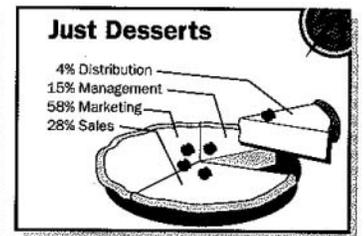
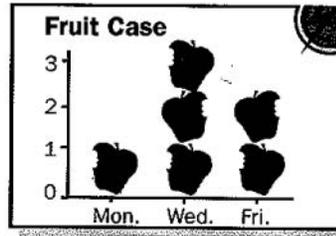


In spite of all your efforts, you'll occasionally find one or two oddball frames that must be redesigned to fit into your show. But if all your images seem like exceptions, go back, re-evaluate and devise a more graceful graphic form that allows continuity.

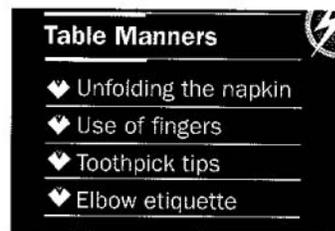
Suppose your show is composed of bullet lists and bar graphs, except for one pie graph. How can you integrate that round graph? See if it works to use the edge locations of your bar graphs for the pie labels. That will probably be enough to rope in the maverick frame.



Don't panic when you come across something that doesn't appear to fit your plan. The important thing is to give your show an overall structure, rather than just to fill the space.

## GRAPHIC DESIGN DEVICES

During the design and layout phases, you may find graphic devices helpful in separating elements or directing attention. Borders, boxes, lines, arrows and blank space are effective tools for these purposes; but use them only when they're needed, not merely for ornamentation.



Too much.



Much better.

## Rules

Horizontal and vertical lines, called rules, can add clarity to your design, especially when space is tight. Used in various widths, textures and colors, rules help separate and distinguish one category of information from another. Don't depend on ruling to emphasize points. There are more effective methods of emphasis, such as altering type color or type style.

Historically, rules are measured in printers' points (72 points equal one inch), but feel free to measure them in any units you want—just be sure they don't get too big. A quarter-inch rule is 18 points, and that's a pretty beefy line. Professional designers generally stay within a range of 1/2 point to 2 1/2 points. There's no need to use more when less will do the job. When rules are set in a bright accent color against a dark background, even a very fine line will "pop."

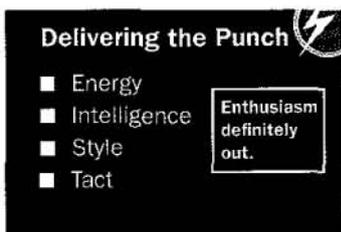
## Borders

You can join vertical and horizontal rules to form a border, or simply draw a box, if your system has that feature. Borders, like rules, serve as separators, but their impact is greater; they convey the unmistakable message that whatever is inside the box doesn't belong with what's outside.

Depending on specific graphic treatment, borders can create a range of effects, from delicate picket fences to giant stone walls with barbed wire coiled along the top.

One thing borders cannot do is make a statement look important. This isn't to say that important messages shouldn't be framed; but, in fact, framing can actually lessen the impact by cluttering the visual field.

Borders can be drawn in many ways—with *thin*, *thick*, *double* or *dashed* lines, for example. Corners can be turned in various ways, ranging from 90-degree angles to radius-turned fillets or even twists and curlicues. In general, a clean corner is best for presentation graphics, since it's



unobtrusive. As for radius corners, there's nothing intrinsically wrong with them, but unfortunately they've joined the growing list of desktop publishing clichés.

## Boxes

A good alternative to a border is a solid-color box without contrasting edges. If box color and background color are close in value, the low-contrast definition of the enclosed space can be pleasantly soft and subtle yet still do the job. Low-contrast boxes are especially appropriate for slides, where color is good.

Be careful when using gray boxes behind type or behind other delicate elements on page graphics or on monotone overhead transparencies. The only way to achieve a gray tone with a laser printer is to use screen patterns—of black dots or lines—to simulate gray. If you put black type on top of such a pattern, there may not be sufficient definition between the type and the screen pattern. The reverse—white type on solid black—would be better.

## Blank Space

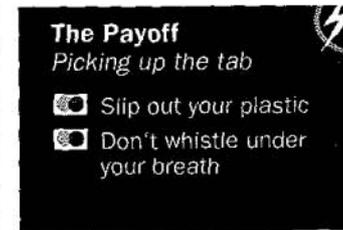
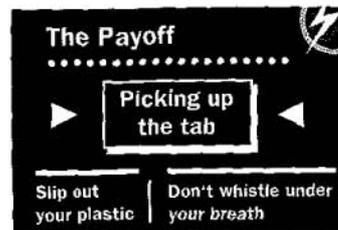
From the time we could hold a pencil, most of us discovered that making pictures is a matter of marking surfaces. We'd describe a picture in terms of the marks that have been applied to the surface—the positive elements. We don't think much about the areas that have no marks at all—the negative elements. These empty or blank areas are actually integral parts of the whole picture.

When you see three lines of type together, evenly sized and spaced, it's fair to assume that they form a single statement. If the **third line** is separated from the first two, however, the relationship changes. In the following examples, the only difference between the two is the use of space, but the effect is profound. The illustration exaggerates the use of space to make the point; you can use less space to accomplish the same goal.





It may seem like a contradiction to use blank space to direct your viewers' attention. We're more accustomed to *adding* marks to clarify a message. But, instead of loading the picture with arrows, borders and rules, the better approach might be to remove all extraneous parts and simply make small adjustments to the size and placement of the essential parts of the message.

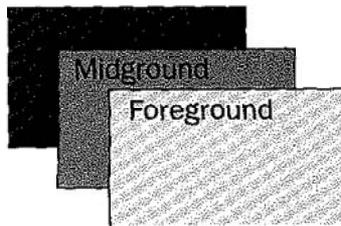


Extraneous visual elements

Clean image

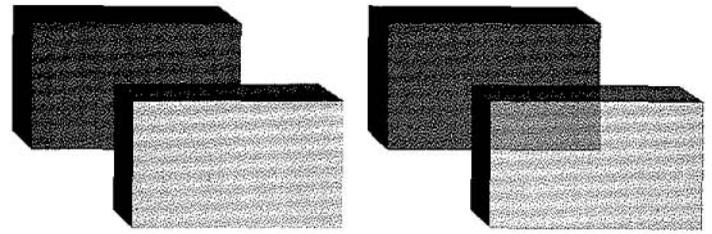
If you find that your frames are generally so tight you must always rely on rules and borders, try spreading your presentation out over more frames. Be generous with the materials you need to get the job done.

## GROUND RELATIONSHIPS



Color, value, hidden lines, shadows, transparency and three-dimensional drawing can all be used to establish back-to-front definition in a two-dimensional graphic.

Think of your graphic composition in three levels: foreground, midground and background. The differences in depth—the figure/ground or figure/field relationship refer to the way the three levels relate to each other.



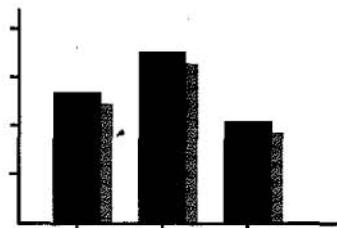
Opacity

Transparency

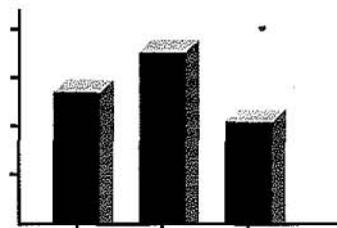
### Shadows

Dimension can also be achieved with shadows. This is usually done by imagining a light shining from a front corner of the picture. *Foreground elements catch the light and cast dark shadows on what lies behind them.* Shadows can be drawn flat or in perspective. Flat shadows — sometimes called drop shadows — are easy to draw on most computer systems. The technique is generally effective; but to some, a flat-shadowed, round-cornered frame is an emerging visual cliché of desktop graphics.

*Three-dimensional shadows* are drawn in perspective to suggest flat planes at angles to one another. Think of the shadow cast by a billboard or other flat object standing upright. The shadow's form can be made in accordance with any perspective drawing techniques.



Flat drop shadow



Three-dimensional shadow



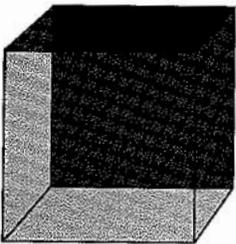
Graduated shadow

Graduated shadows are most like the light patterns cast by real objects. But be careful. The angle of graduation is critical.

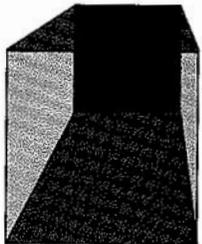
**Perspective**

Many perspective drawing techniques can make graphic elements appear to occupy different planes in space. Simple parallel projection is probably the easiest drawing method and has the greatest applicability to presentation graphics.

Occasionally, a one-point perspective technique is called for, such as using a checkerboard pattern that disappears into the background; but even this simple vanishing-point technique is pretty elaborate for information graphics. (See Appendix C.)



**Parallel projection**

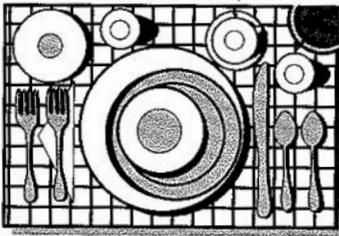


**One-point perspective**

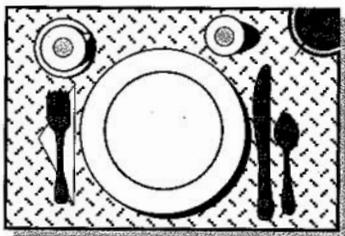
Such heavily worked illustrations aren't necessary for most presentations. It's easy to drift away from your original objectives.

**USE RESTRAINT**

Graphic simplicity is appreciated by most audiences. Remember, they've decided to attend the presentation to reach a new understanding of your topic, not to be wowed by fancy pictures.



**Graphic overload**



**Effective communication**

Software comes with a lot of features that can seduce you into graphic overload. Color is a good example of an area where people can go wild using more features than necessary to get the message across. Just because you have the capabilities for unlimited typefaces, shadows, patterns, decorated corners, borders and tapered lines doesn't mean they'll contribute to your communication goal.

To test for graphic overload, stand back and see whether anything can be removed without losing content or clarity.

## MOVING ON

Good graphic design is invisible. Well-made images are never contrived or forced. They simply serve to convey the message without distractions of any kind. In fact, the better you do your job as a designer, the less your audience will be conscious of your craft.

Next, let's look at typography. Typefaces and type styles are important ingredients; they can make or break the effectiveness of your design. Now that you have lines of type roughed in and positioned on a grid, you can give your thumbnail sketches final form.