# Creating Web Pages & Sites Using Dreamweaver

| Web Page Aesthetics – End-User Considerations Class #1 - Lesson #4 | |
|---|---|
| Goal: | To understand web page design considerations. |
| Objective: | Participants will learn several layout design strategies. |
| Objective: | Participants will learn to use layout design tools. |
| Topics to be covered | 1. Layout design concepts 2. End-user considerations 3. Dreamweaver page layout tools 4. Dreamweaver design tools |

| Vocabulary (Please add your own notes) | |
|---|---|
| **Layout Tools** | Tools used to develop the organization of a page. |
| **Design Tools** | Tools used to create specific elements within a page. |
| **Web page element** | Any part of a web page. For example, a menu, a graphic, text, a date, etc. |

| Resources |
|---|
| **Books** |
| Whalen, D. Joel. (1996). I see what you mean. Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage Publishing, Inc. |
| Winograd, T. (1996). Bringing design to software. Reading, MS. Addison-Wesley. |

Instructional Design          ID/AT          Assistive Technology

Crafton Hills College

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# Web Page Aesthetics – End-User Considerations

# Discussion

**#1 Page Layout**

1. **Viewer Expectations**

   When someone views a printed (or web) page they have been trained to approach it in a particular way. For example, in our culture, where we read left-to-right, top-to-bottom, people generally begin looking at a page in the upper left-hand corner. From there they move to the right and down.

2. **Prime Real Estate**

   Like a newspaper, and because of the way people approach a page, certain areas of the page are perceived to have more importance than others. The top of the page is more important than the bottom. Below is a page which attempts to quantify the value of the space on a page (certainly there are different views on this)
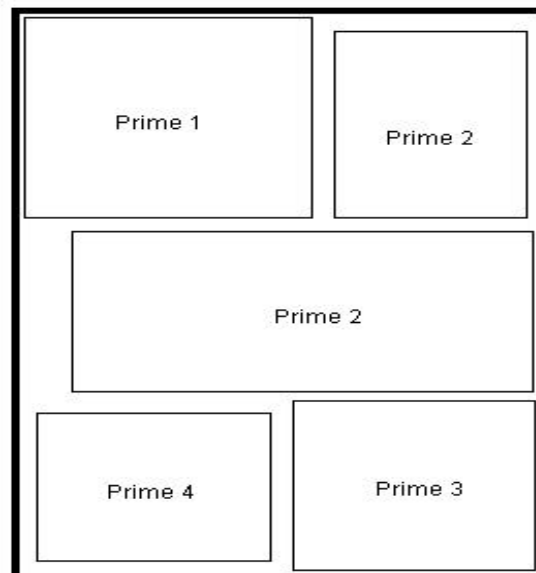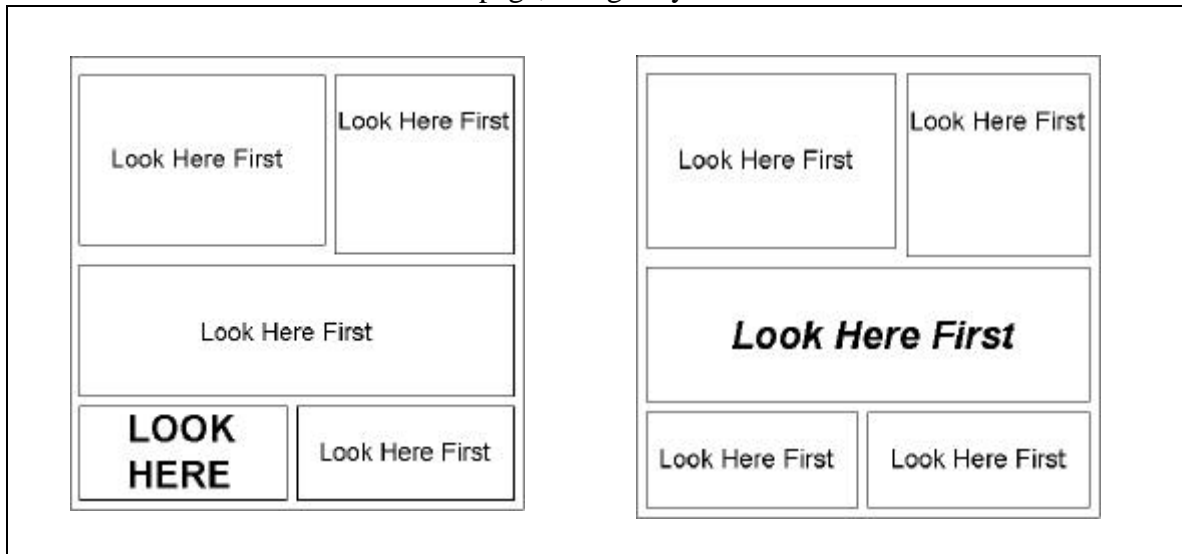
**3. Visual Cues**   Other items also attract a viewer's attention – large print, pictures/photos, etc.  People naturally look for cues such as these on a page to help them discern what is important, related, etc.

These visual cues can override the natural tendencies of people to view particular parts of a page first, or to alter their perceptions of what is important.
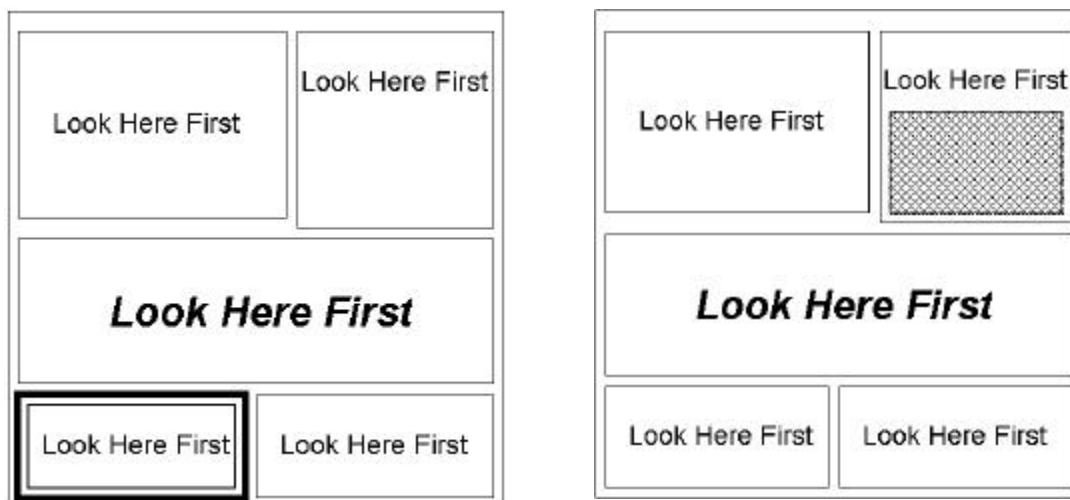
**4. Text Cues**   The following are examples of how changes in text can change the perception of importance of a particular place on a page, suing only text.

| | |
|---|---|
| Look Here First<br>Look Here First<br>Look Here First<br>**LOOK HERE**  Look Here First | Look Here First<br>Look Here First<br>*Look Here First*<br>Look Here First  Look Here First |

**5. Graphical Cues**   Similar to textual cues, graphical cues can have the same impact upon the perceived importance, or attention-getting draw of a page element or area.

| | |
|---|---|
| Look Here First<br>Look Here First<br>*Look Here First*<br>Look Here First  Look Here First | Look Here First<br>Look Here First<br>*Look Here First*<br>Look Here First  Look Here First |

**6. Focus**  Layout elements that stand out on a page can certainly help guide someone looking at it, however, too much of a good thing does exactly the opposite.
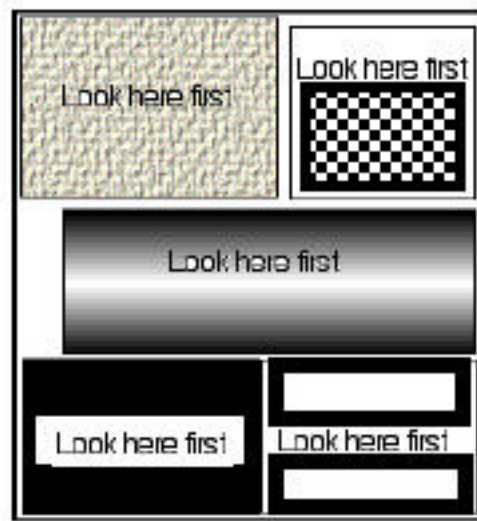


**7. Use What you Know**  The key to making a page layout "user-friendly" is to pay attention to the natural expectations of the end-user. That is, use what you know about the end-user to help that end-user approach your page the way you want them to approach it.

**8. Things to Consider when you're Designing.**  The following are things to consider when designing your pages.

- 1-5 (above)

- Visit those web pages you particularly like, especially if you think they're easy to use. Examine them and see if you can incorporate some of design strategies used on those pages into your pages.

- Examine newspapers, magazines, etc. to see if you can find the strategies they are using to guide readers on their pages.

- The next time you visit a web page that is confusing or downright ugly, stop….and try to figure out why it bothers you so much. If you're daring then check to see if you've done any of those things on your web pages.

## #2 Special Considerations for Web Pages

1. **Underlining**      Generally, people viewing web pages expect links to be underlined.  For that reason, underlining words that do not link on a web page is usually not a good idea (you're asking the end-user to learn a new concept – underlined words on your pages don't always link).

2. **Colors**      Just as underlined words usually indicate links on a page, those links are also usually blue.  Though you can change the linking colors in Dreamweaver, doing so should be done consistently (i.e. all red, yellow, green, etc.).

Although unusual color schemes might seem nice to you they may annoy others.  Be careful when choosing the colors of backgrounds and text for your web pages…and be consistent.

An interesting note worth remembering --- although white letters on a blue background are considered the easiest to read, white letters usually won't print on B&W printers and a colored background can take forever to print on a color printer.

3. **Above the Fold**      In journalism "above the fold" refers to the part of a newspaper that, when folded, can be seen in a news rack (the top half of the page).  Web pages have their own kind of 'fold'…the area of the page above the bottom of the browser window.  Therefore, the most important information on a web page (or how to get to it) should be viewable to an end-user without them having to scroll the page.

4. **Graphics**      Although graphics can certainly draw the eye of someone looking at a page, if not done well or if they are too large, they take forever to load.  People on the Internet are generally impatient and if they have to wait for your page to load they'll probably leave VERY quickly.

Remember, most people are not yet using fast Internet connections like DSL or the T1 lines here at the college. Most, have only 28.8 or 56K modems. Since these people are your largest potential audience be careful not to alienate them with design elements that frustrate them or their hardware.