

AXOR®

hansgrohe

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## Design-Lexicon

AXOR<sup>®</sup>

hansgrohe

## Contents

A - D	4 - 20
E - H	20 - 26
I - L	26 - 28
M - P	29 - 38
Q - T	39 - 46
U - Y	46 - 47

## Preface

If you are interested in design or if design is part of your job, you have probably noticed that design terminology has become increasingly blurred in recent years. The more widely design is discussed the more ineptly it is marketed. With our design lexicon we don't want to fall into the same trap but instead to make a contribution to an objective and professional approach to design terms which we encounter more and more frequently – and not only in the bathroom. The present version of the design lexicon is not meant to be exhaustive, but to provide a common set of terms we use to talk about design. We hope that this resource will prove its worth in your daily work and will eventually, and with your support, become a more comprehensive work of reference. We see the design lexicon as a project which will improve in quality with the help of its readers and their feedback.



We endeavoured to take into account the needs of both people who communicate design and those who are interested in design. After reading a few paragraphs, both sides will quickly realise that the same term can have a completely different meaning seen from another perspective. Few other subjects are so prone to individual interpretation as that of aesthetics and personal taste. Once you realise this, misunderstandings can be avoided and it becomes easier to meet customer requirements. For some definitions, we therefore mention several possible meanings in order to identify clichés and avoid misunderstandings.

As a design brand, we are interested in an objective and professional dialogue about design. The purpose is not to impose universal definitions in the sense of a fixed standard, but to establish a common basis for a professional dialogue. The design lexicon is therefore primarily intended as a tool for understanding and communicating design. It is meant to feed your appetite for design and to sharpen your awareness of changes in the aesthetic and practical perception of design.

In this spirit, enjoy searching for and discovering new and interesting insights!

Philippe Grohe

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several large, sweeping loops and a long horizontal tail stroke.

## Accessories

Borrowed from the French and used mostly in the plural, this collective term describes **additional equipment** (French: accessoires). Accessories are used primarily in fashion design to set accents which are highly trend-dependent (compare: styling).



Photo: Axor Massaud, Jean-Marie Massaud  
(with and without accessories/styling)

In interior design, accessories are less dependent on fashion trends. Textiles, decorative items, pictures, candles, vases and, in the bathroom, also soap dishes, towels, mirrors and decorative design elements for the wall are used to achieve **consistency of a design concept**.

## aesthetic

In everyday speech, this term is used as a synonym for “**beautiful, balanced, tasteful, appealing**”. In the true sense of the word however, “aesthetic” describes all the characteristics which we experience with our senses and which determine how we perceive our environment and objects – particularly whether we perceive them as beautiful or ugly. Balanced proportions, regular or layered forms and harmonious colour combinations are often considered particularly aesthetic, beautiful and pleasant. **How we perceive beauty is partly rooted in biology, but also acquired culturally and sociologically** (defined by our personal environment). All these factors determine whether we perceive a design as being aesthetic or aesthetically convincing or not. In some cultures, clean and harmoniously proportioned shapes are considered beautiful, while in other cultures however beauty means rich ornamentation.

## aesthetics

Aesthetics is the **theory of sensory perception** (from the Greek “aisthesis” = perception). It doesn’t mean “beauty” itself, but rather the **study of laws and basic principles of beauty** (harmony) as they can be observed in nature or in art. It is also concerned with whether aesthetic characteristics are to be seen as objective or whether beauty is in the eye of the beholder. The focus isn’t on personal taste, but on the general human or **social perception of what is beautiful** (“golden section”).

## Alessi

Alessi, an Italian factory for metal goods founded in 1921, is a perfect example

of the strategic transformation of a manufacturer of conventional household goods into a design-oriented company. As a producer of designs, Alessi became a **renowned provider of lifestyle products**. Starting in 1955, Carlo Alessi began commissioning external designers. With Alberto Alessi as a director, the range of goods reflected a cultural strategy which promoted **mass products with artistic sophistication**. The cooperation with Ettore Sottsass, beginning in 1972, also had a strong influence on the company. Michael Graves' kettle, the Hot Bertea and Philippe Starck's Juicy Salif lemon squeezer became cult objects in the postmodern era.

### **ambience**

The term "ambience" means "surroundings", "environment", "setting" in the sense of a **special atmosphere exuded by a personality, a space or a piece of art**. In interior design, ambience is achieved through targeted aesthetic presentation and stands for the atmosphere created by a space.



Photo: Axor Starck, Philippe Starck

**Note from Axor:** The Axor collections follow the general trend "away from the wall" and are therefore particularly

suitable for the composition of a bathroom as a living space, in which the centre of the room is also part of the concept. Creating a specific ambience is of particular importance – especially in sales exhibitions. It is therefore worth considering the tools described in Axor room concepts and marketing aids in order to create a sense of atmosphere. This can be achieved through the use of water, accessories or by lighting candles in an Axor Massaud bathroom.

### **amorphous**

This term could be described as the opposite of design, as it means **unformed, unshaped, somewhere between solid and liquid**.



Photo: Porro, Truffle, Jean-Marie Massaud

Amorphous structures are fluid and not reminiscent of any solid, geometric or linear shapes. They can be organic in appearance, for example when a piece of furniture is designed with an unconventional shape.

### **appropriate**

The production and the design of a product are appropriate for the material involved when an excessive use of

energy, material or a decrease in quality is avoided.

## archetype

An archetype (from the Greek arche: beginning; typos: imprint; meaning **original model, mold**) can be a shape which is embedded in our cultural memory and which is an example of, or a symbol for, a specific function. For many of us, a house still has a rectangular ground plan and a gabled roof, even though a variety of other house types exist today. Philippe Starck employed a bucket of water as an archetype. Together with a water pump, it served him as an original model for a faucet and as an inspiration for his Starck 1 collection – in the same way the wash bowl, archetype of his bowl-shaped wash basin, was re-introduced and established a new style of wash table design.



Photo: Axor Starck 1, Philippe Starck

In product design, archetypes are forms which establish or embody a new product class. For example, cross handles represent the handles of a faucet, the Porsche 911 represents the sports car, Mart Stam's "S34" steel-tube chair

(1926) represents the cantilever chair.

## architectural

Anything that creates a space and cannot be dissociated from it – both in terms of construction and design. In product design, architectural composition is based mostly on basic geometric shapes. Straight, nonexpressive, purist forms, no superfluous elements and a slightly "technical" appearance – this style is perceived as "architectural". These objects appear as architectural, structural elements which are weight-bearing, functional and adjust to the room rather than developing a sculptural life of their own. Such products are often connected to the wall or the floor and provide structure to the room without interfering with the overall architecture. They usually are not decorative, but simply draw attention to the essentials.

## architecture

One of the oldest art forms of human civilisation. Today, the lines between functional buildings and architecture are blurred – department store, concert hall, church and apartments are regarded equally worthy of the design process.



Photo: Milan Fair, Rho-Pero, Missimir Liano Fuksas

The connection between architecture and geometry is as old as architecture itself. The concept of architecture as **both shell and constructive framework**, and the **idea of axiality** (alignment with the axes), find their source in Roman antiquity. These principles have been continually refined and are today expressed through modern construction materials such as steel framing, concrete, glass etc. Space is designed in terms of dimension, proportion, form and composition.

### **asymmetric**

This adjective describes the **nonsymmetrical or unequally balanced elements in a composition**.



Foto: Maya

This manifests itself in an optical or even a structural imbalance in constructed objects or products. Some artists intentionally choose an asymmetric composition to create tension. In deconstructionism, asymmetrical constructions are aimed at confusing the beholders' sense of balance and their perception of harmony by using technical illusions.

### **authenticity/authentic**

Authenticity (from the Greek/Latin = **genuineness, reliability, credibility**) means originality. An authentic object is always an original or a product identical to the original (as in serial production). In the figurative sense, a form or an attitude can be described as authentic (as opposed to cursory, superficial, ostensible) even though it might not characterise the original, but carries its original quality and its true identity. A corporate identity can therefore be authentic if it is presented in a credible manner, and a design quotation or redesign is authentic if it is used or presented with the original in mind. In an era of unlimited reproducibility, authenticity may convey greater credibility than the original which can be copied without capturing its "soul".

### **avantgarde/avantgardist**

With respect to art history, the term avantgarde describes **artists whose ideas and works are ahead of their time**.



Photo: Serralunga, Missed trees, Jean-Marie Massaud

Avantgarde (French: "l'avantgarde" = front guard) stands for a new art movement of the early 20th century. This term is closely

connected to modernity. The original aim of all avantgardist movements (mostly elitist, perceiving themselves as forerunners) was always a change in society. Most avantgardist movements in art emerged at the beginning of the 20th century from artists' communities sharing an idealistic belief in progress – such as Italian futurism, Russian constructivism, De Stijl (Holland) or German Bauhaus. All such movements reject the prevailing aesthetic norms of their time. The term “avantgardist” therefore doesn't describe one particular style, but rather an artistic or intellectual attitude. Today, “avantgardist” generally means a demonstratively modern artistic expression aimed to provoke and consequently promote a new aesthetic or social ideal. Even if this ideal can't be realised, avantgardist movements often have a significant influence on prevailing trends in fashion, art and design.

## **Axor**

Axor is the **design brand of the Black Forest company Hansgrohe AG**. It has been setting enduring trends for the bathroom through a range of successful collections. The introduction of the Axor brand in 1993 is in line with the transformation of the bathroom from a purely functional space into a personal retreat, from a commodity into a design object, and from a single product focus to an entire collection – a trend which Hansgrohe recognised at an early stage and to which it contributed significantly. **Axor focuses** not only on the area of wash table, bath tub or wall, but **on the entire room**. Through an intensive dialogue with designers and architects, Axor provides concepts for the bathroom of the future,

which include the design of the entire room and even the transition into the rest of the living area. **Axor works in long-term cooperation with internationally renowned designers** such as Philippe Starck, Antonio Citterio, Jean-Marie Massaud and Phoenix Design.



Photo: Axor manufacturing plant in Schiltach

Together with these designers and architects Axor offers comprehensive collections which, through their expressiveness, consistency and uniqueness, have become icons in bathroom design. With their wide range and tremendous diversity of products, Axor collections provide space for creativity, permitting the arrangement of the bathroom as a personal living space to match individual desires, needs and styles. With a line depth of more than 60 products per collection, Axor offers options and combinations for wash table, bath tub and shower right down to the matching bathroom accessories. Axor's excellence in quality, research, development and production is rooted in **Hansgrohe's 100 plus years of bathroom expertise**. The man behind the Axor brand is **Philippe Grohe (\*1967), grandson of company founder Hans Grohe**. Following his training and work as a photographer, Philippe Grohe studied International

Marketing. In 1998 he became manager of the Hansgrohe distribution company in Paris. In 2000 he returned to the headquarters to establish the Corporate Marketing division. Since 2001 Philippe Grohe has been responsible for the Axor brand.

### Back to Basics

This design philosophy emerged in the 90s in the context of the English Avantgarde. The goal was to develop **demonstratively simple aesthetics** relating to objects and products – as a **rejection of the trend towards luxury and consumerism** of the 80s. In addition to artists like Ron Arad and Tom Dixon, the main representative of this movement is Jasper Morrison.



Photo: Axor, Duravit and Hoesch, - Starck I (1994)

The “Back to Basics” style developed out of “New Design” and is characterised by rough materials such as untreated steel, plywood or concrete, experimental or minimalist forms and the manufacture of ready-made products from available materials. This style is not motivated so much by a renunciation of consumption, but rather by the **call for selective consumption and a greater emphasis on quality.**

### balance

Balance describes a **state of equilibrium among several elements**. If **two design features are equally weighted**, this can be described as a state of balance – for example when a material appears solid despite its slim shape or when organic expressiveness and geometric clarity (as in Axor Massaud) result in a harmonious overall appearance.

### balanced

Accurate, carefully calibrated, harmonious – and consequently **non-dynamic**, motionless, and non-directional. None of the design or style elements is over-proportioned or overly accentuated. A balanced use of forms creates a **harmonious proportion** between different elements (such as geometric shapes) or styles. A balanced composition **exudes an air of contentment.**

### Baroque

Opposite of simple; a Baroque design signifies the use of lush, decorative shapes, elegant curves and tendriled ornaments in the historic Baroque style (approx. 1580/1600 to 1730/1750). In this epoch, design wasn't considered as the expression of a function, but as its disguise, adornment or glorification.



Photo: Axor mirror “Hello Lovely”, Tord Boontje

The term Baroque, coined in the 18th/19th century, is derived from the Portuguese “barucca” or the Italian “barocco” (oblique,peculiar).

Ornaments are capturing our attention once again, which is why Baroque designs are being reintroduced and set in contrast with those of the modern world (for example the Axor mirror “Hello Lovely” by Tord Boontje).

## Bauhaus

Bauhaus (from the German Bau = construction, architecture + Haus = house) is the name for **Germany’s most famous school of art, design and architecture in Classical Modernity**. It operated from 1919 to 1933 – first in Weimar, then, from 1925 to 1932 in a new building in Dessau designed by Walter Gropius, and finally in Berlin. Closed down by the National Socialists, the school and its students spread all over the globe, exerting a **significant influence on the international world of architecture, art and design**. The International Style in architecture (also called “Neues Bauen” = new building) and modern product design are partly rooted in the Bauhaus. Walter Gropius, founder of the Bauhaus school, envisioned the creation of a contemporary union of art and technology in order to make art accessible to the entire population and to transform it into a mass movement. To this end, newly developed simple forms and new materials such as steel pipes were used which were suitable for industrial mass production. Typical style features of the Bauhaus include simple geometric shapes and the exclusive use of fundamental colours in combination with black, grey and white.



Photo: Bauhaus Dessau, Stein

This functionality-oriented design was considered a means of overcoming stylistic differences and optimising industrial production in favour of affordable products. The new furniture and light buildings were designed to convey a modern approach to life among the working class. However, Bauhaus functionalism instead became the style of a small, intellectual elite. In addition to Gropius, important representatives of the Bauhaus were Mies van der Rohe, Marcel Breuer and Wilhelm Wagenfeld.

## Boontje, Tord

His distinctive work features **romantic flower themes and fairy worlds** filled with unicorns, deer and elves. **Tord Boontje’s design world is poetic, playful and colourful**. His designs are all products of his imagination, but he consciously refers to images from the 18th and 19th century. With this source of inspiration, Boontje translates ancient techniques into the

present industrial manufacturing context. He employs stylistic devices of multiple artists from past epochs and is therefore considered a **student of eclecticism**. The origins of his designs lie in craftworks but his methods are modern.



Photo: Designer Tord Boontje

Tord Boontje was born in Enschede, Netherlands in 1968. He studied industrial design at the Eindhoven Design Academy and the Royal College of Art, London. In 1996 he founded his first design studio in London together with his wife Emma. Boontje's works are displayed in renowned museums such as the Institute of Modern Contemporary Arts or the London Tate Gallery. He works for famous companies like **Moroso**, **Swarovski** and **Alexander McQueen**. In the *Fuorisalone* program, Tord Boontje presents an artistic display of the Axor Montreux collection, entitled "bittersweet". In this theme, he also created ceramic wash table accesso-

ries and two mirrors for the Axor brand. [www.tordboontje.com](http://www.tordboontje.com)

## **brand**

A brand is a legally protected designation of commercial products.



Photo: Messe Frankfurt, Audi/Design Annual exhibition stand

It identifies the manufacturer or commercial enterprise to guarantee the origin and the consistent quality of a product. A brand is characterised by a consistent level of quality, design, style and price. With consistent corporate design and authentic corporate identity, a brand can become a factor which offers reliability and familiarity to consumers.

## **character**

A combination of intellectual and behavioural features which characterise a person or an object. In art and design, it also refers to the effect which an object has on its environment. It is determined by its **proportion** (for example daunting or cute), its **colour** (dark or light, dull or lively) and **form** (cool and angular or round and welcoming). Character therefore is the overall impression which is made up of the sum of these properties, the stylistic orientation (classical, flowery,

purist) and the context or the environment.

### **Citterio, Antonio**

After graduating in architecture from the Politecnico di Milano, **architect and designer** Antonio Citterio (\*1950) founded his own studio in 1972. Between 1987 and 1996 he worked together with Terry Dwan to design numerous buildings in Europe and Japan. In 1999 he founded the studio "Antonio Citterio and Partners" together with Milan-born Patricia Viel. The Milan studio employs approximately 40 people who develop **residential complexes, apartment buildings, hotels, shops, offices, showrooms and corporate imaging** projects. In 2000, a new office was opened in Hamburg.



Designer and architect Antonio Citterio,  
Photo: Andreas Körner

Amongst others, Citterio's clients are **B&B Italia, Flexform, Flos, Guzzini, Iittala, Kartell, Inda, Pozzi Ginori, Sanitec Group, Axor and Vitra**. His first bathroom collection (Axor) was introduced to the market in 2003. In 2004, the sensational Bulgari Hotel was inaugurated in Milan, followed in 2006 by the Bulgari Resort in Bali. At present, numerous new projects

include a hotel project at the Hamburg Brooktorkai, the new "Technogym Village" in Cesena and the renovation of the former Milan post office. Since 2006, Citterio resumed work as a professor at Lugano University.

[www.antoniocitterioandpartners.it](http://www.antoniocitterioandpartners.it)

### **classic**

The adjective "classic" describes a design which is typical for its time, but at the same time so perfect and pure that it seems timeless. Classic designs are considered harmonious and complete – regardless of the associated epoch or art form. Classic works can therefore be found in music, architecture, fashion, art, design, literature and all other areas in which the benchmark is set by human achievement.

### **Colani, Luigi**

German **designer** Luigi Colani (real name: Lutz), born in Berlin in 1928, became known particularly for his creation of aerodynamic, biomorphous shapes for ships, motor bikes, planes, glasses and cameras. **His ultimate ambition is ergonomic design.**



Photo: Villeroy & Boch

By using thermoplastic materials in serial production, Colani was able to convert his ideas into real products. In the bathroom

industry he made a name for himself with one of the first bathroom collections for Villeroy & Boch (1971). This work is regarded as the first comprehensive attempt to integrate modern and ergonomic design in the bathroom. The collection was very popular, particularly among installers.

### collage

A collage is a creative technique which was developed in the **visual arts**. It uses an assemblage of pieces from the most diverse origins to create a new whole. In one common example, newspaper clippings, bits of coloured paper and parts of photographs are re-arranged and glued to a piece of paper (French: "coller" = to glue). In design and interior design the collage technique is **nowadays often used to test the interaction of colours and materials in specific combinations**.

### colour palette

A colour palette is a **fan of coordinated colours** aimed to convey a distinctive appearance or a specific manifestation of colour (for example of a room). In corporate design, a specific colour palette is chosen which may be used for designing publications, signs and public events (exhibitions etc.)



Photo: Technogym, Kinesis Personal, Antonio Citterio

A colour palette also **creates an atmosphere and a mood** which can be rendered more or less cool or warm. Depending on whether the dominant colour is warm or cool or whether the colour palette belongs to the warm or cold spectrum (warm includes red, orange, yellow; cool includes blue, green, violet), a room designed with a specific colour palette can be made to appear cool or warm. The subjective perception of temperature in rooms with warm or cool colour palettes can vary by up to seven degrees Celsius.

### complexity/complex

In design, this term describes a **multi-layered structure** with many different associations and a **sophisticated pattern of organisation**. In aesthetics, one of the criteria for judging the quality of a design is how well it combines organisation (uniformity) and complexity (diversity).



Photo: Koelnmesse; Vitra, Algues, Ronan & Erwan Bouroullec

A **complex design** is the opposite of a pure and simple design. It **demands attention** and isn't intuitively accessible to the user or observer. However, a well-designed, complex object continually surprises its users or observers and **never becomes boring**. Today, a simple exterior often

covers a complex structure, made transparent as in the example of the legendary transparent housing of the Apple computer.

### **concave**

In mathematics and optics, the term “concave” (from the Latin “*concauus*” = hollow, **curved inward**) describes shapes (surfaces, lines) which are curved like the inside of a circle or sphere and which present themselves as a **hollow space**, like for example a recessed grip or the inside of a basin. In **contrast** to this shape, a **convex** design is curved or bulged outward.

### **concept/conceptual**

A concept is a **plan for a project** which can have an artistic or creative value, even before its material realisation. A concept is the advancement of an idea and incorporates many factors which play a role in the realisation, success and the impact of, for example, a new product. **The design constitutes the last stage of a concept.** In the finished product, the concept is still recognisable as the underlying formal and functional idea.



Photo: Axor WaterDream, Jean-Marie

The **conceptual quality** of a product is determined by how long-lasting the design is and how well the product functions. However, concept design, in-

spired in the seventies by concept art, aims at provoking a reaction. The function of an object is presented in an ironic, baffling or exaggerated way. The focus is on what an object inspires, not on its practical value for the user. Elements of concept design can be found in Radical Design and Antidesign, employed by Italian groups like Alchimia and Gaetano Pesce, and in the New German Design (compare “New Design”). The integration and influence of microelectronics plays a growing role, especially in visionary product concepts. However, in an era of virtual worlds and technically sophisticated development and design, a concept is worth nearly as much as the end product. This is demonstrated, for example, by the apparently successful efforts of the red dot award to establish a “design concept” competition for product concepts.

**Note from Axor:** With WaterDream, Axor has established a format through which conceptual potential can be achieved without compromising design creativity – a formula that has been difficult to realise, as illustrated by the practical design constraints faced by the ‘concept cars’ of the automobile industry. The WaterDreams by Phoenix Design, Jean-Marie Massaud, Patricia Urquiola and the Bouroullec brothers represent the idea of a product which could be realised in practice, but which wasn’t developed with practical and economic imperatives in mind. In the case of the Axor Massaud collection, these priorities weren’t considered until the desire for realisation emerged.

### **conservative**

Conservative (from the Latin “*conservativus*”) means “**holding on to conventional**

values” or “traditional”. In a positive context, “conservative” means retaining something valuable and established; used in a negative sense it implies clinging to conventions in a non-progressive or uncritical way.

### **consistency/consistent**

The word consistency (from the Latin “con” = together + “sistere” = to stand) means **constancy, cohesion, closeness and balance**. It is mostly used to describe the **nature of a material**, particularly in relation to its structure, pliability and dimensional stability. A material can be stiff, flexible, kneadable, rough, elastic or liquid; it can change its consistency, become brittle or rigid. In design, the term “consistent” can also be used to describe an idea that is **logical and free of contradictions** or an appearance which is continuous and coherent. Examples include an all-encompassing approach to room design, consistency of design and meaning or intention, formal logic or a design collection that is particularly harmonious.

### **consistent design**

A design is considered consistent when an entire **collection/product line** or a **brand** is presented in one continuous style (in the sense of a corporate design).



Photo: Axor Uno<sup>2</sup>, Phoenix Design

### **constructive**

In design and architecture, **constructive elements** are those parts of a piece of furniture or a building which are **weight-bearing** and constitute the design or the static **structure** in a functional way – like for example the supporting frame of a chair or the steel frame of an office building.



Photo: B&B Italia, Freetime, Antonio Citterio

### **constructivism**

The term “constructivism” describes a **style** in which only pure, harmonious and simple **geometric shapes** are used, and graphic elements are excluded. This style has its origin in the art philosophy founded in 1915 by Wladimir Tatlin in Moscow, which influenced a number of other art movements in modernity such as De Stijl and Bauhaus. Under the impact of the dynamic aesthetics typical of the machine age, artists became engineers, architects, designers and typographers. These “constructivist” concepts facilitated the creation of functional aesthetics in art and design. The most important stimuli emerged from art and still influence our idea of modern design today – with simple, **geometric shapes** and a palette reduced to the fundamental colours and dominated by white, grey and black.

## contemporary

The adjective “contemporary” is mostly used as a synonym for “current”. Strictly speaking however it doesn’t refer exclusively to the present, but to a **status valid at a certain point in time or history**. For example, Schiller was a contemporary of Goethe, and the literature contemporary to this period was determined by Storm and Stress, by classical ideals and revolutionary tendencies.

## contemporary design

Contemporary design can be defined as design which is produced in the present time and which meets current standards of taste – just like contemporary art.

## contrast

The term “contrast” is commonly used to describe a difference in brightness which manifests itself in terms of **colour and light differences** (as for example in painting), particularly black-and-white sequences (a style-defining feature in photography).

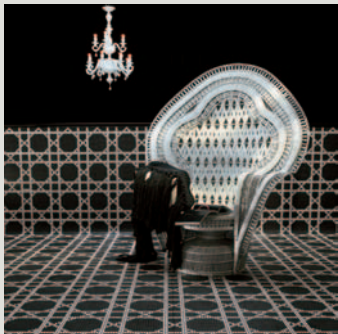


Photo: Bisazza

**Statements** in design or interior design may also be set in contrast with one other, for example **formal contrasts** that make use of different volumes or materials or contrasts in shape and content (compare “polarisation”).

## conventional

The adjective “conventional” means “conforming with social conventions”, but also “traditional” or “customary”.

## convex

The adjective “convex” (from the Latin “convexus”) describes shapes (surfaces, lines) which are **curved** or bulged **outward** (opposite: concave).

## corporate design

Corporate design – frequently abbreviated as “CD” – defines the consistent overall appearance of a company or an organisation, with the purpose of conveying a clear identity and possibly also specific values (CI).



Photo: Volvo, C70

A corporate design is intuitively recognisable. The objective of the corporate design is consistency in communication (logo,

letterheads, marketing material etc.), architecture, vehicles, corporate clothing, packaging etc. In manufacturing industries the corporate design also significantly influences product design (a trend particularly noticeable in the automobile industry).

### corporate identity

The corporate identity (CI) represents the “persona” or “character” of a company which acts and is perceived as one unit – with quasi human characteristics. It is the task of corporate communication to help the company establish a personality and to see that it is perceived as a person or a unit with a specific character. A person’s identity is usually conveyed by physical appearance or the way he or she talks and acts. A company’s identity can be conveyed through **strategic continuity of actions, communication and visual appearance**. The CI comprises the corporate philosophy, mission statement, terminology, guidelines for operation, name, logo and other visual images.



Photo: Smart

It consists of three components: corporate design (CD), corporate communication (CC) and corporate behavior (CB). In addition to certain ethical principals (such as environmental and social standards,

sustainability etc.) corporate behaviour in the sense of business culture includes the conduct of employees towards one another and towards clients, suppliers and partners.

### cubic

A cube or regular hexahedron (from the Greek “hexáedron” = “having six faces”, or from Latin “cubus” = “cube”) is a **geometric body with six identical sides**. It is one of the five platonic bodies (regular polyhedrons). In design, the term “cubic” is not necessarily used in this strictly mathematical sense. It is used for objects which have an **approximate cubic shape** – objects which more or less look like a cuboid, which have an accentuated geometric appearance, which have a cubical, layered shape etc.

### cult

The term “cult” can be associated with particularly appealing **objects from popular culture**, which have a “cult following”, but whose purpose isn’t the quest for recognition in the domain of high culture.



Photo: BMW, Mini Konzeptstudie, Werksdesign

A “cult phenomenon” is usually characterised by a **strong sense of identification**

on the part of a particular group of consumers or fans with a cult product or a cult brand.

## **culture**

In our society, we use the word “cultural” to describe institutions and activities like theatre, music, visual arts, literature, but also education and research. However, these are only the most visible expressions of a culture, which develops within a community and which is determined by a range of factors like language, the political and legal system, family structures, social values, religion and social conventions, education and communication skills, consumer habits, housing and health care, social behaviour and responsible attitude towards individuals, society and the environment. In our European culture, the complex phenomenon of cultural identity is closely connected with the concept of civilisation (as a theoretical counterpoint to the “state of nature”, instinctive behaviour and the abuse of power) which led to a new image of state and society in the context of the Enlightenment in the 18th century. Culture can also be understood as a concept which works on both a large and a small scale. It is not only individuals who develop their own culture, but also every community – on the basis of structures relating to the family, society and religion. An individual might express this cultural identity through appearance, bodily care or style of living. In larger structures, this identity presents itself as a subculture. In companies, moral concepts, history, brand-specific standards of quality and sustainability as well as socially responsible behaviour result in a culture which contributes to the formation of a specific identity (compare “corpo-

rate identity”).

## **design**

Design has two principal meanings: design in the sense of a process (a drawing, an idea or a creative concept), and design in the sense of an outcome (the appearance of furniture, household objects, industrial products, machines, technical equipment, cars and also larger structures such as those encountered in interior design and architecture). The word “design” is derived from the Latin “designare” (= to signify) and has been introduced into many different languages. Following its emergence in craftwork, design has since flourished in numerous other fields. The most important are product design (e.g. furniture and household objects), industrial design (a term which used to describe the design of industrially manufactured products in contrast to craftwork, but is today sometimes also used to describe a specialisation in machines for industrial production), interior design, graphic design (means of visual communication such as typography, prints, marketing materials), communication design, packaging design, fashion and textile design, colour design etc. **Design encompasses not only the visual or aesthetic presentation** of an object or a communication medium, **but also its functionality and construction**. The tasks of a designer include product conceptualisation, selecting and processing materials, and choosing the production technique. Design also influences ergonomics and the user-friendliness of everyday equipment and devices. The emotional component of a design has also become more and more important in today’s world. A well-

designed product performs optimally, clearly conveys its function and is a pleasure to use – in the short and the long-term.

## Design Report

Presently the only design journal published in Germany with a focus on product design and professional issues ([www.design-report.de](http://www.design-report.de)).



Photo: Konradin Medien Verlag, Design Report ISH 2007 special

## dimension

The term “dimension” identifies a **space**. It carries a physical meaning, referring to space and time or space-time. Applied to real life situations, this term makes us aware that actions and events have specific consequences for and impacts on other people, areas of life or the future. In contrast, the meaning of “dimension” in

a **design context** seems nearly trivial. Here, dimension refers only to the **size of an object** or a space. However, dimension gains in importance through the **proportion of volumes and product details** by establishing relationships, determining proportional tension and harmony or simply by impressing with relative size or miniaturisation. The art of design is to appreciate dimension as a question of perspective – this applies to architecture, but also to object design, to the creation furniture for children and to interior design.



Photo: Axor Waterdream, Ronan und Erwan Bouroullec

## discreet

In aesthetics, this term means “unobtrusive, restrained” and describes the **subtlety** of a design element or an entire composition, in which none of the individual elements dominates.

## display

In marketing terminology, a “display” is an **information carrier** which is designed not only to draw the attention to a product, but also to make non-verbal statements about a product or an event. To convey a specific message, a display must be well structured and restricted to the essential information. At the same time, blatant marketing is to be avoided: the display must match the product in style and design.

## dominant

Prevalent; the opposite of “discreet”. A dominant design element prevails over other influences and **shapes the appearance of the entire composition**.

## dynamic

Dynamics (from the Greek “dynamiké” = powerful or “dynamis” = power) refers to **movement of bodies under the influence of a force**. The term “dynamic” usually describes the character of a person, an environment or an object and means that someone or something is full of energy, **lively, agile and light**. “Dynamic” therefore signifies the **opposite of “static”**. However, “dynamics” can also mean the inner movement of a piece of art, a design object, a building or a room design. A sense of dynamism or movement can be achieved through deliberate nuances, rhythms or organic, sweeping lines.

## eclecticism/eclectic

Eclecticism is a **design principle which draws upon different objects, styles, materials or elements and combines them to create something new**. As an artistic movement which openly draws upon existing or historic works of art, eclecticism significantly shaped human creativity for

centuries. It also characterises different periods of European art from classicism onwards.



Photo: Kartell, Louis Ghost, Philippe Starck

The term eclecticism was long used pejoratively to refer to a piece of art that lacked originality. Today, eclecticism is a common technique in art and sometimes also in design. Design quotations are used in a new or unusual way to create an original and innovative piece of art. In modern design, this term describes a technique for reinterpreting forms that were dominant at a particular point in time. Something new is therefore created using established ideas and objects. Often this results in a play on quotations and symbols drawn from the world of design and architecture.

## elegance/elegant

Elegance is associated with a **sophisticated, stylish taste** which has a distinctive and cultured appearance. People who

dress elegantly and furnish their home in an elegant style wish to express a refined, **cultivated** sense of taste (from French “elegant” = fine, delicate).



Photo: Axor Citterio M, Antonio Citterio

The elements employed are mostly **classical and harmonious**; bold or ornate elements are avoided because they are considered vulgar.

### **ergonomics/ergonomic**

“Ergonomic” is mostly used as a synonym for “**anatomically designed**” or “optimal for human use”. Ergonomics is a method for designing a work space that is efficient and gentle on the body.



Photo: Ligne Roset, Sessel 35H, Frédéric Sofia

The aim of an ergonomic design is to improve the interaction of man and machine and to create products that are easier to handle and more comfortable to use.

### **exhibition concept**

It is crucial to **design an exhibition according to a clear and consistent concept in order to successfully address a particular target group**. By focusing on different market segments (luxury bathroom, fast-moving items) or styles (mediterranean, country style, modern, minimalist, traditional) specific customer groups can be targeted. A conventional presentation in compartments with products aligned along the wall isn't always sufficient to introduce a complete bathroom concept. To achieve an all-encompassing presentation, it is important to make use of **spatial concepts and expansive compositions** which convey the complexity of a theme or a collection by means of architectural tools (colour composition, design of floor and walls, lighting). The more realistic the individual bathrooms appear in construction (including accessories, lighting, partitioned rooms with ceiling, complete bathroom set-up), the more inspiration they provide for the customers.

### **extravagant**

Today, the term “extravagant” is often used to describe people possessed of a bold manner and eccentric tastes. Originally, the word “extravagant” simply meant “**exceptional**” or “**unusual**”. As a product description however, “extravagant” mostly has a negative connotation and is used when a design or a design feature seems odd, over the top or inappropriate.

## form

The form (from the Latin “forma” = shape, contour) gives shape to the material. Form is defined by the **outline of a material and the relationship between the individual components**; it determines its **outer appearance**. Even though the formative process doesn't mean that the material changes its nature, it has an aesthetic, communicative and practical impact on how the material is perceived, consumed or employed.

## Form follows function

Form follows function is a **principle in design and architecture**. It means that **the shape of an object should be based on its intended use or function**. This phrase is part of a famous quotation by the American architect Louis Henry Sullivan (1856-1924), who introduced the first multistorey office buildings and department stores in frame construction and is amongst the founders of modern architecture. In Germany, this design principle was employed consistently for the first time by the Bauhaus school and subsequently came to be associated with functionalist design. This design movement does away with decoration and uses only geometric shapes. Sullivan's integral design principle was, however, ignored.

According to this principle every shape, every object and every structural, decorative or typifying architectural element also has a semiotic function – meaning that its **appearance is pictorial, descriptive, identifying**. In accordance with Sullivan's theories this function can also be fulfilled through the organic or decorative use of forms.

## formal expression

The way in which an object or a room achieves a certain expression by means of its formal elements. Rooms and objects don't express themselves with words, but through their arrangement and via metaphorical references – for example a handle in the shape of a leaf. The term “formal expression” is in line with the idea that individual design elements (such as basic shape, lines, colours) can achieve a certain expression via their arrangements – just like the words in a language. An object can therefore be soft or aggressive, expressive or concentrated, discreet or dominant, minimalist or sculptural.

## Frog Design

Frog Design is **one of the most well-known international design studios**. Frog Design was founded in 1969 by Hartmut Esslinger in Altensteig in the Black Forest, initially under the name “Esslinger Design”.

Following his international breakthrough in 1982 with his now legendary design for the first Apple Macintosh computer he changed the name to Frog Design. The acronym FROG is an abbreviation for “Federal Republic of Germany”. As a result of the company's global activities, the headquarters were moved to Silicon



Photo: Siemens, Porsche Design, Second Edition

Valley, California.



Hartmut Esslinger

Frog Design now specialises in the combination of product design, branding and digital media.

[www.frogdesign.de](http://www.frogdesign.de)

## functionalism

Functionalism is an important 20th century movement in architecture and design that reached its heights in the period of Classical Modernity and during the so-called "International Style" movement that ran from the end of the Second World War until the end of the seventies. In functionalism, design was considered a purely aesthetic value and therefore was pushed into the background. The design was to be determined solely by the intended purpose of the building or the object. The functionalists referred to the well-known, but largely misinterpreted, maxim "form follows function" coined by Louis Henry Sullivan. Functionalism differs from other design movements in modernity by its refusal to incorporate an emotional dynamic. A typical functionalist design is demonstratively realistic, linear and emotionally neutral. In architecture, complex structures are organised in small units which are then duplicated. Functionalist

architecture is characterised by steel frame construction, delicate pillar construction with a flexible ground plan, the seeming abolition of gravity and modular composition. The aim is balance and clarity - not only aesthetically, but also intellectually. Consequently, functionalist buildings and product arrangements often come across as rationalistic and even cold. Very often, the search for the "pure form" is in direct conflict with individuality and diversity. In functionalism, the ideal of orderliness is set in opposition to chaos and the complexity of appearances.



Photo: Strüwing, SAS Hotel Kopenhagen, Arne Jacobsen

In architecture, functionalism emigrated together with the Bauhaus artists and evolved under the name "International Modernity" with its partly emotionless, partly organic designs. In product design however, functionalism established itself mainly in Germany after the Second World War. At the Ulm School of Design (HfG Ulm), Germany, the so-called "good design" was considered the conceptual ideal. It was realised most consistently by the Braun brand. "Good design" was based on a set of standard rules which

were applied in a stultifying manner by designers and industrial planners, resulting in a uninspiring standardisation of design objects such as monotonous office buildings and work spaces.

### **futuristic**

Describes a **forward-looking concept** and an **experimental design** which assumes or simulates altered living conditions, as exemplified by the Axor WaterDream by Phoenix Design.



Photo: Axor WaterDream, Phoenix Design

### **golden section**

In art and architecture, the golden section is often described as the **ideal ratio** among different lengths of an object or a construction to one another. It is considered the **epitome of aesthetics and harmony** and was used intuitively long before its formula was discovered. The golden section defines the harmonious partition of an object into a shorter and a longer section in the mathematical ratio of  $b:a = c:b$ . The ratio of the longer section to the total length is the same as the ratio of the smaller section to the longer one.

### **graphic**

A graphic (from the Greek: “graphikós” = able to draw or paint) is a **two-dimensional drawing or a systematic representation**.



Photo: Jean-Marie Massaud, Chaos, prototype

In product design, the term “graphic” is used when the volume of a product is reduced to a minimum to make space for a structural, linear representation and to create a clear-cut profile.

### **graphic design**

Classic graphic design is the art of **communicating visually using two-dimensional media** – in the print sector, in packaging design, in the creation of logos and in marketing. With changes in media and the generally increased need for communication, the scope of graphic design has been extended to the design of user interfaces, computer programs and other types of audio-visual media. However, the most important sectors in graphic design are still typography (mainly print products) and the development and design of images. The guidelines for this process are usually defined in design manuals.

## **haptics/haptic**

Haptics (from the Greek “haptikos” = able to touch) is the **study of tactile sense**. When touching surfaces and when being touched, living beings receive various impressions and information. In design, the **haptic perception of an object influences our well-being**.



Photo: Axor Citterio, Antonio Citterio

Our reactions like comfort or disgust, feeling warm or cold, at ease or irritated are **intuitive** and beyond our control. The tactile perception of a surface largely determines our emotional relationship to the object, but also our confidence in its ergonomic quality, as in the example a chair or a musical instrument. Nevertheless, the haptic quality of a design object, controllable via the choice of material or the method of manufacturing, is often underestimated in comparison to its visual impact.

## **harmony/harmonious**

Harmony (from the Latin/Greek “harmonia”= agreement, concord) is an **aesthetic term for the smooth meeting and coexistence of two or more different but matching parts**. These parts **complement one another** resulting in a **harmonious, balanced appearance**. Ideally, all different parts retain their own identity,

but join together to form a new unit. In most systems – as in music or colour – the individual elements must share a common origin on a deeper level in order to be compatible (such as belonging to the same pitch in music or to the same colour category).

## **high-tech**

The term “high-tech” describes technology that is **cutting-edge**. However, “high-tech” is also associated with other concepts – such as computerisation, smart production techniques, customisability and even specific design characteristics. In the seventies and eighties, the design term “high-tech” was associated with structures that prominently showcase pipes, cables or metal strings, transparently displayed in the so-called “high-tech style” (as in the example the Centre Pompidou or the transparent housing of Swatch watches). Today, however, “high-tech” is associated with micro-processor technology, bionics and lightweight construction. Corresponding with this contemporary association, “high-tech” in design is today represented by delicate structures, a reduction in material and construction principles slightly reminiscent of cellular structures.



Photo: Axor Steel, Phoenix Design

## Hochparterre

Major Swiss journal for design and architecture. [www.hochparterre.ch](http://www.hochparterre.ch)

## homogenous

Homogeneity (from the Greek: "homos" = same; "genos" = kind; "homogenous" = of the same kind) means consistency of a characteristic within a system or **consistency of objects**, appearances and elements **within a system**. A homogenous design is harmonious and consistent, a homogenous use of colour shows few contrasts, or gradations within one colour palette (for example only cool colours or only warm colours, gradations of grey to white etc.).

## identity

Identity (from the Latin "identitas" = sameness) encompasses a number of complex issues and applies to people as well as to artificially produced phenomena and products. Identity not only implies **uniqueness** (and given the immense number of individuals and products, many different factors must come together to produce relevant differences), but also unity (of the determining factors).



Photo: Loewe AG, Individual, Phoenix Design

In other words: **many factors must come together to shape a form which is consistent and not arbitrary**. Just like contradictions within the character of a person, discrepancies in the overall appearance and presentation of a product or a collection lead to conflicts.

## Il bagno

Title of an important **Italian journal for the bathroom industry** which showcases the diversity of Italian brand products.

[www.reedbusiness.it](http://www.reedbusiness.it)

## image

"Image" can refer to the **picture we have in mind of an object or a person**, including both the associations and emotions connected with this picture and its standing in our society. Image is increasingly regarded as a product which is consciously shaped by means of its appearance. Visual appearance is one of the key factors influencing someone's opinion about an object, an idea or a person's character. In this context, product and communication design plays an important role in the creation and transfer of an image (e.g. of a brand).

## innovation/innovative

The literal meaning of "innovation" is "**renewal**". The term "innovation" is used in the sense of **new ideas and inventions**. Innovation doesn't mean the creation of product variants, but a **process** through which important characteristics of a product are added or improved, a new use or application is introduced or the way is paved for the evolution of a product category. **Innovations in technology, material and form** are all relevant to design.



Photo: Hansgrohe, Raindance, Phoenix Design

However, the term “innovative” has been used in an over-inclusive manner. It shouldn't be employed as a synonym for “new” or “original”, but in a more spare and exacting manner. Not every novelty at a trade show is an innovation. Examples of innovations in the bathroom are coated ceramic surfaces with nano effect or a product like the Raindance hand shower, which revolutionised the customary use and appearance of this product category by means of alternative design proportions and optimised technology.

### **interior design**

The aim of interior design or **spatial art** is the **artistic furnishing and decoration of a room**. Interior design includes many areas of applied arts.



Photo: Yoo, Philippe Starck

The representatives of the Bauhaus school wanted to break down the barrier between architecture and interior design. Their concept of architecture, interior design, art and product design as one integral task has become very popular again today.

### **Interni**

Title of an important Italian design journal with a focus on furniture.

[www.internimagazin.it](http://www.internimagazin.it)

### **Jacobsen, Arne**

Arne Emil Jacobsen (1902-1971) was a **world-famous Danish designer and architect** whose work is commonly associated with **modern functionalism**, but whose structures are dedicated to human needs. Jacobsen's extensive body of work is characterised by an integrative approach, the original use of forms and the combination of industrial production and traditional handcraft. Jacobsen, an all-round designer, followed his dream of creating integrated works of art comprising architecture, garden, furniture and décor - including everything from armchairs and wall paper to handrails, graphic elements and table decorations.



Photo: Fritz Hansen, The Swan and The Egg, Arne Jacobsen

His most famous works are his chair "The Ant" (1952 for Fritz Hansen) and his shell chairs in organic design - "The Swan" and "The Egg" - which were created in the late fifties. In 1969 he designed the "Vola" faucet line to furnish the Danish National Bank in Copenhagen. It was the first grid-based, modular faucet line for concealed installation and therefore the first faucet emerging directly from the wall, with a separation between handle and spout. It has been produced ever since by the company Vola AS using virtually the same design.

## Jugendstil

Jugendstil is an epoch in art history similar to Art Nouveau and was popular around the turn of the 19th to 20th century. Other terms for this period are Modern Style, Modernismo, Stile Liberty or Vienna Secession. Jugendstil is considered one of the first styles shaped by design more than by art and in which a modern concept of design was cultivated. In this context, craftwork developed its own formal expression and, through its industry-related products (lamps, furniture, cast iron goods), interacted with architecture to become an equal partner.

## lifestyle

The term "lifestyle" means "individual way of life". In common speech, "lifestyle" means the cultural form of life of a group of people. In this context, it is common to speak of an American, a Western or Eastern lifestyle. It not only represents certain values, but also conveys preferences in fashion, music and other areas. Attitudes towards health, professions, free-time, family and the nature of social relationships are also a part of a lifestyle.



Photo: Moroso, Antibodi, Patricia Urquiola

This modern buzzword is often used in relation to youth culture and other styles of life which are strongly orientated towards indulgence, consumption and appearances. Lifestyle orientation therefore also includes the conscious presentation of one's personality (through cultural and fashion elements) and one's accommodation style. The currently dominant trend is a high-quality, refined style as opposed to an ecological or socially conscious orientation. The ideal of any lifestyle, no matter what its specific orientation, is the creation and communication of individuality. The challenge, it seems, is to find a convincing (authentic) balance between individuality and the prevailing "Zeitgeist".

## luxury/luxurious

Luxury means expenditures and activities which exceed the bounds of what is considered standard or essential in a society. In its positive meaning, luxury is regarded as a desirable situation which makes life more comfortable for individuals and takes away their worries. Also "en vogue" in our society is a luxury which is limited

in time and which marks special occasions in life. A clearly negative meaning of luxury, however, is a lifestyle that is random, irresponsible and wasteful.



Photo: Axor Citterio, Antonio Citterio

Luxury can be defined as a relative deviation from a state culturally defined as “normal”. Against a background of relative wealth on one side and a decrease in quality of life on the other, luxury is less and less defined by material wealth, and instead by immaterial values like personal time, health and health care, outdoor experiences, family life, space and a natural environment, self-determination, enjoyment of body and food, continuing education etc.

### **Massaud, Jean-Marie**

The vision of **French designer** Jean-Marie Massaud is to create a union between man, nature and space. Born in 1966 in Toulouse, France, he attended the renowned school “Les Ateliers”, Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Création Industrielle in Paris. His overall aim is the union of design and architecture. In 2000,

together with Daniel Pouzet, he founded the Studio Massaud, where they completed architectural projects like the Tanabe House in Fukuoka, Japan. Always focussed on the individual, Jean-Marie Massaud’s approach is directed by the search for the essential. His work is determined by the pursuit of sense, magic and vitality.



Jean-Marie Massaud, photo by Karsten Jipp

Massaud’s works in product design have won numerous awards and range from **industrial products to pieces of furniture**. In **architecture**, Massaud’s achievements include renowned projects such as Renault’s international presentation in automobile exhibitions or the Lancôme Stores in Paris, New York and Hong Kong. His largest architectural project so far will soon be completed: the spectacular 50,000 capacity “Volcano” football stadium in Guadalajara, Mexico. After completing successful projects for renowned companies like **Armani, Cacharel, Cassina, Cappellini or Baccarat**, Jean-Marie Massaud now also works for Axor, the designer brand of Hansgrohe AG. In 2005, Massaud developed his concept of the ideal bathroom in the context of the “Axor WaterDream” project. This vision has now been realised in the Axor Massaud collection. [www.massaud.com](http://www.massaud.com)

## minimalism/minimalist

Strictly speaking, minimalism isn't a style, but a **principle in design which can be used in many different styles**. The aesthetic aim in minimalism is a functional and visual result characterised by elegance, controlled use of materials and concentration. This aim is achieved by **using only as much material as necessary and by focussing on the core of a project**. The motto "less is more" is based on an aesthetic rule also familiar in some Asian cultures, according to which a **strong impression is often created through the minimal use of objects and by ensuring that superfluous elements do not distract from the core "idea"**. The adjective "minimalist" is often used as a synonym for "clear", "simple" and "reduced". A typical feature of minimalism in architecture and design is the avoidance of any overload in the use of features. Minimalist designs typically feature primitive colours (red, yellow, green, blue) or geometrically primitive forms (e.g. circle, square, triangle) and small dimensioning in the context of large surfaces. Smooth surfaces are dominant. In many cases, this is connected with a cool, rational design, often with a highly functional character.



Photo: Cassina, Aspen, Jean-Marie Massaud

However, minimalism can also be found in organic or classical designs. In design, the term minimalism is associated with a

fundamental, purist trend which in the 80s consciously broke away from Studio Alchimia and Memphis. (See distinction between purism and minimalism in Appendix A.) The ideal of minimalism is simplicity. Simplicity means that only a few factors contribute to the creation of a form and that relatively few influences are visible. The most exacting requirements in minimalist design are generated when there is a need to integrate complex components into a simple form in a harmonious and virtually invisible way. Minimalist product design therefore often encloses a complex interior or a complex processing of materials. The aim is to transform complexity (of technical equipment or difficult structures) into a highly sophisticated organisational form.

## modern

In common usage, the term "modern" means "contemporary", "up to date", "progressive" or "in accordance with the latest fashion". However, using the term "modern" as a synonym for "fashionable" is under-inclusive. "Modern" refers to the **latest developments in society, science and technology**. In design, "modern" is mostly used in a contemporary context. It is less common to use the term with reference to Classical Modernity (early 20th century).

## modular

A module is a **component of a larger system**. Modularisation refers to partitioning of an ensemble. In modular construction, systems are assembled from standardised individual components. In industrial production, modularisation increases efficiency, and the resulting modular product offers advantages for

the users. Some highly sophisticated and common product lines in the automobile or furniture industry are based on modular construction, which makes it possible to customise a collection or to adjust it to changing circumstances.

### **monochrome**

As an adjective, “monochrome” is a synonym for **uniformly coloured**, while as a noun it refers to a painting completed in different shades of a single colour. The ultramarine works by the French painter Yves Klein (1928-1962) which were inspired by Buddhist Zen painting, stimulate a meditative immersion into “the void”, which gains in depth through the use of colour, seemingly plunging into eternity – an effect so far only encountered in the paintings of Mark Rothkos. A room which is completely white has a similar effect, since it provides few or no contrasts.



Photo: Silkon Hotels, Zaha Hadid Architects

### **monotonous**

In day-to-day speech, monotony is a form of tedium or uniformity (for example in the context of unvaried activities). A collection which lacks variation in design or a product design which appears emotionless and purely functional runs the risk of quickly becoming monotonous and boring. Monotony in the sense of

minimalist design, however, can produce an attractive, meditative effect.

### **monumental**

Resembling a monument, impressively large.

### **natural**

In common usage, the adjective “natural” means “**real**”, “**authentic**”, “**original**” and “**native**”. This general meaning was coined during the Enlightenment in Rousseau’s philosophy in order to accentuate the difference between a natural and a civilised way of life. This term therefore describes a state of affairs which hasn’t been altered by civilisation or education. The use of “natural” in the sense of “**biological**”, “**non-synthetic**” and “**pure**” only became dominant with industrial development and the introduction of artificial materials and artificially produced food.



Photo: Axor WaterDream, Jean-Marie Massaud

With the increasing mechanisation of our surroundings and a growing sense of alienation from nature and traditions, the idea of a natural environment has come to assume greater prominence as an ideal or a utopian state of affairs. In **design and architecture**, the term “natural” commonly refers to biological principles and conno-

**tations of nature.** In this context, “natural” refers to a process of imitation with the purpose of **achieving an overall impression reminiscent of nature.** The aim is to **create a sense of well-being.**

When designing an object and when choosing the materials, all of the human senses are considered – visual and spatial perception, the senses of smell and touch, sensations of warmth and cold and also cultural connotations.

### **naturalist**

In naturalism, objects are portrayed as they are – **as realistically as possible,** seemingly real, convincing in perspective, accurate in every detail and without euphemism. However, accuracy in appearance, carried to extremes by photo-realism, is no guarantee that the message conveyed is genuine or true. The term “naturalist” originates in the naturalist movement in literature, art and theatre that ran from approximately 1880 until 1900.

### **New Design**

“New Design” can be used as a collective term referring to several **theoretical, experimental and practical design approaches of the late 70s and 80s** which turned away from classic functionalism to look for new alternatives, initially outside of industrial production.



Photo: Established & Sons, The Crate, Jasper Morrison

New Design comprises a number of very different design styles, ranging from Anarcho Design to Neo Baroque to minimalism. The design elements employed were **irony, provocation and the mixture of styles and materials.** Artists and producers of the “New Design” were typically organised in groups within which art works of near-artisan quality could be produced – a principle which is still followed by designers such as Michele de Lucchi. This principle has also been rediscovered by other designers who create unique works and pass them on to galleries to sell at art fairs. In the “New German Design”, represented by groups such as Kunstflug and Gingbande, and individual artists such as Stiletto, the philosophy of New Design entailed a combination of artistic elite awareness and individualism which made little effort to reach out to society at large.

### **nostalgia/nostalgic**

**Memory of good times past:** a feeling of undefined, **retrospective longing** which motivate one to recall or **revive past styles in art, music or fashion.**

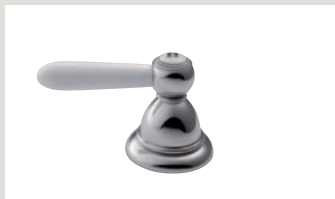


Photo: Axor Carlton, Phoenix Design

This effect can be realised in country style or classic design, but also by reusing flower power elements of the 60s or the music of the 80s. The focus is on

reconstructing a past style as accurately as possible, without adding new elements and without creating a new style by combining old and new elements (compare "retro").

### **opulence/opulent**

Luxurious shapes (from the Latin "opulentia" = wealth, affluence, splendor, abundance) which seem exaggerated if they don't appear in a stylistically authentic context (for example in an organic design concept).



Photo: Hiroshi Kawano, Bloom Pendant lamp

### **organic design**

Organic design is both a **style** and a **principle of design** and construction. As a style it constitutes the **polar opposite of geometric, functionalist styles**. It is inspired by organic shapes and sometimes also by inorganic, particularly crystalline, structures, both of which **appear in nature**. Classical features of organic design are **powerful curves and dynamic, round shapes**. Typically but not exclusively amorphous forms are used which appear **natural** and which **symbolise nature**. The aim is to achieve a pleasing, natural impression. Many designs allude to

structures that are grown naturally or shaped by the forces of nature. As a design principle, organic design is **not restricted to a specific style**.



Photo: Cor, Lava, Vertijet design studio

It can be found in traditional but also in **high-tech or minimalist styles**. Its characteristic feature isn't the stylistic expression, but the **principle of construction which imitates nature** (e.g. cellular, netted, skeletal, crystalline) and which abandons classical static weight-bearing structures in favour of a construction that seems more elastic and free. What all organic objects have in common is a design which is **developed from the inside out**, and a **focus on accentuating emotional expression**. Recurring techniques include asymmetrical construction, flowing lines and soft shapes, directed structures, plastic volumes and dynamic forms. In organic architecture, buildings might appear to grow or they might even appear to have an explosive energy. In architecture, ground-breaking work was completed by Frank Lloyd Wright (Guggenheim Museum New York), Le Corbusier, Eero Saarinen and in Germany particularly by Hans Scharoun. Rudolf

Steiner's architecture, however, comprised its own independent movement. Today, futuristic buildings by architects like Frank O. Gehry, Zaha Hadid or Peter Cook (Kunsthhaus Graz) increasingly showcase organic design elements. In addition to the founders of organic design, Charles Eames for example, the most important representatives are Ron Arad, Joe Colombo, Luigi Colani, Massimo Iosa-Ghini and Ross Lovegrove (seats for Japan Airlines, 2002).

### original

The word "original" (from the Latin "origo" = beginning) has several levels of meaning. As opposed to a counterfeit, an original is a **genuine product** or object. As opposed to a copy, an original is a work created by the artist himself; it is unchanged and not replicated. "Original" can also mean the **"initial version"** or **"prototype"** referring for instance to the first version of a text, book, painting, work of art or a product model. As an adjective, "original" can also mean innovative, creative or ingenious.

### ornament

An ornament (from the Latin "ornare" = to decorate, to adorn) is a **recurring, often abstract pattern**. Its history goes back thousands of years, **reached its climax with the Jugendstil movement** before being demonised by the functionalists.

### Phoenix Design

Based in Stuttgart with a branch in Tokyo, Phoenix Design creates one bestseller after another. The two partners, **Tom Schönherr** (left) and **Andreas Haug**, are designers by passion. In the bathroom sector they have, since the formation of

their company in 1987, mainly worked together with **Hansgrohe**, the faucet specialist from the Black Forest.



Phoenix Design Tom Schönherr, Andreas Haug)

With faucets like the Axor Steel or the Hansgrohe Talis S, clever shower systems, and the Pharo shower panels they have made a significant contribution to the design-oriented product range of this family-run company. The latest coup for the Stuttgart designers: the **Raindance hand shower**. The reversal of proportions – short handle, large shower plate – has been one of their most ingenious ideas. Phoenix Design is the winner of the Lucky Strike award and operates according to the design principle "form follows emotion" – a principle which is visible in bathrooms all over the world, in bathroom ceramics like the Caro collection by **Duravit** (with more than ten years of proven success), and in bath tubs by **Kaldewei**. Phoenix Design also creates exclusive TVs for **Loewe**, mobile phones for **Siemens** and numerous accessories like watches and fountain pens, all designed to make everyday life more beautiful. [www.phoenixdesign.com](http://www.phoenixdesign.com)

## pictorial

**Depictive presentation** or design using images; a pictorial language contains many metaphors (to spread like wildfire; a shower spray like a shower of rain) and strong expressions.



Photo: free-standing towel holder, Axor Massaud

A product design can be called pictorial if it is modelled on an specific object and evokes specific associations.

**Note from Axor:** The free-standing Axor Massaud towel holder is an example of pictorial representation – this organic product is reminiscent of a branch.

## pictorial language

**Pictorial language is a way to communicate with images rather than words.** It uses both realistic images and stylised images (such as pictograms) to evoke specific associations. Images with particular connotations lend themselves to such

a purpose – for example images representing nature, classical antiquity or motorsports. A design can also speak in pictorial language, as in cases where it is employed to **symbolise a specific product or type of building** – for example a hot dog stand in the shape of a hot dog, the roof of an airport terminal reminiscent of airplane wings or a handle with molds in the form of fingerprints.

## plagiarism

**Theft of intellectual property.** Plagiarism (derived from the Latin “plagium” = kidnapping) means passing off someone else’s intellectual property as one’s own work or part of one’s own work. Under certain conditions plagiarism is liable to prosecution in which case the plagiarist faces compensation payments. **As opposed to a copy or a counterfeit**, a plagiarised product is **not necessarily identical to the original**; no effort is made to pretend that the plagiarised product is the original. Instead there is a denial that the product has been copied at all.



Photo: Hansgrohe, fight against plagiarism.

**Note from Axor:** The Axor brand engages renowned designers who conduct professional trend research and develop visionary concepts. Such time-intensive

product development not only requires managerial foresight and sustainable brand management, it also comes with a significant financial expense. Consumers and sales representatives can support these efforts to create design value and the sustainable pursuit of quality by voting with their purchase.

### **polarisation**

The term “polarisation” generally describes the process whereby **two or more contrary positions are drifting apart**. The opinions and characteristics of different people can be polarising, as can questions of taste. This means that they evoke either particularly strong approval or rejection. In design, opposites can be used deliberately to create tension, as in the combination of organic and geometric forms, different materials or colours or even contradictory messages (conveyed for example through the opposition of form and content or the combination of familiar forms and unusual functions).

### **postmodernity**

As an epoch, postmodernity describes the **period after the so-called progressive or modern era**. In philosophy, linguistic research and other creative fields across Western culture, postmodernity had a significant impact. In the mid-70s the Avantgarde movement formed and in the 80s went on to have a huge impact on architecture and design. In architecture, the most important representatives of this movement were the Americans Robert Venturi and Charles Jencks. In design, it was led by personalities such as Ettore Sottsass or Alessandro Mendini or Italian groups like Alchimia and Memphis.



Photo: Alessi, lemon squeezer, Philippe Starck

**Originally intended as a protest against the emotionless design typical of functionalism**, the postmodern style in design proved to be a **great commercial success**. Soon however it was accused of impractical and random use of forms and a somewhat kitschy style. Postmodern artists frequently use design quotations in a playful, decorative manner and often without a functional element. Within the movement it is considered original to recombine and reuse existing designs and ideas, as opposed to authoring entirely new ones. The dominating artistic techniques are deconstruction, sampling and the mixing of available elements. Past styles are also sometimes presented in an ironic way. The world view of postmodernity is pluralistic, fractal and defined by random cycles. The postmodern discussion of the meaning of forms (in opposition to the monotonous functionalism of the “International Style”) took place mainly in architecture, but also reverberated in design. **The communicative function of objects regained prominence under the postmodern influence**. Ever since, architecture and design has attached greater importance to the “language of objects”.

## **product design**

Design and development of products for industrial production. As opposed to other fields of design, such as for example graphic design, three-dimensional objects are developed which are intended for human use and therefore have to fulfill certain requirements: they must be functional (i.e. serve their purpose in an optimal way), user-friendly, practical, ergonomically designed and durable. Since a product should address all the human senses, its aesthetic appearance is important – it should look good as long as possible (visual appearance), feel good (haptics), smell good, have a nice sound (important for example in automobile design) and perhaps convey a new experience to the senses. Another important task of product design is sustainability, which is achieved through environmentally friendly materials and manufacturing processes, product durability and recyclability, and the conservation of energy in production and product application. Another important aspect of product development is the adjustment of the design to industrial mass production, which makes it possible for a product to be manufactured automatically or with fewer steps, using as little material as possible and therefore generating minimum costs. Today, however, this aspect of development is not always taken into account. The suitability of a design object for mass production is no longer considered a compulsory task by all designers. This development is due partly to technical advances which make it possible to customise objects or to produce them in small batches, but also to the marriage of design and art which opens up the possibility of creating a larger number of

products that are available at a premium high price or in a limited edition.

## **profile**

In architecture and design, “profile” originally meant “cross-section”, “side view” or “outline of a form”. In the context of today’s overabundance of forms and products however, “profile” (as the aesthetic equivalent of the concept of identity) has a much broader meaning. It stands for differentiation (on the market), originality, catchiness and individuality. Just like people, products achieve a higher profile when they distinguish themselves through certain actions, distinctive characteristics or a particular appearance – **adding to their depth from the point of view of consumers and observers**. At times, however, the resulting product character is more an artificial image than a reflection of its true nature – a reality confronted not only by voters, but also by many consumers. In design, the challenge is to find the right balance between classical, timeless characteristics and an appearance which is original and in line with the trends of the times.

## **proportion/proportional**

In aesthetics, proportionality means a **ratio of size or length which is particularly pleasing to the eye**. In fine arts, proportion is used to measure the ideal ratio of individual parts to one another and to the whole. In architecture, it is the measurement of width, height and depth in relation to the complete building (compare “golden section”). **How we perceive the balance of proportions** is not a matter of chance, it is **determined by biology, aesthetics and culture**.



Photo: Label Retro, Limbo

As a design movement, purism developed from an aesthetic trend which itself derived from Russian constructivism, a style which called for clear, austere art modelled on the basis of purely architectural and geometric forms.

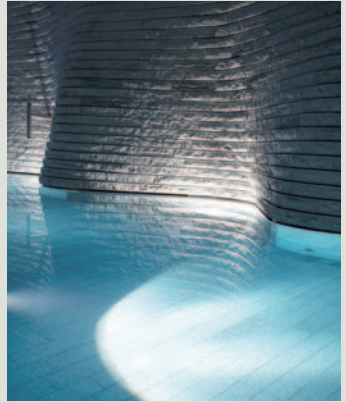


Photo: Tschuggen Grand Hotel, Tschuggen Mountain Oasis

For instance, to Europeans American cars seem generally overproportioned, but still harmonious on the whole. Extra-long necks, considered an ideal of beauty in some African cultures, radically challenge our perception of proportions, because the ratio of one part to the whole seems distorted. In fashion, taste changes faster than in other areas, while for example in architecture proportions are relatively more constrained by structural requirements. In design, there is currently a slight imbalance of proportions towards XXL, while minimalist proportions as in high-tech products or structures tend towards the other extreme.

### **purism/purist**

Today, "purism" is mostly used as a synonym for "simplicity" and "frugality". Originally however it was used in the sense of "linguistic purism" which advocated a pure, unaltered style, free of any foreign objects. **Purists want to keep a cultural characteristic as authentic, original and pure as possible.** A strictly classical design can also be considered purist. **Purism is therefore always associated with a certain sense of stringency.**

**The ideal is a composition of elementary geometric forms that avoids purely decorative effects.** In today's design terminology, "purism" stands for the **extremely reduced use of forms** with a nearly ascetic character. An ethical component can be also be perceived: modesty in outward appearance meant to convey a nearly sacred concentration on intrinsic values. Since **purism also represents the ideal of authenticity**, nothing is concealed – as opposed to minimalism for example – to achieve a more homogenous and harmonious appearance. All elements should speak for themselves. **Typical features** of purism include a minimal combination of materials, untreated

surfaces, clarity through sharp lines, geometric or archetypal forms (including traditional, simple forms), a somewhat homogenous use of colours or strong contrasts with few primary colours, combinations of black and white and shades of grey. (Differentiation between purism and minimalism in Appendix A.)

### quality

Quality (from the Latin "qualitas") means the **property, character or state of a material, an object or a process**. Strictly speaking, "quality" itself is **not a value, but a unit of measurement**: hence quality can be "high" or "low". Mostly, however, it is used as a synonym for "high quality". Even in product design, different kinds of quality are distinguished: **aesthetic quality** (a product can have trend-oriented or timeless qualities), **quality of material and workmanship, functionality, reliability, durability etc.** Of course, the question of whether the quality of design is defined by trends or instead by timelessness and a sense of familiarity is a matter of taste. Premium brands such as Axor have made the choice to offer their customers the latter.



Photo: Konradin Medien Verlag, Axor Citterio, Antonio Citterio

### quotation

While in general usage quotation refers to the literal repetition of a part of a text, in the context of art, architecture and design it describes the reclamation of parts of an older or historic work in the process of creating a new one. Quotation is a technique which has been popular in many periods in art history and was revived in the 20th century, particularly by postmodernists. While in postmodernity quotations were mostly used in an ironic and playful manner, designers in the modern eclectic style employ quotations as a means of deriving new design interpretations and, ultimately, new designs.

### Radical Design

Active from the **late 60s to the late 70s**, **this Italian movement countered the dull, functionalist and also the consumer-oriented and fetish-oriented design trends**. The representatives of Radical Design were **critical of society** and expressed themselves through **drawings, photo montages and projections** rather than products. Radical Design groups such as Superstudio, Archizoom and Alchimia represented anti-industrial tendencies. Ettore Sottsass is considered the intellectual father of this movement. He later joined the Memphis group, the successor of Alchimia. Together with designers like Michele De Lucchi he represented a design philosophy that favoured marketing, industry and consumerism.

### retro

Retro (from the Latin "retro" = backward) is a modern cultural phenomenon in **which cultural souvenirs of past decades** - from everyday objects to musical instruments - **are revived and presented in a fresh**

manner. Since “retro” is a style concept and not a specific style (like for example 70s style), it is **not connected to a certain epoch**. In design this phenomenon is expressed in terms of inspiration by traditional models without a strict commitment to the original. Even though retro design can have a nostalgic character, the focus is usually on variation.



Photo: Bd Ediciones, Showtime, Jaime Hayon

The purpose of high-quality retro design objects is the creation not of a mere copy, but of an imitation or a new creation based on associations with a previous design. **Note from Axor:** With the Montreux faucet collection, Axor has answered the call for a retro design. The design harkens back to the early 20th century (turn of the century, Art Deco etc.). The historical design was translated in detail into modern, highly sophisticated faucets with a commitment to the original quality of workmanship.

## rustic

The traditional meaning is “country-style”, “simple”, “rural”. In design, rustic style elements are often used as quotations to accentuate a traditional character while at the same time creating an unconventional appearance. In rustic design,

some constructive or decorative elements and surfaces are created larger or rougher than necessary or than would be possible using technical equipment. The aim is to create **an object that appears original and handcrafted**. For the same reason **natural materials such as wood** (or wood imitations) are used. As a style, rustic design evokes the ideal of the “simple life”.

## sculptural

A sculpture is a **three-dimensional body** (mostly a piece of art) which has a powerful and symbolic appearance from several perspectives and which clearly distinguishes itself from its environment. A **sculptural design element** delivers its own, autonomous statement, is independent of its environment and **has a strong influence on the viewer’s perception of a space**. In this sense, sculptural elements are frequently employed as a point of contrast to architectural elements.



Photo: B&B, oversized candles, Jean-Marie Massaud

## self-explanatory

A self-explanatory design doesn’t require any explanation; **the product “speaks” for itself**. Its symbolic and ergonomic character is so clearly apparent that its

operation, its use or its integration into a specific aesthetic or functional context is intuitive.

### **solid**

“Solid” means “genuine”, “authentic”, “strong”, “sturdy” and “indestructible”.

It can also have the meaning of “rooted”; the opposite of “detached” or “aloof”; often used to describe **simplicity and high quality**. It refers to **craftmanship, tradition, reliable quality** and a relative independence from outside influences (fashion, technology etc.).

### **spatial concept**

A concrete spatial concept comprises different **aspects of architecture and interior design**.



Photo: Axor Citterio, Antonio Citterio

A high-quality spatial concept takes into consideration the use of space in different scenarios and for specific purposes. Perception of space is mostly determined by the relationship between different parts of the room (line of sight and the creation of niches, void spaces through galleries, or half-size walls etc.), light and materials, as well as by the use of colour and forms.

### **Starck, Philippe**

Philippe Starck (French, born 18 January 1949 in Paris) is perhaps the **most famous living designer**. His works cover a wide spectrum from **interior design, product and food design to architecture**. Starck studied at the École Nissim de Camondo in Paris, founded a company that produced inflatable objects in 1968 and worked as an art director for Pierre Cardin from 1971-72. His designs for the nightclubs La Main Bleue (1976) and Les Bain-Douches (1978) established his reputation as a trend-setter. In 1980 he founded Starck Product, a production and marketing studio. The furnishing of the Café Costes (1981) and the interior design of the private apartments of the Élysée Palace in Paris for President François Mitterrand (1983) are famous examples of the New Design, which in France has manifested itself exquisitely in interior design. Many of his designs for everyday objects and accessories created in the 80s and 90s – for Thomson and Alessi for example – became very popular as a result of their emotional expressivity, inspired by postmodernity.



Foto: Philippe Starck

His open-minded idea of a design which is affordable and therefore accessible to the mainstream led, for example, to the creation of various product series for department store chains. At the same time he designed the interiors of a number of luxury hotels, which – starting with the Royalton (1988) and the Paramount (1990) in New York – helped create a new hotel image. In the 90s, Starck surprised observers with his **classical and ironic designs** employing unusual combinations of materials such as die-cast plastic seats or a stool in the shape of a garden gnome. Together with the German companies **Duravit, Hoesch and Hansgrohe**, Starck realised his vision of a “Salon d’Eau” (1994). With their minimalist appearance, his four bathroom collections embody a design which is increasingly characterised by simplicity and a focus on the essential. In his 2003 retrospective in the Pompidou Centre in Paris, Philippe Starck turned his public persona into an art object. His aim was simultaneously to exhibit and to ridicule himself – an antagonism also characteristic of his works. For instance, his “Collection Guns” lamps and “Collection La Vie”, recently designed for **Flos**, combine both a critique of and a passion for consumerism, as well as a counterposition of morality and irony, in order to create an object of mass appeal. [www.starck.com](http://www.starck.com)

### **statics/static**

Statics (from the ancient Greek “statike” (techne) = (art of) weighing, “statikos” = causing to stand) generally means **steadiness and immobility**. It also signifies the physical and structural mechanisms which lead to forces being at rest. The corresponding adjective can also

stand for a certain immobility in life. In design, it is used to describe a state of rest or even rigidity (as opposed to flexibility, agility, dynamism). Used in a negative sense, it characterises a bland, uninspired composition; in a positive context however it can stand for a balanced and expressive composition of elements.

### **streamlined**

A streamlined shape generally refers to a body or an object in the **ideal shape of a drop**. It is characterised by **minimal flow resistance** in relation to the surrounding medium (usually air or water). Many models of streamlined shapes can be found in nature. In transport design, it is based on **aerodynamic** studies relating to aircraft and automobile construction. A streamlined object, such as a helmet for cycle racing, typically tapers off at one end. In design history, streamlined shapes play a particularly important role in the USA from the 30s to 50s, spreading from there to Germany where it was widely employed as a decorative design element in the time of the German Economical Miracle. As a **symbol for progress and dynamics**, the streamlined shape was applied to a wide range of everyday objects. Not only cars and buses, but also buildings, prams, coffee makers and pencil sharpeners from this time period featured turbine-like shapes and tapered decorative strips.

### **stringent**

**Tight, rigorous, strict** – both in the logical and aesthetic sense. A stringent design signifies a **consistent, logical** or obvious **context** which can be anchored in both aesthetic and functional features (compare “consistent design”).



Photo: Axor Steel, Phoenix Design

### structured

A structure (from the Latin “structura” = assembling, construction) is the **inner composition of an object or a system**. In design, this structure is not always visible, for example when the constructive elements of a multi-layered body are partly or fully concealed by an outer layer or cushioning. This outer layer can either have a function (as in the example of upholstery) or convey a design statement (three-dimensional appearance, cover etc.).

### style

Style is primarily the **expression of personality**. However it is not restricted to individual expression, but can also signify the presentation and expression typical of an epoch (such as Jugendstil), a region (like the Italian “Bel Design”) or an artist/group of artists or designers (Bauhaus, Memphis etc.). A style is identified by **recurring, characteristic features** and by a particular choice and use of forms. In fine arts it is called a style if these features form a **pattern that appears in numerous individual works**. These characteristics can also develop into a personal style (also called **individual style**) found in art,

design or in fashion. However, a style can be considered “archaic”, “ideal” or “naturalist”, independent of personalities or time periods. In design, the most widely known stylistic categories are functionalist, minimalist, organic and classical. (See appendix B for style world features and a classification of Axor collections.)

### style mix

A **combination of style elements** of varying origins – from different historical contexts for example (compare “eclecticism”) or from different aesthetic backgrounds.



Photo: Axor Montreux, Phoenix Design

A style mix usually features **objects taken from different designs**. However, different styles are **not mixed within a product or a collection, so that the individual styles remain distinguishable**. This is a commonly used method in interior design. Style elements for the most part are used sparingly in order to establish accents and contrasts. The aim is to create tension and to challenge familiar perspectives so as to lend a distinctive character to a minimalist or purist ambience. The intention is to invite a fresh perspective on objects which are considered aesthetic standard-setters because of their immaculate appearance.

## styling

Styling refers to the **aesthetic alteration of a product to make its appearance more attractive, thereby increasing its appeal on the market.** In most cases, styling consists of a relatively **minor final touch.** It serves to influence the customer's choice with its **attractive appearance.** Styling is applied in a broad diversity of areas including food, flowers, the human body and interior design. It also applies to exhibitions or showcase bathrooms which, by means of appropriate decoration (compare "accessories"), are rendered more attractive to the consumer. By choosing different styling elements (shapes, materials, colours, light) it is possible to address different target groups. In the USA, the styling of individual functional products became the dominant design principle from the 30s to the 50s. The design of a product was no longer determined by functional requirements, but was chosen because of its visual appeal. Raymond Loewy is considered the father of styling. In addition to his various fridges or the Greyhound bus, his most famous products are probably the Lucky Strike cigarette package or the Shell logo. Styling developed out of marketing and, as an expression of the belief in progress, became the epitome of the American Way of Life. In the US, design was mostly considered part of marketing, while the European school (William Morris, Werkbund, Bauhaus, Ulm School of Design) always associated design with ethical, artistic and social ambitions. The most characteristic feature of styling is a streamlined shape (compare "streamlined").

## stylish

In the appropriate style; characterised by a specific style. The **harmony of individual elements and a consistent overall impression** make a design convincing and stylish, and is usually evidence of good taste.

## symbol

A symbol (of Latin/Greek origin) always carries a meaning. It is an image defined by certain conventions and serves as a sign, emblem or metaphor. As a sign, it is a **substitute for something that is imperceptible.** "Symbolic" therefore first of all means "representative" or "referring to a deeper meaning". In the context of design, symbols are not employed as direct signs (as for example in language theory or on traffic signs), but rather convey an indirect message. A symbol goes beyond the meaning of the object itself. The meaning of symbols occurring in religions, myths or art often can't be translated or interpreted by reason alone. A similar depth of meaning can be found in design, but symbols in design mostly have an emotional function. Either the design itself conveys a familiar, conventional world (such as the wing chair or the Axor Starck 1 faucet, reminiscent of an old-fashioned pump, see photo "archetype"), or individual design elements stand for different aspects of life - such as the colour gold for luxury or the Orient, chrome for sophisticated technology or a leaf-shaped couch for nature. The symbolic function of design (as opposed to a mere indication of intended use and operation) becomes apparent in its relation to the social context. For instance, Bauhaus symbolised avantgardist ideas, functionalism represented

industrial progress, country style was a symbol for the “simple life” while minimalism stands for sophistication and high-tech comfort.

## symmetry

In Greek Antiquity the aesthetic principle of symmetry was originally defined as harmonious proportionality and balance. Later on, particularly in the Baroque style, it was mostly defined in the sense of mirror-image symmetry in which all elements along an axis reflect the other half. In design, symmetrical means **evenly shaped**.



Foto: Axor Starck, Philippe Starck

Symmetry is achieved when two or more elements are **identical in proportion and design and clearly relate to one another in a given space**. A symmetrical design usually employs **basic geometric shapes**, which creates a classical appearance. Any movement within a symmetrical composition always has a clear direction.

Mirror-image alignment, axuality and recurring shapes create an impression of direction. According to the psychology of perception, symmetry accommodates the **human need for regularity**. During the renaissance, the symmetrical structure of

the human body was considered the ultimate norm for art. When symmetric shapes occur in nature – for example in a seashell, crystalline structures, a lake or the regular course of a river – we **recognise them and react intuitively**. We naturally perceive them as **aesthetically pleasing**. Behavioral research has shown that most people find symmetric facial features attractive. In architecture, symmetry is important for reasons of structural stability. However, by **neutralising tension**, a symmetrical construction also achieves an aesthetic effect. **Note from Axor:** For as long as faucets have been designed with more than purely functional aspects in mind (think of an old-fashioned pump with its handle by the side or a cold water tap with a single-sided control), their structure has been strictly symmetrical. They consist of a spout in the middle which is either flanked by two taps or accompanied by a single-lever handle which is usually positioned in the middle or at least has a linear appearance. In most cases, this faucet is in turn mounted on the centre line of the wash basin. With its round wash basin and the square shape of its water outlet, the Starck X collection is a typical example of an ideally symmetrical composition.

## tension

In physics, the term “tension” describes the **force** inside an elastic body. In design it’s the same, the only difference being that in most cases the body isn’t elastic and the force in question is not of a physical nature, but **manifests itself as a visual and emotional energy**. Tension is created through polarisation or a hierarchical structure and helps render an object more desirable and attractive in the

long term.

### **timeless**

**Not time-bound.** Describes an ideal ageless state which we desire not only for ourselves, but also – through the choice of classical designs – for the interior of our houses or apartments.



Photo: Axor, Axor Starck, Philippe Starck

### **trend**

One meaning of trend is a **fashion tendency**, mostly of a short-lived nature. Since bathrooms are designed to last a long time, trends in this field are usually realised in a milder and more conventional form. Nevertheless, Axor designers keep a close eye on current trends in design and customer needs.



Photo: Apple, iPod, Werksdesign

### **typography**

As an important part of graphic design, typography is the art of setting letters and other characters in a way that renders a text more easily readable, aesthetic and distinctive. A particularly artistic and original typographic design can be an eye-catcher that transforms textual material into an artistic statement – especially in poster art.

### **Ulm School of Design**

The Ulm School of Design (1953 to 1968) is considered the **successor of the Bauhaus school**. With Max Bill, former Bauhaus student, as its principal, the aesthetic values of the Bauhaus were structured and transferred to modern functionalism, which came to have a significant influence on the idea of design in the decades that followed.

### **unicum**

A unicum (from the Latin “unus” = one, one single) is an **object or a product which only exists once in this form**. Even though the democratic nature of design manifests itself in reproducibility and serial production, unicas today are no longer restricted solely to the art market. Instead, some design products are marketed (and priced) as limited editions of a serial design or as unique objects.

### **universal design**

A product, building or public space design which meets the needs of all age groups and is fully accessible even to those who are at a very advanced age – without the need for modification. The term “universal design” is used internationally and is now superseding the more restrictive concept of “barrier-free”

design. In the USA, this concept is also called "design for all," while in Great Britain another commonly used term is "inclusive design". Apart from basic design qualities like aesthetics and longevity, the most important principles of universal design are equitability and flexibility of application, simple and intuitive operation, high error tolerance, safety and ergonomics. The aim is to create a flexible and comprehensive environment for all generations.

### **volume**

A volume (from the Latin "volumen" = book, roll, coil; "volvere" = to wind, to roll) is the **spatial content of a three-dimensional body.**

### **Zeitgeist**

The German expression "Zeitgeist" ("spirit of the age") is used internationally and originates in the philosophy of Hegel (1770-1831). It describes the **general intellectual and cultural climate of a time or an era.** In the 80s "Zeitgeist" became the popular buzzword of a consumer society, but it regained a more serious meaning in relation to the political and social changes of the 90s.

## Notes



# Appendix

## A. Differentiation of purism and minimalism

purist	minimalist
<p><b>Use of simple forms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• basic geometric shapes, archetypal forms, which are identified with a particular product (e.g. an old-fashioned water tap)</li><li>• can have an ascetic appearance</li><li>• borders and edges are often accentuated</li></ul>	<p><b>Use of simple forms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• basic geometric shapes are preferred, but organic shapes are also acceptable</li><li>• non-ascetic appearance, but a “reduction to the essential” similar to Far Eastern aesthetics</li><li>• <b>smooth transitions</b></li></ul>
<p><b>Aesthetics of logic/technology</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• structural elements are sometimes accentuated or left visible</li><li>• the ideal is transparency of construction and material</li></ul>	<p><b>Aesthetics of floating</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• constructive elements are concealed; the mysterious effect of “floating” constructions is considered attractive (example: Starck X)</li><li>• anything that could detract from the aura of simplicity is concealed; absence of “technical” elements</li></ul>
<p><b>Purity of material</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• classical, generally “old” and “pure” materials are preferred; not only natural materials, but also classical materials of Classical Modernity (embodying technological progress) and of the New Classicism, which accentuate the structural character (e.g. steel, concrete or glass).</li></ul>	<p><b>Minimisation of material</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• type of material is irrelevant; new compound materials and high-tech materials are as good as “simple” materials</li></ul>

## B. Style worlds – Style features

### Traditional

- muted colours/shades of yellow and red
- black and white contrasts
- high-quality materials
  - dark wood
  - leather
  - ceramic
  - natural stone
- fragmented patterns
- decorative architectural elements
  - stucco
  - cornice
  - representative elements
- warm ambience
- classical room layout
  - solid walls
  - high walls
  - no open-plan living
  - no open spaces in walls
- Today, traditional elements are often combined with modern elements (see style mix).

### Retro

- inspired by traditional models without a strict commitment to the original
- not associated with a specific epoch
- current example: 70s retro wave
- Axor invokes the early 20th century (turn of the century; Art Deco etc.)

### Country

- natural colours and materials
- wood, metal, basketry
- summer cottage ambience and garden furniture

- mix of solitaire furniture
- ceilings and floors made of light wood
- many decorative elements and accessories
- traditionally shaped furniture

### Neoclassicism

- traditional shapes with a straight, clean character
- sans-serif fonts
- accentuation of surfaces
- quiet overall appearance
- genuine materials
- harmonious colour combinations
- arrangements in similar colour tones
- colours: black and brown
- may include modern architectural elements
- refined architecture and furniture

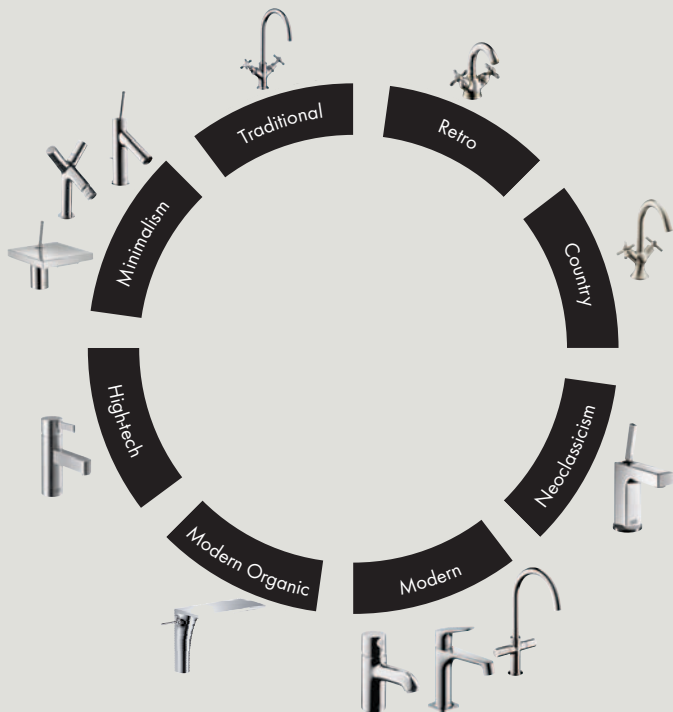
### Modern

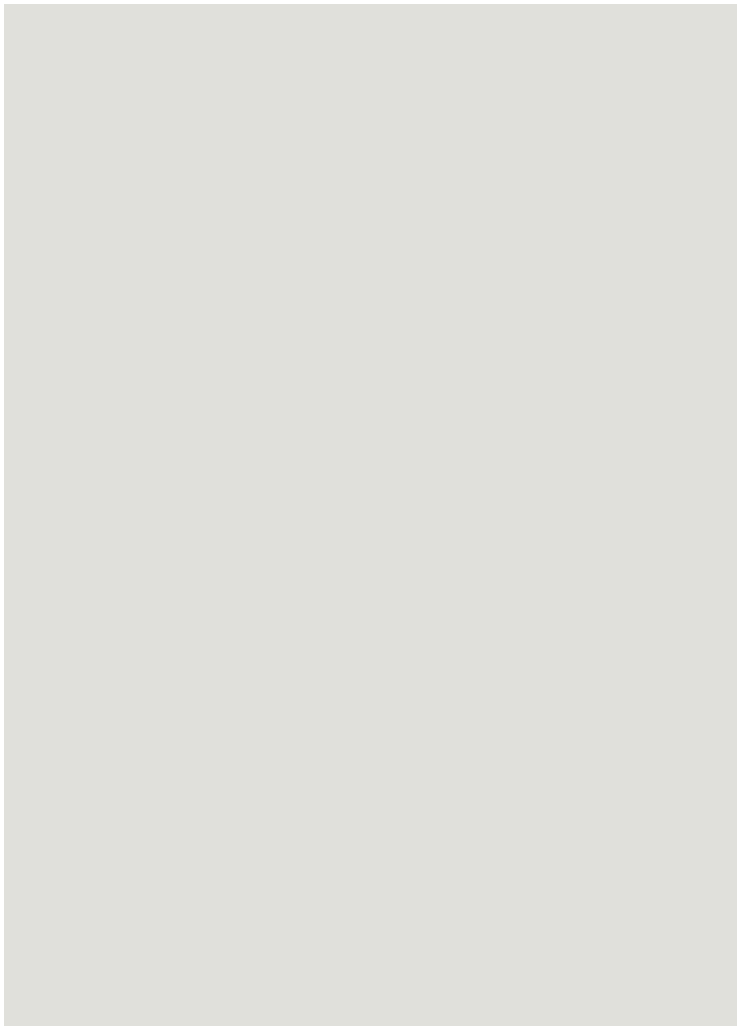
- reduced to the essential
- invention of new forms
- chunky, rough forms
- ergonomic
- prominent appearance
- no fixed standards for forms

### High-tech

- construction materials are preferred
- plastic, metal
- “technical” forms
- deliberately unemotional and straight forward; accentuated edges (soft transitions are avoided)
- masculine

## B. Style worlds – Style features





# Index

<b>A</b>		classic	12
Accessories	4	Colani, Luigi	12
aesthetic	4	Collage	13
aesthetics	4	colour palette	13
Alessi	4	complexity/complex	13
ambience	5	concave	14
amorphous	5	concept/conceptual	14
appropriate	5	conservative	14
archetype	6	consistency/consistent	15
architectural	6	consistent design	15
architecture	6	constructive	15
asymmetric	7	constructivism	15
authenticity/authentic	7	contemporary	16
avantgarde/avantgardist	7	contemporary design	16
Axor	8	contrast	16
<b>B</b>		conventional	16
Back to Basics	9	convex	16
balance	9	corporate design	16
balanced	9	corporate identity	17
Baroque	9	cubic	17
Bauhaus	10	cult	17
Boontje, Tord	10	culture	18
brand	11	<b>D</b>	
<b>C</b>		design	18
character	11	Design Report	19
Citterio, Antonio	12	dimension	19

discreet	19	homogenous	26
display	20	<b>I</b>	
dominant	20	identity	26
dynamic	20	Il bagno	26
<b>E</b>		image	26
eclecticism/eclectic	20	innovation/innovative	26
elegance/elegant	20	interior design	27
ergonomics/ergonomic	21	Interni	27
exhibition concept	21	<b>J</b>	
extravagant	21	Jacobsen, Arne	27
<b>F</b>		Jugendstil	28
form	22	<b>L</b>	
Form follows function	22	lifestyle	28
formal expression	22	luxury/luxurious	28
Frog Design	22	<b>M</b>	
functionalism	23	Massaud, Jean-Marie	29
futuristic	24	minimalism/minimalist	30
<b>G</b>		modern	30
golden section	24	modular	30
graphic	24	monochrome	31
graphic design	24	monotonous	31
<b>H</b>		monumental	31
haptics/haptic	25	<b>N</b>	
harmony/harmonious	25	natural	31
high-tech	25	naturalist	32
Hochparterre	26	New Design	32

# Index

nostalgia/nostalgic	32	self-explanatory	40
<b>O</b>		solid	41
opulence/opulent	33	spatial concept	41
organic design	33	Starck, Philippe	41
original	34	statics/static	42
ornament	34	streamlined	42
<b>P</b>		stringent	42
Phoenix Design	34	structured	43
pictorial	35	style	43
pictorial language	35	style mix	43
plagiarism	35	styling	44
polarisation	36	stylish	44
postmodernity	36	symbol	44
product design	37	symmetry	45
profile	37	<b>T</b>	
proportion/proportional	37	tension	45
purism/purist	38	timeless	46
<b>Q</b>		trend	46
quality	39	typography	46
quotation	39	<b>U</b>	
<b>R</b>		Ulm School of Design	46
Radical Design	39	unicum	46
retro	39	universal design	46
rustic	40	<b>V</b>	
<b>S</b>		volume	47
sculptural	40		

**Z**

Zeitgeist

47

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