

week::four

Introduction to Grids: Creativity within Structure

Grids

Defined

- A grid is a non-printed system of horizontal and vertical lines that divides the pages and helps the designer align elements consistently. (Graham, 82)

Grid are all about...

- Alignment
- Organization & Information Flow
- Design Consistency & Predictability
- Unity
 - Unity is achieved by joining elements and exploiting their potential relationships (White, 51)

Basic Grid Elements

Columns

Flowlines and Rows

Gutter

Margins

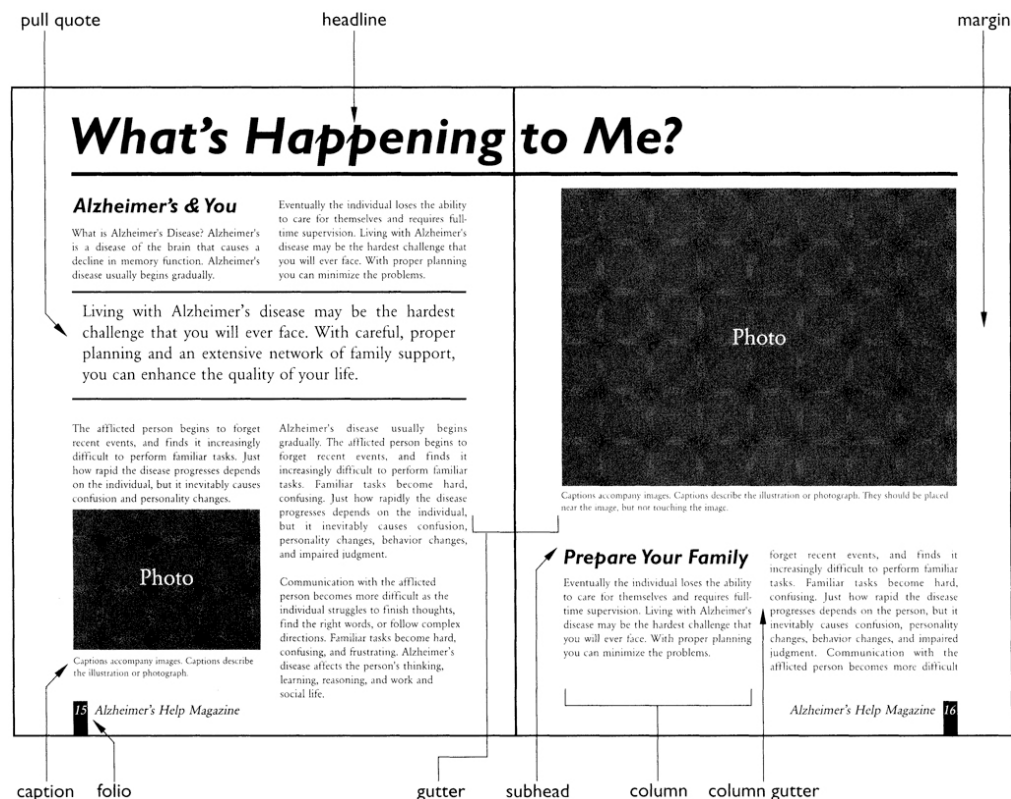
- Top, bottom, left, right, inside, outside

Guides

Modules

Spatial Zones (super-columns)

Markers

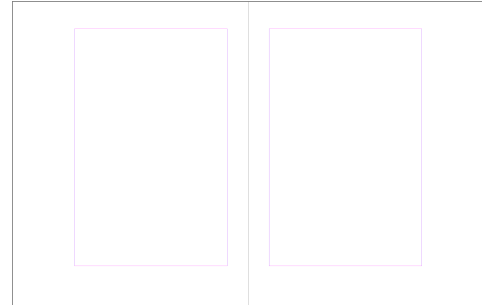


Graham, pg. 88

Grid System Types

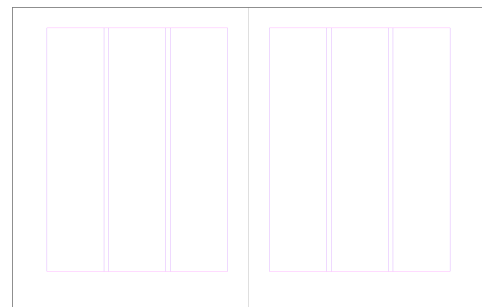
Manuscript

- One large area: Text block plus margins
- Its job is to hold extensive, continuous text
 - Books, essays, research papers, etc.
- Is all about controlling **line length**
- Wider margins help focus the eye and create a sense of calm and stability. (Samara, 26)



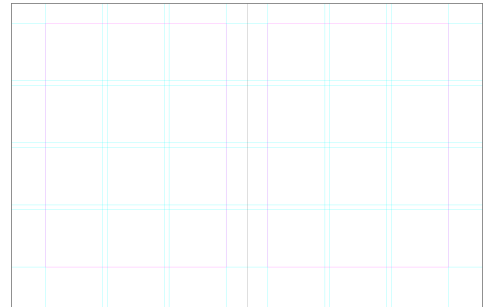
Column

- Very flexible
- Columns can be used to unify text (text running through multiple columns), or they can be independent from one another.
- Content can stay in one column or crossover into two, three, or more columns.
- Width of text is important:
 - Too much text per line—Hard for the reader to focus and find their way.
 - Too little text per line—Lines are too short and chunky with lots of hyphenation.
- Margins should be greater than the gutter width
 - Brings focus to the content
- **Flowlines** define vertical stopping points:
 - AKA: Horizontal anchors; Hanglines
 - Define distance from top to content or bottom to content.
 - Layouts can have multiple flowlines.



Modular

- Lots of columns and rows
- Used **modules** and **spatial zones** to define where content will go.
- Good for large collateral and publishing systems.
- **Proportions** of each module is important:
- Can be derived from many different sources, including paper ratio, the Golden ration, or desired feel.
 - Square=stability
 - Landscape=open
 - Portrait=compresses or stressed.
- Gutters are just as important as column and row sizes.
- Rigorous repetition helps standardize space—brings predictability for the reader.
- Projects order, clarity, and rationalism.



Hierarchical

- Grids based on **intuitive placement of object groups** rather than regular repeating intervals.
- Websites are one good examples of this.
- Each visual unit can have its own structure—one that best suits its needs.

