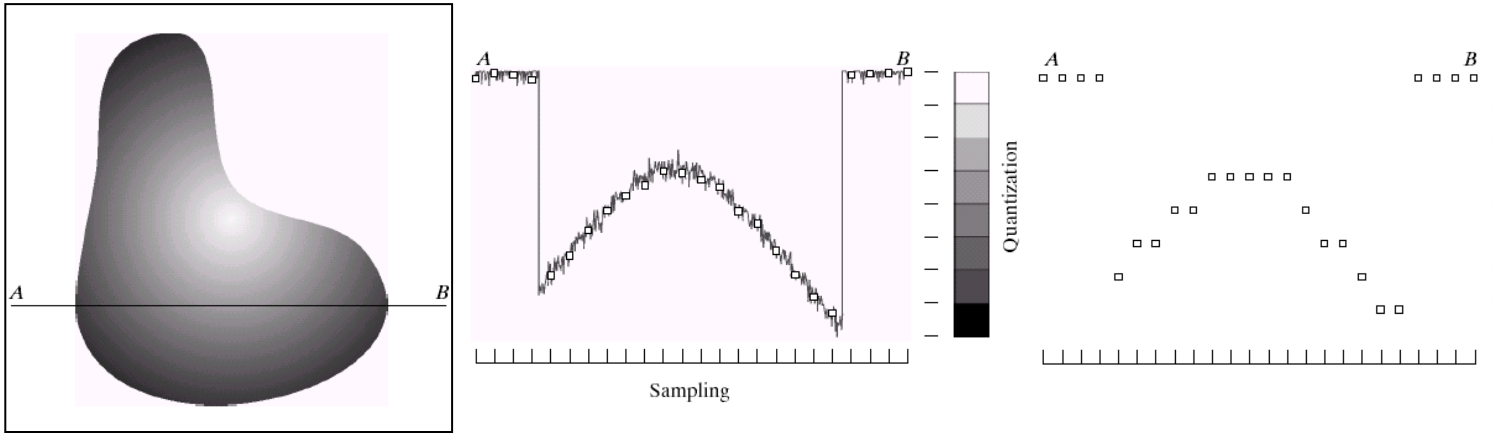




Using Sensor Strips and Rings

Image Sampling And Quantisation

- A digital sensor can only measure a limited number of **samples** at a **discrete** set of energy levels
- *Quantisation* is the process of converting a continuous **analogue** signal into a digital representation of this signal



Images taken from Gonzalez & Woods, Digital Image Processing (2002)

Image Sampling And Quantisation

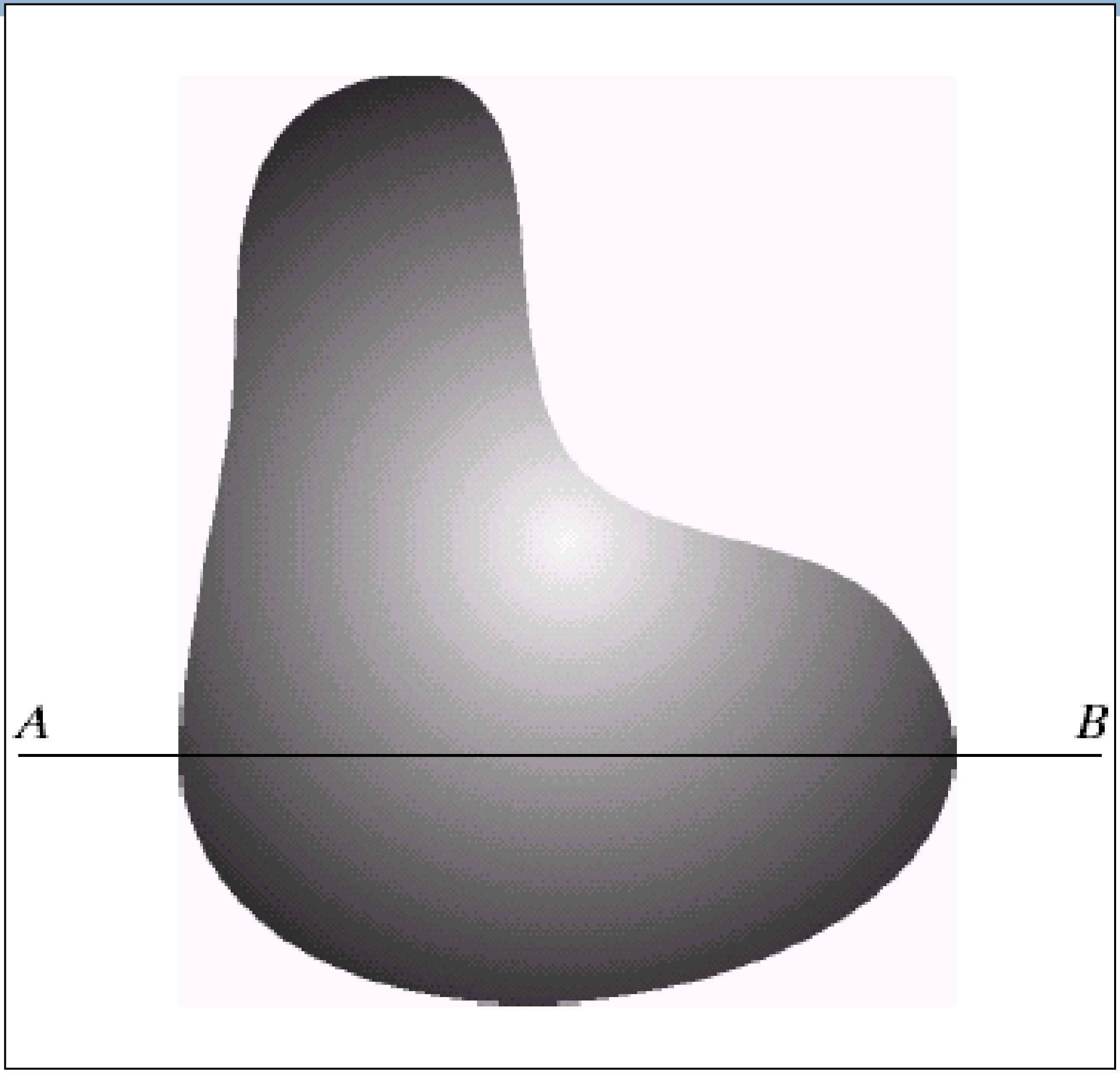
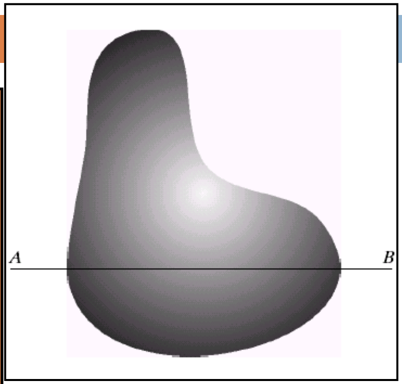
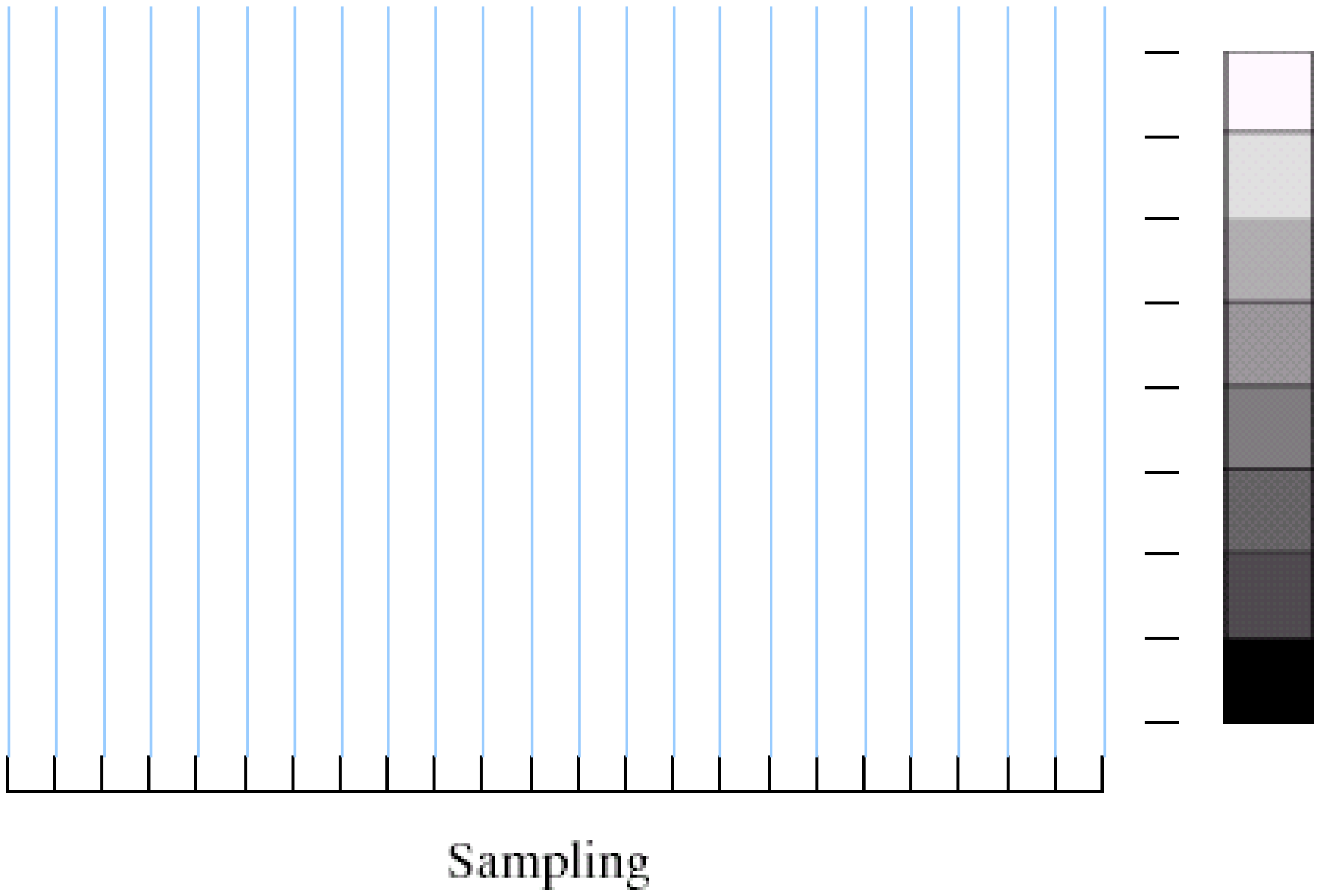


Image Sampling And Quantisation

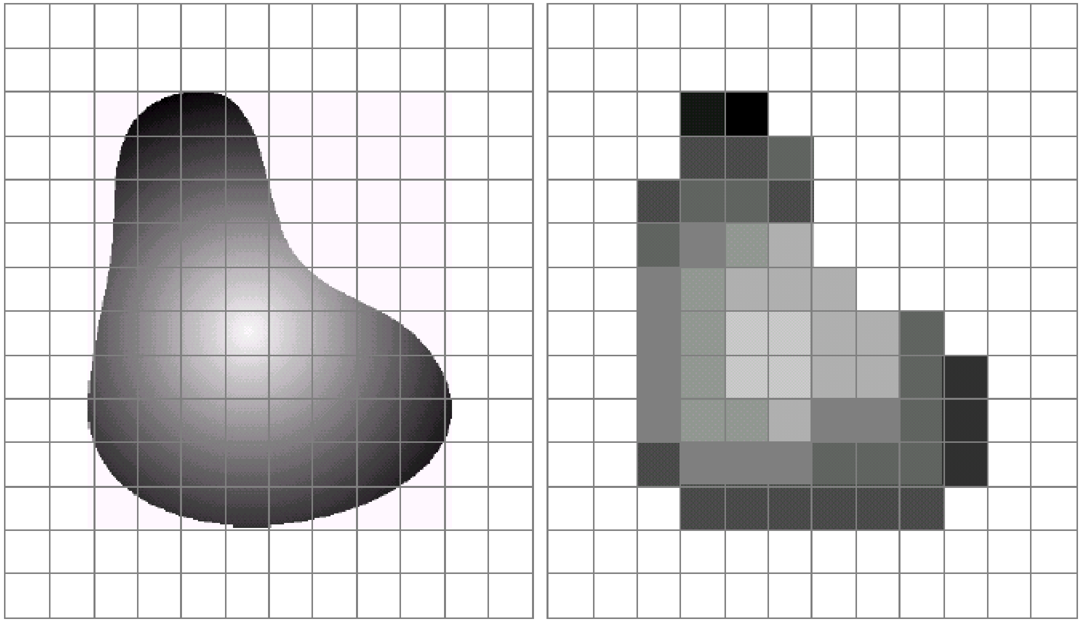




Images taken from Gonzalez & Woods, Digital Image Processing (2002)

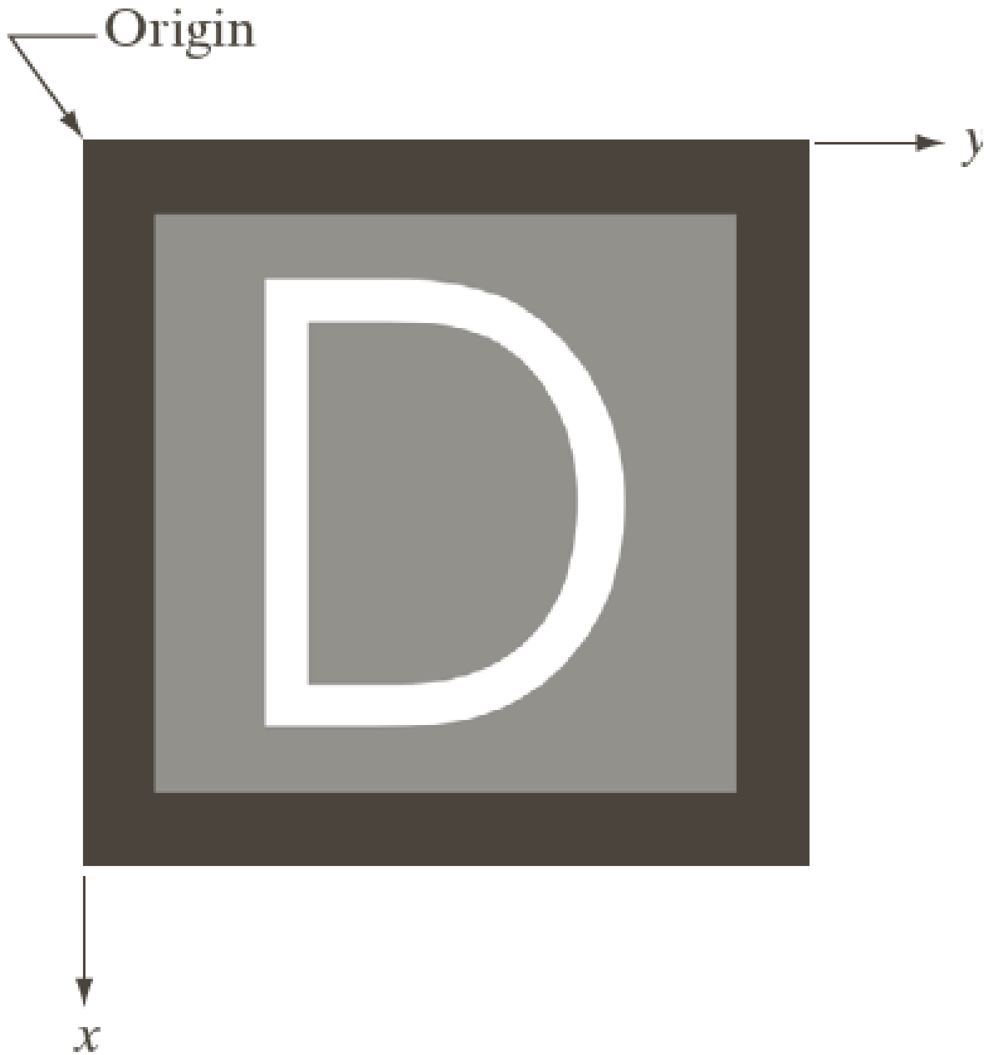
Image Sampling And Quantisation (cont…)

- Remember that a digital image is always only an **approximation** of a real world scene



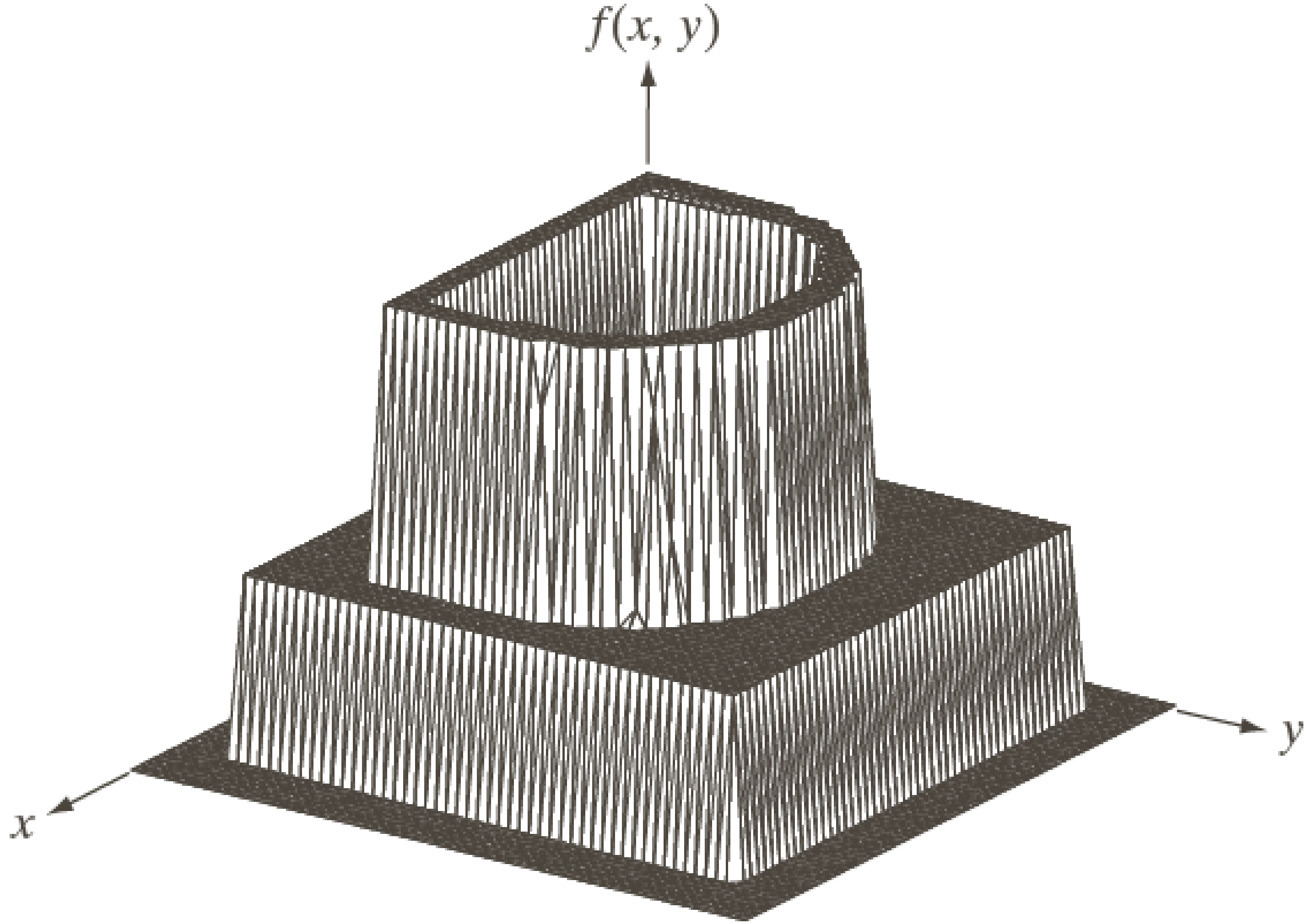
Images taken from Gonzalez & Woods, Digital Image Processing (2002)

Image Representation



Images taken from Gonzalez & Woods, Digital Image Processing (2002)

Image Representation

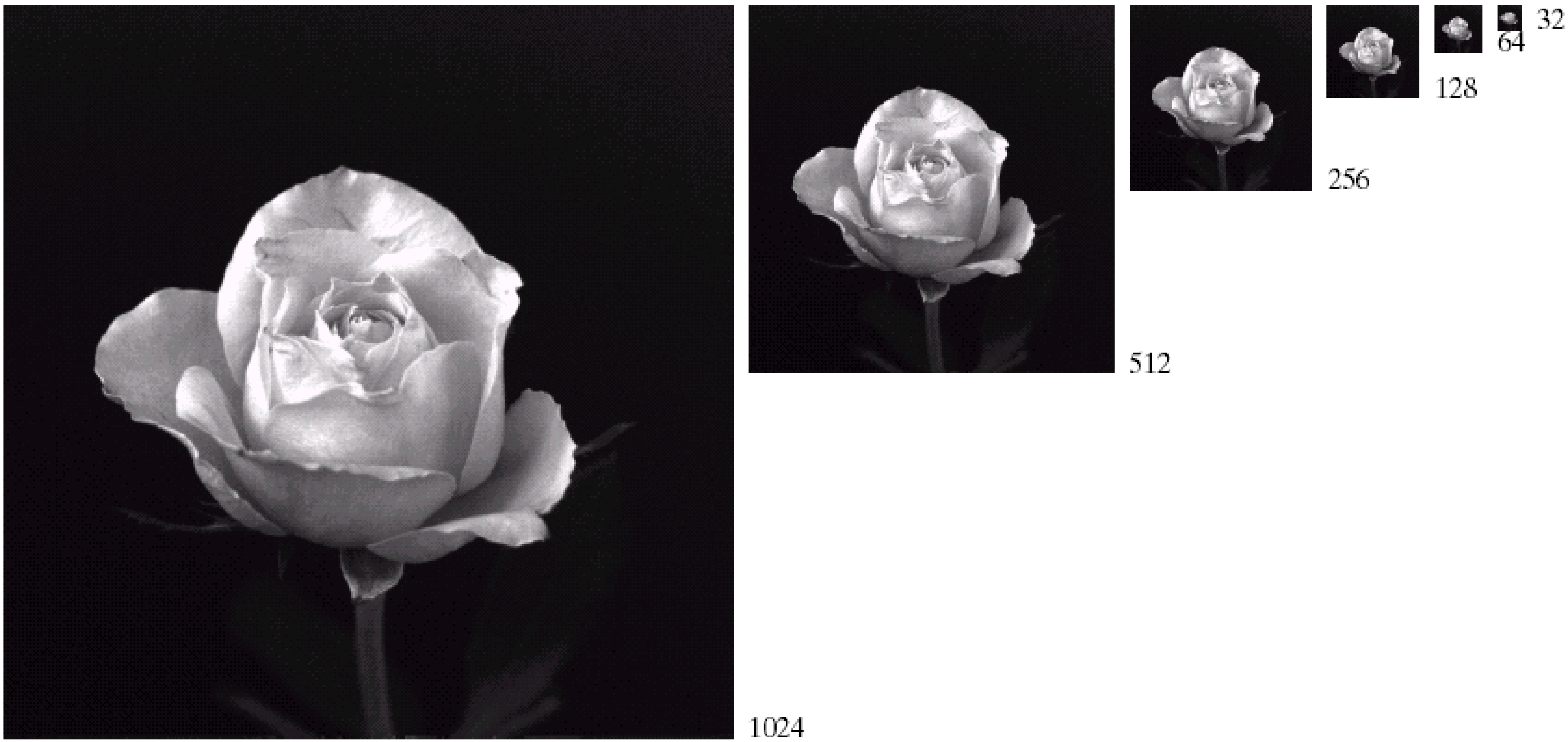


Images taken from Gonzalez & Woods, Digital Image Processing (2002)

Spatial Resolution

- *The spatial resolution* of an image is determined by how sampling was carried out
- Spatial resolution simply refers to the smallest discernable detail in an image
  - Vision specialists will often talk about pixel size
  - Graphic designers will talk about *dots per inch* (DPI)

Spatial Resolution (cont…)



Images taken from Gonzalez & Woods, Digital Image Processing (2002)

Spatial Resolution (cont…)

Images taken from Gonzalez & Woods, Digital Image Processing (2002)

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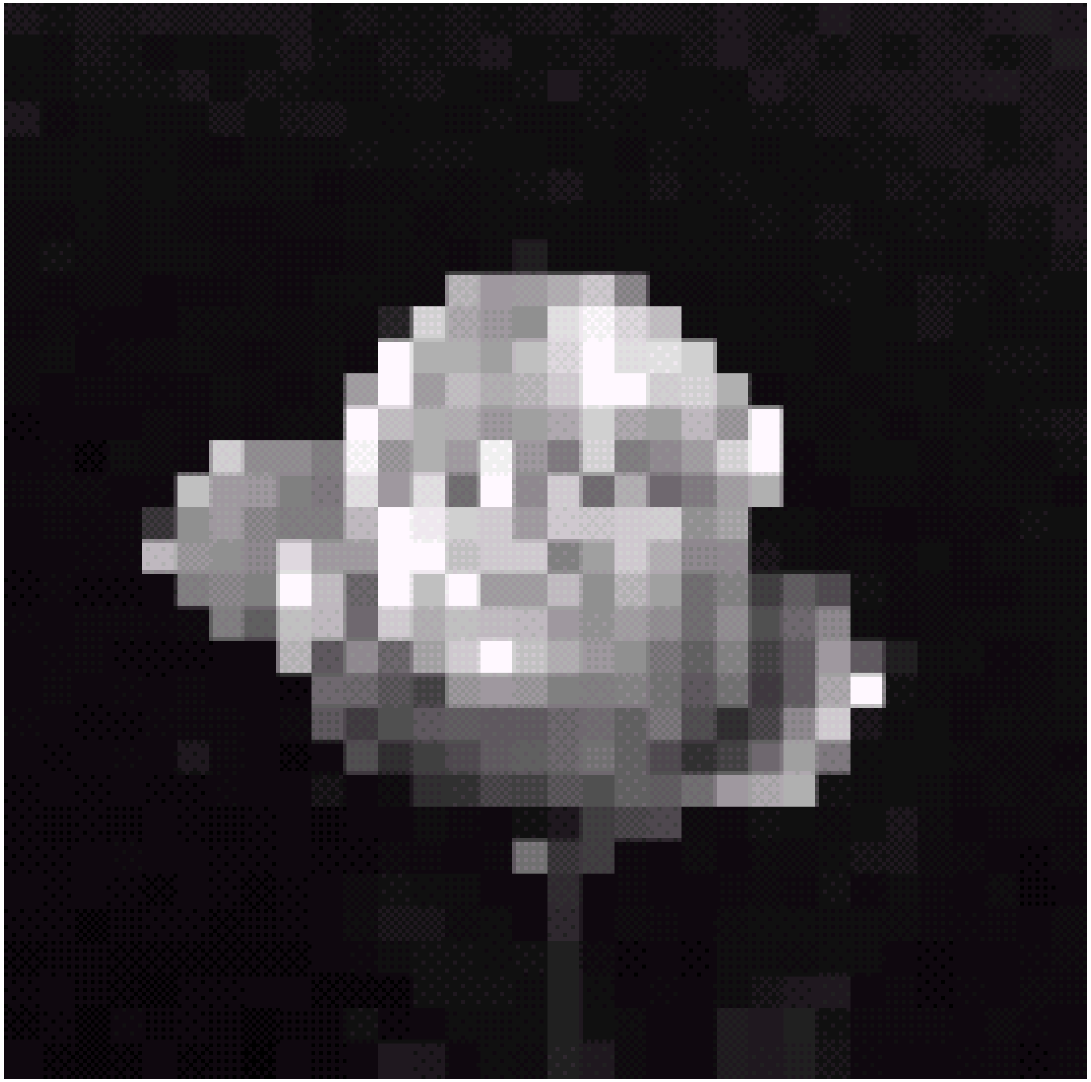
Spatial Resolution (cont...)

Images taken from Gonzalez & Woods, Digital Image Processing (2002)

Spatial Resolution (cont…)



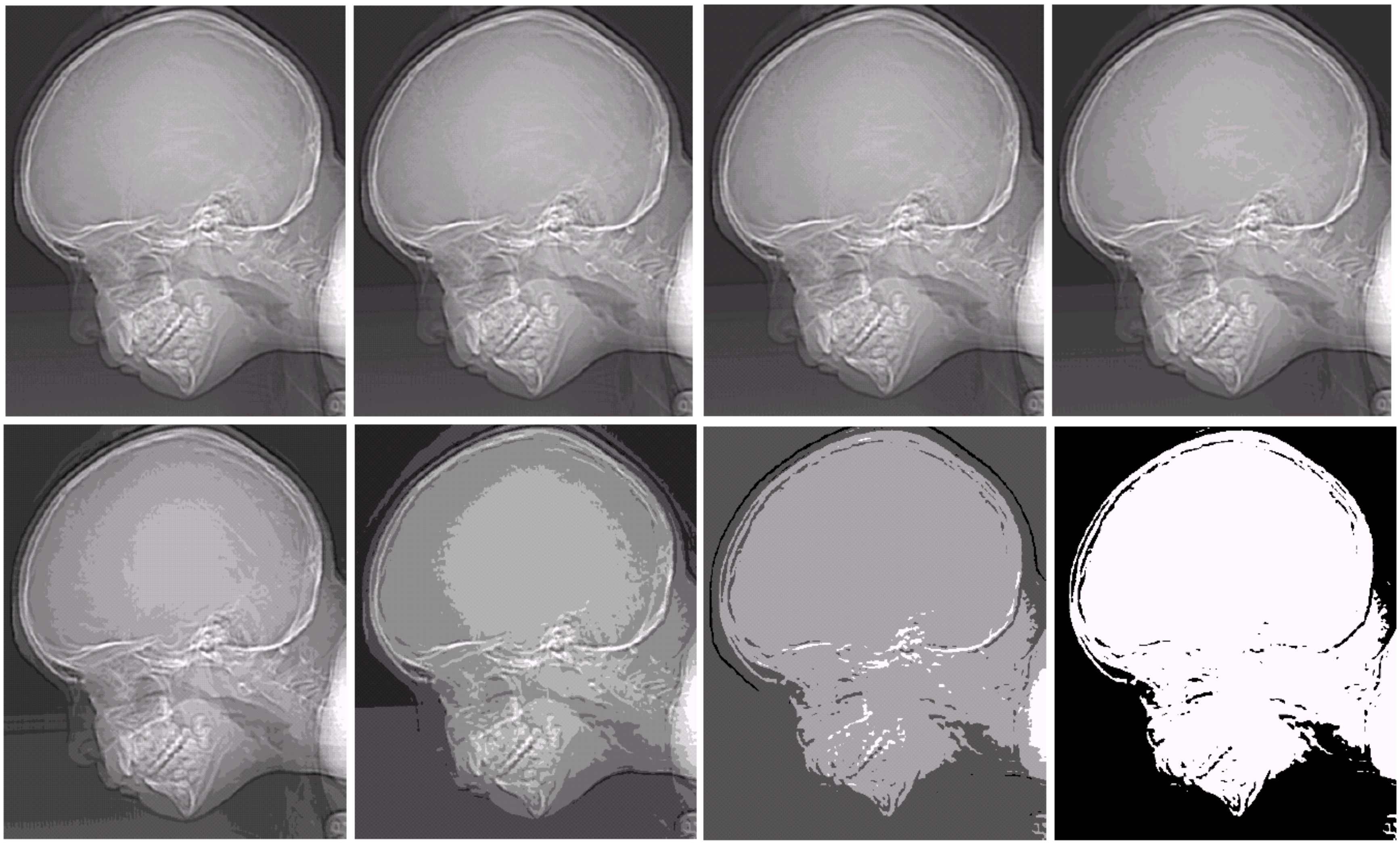
Images taken from Gonzalez & Woods, Digital Image Processing (2002)

Intensity Level Resolution

- *Intensity level resolution* refers to the number of intensity levels used to represent the image
  - The more intensity levels used, the finer the level of detail discernable in an image
  - Intensity level resolution is usually given in terms of the number of bits used to store each intensity level

Number of Bits	Number of Intensity Levels	Examples
1	2	0, 1
2	4	00, 01, 10, 11
4	16	0000, 0101, 1111
8	256	00110011, 01010101
16	65,536	1010101010101010

Intensity Level Resolution (cont…)



Images taken from Gonzalez & Woods, Digital Image Processing (2002)

Intensity Level Resolution (cont…)

Images taken from Gonzalez & Woods, Digital Image Processing (2002)

Intensity Level Resolution (cont…)

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Intensity Level Resolution (cont…)

Images taken from Gonzalez & Woods, Digital Image Processing (2002)

Intensity Level Resolution (cont…)

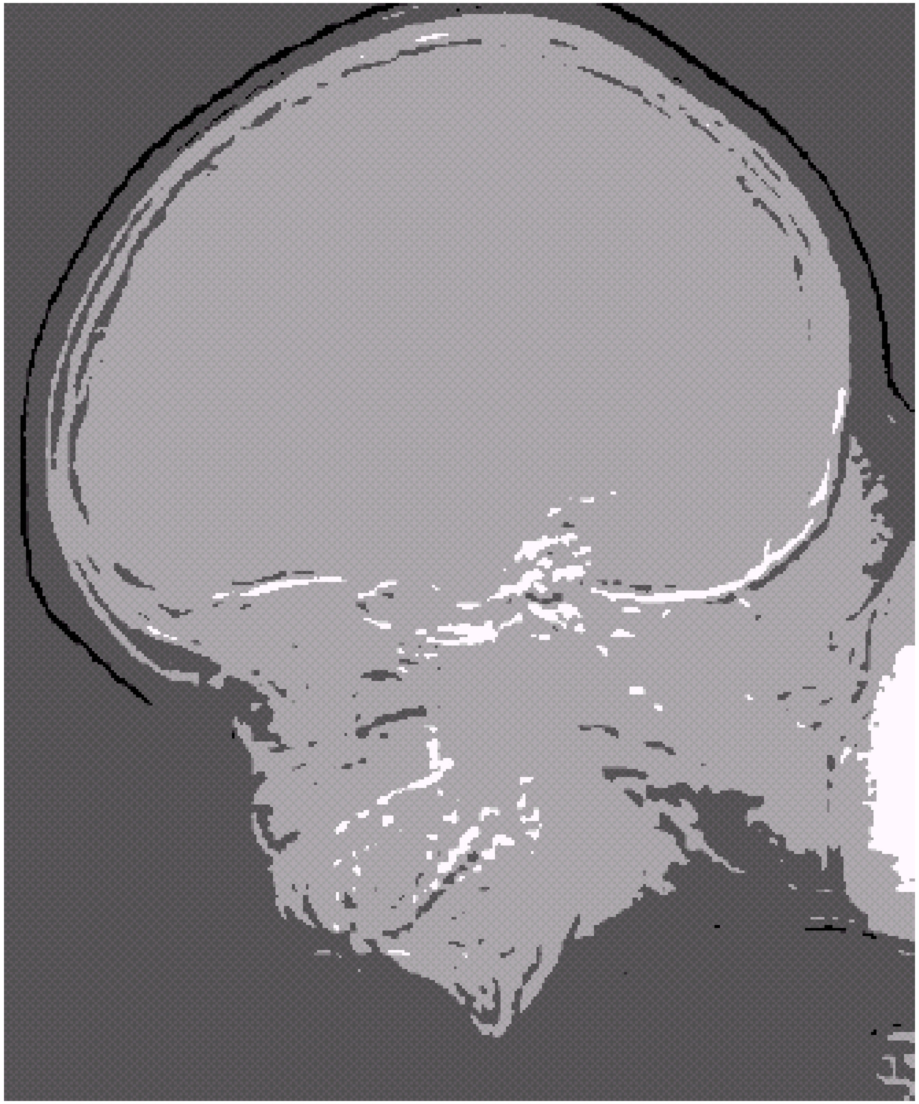
Intensity Level Resolution (cont…)

Due to insufficient number of gray levels, this artifact is more visible below and it is called false contouring.

Intensity Level Resolution (cont…)

Images taken from Gonzalez & Woods, Digital Image Processing (2002)

Intensity Level Resolution (cont…)



Intensity Level Resolution (cont…)

Images taken from Gonzalez & Woods, Digital Image Processing (2002)

Resolution: How Much Is Enough?

- The big question with resolution is always *how much is enough*?
  - This all depends on what is in the image and what you would like to do with it
  - Key questions include
    - Does the image look aesthetically pleasing?
    - Can you see what you need to see within the image?

Resolution: How Much Is Enough? (cont…)

- The picture on the right is fine for counting the number of cars, but not for reading the number plate

Intensity Level Resolution (cont…)

Low Detail

Medium Detail

High Detail

Summary

- We have looked at:
  - Human visual system
  - Light and the electromagnetic spectrum
  - Image representation
  - Image sensing and acquisition
  - Sampling, quantisation and resolution
- Next time we start to look at techniques for image enhancement