Title:
Designing Your T-Shirt: Three Elements For Success

Word Count:
458

Summary:
A number of technologies exist today, from inkjet transfers to online designers,
which make designing and printing your own t-shirts easy and affordable. But
ease of production doesn't guarantee a good design. The following are three
design components to consider when creating a design for a t-shirt: Contrast,
Size, and Balance.

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contrast between your ink colors and your shirt. For example, bright ...

Keywords:
t-shirt design,layout,printing,art

Article Body:
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Contrast is the difference in *brightness* between colors. You want to have
contrast between your ink colors and your shirt. For example, bright yellow, a
perfectly good color, is not good for text on a white shirt because white and
yellow are similar in brightness. It's very difficult to read yellow letters on
a white background. Dark colored inks, likewise, do not show up well on dark
colored shirts. Navy blue ink, for example, won't show up on a black shirt (or a
burgundy shirt, or forest green, etc…).

Another area where you need to consider contrast is the graphic itself. A
graphic (or multicolored font) that is made up of a group of similar colors,
such as dark blue, deep purple, and black, will be hard to distinguish; the
lines and colors will visually blur together. Contrast between light and dark
colors will make your graphics easy to recognize.

Size does matter when it comes to shirt design. Bigger is usually better for

both text and graphic elements. Your design needs to be able to be read from around six to eight feet away. Keep your text relatively simple, or at least have a major few words that are large and easily seen. People don't have the time or inclination to read a paragraph of text on a shirt. You have about 3 seconds to get your message across before the shirt has passed by. While smaller text can be used, remember to save it for information that is less important than your main idea since it will be less easily seen.

Balance refers to the overall distribution of text and images on your shirt. A layout is described as being "heavy" where there is a lot of imagery or thick, full, font styles. As the word implies, when there is an area that is heavy (or light), there needs to be a similar area on the other side. Balance can be focused either left/right or top/bottom. As a design element, balance is an area where there is the most leeway for "breaking the rules". Many times an off-balance, asymmetric design can be very energetic. But for a classic, clean design remember to keep your elements balanced.

If you are conscious of Contrast, Size, and Balance when designing your t-shirt, you will be well on your way to a result that will be visually pleasing to both you and your audience.