

designing your web site

# comp

- the word **comp** is an abbreviation of the phrase “comprehensive dummy,” a term that comes from the print design world.
- it’s a complete simulation of a printed layout that’s created before the layout goes to press.
- in translating this term to web design, a **comp** is an image of a layout that’s created before we begin to prototype the design in HTML.

# main criteria of good design

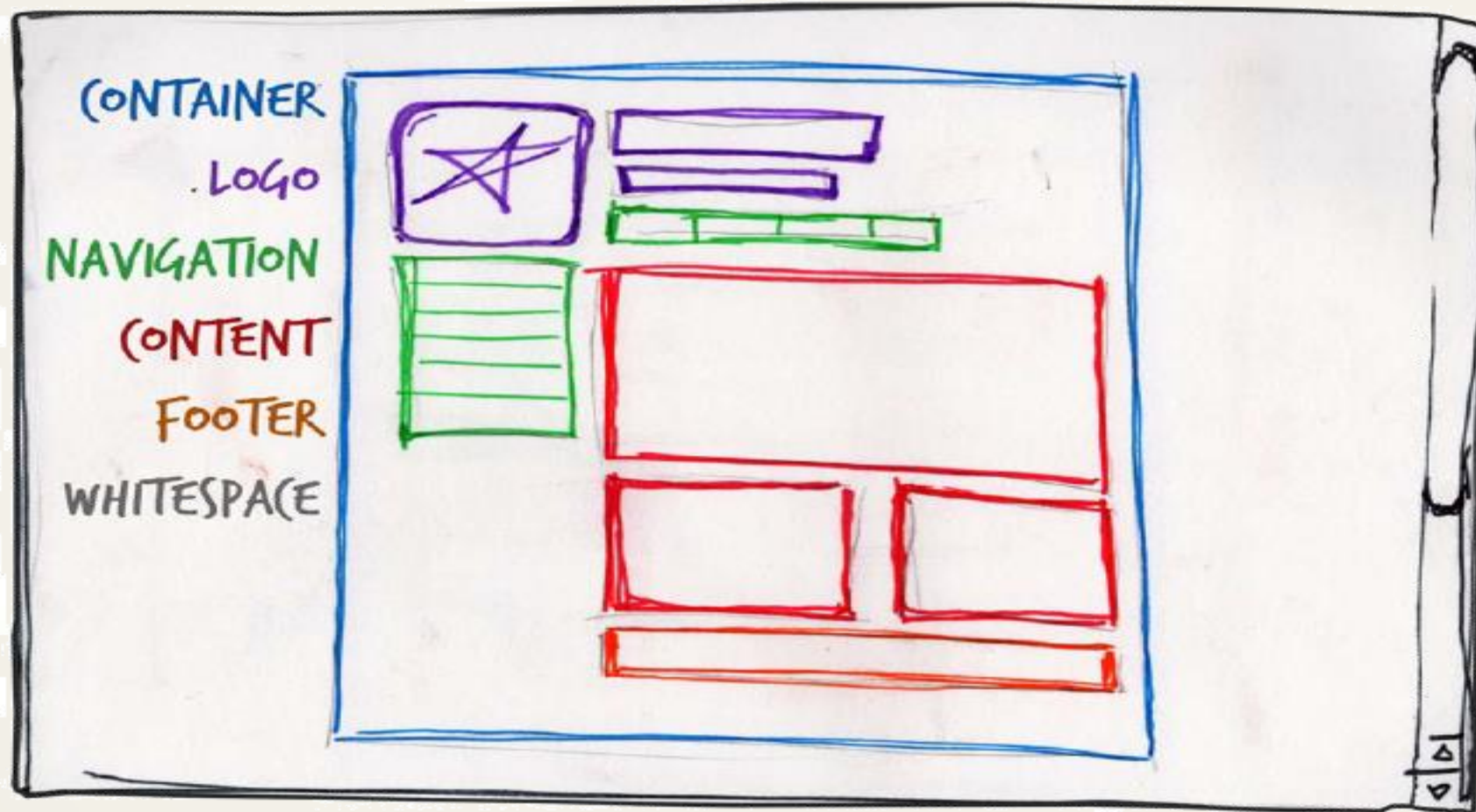


- Users are pleased by the design but drawn to the content
- Users can move about easily via intuitive navigation
- Users recognize each page as belonging to the site

# information architecture

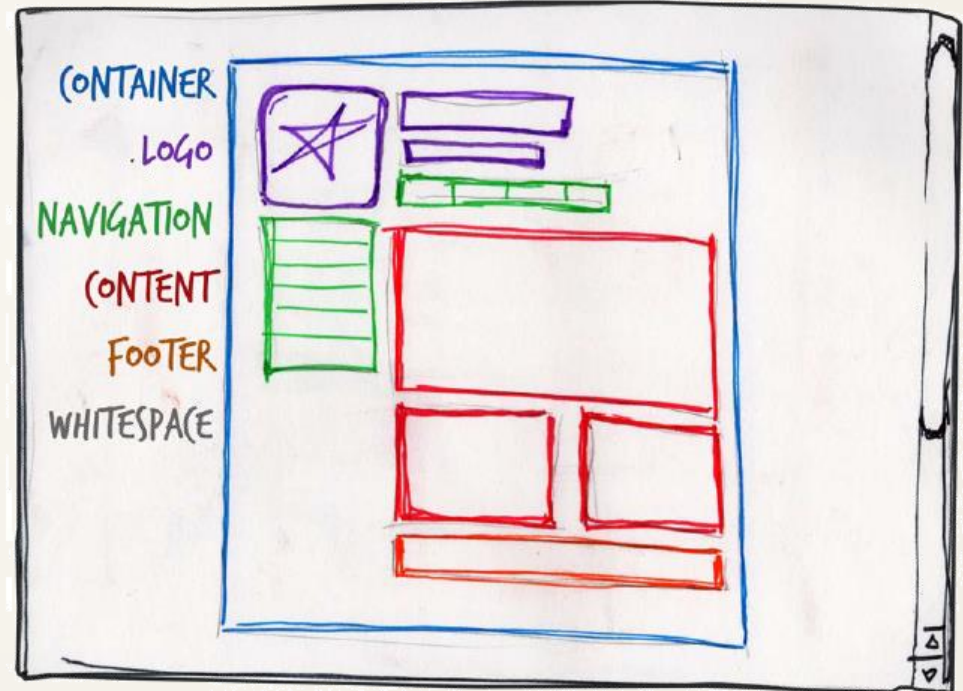
- organizing the content and flow of the website into a structure we can design around
- collect all the information to be presented on the web site, separate it into blocks of content and organize into a flow
- determine which pieces of information belong to the same page and then work on each page separately

# typical web page components



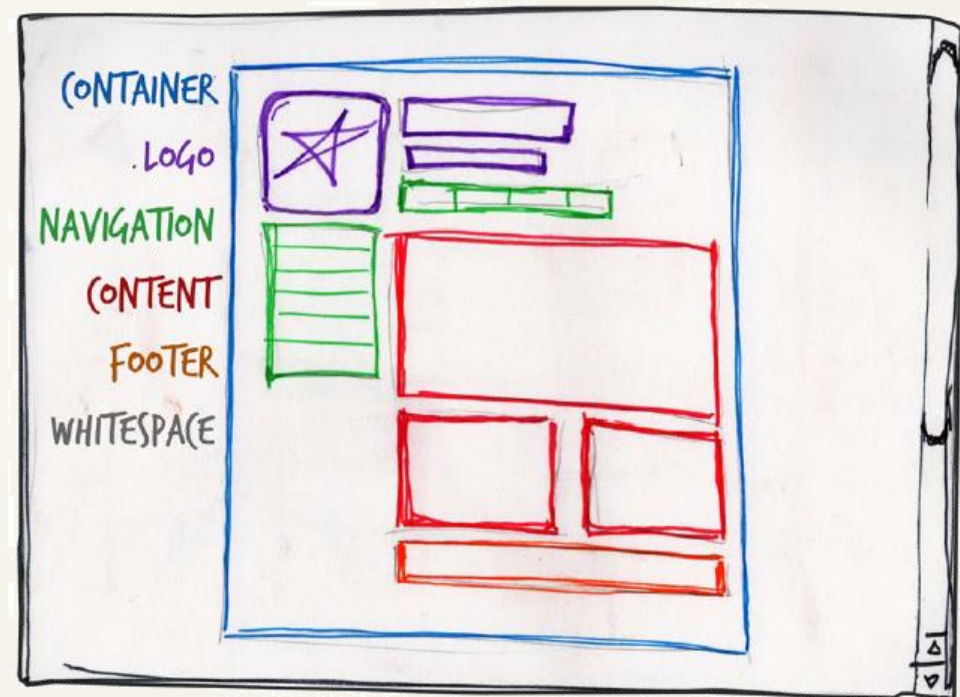
# containing block

- all-containing div tag
- define size, margins and centering



# logo and site identity

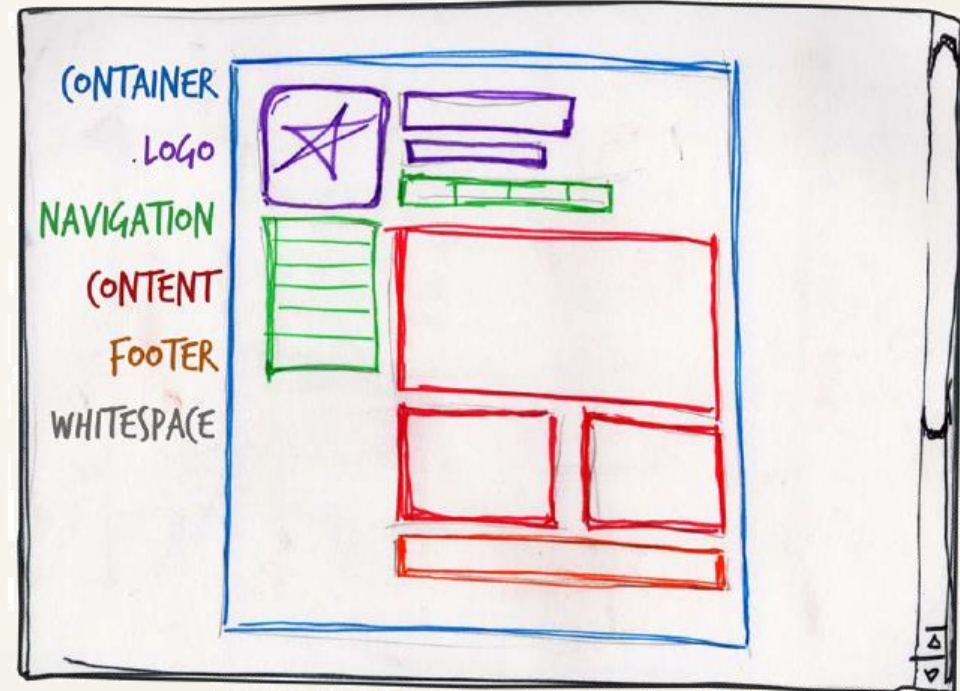
- the identity block that appears on the website should contain the logo or name, and sit at the top of each page of the website.
- the identity block is informing users that the pages they're viewing are part of a single site.





# navigation

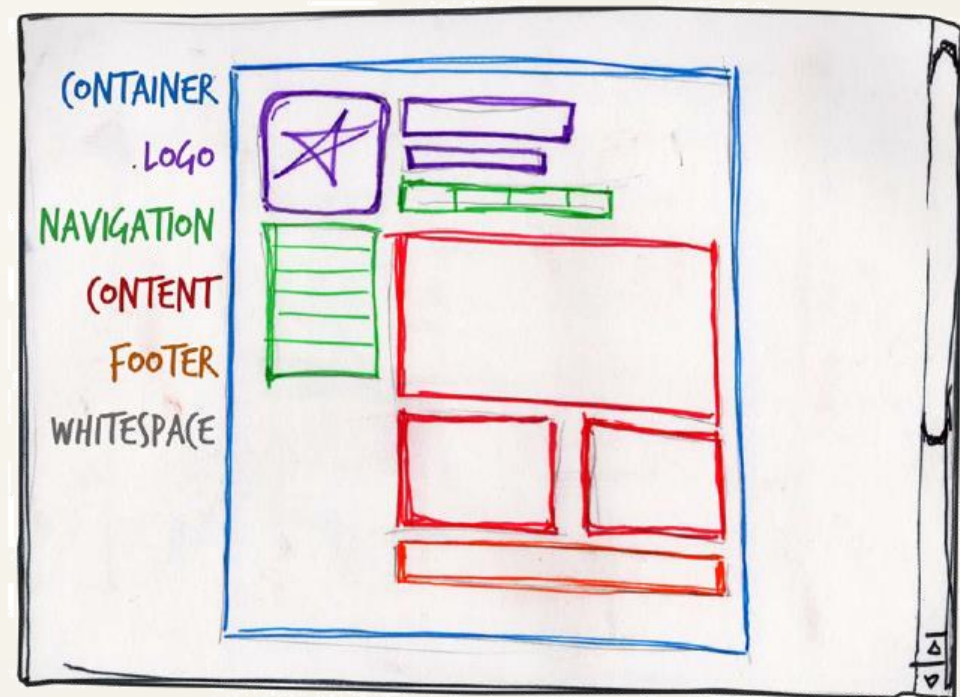
- it's essential that the site's navigation system is easy to find and use.
- it should appear in between 0 and 500 px from the top





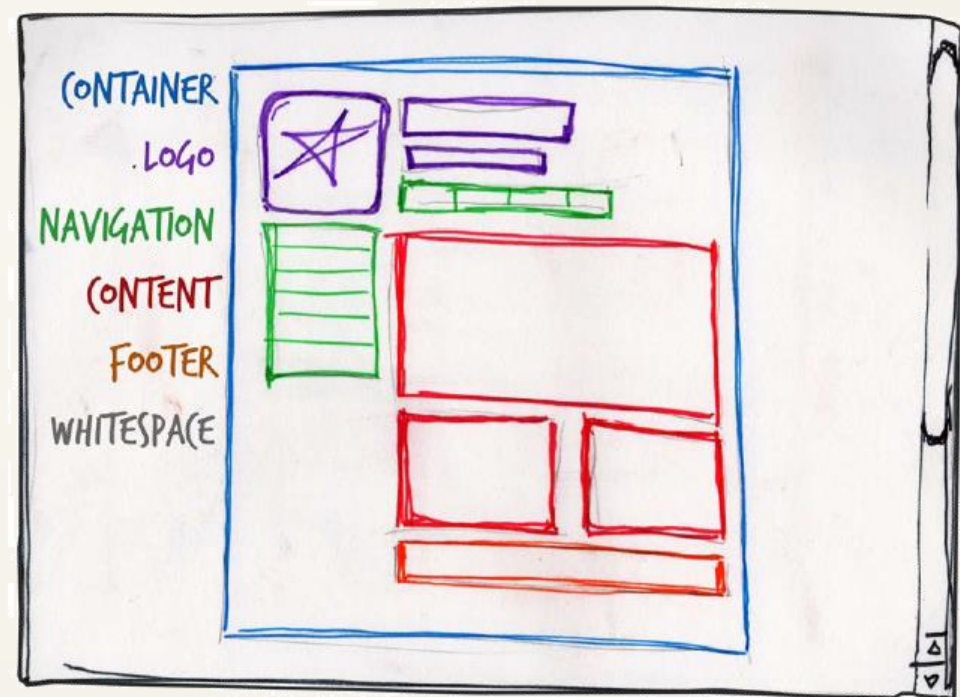
# content

- should be kept at focal point



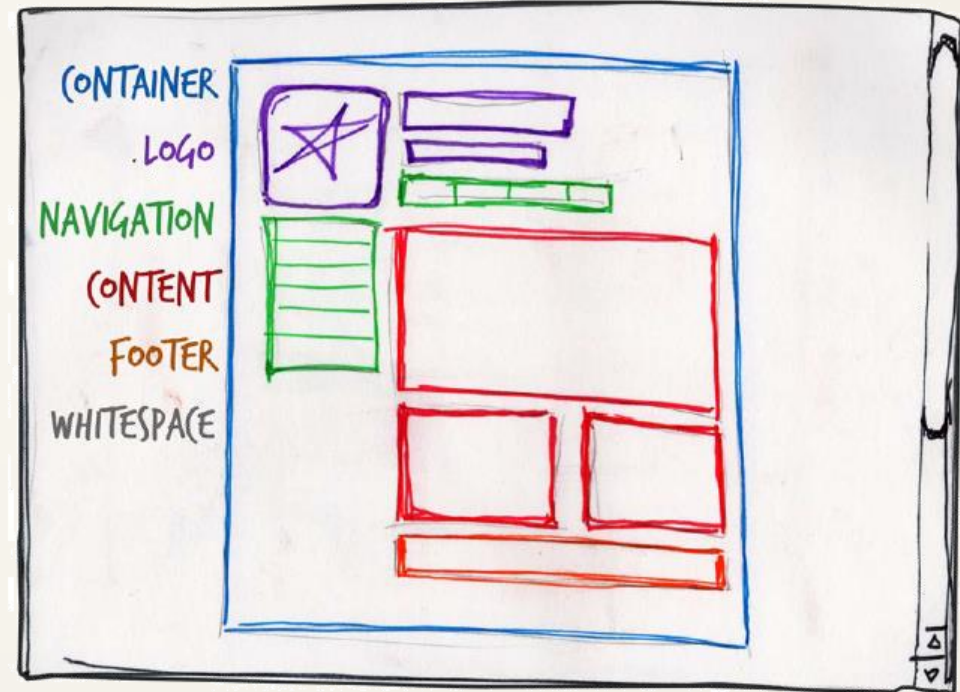
# footer

- usually contains copyright, contact, and legal information, as well as a few links to the main sections of the site.
- by separating the end content from the bottom of the browser window, the footer indicates to users that they're at the bottom of the page.



# whitespace

- without carefully planned whitespace, a design feels closed in, like a crowded room.
- whitespace helps a design to *breathe* by guiding the user's eye around a page, but also helps to create balance and unity



# design using grids

- the most used containing box has width 960px; the number is divisible by 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 15, and 16—making it an ideal for equally-spaced grid cells.
- We can create three layout foundations: one with 12 columns, one with 16 columns, and one with 24.
- People prefer to work from the 12-column templates, as they allow to easily divide content into quarters by spanning three columns, thirds by spanning four, and halves by spanning six.

# the golden ratio



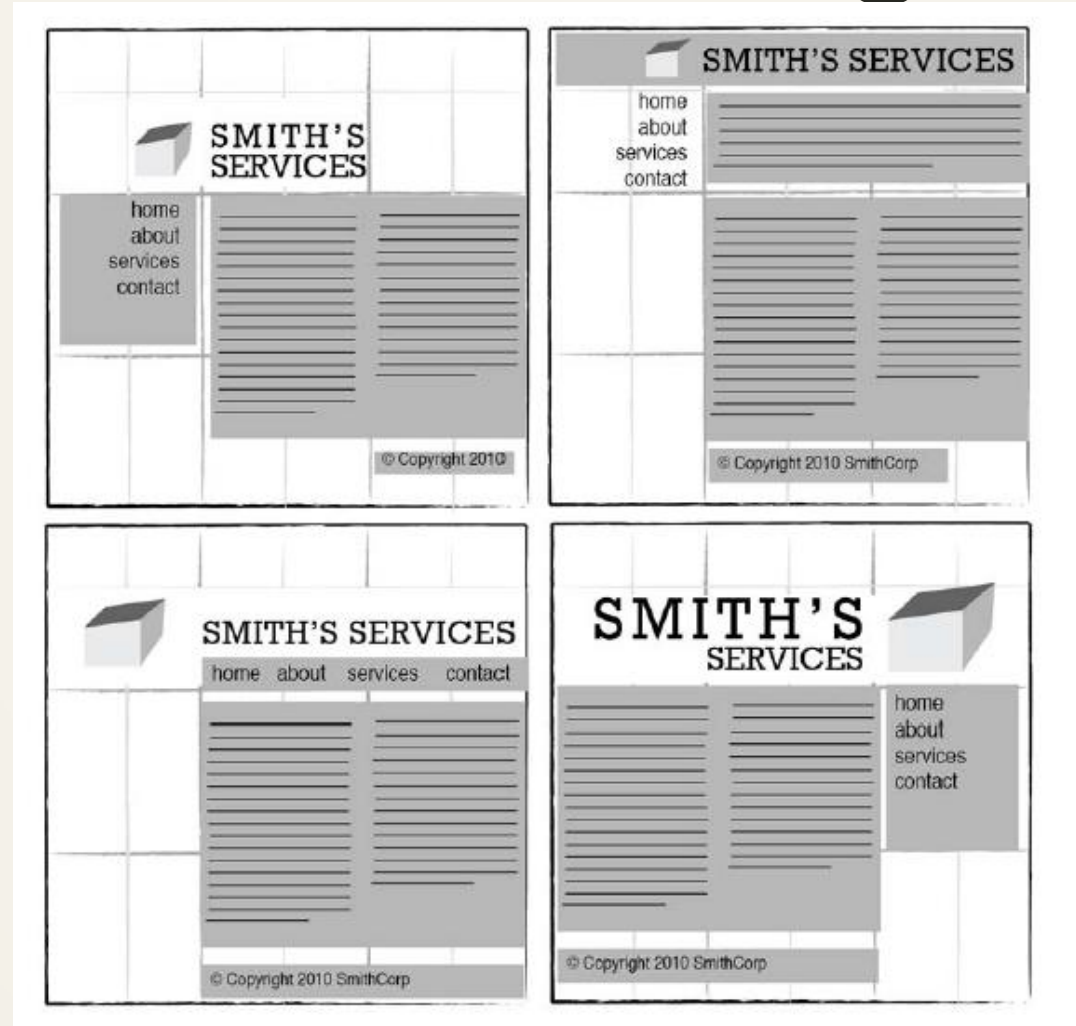
- the Pythagoreans observed a mathematical pattern that occurred so often in nature that they believed it to be divinely inspired.
- they referred to this pattern as the golden ratio or divine proportion.



# the rule of thirds

- in general, compositions divided by lines that are proportionate to the golden ratio are considered to be aesthetically pleasing.
- the artists of the Renaissance used divine proportion to design their paintings, sculpture, and architecture.
- designers today often employ this ratio when creating page layouts, posters, and brochures.
- a simplified version of the golden ratio is **the rule of thirds**: a line bisected by the golden ratio is divided into two sections, one of which is approximately twice the size of the other.

# sample rule-of-thirds grids inside containing block





- the longing we have for structure, grids, and ideal proportion is deeply ingrained in human nature.
- a layout that “doesn’t look quite right” can often be fixed by moving elements and resizing them on the grid.

# visual balance

- just as physical objects have weight, so do the elements of a layout.
- if the elements on either side of a layout are of equal weight, they balance one another.
- there are two main forms of visual balance: symmetrical and asymmetrical.

# symmetrical balance

[home](#) [portfolio](#) [journal](#) [elsewhere](#) [about](#) [contact](#)

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## Comment Trifecta

Let's face it, comments on blog posts aren't what they used to be. There's just too many ways to consume information. With [Refresh Columbia](#) in particular, meetup announcements start as blog posts, get automatically syndicated as a MailChimp email campaign, posted as a note on the Facebook fan page wall, read in a bunch of other RSS readers and announced on Twitter. Many of those steps (Specifically Facebook and Twitter) provide people external channels to communicate about the content here. I was trying to figure out a way to tie some of those conversations together and decided to give the [WPBook WordPress plugin](#) a try. According to ...

08/16/2010 | No Comments | Filed Under: Site

[Read More](#)

## Bonjour, my name is Jason!

I like to climb on things. Can I have a banana?  
*Eep. Eep.* I'm not really a monkey, I just play one on the internet. In real life, I'm a web designeloper. Here on my personal site, I tend to sidestep all things professional for more trivial faire. When I do write or speak about what I *actually do* for a living, I tend to do so [elsewhere](#). Feel free to [drop me a line](#) if you have questions, or use that frighteningly descriptive hyperlink below to learn more.



Learn more than you ever wanted to know...

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### Twitter, ya Follow?

Starbucks kicked me out. Back to work at home again till the caffeine wears off. [32 mins ago](#)

### Absolutely Scrumdillyumptious

Pencil Tip Micro Sculptures  
This collection of work by Dalton Ghetti belongs in a Ripley's museum. Amazing.

### The Hands vs. The Brains

Interesting article from Jared Spool about two types of workers.

### Finger Painting on the iPad

Time lapse video of artist David Kassin using the brushes app to paint a live model.

### The Principles of Beautiful Web Design



If you are squeamish about choosing colors, feel uninspired by a blank browser window, or get lost trying to choose the right font, then you should [check out my book](#).

### See Life Through My Eyes



### Recently

- 08.16 [Comment Trifecta](#)
- 08.14 [Redbox Frustration](#)
- 07.26 [Dr. Pepper Cherry Milk](#)
- 07.08 [The Climber](#)

# asymmetrical balance

- rather than mirror design on either side of the layout, asymmetrical balance involves objects of differing size, shape, tone, or placement.
- these objects are arranged so that, despite their differences, they equalize the weight of the page: if you have a large object on one side of a page, then you partner it with several smaller items on the other side.

- it's as if the entire composition is in a picture frame hanging by a single nail on the wall.
- it takes little weight on one side or the other to shift the entire picture off balance.



# balance using size and colors

- the wider column is often lighter in color—a tactic that creates a good contrast for the text and main content.
- the diminutive navigational column is often darker, has some sort of border.

Steinway History • Career Opportunities • Legal

ABOUT STEINWAY


*Steinway is dedicated to making the finest pianos in the world*

Steinway & Sons was founded in 1853 by German immigrant Henry Engelhard Steinway in a Manhattan loft on Varick Street. Over the next thirty years, Henry and his sons, C. F. Theodore, Charles, Henry Jr., William, and Albert, developed the modern piano. They built their pianos one at a time, applying skills that were handed down from master to apprentice, generation after generation.

*Each Steinway grand piano, for example, takes nearly a year to create. Nothing is hurried.*

Today, we still build our pianos that way. Each Steinway grand piano, for example, takes nearly a year to create. Nothing is hurried. Even the carefully selected woods employed in the rims, tops, soundboards, and actions cure for months in our yard, kilns and conditioning rooms, until they stabilize at a rigidly specified moisture content.

Steinway is dedicated to the ideal of making the finest pianos in the world. The result is instruments renowned for their unsurpassed quality. Pianos with such superior sound and responsive touch that they enchant the most demanding pianists. And we are preferred overwhelmingly by people who share the joy of playing and owning the



Henry E. Steinway



# unity

- a unified layout is one that works as a whole rather than being identified as separate pieces.
- two ways to create unity: proximity and repetition



# proximity: margins and padding

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## Unkgnome

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## Gnomenclature

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# repetition: unifying patterns



# emphasis or dominance

- often you identify an item in the content, or the layout itself, that you want to stand out.
- one method of achieving such emphasis is by making that element into a focal point.
- a **focal point** is any element on a page that draws the viewer's eye, rather than just being part of the page as a whole or blending in with its surroundings.

# emphasis can be achieved with

- placement
- continuance
- isolation
- contrast
- proportion



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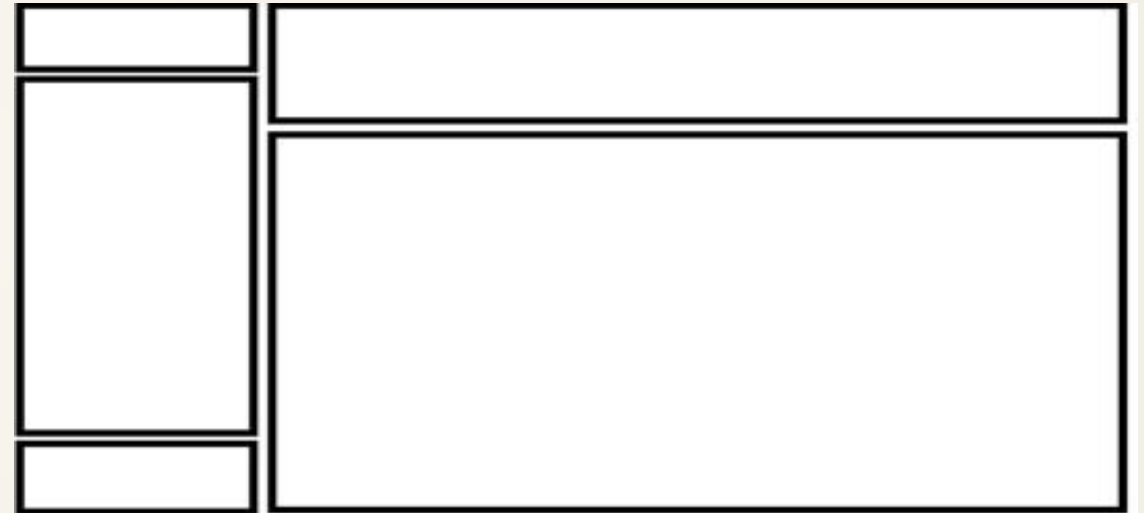
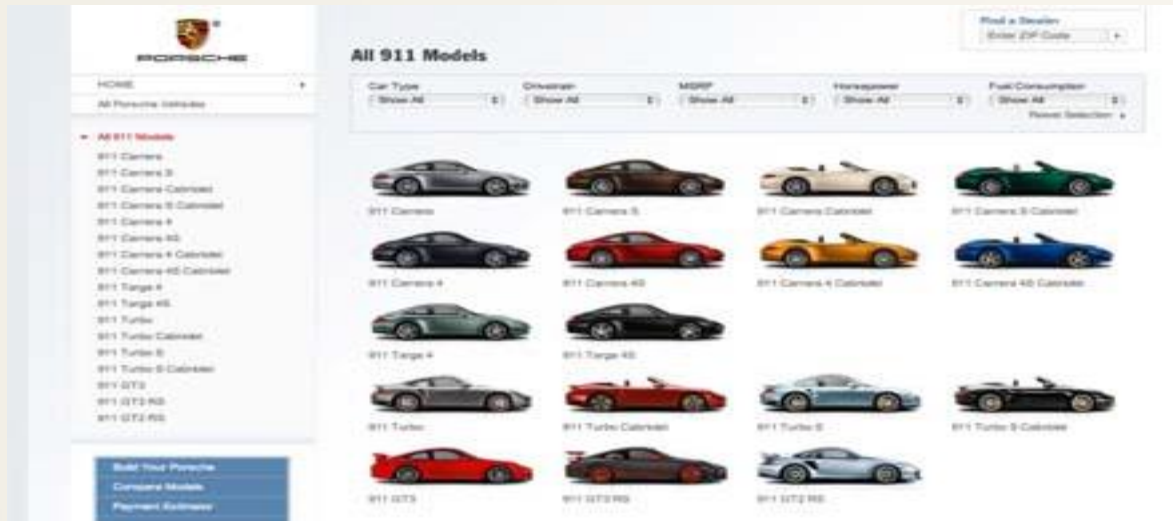
page layouts



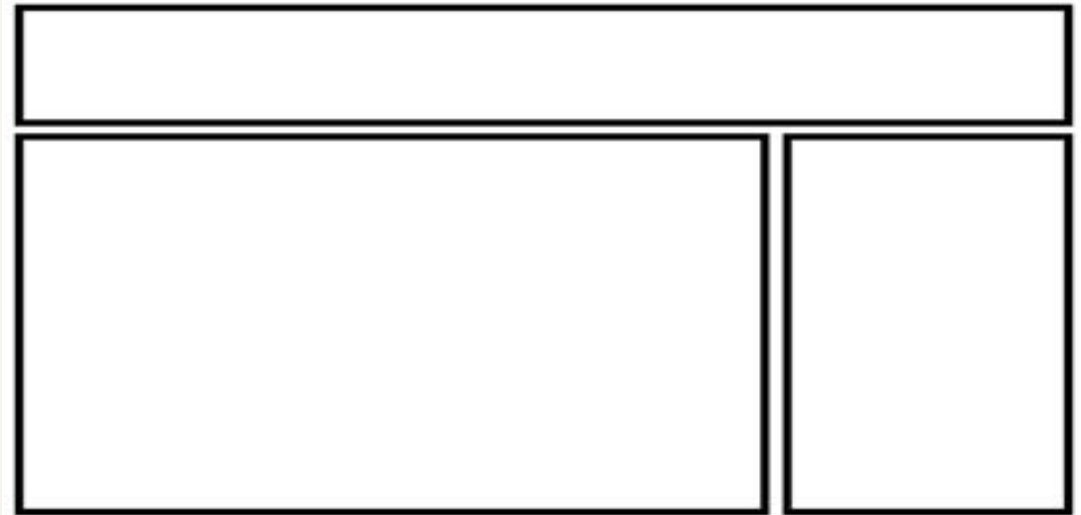
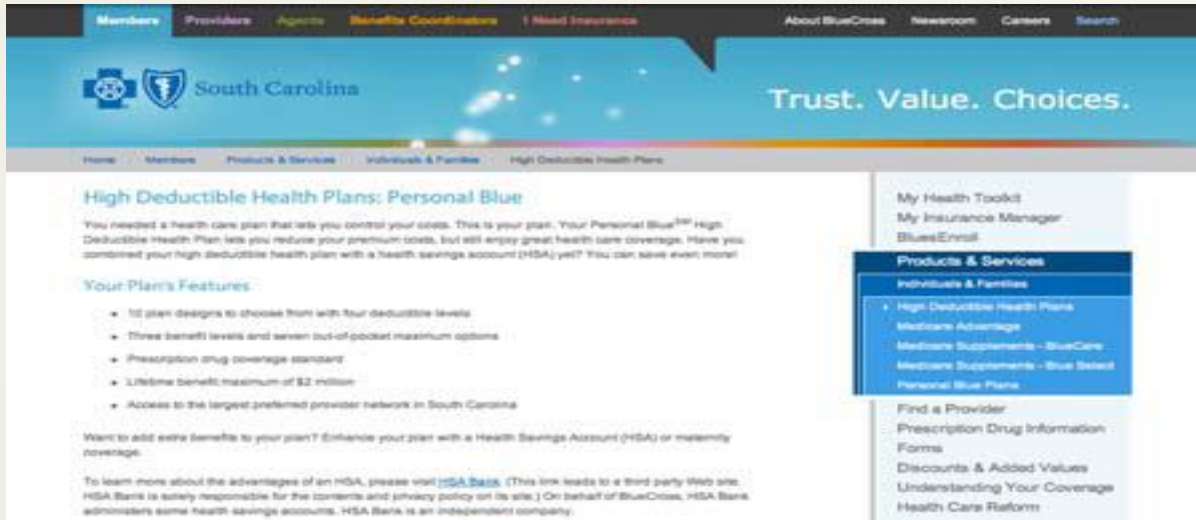
- If it's a simple site that doesn't require any secondary navigation, consider a narrow, column-less layout.

bread-and-butter layouts

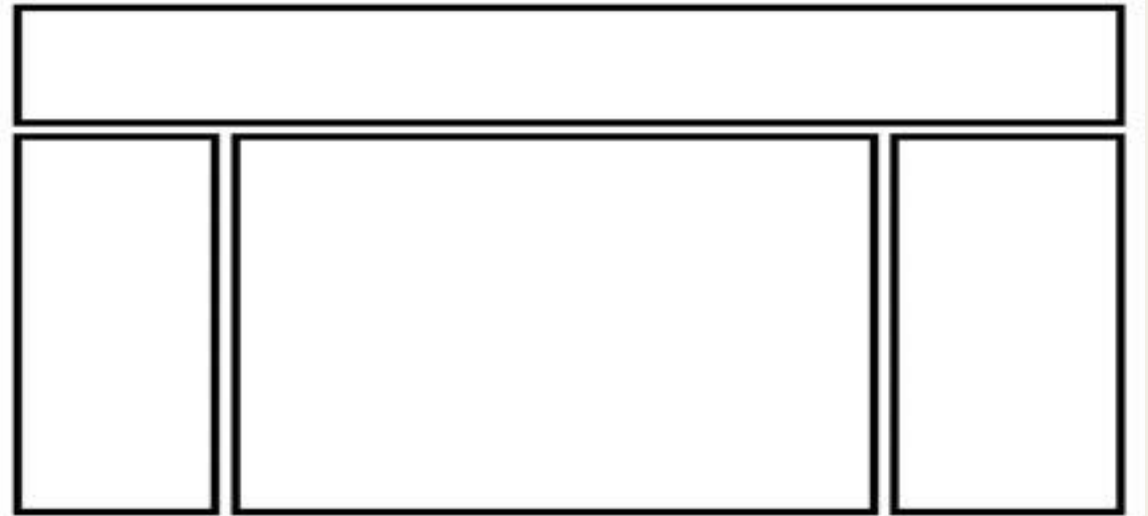
# left-column navigation



# right-column navigation



# the three-column navigation



# types of navigation

## navigation table

Company	Services	Quality	Resources	Contact
---------	----------	---------	-----------	---------

## navigation menu

<b>PROGRAMS</b>	<b>MENTORING</b>
Upcoming Programs	
Past Programs	

## navigation list

- > [Company Info](#)
- > [Press Releases](#)
- > [Customer Service](#)

## navigation tree

- ❏ Item 1
  - 📁 Folder 1
    - ❏ Sub Item 1.1
      - 📁 Folder 1.1
        - ❏ Sub Item 1.1.1
        - ❏ Sub Item 1.1.2
        - 📁 Folder 1.1.1
- ❏ Item 2

## navigation buttons

About Us	<b>Services</b>	Partners
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non-typical layouts



# content-based web site: no navigation



# extra-content in the footer

The screenshot shows a website footer with a dark blue background. At the top, there are three green buttons: 'WHAT IS IT?' with a right arrow, 'SIGN UP' with a right arrow, and 'LEARN MORE' with a right arrow. Below these is a yellow banner with the text 'Know What's Going On' and 'Get Emails and follow us on Facebook and Twitter.' It includes icons for Twitter and Facebook, an 'Email Sign Up' form with a 'GO' button, and a 'GO' button. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column has a 'Welcome to Show & Tell' section with a paragraph of text, followed by a 'Are You a Non-Profit?' section with a smiley icon and a 'CONTACT US' button. The right column has a 'Blog Entries' section with three entries: 'We Want to Help Your Community!' (Mar 2010, 0 Comments), 'Prosperity Versus Greed' (Apr 2009, 1 Comments), and 'Eating Out' (Apr 2009, 0 Comments). The footer itself is divided into four columns: 'Info for Sellers' with a list of links, 'Recent Blog Entries' with a list of links, 'We're Social' with social media icons and links, and 'Email Signup' with a text box and a 'GO' button. At the bottom, there is a copyright notice and a design credit.

WHAT IS IT? → SIGN UP → LEARN MORE →

**Know What's Going On**  
Get Emails and follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

Email Sign Up  GO

**Welcome to Show & Tell**

At Show & Tell Consignment Sale we *show* excellent items for a great price and you *tell* everyone you know about the sale. We also offer exciting opportunities for the **entrepreneur at heart** and for **non-profit organizations** to host their own sale. Let us know how we can help you and remember, tell everyone about Show & Tell Consignment Sale!

**Are You a Non-Profit?**  →

If you are looking for innovative ways to raise funds, we would love to show and tell you how.

**Blog Entries**

We Want to Help Your Community! Mar 2010  
*0 Comments*

Prosperity Versus Greed Apr 2009  
*1 Comments*

Eating Out Apr 2009  
*0 Comments*

**Info for Sellers**

- + Acceptable Items
- + Preparing Items
- + Dropping Items Off
- + Terms/Details
- + Payment
- + After the Sale
- + Calendar
- + Login

**Recent Blog Entries**

- + We Want to Help Your Community!
- + Prosperity Versus Greed
- + Eating Out

**We're Social**

- Join us on Facebook
- Follow us on Twitter
- Subscribe to Events
- Subscribe to Blog

**Email Signup**

Regular updates on sales and promotions in your area. Stay in the loop!

© 2010 Show & Tell. All Rights Reserved. Valid XHTML & CSS. Site Designed by FortySeven Media

# minimalism

## Analog

Analog is a company of friends who make web sites. It's a co-operative where imagination, design, and engineering thrive; good people doing good work.

By the way, with some GeoIP guesswork, it looks like you're in or near Columbia, SC. Chris is closest to you -- about 600 miles away in Brooklyn. Andrei is in San Francisco. Alan, Jon, and Jun are in the UK.

**PEOPLE** We're a tight-knit group of designers — Alan Colville and Jon Tan — and developers — Andrei Zmurevski, Chris Shiflet, and Jon Gibbins. Between us, we've authored and coauthored half a dozen books; given more than a hundred talks at conferences like OSCON, South by Southwest, FOWA, and Webstock; and helped the likes of Yahoo, Dell, National Geographic, Visa, and BlackBerry.

## Kha Hoang

**PORTFOLIO**

Agnes Brontmar  
Bel Harbor  
Uran Bay Club  
L&L  
Narungachina  
Wilder Winestate  
Accounting  
Selly Group  
Spring  
The Heritage House  
The Tent

*Design is thinking made visual.*  
- Saul Zaentz

**Featured**  
• Apple Talent

**CONCEPTS**  
**ABOUT**

hello@khaohang.com  
san Francisco 08:48 pm

# inspirational ideas

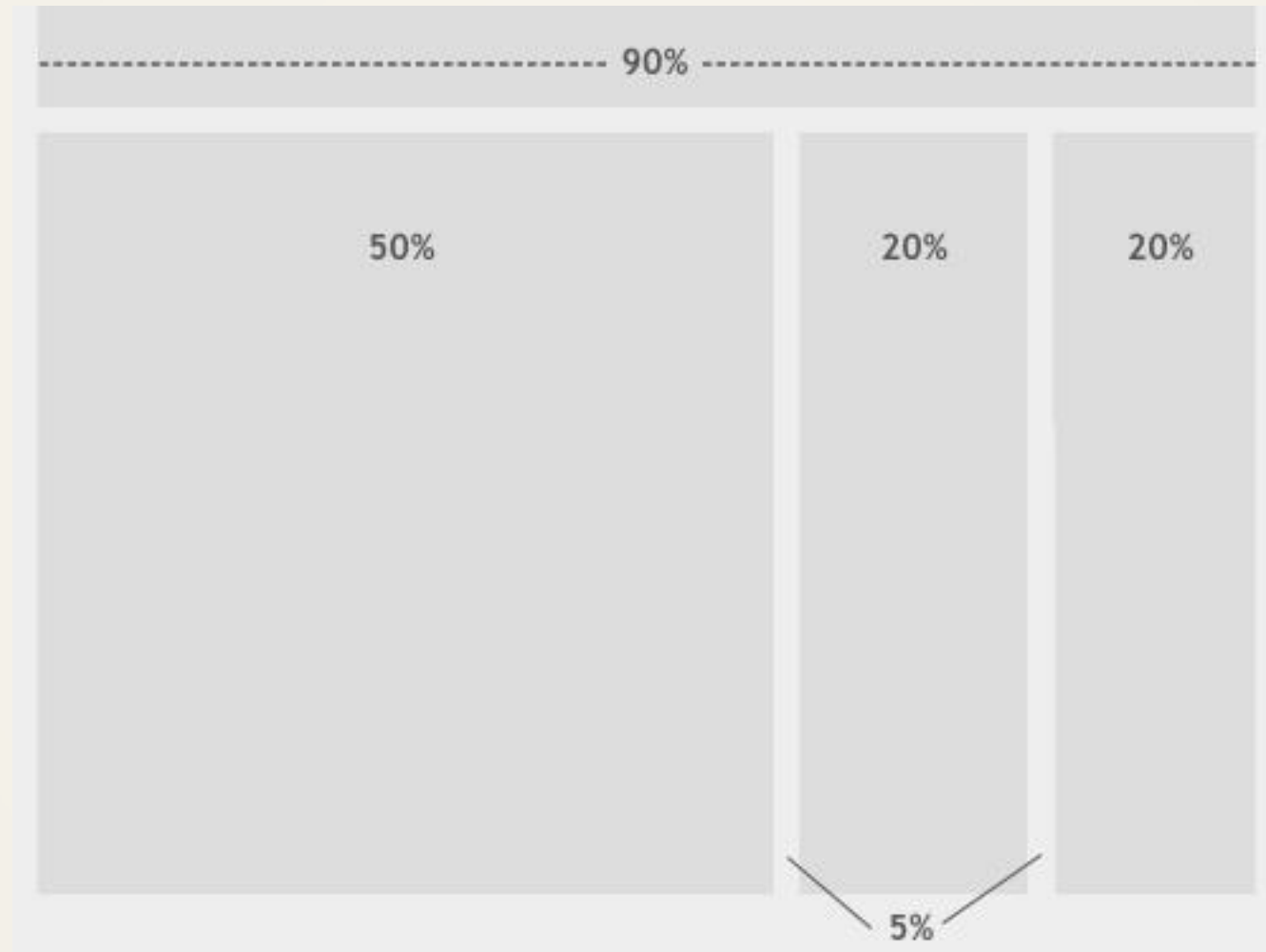
- <http://unmatchedstyle.com/gallery>
- <http://www.cssdrive.com/>
- <http://patterntap.com/>
- <http://designmeltdown.com/>
- <http://www.csszengarden.com>

technical types of layouts

# Fixed layouts (crunchy)



# Fluid layouts (squishy)





# Responsive layouts

THE WEBLOGUE      BACK ISSUES      ABOUT OUR PAPER

## The Baker Street INQUIRER

**“Give me problems, give me *work*.”**

In the year 1878 I took my degree of Doctor of Medicine of the University of London, and proceeded to Netley to go through the course prescribed for surgeons in the army. Having completed my studies there, I was duly attached to the Fifth Northumberland Fusiliers as Assistant Surgeon. The regiment was stationed in India at the time, and before I could join it, the second Afghan war had broken out. On landing at Bombay, I learned that my corps had advanced through the passes, and was already deep in the enemy's country.

victors & villains

 SHERLOCK HOLMES	 DR JOHN HEMISH WATSON	 MYCROFT HOLMES
 PROF JAMES MORIARTY	 IRENE ADLER	 JAMES WINTER

Illustrations by Sidney Paget, words by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.  
What remains is by Ethan Marcotte.



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What remains is by Ethan Marcotte.

# Elastic layouts

“A pixel is an unscalable dot on a computer screen, whereas an em is a square of its font size. Because font sizes vary, the em is a relative unit that responds to users’ text-size preferences.”

- [Patrick Griffiths, A List Apart](#)

- An elastic design is sometimes preferred by designers because it **mixes the two other main layout types**. It works by sizing all elements with **em**'s.
- If implemented correctly, this layout style can be very user-friendly. The goal is to have everything grow larger or smaller in proportion with the user's preference.
- This type of layout is much more difficult to create than the other two