

# Job Description: Graphic designer

## General Description

Graphic designers create visual concepts, using computer software or by hand, to communicate ideas that inspire, inform, and captivate consumers. They develop the overall layout and production design for applications such as advertisements, brochures, magazines, and reports.

## Duties

Graphic designers typically do the following:

- Meet with clients or the art director to determine the scope of a project
- Use digital illustration, photo editing software, and layout software to create designs
- Create visual elements such as logos, original images, and illustrations to help deliver a message
- Design layouts, including selection of colors, images, and typefaces
- Present design concepts to clients or art directors
- Incorporate changes recommended by clients or art directors into final designs
- Review designs for errors before printing or publishing them

Graphic designers work with both text and images. They often select the type, font, size, color, and line length of headlines, headings, and text. Graphic designers also decide how images and text will go together in print or on a webpage, including how much space each will have. When using text in layouts, graphic designers collaborate with writers, who choose the words and decide whether the words will be put into paragraphs, lists, or tables. Through the use of images, text, and color, graphic designers may transform data into visual graphics and diagrams to make complex ideas more accessible.

Frequently, designers specialize in a particular category or type of client. For example, some designers create the graphics used on product packaging, and others may work on the visual designs used on book jackets.

Some individuals with a background in graphic design become postsecondary teachers and teach in design schools, colleges, and universities.

# Responsibilities

- Study design briefs and determine requirements
- Schedule projects and define budget constraints
- Conceptualize visuals based on requirements
- Prepare rough drafts and present ideas
- Develop illustrations, logos and other designs using software or by hand
- Use the appropriate colors and layouts for each graphic
- Work with copywriters and creative director to produce final design
- Test graphics across various media
- Amend designs after feedback
- Ensure final graphics and layouts are visually appealing and on-brand

**Graphic designers held about 290,100 jobs in 2018. The largest employers of graphic designers were as follows:**

Self-employed workers	22%
Specialized design services	10
Advertising, public relations, and related services	8
Printing and related support activities	7
Newspaper, periodical, book, and directory publishers	5

Graphic designers generally work in studios, where they have access to equipment such as drafting tables, computers, and software. Although many graphic designers work independently, those who work for specialized graphic design firms are often part of a design team. Many graphic designers collaborate with colleagues or work with clients on projects.

# Work Schedules

Graphic designers' schedules vary depending on workloads and deadlines.

Those who are self-employed may need to adjust their workday to meet with clients in the evenings or on weekends. In addition, they may spend some of their time looking for new projects or competing with other designers for contracts.

# Education

A bachelor's degree in graphic design or a related field is usually required. However, people who have a bachelor's degree in another field may complete technical training in graphic design to meet most hiring qualifications.

The **National Association of Schools of Art and Design** accredits more than 360 postsecondary colleges, universities, and independent institutes with programs in art and design. Most programs include courses in studio art, principles of design, computerized design, commercial graphics production, printing techniques, and website design. In addition, students should consider courses in writing, marketing, and business, all of which are useful in helping designers work effectively on project teams.

High school students interested in graphic design should take basic art and design courses, if available. Many bachelor's degree programs require students to complete a year of basic art and design courses before being admitted to a formal degree program. Some schools require applicants to submit sketches and other examples of their artistic ability.

Graphic designers must keep up with new and updated computer graphics and design software, either on their own or through formal software training programs. Professional associations that specialize in graphic design, such as **AIGA**, offer courses intended to keep the skills of their members up to date