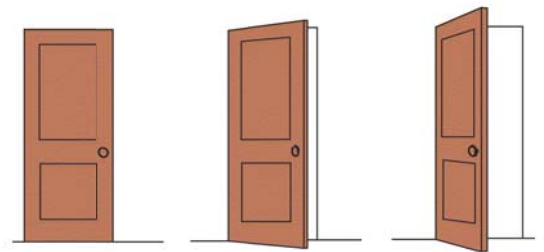


Types of Perceptual Constancy – Chapter 5

Our text discusses the Gestalt organizing principles (Figure/ground, proximity/nearness, similarity, continuity and closure in section 5.6 (Gestalt Principles). But the text doesn't discuss Perceptual Constancies.

Perceptual Constancy means that even when the angle and distance change, we know through experience that the objects themselves do not change in shape or size even though the sensory information on the retina suggest otherwise. Another example of how our brain in its perceptual powers takes care of us.

- Shape Constancy allows us to identify shapes viewed at different angles. So for example in the pic at the right even though the 3 doors project different images on your retina, your brain perceives them all to be the same shape in the real world.

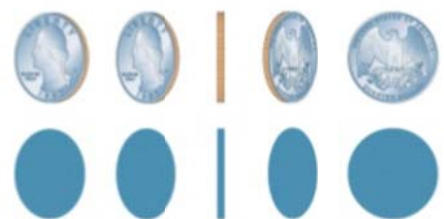


- Size Constancy allows us to perceive objects as the same size at different distances. So in the pic at the right, you know the balls are all the same size, even though your retina is screaming how big the 8 ball is.



Examples of Perceptual Constancy

- When you walk towards your car, it seems to remain the same size, even though the retinal image is growing larger as you walk.
- when someone throws a ball towards you at first it seems far away, but as it comes closer to you it gets bigger. You still know that the ball actually does not change size.
- You know the coins at the right are all the same shape, even though your retina doesn't think so.



Shape Constancy