

GRAPHIC DESIGN

LAYOUT SINS- 13 AMATEUR ERRORS

Adapted from *White Space is Not Your Enemy*

Standards:

SHORT LIST

These are not the only common design errors but they are probably the most conspicuous error in amateur work.

DO these things and you pretty much advertise that you do not know what you are doing.

1. **Things that Blink. Incessantly.** Keep animated repetition to a minimum.
2. **Warped photos.** Keep photos in proportion
3. **Naked photos.** Use hairline rules to border photos that have ambiguous edges
4. **Bulky Borders & Boxes.** Use negative space to group or separate things. If you must use a border or box, choose an understated one.
5. **Cheated margins.** Be generous with margins, including inset and offset for text and picture boxes
6. **Centering everything.** Avoid centered layouts.
7. **4 Corners & Clutter.** Clutter: Bad. Clumping: Good
8. **Trapped Negative Space.** Push extra negative space to the outside edges of your layout
9. **Busy Backgrounds.** Design backgrounds as negative space. Save tiling for the bathroom
10. **Tacky type emphasis.** Think twice about reversing, stroking, using all caps or underlining
11. **Bad Bullets.** Use real bullets for lists, and use hanging indents to properly align lists
12. **Widows and orphans.** Avoid inelegant breaks at the bottoms and tops of legs of type
13. **Justified Rivers.** Avoid unsightly rivers of negative space flowing through legs of justified type.

Sin #1:

Things that Blink. Incessantly. Keep animated repetition to a minimum.

On a web page, if you are going to have an animated graphic, at least set it so it stops after 3 passes.

Sin #2:

Warped photos. Keep photos in proportion

Sin #3:

Naked photos. Use hairline rules to border photos that have ambiguous edges

Sin #4:

Bulky Borders & Boxes. Use negative space to group or separate things. If you must use a border or box, choose an understated one.

Sin #5:

Cheated margins. Be generous with margins, including inset and offset for text and picture boxes

Sin #6:

Centering everything. Avoid centered layouts.

Sin #13:

Justified Rivers. Avoid unsightly rivers of negative space flowing through legs of justified type.

Sin #7:

4 Corners & Clutter. Clutter: Bad. Clumping: Good

Sin #8:

Trapped Negative Space. Push extra negative space to the outside edges of your layout

Sin #9:

Busy Backgrounds. Design backgrounds as negative space. Save tiling for the bathroom

Sin #10:

Tacky type emphasis. Think twice about reversing, stroking, using all caps or underlining

Sin #11:

Bad Bullets. Use real bullets for lists, and use hanging indents to properly align lists

Sin #12:

Widows and orphans. Avoid inelegant breaks at the bottoms and tops of legs of type