

# WELCOME

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Hierarchy

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Dominance

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# DESIGN THEORY

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## What is Design Theory?

- An approach that helps to understand and explain design knowledge
- Defines the basic building blocks or elements of visual design
- Describes the principles used when working with design elements

## Art ≠ Design

- Design helps to solve a problem
- Art is a bit more diverse (a form of expression)
- Design theory (today) is influenced by modern art movements

## Notable Influences

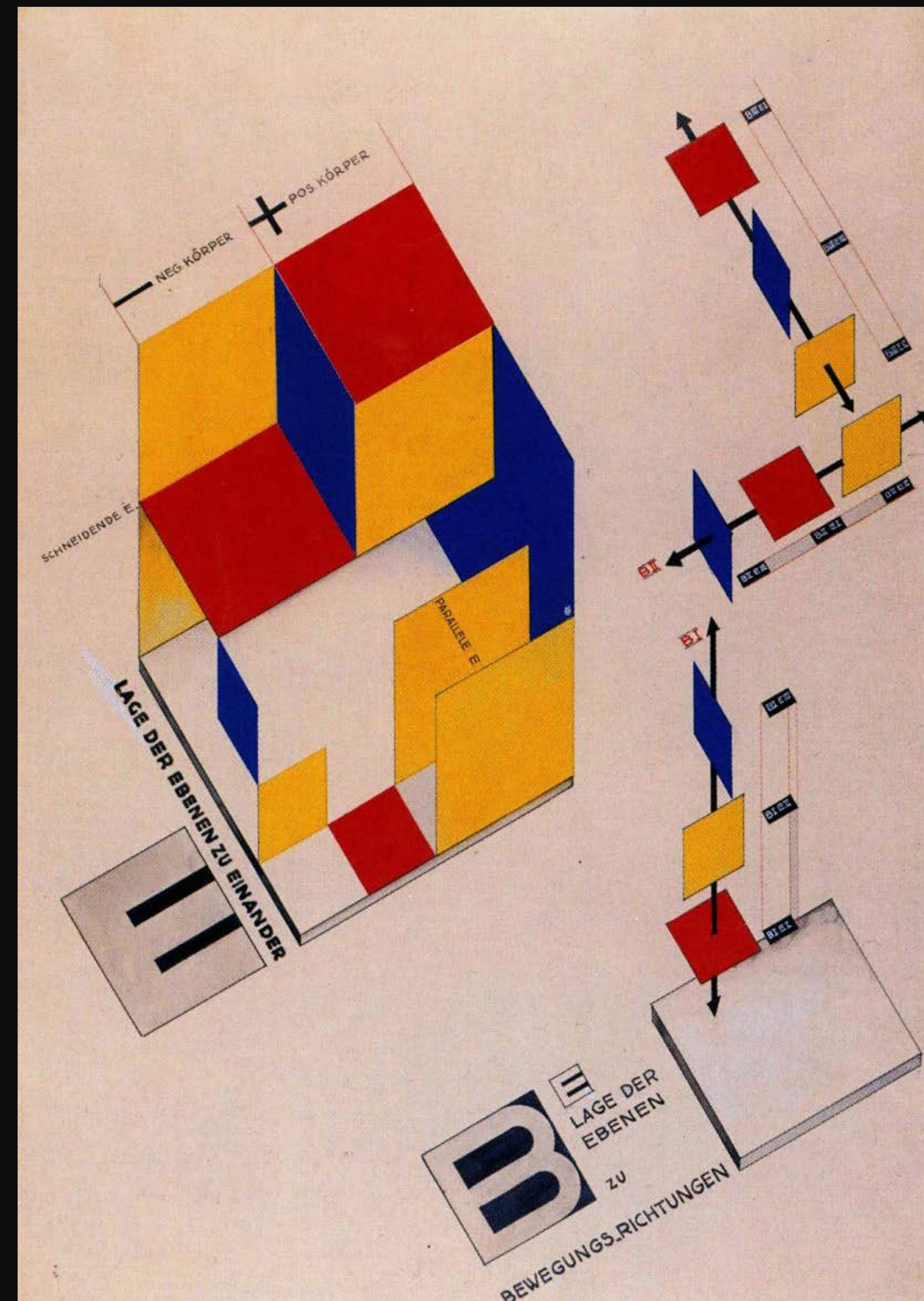
- The “De Stijl” (1917) style of art
- Bauhaus (1919) art, architecture and design school

## Why is it important?

- Allows a designer to clearly explain a design decision
- An essential tool for helping graphic and visual designers diagnose design problems









# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## What are the basic elements?

- These are the elements used to create a visual design

## They include the following

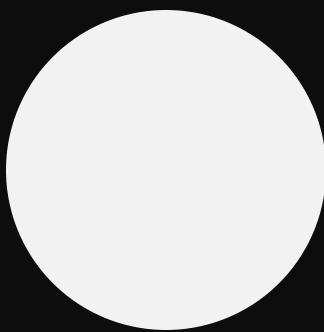
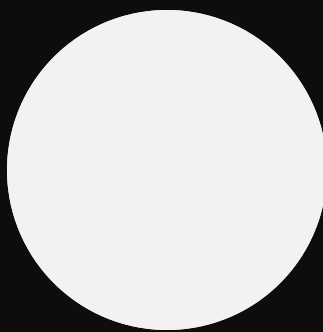
- Points and lines
- Shapes
- Colour (and Colour theory)
- Texture
- Typography
- Form

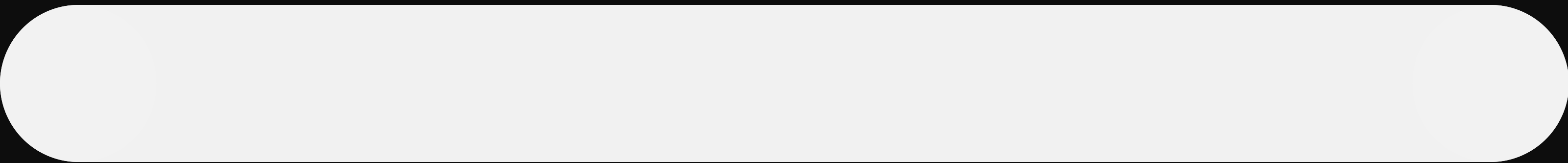
# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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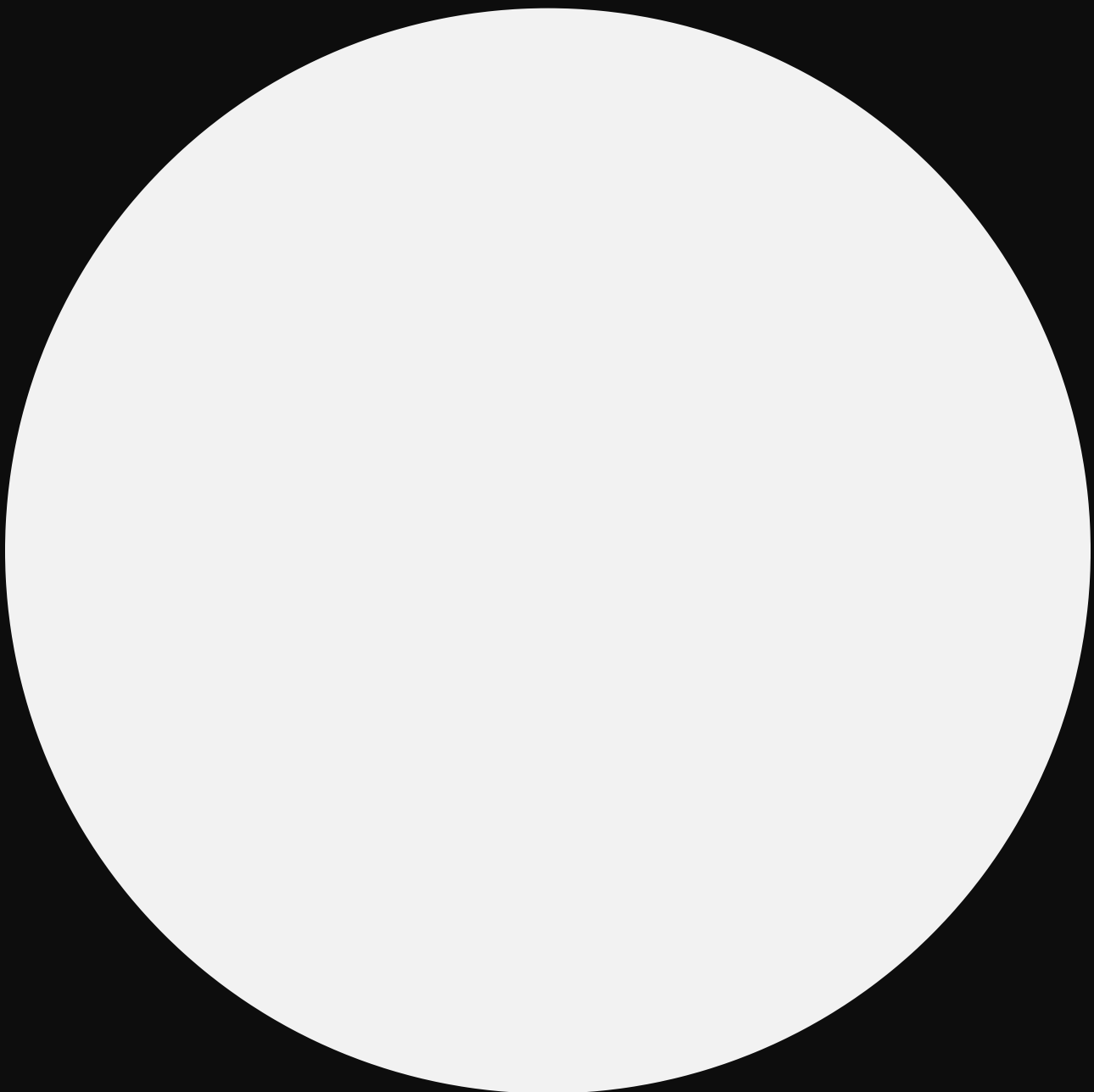
## Points and lines

- Connecting two points forms a line
- Lines help make divisions
- Repeating a line creates texture
- Straight lines have a length, width and direction



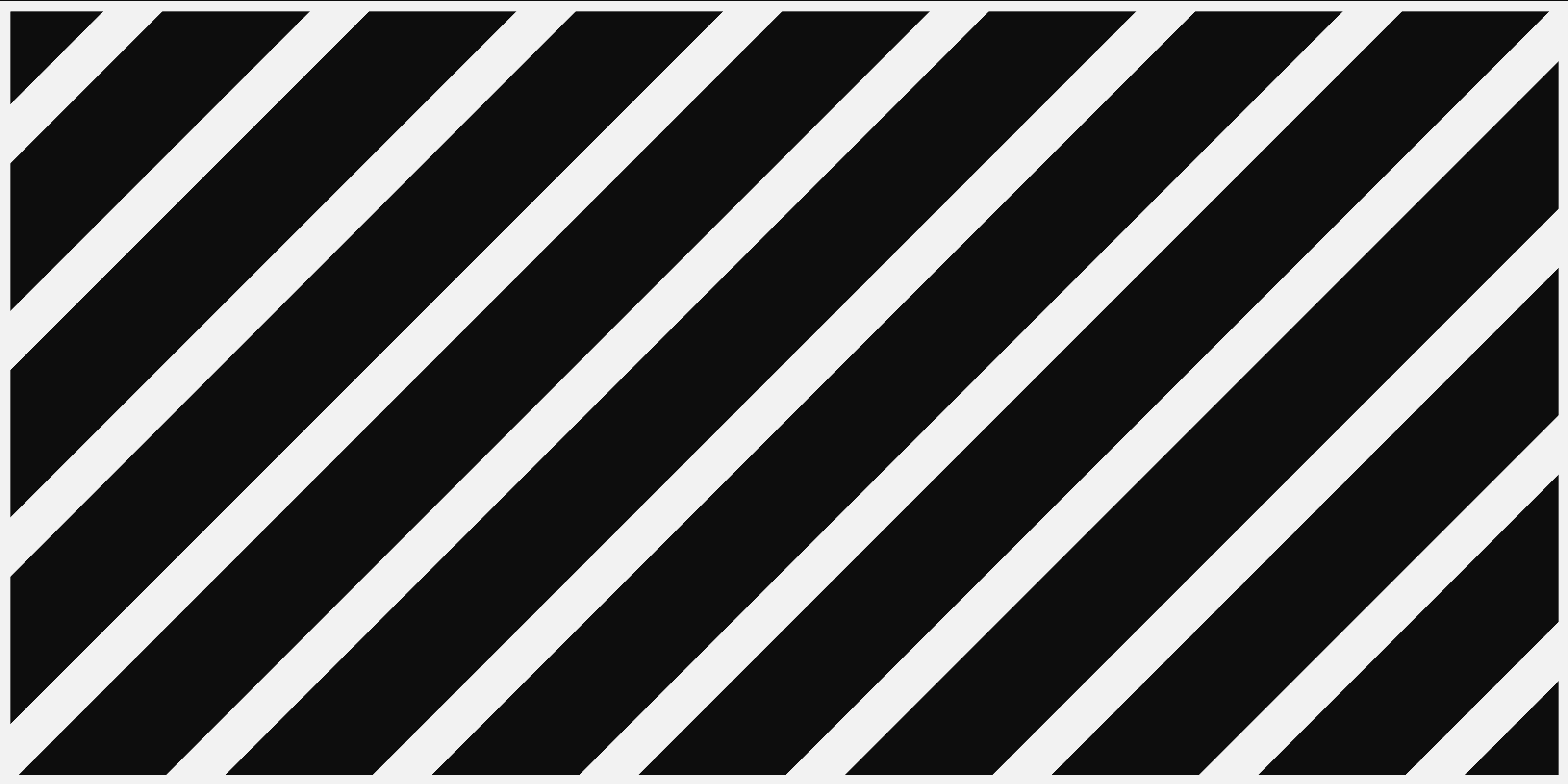


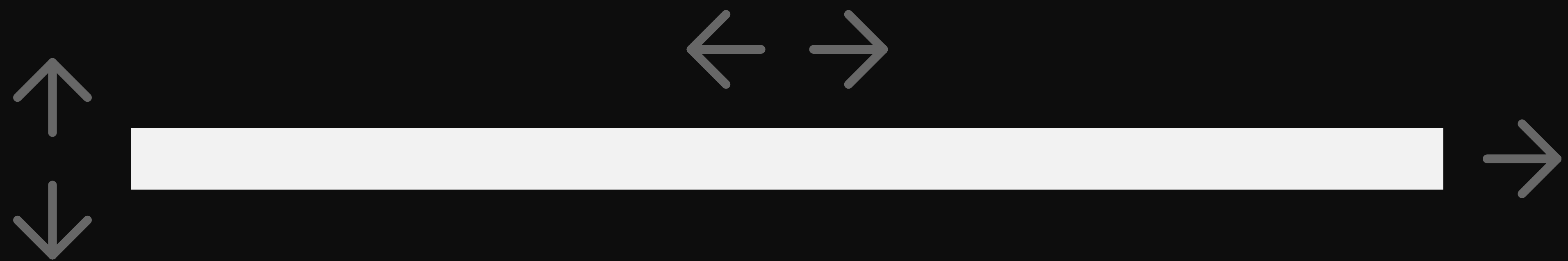










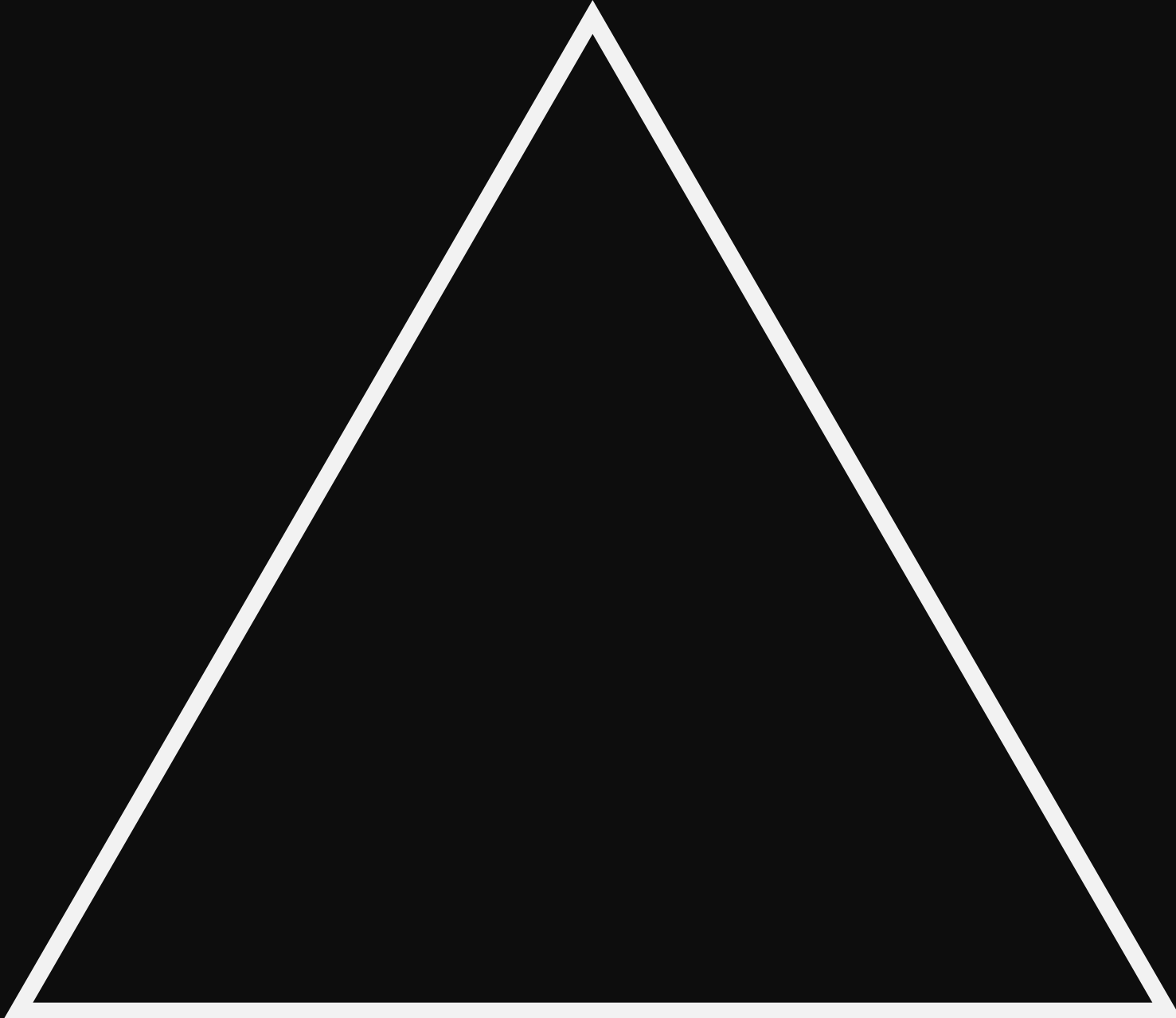
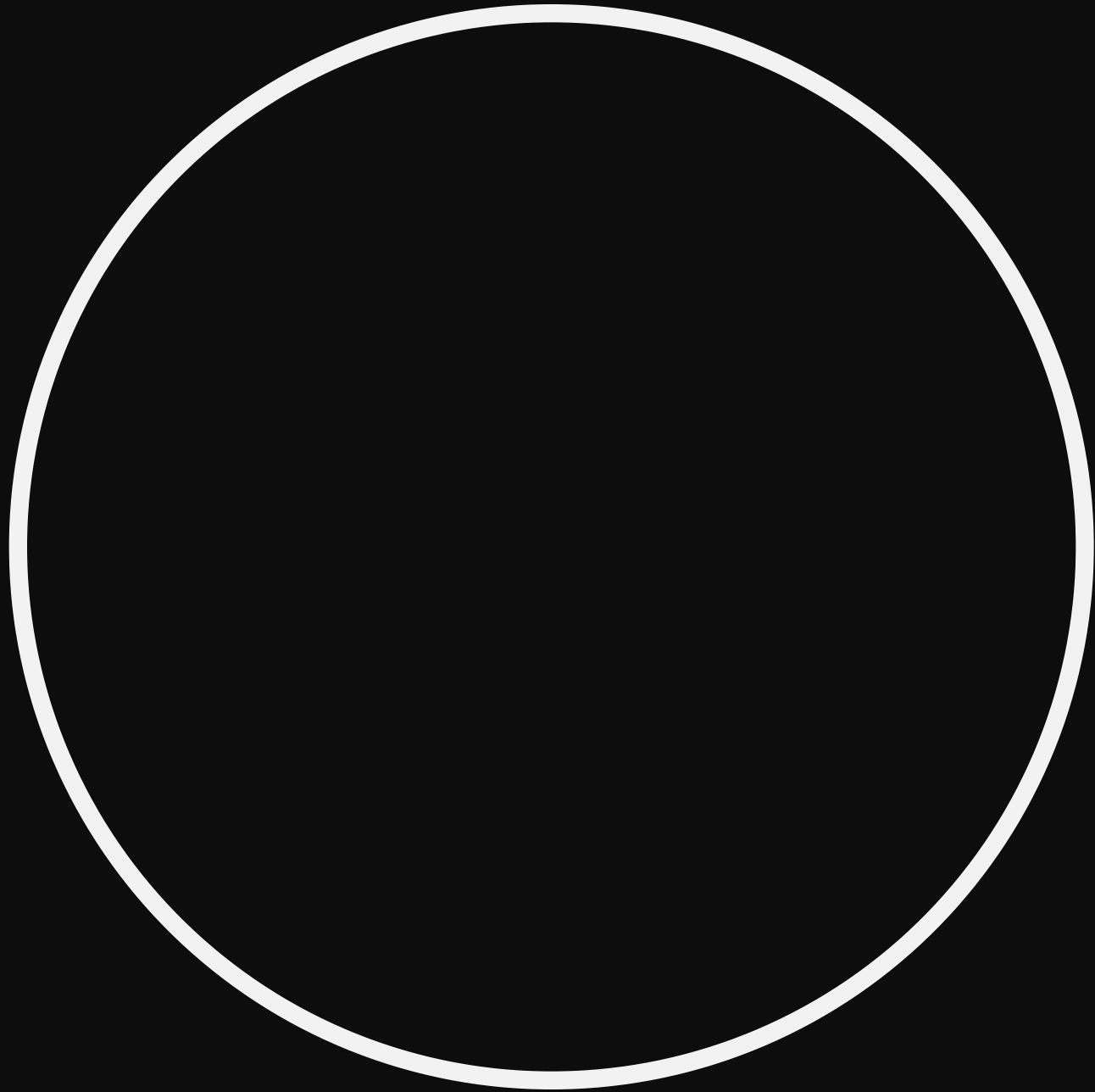


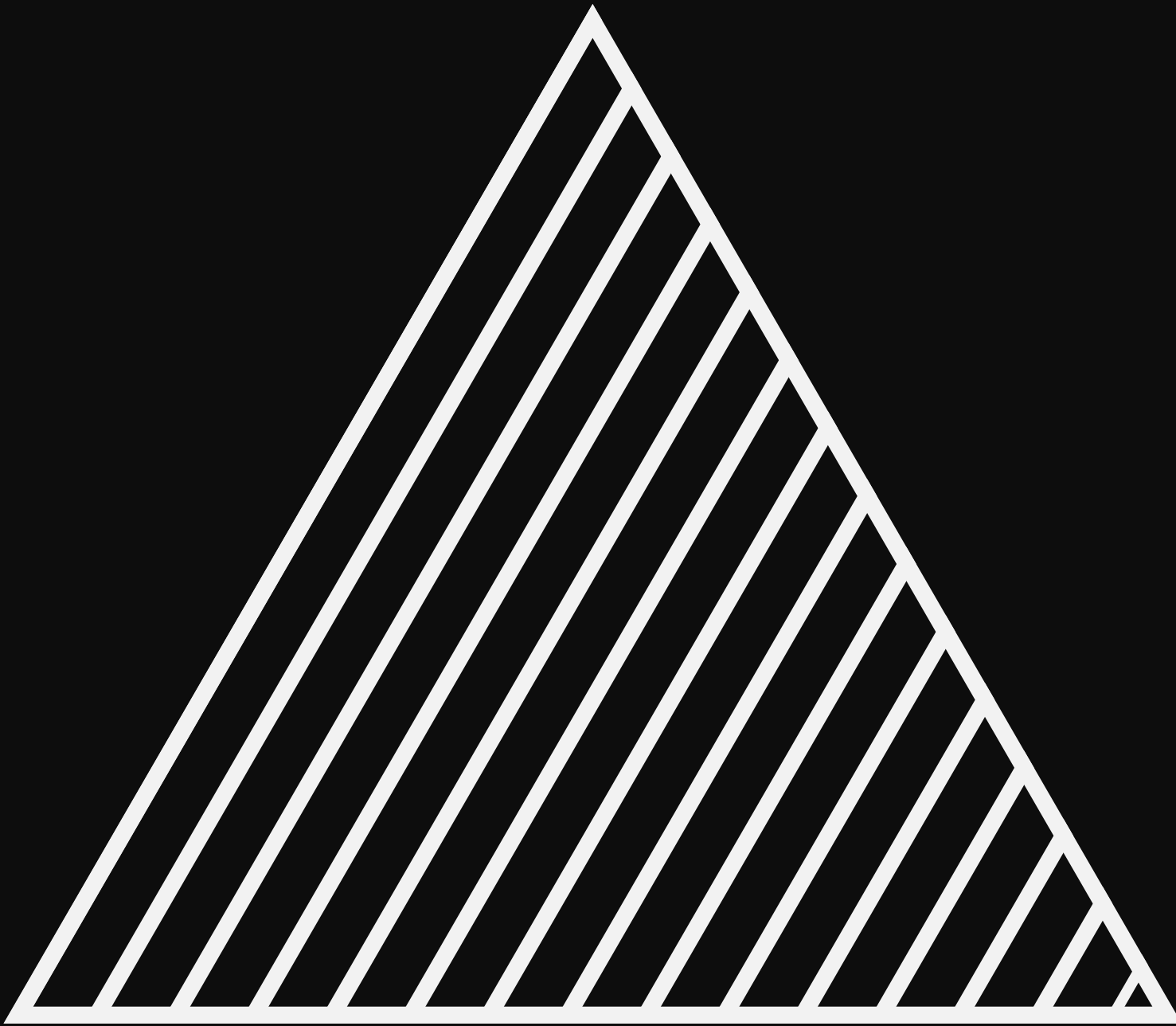
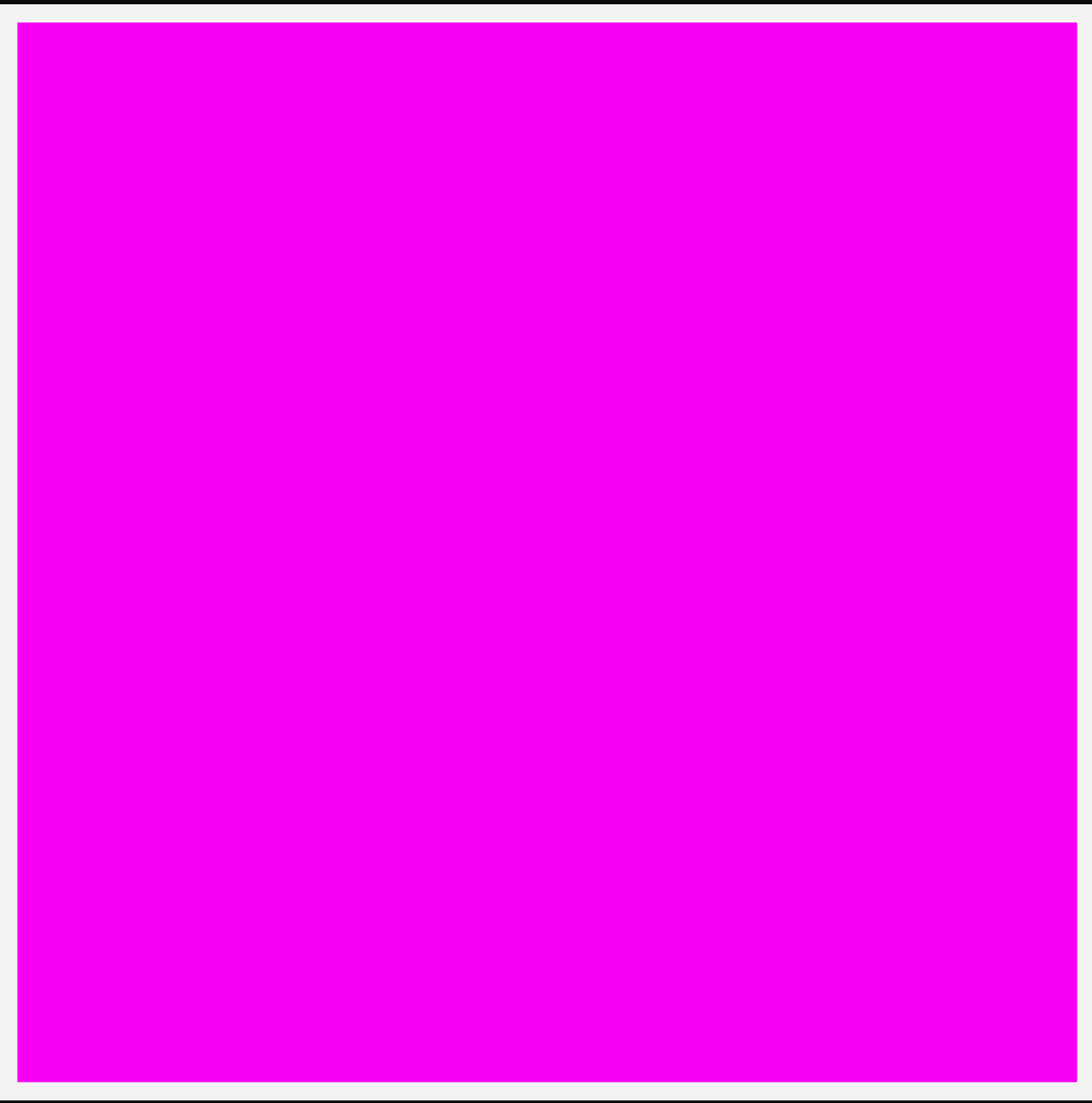
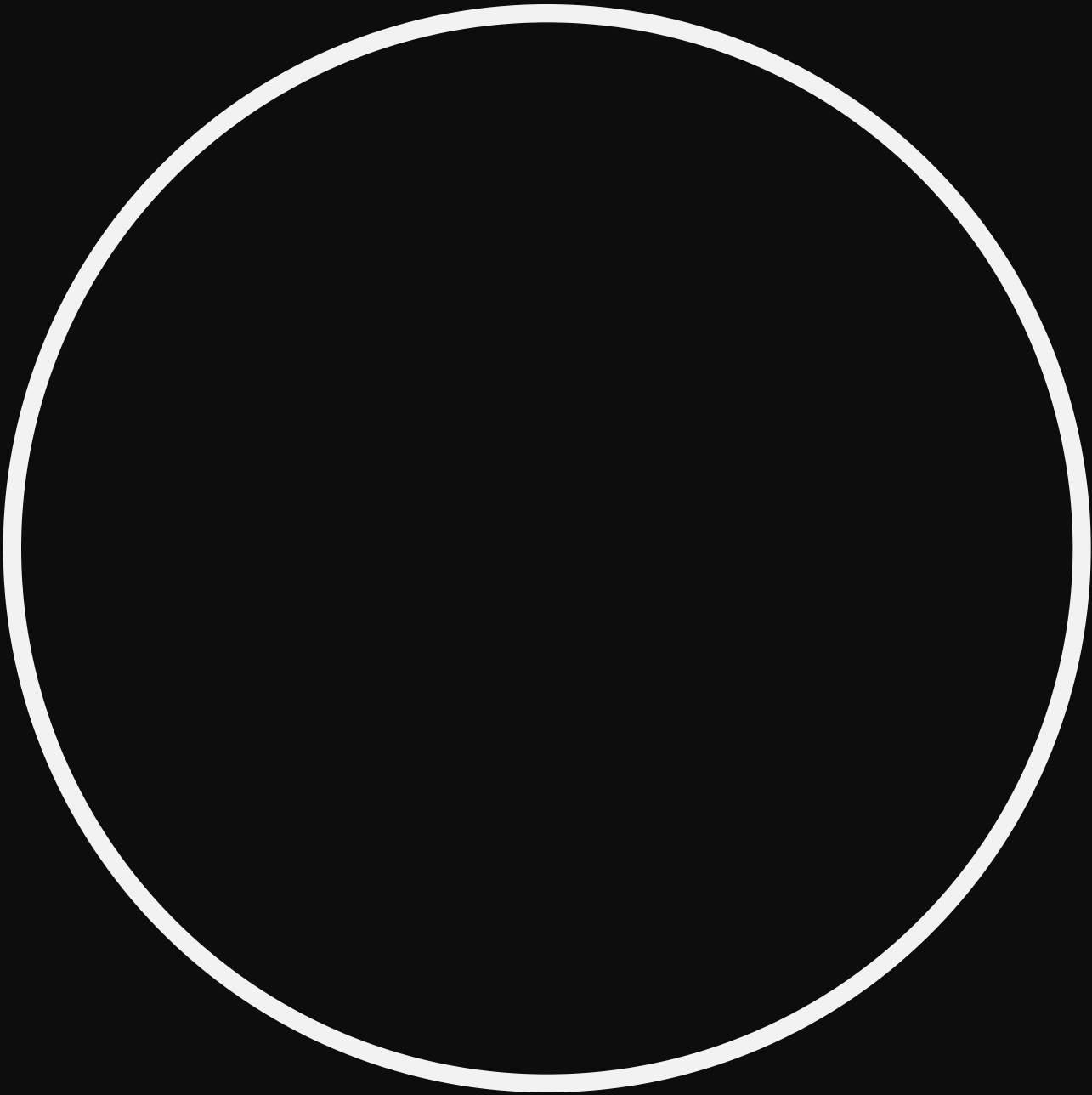
# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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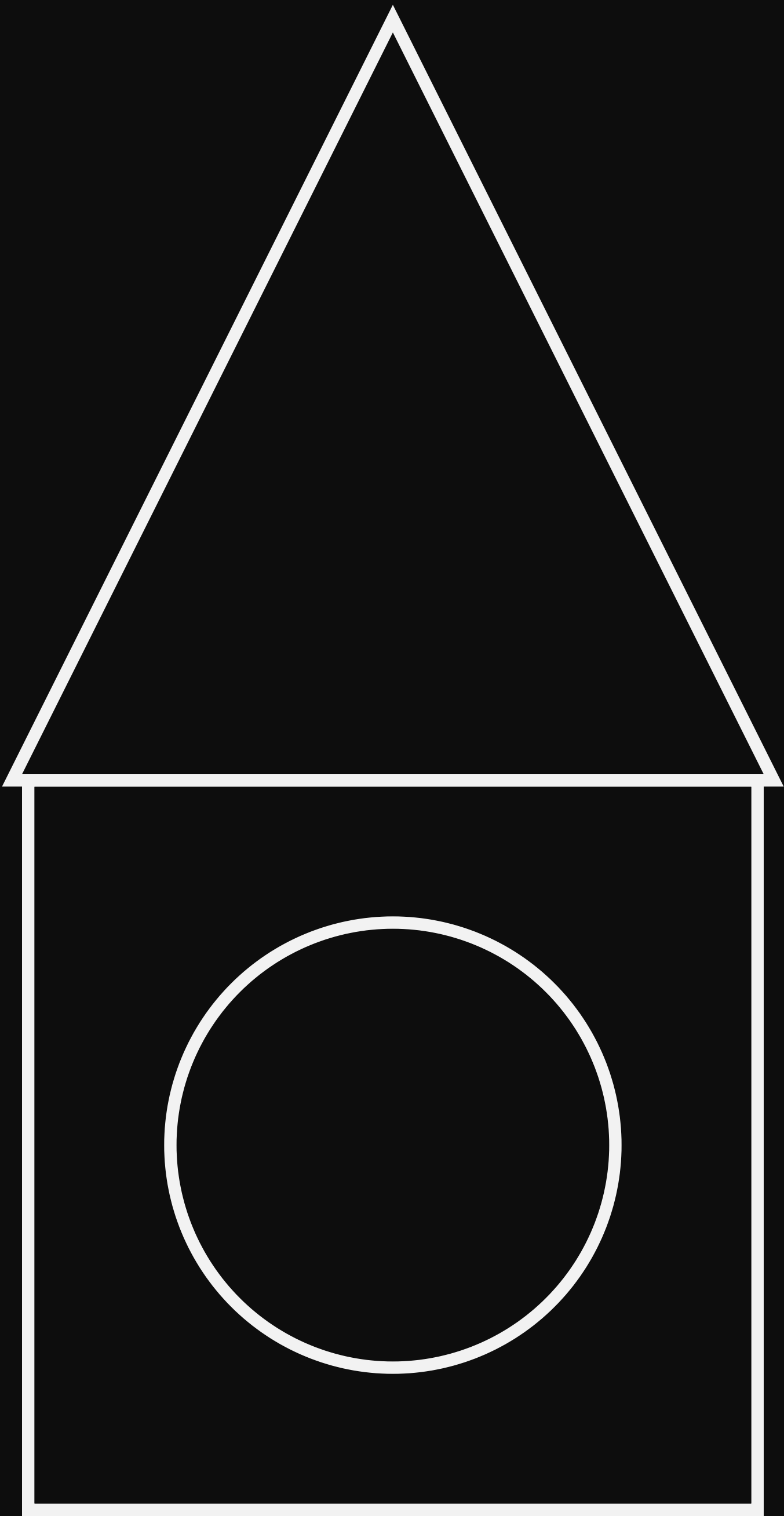
## Shapes

- Self-contained areas
- Lines, colour, texture and/or different values define the area
- Every object is composed of shapes









# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

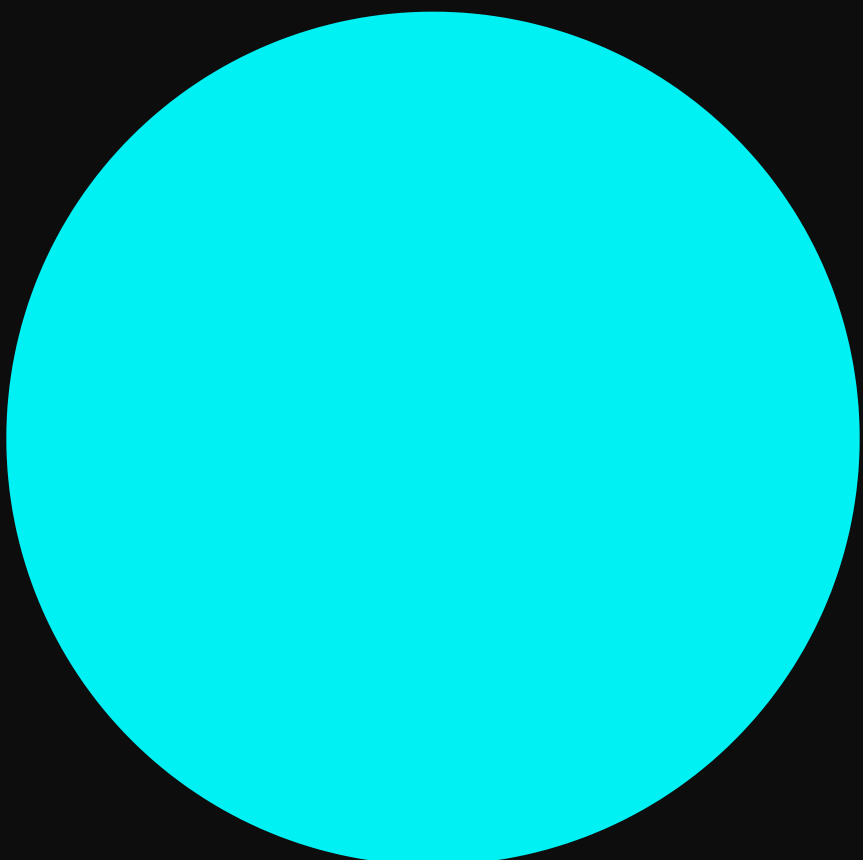
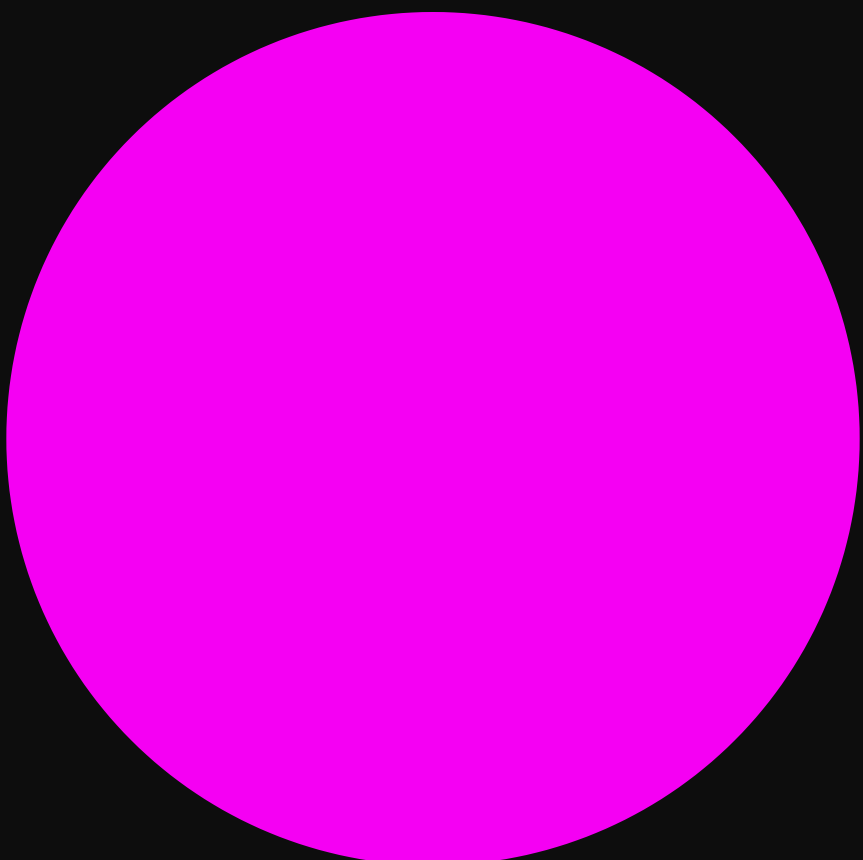
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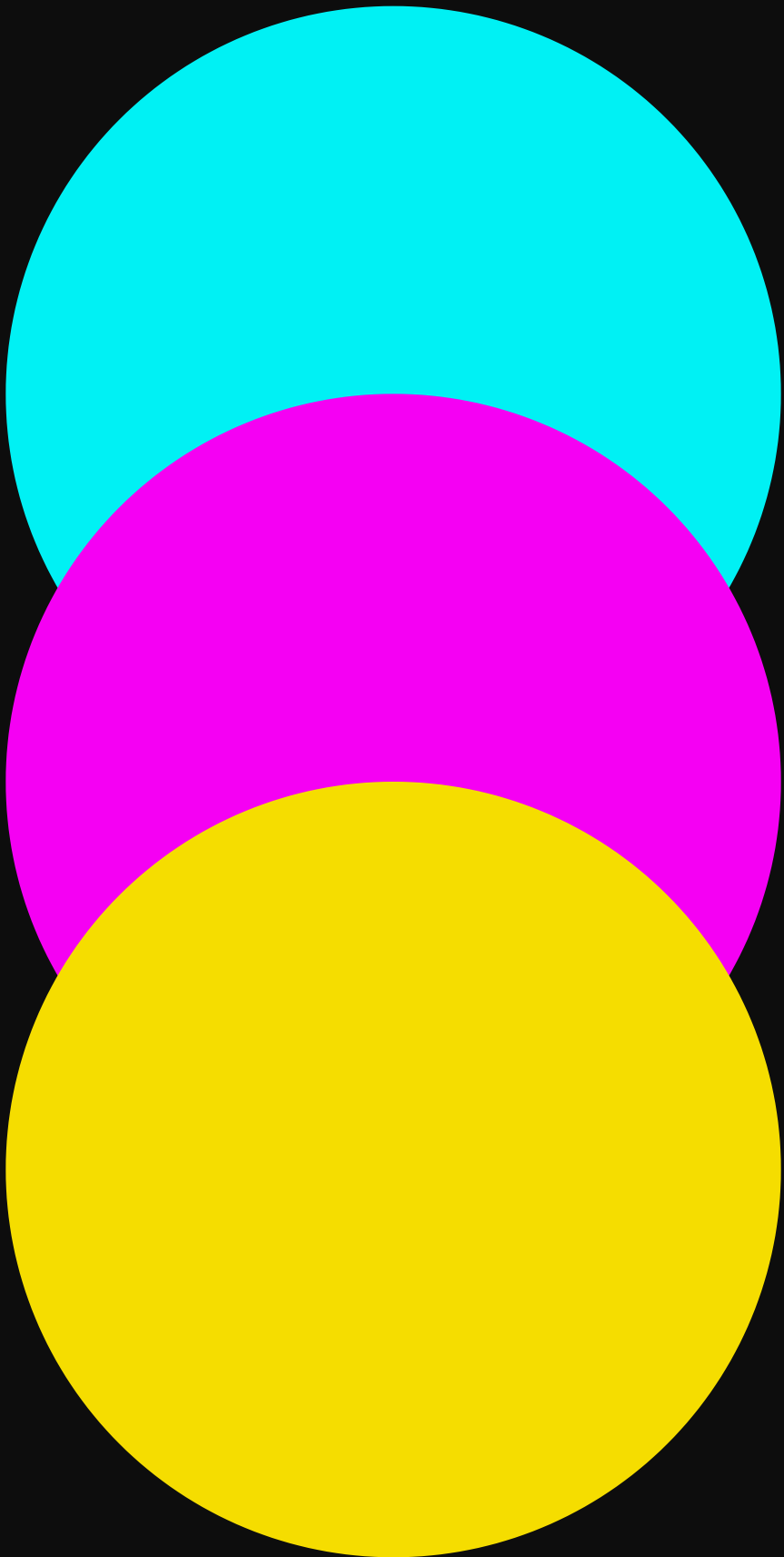
## Colour (Hue)

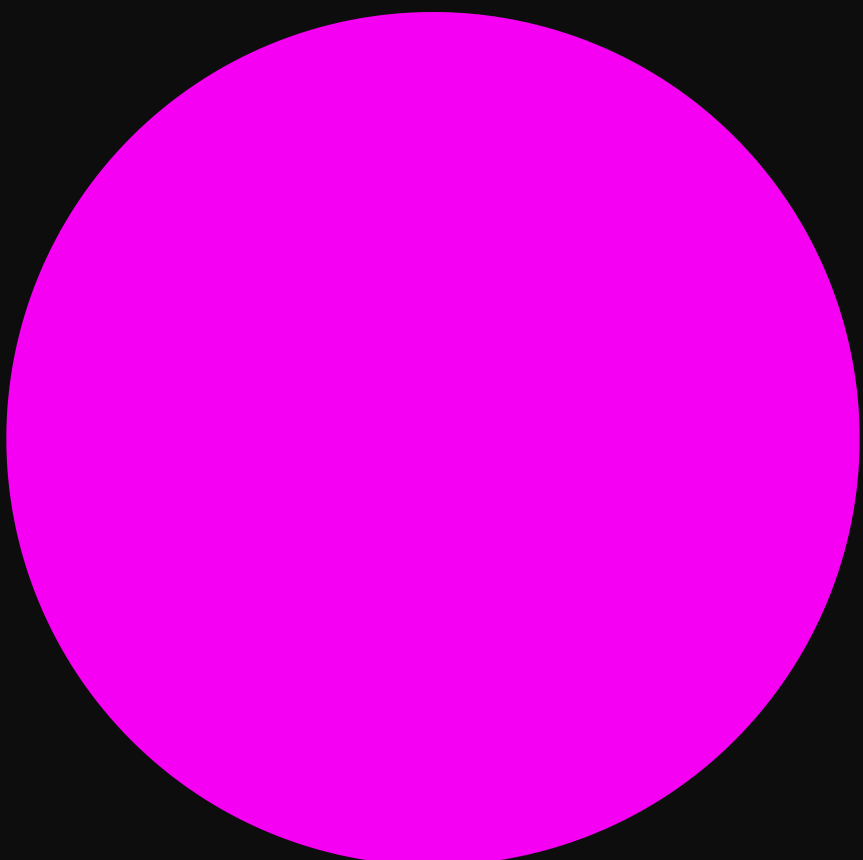
- Help differentiate items
- Create depth
- Add emphasis
- Organise information

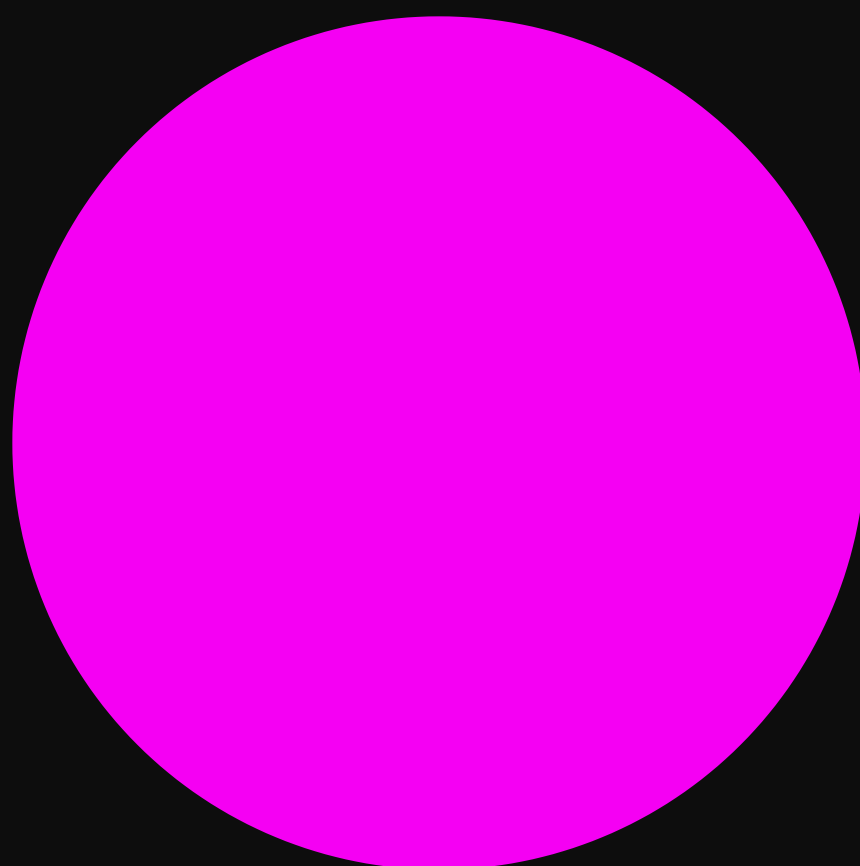
## Colour: Colour theory

- Colour wheel
- Tints and shades
- Colour Temperature
- Neutrals
- Colour schemes
- Meaning of colour
- Subtractive vs Additive (CMYK vs. RGB)

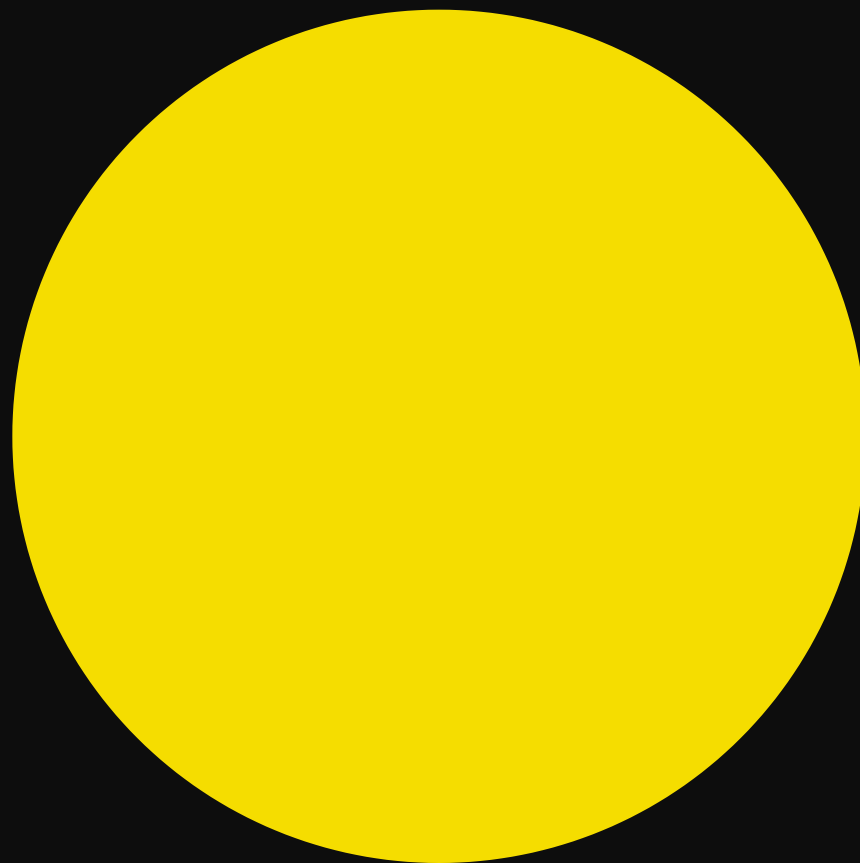




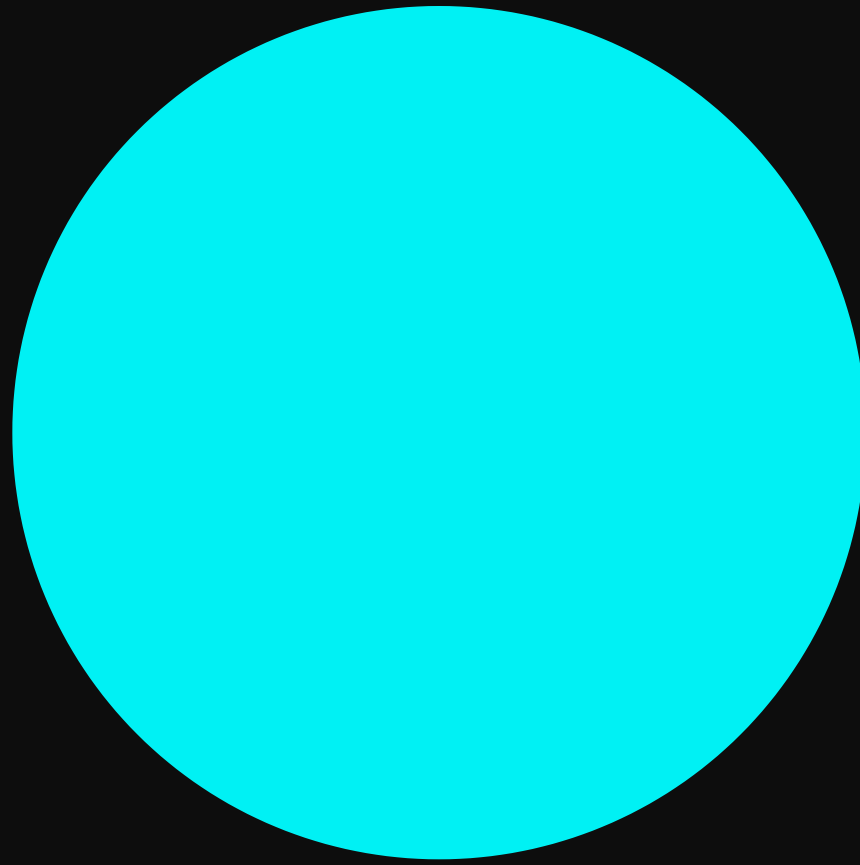




Group 1



Group 2

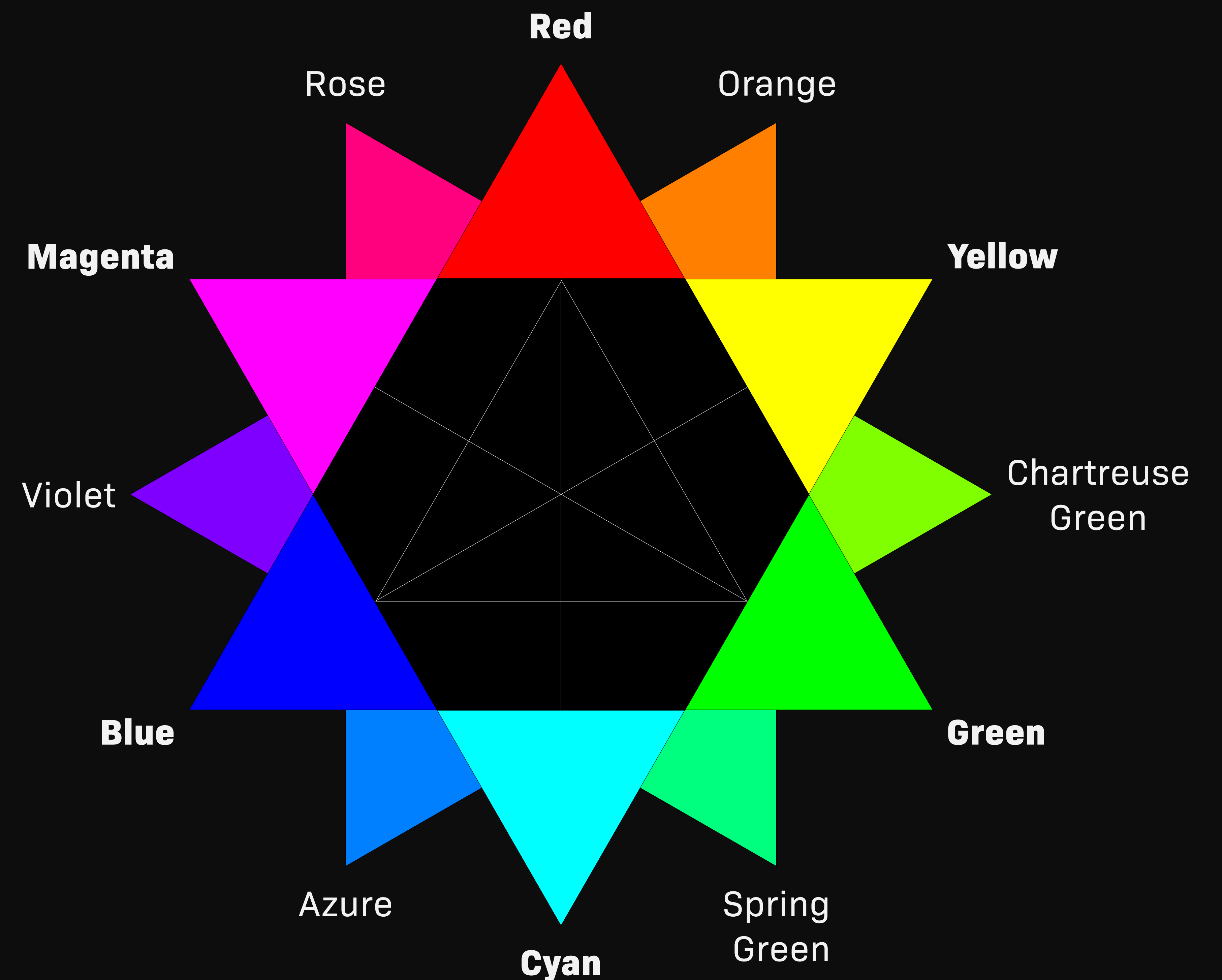


Group 3

# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

## Colour Wheel

- Based on the original colour circle by Sir Isaac Newton (1704)
- Today, most colour wheels show twelve colours
- Three primary colours (RGB, RYB or RGV)
- Three secondary colours (mix of primary)
- Six tertiary colours (mix of primary and secondary)



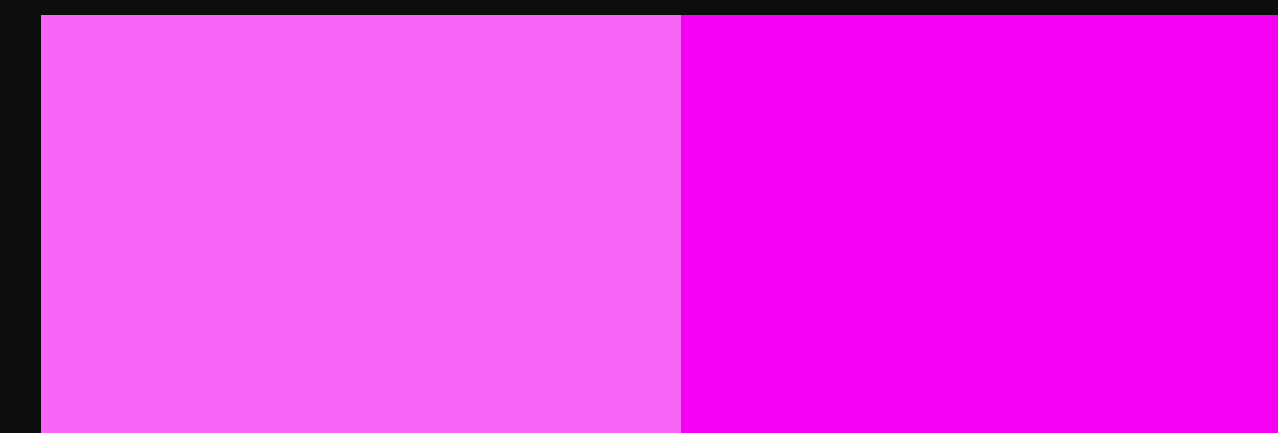
# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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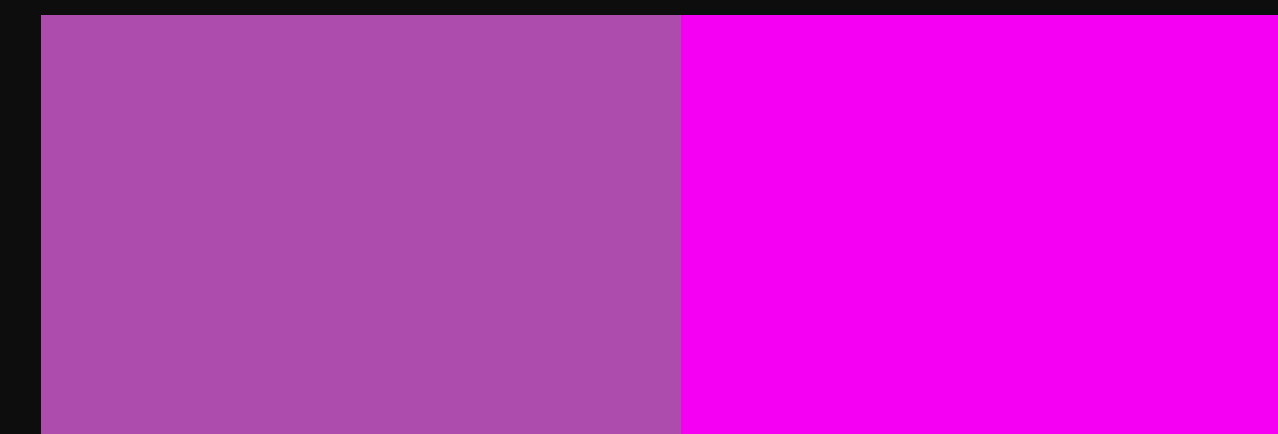
## Tints and shades

- Tint is the colour result when white is added
- Tone is the colour result when grey is added
- Shade is the colour result when black is added
- Saturation is the strength or weakness of a colour

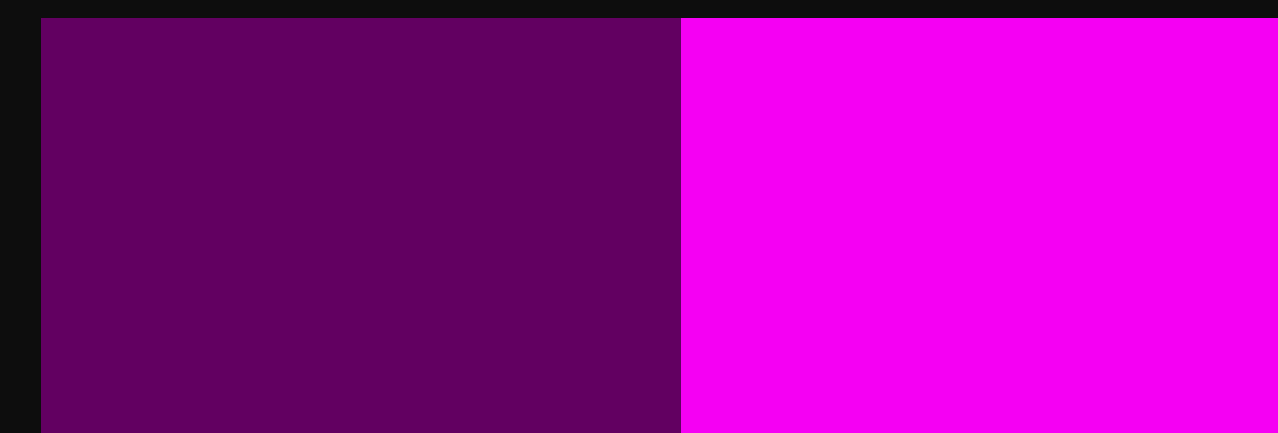
Tint



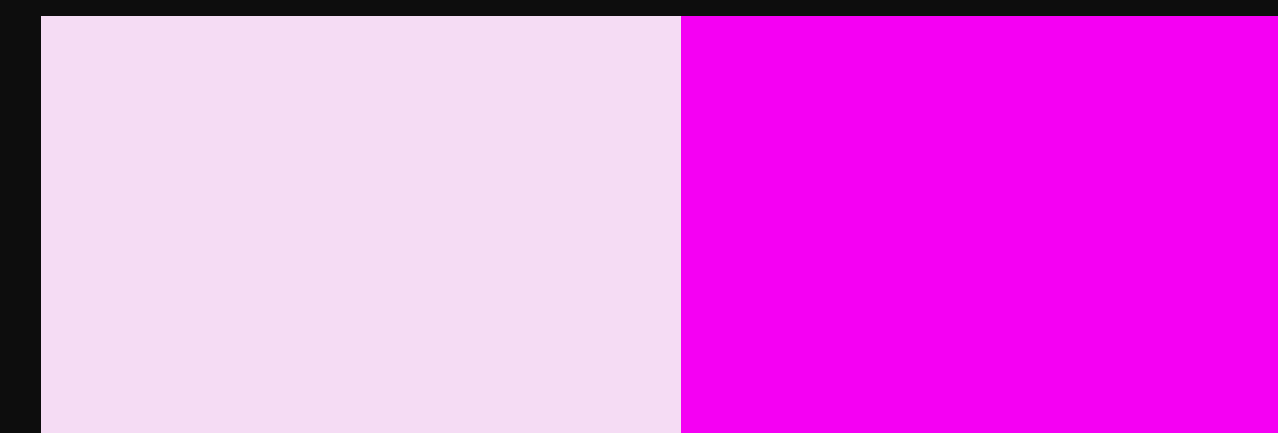
Tone



Shade



Saturation

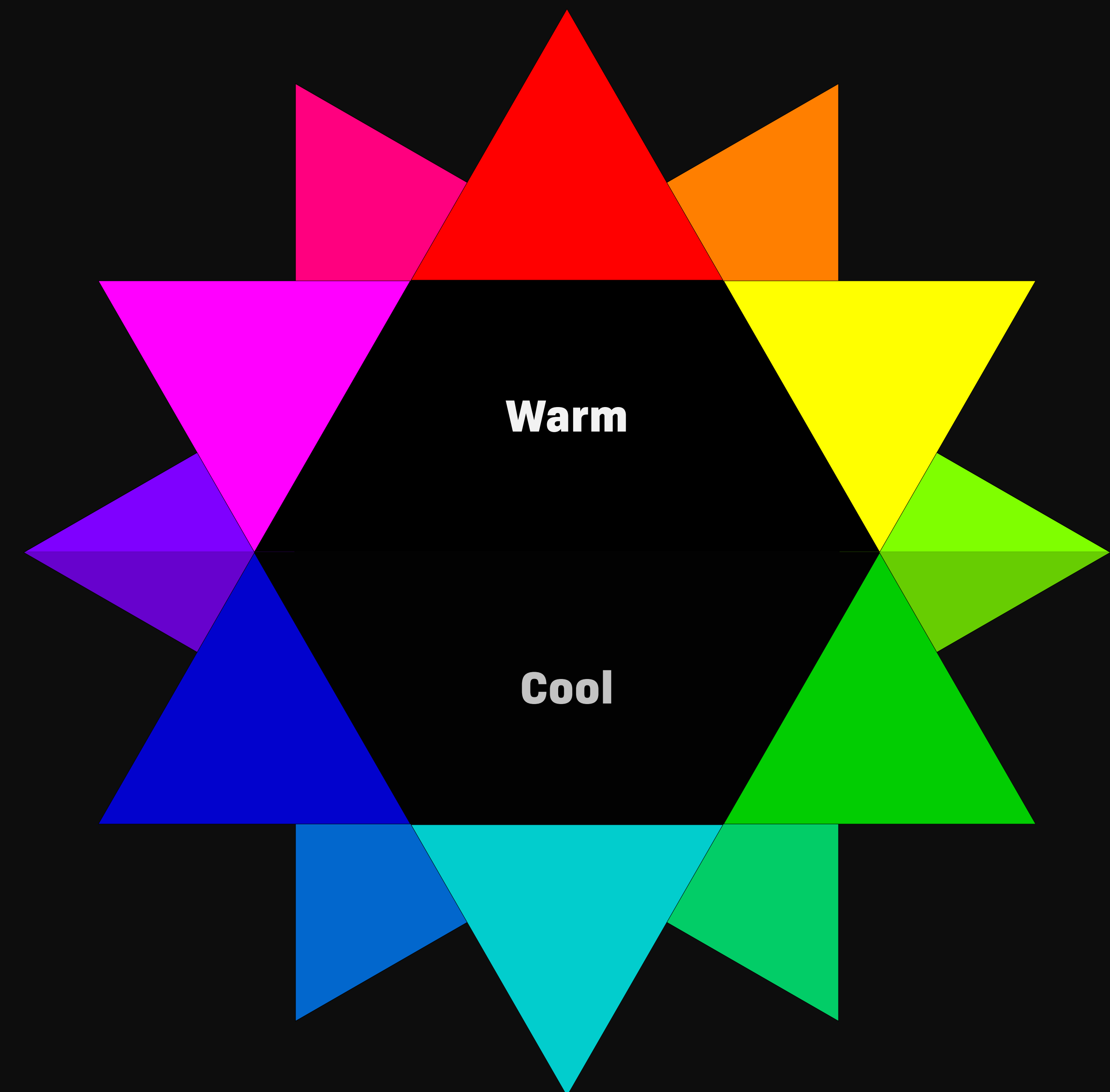




# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

## Colour Temperature

- Warm colours include red, orange, and yellow (and variations of these)
- Cool colours include green, blue, and purple (and variations of these)
- Red and yellow are both primary colours (within the warm spectrum)
- Blue is the only primary colour (within the cool spectrum)
- Greens take on some of the attributes of yellow
- Purple takes on some of the attributes of red
- Warm colours appear closer
- Cool colours appear farther



# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Neutrals

- Neutral colours include black, white, grey, tans and browns
- Commonly combined with brighter accent colours
- Can also be used on their own
- The meanings and impressions of neutrals depend more on the colours surrounding them

White



Brown



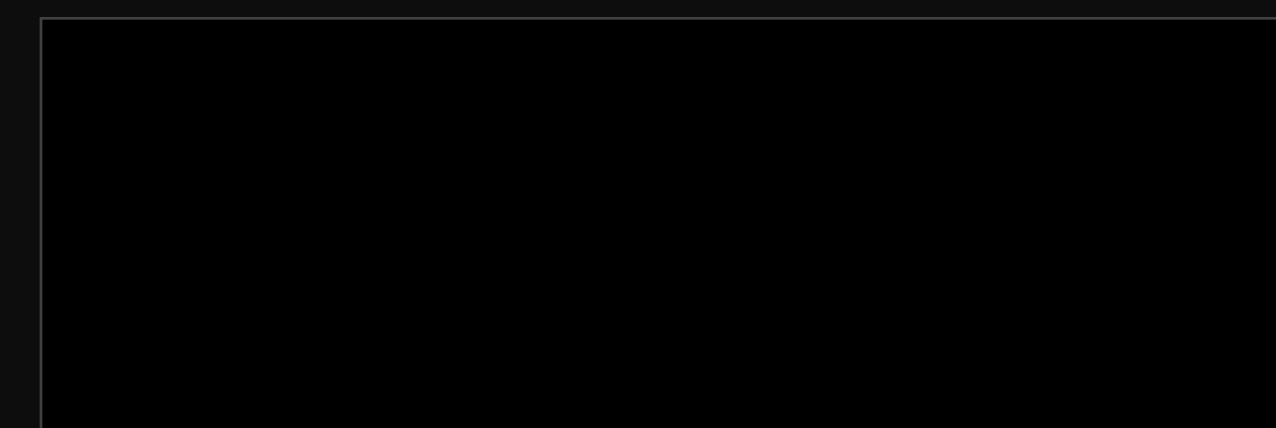
Grey



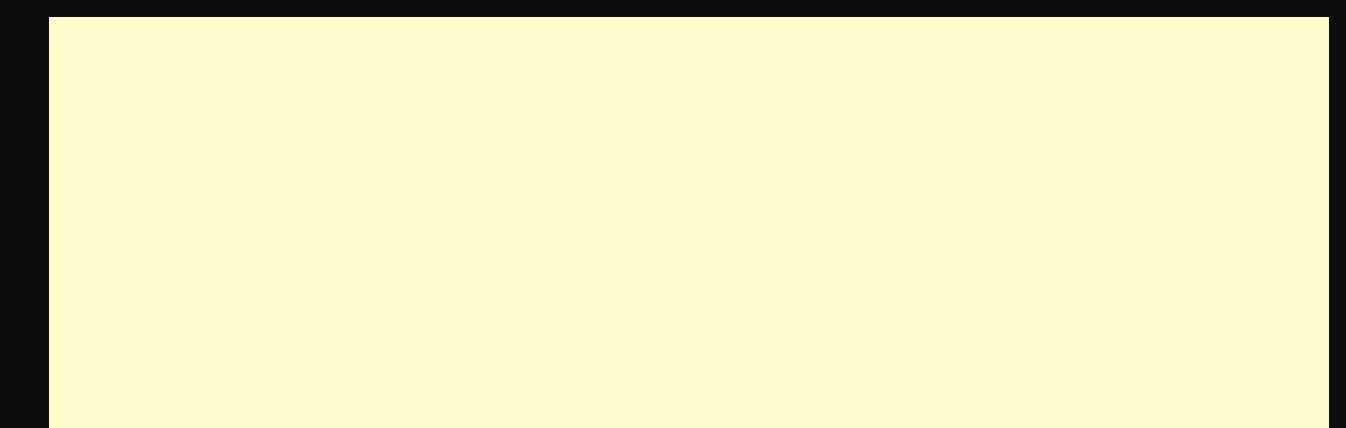
Tan



Black



Cream

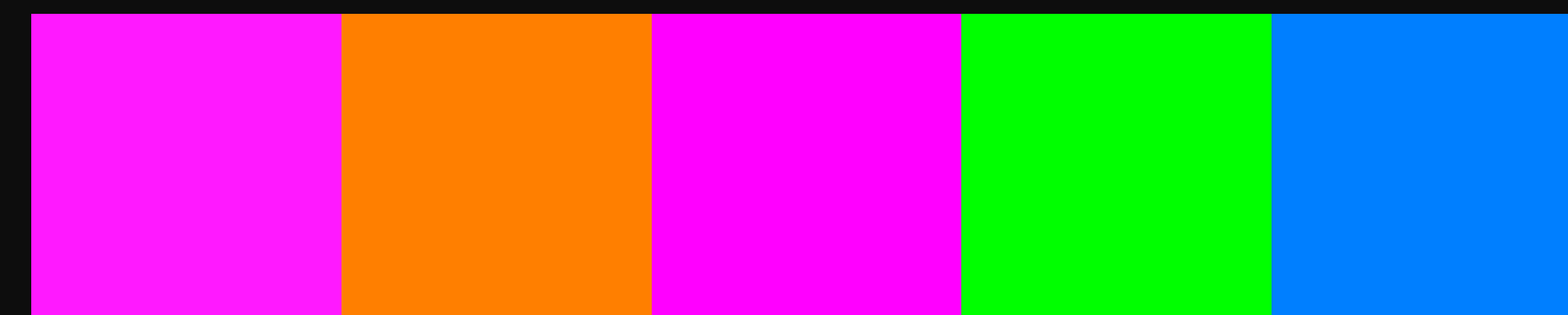
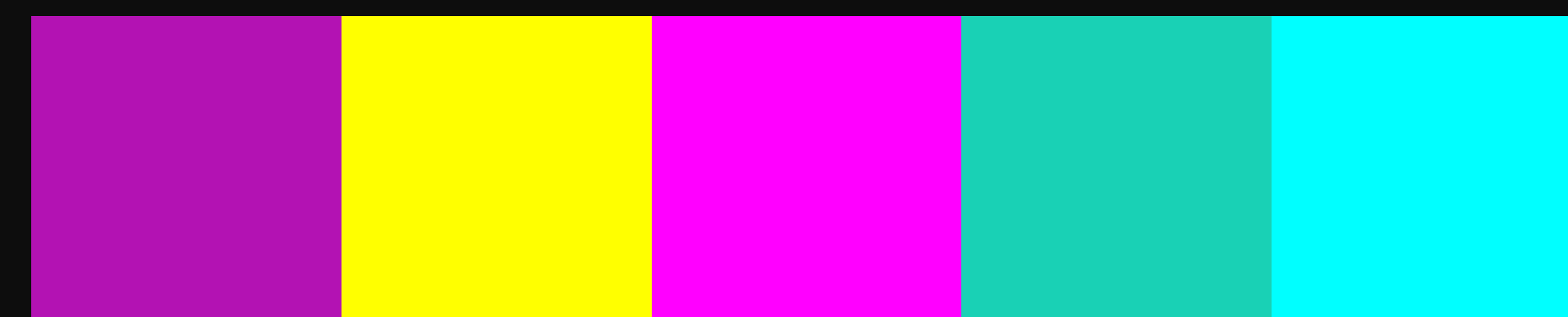
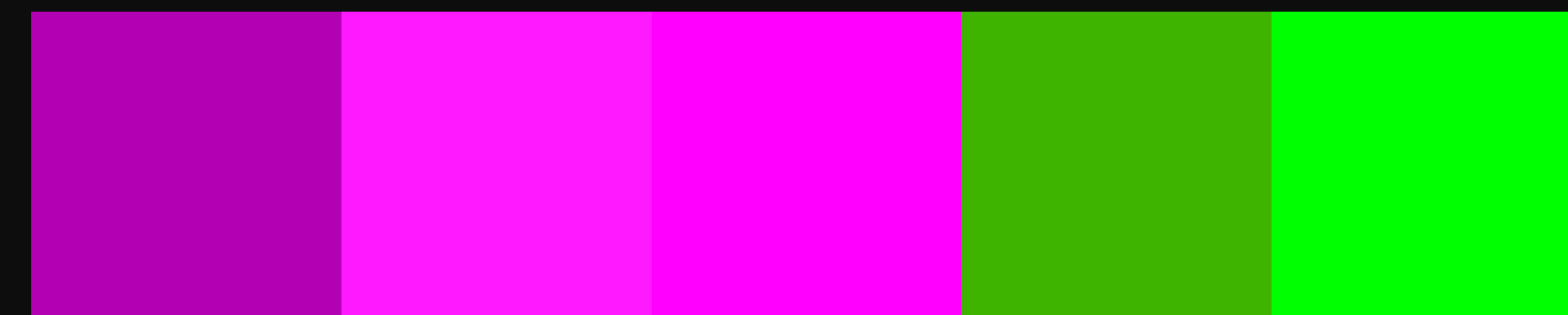
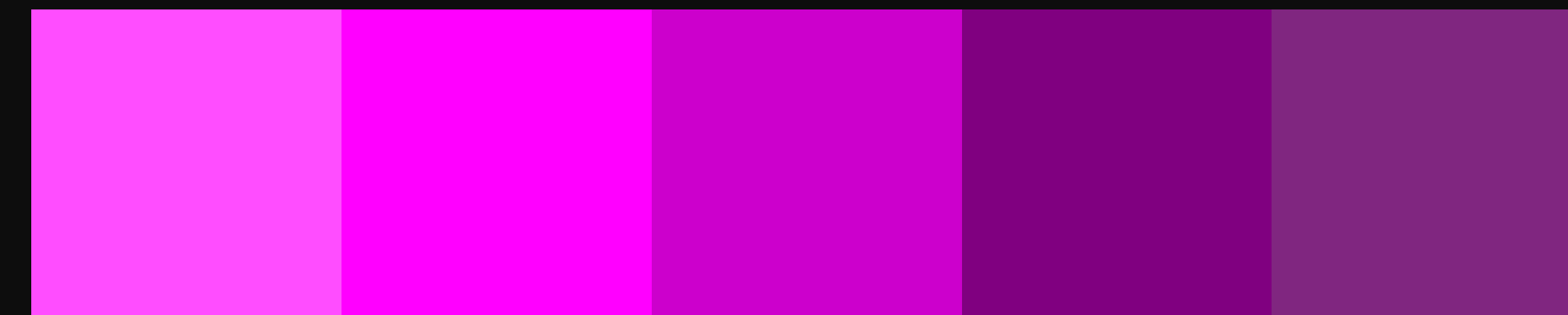


# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Colour schemes

- A colour scheme is used to set a mood, attract attention, or
- make a statement (style and appeal)
- The colour wheel is the basic tool for creating colour schemes
- Monochromatic, complementary, triadic, and square are types of colour schemes
- Other colour schemes exist (also possible to create your own)
- Online tools make it easy to create colour schemes

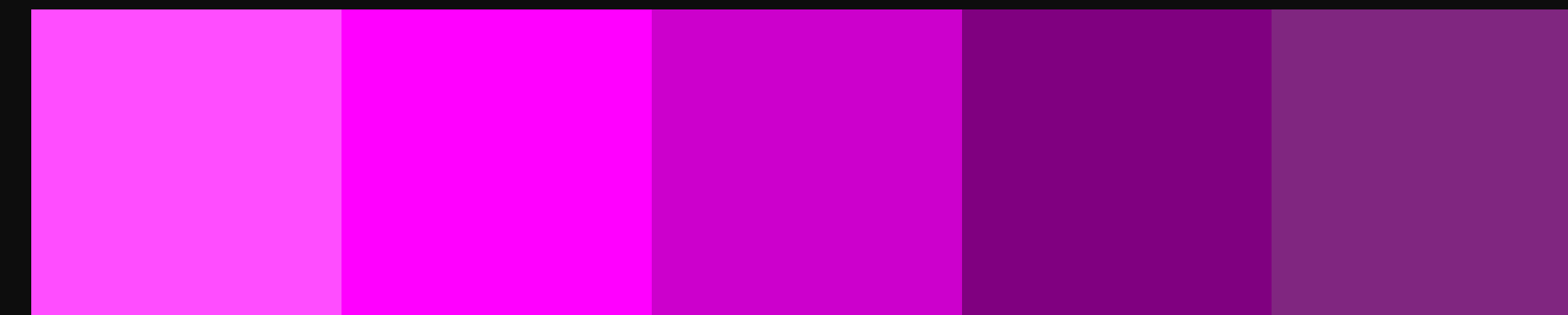


# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Monochromatic colour schemes

- A scheme using only one colour (and all its tints, tones and shades)
- Easiest colour scheme to use
- Can be seen as a bland, boring but safe choice

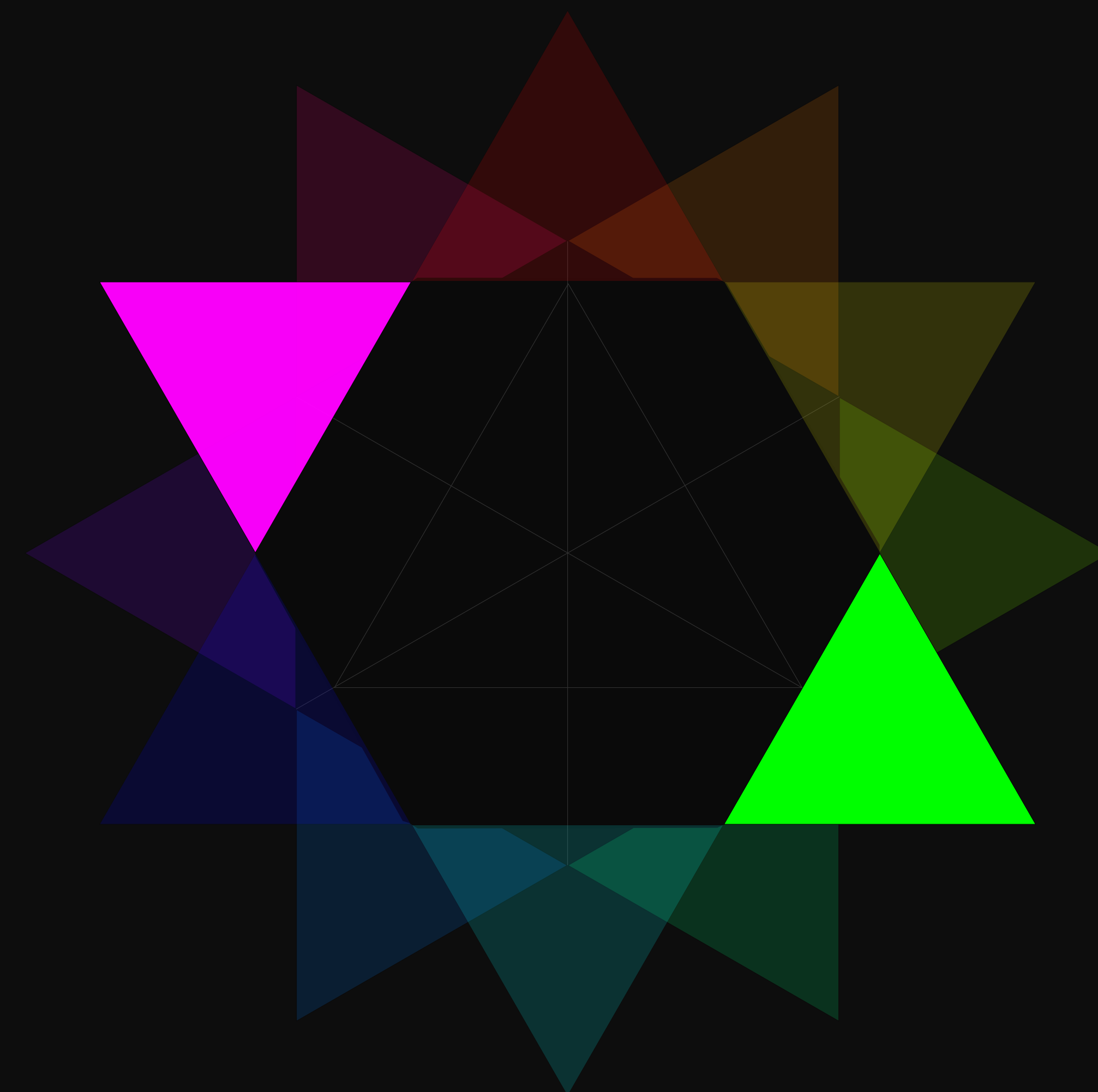
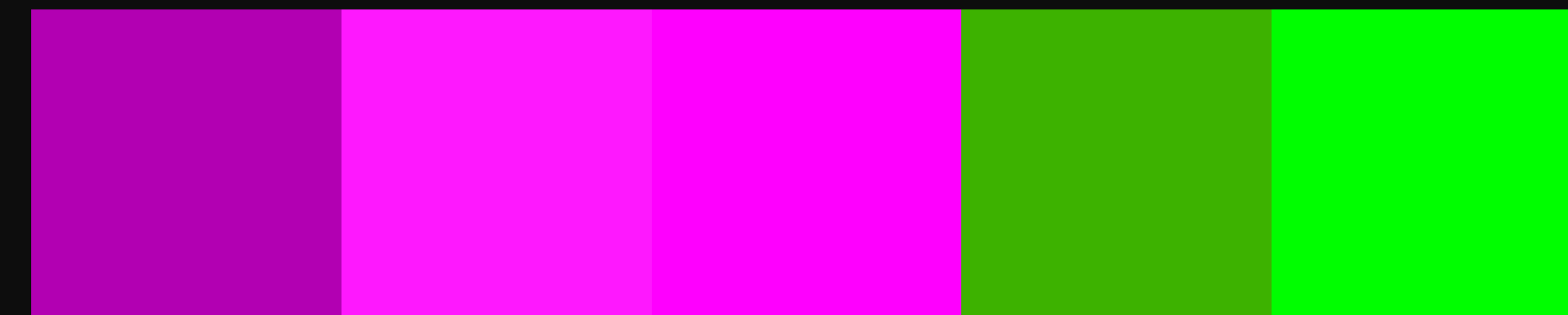


# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Complementary Colour Schemes

- Match up colours that lie directly opposite each other on the colour wheel
- Also includes all the tints, tones and shades of both colours
- Allows for a wider range of choices
- Great to use as it contains both warm and cool colours
- Provides contrast

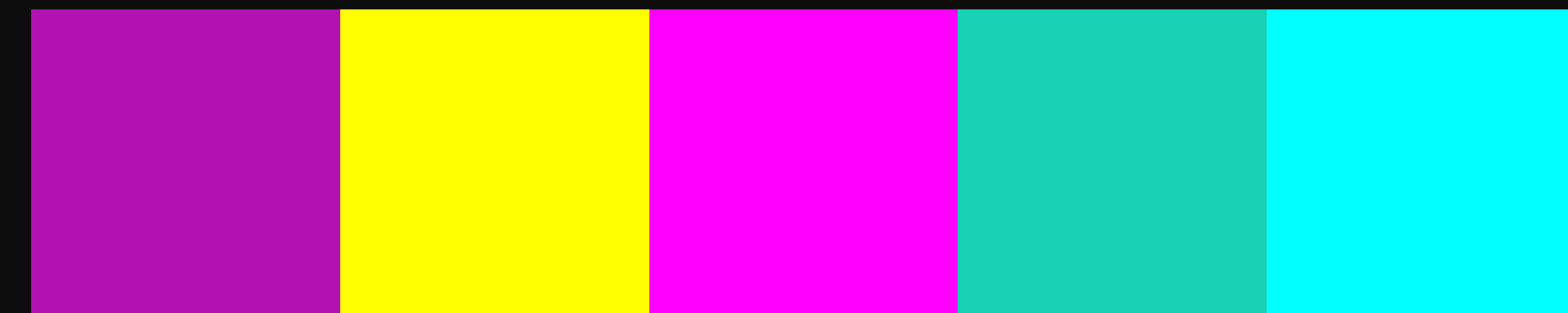


# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Triadic colour schemes

- When you pick one colour and then pick two other colours that lie equidistant
- Also great to use as it contains both warm and cool colours
- Useful if a temperature needs to dominate the other

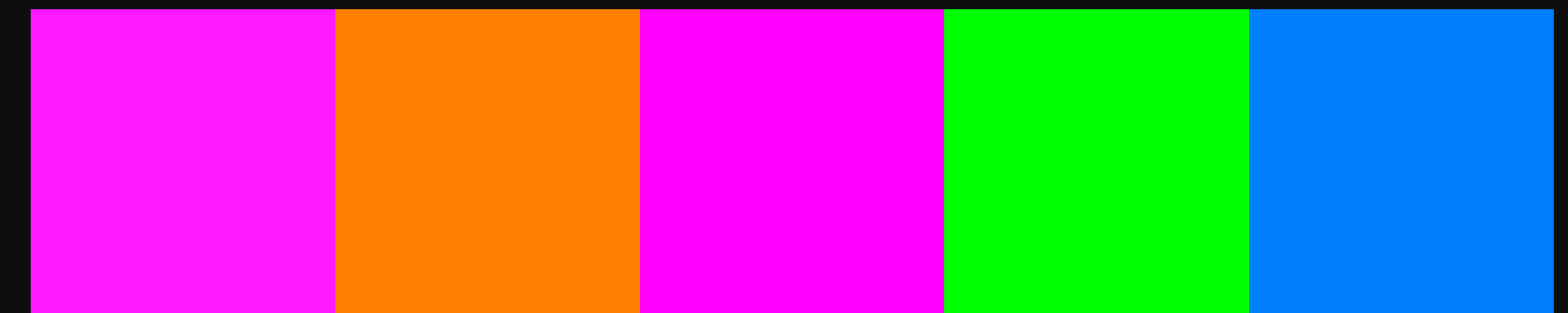


# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Square colour schemes

- When all four colours are spaced evenly around the colour circle
- Works best if you let one colour be dominant
- Can be a complicated scheme to use

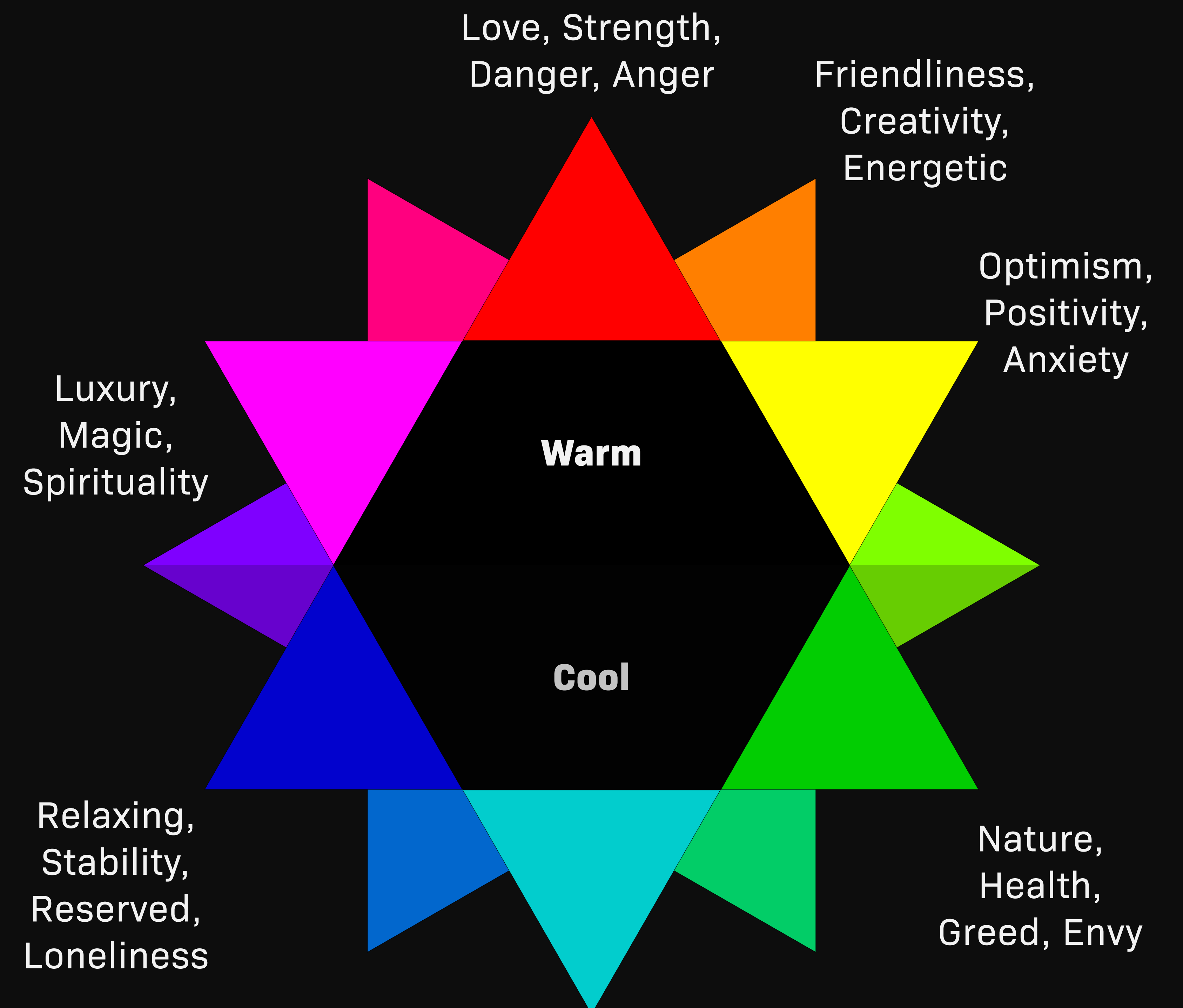




# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

## Meaning of colour

- Colours can portray a certain feeling or emotion
- These meanings can change due to cultural differences
- Warm colours are seen as positive and energetic
- Red (a warm colour) can also mean danger or anger
- Cool colours are seen as relaxing or reserved
- Green (a cool colour) can also mean greed or envy
- White (a neutral colour) is seen as clean and pure
- Black (a neutral colour) can mean elegance or power but also sad or evil





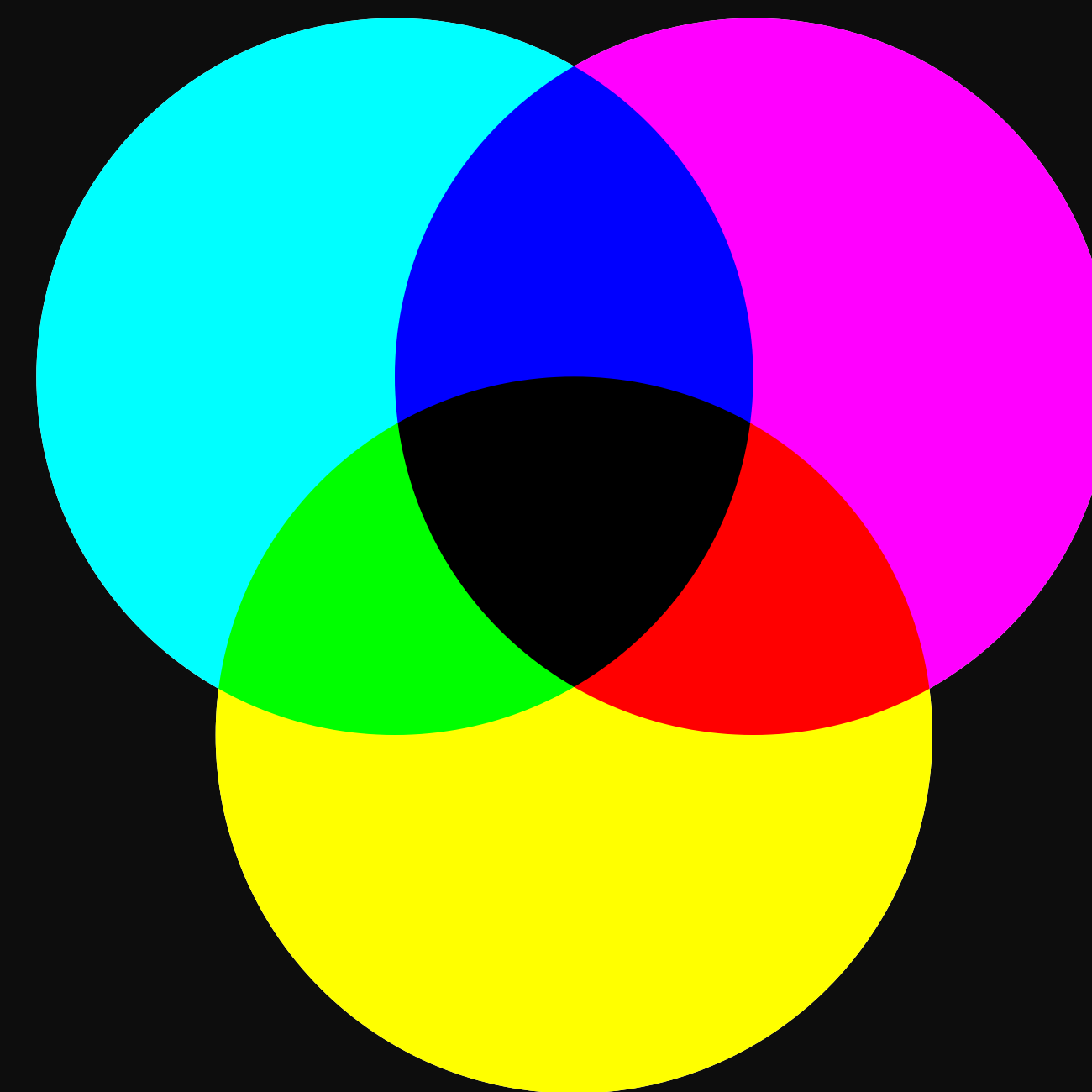
# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Subtractive vs Additive

- There are two models for colour in visual design (CMYK vs. RGB)
- CMYK stands for cyan, magenta, yellow and key (black)
- RGB stands for red, green, and blue

CMYK



RGB



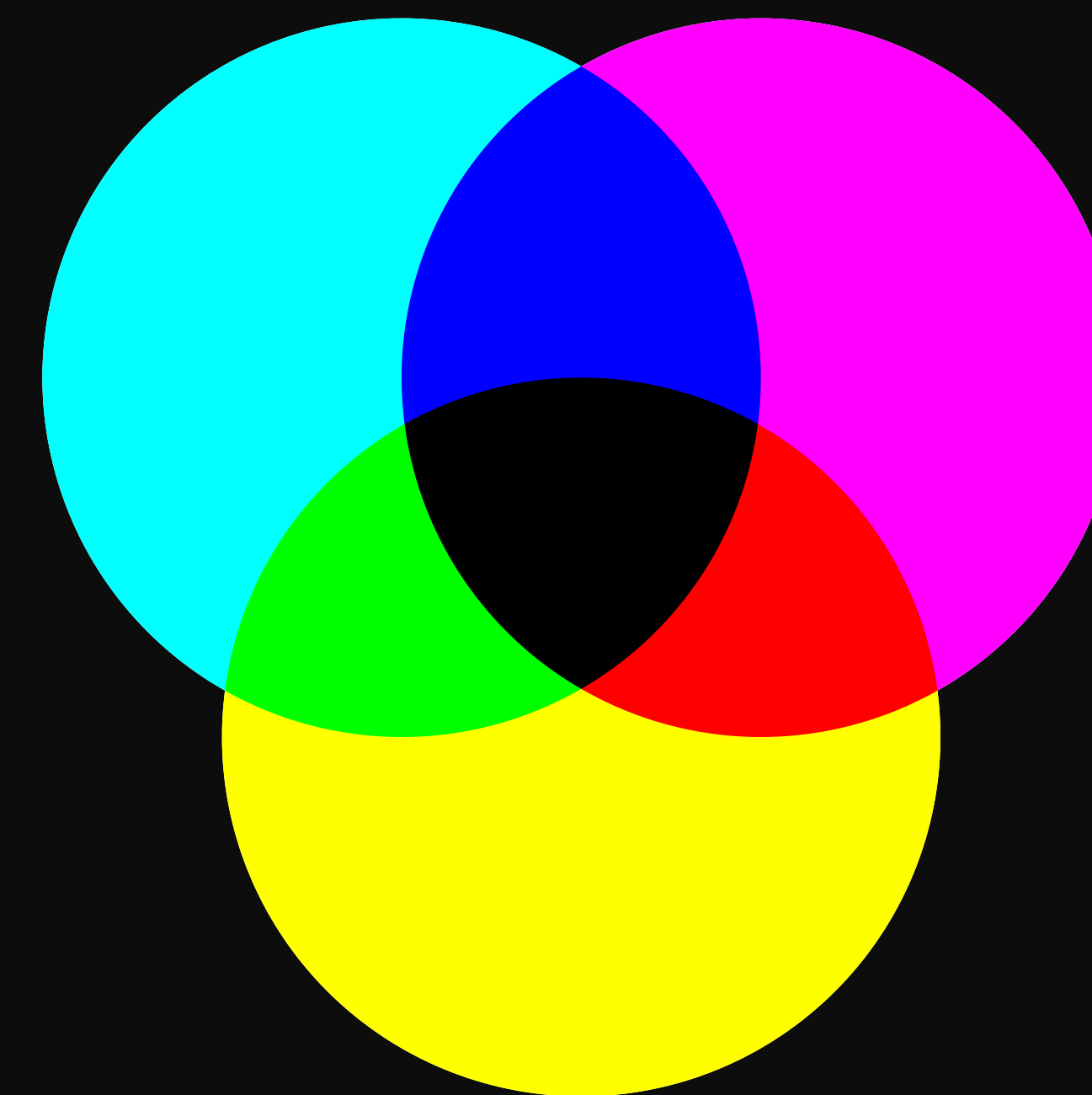
# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## CMYK

- The CMYK model is a subtractive model
- CMYK colours are created through absorbing wavelengths of visible light
- CMYK applies to painting and printing

## CMYK



## RGB

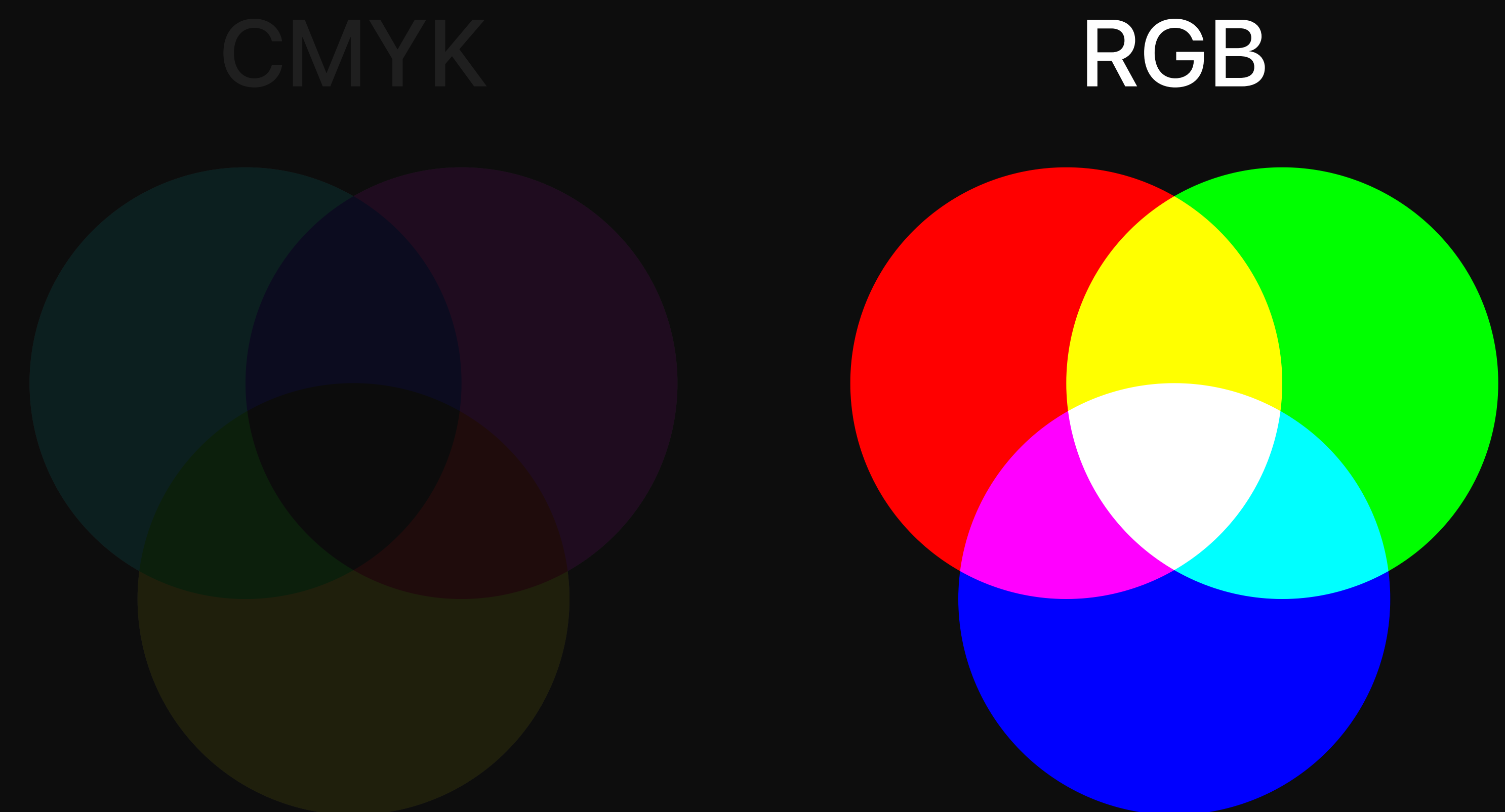


# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## RGB

- The RGB model is an additive model
- RGB colours are created through light waves that are added together
- RGB applies to displays (computers, televisions and electronics)

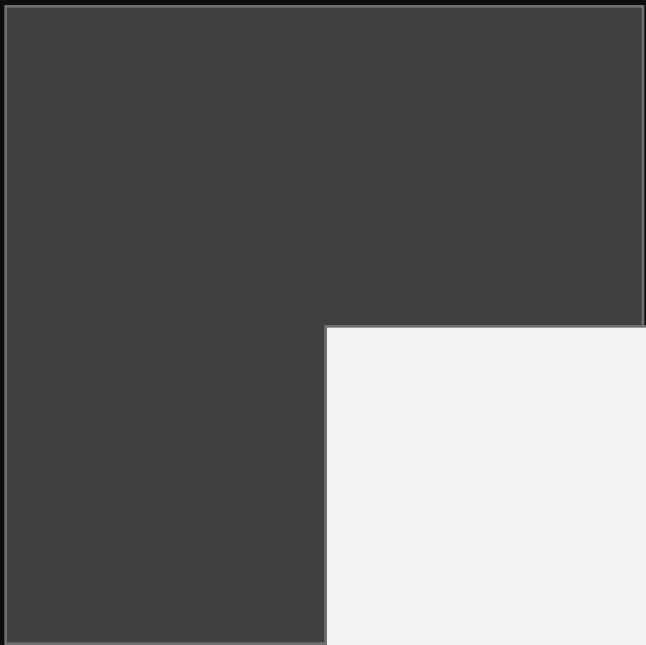


# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Contrast and Colour Accessibility

- Comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)
  - Recommendations for making web content more accessible for people with disabilities
- Three levels of conformance
  - Level A (basic requirement)
  - Level AA (overall accessibility)
  - Level AAA (enhanced accessibility)
- Aim for a Level AA contrast ratio between two colours
  - A variety of tools exist to make this task easier
  - Decorative and inactive text or elements are exempt
- Do not rely on colour alone
  - To convey information
  - Prompt a response
  - Indicate an action
  - Distinguish a visual element



Ratio

9.26:1

Normal Text

✓ AA- 4.5:1

✓ AAA- 7:1

Large Text

✓ AA- 3:1

✓ AAA- 4.5:1



myname@myemail.me



myname@myemail.me

Email address already exists



myname@myemail.me

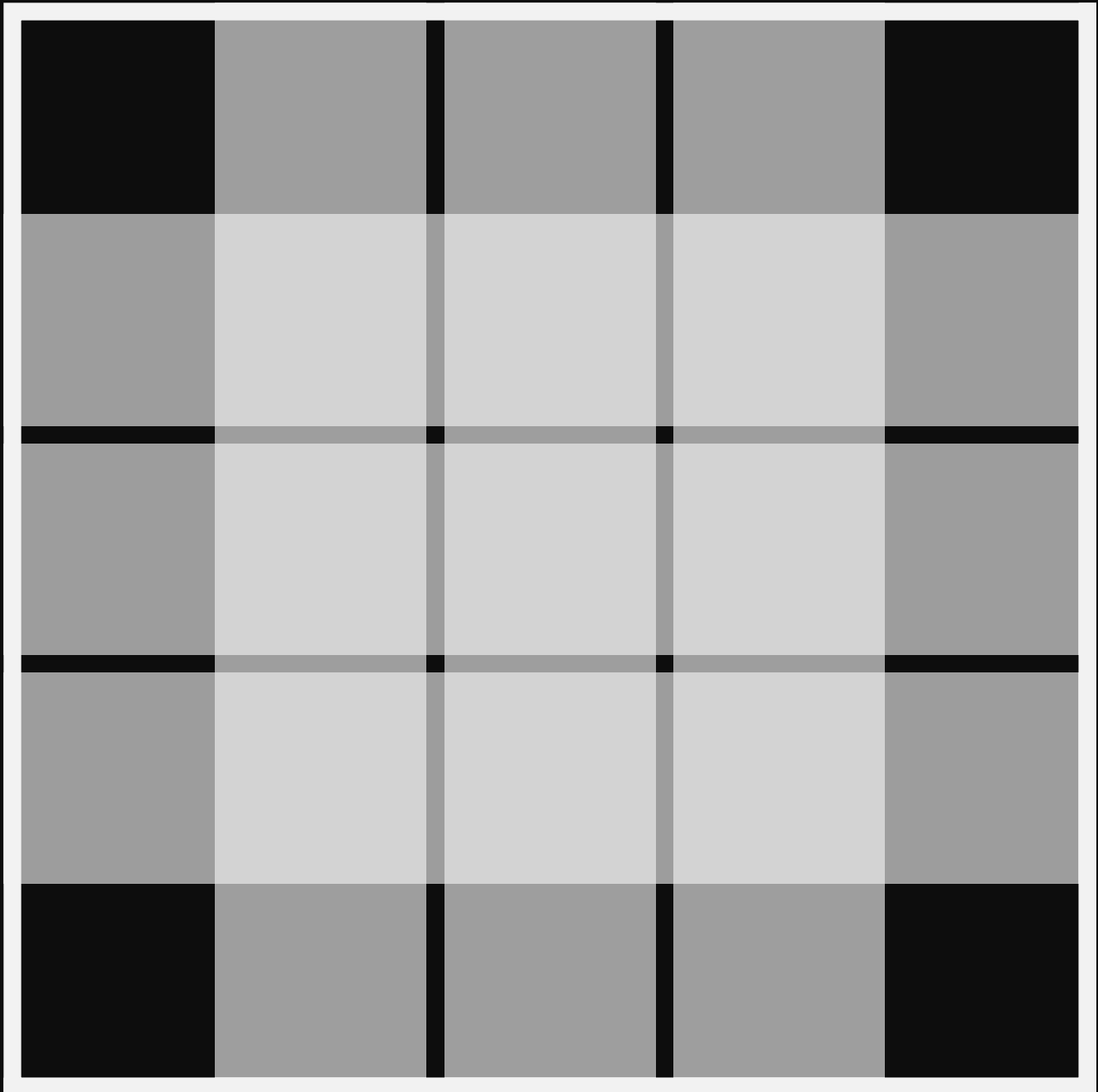
Email address already exists

# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

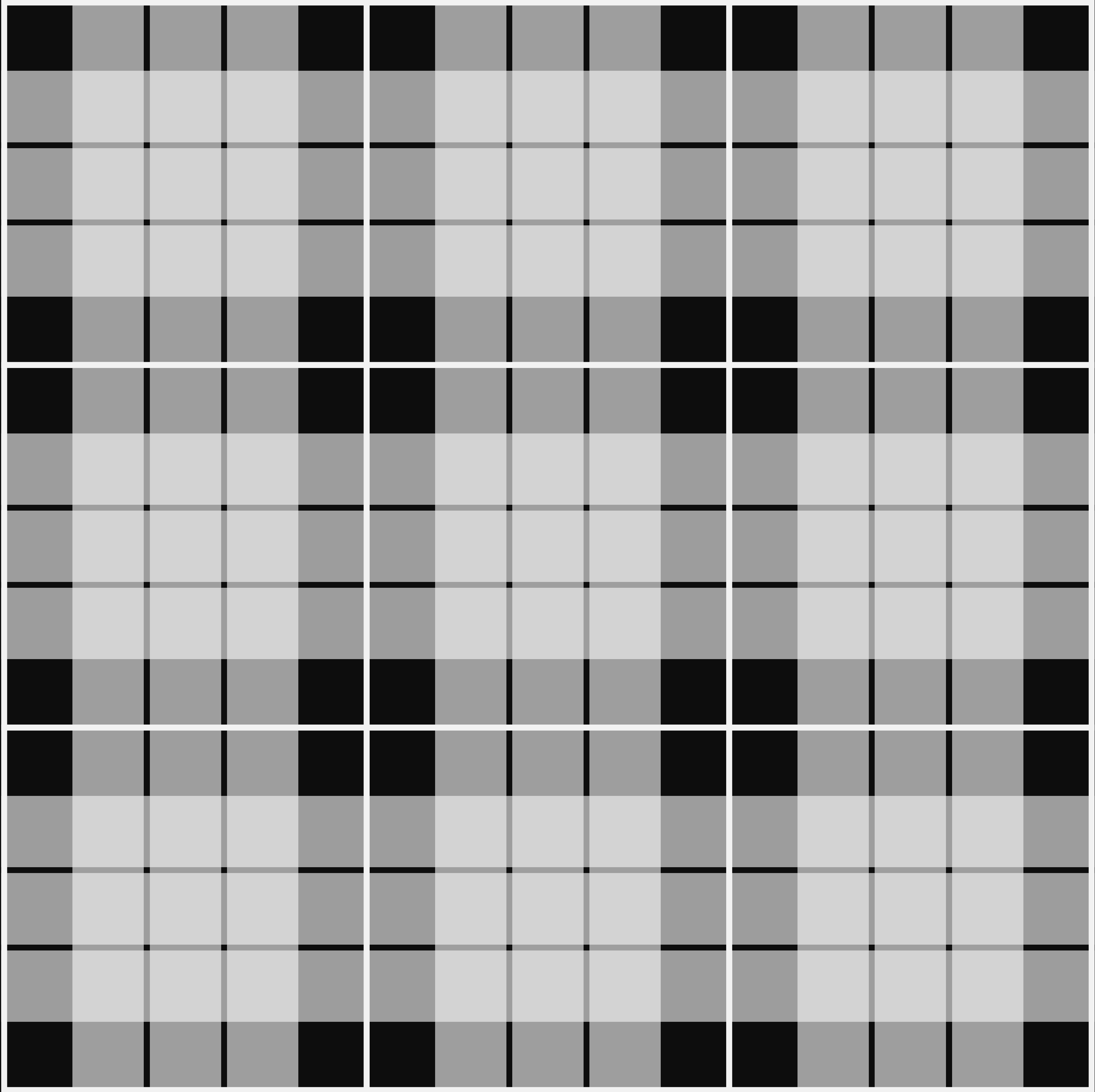
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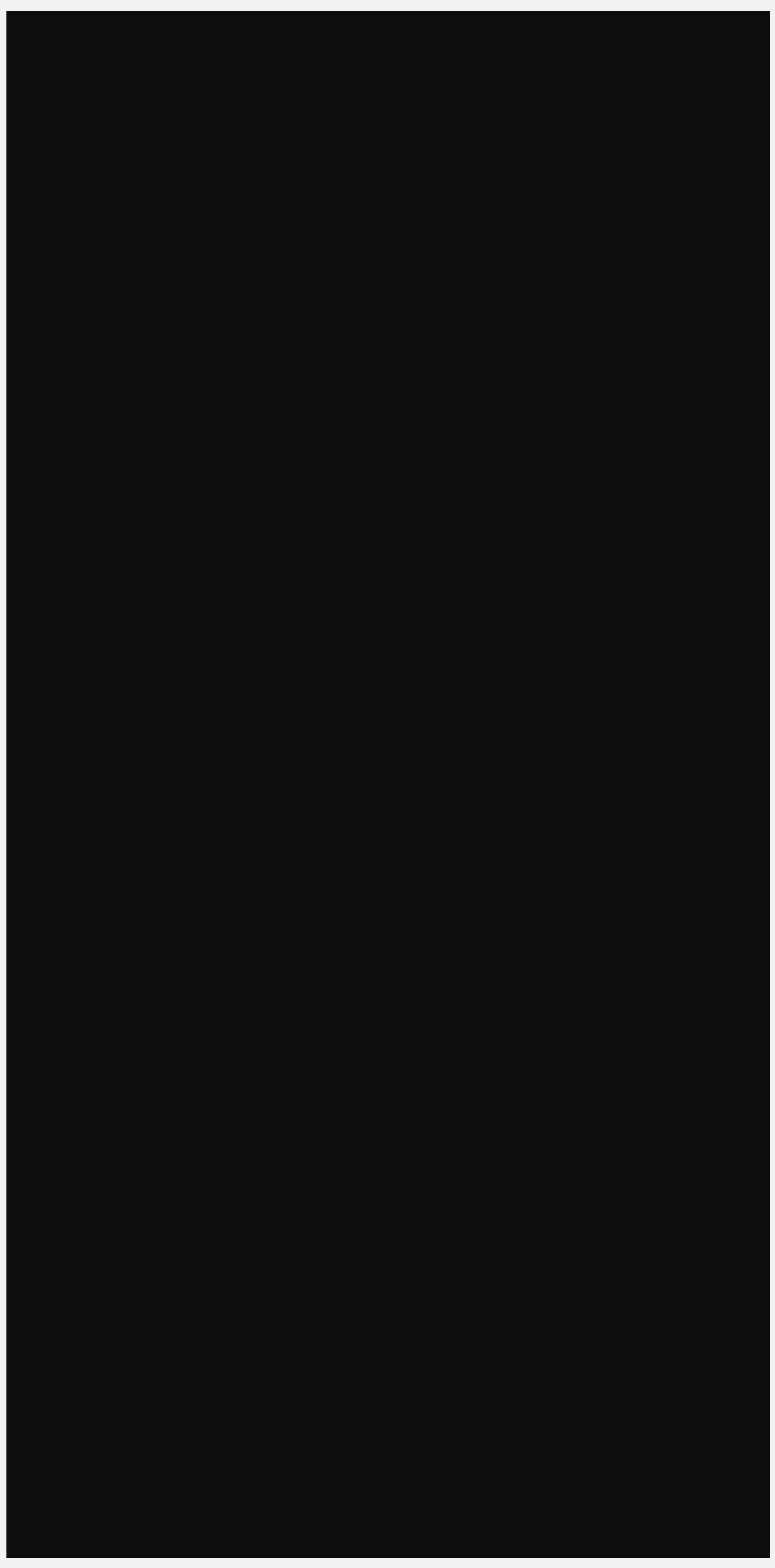
## Texture

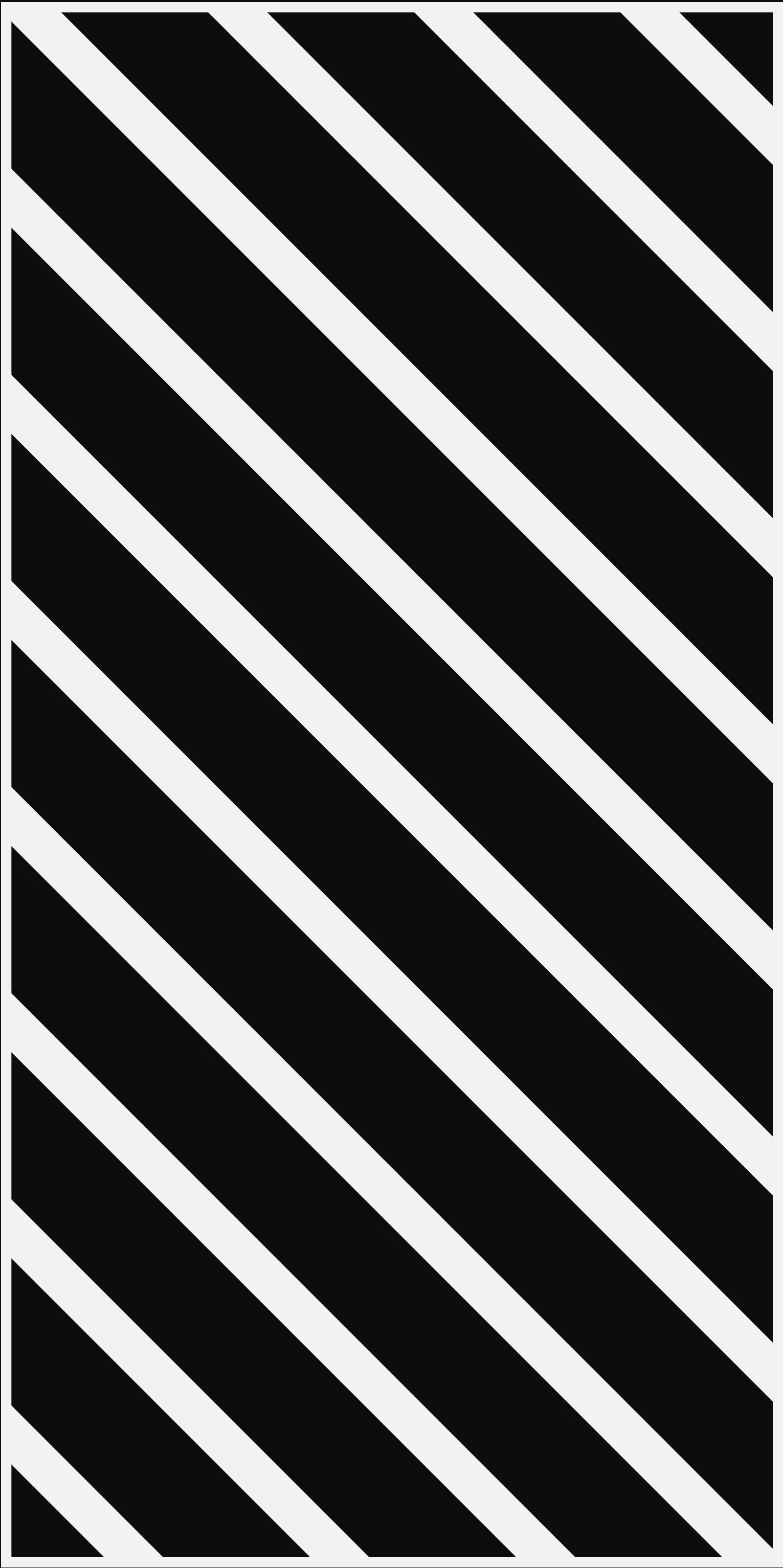
- The feel of a surface (or perception thereof)
- Repeating a texture creates a pattern
- Can attract or deter attention (depending on how it's used)



Design Theory – The basics of visual design









# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Typography

- Type of font (Serif, Sans-Serif, etc)
- Size
- Alignment
- Colour
- Spacing

# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Typography: A brief history

- Typography has existed throughout human history
- Invention of paper was the key element in global cultural advancement
- Block printing (wooden) was first recorded in Chinese history
  - Movable metal type was already known by the 12th and 13th centuries
- Around 1455, inventor Johannes Gutenberg mass produced the Gutenberg Bible
  - Demonstrating the power of the printing press (and movable metal type)
  - Marking the beginning of the printing revolution

# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Typography: Fundamentals 1/3

- Typography is the art and technique of arranging type
- Arranged type must be legible, readable and set the right tone
  - Tone is the mood or feeling conveyed visually regardless of content (formal or informal tone)
  - Legibility is determined by how easy it is to differentiate the characters in a typeface (eg. uppercase L from a lowercase l)
  - Readability refers to how easy it is to read words or blocks of text (the style of a typeface affects readability)

# Formal Tone

Informal Tone

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consetetur  
sadipscing elitr, sed diam nonumy eirmod tempor  
invidunt ut labore et dolore magna aliquyam erat,  
sed diam voluptua. At vero eos et accusam et.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consetetur  
sadipscing elitr, sed diam nonumy eirmod tempor  
invidunt ut labore et dolore magna aliquyam erat,  
sed diam voluptua. At vero eos et accusam et.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consetetur  
sadipscing elitr, sed diam nonumy eirmod tempor  
invidunt ut labore et dolore magna aliquyam erat,  
sed diam voluptua. At vero eos et accusam et.

# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Typography: Fundamentals 2/3

- The baseline
  - An imaginary line, each line of text rests on the baseline
- Cap height
  - Refers to the height of a typeface's capital letters measured from the baseline (eg. flat capital letters such as M or I)
- X-height
  - Refers to the typeface's height of the lowercase x
- Ascenders
  - The upper part in certain letters that extend beyond the cap height (eg. lowercase d)
- Descenders
  - The lower part in letters that extend beyond the baseline (eg. lowercase y)

# Anatomy of Typography

Baseline



Cap height

xyd MII



# Anatomy of Typography

Ascender

# Anatomy of Typography

Descender

# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Typography: Fundamentals 3/3

- Weight
  - Refers to the relative thickness of a font
  - Common weights are light, regular, medium and bold
  - Light being the thinnest and bold being the thickest weight
  - For web typography, weight can also be defined by using the numerical value range from 100-900

Light

Regular

Medium

**Bold**

# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN


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## Typography: Readability 1/3

- Tracking (or letter-spacing)
  - Refers to the space between each letter in a word
  - Larger type (headlines) use tighter letter-spacing to improve readability
  - Looser letter spacing for smaller type sizes can improve readability
- Kerning
  - Refers to custom spacing between different letters
- Line length
  - Refers to the number of characters per line of text
  - The ideal line length for body (or paragraph) text should be between 40-60 characters
  - Wider displays can go up to 120 characters (with an increased line height)
  - For short lines of text the ideal line length is 20-40 characters



# Anatomy of Typography

A diagram illustrating letter spacing (tracking) in typography. It features a magenta rectangular box with small vertical and horizontal lines at its corners, spanning the width of the letters 'n' and 'a' in the word 'Anatomy' on the top line of the title. Above the box, the text 'Letter spacing (tracking)' is written in a small, magenta font.

Too narrow

Ideal range (40-60 characters)

Too wide

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet,  
 consetetur sadipscing elitr, sed  
 diam nonumy eirmod tempor  
 invidunt ut labore et dolore magna  
 aliquyam erat, sed diam voluptua.  
 At vero eos et.

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 invidunt ut labore et dolore magna aliquyam erat, sed diam voluptua. At vero eos et.

# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Typography: Readability 2/3

- Line height (or leading)
  - Defines the vertical space between baselines
  - Line height is proportional to type size
  - Measurement ignores ascenders and descenders
- Paragraph spacing is the vertical space between paragraphs
  - To maintain vertical rhythm, paragraph spacing should be about the same as the line height

# Anatomy of Typography

Line height (leading)

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consetetur sadipscing  
elitr, sed diam nonumy eirmod tempor invidunt ut  
labore et dolore magna aliquyam erat, sed diam  
voluptua. At vero eos et accusam et justo duo.

Paragraph spacing

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consetetur sadipscing  
elitr, sed diam nonumy eirmod tempor invidunt ut  
labore et dolore magna aliquyam erat, sed diam  
voluptua. At vero eos et accusam et justo duo.

Paragraph spacing

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consetetur sadipscing  
elitr, sed diam nonumy eirmod tempor invidunt ut  
labore et dolore magna aliquyam erat, sed diam  
voluptua. At vero eos et accusam et justo duo.

# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Typography: Readability 3/3

- Type alignment
  - How text aligns where it is placed
  - Left-aligned: text is aligned to the left margin
    - Most common for left-to-right languages
  - Right-aligned: when text is aligned to the right margin
    - Most common setting for right-to-left languages
    - Not recommended for long text if a left-to-right language
  - Centred: when text is aligned to the centre
    - Not recommended for long text
- Tabular figures (or monospaced numbers)
  - Keep values optically aligned for better scanning
  - Ideal for use in tables

Left-aligned

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consetetur sadipscing elitr, sed diam nonumy eirmod tempor invidunt ut labore et dolore magna aliquyam erat, sed diam voluptua. At vero eos et accusam et justo duo.

Centred

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consetetur sadipscing elitr, sed diam nonumy eirmod tempor invidunt ut labore et dolore magna aliquyam erat, sed diam voluptua. At vero eos et accusam et justo duo.

Right-aligned

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Left-aligned

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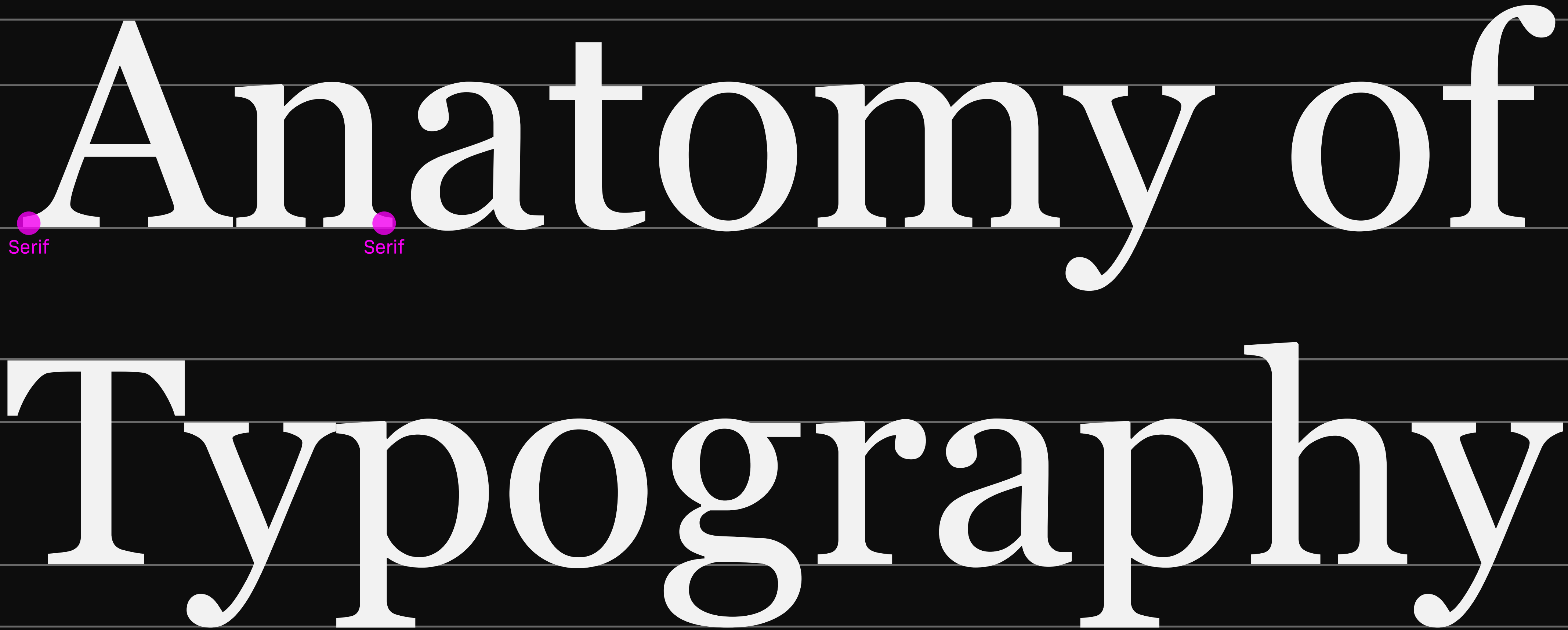
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321	1

# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Typography: Typefaces 1/5

- Serif typeface (or font)
  - A serif is a small shape or projection at the ends of a letter
  - Examples: Times New Roman and Georgia are serif typefaces
- Slab serifs
  - Heavy stroke weight
  - Bitter is an example of a slab serif font



The image shows the words "Anatomy of" and "Typography" in a large, white serif font, centered on a dark background. The text is overlaid on a series of horizontal white lines, similar to handwriting guides. Two small pink dots are placed on the baseline of the word "Anatomy": one under the letter 'A' and one under the letter 'n'. Each dot has the word "Serif" written in pink text directly below it, pointing to the small horizontal strokes (serifs) at the bottom of these letters.

# Anatomy of Typography

Times New Roman

Georgia

Bitter

# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

---

## Typography: Typefaces 2/5

- Sans-Serif typeface (or font)
  - A typeface without serifs
  - “sans” from the French word that means “without.”
  - Examples: Arial, Verdana and Futura are sans-serif typefaces

Arial

Verdana

Futura



# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

---

## Typography: Typefaces 3/5

- Monospace typeface (or font)
  - A typeface where every character takes up the same width
  - Examples: Roboto Mono and Source Code Pro are monospace typefaces

Roboto Mono

Source Code Pro

# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

---

## Typography: Typefaces 4/5

- Handwriting typeface (or font)
  - Natural, handwritten feel
  - Better suited for headings, titles
  - Examples: FF Market and Indie Flower are handwriting typefaces
- Black letter
  - High contrast stroke with straight lines and angular curves
  - Amador is an example of a black letter typeface
- Script
  - Replicates a calligraphic style of writing
  - Bickham Script is an example of a script typeface

*FF Market*

Indie Flower

**Amador**

*Bickham Script*

# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

---

## Typography: Typefaces 5/5

- Display typeface (or font)
  - A typeface for use at large point sizes
  - Better suited for headings, titles
  - Examples: Shrikhand and Righteous are display typefaces

***Shrikhand***

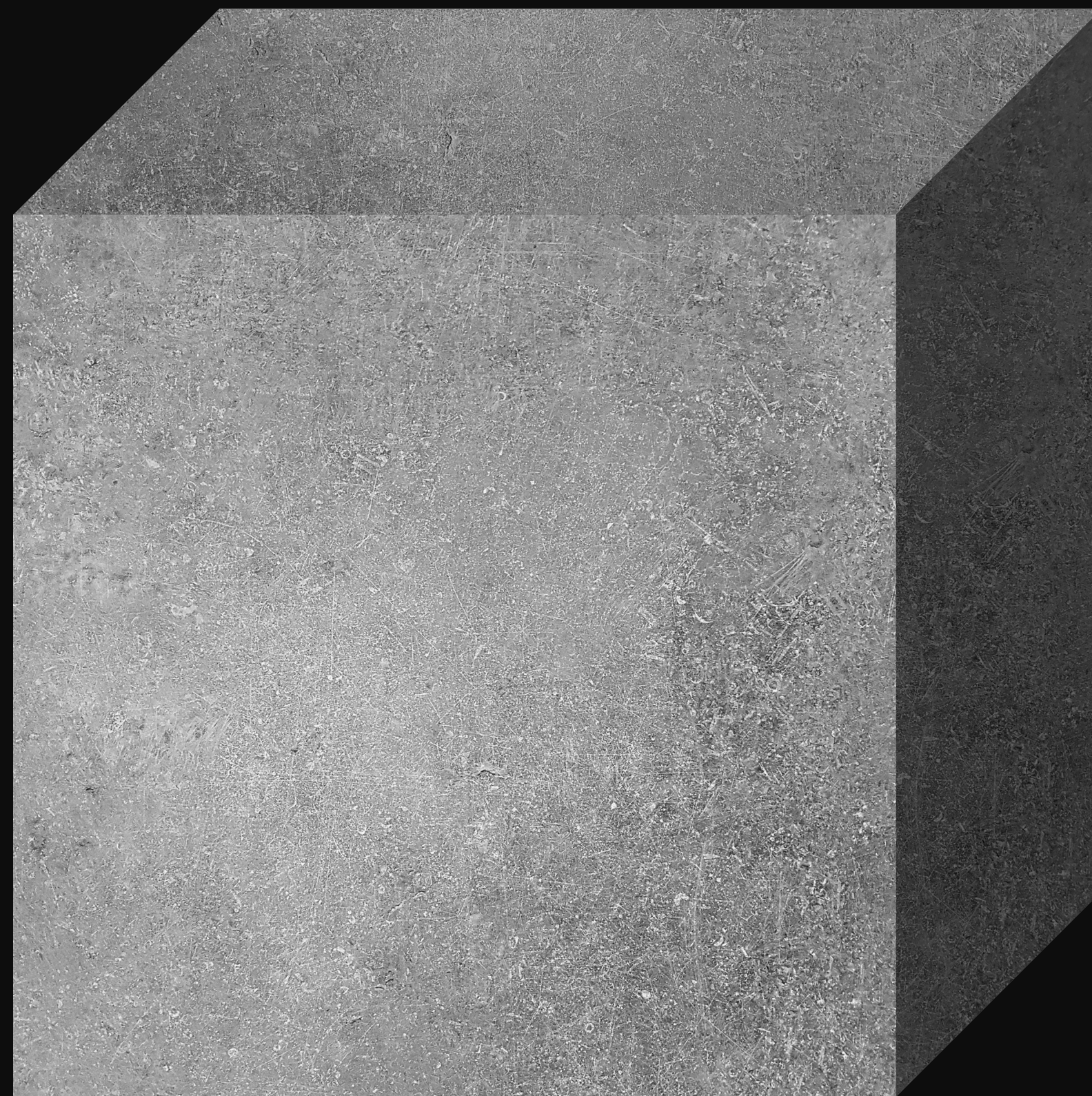
**Righteous**

# BASIC ELEMENTS OF VISUAL DESIGN

---

## Form

- Volume and mass of 3D objects
- Combination of two or more shapes
- Enhanced with different tone, colour and texture





# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## What are the basic principles?

- The basic principles can be considered tools to be used with the basic elements
- Applying the basic principles correctly to the basic elements leads to a successful visual design

## Basic principles to consider

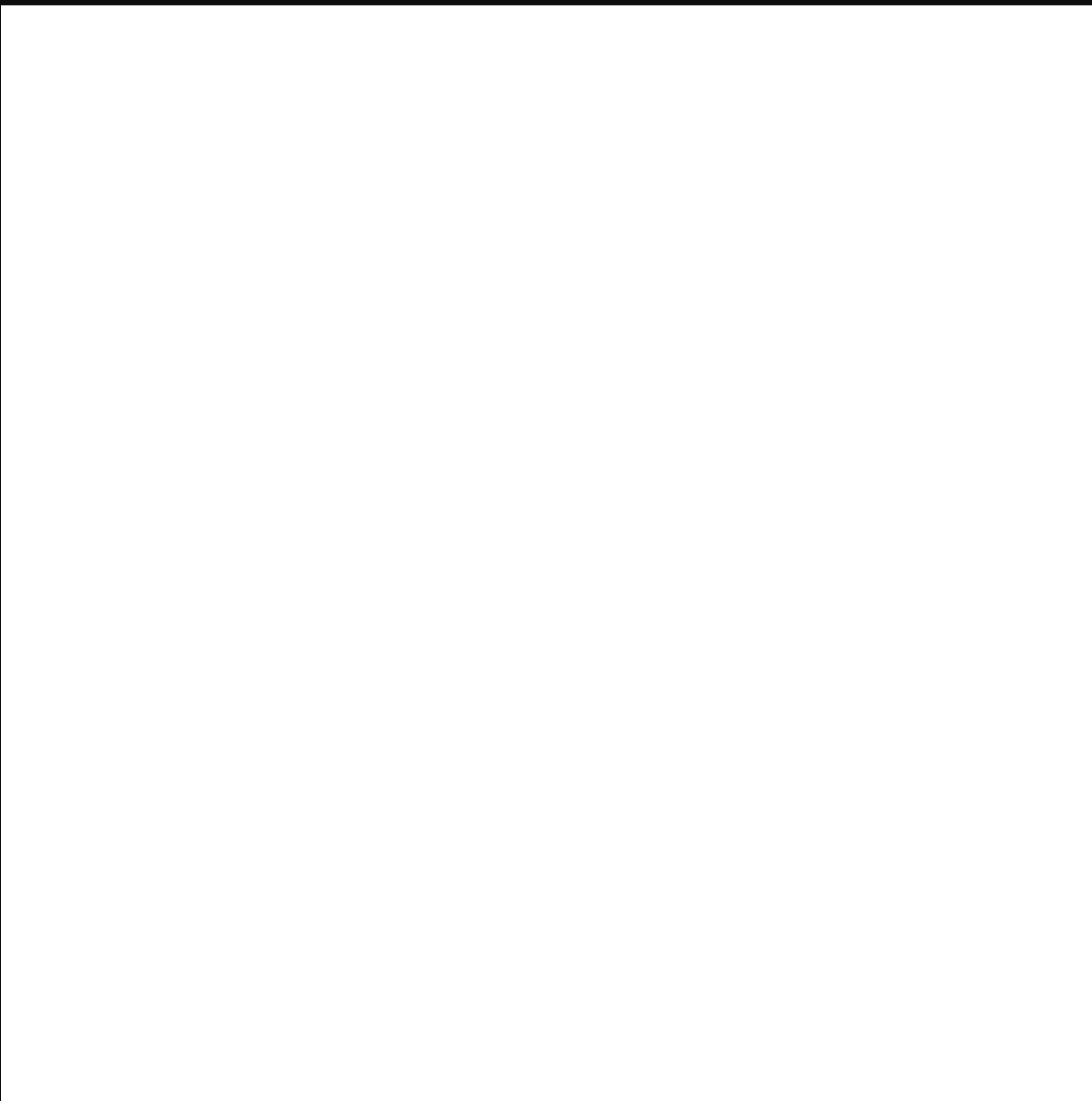
- Unity
- Gestalt
- Space
- Hierarchy
- Balance
- Contrast
- Scale
- Dominance
- Similarity

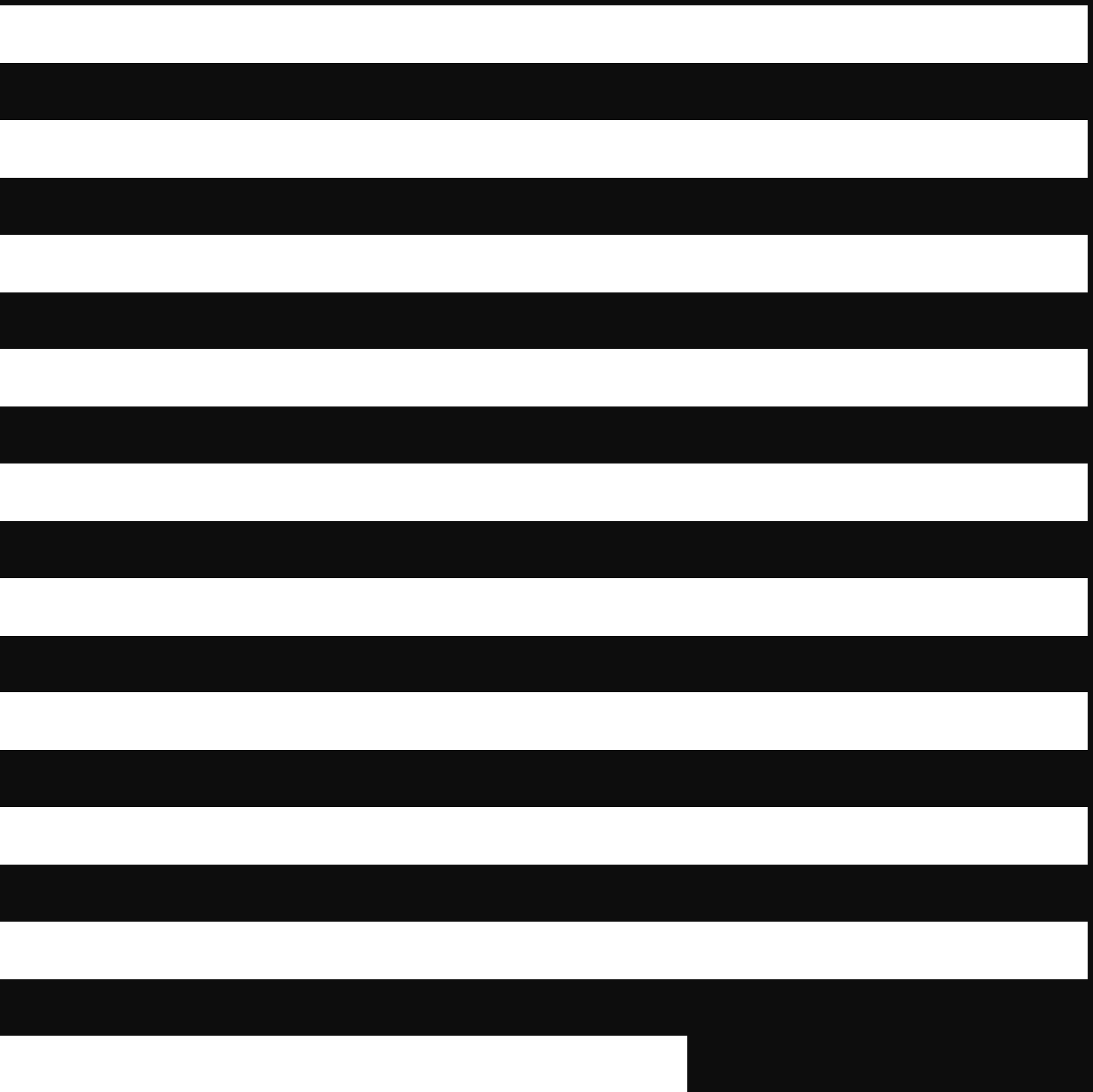
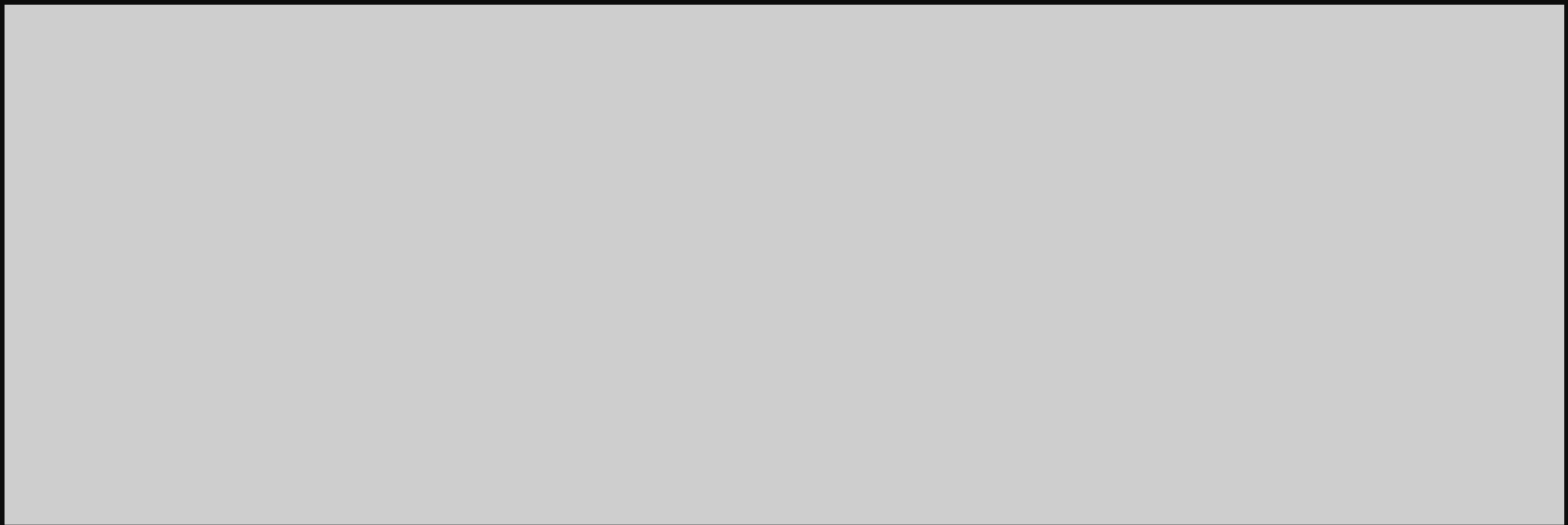
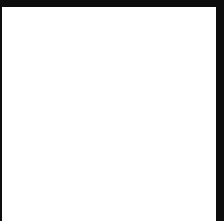
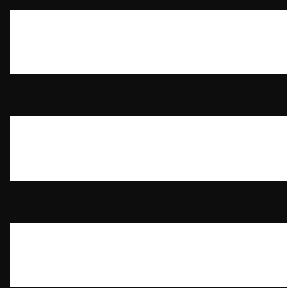
# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Unity

- When all design elements appear to belong together visually or conceptually
- To avoid a boring and overwhelming design, the visual design must strike a balance between unity and variety
- Also refers to the visual linking of various elements of the work





# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Gestalt

- “Gestalt” is the German word for “form” or “shape” and is the psychological study of how we perceive visual stimuli
- The work of early 20th century German psychologist Max Wertheimer and colleagues Kurt Koffka and Wolfgang Kohler
- Helps to perceive the overall design as opposed to individual design elements
- If design elements are arranged properly, the Gestalt (or form) of the overall design will be made clear
- The four properties (Emergence, Reification, Invariance and Multi-Stability) are the key principles of Gestalt

# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Gestalt properties

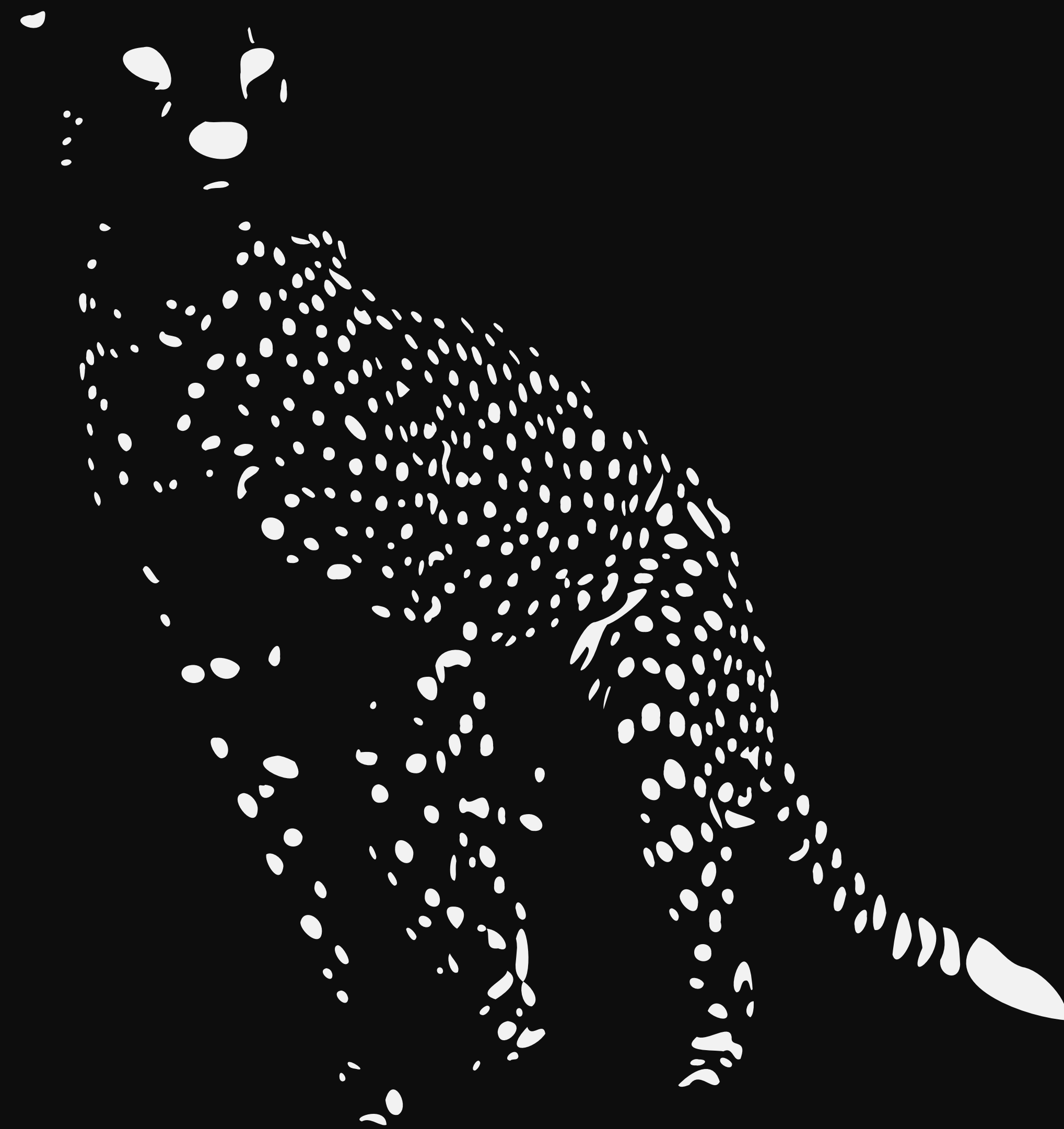
- Emergence
- Reification
- Invariance
- Multi-Stability

# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

---

## Gestalt: Emergence

- When identifying objects visually, our brain will match the outlines to familiar objects we already know
- Once the outline emerges we move on to finer details



A cheetah “emerges” from the combination of spots

Attribution: Photo by Dean Bennett on Unsplash

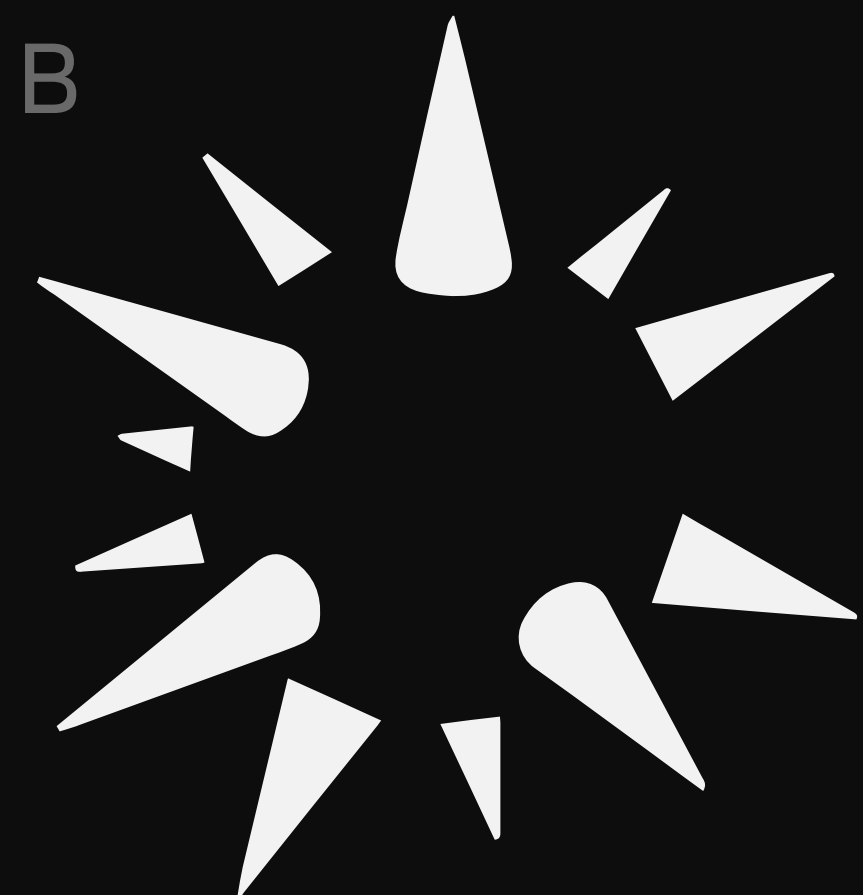
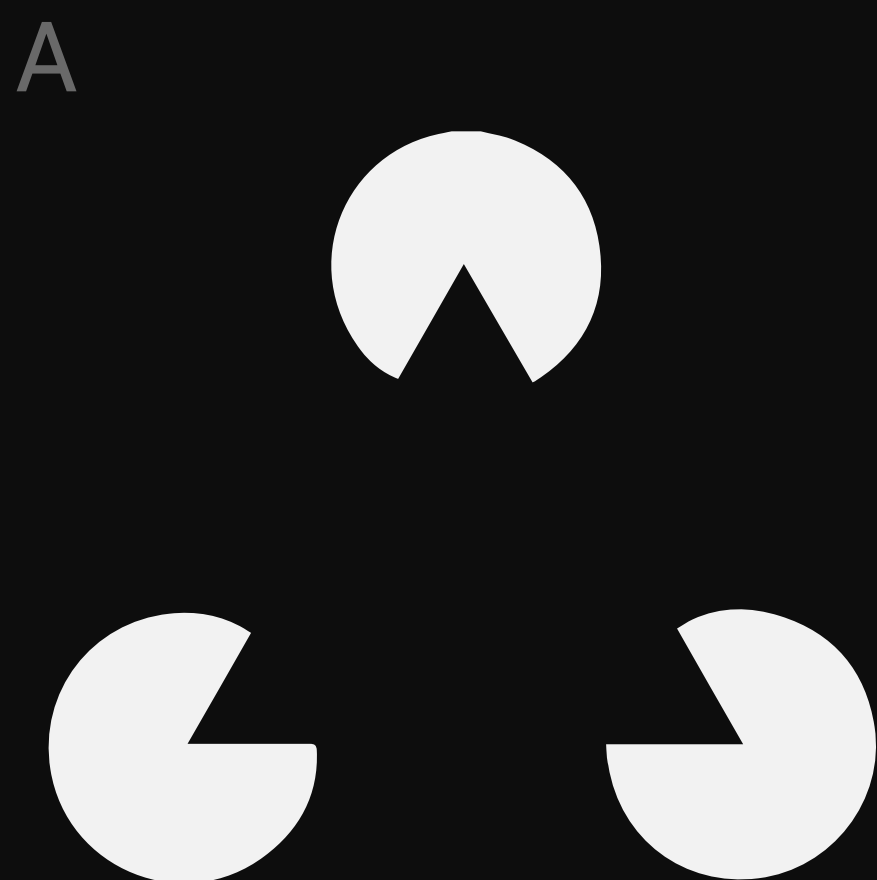


# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Gestalt: Reification

- We can visually identify things that are partially obscured as a whole (even if they're not)
- Example A: We see a triangle when it's three objects
- Example B: Seen as a complete three-dimensional shape
- Examples C and D: As belonging to a single shape

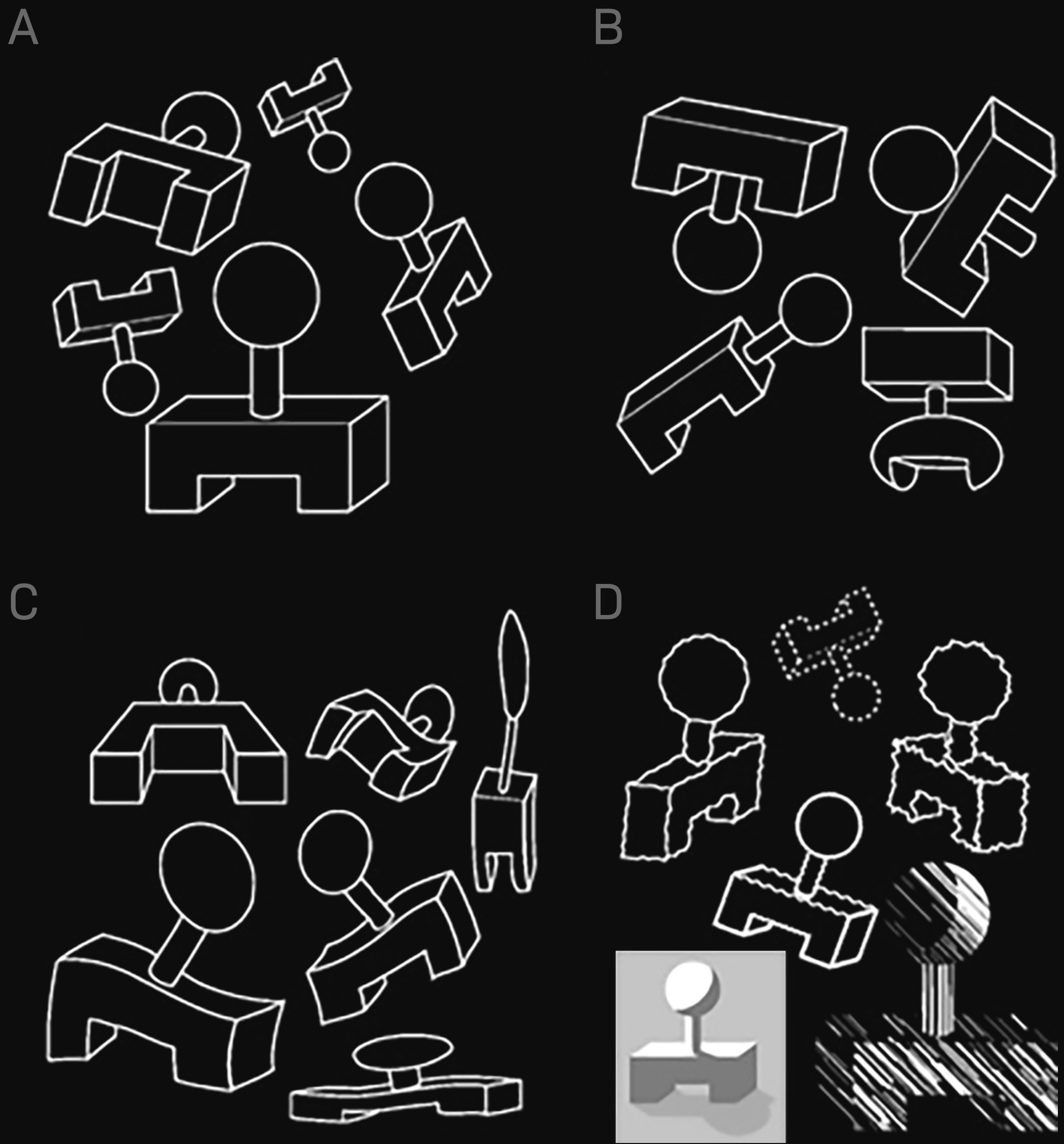


# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Gestalt: Invariance

- Similar to Reification but concerns viewing objects from different perspectives
- Examples A, C and D are all recognised as the same basic shape compared to example B



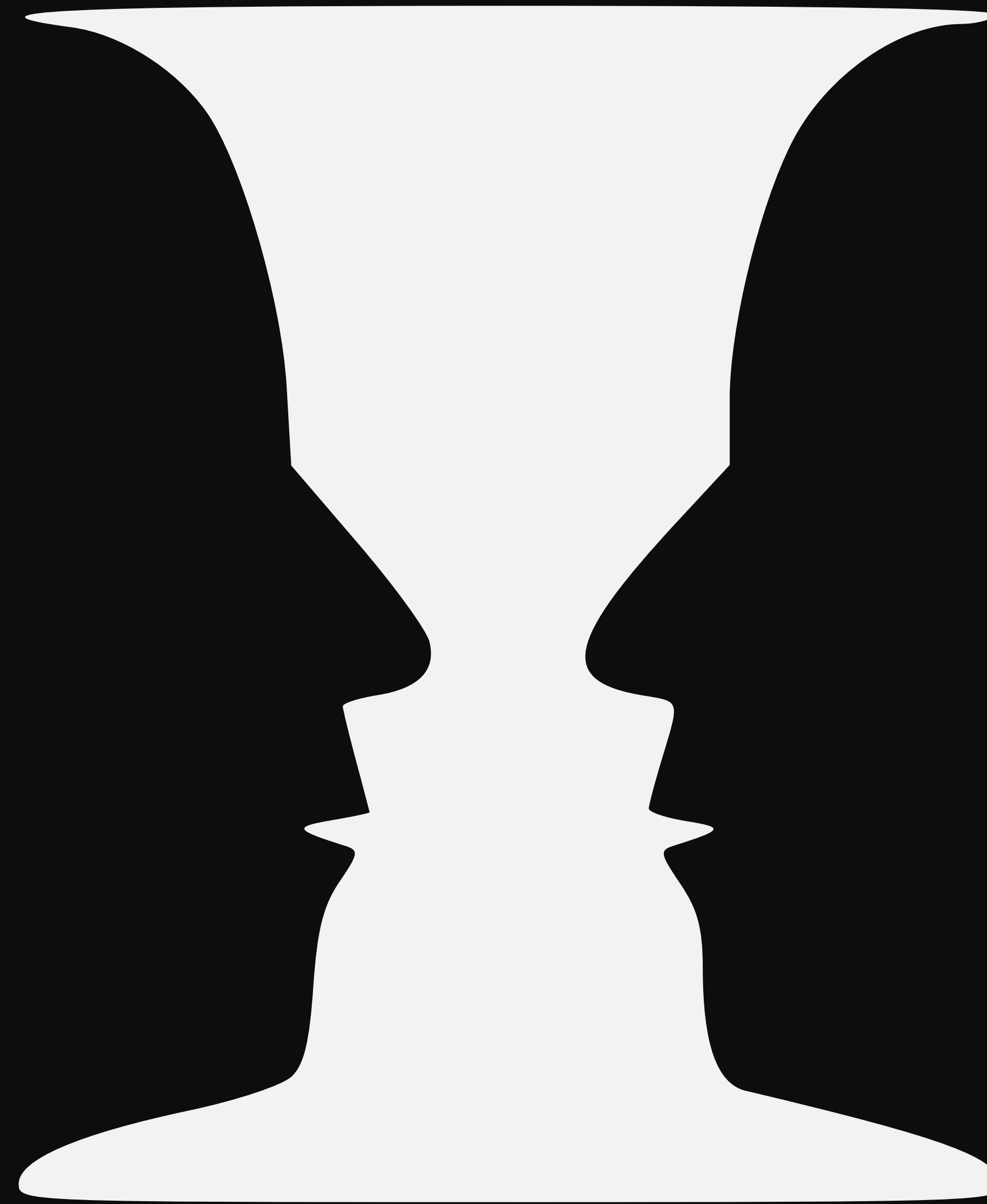
Attribution: Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2428244>

# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Gestalt: Multi-Stability

- When different interpretations of an object exist, the brain will switch back and forth between the interpretations
- The Rubin's vase illusion is a famous example of this



Attribution:

By Alan De Smet at English Wikipedia, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2428267>

# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Basic Gestalt principles

- Similarity
- Proximity
- Closure
- Figure-Ground
- Continuation
- Common Fate

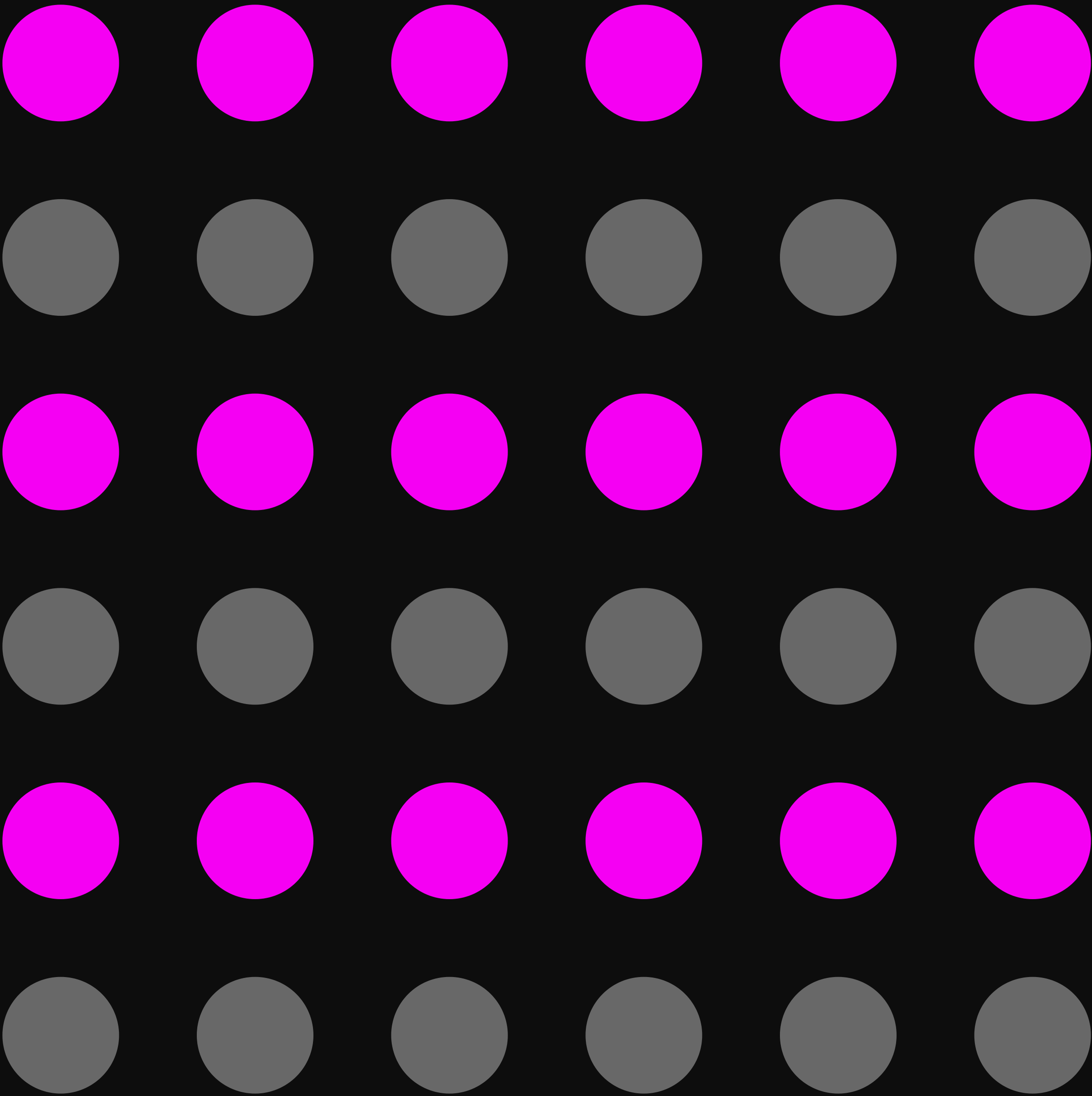
# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

---

## Gestalt: Similarity

- Elements within an assortment of objects are perceived to be grouped if they are similar to each other (belong together)
- Similarity can be affected by the attributes of colour, size, shape and orientation
- In our example, the colour circles are perceived as being grouped and form horizontal rows



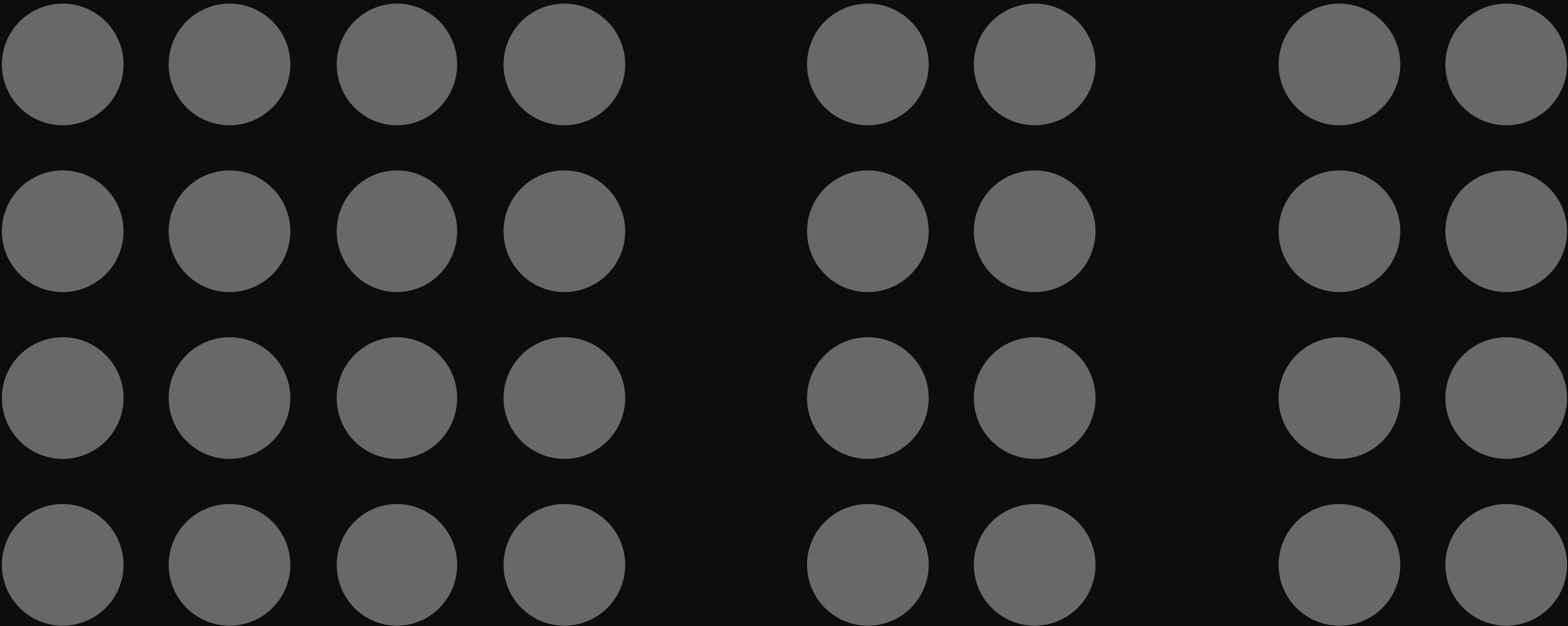


# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Gestalt: Proximity

- Objects or shapes that are close to one another appear to form groups
- Even if the shapes, sizes, and objects are different they will appear as a group (if they are close)
- In our example, the 32 circles are perceived as being separated into three groups

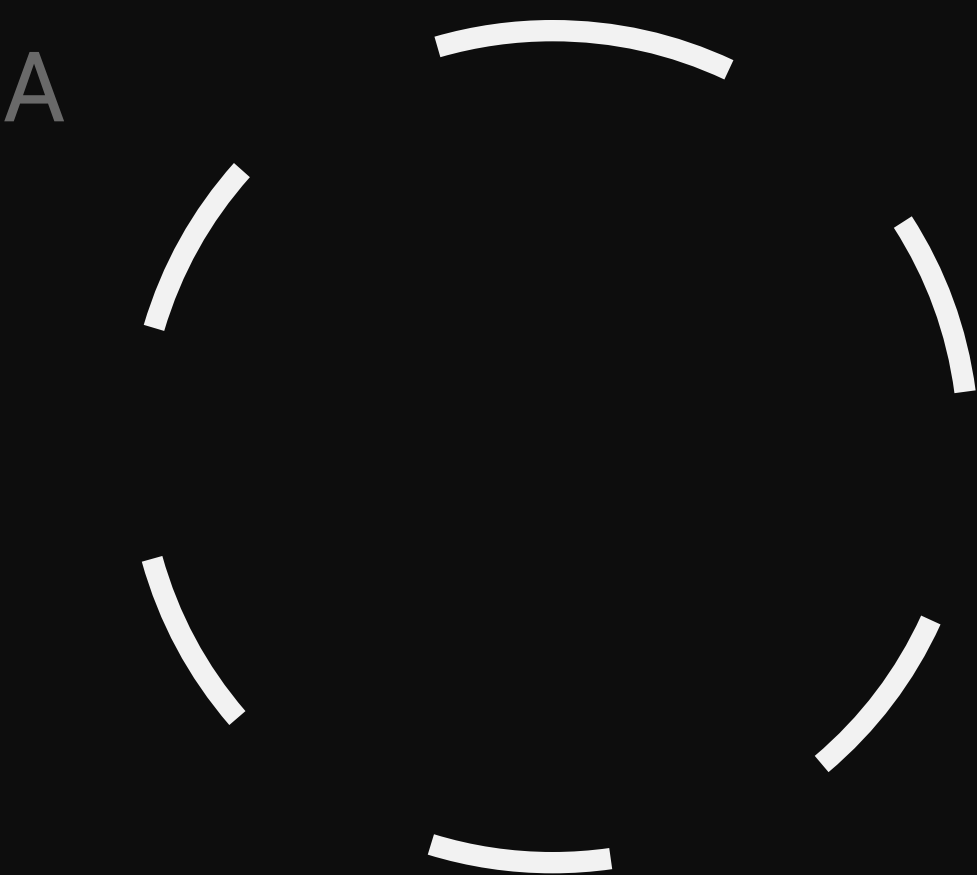


# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Gestalt: Closure

- Objects such as shapes, letters, etc., are perceived as being whole when they are not complete
- If provided with enough information, we will fill in what we perceive are missing parts to create a whole
- Example A: We perceive a circle on the left and square on the right
- Example B: Without enough information, it is difficult to form these shapes by looking at it



# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Gestalt: Figure-Ground

- We perceive elements as either the object of focus (figure) or the background (ground)
- Figure-ground is stable when the figure is distinct from the background and the background does not compete for attention
- Figure-ground is not stable when the figure and the background compete for attention
- A circle on a background is an example of a stable figure-ground relationship
- The Rubin's vase (covered in multi-stability) is an example of an unstable figure-ground relationship



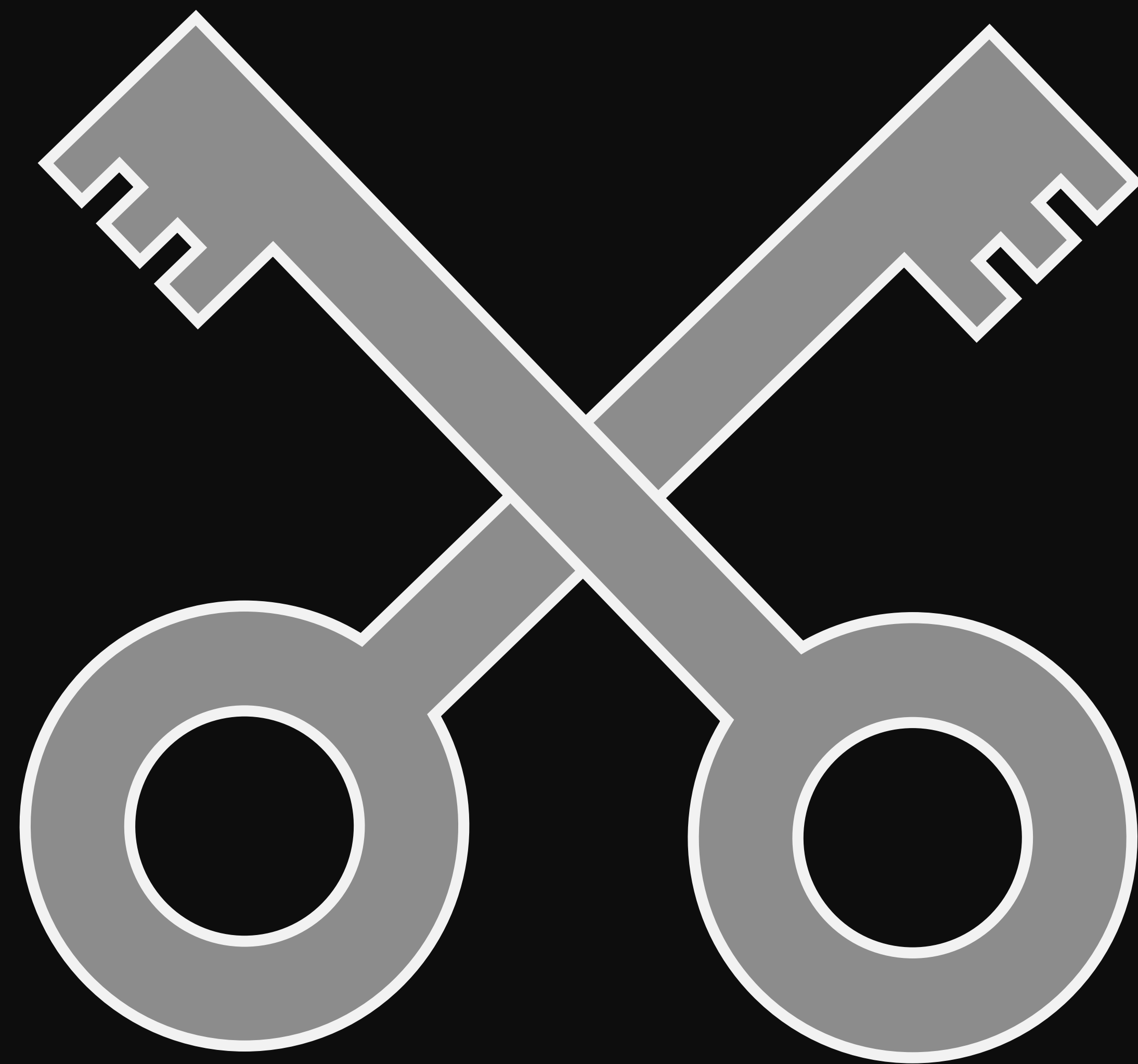
# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Gestalt: Continuation

- Preferring the path of least resistance, we perceive lines as continuing along their established path (or direction)
- We are less likely to group elements (that intersect) with unexpected directional changes as being one object
- For example, the cross-keys emblem perceives overlapping keys as opposed to a single object





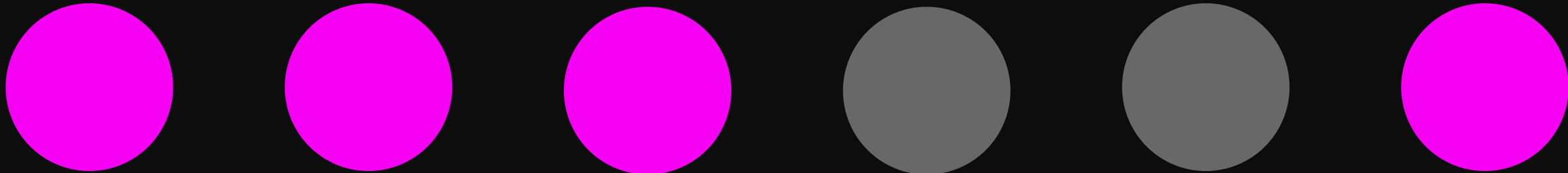
# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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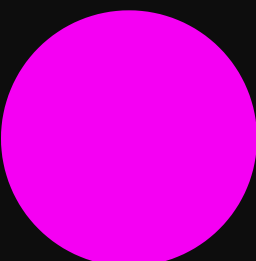
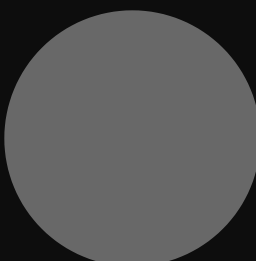
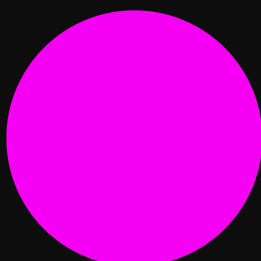
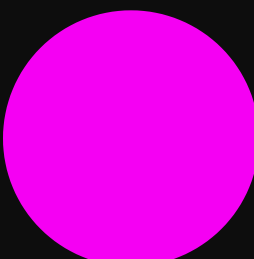
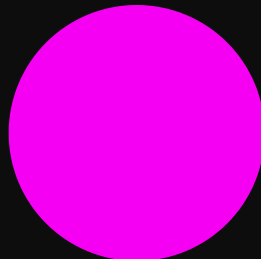
## Gestalt: Common Fate

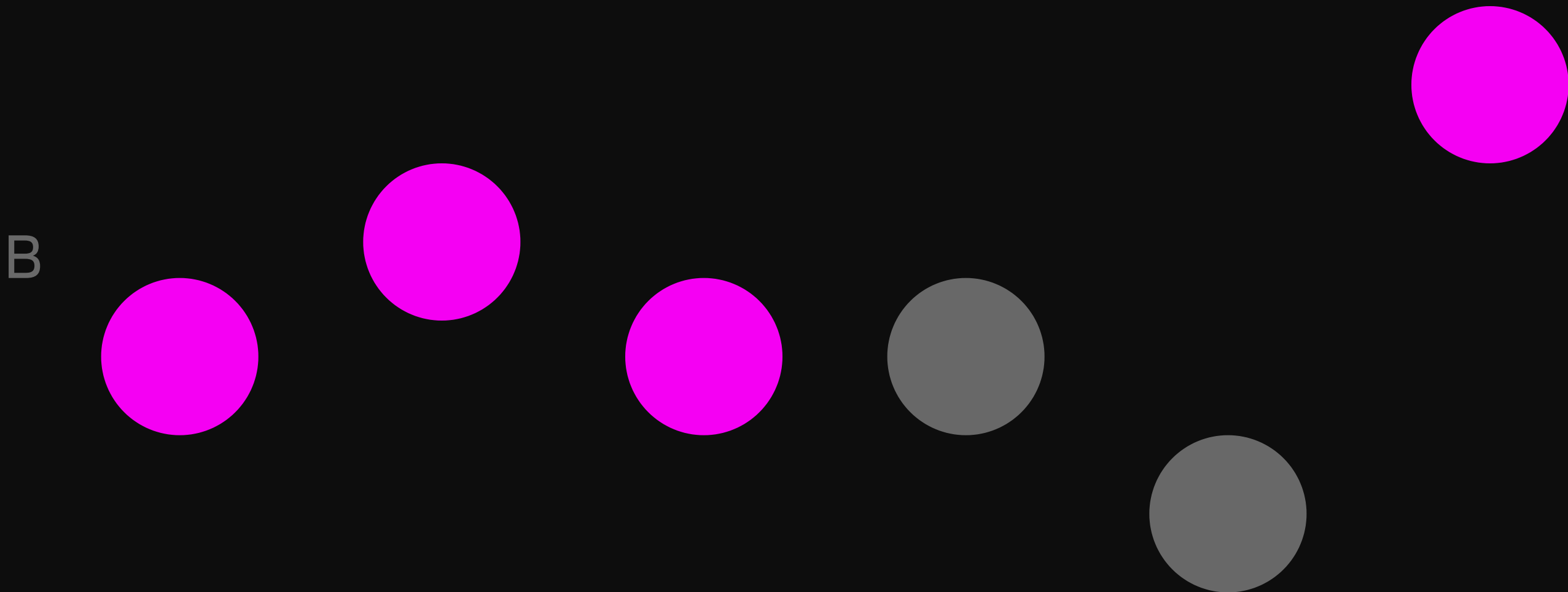
- Objects that move on the same path or at the same speed are perceived as belonging to the same group
- Example A: Circles moving in the same direction are grouped instead of those with a matching colour
- Example B: Circles are moving at different speeds and direction making it difficult to perceive them as a group

A



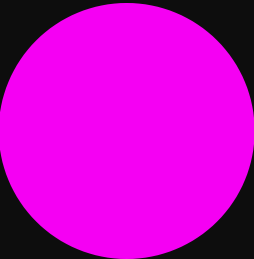
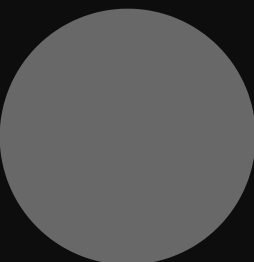
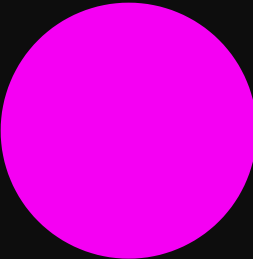
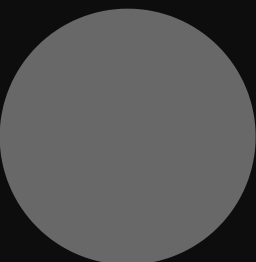
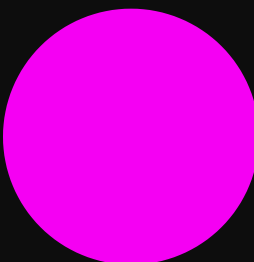
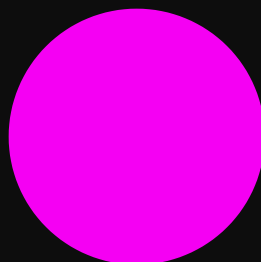
A





B

B



# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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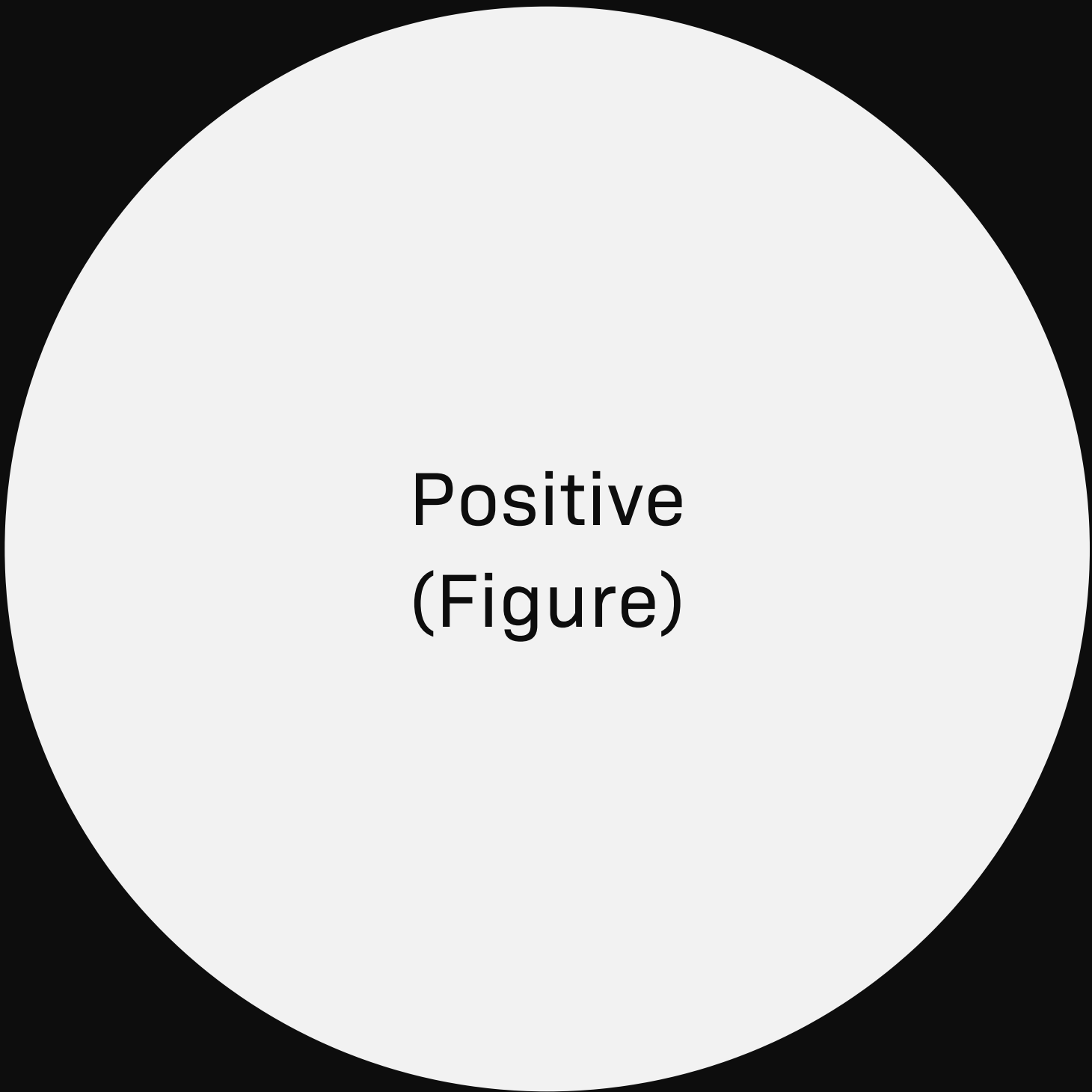
## Space

- Space is defined when something is placed in it
- White space (or negative space) is an important part of visual design
- White/negative space is the empty area around a (positive) design element
- “White” space does not have to be white to be considered negative space
- Negative-positive space is related to the figure-ground Gestalt principle
- Integrating space into a design helps reduce noise (or clutter), improve readability, and/or create an illusion



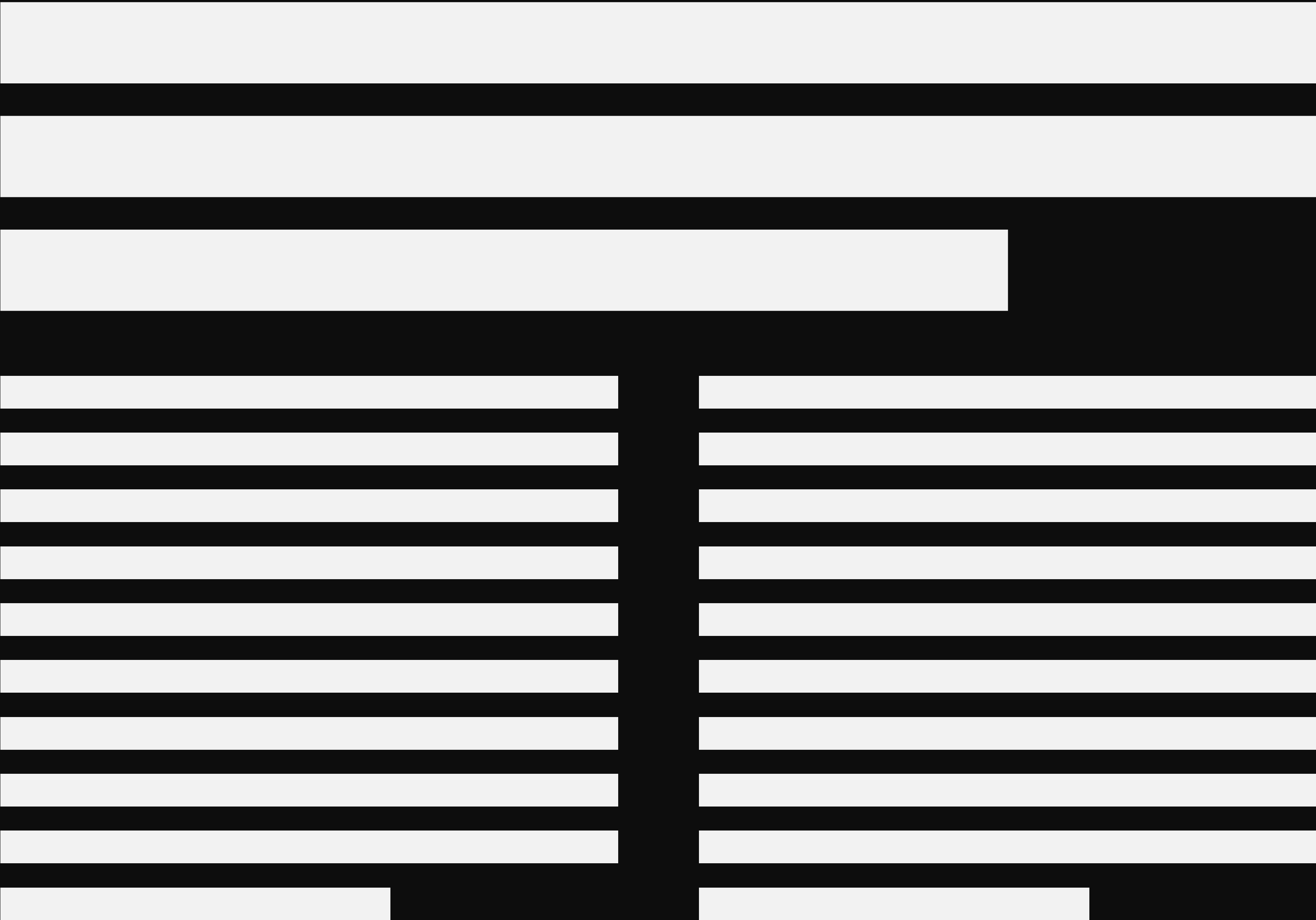


White/Negative Space  
(Ground)



Positive  
(Figure)



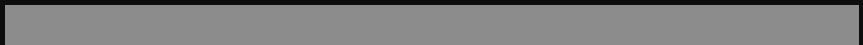
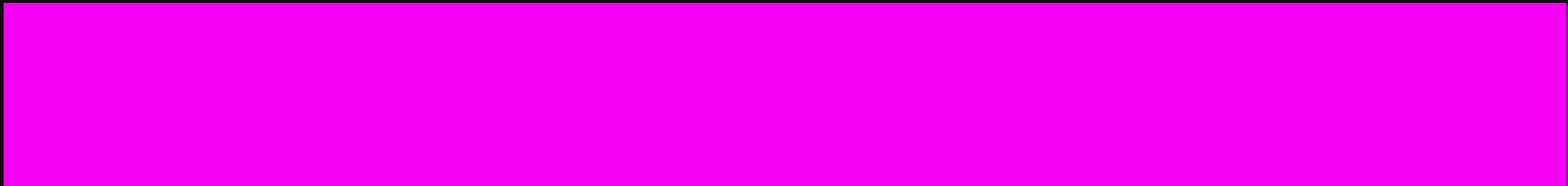


# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Hierarchy

- Refers to guiding the eye on a page (or screen) to view design elements in the order of their importance
- Hierarchies are created by using size, colour, positioning of elements and many other visual signals
- Use 2–3 typeface sizes to indicate what pieces of content are most important
- Consider using bright colours for important items and muted tones for less important ones
- Elements at the top are usually perceived as most important



# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

---

## Balance

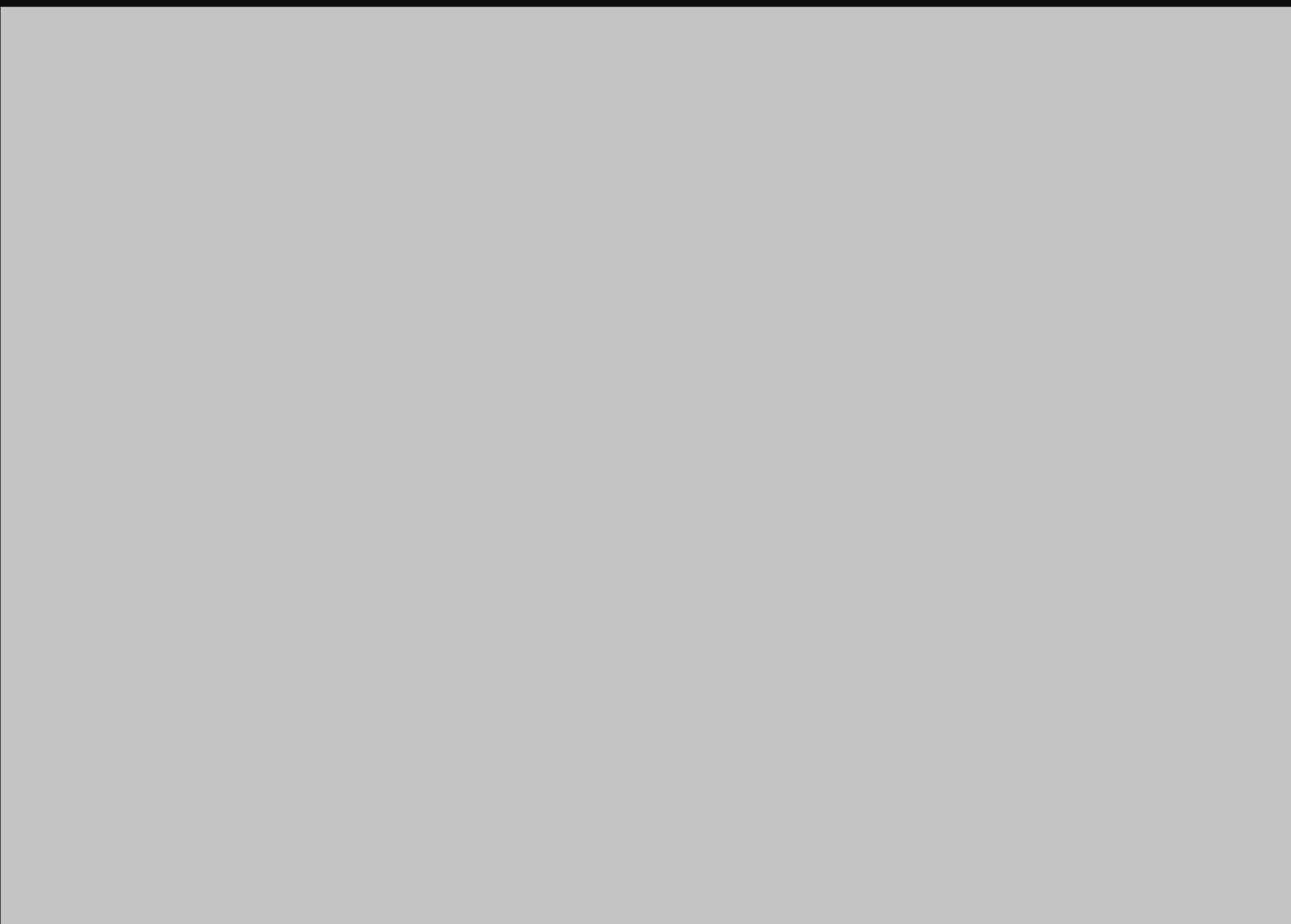
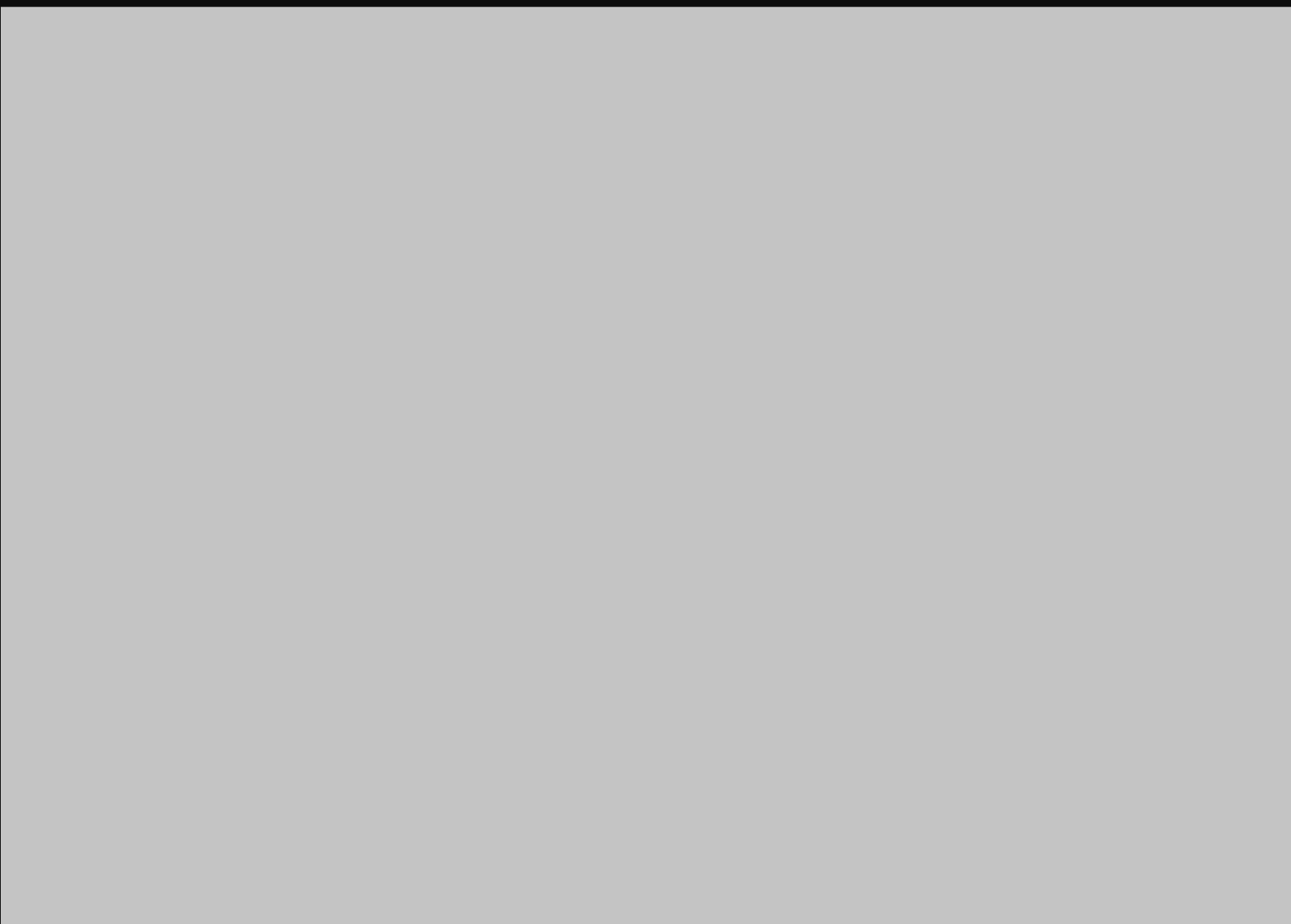
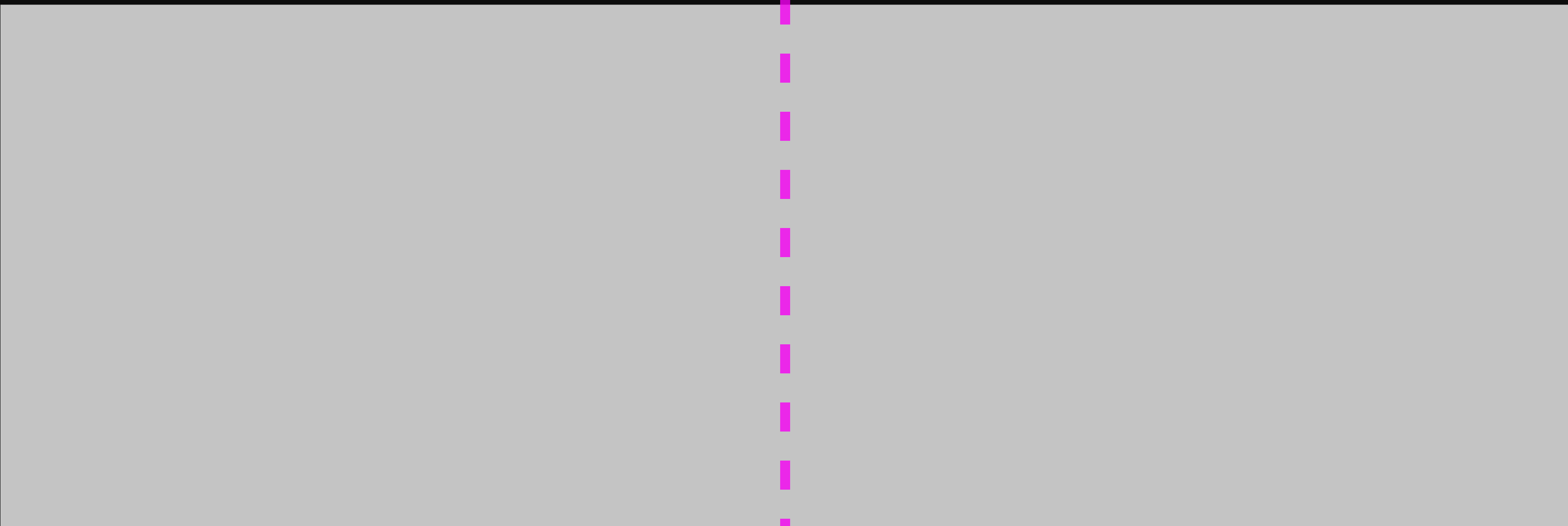
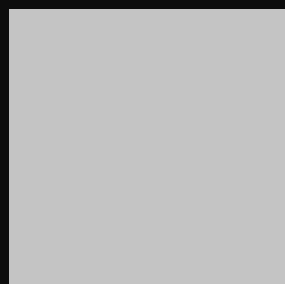
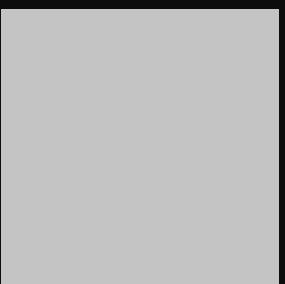
- Creates the perception that there is an equal distribution of design elements
- Balance can be achieved with or without symmetry in the design (Symmetrical or Asymmetrical)
- To create balance, establish an imaginary axis and distribute design elements evenly
- Choose the kind of balance for what you want to convey

# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Symmetrical balance

- When similar elements are evenly distributed relative to the imaginary axis
- Symmetrical balance is quiet and static



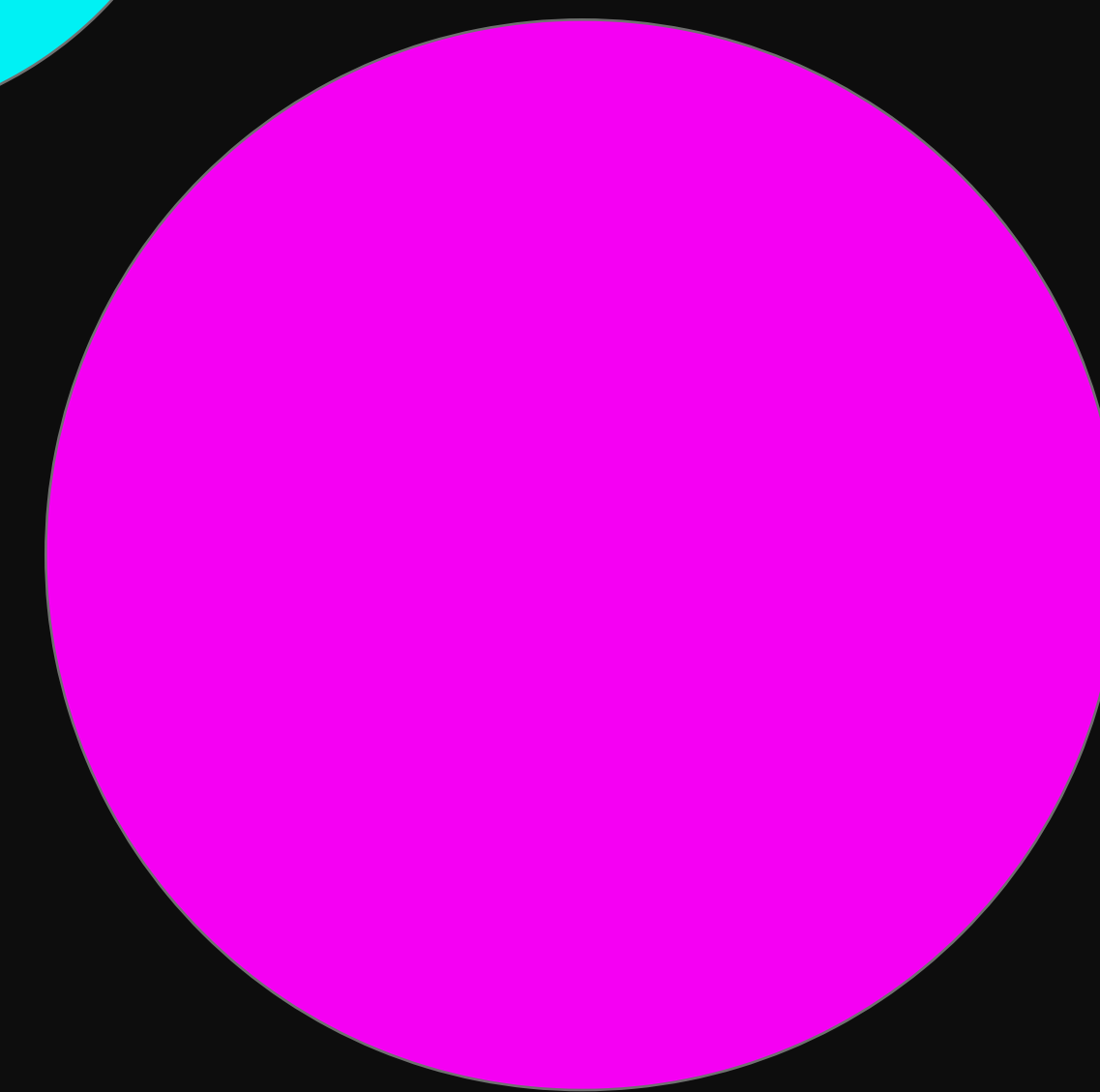
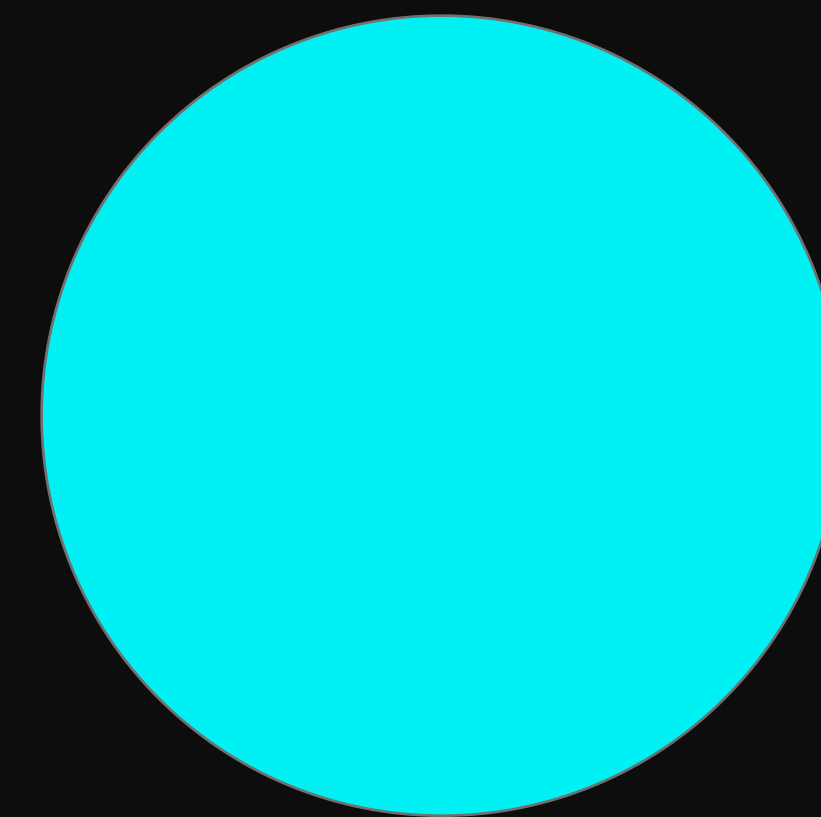
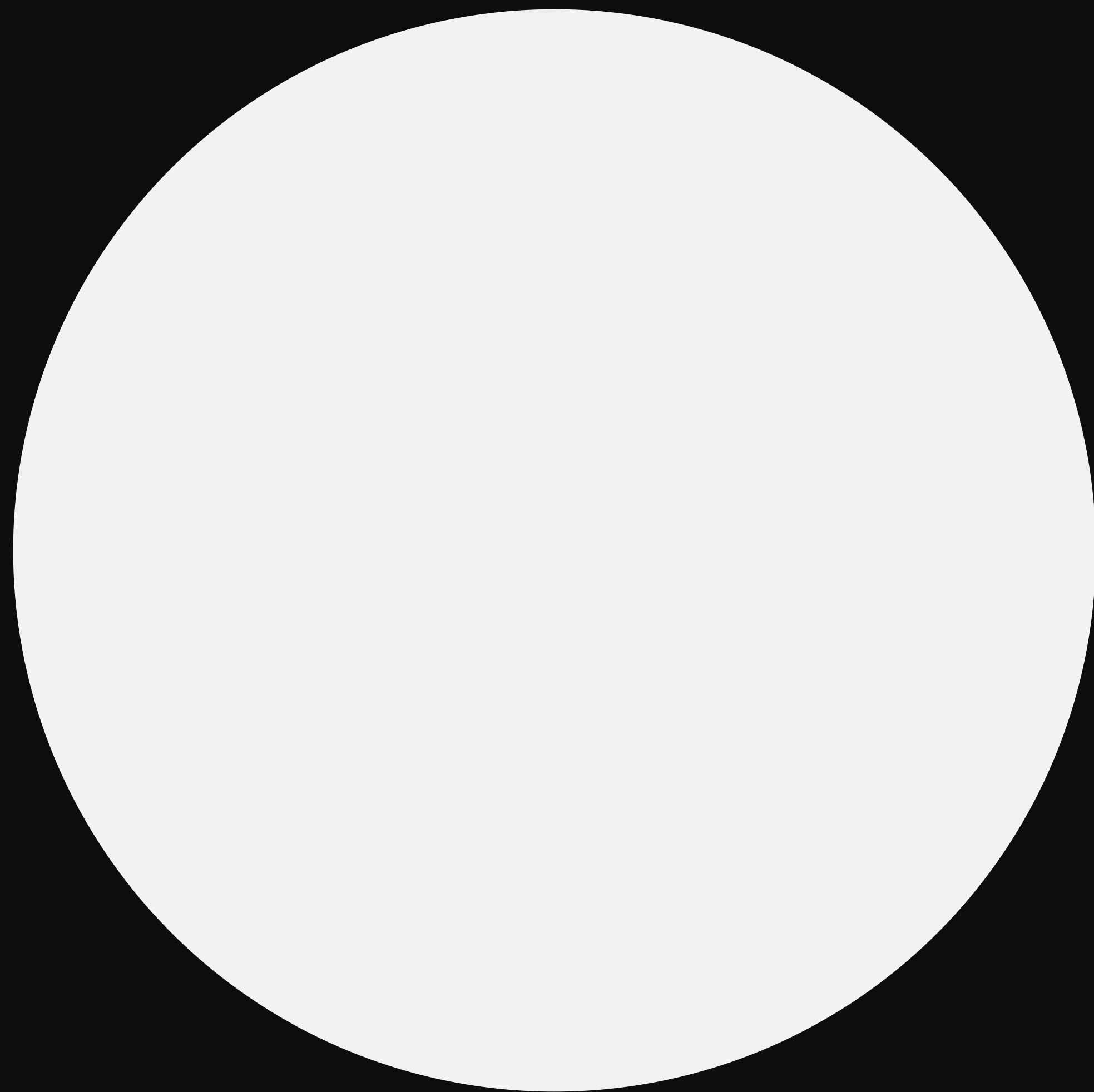


# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Asymmetrical balance

- When dissimilar elements (but of equal visual weight) are distributed relative to the imaginary axis
- Asymmetrical balance creates a sense of energy and movement

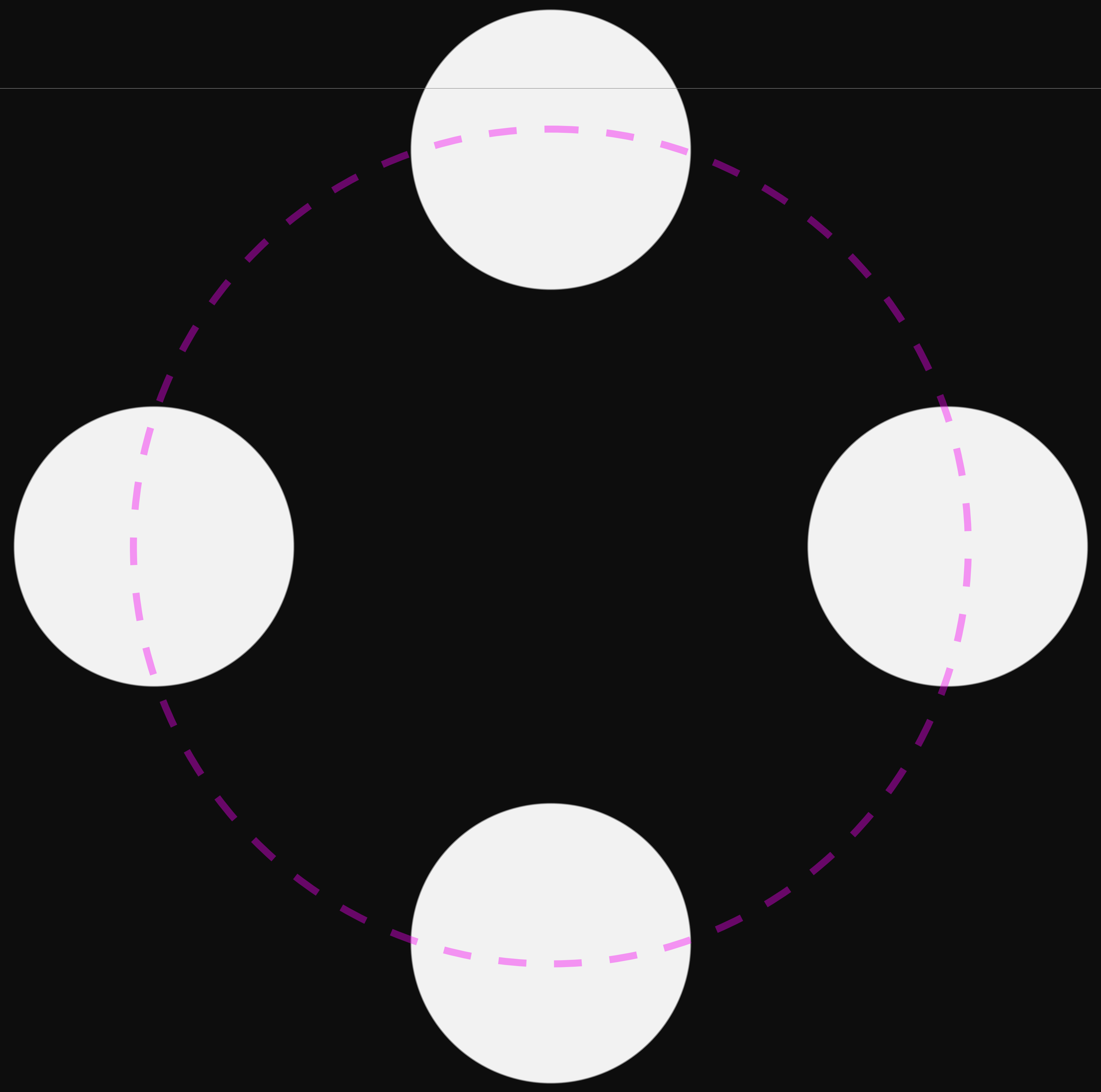


# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Radial balance

- When elements radiate out from a central point in a circular direction
- Radial balance leads the eye to the centre of the composition

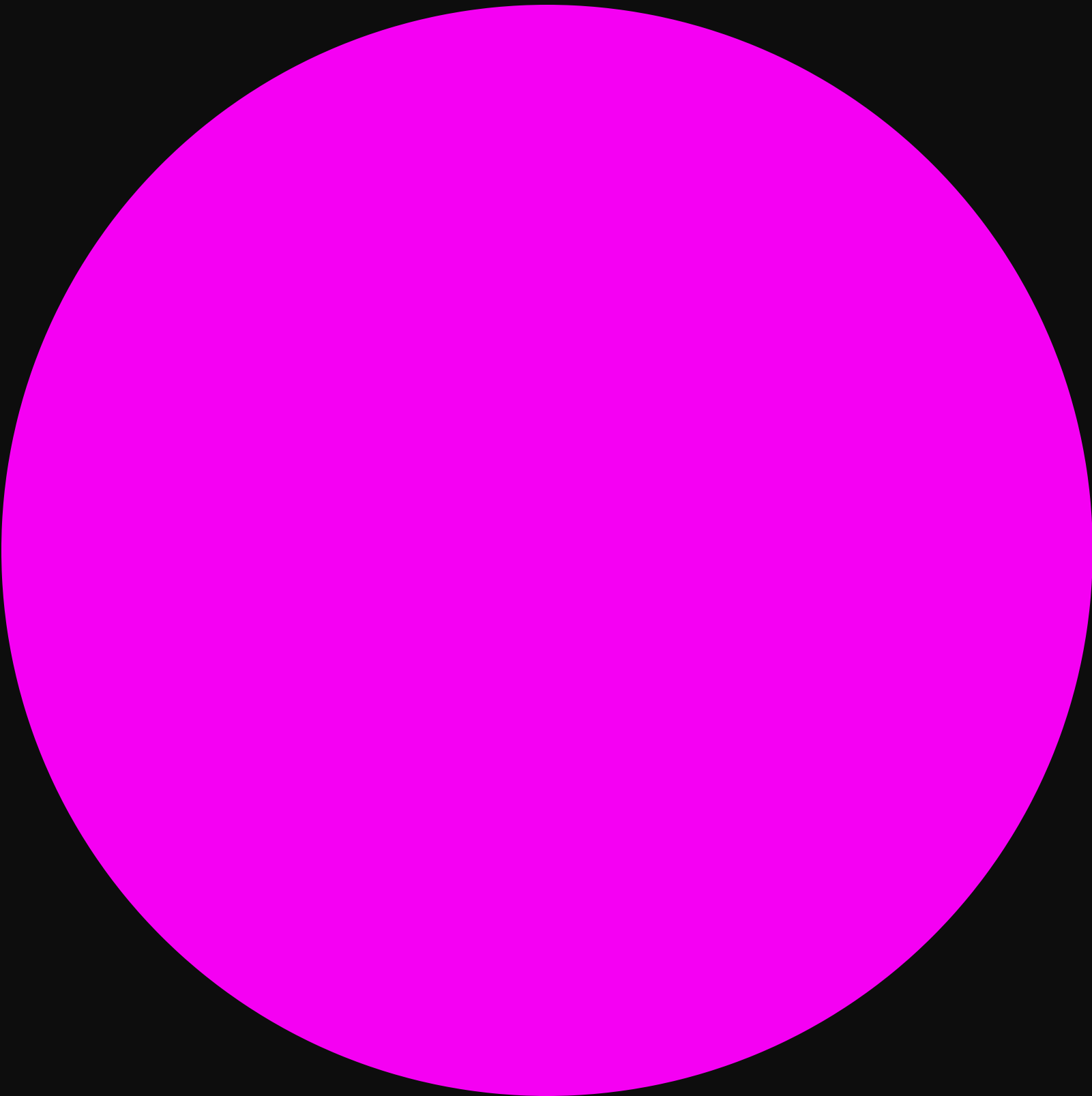
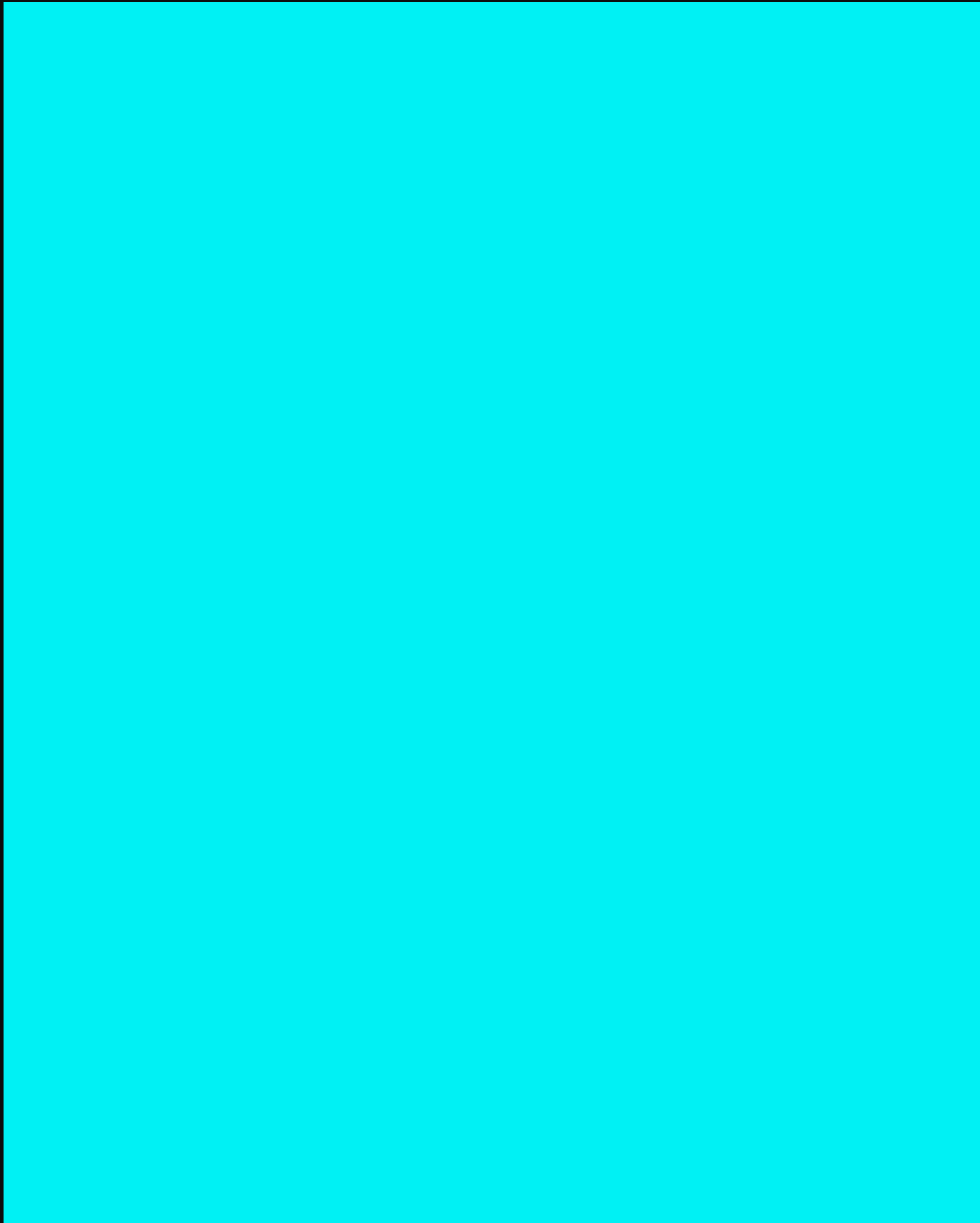


# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Contrast

- Contrast is the juxtaposition of dissimilar elements
- We use contrast to signal the fact that elements are different
- You can create contrast by using size, colour and other characteristics

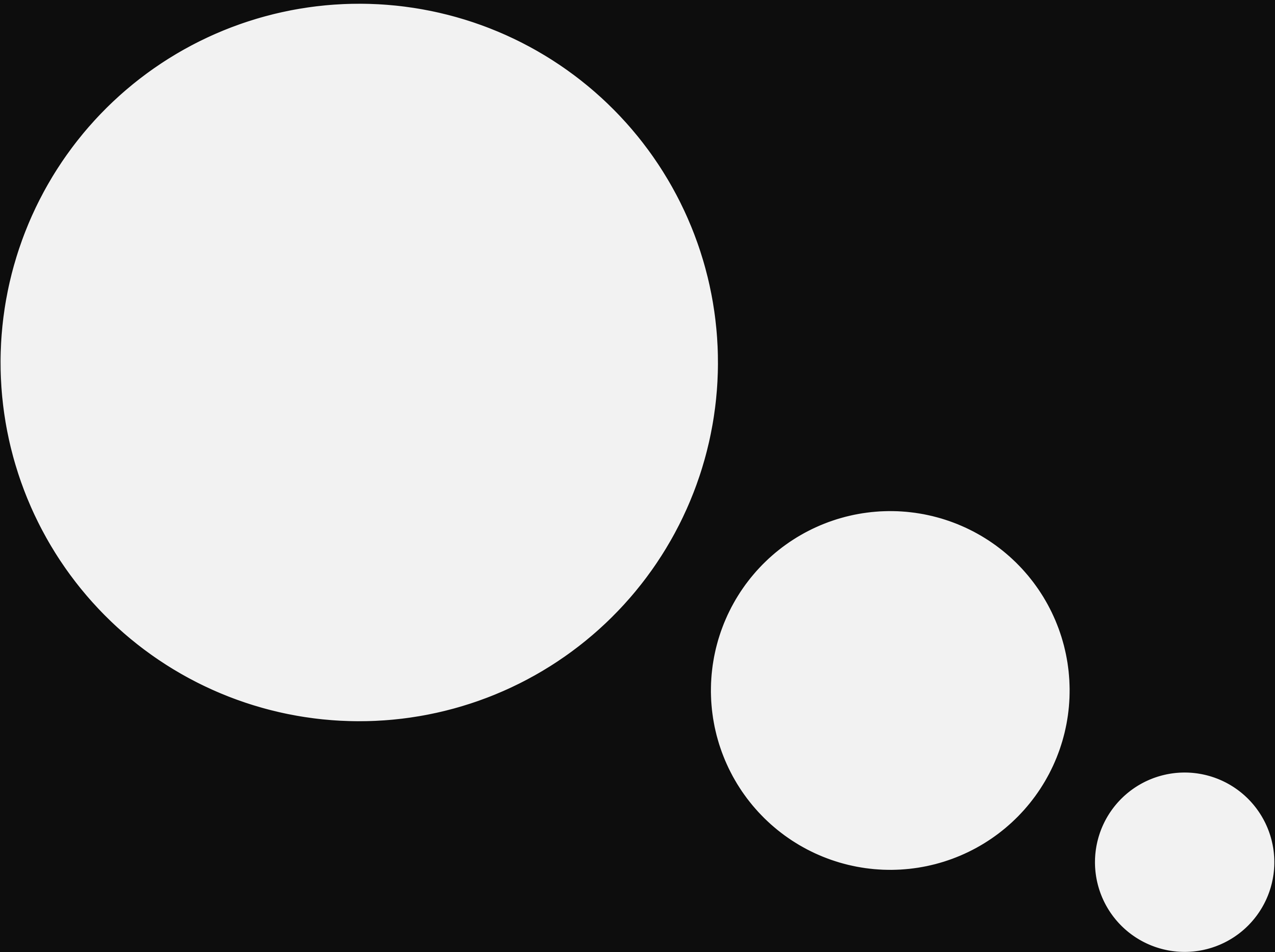


# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Scale

- Scale refers to using relative size to signal importance and rank of the elements in a design
- It creates interest and depth by demonstrating how each item relates to each other based on size
- Usually, the most important elements in a design are bigger than the less important ones
- For a visually pleasing design, use no more than three different sizes



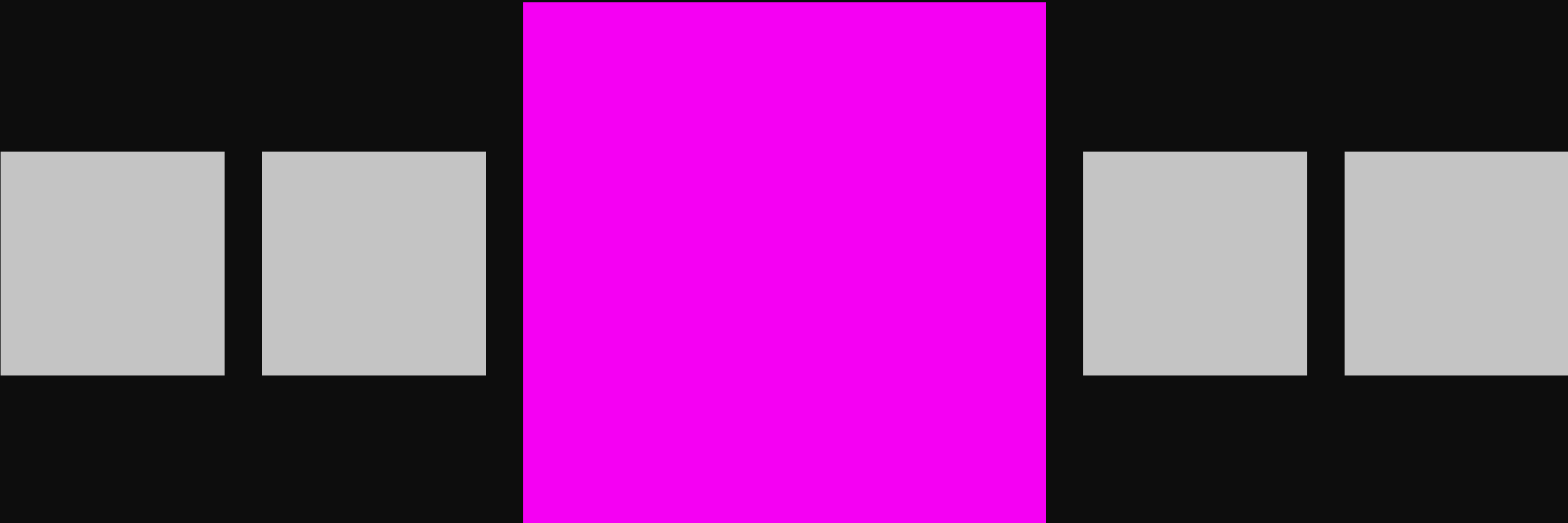


# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Dominance

- Places focus on a single element as the focal point in a design and others being of less significance
- Dominance can be established through scaling and contrasting based on size, colour, position, shape and other factors
- When using dominance, be sure to maintain the unity of the design

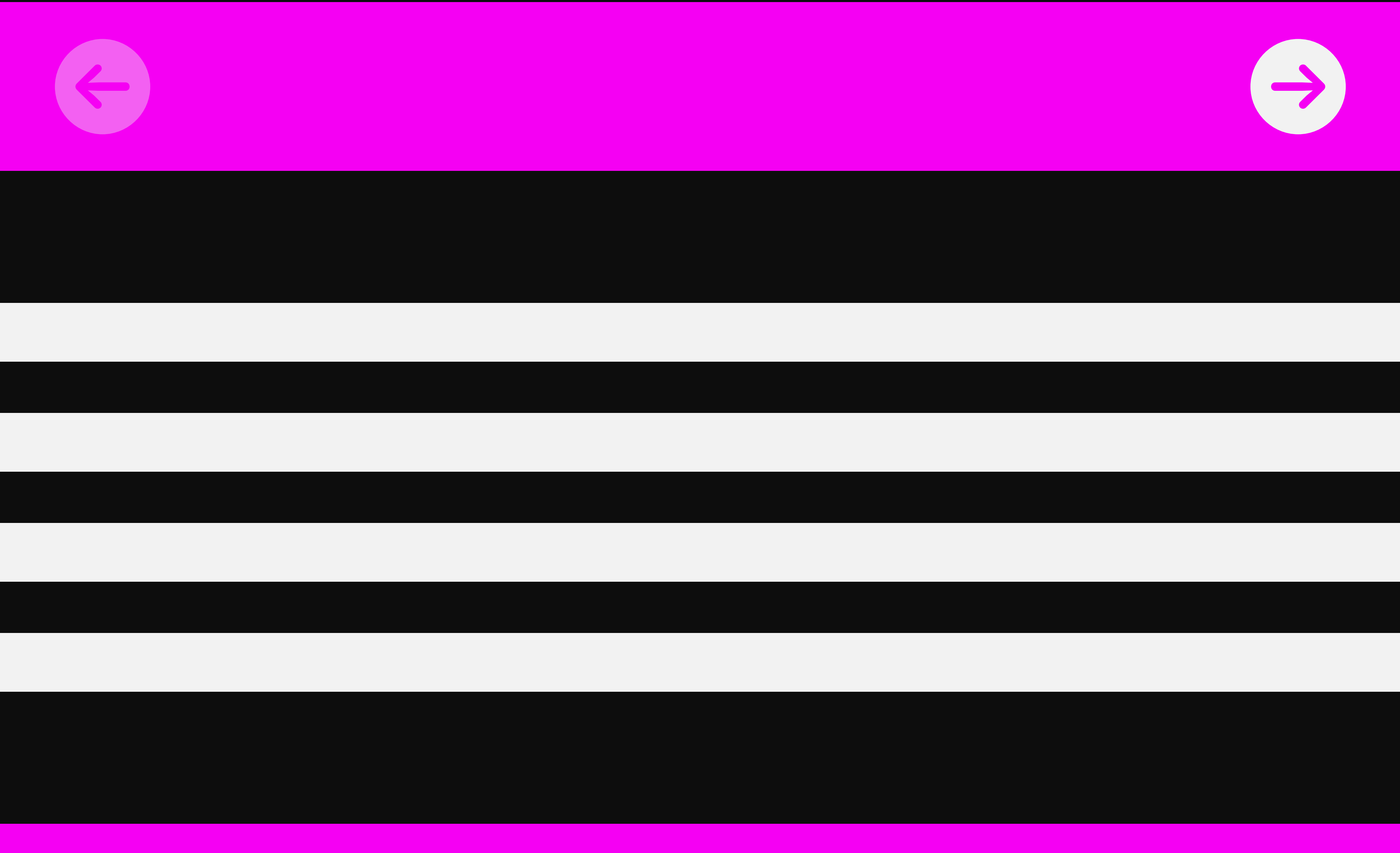


# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL DESIGN

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## Similarity

- Similarity refers to creating continuity throughout a design without exact duplication
- Used to make items work together over an interface to help users learn the interface quicker
- Express continuity from page to page in publications (headers, themes, etc.)
- Refer back to the Gestalt principle of similarity





# VISUAL DESIGN ASSIGNMENT

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## Design an image

- Include at least two design elements
- Include at least one design principle

# DESIGN FUNDAMENTALS

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## Rule of thirds

- A guideline for composing visually compelling images
  - Divide an image into nine equal zones using horizontal and vertical lines
  - Place the focal point of the image where the lines intersect
  - Top or bottom horizontal lines can be used to place the horizon
- Written by English painter and engraver John Thomas Smith in 1797





Attribution: Photo by antonio molinari on Unsplash



# DESIGN FUNDAMENTALS

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## Look room and lead room

- A composition technique linked to the rule of thirds
- Adding space in front of a person or object
  - A person looking at something or someone just off-screen
  - A car in motion











# DESIGN FUNDAMENTALS

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## Headroom

- A composition technique linked to the rule of thirds
- Distance between the top of a subject's head and top of the frame
- Avoid too much or too little headroom
- Ideal composition has a subject's eyes positioned one-third down from the top of the frame







# DESIGN FUNDAMENTALS

---

## Leading lines

- A composition technique that guides the viewer into the image and towards a focal point
  - Physical leading lines or implied (subtle) leading lines
- Converging lines
  - Two parallel lines converge to a single point











# REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

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## Design theory

<https://blog.shillingtoneducation.com/design-theory/>  
<https://www.creativebloq.com/graphic-design/difference-between-art-and-design-51620336>  
<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/d/de-stijl>  
<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/b/bauhaus>

## Visual design

<https://www.usability.gov/what-and-why/visual-design.html>  
<https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/the-building-blocks-of-visual-design>  
<https://creativecloud.adobe.com/discover/article/understanding-color-a-visual-guide>  
<https://www.informationisbeautiful.net/visualizations/colours-in-cultures/>  
[https://www.w3.org/wiki/Colour\\_theory](https://www.w3.org/wiki/Colour_theory)  
<https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/>  
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