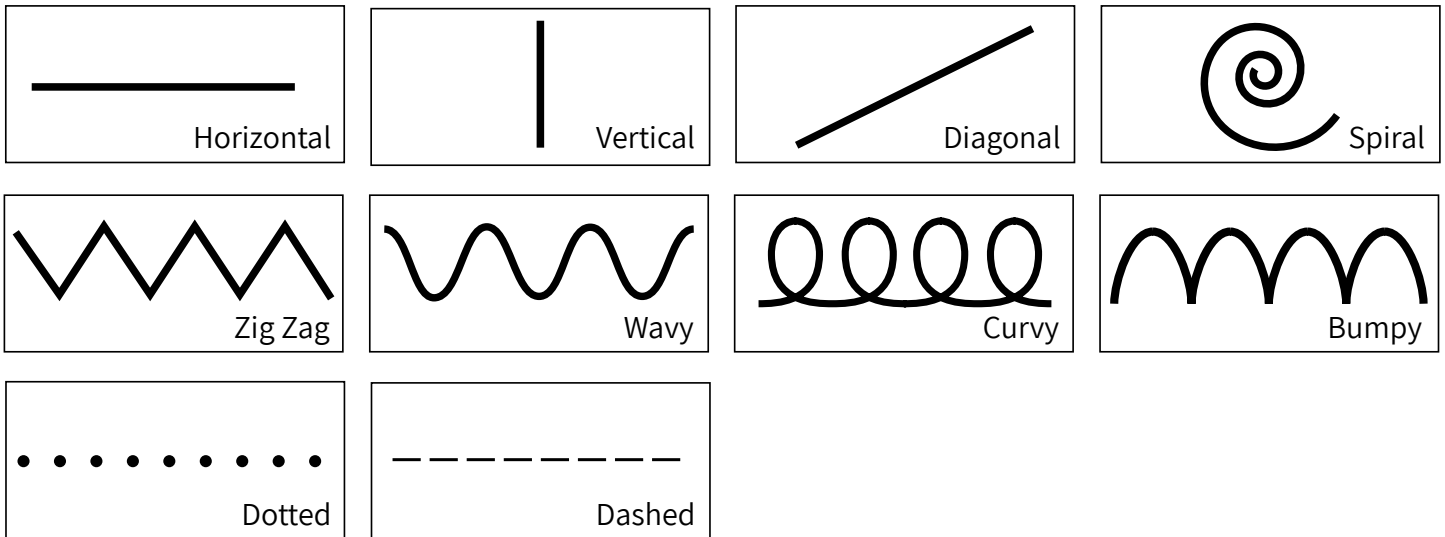


Element of Art: Line

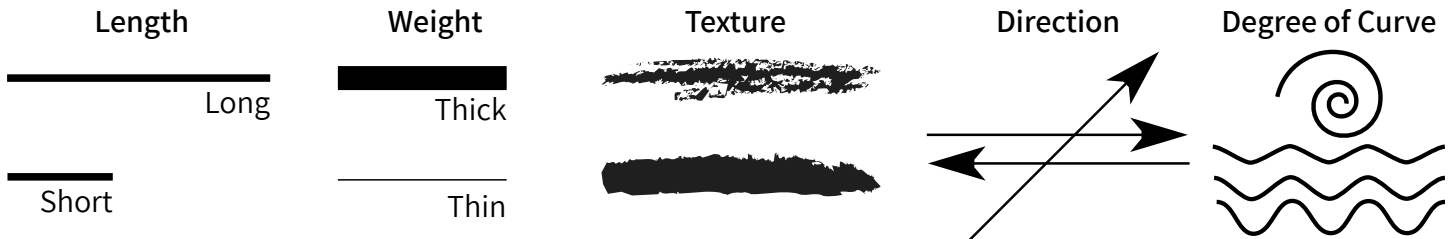
About Line

The elements of art are the essential components, or visual tools, used to create and discuss an artwork. The element of art of line is the first of the seven core elements of art we are going to examine. What is a line? Some say a line is the path of "a moving point or dot."

Some types of line:

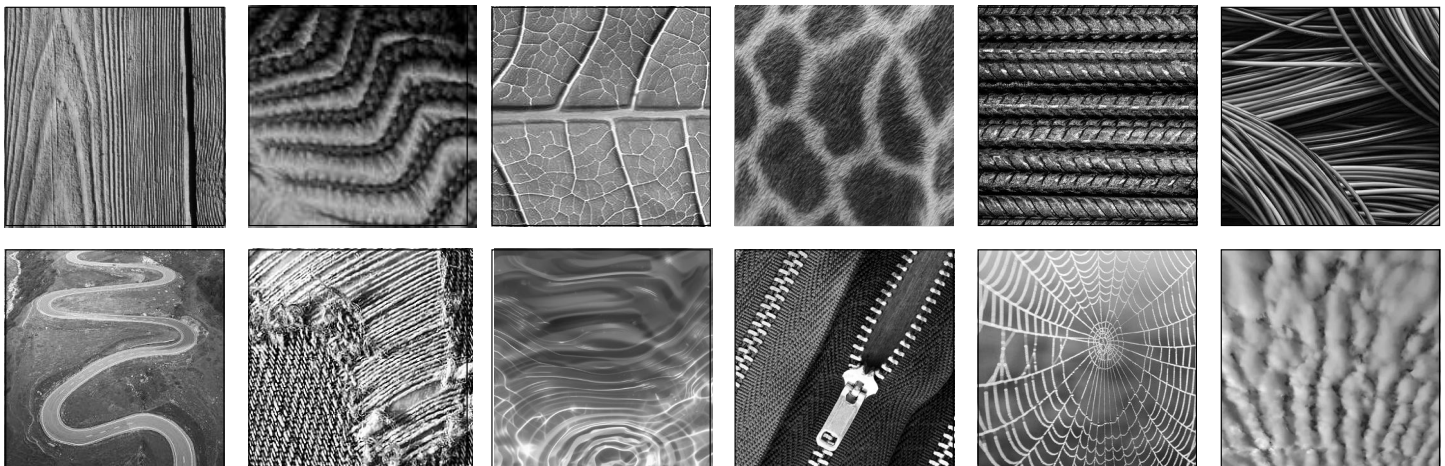


Line Variation:



Lines in everyday life:

Lines can be found everywhere.



Element of Art: Line *cont'd*

How do artists use line?

Defining Forms and Structures

1. **Outlines and Contour:** Artists use contour lines to map the outer edges and surface ridges of two dimensional shapes and three dimensional forms.
2. **Cross Contour:** Lines wrap around an object to emphasize its volume and three-dimensional mass.
3. **Construction Guidelines:** Light provisional lines help plan proportions, perspective, and placement in developing a piece.



Igor Stravinsky by Pablo Picasso
Example of contour line.



Portrait of Ben Franklin by Henry Bryan Hall, Jr.
Example of cross contour line.



Portrait of William Wilberforce by Thomas Lawrence
Example of construction guidelines.

Creating Texture and Value

1. **Hatching and Crosshatching:** Drawing and printmaking techniques used to build shade, texture, and three-dimensional form using lines.

Hatching: A shading method that uses a series of non-crossing, parallel lines. Artists change the tone by altering line spacing and thickness. Lines spaced far apart create light values, while lines placed close together create darker values.

Cross Hatching: An extension of hatching where a second set (or multiple sets) of lines is drawn at an angle across the first set. The intersecting lines cross over each other to form a dense grid or weave pattern. Adding more layers of crossed lines makes the shadow or value much darker.

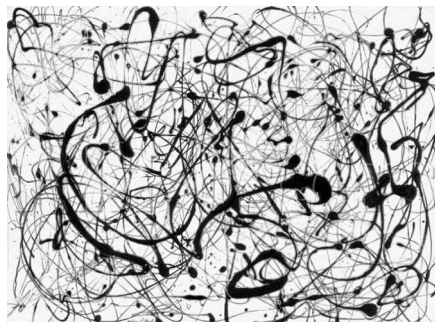
2. **Line Quality:** The unique visual and physical character of a line in an artwork, defined by its thickness, texture, and darkness.



Head of a Girl by Leonardo da Vinci
Example of hatching



Portrait of Roulin by Vincent van Gogh
Example of cross hatching



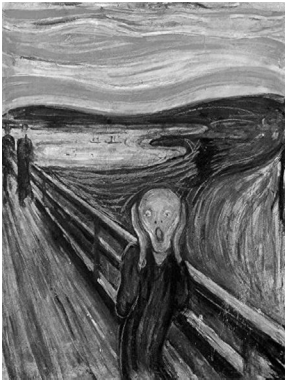
Number 14, Jackson Pollock
Example of varying line weight

Element of Art: Line *cont'd*

How do artists use line? **Cont'd**

Guiding Movement and Emotion

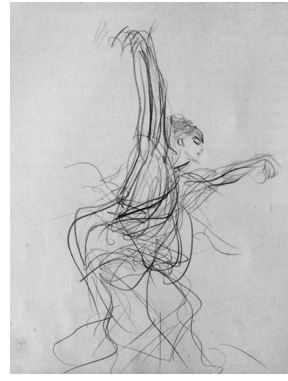
1. **Directional Paths (or Leading Lines):** Visual routes that guide a viewer's eye across a composition.
2. **Gesture and Energy:** Fast, loose gesture lines capture the dynamic physical energy or movement of a living subject.
3. **Implied Lines:** Invisible paths created by alignments or a subject's gaze direct attention without drawing a physical mark.



The Scream by Edvard Munch
Example of Directional Path.



Starry Night by Vincent van Gogh
Example of brushstrokes creating a directional path.



Sketch of a Spanish Dancer by John Singer Sargent
Example of gesture drawing.



Example of an actual line versus an implied line

4. **Emotional Quality:** how the thickness, direction, and texture of a stroke communicate feelings before a viewer even recognizes the subject matter.

Horizontal lines: Suggest quiet, rest, peace, and stability because they mimic a resting person or a flat horizon.

Vertical lines: Communicate strength, dignity, height, and rigid stability like a tall tree or standing figure.

Diagonal lines: Convey action, motion, tension, and a sense of being unstable or off-kilter.

Jagged or zigzag lines: Express turmoil, anxiety, aggression, and chaotic energy through sharp, sudden shifts.

Curved lines: Evoke comfort, calm, grace, and organic flow with soft, smooth, or sweeping paths.