

## Groupings - Are You Balanced?

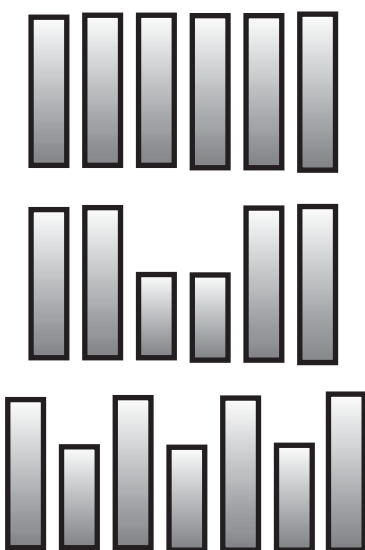
When deciding which group of accessories to use to decorate your home, is less really more? It's all a matter of opinion, personal preference and taste. There are no set rules on how to best display your accessories. Some people will fill every shelf, bookcase, nook and cranny with a collection of artwork, crafts, knick-knacks and photos, while others keep surfaces uncluttered and streamlined, highlighting a single object as a stand-out focal point. Consider color, contrast, shape, size and texture to make your home accessory grouping a highlight of your home decorating.

### Get Creative!

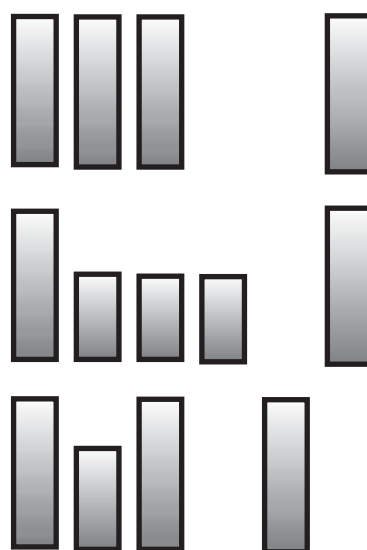
You can arrange pieces by color, material, style, country of origin, era or theme to make the grouping stand out. Your arrangement may consist of a simple line of tea lights or small candle holders, or it may feature several alternating styles of vases. Seemingly unrelated objects may have a cohesive similarity, such as various plates with different designs or various accent pieces that all have the same color details or background. Create a splash of contrast by including a single piece with a striking difference, such as a brilliant red (primary color) urn amid a group of soft yellow vases. Different textures can also highlight unlike pieces. Smooth river rocks on a rough, aged wood runner or seashells in a glass container of fine sand emphasize the harmony and balance that can be created by combining various textures. Don't be afraid to experiment (you can always change back).

### Balance And Object Placement

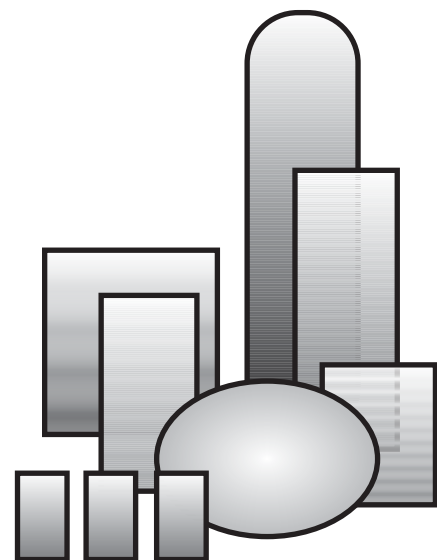
Play around with symmetry and placement of decor objects. Some people prefer a symmetrical layout (formal balance), such as a fireplace mantel flanked by identical candle holders on each end with matching vases in the middle. This look often denotes formality - careful not to come off as too sterile or stuffy. Others seek out variation, or variety (informal balance). An asymmetrical grouping may look or feel unbalanced to some, but catches the eye, as well as gives the eye a rest as the grouping is broken up. Try moving two tall (but not identical height) candles to one side of your mantel and balance them with a shorter, wide vase of flowers on the other side. Consider lopsided or uneven arrangements consisting of objects in odd numbers. Even if you are creating even numbered groups, four for example, put one larger/taller piece with three smaller pieces. When arranging in groups, use the full depth of the shelf or surface, placing some objects to the back and others in the front.



Formal Balance



Informal Balance



Full Depth Grouping