

# TEST YOUR Skills

## Design Beautiful Pages— Masterfully Mirrored Design

### Test Your Skills Challenge 3

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#### Design Principles & Everyday No-No's Challenge

Welcome to Challenge 3!

A Mirror design is actually pretty simple, but there are a few things that can trip us up. Some of those things can be a problem on any design, but others are specific to a Mirror design.

Here's a page that has a good start but has some problems. Let's go through the Design Principles and see how this page stacks up.

We'll start with Focal Point. What do you think? On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you grade this page?

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I would give Focal Point a 4. The top left photo is the main focus, and it's a great photo. However, I think the two images should be reversed. It's hard to see the couple in the smaller photo. If we switched photos, it would be much better.



Here's my page with the photos switched. I'm happier with it, and the focus better, in my opinion.

Now let's consider Flow. How would you grade this page for flow?

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I would give this page a 3. The two photos and the elements near the photos would give this page a strong diagonal flow, but the items in the other two corners are major distractions from that flow.

It's really not necessary to fill up corners!

It's possible that you could have a triangular flow with something tasteful in one of the other corners, but putting an element or cluster in all four corners creates a box that is seldom flattering.

Not only that, but the item in the top right corner is a flat item over a 3D paper. Let's just remove the entire element, shall we? And the musical notes as well.



Homer Parry and Kathleen Quarles courted during the summer of 1946. Theirs was a sweet and innocent romance based on mutually held Christian principles of love, respect, and purity.

## *Courting*

happiness

1. the quality or state of being happy.
2. good fortune; pleasure; contentment; joy.

Let's adjust the flow.

Aaaaahhhh...that's a relief!

What about the Rule of Odds?

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I'd give this page a 5. It doesn't have a lot of elements, but there are three elements next to the top left group. In the lower right the two flowers and the word art make a trio.

What about repetition?

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I'd give this page a 2. The two photos are definitely connected, with my mother wearing the same skirt in both. And the word art on the right mimics the journaling on the left, so there's a small amount of repetition.

But this is a MIRROR page!

One of the distinguishing features of a mirror page is to mirror things, which means some repetition. Instead, all the flowers are totally different and don't even match with color.

Also, did you notice that the blue 3D flower doesn't have a drop shadow? That's a No-No for sure.

Let's work on repetition a bit.





The lower right cluster actually looks very nice, so I made some changes to the upper left group by:

- Replacing the overlay
- Replacing the flowers
- Adding the circular scribble overlay

Now there's a real feeling on continuity between the two sections.

The three Design Principles left are Balance, White Space, and Proximity. What do you think?

I'd give a 5 for Balance and White Space, and a 3 for Proximity. The elements are all connected to something, but the title is floating in space. The fact that it's in the diagonal flow of the page helps a lot, but it still looks odd.

Also there are a few things to fix. The shadows on the envelope mat and upper left photo are reversed. The smaller shadow is normally below the higher shadow. I would also prefer a smaller shadow on the lower right image, though a popped up photo is sometimes a nice touch.



Here's my final page with all the changes (After).

Compare that to the original image (Before). My finished page is much more cohesive.

- I adjusted the drop shadows.
- I moved the title and adjusted the scribble overlay to accommodate it.
- I added an overlay at very low opacity next to the upper left cluster to give it a bit of understated grunge.

## Conclusion

Make it a habit to mentally run through the 7 Design Principles as you create your page. Then look your page over one final time to make sure you didn't miss a No-No!

