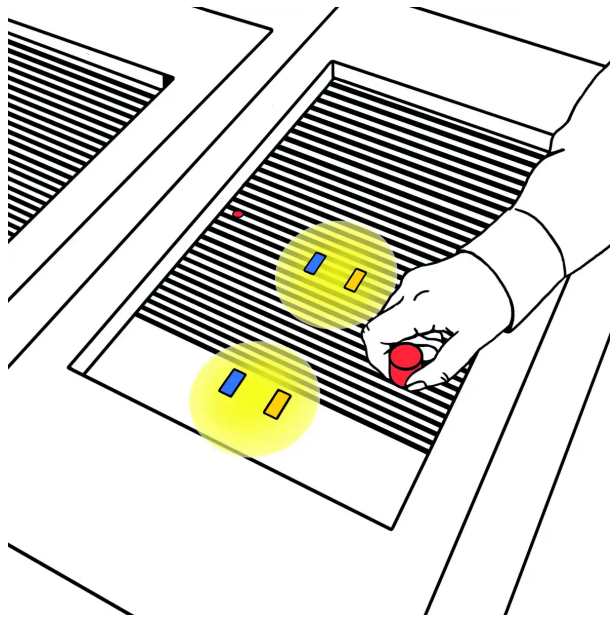


Footstep Illusion

How do the coloured rectangles move forwards?



Slowly slide the Plexiglas panel with the yellow and blue rectangles over the black and white stripe pattern.

Look at the red dot. What do you notice?

Slide the Plexiglas panel with the blue squares slowly over the black and white stripe pattern, too.

Slide the Plexiglas panel so that a pair of rectangles is above the white area. This way you can see that the yellow and blue rectangles are at the same height.

Although the panel with the yellow and blue rectangles is moving at one speed, the rectangles appear to jump forward a short distance and then wait a short time like footsteps.

The illusion is created by the different contrast between the surrounding colour and the colours of the rectangles. If the ends of the blue rectangles are on the white stripes, the contrast is high, and the rectangles and their movement is clearly visible. On the other hand, if the blue rectangles are on the black stripes, the contrast is low, and the edge of the rectangles is harder to see. They seem to stand still. The opposite effect occurs with the yellow rectangles. As a result, the two rectangles seem to move forward step by step, similar to two footsteps.

Similarly, in the row of slightly offset blue squares, there is no uniform forward motion. Idea: phaeno;