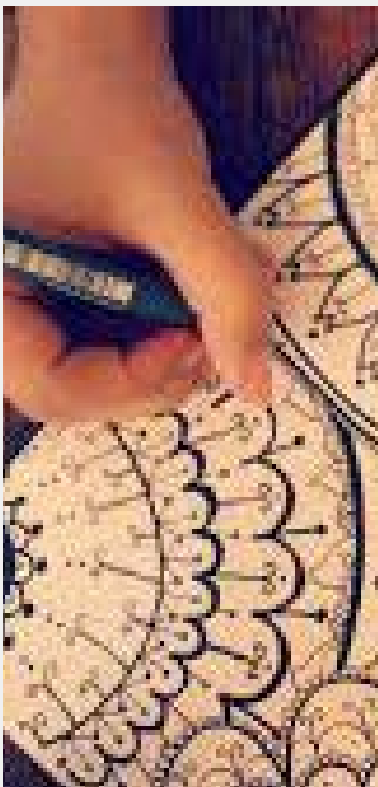




# How **2** Guide

Creative Thinking

# Contents



Creativity	3
<i>What is Creativity?</i>	3
<i>Barriers and motivators</i>	4
<i>The elements of design</i>	4
<i>The principles of design</i>	6
Finding inspiration	9
<i>Fashion</i>	9
<i>Art</i>	10
<i>Architecture</i>	11
<i>Movements</i>	12
<i>Performance Art</i>	13
Is this you?	14
<i>What do you see?</i>	17
What next?	20
<i>Inspiration</i>	20
<i>Creative techniques</i>	21
<i>Sketching used in the Design industry</i>	30

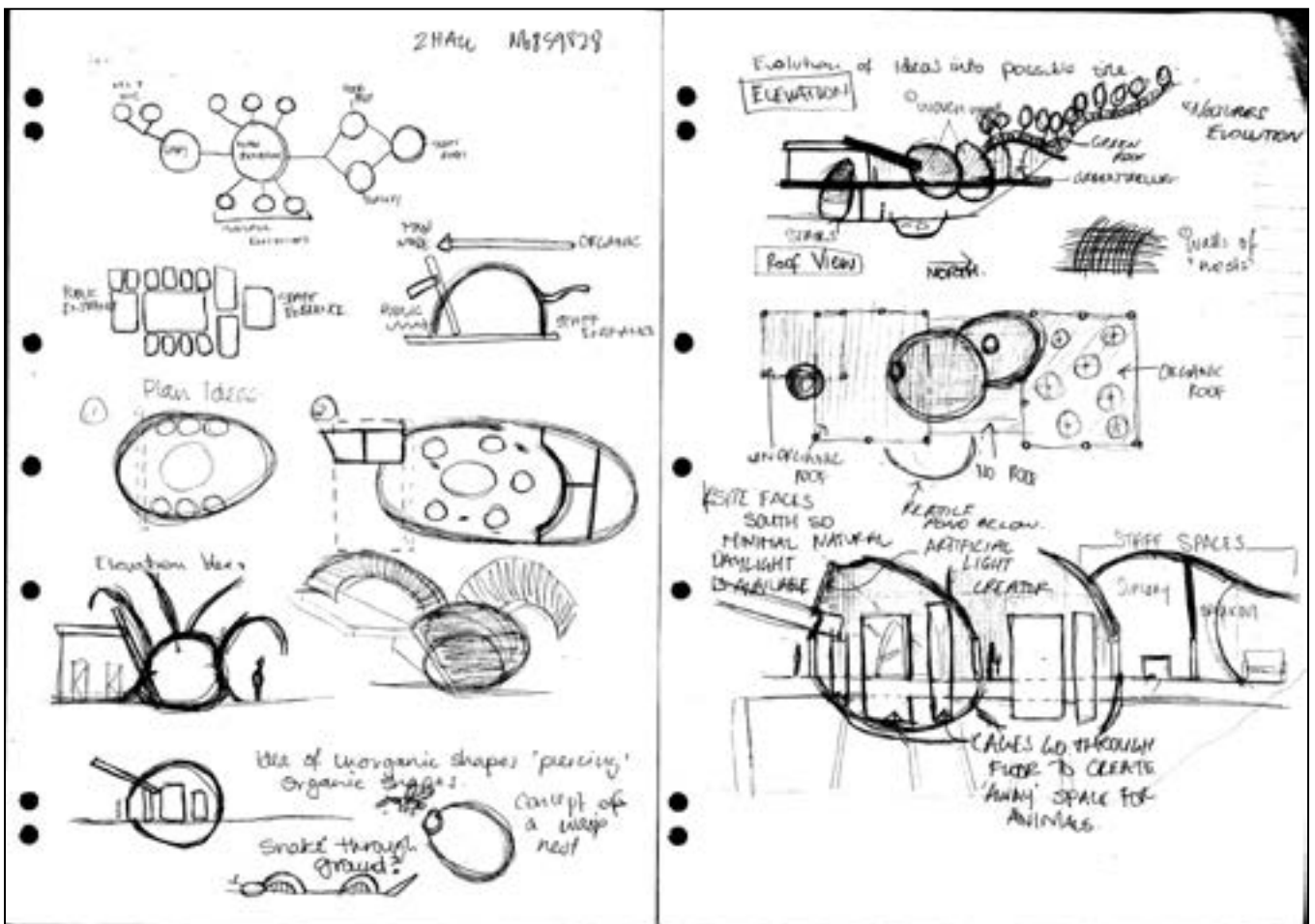
# Creativity

## What is Creativity?

There are one million and one ways to define this meaning and it is a question that all designers will wrestle with and explore throughout their studies and definitely through out their careers.

Creativity could be your worst nightmare or your best friend, it can be your cure or your curse. However, we all have the ability to tap into our very own reserve of this mysterious skill.

Hopefully throughout this guide you will learn some basic techniques that will help you to start developing your creative skills.



Architecture design concept examples



## Barriers and motivators

Some of the first things you must do before tapping into your creativity is to understand yourself. **What motivates you?** (interest you and makes you want to work harder) and at the opposite end of the spectrum, **what slows you down or stunts your creativity?** There are known as *barriers*.

Over the next few pages explore the rules and constraints that you as a designer work in/with. These are formally known as the *elements and principles of design*. Also, discover how people throughout time have stretched these boundaries and broken these rules to create new and exciting ideas.



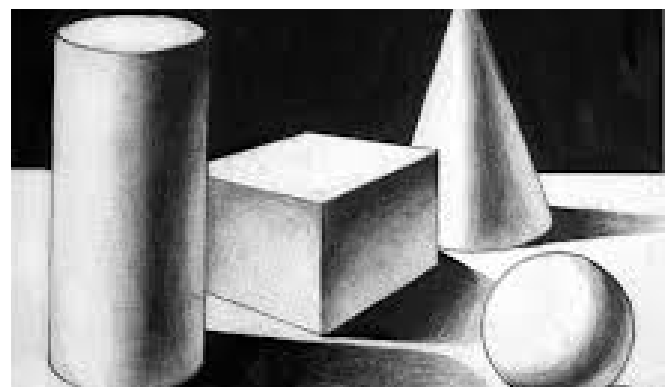
## The elements of design

### Line

A line can be considered in two ways. The linear marks made with a pen or brush or the edge created when two shapes meet.

### Shape

A shape is a self contained defined area of geometric or organic form. A positive shape in a painting automatically creates a negative shape.



## Direction

All lines have direction - Horizontal, Vertical or Oblique. Horizontal suggest calmness, stability and tranquillity. Vertical gives a feeling of balance, formality and alertness. Oblique suggest movement and action.

## Size

Size is simply the relationship of the area occupied by one shape to that of another.



## Texture

Texture is the surface quality of a shape - rough, smooth, soft, hard, glossy, etc. Texture can be physical (tactile) or visual.

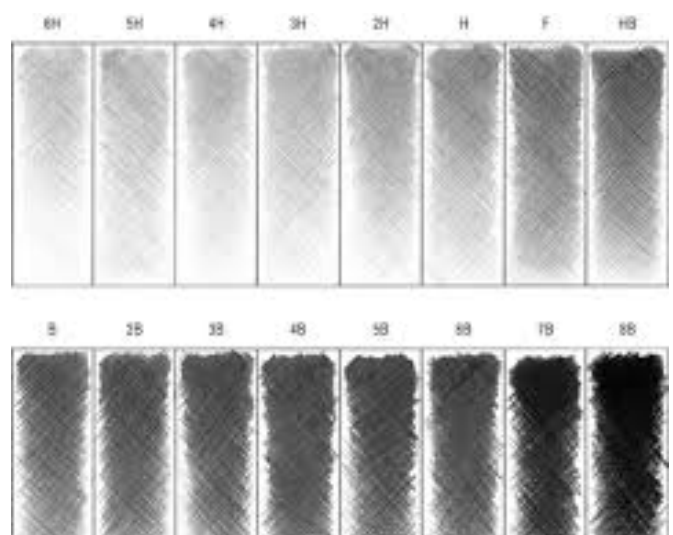
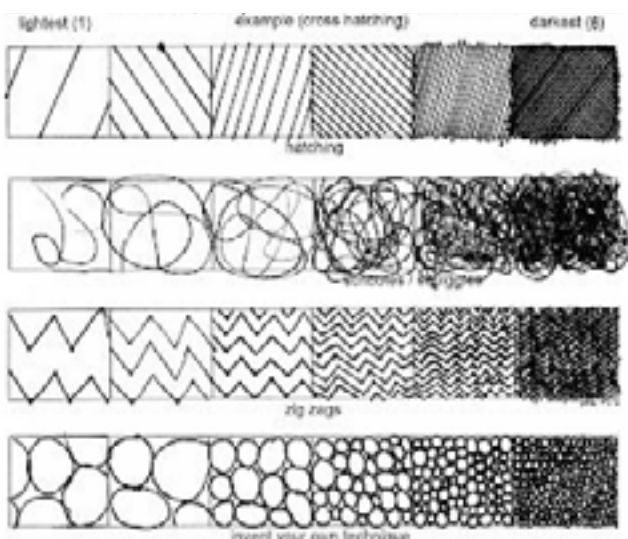
## Colour

Also called Hue

## Value

Value is the lightness or darkness of a colour. Value is also called Tone.

Text taken from the John Lovett website for more information see - [www.johnlovett.com/test.htm](http://www.johnlovett.com/test.htm)



## The principles of design

### Balance

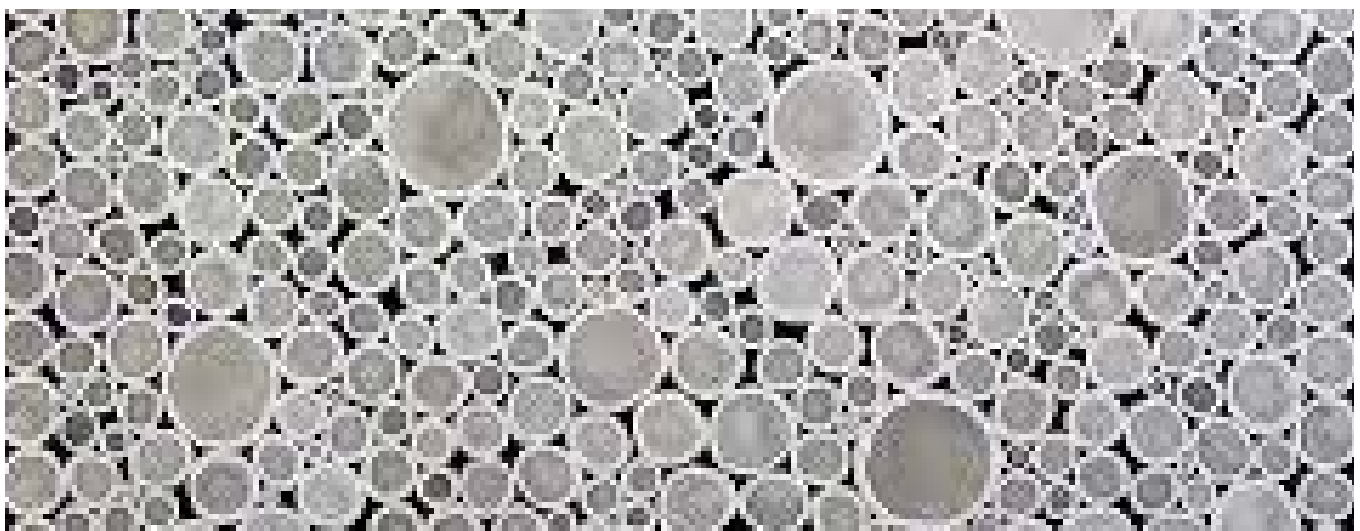
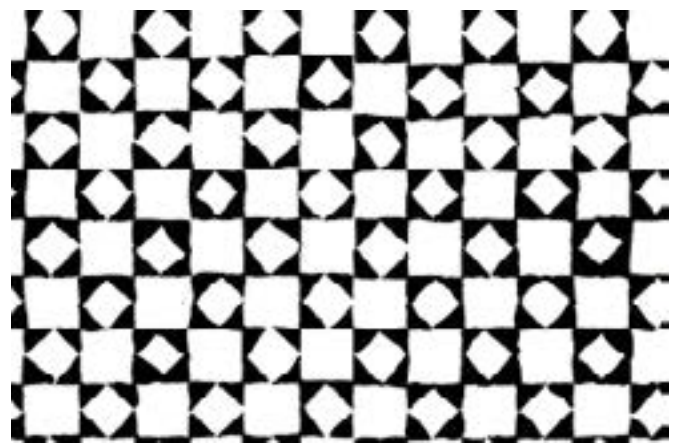
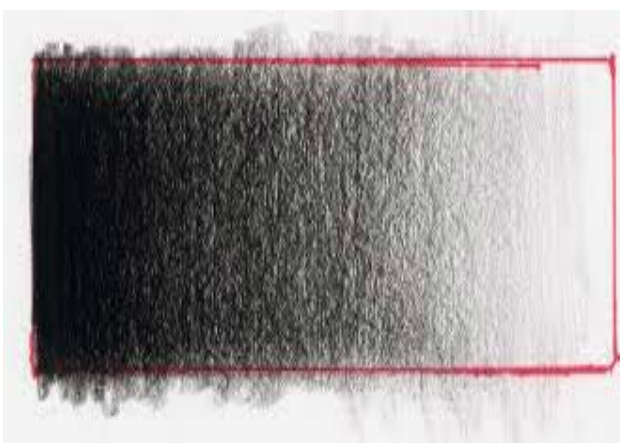
Balance in design is similar to balance in physics. A large shape close to the centre can be balanced by a small shape close to the edge. A large light toned shape will be balanced by a small dark toned shape (the darker the shape the heavier it appears to be).

### Gradation

Gradation of size and direction produce linear perspective. Gradation of colour from warm to cool and tone from dark to light produce aerial perspective. Gradation can add interest and movement to a shape. A gradation from dark to light will cause the eye to move along a shape.

### Repetition

Repetition with variation is interesting, without variation repetition can become monotonous. When variation is introduced, the five squares, although similar, are much more interesting to look at. They can no longer be absorbed properly with a single glance. The individual character of each square needs to be considered. If you wish to create interest, any repeating elements should include a degree of variation.



## Contrast

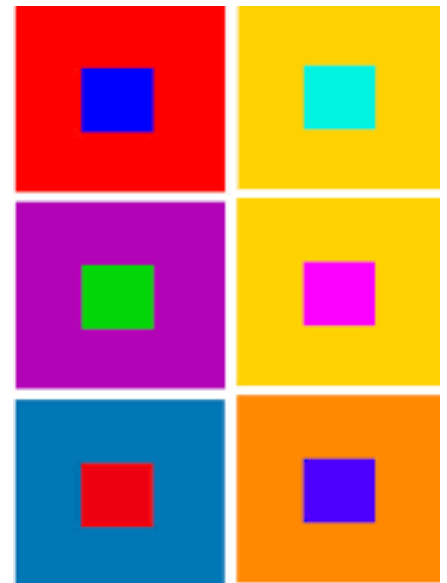
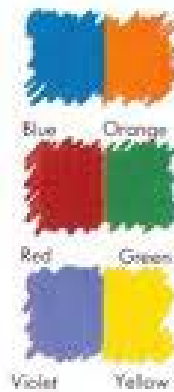
Contrast is the juxtaposition of opposing elements e.g. opposite colour on the colour wheel - red/green, blue/orange etc. Contrast in tone or value - light/dark. Contrast in direction - horizontal/vertical.

The major contrast in a painting should be located at the centre of interest. Too much contrast scattered throughout a painting can destroy unity and make a work difficult to look at. Unless a feeling of chaos and confusion are what you are seeking, it is a good idea to carefully consider where to place your areas of maximum contrast.

Colour wheel



Strong contrasts



## Harmony

Harmony in painting is the visually satisfying effect of combining similar, related elements. e.g. adjacent colours on the colour wheel, similar shapes etc.



## Dominance

Dominance gives a painting interest, counteracting confusion and monotony. Dominance can be applied to one or more of the elements to give emphasis.

## Unity

Relating the design elements to the idea being expressed in a painting reinforces the principle of unity; e.g. a painting with an active aggressive subject would work better with a dominant oblique direction, course, rough texture, angular lines, etc. whereas a quite passive subject would benefit from horizontal lines, soft texture and less tonal contrast.

Unity in a painting also refers to the visual linking of various elements of the work.

Text taken from the John Lovett website for more information see - [www.johnlovet.com/test.htm](http://www.johnlovet.com/test.htm)





# Finding inspiration

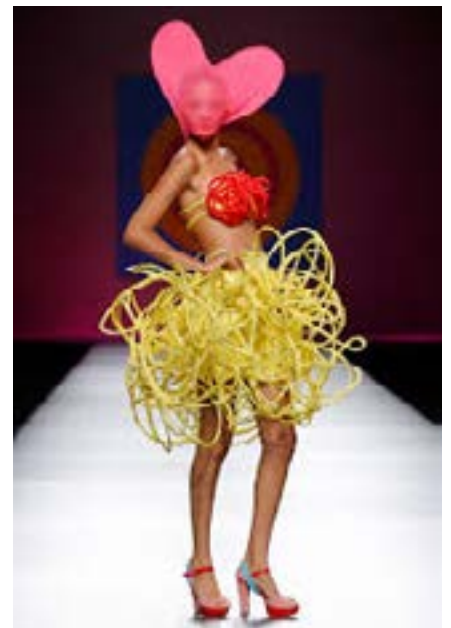
There are multiple areas that you may like to explore for inspiration.

## Fashion

Alexander McQueen <http://www.alexandermcqueen.com>



Agatha Ruiz de la Prada <https://www.agatharuizdelaprada.com/store/>



## Art

Salvador Dali (1904-1989) <http://www.salvadordali.com/>



The Persistence of Memory (1931)



Dream Caused by the Flight of a Bee (1944)

Andy Warhol (1928-1987) <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/andy-warhol-2121>



Elizabeth Taylor (Colored Liz) - 1963



A portrait of Marilyn Monroe by Andy Warhol



## Architecture

Frank Gehry <http://www.archdaily.com/tag/frank-gehry>



Hotel Marques de Riscal



Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health, Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Zaha Hadid <http://www.zaha-hadid.com/>



Metro Station Being Built In Saudi Arabia



Office building and hotel designed for Dubai "Opus"

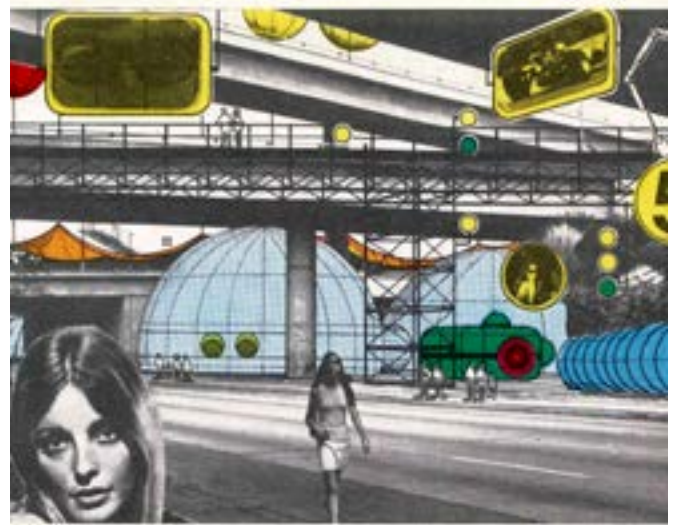


## Movements

Archigram <http://www.archdaily.com/tag/archigram>



A Walking City, Archigram, Utopian Architecture



Instant City, Archigram, Utopian Architecture

Dada Movement <http://www.theartstory.org/movement-dada.htm>



Andrew Tonna



Dada party by Astronomie Hoch-C



## Performance Art

Leigh Bowery <http://www.biography.com/people/leigh-bowery-20943343>



Leigh Bowery's performance



Leigh Bowery's performance

Cabaret Voltaire - Dada <http://www.dada-companion.com/cabaret/>



Performance - Cabaret Voltaire



Performance - Cabaret Voltaire

For more interesting design idea, why not subscribe to some online journals. Try these to start with: [www.thecoolhunter.co.uk/architecture](http://www.thecoolhunter.co.uk/architecture) [www.designweek.co.uk](http://www.designweek.co.uk) [www.dezeen.com](http://www.dezeen.com) [hppt://mocoloco.com/](http://mocoloco.com/)



# Is this you?

Identifying a weakness can help you grow and develop your skills as a designer. Sometimes understanding your actions/emotions can be half the battle to breaking down a barrier that restricts your creativity. Are you any of the below?

## Trying to Find the “Right” Answer

One of the worst aspects of formal education is the focus on the **correct answer** to a particular question or problem. While this approach help us function in society, it hurts creative thinking because real-life issues are ambiguous. There’s often more than one “correct” answer, and the second one you come up with might be better than the first.

Many of the following mental blocks can be turned around to reveal ways to find more than one answer to any given problem. Try reframing the issue in several different ways in order to prompt different answers, and embrace answering inherently ambiguous questions in several different ways.

## Logical thinking

Not only is real life ambiguous, it’s often illogical to the point of madness. While critical thinking skills based on logic are one of our main strengths in evaluating the feasibility of a creative idea, it’s often the enemy of truly innovative thoughts in the first place.

One of the best ways to escape the constraints of your own logical mind is to think **metaphorically**. One of the reasons why metaphors work so well in communications is that we accept them as true without thinking about it. When you realize that “truth” is often symbolic, you will often find that you are actually free to come up with alternatives.

## Following Rules

One way to view creative thinking is to look at it as a **destructive force**. You are tearing away the often arbitrary rules that others have set for you, and asking either “why” or “why not” whenever confronted with the way “everyone” does things.



This is easier said than done, since people will often defend the rules they follow even in the face of evidence that the rule doesn't work. People love to celebrate rebels like Richard Branson, but few seem brave enough to emulate him. Quit worshipping rule breakers and start breaking some rules.

### **Being Practical**

Like logic, practicality is hugely important when it comes to execution, but often stifles innovative ideas before they can properly blossom. Don't allow **the editor** into the same room with your inner artist.

Try not to evaluate the actual feasibility of an approach until you have allowed it to exist on its own for a bit. Spend time asking "what if" as often as possible, and simply allow your imagination to go where it wants. You might just find yourself discovering a crazy idea that is so insanely practical that no one's thought of it before.

### **Play is Not Work**

Allowing your mind to be at play is perhaps the most effective way to stimulate creative thinking, and yet many people disassociate play from work. These days, the people who can come up with great ideas and solutions are the most economically rewarded, while worker bees are often employed for the benefit of the creative thinkers. You have heard the expression "work hard and play hard". All you have to realize is that they are the same thing to a creative thinker.

### **That is Not my Job**

In an era of hyper-specialization, it is those who happily explore completely unrelated areas of life and knowledge who best see that **everything is related**. Sure, you have got to know the specialized stuff in your field, but if you view yourself as an **explorer** rather than a highly-specialized cog in the machine, you will run circles around the technical master in the success department.

### **Being a "Serious" Person**

Most of what keeps us civilized boils down to conformity, consistency, shared values, and yes, thinking about things the same way everyone else does. There is nothing wrong with that necessarily, but if you can mentally accept that it is actually nothing more than group-think that helps a society function, you can then give yourself permission to turn everything that's accepted upside down and shake out the illusions.



Leaders from Egyptian Pharaohs to Chinese emperors and European royalty have consulted with fools, or court jesters, when faced with tough problems. The persona of the fool allowed the truth to be told, without the usual ramifications that might come with speaking blasphemy or challenging ingrained social conventions. Give yourself permission to be fool and see things for what they really are.

### **Avoiding Ambiguity**

We rationally realize that most every situation is ambiguous to some degree. And although dividing complex situations into black and white boxes can lead to disaster, we still do it. It is an innate characteristic of human psychology to desire certainty, but it is the creative thinker who rejects the false comfort of clarity when it is not really appropriate.

Ambiguity is your friend if you are looking to innovate. The fact that most people are uncomfortable exploring uncertainty gives you an advantage, as long as you can embrace ambiguity rather than run from it.

### **Being Wrong is Bad**

We hate being wrong, and yet mistakes often teach us the most. Thomas Edison was wrong 1,800 times before getting the light bulb right. Edison's greatest strength was that he was not afraid to be wrong.

The best thing we do is learn from our mistakes, but we have to free ourselves to make mistakes in the first place. Just try out your ideas and see what happens, take what you learn, and try something else. Ask yourself, what's the worst that can happen if I am wrong? You will often find the benefits of being wrong greatly outweigh the ramifications.

### **I am Not Creative**

Denying your own creativity is like **denying you are a human being**. We are all limitlessly creative, but only to the extent that we realize that we create our own limits with the way we think. If you tell yourself you are not creative, it becomes true. Stop that.

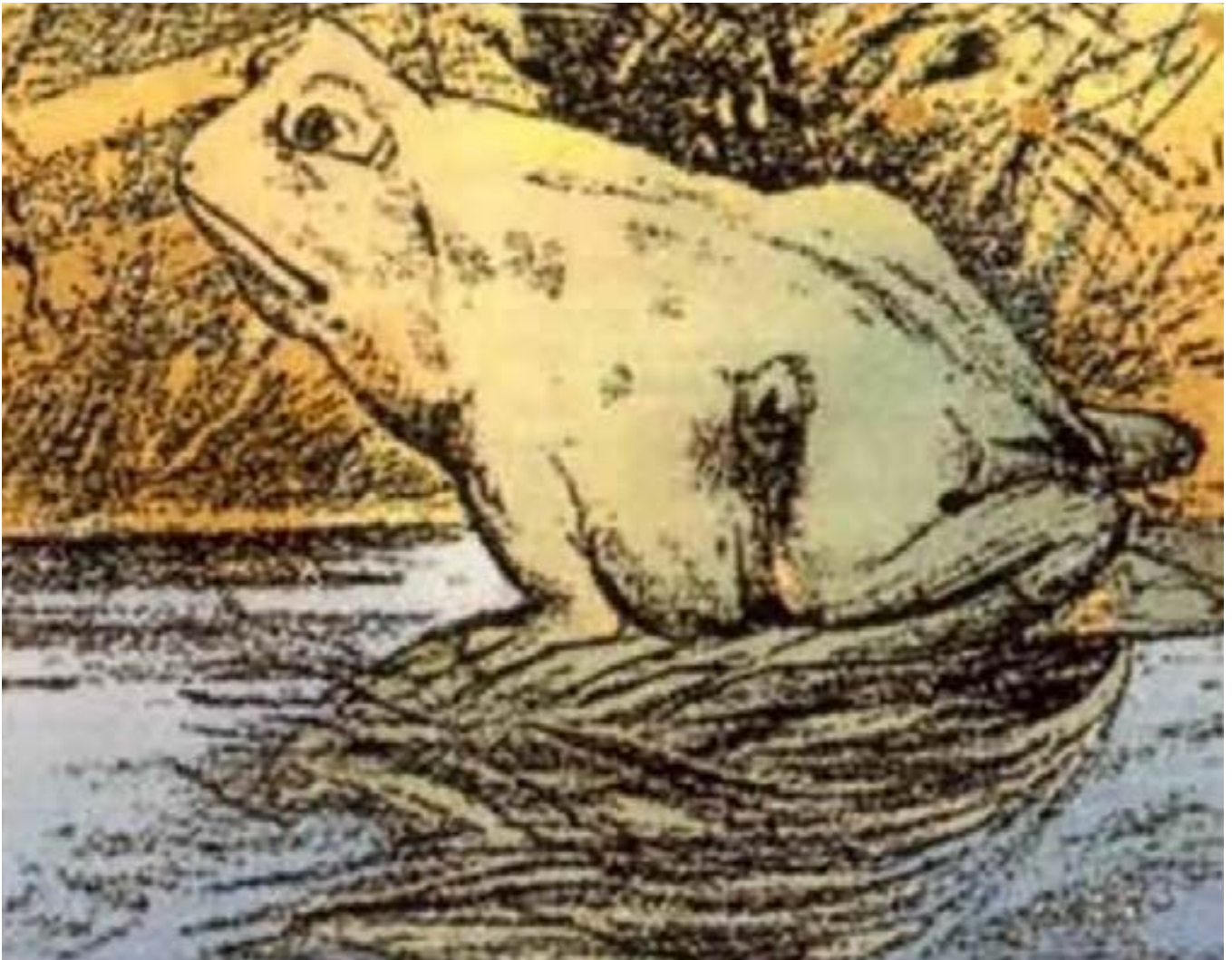
In that sense, awakening your own creativity is similar to the path reported by those who seek spiritual enlightenment. You're already enlightened, just like you are already creative, but you have to strip away all of your delusions before you can see it. Acknowledge that you are inherently creative, and then start tearing down the other barriers you have allowed to be created in your mind.





## What do you see?

So let's start thinking a little more creatively. Take a quick glance at the image below. What do you first see?



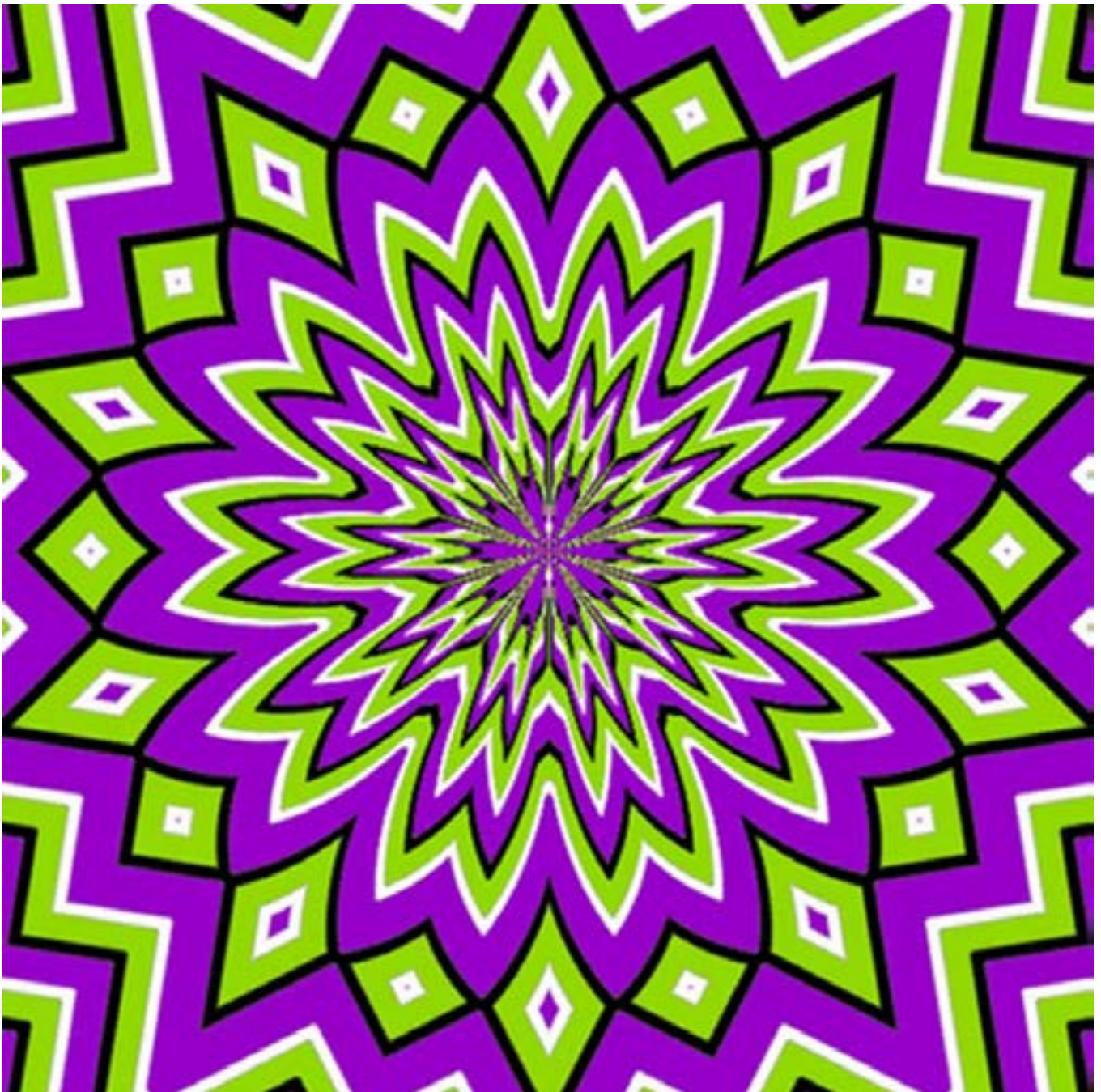


**Frog or Horse?**

[http://www.planetperplex.com/img/frog\\_horse.jpg](http://www.planetperplex.com/img/frog_horse.jpg)



Lets try one more... Is this image moving or is it an illusion?



# What next?

Hopefully, by this point you are feeling a little more self aware and any anxiety or issues you have previous felt when trying to be creative have now been identified and addressed.

So why not try a few sketching techniques and also gather some inspiration while working through them.

## Inspiration

Begin your sketches by getting as much inspiration as possible. Think about all the different ways that you can research, not just is books or the internet. Why not go out in your local city with your camera? Attend interesting events/exhibitions? Go for a walk (nature can be great inspiration). Think about all your sense (why not try listening to some new music)? What is on at your local art gallery?



Nature



Culture



Artists



Fashion



## Creative techniques

The below tasks have been used around the world to build creativity and also strengthen observational skills and hand-eye co-ordination.

### Sketching to music

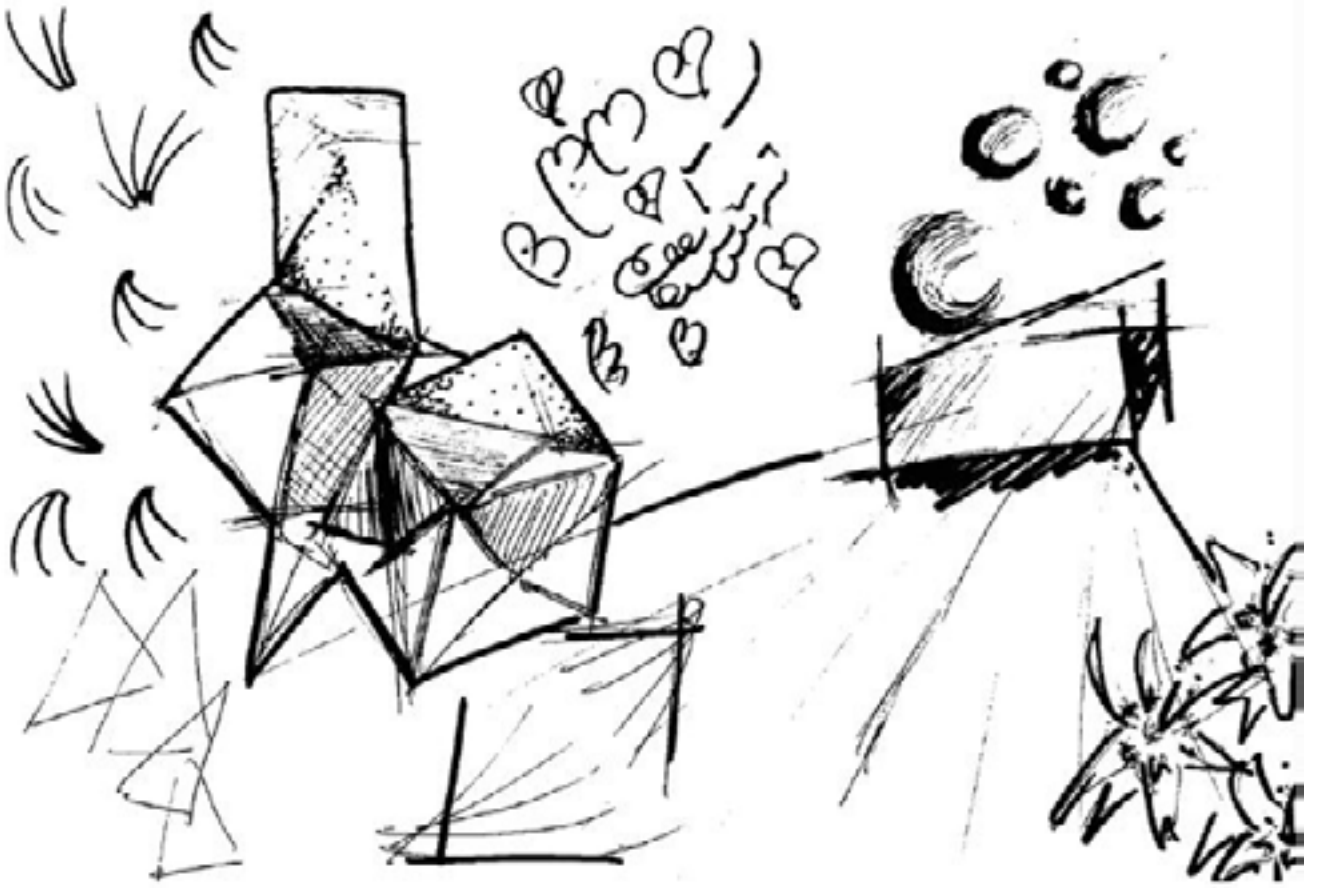
For this exercise you will need:

- *Some music (CD player, TV music station etc.) this works particularly well with jazz music*
- *Plenty of paper*
- *Various types of media e.g. pencil, coloured pencil, pen. Whatever your comfortable with or why not experiment with a medium that you have never used before. (Alternatively you may want to try this on the computer by sketching on Photoshop with a paint brush tool).*

Steps:

- 1) Find a place and time when you will not get disturbed, where you feel safe and where you can relax.
- 2) Now play your music, at first you may feel silly or awkward and it may take a few minutes to allow yourself to put your pen to paper but eventually you will start visualising things in your mind as forms, shapes, colours... When you do put it down on your paper.
- 3) Don't worry about what the end product looks like just let yourself go.
- 4) Finally after you have finished listening to your music take a look at what you have done, consider where you should like to develop any of you ideas further. Maybe you have found a pattern that you would like to redraw and render (this could end up being a wallpaper) or fabric for a cushion.





Results: While listening to Jose Gonzalez - Heartbeats



Results: While listening to Wild Wood Paul Weller



## Sketching whilst travelling

For this exercise you will need:

- A pending car/train journey (that you are the passenger, not the driver)
- Plenty of paper and something hard to rest on e.g. a clip board or book
- Various types of media e.g. pencil, coloured pencil, pen. Whatever you are comfortable with; or why not experiment with a medium that you have never used before.

Steps:

- 1) When comfortably seated with your pen and paper, simply look out of the window and observe.
- 2) Allow your mind to wander while looking and when you have an idea jot it down.
- 3) Don't worry about what the end product looks like just let yourself go.
- 4) Finally when safely home and have some spare time, re-evaluate your drawings consider if you would like to develop any of your ideas further.



Results: While travelling from Nottingham to Scotland



## Sketching blind

For this exercise you will need:

- *An object that you would like to draw*
- *Plenty of paper*
- *A pen and a home made obscurer (see below for detail on how to make one)*

Steps:

1) To make your obscure cut out a square of card (approx 15cm x 15cm) and cut a small hole in the middle, smaller enough to hold your pen. Insert your pen into the hole. The card will now obscure your view of the paper.

2) When comfortably seated with your pen/obscurer and paper, simply look at the object and try to draw it the best that you can (without taking a peek under your obscurer).

3) Try not to look at your drawing, simple observe the object you want to draw. Concentrate on the small details on the object, look at the space that take up, and think about what forms are created by your object.

4) Don't worry about what the end product looks like just let yourself go.

5) Finally when finished and have some spare time, re-evaluate your drawing, consider if you would like to develop any of your ideas further.



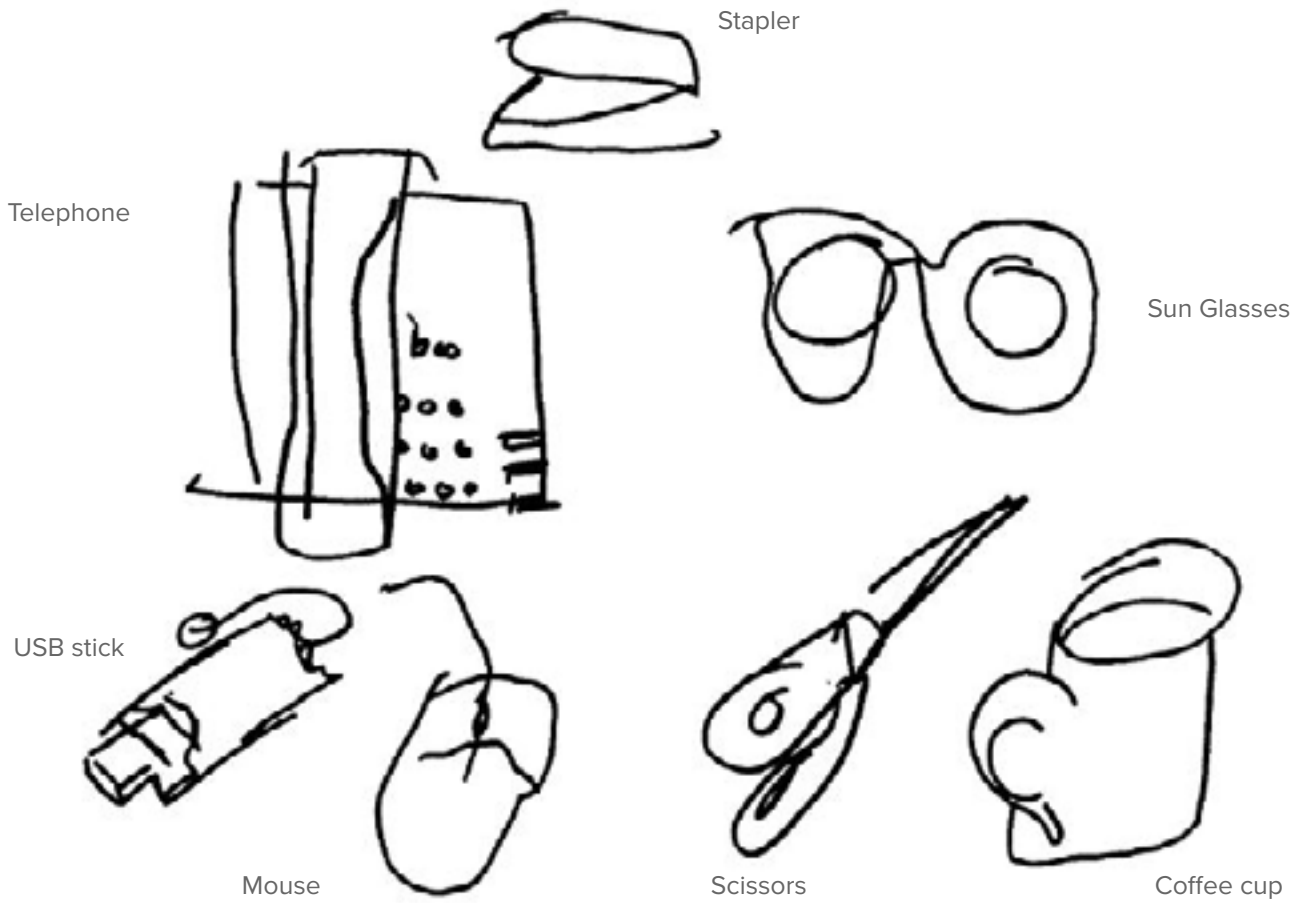
Obscurer example



Pens examples







See how a basic sketch can lead to something much more inspiring.



## Continuous line drawing

For this exercise you will need:

- *An object that you would like to draw*
- *Plenty of paper*
- *A pen*

Steps:

1) When comfortably seated with your pen and paper, simply look at the object and try to draw it the best that you can without taking your pen off the paper.

2) Try not to remove your pen and if you do simply start your drawing again but at the point it fell off from.

3) Don't worry about what the end product looks like just let yourself go.

4) Finally, when finished and have some spare time, re-evaluate your drawings consider if you would like to develop any of your ideas further.



Results



## How to trace

For this exercise you will need:

- A series of photos/images you would like to be able to draw
- Plenty of paper
- A pen
- Masking tape
- Tracing paper or a layout pad

Steps:

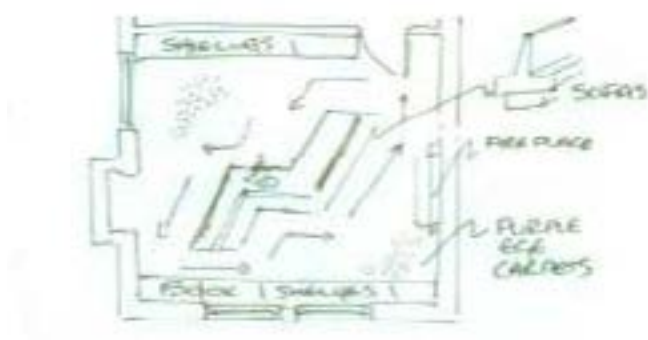
1) Once you have collected a selection of images that inspire you. Print them off and using masking tape, secure to a work surface with sufficient light.

2) Next, secure a sheet of tracing paper over your images and using a fine liner pen (e.g. Staedler pigment liners) draw over and explore your images. Include annotation where necessary.

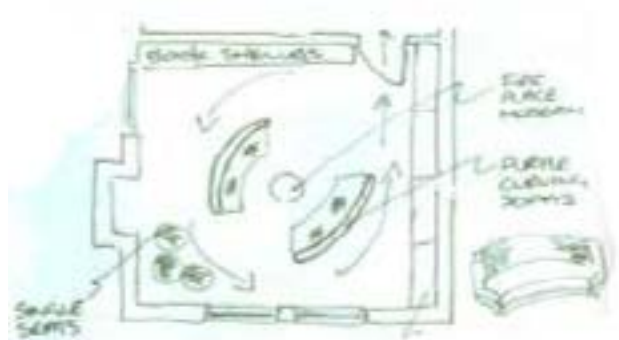
3) Finally, once drawn you can photocopy your tracing and render.

*Tip: Why not make multiples photocopies so you can experiment with colour and texture.*

Try exploring different ideas and do not worry about changing your mind if your instincts tell you that something is not working.

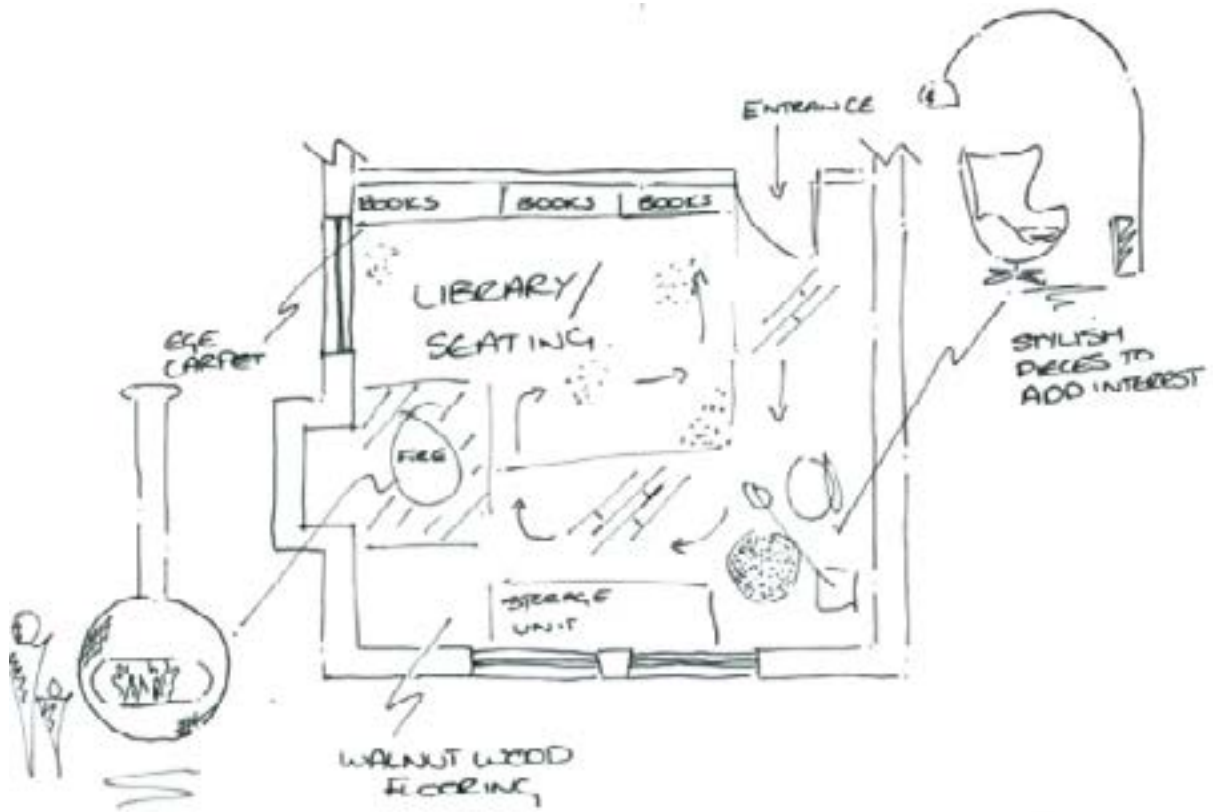


First idea



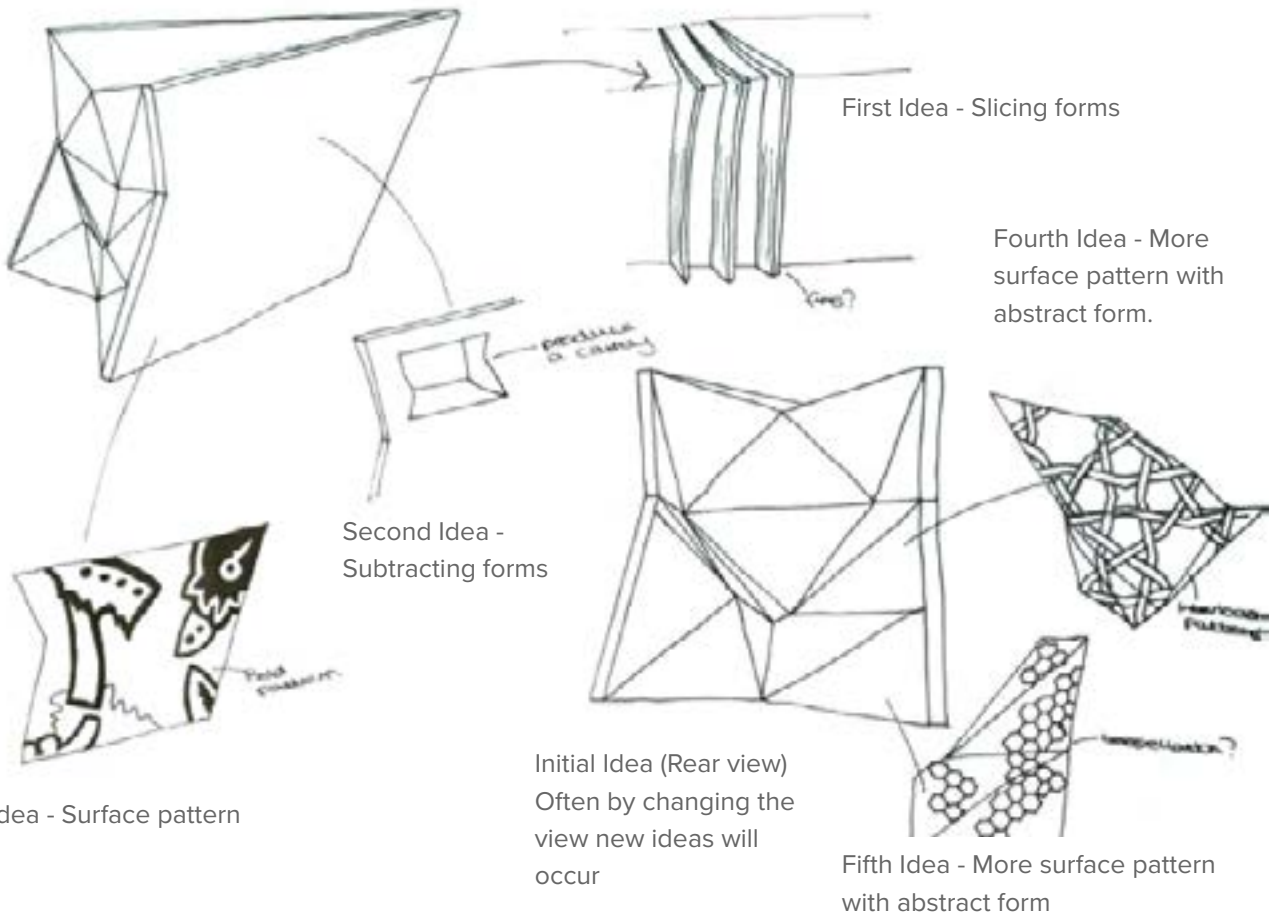
Second idea





Third idea

Initial shape has been traced, now to decide route to take?

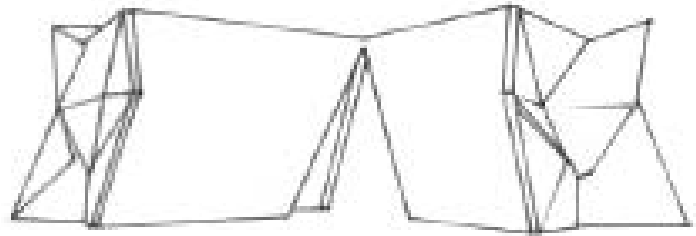
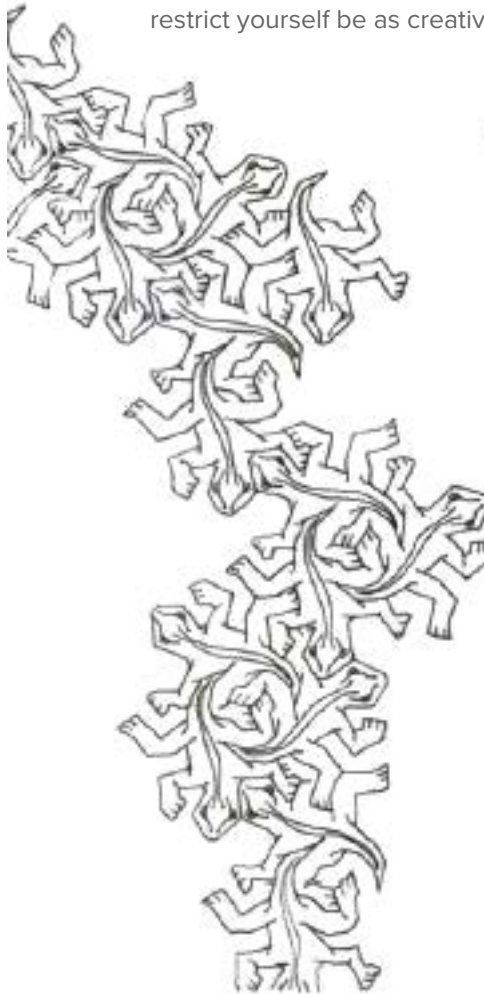


Third Idea - Surface pattern

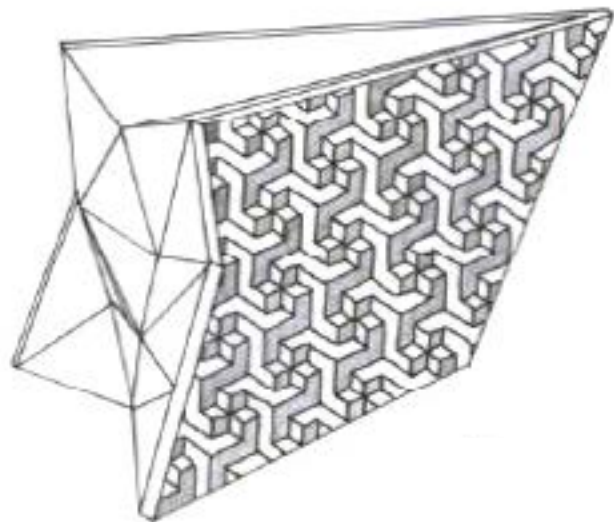
Initial Idea (Rear view)  
Often by changing the view new ideas will occur

Fifth Idea - More surface pattern with abstract form

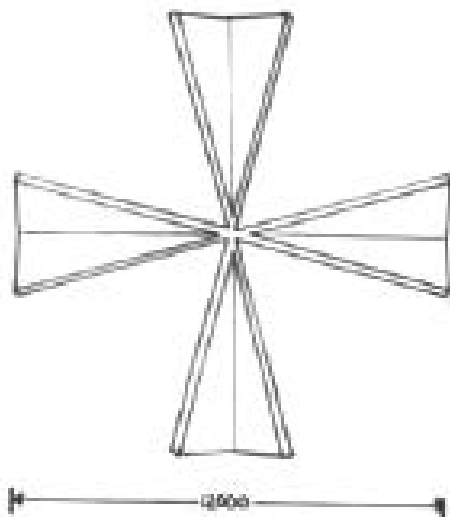
An additional tracing (just like thinking out loud) Don't restrict yourself be as creative as you like



Final Idea - Using 4 shapes



By adding a scale to your sketch, you can visually communicate an additional element of detail to your design



Final idea showing some additional detail (how surface pattern should be applied to each stand)



## Sketching used in the Design industry

Frank Gehry produces beautiful fluid sketches which can be then annotated and detailed to produce full concepts. See the **Marques de Riscal Hotel**.



Frank Gehry  
2-198



Frank Gehry  
2-198



Frank Gehry  
2-198



Ron Arad builds up detail within his sketches by using a variety of colour and media.

