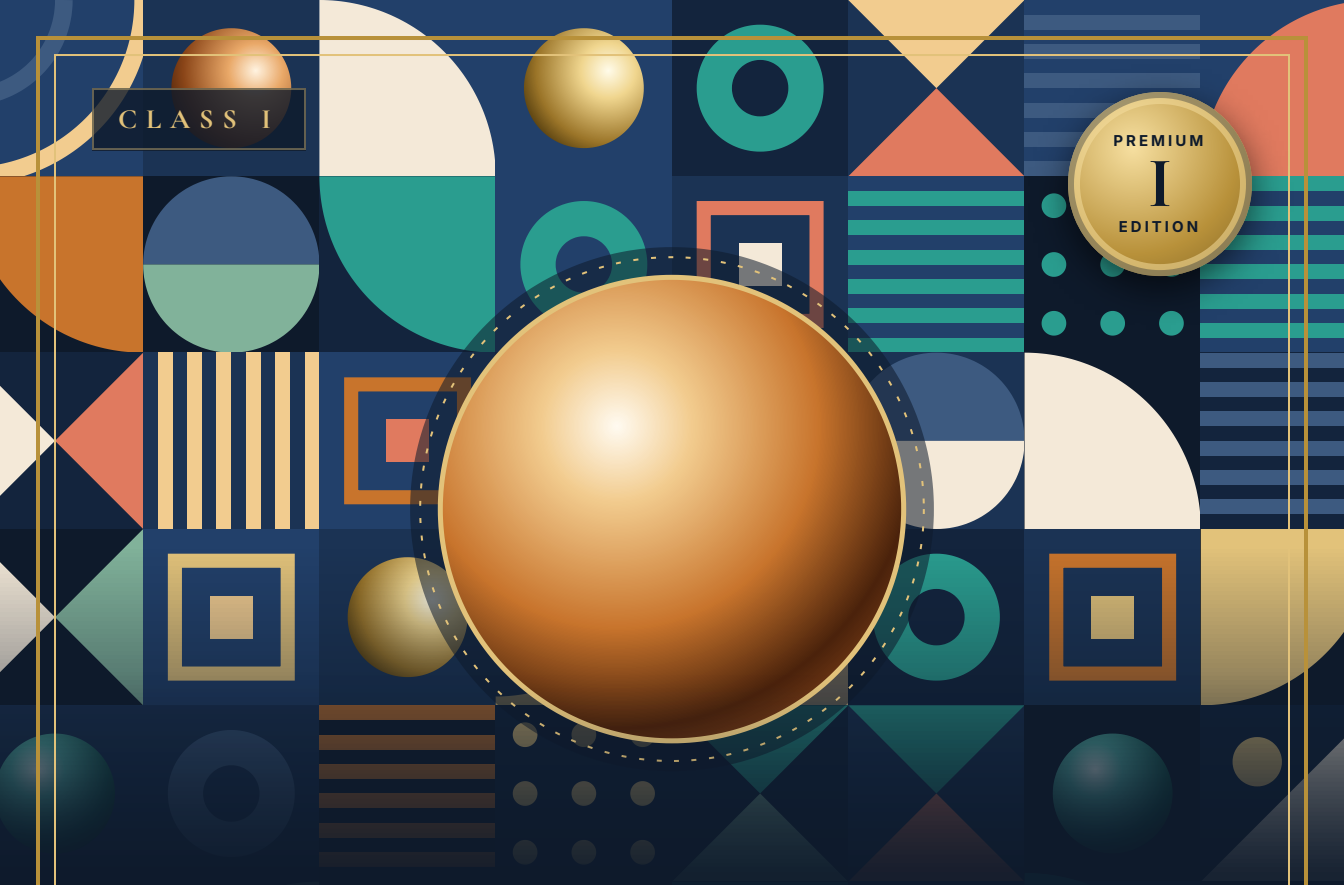
CLASS I

PREMIUM
I
EDITION



KECUDO

DESIGN PRINCIPLES SERIES

The *Elements* of Design

A visual course in the raw materials of design — with original illustrations, worked examples and 64 self-check questions

POINT · LINE · SHAPE · VOLUME · VALUE · COLOR · TEXTURE · PATTERN · SPACE · DEPTH

CLASS 1 · 2026 EDITION · DESIGNER SERIES

KECUDO

Front matter

Contents

About this book 2

Part I · Foundations

1. Elements vs Principles 5
2. Point & Line 8
3. Shape 11
4. Volume & Form 14

Part II · Core

5. Value 18
6. Color as an Element 21
7. Texture 24
8. Pattern 27

Part III · Advanced

9. Space 31
10. The Illusion of Depth 34
11. Optical Illusions 37
12. Unity 40
13. Element Audit 43

Self-assessment

Self-assessment 46
Your result 52

FOUNDATION

Chapter 1

Elements vs Principles: The Designer's Toolkit

Every design — a poster, an app screen, a coffee cup — is built from a small set of raw materials, the **elements**, and arranged by a set of rules, the **principles**. Elements are *what* you work with; principles are *how* you arrange them.

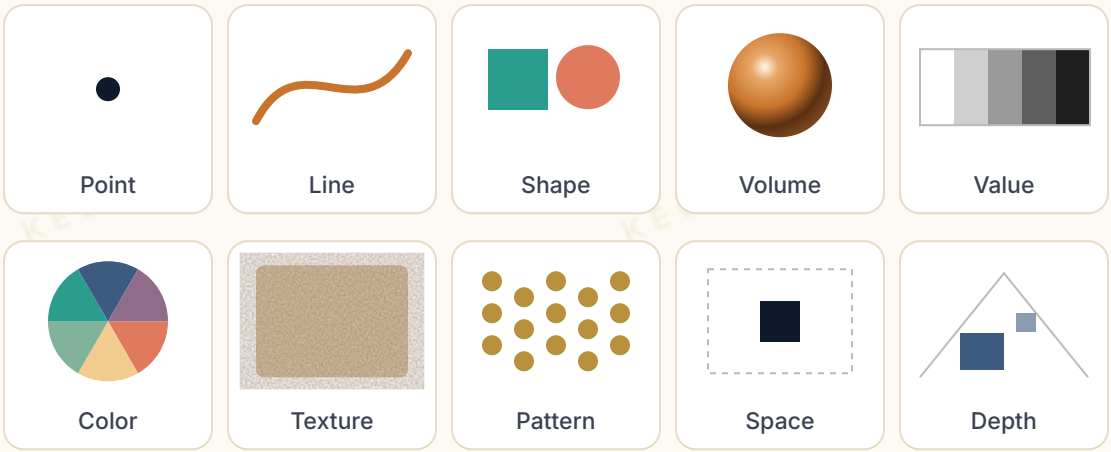


FIG 1.1 · The ten building blocks covered in this book.

Think of the elements as ingredients and the principles as the recipe. This book teaches the ingredients; **Class 2** teaches the recipe: balance, proportion, emphasis, rhythm and unity.

Two ideas that guide everything

Architect Louis Sullivan wrote that *form ever follows function*: a thing's shape should come from its job. Industrial designer Dieter Rams summed up his Braun work as *less, but better*: remove what does not help, refine what remains.

ELEMENT	WHAT IT DOES FOR THE VIEWER
Point · Line	Leads the eye, divides, outlines
Shape	Creates fast, recognisable areas
Volume · Form	Suggests three dimensions and weight
Value	Creates light, dark, depth and readability
Color	Sets mood, signals meaning
Texture	Suggests how a surface would feel
Pattern	Repeats a motif to build rhythm and identity
Space · Depth	Gives room, separates, creates depth

WORKED EXAMPLE · KECUDO BREW CO.

Kecudo Brew Co. (fictional) runs 12 coffee shops and is redesigning its order-ahead page, menu boards and cups. The brief: a commuter with one free hand should find and tap **"Order ahead"** within 5 seconds. We audit every element of this brand as the book goes on.

Espresso `#3b2416` Crema `#c8742c` Cream `#f5ead8` Latte `#d9c3a5`

FOUNDATION

Chapter 2

Point & Line

A point is the smallest mark a designer can make. Set it in motion and it becomes a line: the first and most direct tool for telling the eye where to go.



Horizontal	Vertical	Diagonal	Curved	Zig-zag
calm · rest	strength · height	energy · motion	soft · organic	tension · alarm

FIG 2.1 · Line direction carries emotion before any word is read.

- **Actual lines** are drawn: rules, borders, underlines, strokes.
- **Implied lines** are suggested: a row of aligned items, a person's gaze, the edge where two colours meet.
- **Weight** signals importance. Keep to 2–3 line weights per design.
- **Quality** (smooth, rough, dashed) adds personality: hand-drawn lines feel informal; crisp lines feel precise.

FOUNDATION

Chapter 3

Shape

A shape is a closed, two-dimensional area. People recognise shapes before they read a single word, so shape is often the fastest way to communicate.



Geometric — ordered, precise **Organic — natural, human** **Symbolic — meaning**

FIG 3.1 · Three shape families and what they tend to say.

- **Geometric** — circles, squares, triangles: ordered, man-made, precise.
- **Organic** — leaves, splashes, beans: natural, friendly, human.
- **Symbolic** — icons and pictograms: a whole idea in one simplified shape.
- **Shape psychology** is cultural, not universal: circles often read as community and softness, squares as stability, triangles as direction or tension.

Self-assessment

Part A · Basics

1. Elements of design are...

- **A** Rules for arranging
- **B** The raw materials of design
- **C** File formats
- **D** Print settings

2. A diagonal line usually suggests...

- **A** Calm
- **B** Stability
- **C** Energy and movement
- **D** Silence

3. Which is an organic shape?

- **A** A coffee-bean outline
- **B** A square
- **C** A triangle
- **D** A rectangle

4. Value describes...

- **A** Hue family
- **B** Texture
- **C** Size
- **D** Lightness or darkness

5. Negative space is...

- **A** A mistake
- **B** Empty space around and between elements
- **C** Dark colour
- **D** A shadow

K

KECUDO

Thank you for learning with Kecudo.

NEXT IN THE SERIES

Class 2 · The Principles of Composition

Balance, proportion, emphasis and focal point, rhythm and unity — arranging the elements you now know, as the Kecudo Brew redesign continues.

kecudo.com