

K.I.S.S.

(Keep It Simple, Stupid)



When it comes to graphic design, this principle rocks.
Here are some basics:

- **WHITE SPACE:** The Most Important Principle. Use lavishly. It makes those few things on the page/space so much more attractive!
- **FONTS:** on *any* surface (e.g., print, web page, banner, billboard) limit fonts: 3 max, 2 preferred. Fancy fonts are *only* good for headlines. Large amounts of text are easier to read in serif (like Times New Roman or Bookman). This sentence uses Arial, a standard sans serif font.
- **FONT size:** Consider your audience. Seniors and children=larger. Web sites: small is really tough.
- **IMAGES:** see details in the next 2 bullets. Limit the number of images, crop them for effectiveness, repeat them to reinforce the message.
- **CLIPART:** please **resist!** One or two items of recent vintage are *possible*, but use them sparingly; repeat them to strengthen the visual message. A better choice is...
- **Royalty-free image sources:** There are some great ones, especially online. Photos, videos, cartoons, more. Fees are very low. See the lips? My favorite is www.istockphoto.com.
- **COLOR:** Yes, but use judiciously. Avoid “institutional” paper colors—faded blue, green, yellow. One ink color added to a b&w print document has big impact.
- **PAPER:** 20# stock (standard copy paper) is lousy for 2-sided documents—text bleeds through. Card or index stock hold up better (e.g., bookmarks). Unusual finish papers—metallic, parchment, textured—look “sophisticated.” In small runs (such as invitations), can be very cost-effective.
- **TEXT:** See White Space. Limit the words! The idea is to attract folks, make them ask for more information. If there’s too much stuff, it will be ignored.
- **Symmetry:** isn’t required and can look predictable. Some parts of our world are symmetrical, others aren’t. Off-center, right-justified, 3 or 5 part sections can work very well.