

Design Fundamentals

By Stan Ketterer, assistant professor

To design sound pages, you must follow some basic principles. You must apply these principles every time you design a page. If you follow them, your pages will have consistently sound designs. Violate them frequently, and you will be looking for another line of work. Follow these principles:

1. Before you touch pencil to paper or hand to mouse, rank your stories. You must know what the stories are about and evaluate their news value. Don't be lazy; read them. Once you have ranked them, generally place them in descending order on the page according to their importance. Story placement is a nonverbal cue that indicates their importance to readers.
2. When you design, start with the art and build your page around it. Pages are built around photographs and graphics. Your design options often will become clear once you place photographs and graphics, especially if they go with stories.
3. Have one dominant element, usually a photo with a story. You must give the reader a reason to stop and look at the page. Often the dominant element is a story with a photo, but it can have more photos, quotes and graphics to provide the reader with more points of entry onto the page. Your central package must dominate the page so that the reader's eye is drawn to it.
4. If you only have one photo, play it BIG. Eye-Trac research shows most readers enter a page by looking at photos. If you have only one photo, make it big enough to catch the reader's attention. Photos can be smaller if you have more of them.

If you have an open page, the dominant photo generally should be:

- * At least 3 columns if it is vertical.
 - * At least 4 columns if it is horizontal.
5. Vary the sizes and shapes of the photos and graphics to add variety and visual appeal to the page. Photos that have similar shapes and sizes are dull, giving the reader little reason to sample them. If they are nearly the same, none stands out. Avoid square photographs.
 6. Use a mixture of vertical and horizontal elements to add variety to the page and to move the reader's eyes around it. Cross the page at least once with type. Don't leave vertical gutters that run all the way down the page and divide it visually. Avoid stacking, or panning, stories on top of one other. None of them will stand out.
 7. Use photos and other graphic elements to break up the gray and to avoid tombstoning headlines. Secondary photos and graphics are wonderful ways to break up headlines and to add life to the bottom of your pages. This is especially true with jumps. Make your art work for you.
 8. Honor the hierarchy of type. Generally, headlines should decrease in size as you go down the page because the stories are less important. Use three-line headlines above two-line headlines. The main exception to type hierarchy is the headline at the bottom of an open page on an anchor story, which gives the reader a reason to look at the story. You need a bigger headline to attract a reader to the bottom of the page. In most cases, use a 48-point headline for an anchor.

On the front page, use the following main headlines:

- * A one line, 60-point headline for banners. Use a one line, 72-point headline for more important stories and big packages.
- * A three line, 54-point headline for 2-column main headlines with a six-column grid. With a 5-column grid, you can use 60-point or 54-point for a 2-column headline.
- * Three-column main heads are normally 60 or 54 points.

On open pages, normally use the following headlines:

- * A one-line, 60- or 54-point headline for banners.
- * Use the same as the front for main 2-column or 3-column headlines.

On most inside pages, normally use the following main headlines:

- * A one-line, 48-point or 54-point banner, depending on the story. If the page is nearly open, you can use a 60-point banner.
- * A two-line 48- or 54-point headline for 2 columns;
a two-line 48-point headline for 3 columns.

In all types of pages, most 1-column headlines should be three lines. Some publications allow 4-line, 1-column headlines on long stories. In all cases, the second largest headline should be two types sizes smaller than the main headline. This sizing will allow the main headline to stand out.

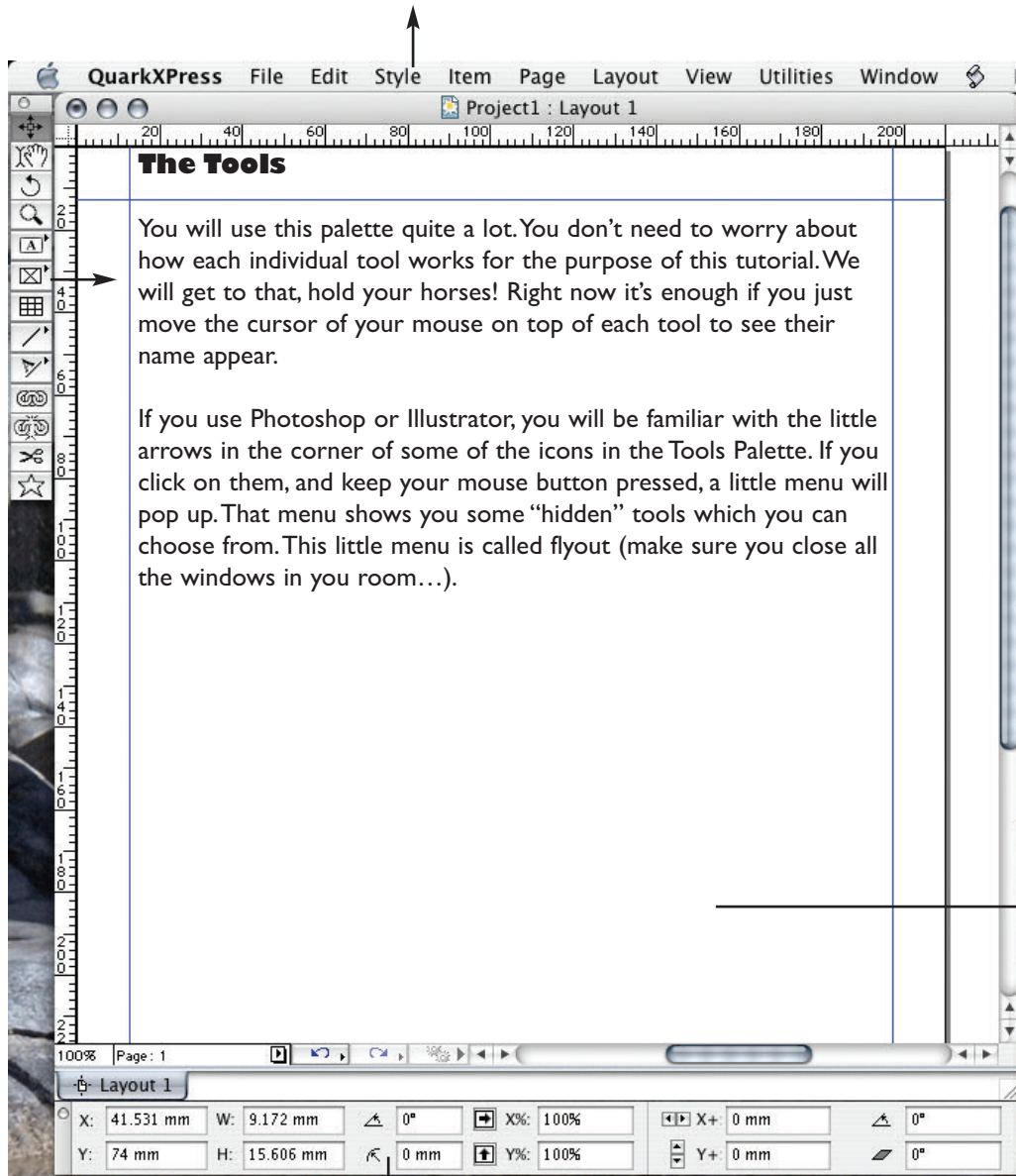
9. Use screens and color to add variety to your pages. Use screens more when you have only one piece of art, especially on the bottom part of the back page. Keep screens small to increase their legibility. Color is more effective when used sparingly.

Tool Bars and Other Windows

The Menu Bar

You can get access most of the functions of QuarkXPress through the Menu Bar. However you will see that, as you become more proficient and faster at using QuarkXPress, you will want to learn shortcuts so you don't have to drag your mouse around in search of the option you want. If you want to learn the shortcuts, just look next to the command you are interested in and you will see the shortcut if there is one.

If you want to open a new document go to File> New> Project (Command + N for Macs; Control + N for PCs). When the New Project window shows up, choose your document settings and press OK.



QuarkXPress's Work Area

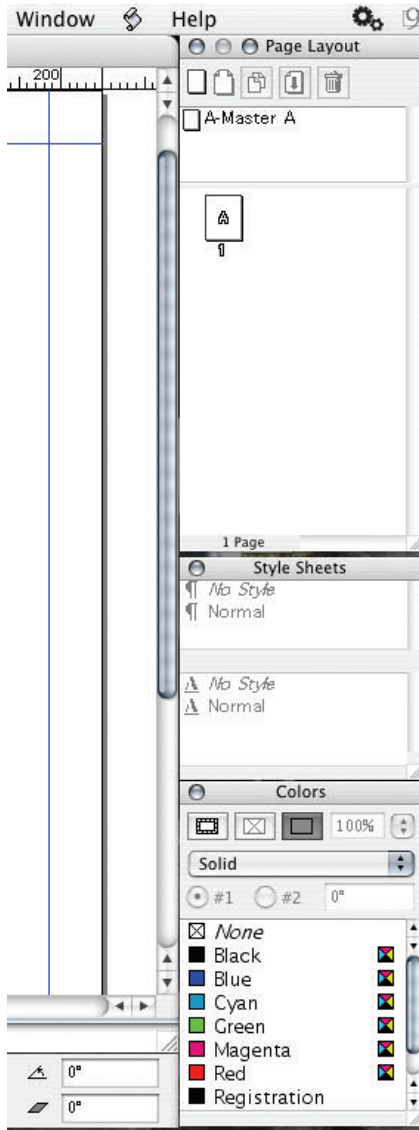
Like most programs, QuarkXPress has a Menu Bar on top of the screen. It also has the Tools (on the left in the illustration) and the palettes. Palettes are little windows which have specialized functions, e.g., you have got one that handles colours, one that handles style sheets, one that handles pages, and so on.

The Measurements Palette

The Measurements palette hosts a variety of information and settings such as the coordinates of an object, its size, the size and font being used and so on. You can make it show up by going to Window> Measurements. Its functions change depending on what you are doing — for example, if you have selected a shape, the Measurements palette won't show you the information related to fonts.

Contextual Menus

Contextual Menus show up when you right + click (Windows) or Control + click (Mac Os) on objects in your layout. They change depending on which object you have selected. They are very useful as they show you options that are related to what you are doing, for example you can see the Get Picture command when you right click on a picture box. This also saves you the time to go all the way up to the top of your screen to the Menu Bar.



The (Other) Palettes

You can collapse a floating palette by double-clicking on the top bar of the palette, where its name is displayed. You can close a palette by clicking on the button on the top left.

All of QuarkXPress' palettes can be conveniently found under the Window Menu. Following is a list of them:

- * Tools
- * Measurements
- * Page Layout
- * Style Sheets
- * Colours
- * Synchronized Text
- * Trap Information
- * Lists
- * Layers
- * Profile Information
- * Hyperlinks
- * Index
- * Sequences
- * Placeholders