

Subtract

- Remove certain parts or elements
- Compress or make it smaller
- What can be reduced or disposed of?
- What rules can you break?
- How to simplify?
- How to abstract, stylise or abbreviate?

Add

- Extend or expand
- Develop your reference subject
- Augment, advance or annex it
- Magnify, make it bigger
- What else can be added to your idea, image, object, material?

Transfer

- Move subject into a new situation
- Adapt, transpose, relocate, dislocate
- Adapt subject to a different frame of reference
- Move subject out of its normal environment
- Transpose to a different historical, social, geographical setting
- Adapt a bird wing model to design a bridge
- How subject can be converted, translated, transfigured?

Empathize

- Sympathize with subject
- Put yourself in its shoes
- What if subject has human qualities?
- Relate to subject emotionally, subjectively

Animate

- Mobilize the visual and psychological tensions
- Control the pictorial movements and forces
- Apply factors of repetition and progression
- What human qualities subject has?

Superimpose

- Overlap, place over, cover, overlay
- Superimpose dissimilar images or ideas
- Overlay elements to produce new images, ideas, meanings
- Superimpose elements from different perspectives, disciplines, time
- Combine sensory perceptions such as sound and color
- Superimpose several views to show different moments in time

Change scale

- Make subject bigger or smaller
- Change time scale - seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years
- Change proportion, relative size, ratios, dimensions

Substitute

- Exchange, switch or replace
- What other idea, image, or material can you substitute?
- What alternate or supplementary plan can be employed?

Fragmentate

- Separate, divide, split, dissect
- Take your subject or idea apart
- Chop up, disassemble it
- What devices can divide it into smaller increments?
- How to make it appear discontinuous?

Isolate

- Separate, set apart, crop, detach
- Take only part of your subject
- “Crop” your ideas with a “mental” viewfinder
- What element can you detach or focus on?

Distort

- Twist subject out of its true shape, proportion or meaning
- Make imagined or actual distortions
- Misshape it, yet produce unique metaphoric/aesthetic quality
- Make it longer, wider, fatter, narrower
- Melt, crush, bury, crack, tear, torture, spill something on it

Disguise

- Camouflage, conceal, deceive, encrypt
- Hide, mask, “implant” subject into another frame of reference
- Conceal by mimicry, like chameleons and moths
- Create a latent image that communicate subconsciously

Contradict

- Contradict the subject’s original function
- Contradict visually and intellectually, yet remain structurally integrated
- Contradict laws of nature such as gravity, time, human functions
- Contradict normal procedures, social conventions, rituals
- Contradict optical and perceptual harmony (eg. illusions)
- Deny, reverse

Prevaricate

- Fictionalise, “bend” the truth, falsify, fantasize
- Use subject as a theme to present ersatz information
- Interpret information differently to mislead or confuse
- Analogize
- Draw associations
- Seek similarities between things that are different
- Compare with elements from different domains, disciplines
- What can I compare my subject to?
- Make logical or illogical associations

Parody

- Ridicule, mimic, mock, burlesque or caricature
- Make fun of your subject, roast it
- Transform it into a joke, limerick or pun
- Make zany, ludicrous or comic references
- Make a humourous cartoon drawing of the problem

Hybridize

- Cross-fertilise—wed subject with an improbable mate
- What would you get if you crossed a ____ with a ____?
- Cross-fertilise color, form and structure
- Cross-fertilise organic and inorganic elements
- Cross-fertilise ideas and perceptions

Metamorphse

- Transform, convert, transmutate
- Depict your subject in a state of change
- Change color, configuration
- Make structural progressions
- Make aging (cocoon-to-butterfly) transformation
- Make “Jekyll and Hyde” transmutations

Symbolize

- A visual symbol stands for something other than what it is
- Design an icon for your idea
- How can your subject be imbued with symbolic qualities?
- Public symbols are cliché, well-known and understood
- Private symbols are cryptic, have special meaning to its originator
- Works of art are often integrations of both public and private symbols
- Turn your subject into a symbol (public or private)

Mythologize

- Build a myth around your subject
- Transform your subject into an iconic object

Fantasize

- Fantasize your subject
- Trigger surreal, preposterous, outlandish, bizarre thoughts
- Topple mental and sensory expectations
- How far out can you extend your imagination?
- What if automobiles were made of bricks?
- What if alligators played pool?
- What if insects grew larger than humans?
- What if night and day occurred simultaneously?

Repeat

- Repeat a shape, color, form, image, or idea
- Reiterate, echo, restate or duplicate your reference subject in some way
- Control the factors of occurrence, repercussion, sequence and progression

Combine

- Bring things together
- Connect, arrange, link, unify, mix, merge, rearrange
- Combine ideas, materials and techniques
- Bring together dissimilar things to produce synergistic integrations
- What else can you connect to your subject?
- Connect different sensory modes, frames of reference, disciplines