# HOW TO DESIGN
a better flyer

A good flyer (or poster) takes time and thought, but the added effort will pay off. Once you understand your audience and basic visual communications techniques, you'll be able to effectively communicate your message to your audience, and hopefully, get the response you want:

COMPOSITION
Your goal is to create **BALANCE** on the page. This does not mean everything needs to be centered. Picture the yin/yang symbol. It is perfectly-balanced--the white space gives strength to the black side and vice versa. In a successful flyer or poster design, the white space (where there is no text or art) is just as important as what is written or pictured.
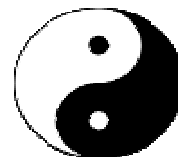
To help lay out a complicated flyer with a lot of information, consider using a grid. Look at how a newspaper page is set up. Each page uses a grid system that keeps everything lined up, making the piece easer to read overall.   Your **LAYOUT** should have a definite **FLOW**.   By nature, we read from left to right and top to bottom. Think about how the eye flows over the page. Determine the order you want your reader to follow. They'll see **IMAGES** first, then headlines & anything bolded next, then the smaller text. Keep the eye moving across the page so all your message is read.   Help your readers stay focused by adding a frame or border around the outside of the page - it will "trap" your readers' attention on your flyer or poster.

The **SIZE** of your paper can also affect composition. Eliminate too much white space by going to a half-sheet size. (You'll also get more flyers for your dollar).

TEXT
Most of your flyer will likely be words. Words are probably your biggest "design element" on your page. Here's how to use words to your advantage:

TRENDY   **ROMAN**   Electronic   **Energetic**

Poetic   Kids   Girly

Certain **FONTS** have different feelings. When you see cursive on a wedding invite, it looks romantic. The same font, however, would not be used on the cover of US News & World Report. Instead, you would see bold, simpler fonts that almost "scream" at you. Think carefully about your message and audience. What do you want your font to say? Outlined, bubbly and tilted fonts tend to appeal more toward children or 'fun' themes, while simple, bold fonts are more appropriate for adults (or more serious content).

You also need to consider **READABILITY**. You want your message to catch someone's eye and attract their interest. Make sure your font is easy to read! *Sans serif* fonts (with few wings or feet, like Arial) are often used for headlines and small amounts of text. *Serif* fonts (with wings and feet, like Times) are easier to read for large blocks of text, such as in a novel.

ARTWORK

PHOTOS are a great way to bring attention to your flyer, but sometimes do not copy well. If you do choose to use a photo, try copying it first, to see how it looks. Photos should show action and excitement! Remember to **CROP** first, to <u>eliminate unncessary background</u> and visuals that are not related to your subject.

CLIP ART is probably a better option, since <u>solid black lines</u> tend to photocopy well. (If your clip art has grey tones, test-copy the images before finalizing your flyer to see how they turn out on the copies).
When choosing clip art, consider your audience and their level of sophistication. Silly clip art works for some messages, while antique line art is better for others. For instance, if you are promoting a classic tea party, perhaps an old tea pot that looks like it was drawn with a fine pen is most appropriate. If the party is kid-oriented, clipart of a little tea set or dress-up hat would work nicely. Since <u>artwork is the first thing people see</u>, it must set the correct **TONE**. (Do make sure that artwork you select is not copyrighted).

One great piece of artwork should be enough for your flyer. Don't go overboard and try to show every inch of activity that will be taking place. That's what the text is for. If you do use more than one piece of art, try to select pieces that coordinate. Art used should match in tone and style, and pieces should compliment each other.

GETTING NOTICED
Consider your **DISTRIBUTION METHOD** and what will compete with your flyer for your audience's attention.
Try copying on colored paper and pick a color that reinforces your message and appeals to your audience.
Younger kids like flourescent green, for instance, but it would not be appropriate for use in a retirement community. Add a splash of **COLOR** to a white page (but also consider if it will be copied in black and white).
To <u>add some jazz</u> to your flyer, try using a rubber stamp. For example, if you were promoting a dog-walking event, you could try stamping random dog footprints over the page to add a nice personal touch.

WEBSITE LINKS
If your flyer will be added to a website as a link, it's important to consider the **FILE SIZE** of your flyer. In general, flyers that include graphics, big flowery fonts, or photos will be larger. Creating your flyer using Adobe software (.pdf files) will also add to file size. To insure that website viewers can properly access your link and be able to print your flyer, uploaded files should be <u>no larger than approximately 2.0 Mbytes</u>. Please check the file size of your flyer before forwarding it to your website's administrator.

POSTERS
Here's a great idea to develop an easy & quick poster: try taking your flyers and hanging four (or more) together to form a poster! The larger space they fill, together with the <u>repetition,</u> is both eye-catching and effective.

GUIDELINES FOR
girl scout events

INCLUSIVENESS

Remember, Girl Scouting is for every girl, everywhere. The Girl Scouts of Minnesota and Wisconsin River Valleys come from a wide range of economic, spiritual, educational, and ethnic backgrounds. Some girls have disabilities, some come from one-parent households, others live with grandparents or other legal guardians. As we plan events for girls, we have the opportunity to demonstrate Girl Scout values by designing themes, messages, and materials that <u>welcome EVERY Girl Scout</u> and family.

WHAT'S IN A NAME

To ensure that every girl and adult feels welcome and respected, GSMWRV recommends that troops and service units not use event names that include the phrases "father/daughter" or "mother/daughter." Instead, try "he and me," "she and me," or other phrases that consider people who don't live in a two-parent, mother/father household. The council also recommends using the following sentence on printed materials for this type of event: *"While the [event] is a great opportunity for girls to bond with a special [male or female] adult in their lives, girls are welcome to bring any relative, guardian, or family friend."*

USE OF THE GIRL SCOUT LOGO

Please remember to <u>use the Girl Scout logo on all printed materials</u> for your event. It's important that people see and remember the Girl Scout connection.

The preferred version of the Girl Scout logo is the horizontal logo.
If you need a copy of the logo, contact: bkelley@girlscoutsrv.org

WRITTEN
COMMUNICATIONS
tips

GENERAL REMINDERS
Our organization name is **Girl Scouts of Minnesota and Wisconsin River Valleys**:

> Do not use the word "council" in our proper name
> Do not abbreviate 'and' to '&'
> Always SPELL OUT Minnesota and Wisconsin, rather than abbreviating the state names
> The abbreviation GSMWRV is acceptable only in INTERNAL communications, not external or public materials
> References using "River Valleys" or "River Valleys Girl Scouts" are acceptable, only after using the full formal name once in each correspondence.

NEW: Always say and write - Girl Scout Daisy, Girl Scout Junior, Girl Scout Cadette (& so on), vs. Daisy Girl Scout, Junior Girl Scout, or Cadette Girl Scout.
Never use just the word "scouts" when referring to Girl Scouts. When communicating about both Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts, use that phrasing, not "Girl and Boy Scouts."

NOTES ON CAPITALIZATION & PUNCTUATION

Proper names: Capitalize when they are an integral part of a person, place or thing (Girl Scout New Member Night, Valley Lake Service Unit, Girl Scout Troop 55555)
Use lowercase when names stand alone in subsequent reference (service unit, service center, new member night)
Lowercase the common nouns in all PLURAL uses (Brooklyn Center and Northfield service centers, Brownie and Junior Girl Scout troops)

The Dash: The long dash is used to represent a dramatic pause and should always be the " -- " sign, not the " - " sign.

www lingo: *Website* is one word, lowercase; same with *webpage* .
Online and *email* do not have hyphens.

Exclamation point: Avoid overuse of exclamation points. They should only be used to express a high degree of surprise, incredulity or other strong emotion.
Never use more than one exclamation point together.

Reduce passive voice: Use action words whenever possible. It's much more engaging and exciting to read.
In most cases, you can easily take out the passive word "will," and change the verb tense.

Example: (passive) *This patch program will help girls discover that science is fun.*
(active)   *Girls discover science is fun through challenging, hands-on activities.*