

Good and Poor Design Elements Check List

Good Design Checklist

Text	
	Background does not interrupt the text
	Text is just big enough to read
	The hierarchy of information is perfectly clear
	Columns of text are narrower than print versions
Navigation	
	Buttons and bars are easy to use and understand
	Frames are unobtrusive or invisible
	Large sites have indexes or maps
	Navigation bars or buttons let the user know where they are and where they are going
Links	
	Link colors coordinate with site colors
	Links are immediately recognizable
Graphics	
	Buttons are appropriately sized and color balanced
	Every graphic has an alt label
	Every graphic link has a matching text link
	Graphics and backgrounds use browser safe colors
	Animated gifs turn-off by themselves
General Design	
	Pages download quickly
	Graphics are used to break up long text areas
	Every web page belongs in the site and carries over theme elements and characteristics

Poor Design Checklist

Backgrounds	
	Gray default background color
	Color combinations that make the text hard to read
	Busy, distracting backgrounds that make text hard to read
Text	
	Text crowding against the left edge
	Text that stretches all the way across the page
	Centered type over flush left body copy
	Paragraphs of type in all-caps, bold, italics or combinations of these
	Underlined text that is not a link
	Text that is too small to read
Links	
	Default blue links
	Blue link borders around graphics
	Links that are not clear where they will take you to
	Links in paragraphs that take you off to remote, useless pages
	Text links that are not underlined so you don't know they are links
	Dead links
Graphics	
	Large graphic files that take forever to download
	Meaningless or useless graphic files

	Thumbnails that are nearly as large as the real images they connect to
	Graphics with crud around the edges
	Graphics with no alt labels
	Missing graphics (and no alt labels)
	Graphics that are too big for the screen

Tables	
---------------	--

	Borders turned on in tables
	Tables used as design elements with big borders

Blinking and animations	
--------------------------------	--

	Anything that blinks, especially text
	Rainbow rules
	“Under construction” signs (little animated men working)
	Animated pictures of e-mail
	Animations that never stop

Junk	
-------------	--

	Counters on pages
	Junky advertising
	Having to scroll sideways
	Numerous picture of awards the site has won on the first page

Navigation	
-------------------	--

	Unclear or overly complex navigation
	Too many or complicated frames
	Frames with unnecessary scroll bar
	Orphan pages (no links back)
	Useless page titles that don't represent the page contents

General Design	
-----------------------	--

	Entry or home page that is larger than 1024 x 768
	No focal point on the page
	Too many focal points on the page
	Navigation buttons are the only interesting element
	Not enough alignment or structure
	Lack of contrast in color or text to create a visual flow
	Pages that only work in one browser