SMART DESIGN FOR WEBSITES

This document will serve as a guide for how to design simple and user-friendly websites. You will be provided with general rules as well as examples of smart and poor design.

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Note:

Section 1 - based on popular opinions and content compiled from various websites
Section 2 - based on class lectures and the text *Information Visualization* by Colin Ware
Section 3 - based on T. A. Hart, B. S. Chaparro, & C. G. Halcomb's research *Evaluating websites for older adults: adherence to 'senior-friendly' guidelines and end-user performance*

SECTION 1

THE BASCIS

Avoid Ambiguity: Websites should be intuitive for the user in order to facilitate exploration and ease in use.

Be Consistent: Use the same images or words for the same concepts. That way the user can become accustomed to the vocabulary of your design.

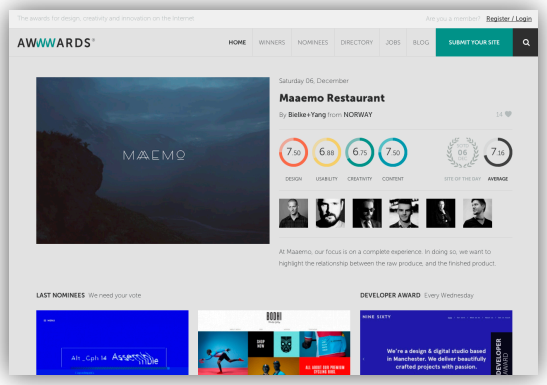
Keep it Simple: Human's prefer to think about things that are simple. This is the idea behind cognitive fluency. If your design is simple and familiar users will like it more.

IMAGES AND TEXT

More Photo Content and Less Text: Users can process photos more quickly and efficiently. If a user is inundated with text, it will lead to confusion and frustration.

Poor Design: http://www.libertyvan.com/

Smart Design: http://www.awwwards.com/



RECOGNITION IS EASY; RECALL IS HARD

See and choose options are easier than recall and type options. It is more effective show users a menu of options and let them select than to have them search for their desired function.

In addition, the more important the function is to the website the more visible it should be. Therefore, design should always be goal-oriented.

PROVIDE FEEDBACK

Design should recognize the user's actions instantly. Design should be responsive to the user and provide information regard how long it will take to execute a function especially if it will be over 5 minutes.

SECTION 2

COLOR CHOICES

The right choice of color is essential to smart design. Color can draw our attention toward or away from specific areas of website, and it can provide ease of use or significantly stifle users.

Around 10% of men and 1% of women are colorblind. Individuals with color blindness have deficiencies relating to their cones. This results in difficulty telling certain colors apart. Designers should actively avoid using color that may be easily confused or make processing information difficult.

The three types of color blindness are:

Protanopia - lack of long wave sensitive cones
Deuteranopia - lack of medium wave sensitive cones
Tritanopia - lack of short wave sensitive cones

Colors that are often confused by Protanopes:

1. Black with red
2. Dark brown with dark green, dark orange and dark red
3. Some blues with some reds, purples and dark pinks
4. Mid-greens with some oranges

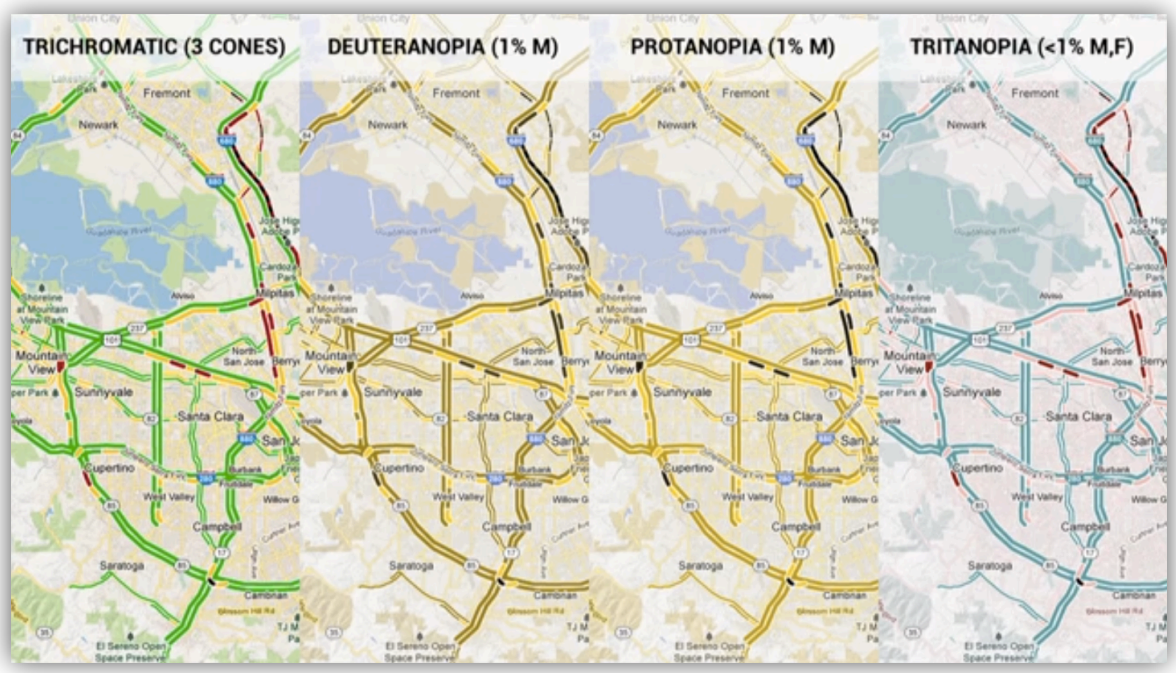
Colors that are often confused by Deuternopes:

1. Reds with greens or browns
2. Blue-greens with grey and pinks
3. Bright greens with yellows
4. Pale pinks with light grey
5. Light blues with lilac

Colors that are often confused by Tritanopes

1. Light blues with greys, dark purples with black
2. Greens with blues
3. Oranges with reds.

EXAMPLES OF HOW COLOR BLIND MAY SEE



Note: Your viewer may lose crucial information if you do not keep these guidelines in mind. As a designer, you need to think about the goal and context of your design. Then you can move forward and decide if atheistic or readability of people with color blindness is more important.

Key Take Away:

These colors should not put next to each other or used to signify meaning:

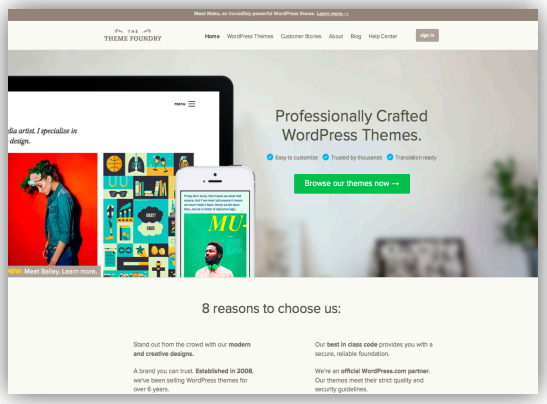
1. Red with dark colors like black, green or brown
2. Blue with purple or pink
3. Grey with pink

AVOID USING EQUILUMINANT COLORS

Equiluminant colors create an illusion of motion. Your "what" system will process the information about the objects, but the "where" can't register a stable position. When we cannot distinguish the position of an object, it may the object/image look jittery or unstable.

Poor Design: http://art.yale.edu/

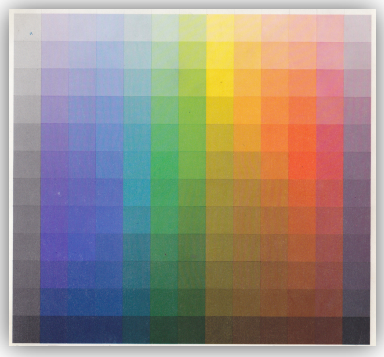
Smart Design: https://thethemefoundry.com/



AVOID USING COLORS THAT ONLY HAVE CHROMATIC DIFFERENCES

Purely chromatic differences (i.e. only differences in chromatic channels and no differences in luminance channels) are not suitable for displaying any kind of detail. For example, when there is only a chromatic difference between the test and the background on a display the text is very difficult to read.

Each column has the same chromacity.



SECTION 3

THE SCIENCE

The National Institute on Aging (NIA) and the National Library of Medicine (NLM) created a guide websites geared at seniors. This was list of 25 guidelines targets at users who are 60 years or older. The guidelines were built around 3 key areas:

1. Designing Readable Text
2. Increasing Memory and Comprehension of Web Content
3. Increasing the Ease of Navigation

Participants were tested one these senior friendly websites. They were asked to find specific information and rate their satisfaction with the page.

Results: Websites that used most of the senior guidelines resulted in higher task success., although, those websites were not particularly preferred or did not increase satisfaction of use. Experienced users preferred websites that were compliant with the guidelines, while the least experienced users preferred websites that followed very few of the guidelines.

Key Take Away:

Experiences users will tend to prefer navigating websites that use common practices. There has not been significant research in the area of what works best in design. So consider the goal of your user and design so that it is easily achievable.

Good Luck!