

Two important principles for aesthetically beautiful design is, contradictorily, symmetry and contrast. The human eye values symmetry because of how it automatically categorizes and makes connections. Symmetry allows for balance which is pleasing to the eye. Conversely, contrast is important. Once a pattern has been established, contrast to that pattern makes the design interesting and compelling to the human eye.

Symmetry & Contrast

An example of both of these principles can be found right here on the University of Washington's campus: The Quad. The precise layout of the bricks, grass, and buildings provide the symmetry that is pleasing. Everything is symmetrical. What makes this design interesting is the cherry blossoms. The architects of the quad implemented the trees as the contrast. Every month the trees change, which provides the design interesting development. This living design is beautiful because of the juxtaposition of symmetry and contrast.



Dale Johnson, Seattle Times