

# Professional Publishing

## Session 3: Grids

### References

- Keith Martin, *Creative Suite 3 Integration*. pp191-209 Magazine Project
- Paul Honeywill and Daniel Carpenter, *Digital magazine design with case studies*
- Kimberley Elam, *Grid Systems: Principles of Organising Type*
- [http://desktoppub.about.com/od/grids/II\\_aa\\_gridsflex.htm](http://desktoppub.about.com/od/grids/II_aa_gridsflex.htm)

# Grid Issues

- Definitions
- Elements of a grid
- Grid styles
- InDesign's grid controls

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## Definition of a grid

- **Think of the grid as a plan - a plan for your page layout**  
Many of the pages that you see everyday have a grid. You may not see it but it is there, holding up the design, establishing structure, guiding the page elements.
- Use a grid as an aid to the organisation of your content

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# Elements of a Grid

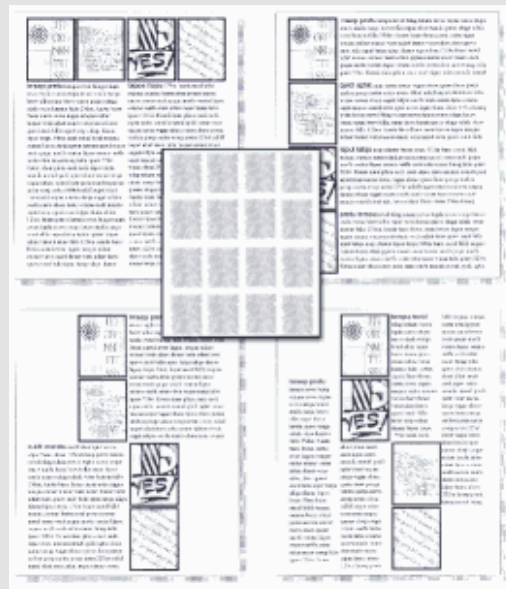
- Grids are the foundation of visual media
- Grids are visible to the designer but not to the reader
- Divide the page horizontally to create columns
- Additionally divide the page vertically to create rows
- Grids define the placement of text, images and graphics on the page
  - Content should straddle grid units to maintain visual interest

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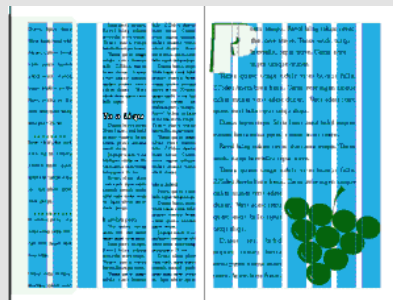
## Variations on a 4x4 grid



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7-unit  
vertical  
grid  
examples

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## White space in a grid

- Elements on your page do not have to be confined to individual grid units
- In a five-column grid, 5 narrow columns of text can be hard to read
  - Try two columns of text, each spanning two grid units with an empty grid unit for accents, photos, breathing room, or adjacent caps

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## White space in a grid

TOP  
3 column grid

BOTTOM  
2 cols x 3 rows grid



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## Mixing grids in a publication



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# Issues when creating a grid

## **Content or Page Elements.**

Is the publication heavy on text or heavy on graphics? Will there be many headlines, rules, illustrations, pull-quotes?

## **Text.**

Look at both amount of text and how it is broken down – long articles, lots of short articles, a mix of long and short articles. How many subheads?

## **Photos and Illustrations.**

Are there similarities in the type of illustrations or size of photos? Can photos be grouped by size or type? Are there a lot of rectangular elements or many irregularly shaped elements?

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- **Complexity**

Generally the larger the number of grid units (and the smaller the individual units) the more design options are available.

Too many options can destroy the underlying unity that the grid provides.

- **Objective**

A grid will reduce clutter and anarchy in page layout.

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## Grids for different content - images

- A newsletter, brochure, or magazine with many photographs requires
  - a grid with many smaller units
  - more possibilities for placing and sizing the photographs
  - opportunities to create a visual hierarchy, emphasis and impact

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## Grids for different content - text

- Newsletters use a columnar grid
  - 1, 2, and 3 column grids accommodate lots of text
  - 4 or more columns offer greater flexibility for publications with mixed content and variable length articles
- Grids based on an even number of grid columns can suffer from too much symmetry
- Newsletters don't have to be tied to columnar grids  
A newsletter consisting of mostly small articles or "news briefs" and photos could use a 6(2x3), 9(3x3), or 12(3x4) unit grid of rectangular or square units.

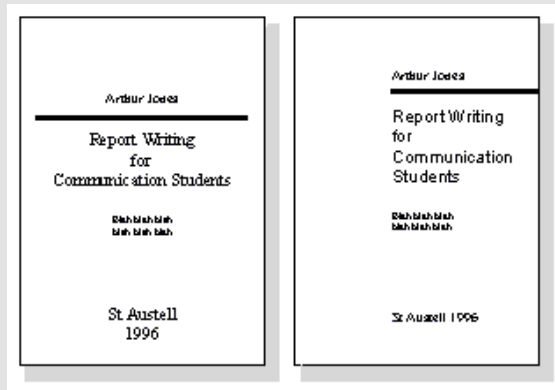
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# Asymmetrical design

Asymmetry  
adds  
interest to  
design  
Compare  
these two  
layouts



## A grid is not always appropriate

### **Grids don't have to limit design**

Grids *can* feel stifling. But they needn't be.

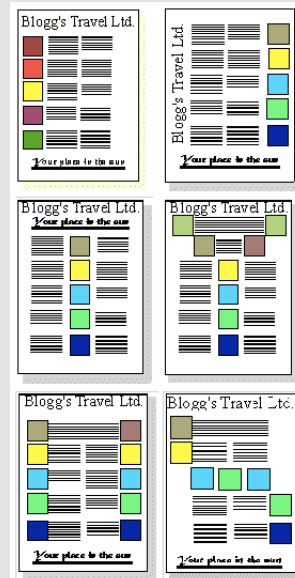
- Layouts based on complex grids are not appropriate in all cases
- Grids should fit the mix of elements rather than forcing elements to fit the grid

# CUTYOS

Single page design standard layouts based on these letter shapes

Particularly useful for Posters and individual page layouts

Consider asymmetrical designs, especially for spreads



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## InDesign grid controls

Set the page margins using Layout>Margins and Columns

Set the grid using Layout>Create Guides on a Master Page

Set the text Baseline Grid using Preferences>Grids...

Set a background Document Grid using Preferences>Grids...

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**Margins and Columns**

**Margins**

|         |         |        |       |
|---------|---------|--------|-------|
| Top:    | 25 mm   | Left:  | 12 mm |
| Bottom: | 20.5 mm | Right: | 10 mm |

**Columns**

|         |   |         |      |
|---------|---|---------|------|
| Number: | 1 | Gutter: | 4 mm |
|---------|---|---------|------|

**Create Guides**

|              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| <b>Rows</b>  | <b>Columns</b> |
| Number: 4    | Number: 3      |
| Gutter: 4 mm | Gutter: 4 mm   |

**Options**

Fit Guides to: ☒ Margins ☐ Page

☒ Remove Existing Ruler Guides

OK Cancel Preview