

TYPES OF LOGOS

WORDMARK



Wordmarks (a.k.a. logotypes) consist of the company's name, written in a certain typeface or font. While this may sound very straightforward, as Steve Jobs said, "Simple can be harder than complex." To successfully learn how to design a logo, you need to pay extra attention to every little detail.

If you're going for a wordmark—or text logo, here are a few routes you can take. Some brands create a custom typeface especially for their logo, like Coca-Cola. However, this takes time and requires the skills of a professional designer and commitment to a long graphic design process. Alternatively, you can choose a logo font that reflects your brand's vibe. Modern logo designs, for example, will generally use a sleek sans serif font, while trendy logo designs might require more elaborate typefaces. Consider whether to go for all caps, small letters or a mix, as well as add any special characters or color to your logo.

A wordmark is a great choice for brands with catchy names, or those that want to get their name out into the world, as their logo will appear throughout all their communication and marketing materials.

Examples: Wix, Coca-Cola, Subway, Casper, Kellogg's, eBay and West Elm.

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LETTERFORMS



Letterforms are one-letter logos that only include the first letter of the company's name. Often, brands will have an additional version of their logo that comprises their full business name (called a wordmark or logo-type, as explained above), to be used in different occasions.

As letterform logo designs are small, they're easily scalable. Even when used in minuscule dimensions, they're likely to stay recognizable, especially if they have a fairly simple design without too many details. This makes them ideal for app icons, favicons, social media profile pictures and more.

Generally, letterform logos are a good choice for brands that are already reasonably well-known. Otherwise, it can be tricky getting people to know and remember your company's name. They're also beneficial for brands with long names. They can also be used by large company's, with a lot of visibility as part of rebranding efforts. And if you're a brand who believes in minimalism they're also a good choice.

Examples: Facebook, McDonald's, Netflix and Pinterest, Uber and H&M.

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Lettermarks (a.k.a. monogram logos) are typography logos that are made up of the brand's initials. In most cases, brands that have monogram logos are referred to by their abbreviated version when speaking, like IBM and NASA (when was the last time you heard someone say National Aeronautics and Space Administration?).

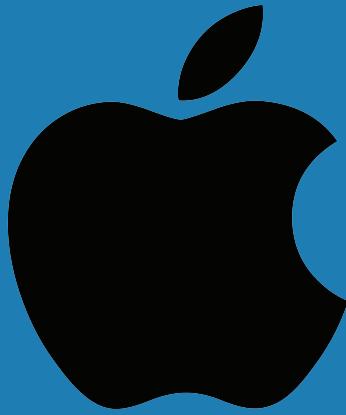
Similarly to the logo types mentioned above, lettermarks can also be made using a custom typeface, or by finding a font that successfully conveys your brand identity. Make sure to take into account various typography parameters, like kerning (the spacing between letters), width, weight and style (such as bold or italic).

In certain industries, it's commonplace for brands to use the abbreviated version of their name. If you're operating within those, you may want to stick to the norm and create a lettermark logo. Lettermarks are also a common choice for brands with long names that want to be more memorable with a shortened version. Think about your target audience, and their need for an abbreviated version they'll remember. Just make sure to get feedback on your abbreviation, to make sure it makes sense and you haven't inadvertently spelt something inappropriate.

Examples: HBO, IBM, NASA, CNN, HP and Louis Vuitton.

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LOGO SYMBOLS



Logo symbols (a.k.a. brand marks or pictorial marks) are graphic icons, symbols or images that reflect the brand's identity or activity. Normally, these types of logos represent an object from the real world. Some of the best logos using symbols are the kind that you instantly know which brand it is, the second you see them.

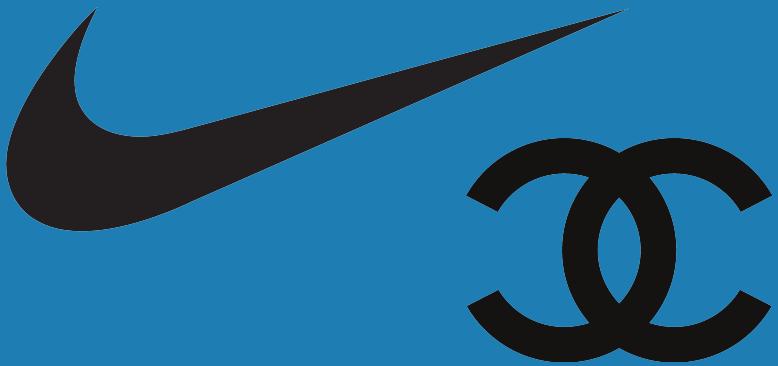
If you decide to go for a pictorial mark, consider what will symbolize your brand. Do you want it to be a literal representation of your name, like Apple? It can also be used to subtly suggest your brand's values or message. Notice, for example, how Twitter's bird faces upwards, representing hope and freedom.

Finding the perfect image for your logo symbol can be a challenge, especially if you're a fairly new brand. Not only are you likely to grow, change and add new products as time goes on, but it could also take time for customers to recognize your logo and connect it to your brand. In this case, consider incorporating your name into the logo (see combination marks below).

Examples: Shell, Apple, Twitter, Target, Instagram and Snapchat, Major League Baseball, church logos.

TYPES OF LOGOS

ABSTRACT LOGO MARKS



These are image-based logos that use abstract forms to reflect a company's branding. Unlike pictorial marks that represent a real object, abstract logo marks are more metaphorical.

As they don't depict a specific recognizable object, abstract logo marks give you the chance to create something highly unique. If you go for this type of logo, pinpoint your brand's core values. Experiment with reflecting them in a simple, geometric form that will evoke the right emotions and messages. For example, in addition to looking like the letter 'A', Airbnb's logo is reminiscent of the familiar 'location' icon as well as being an abstracted form of an upside down heart.

If you decide to create this type of logo, make sure you've solidified your brand identity and know exactly what it is that you want to convey to your audience. In addition, an abstract logo mark can be a good choice for global brands whose names don't work well across different languages. Not sure? Consider leading with usability testing to get an idea of how well your abstract logo type works with a target audience.

Examples: Airbnb, Chanel, Nike, Olympics, Google Drive, Adidas and Pepsi.

TYPES OF LOGOS

MASCOTS



Mascot logos consist of illustrated characters that act as visual representations or “ambassadors” for a brand. They can be anything from fictitious creatures to real people, as long as they reflect the brand’s identity.

Mascots can be a good way of getting customers to connect to your brand, as people tend to naturally resonate with other humans or characters. You can also use a mascot to create a fun, playful vibe that will appeal to your audience, which explains why companies targeting children and families often use this type of logo. Consider whether your business suits having a mascot and if so, how you can use it to send the right message. Start with, what's the goal of our logotype? Then work from there.

Due to their generally friendly, engaging nature, mascots can work well when designing for social media and marketing campaigns. They also work well with animation and other motion effects. However, take note that they’re often made up of more details than a standard logo, so may require a simplified version for small dimensions, like favicons or business cards.

Examples: Michelin Man by Michelin, Colonel Sanders by KFC, Cap’n Crunch, Tony the Tiger by Kellogg’s and Mr. Peanut by Planters.

TYPES OF LOGOS

EMBLEMMS



Emblems, also known as badge logos, are typically reminiscent of crests. They combine text and symbolic imagery to form ornate designs with a traditional feel.

If you're considering whether an emblem is right for your brand, think about the industry you're in. While there are no rules, this type of logo is especially popular amongst universities, sports teams and coffee brands. A current logo trend is a contemporary take on the emblem, opting for a more minimal approach, which usually involves vector illustrations and clean lines.

Emblems can also give you the space you need to add a slogan that reflects your brand's message. When creating an emblem, take into account that due to their intricate details, this type of logo can be less versatile and doesn't always work well on a smaller scale. In those cases, you can create a simpler alternative.

Examples: Starbucks, Stella Artois, Harley-Davidson, NFL, Warner Brothers, Manchester United.

TYPES OF LOGOS

COMBINATION MARKS



This type of logo combines (surprise, surprise) images with words. For example, a combination logo could consist of an icon with a wordmark, or a mascot with a letterform and so on. Some brands have one main logo in the form of a combination mark, while occasionally splitting up the text and imagery to better suit various contexts.

Combination marks are very popular amongst brands from all industries, as they are extremely versatile. You can create a number of variations of your logo and use them for different purposes, while ensuring a clear and cohesive visual language throughout. For example, notice how Lacoste uses their combination mark on their website design, while most of their products only feature the much-loved and recognizable green crocodile.

For companies that are not yet well-known, combination marks can be a great starting point, helping you build brand recognition. With time, you'll have the freedom to use just the text or just the icon, while remaining recognizable. Also, supporting the text with icons, symbols and other forms of imagery helps potential customers understand what your brand is all about.

Examples: Taco Bell, Toblerone, Dropbox, CVS, Dove and NBC.

TYPES OF LOGOS

DYNAMIC MARKS



When it comes to understanding types of logos and which one is right for you, dynamic logos are kind of a unique anomaly in that they can take on many forms. This may sound strange, since a general rule of logo design is consistency, however that is precisely what makes dynamic logos so versatile. It is through that very consistency that dynamic logos thrive. These logo types require a basic framework that serves as the core motif which will appear in any, and every, version of the logo.

For example, think of when you open your Google browser, and you see the familiar wordmark logo suddenly characterized by historical figures, holidays or celebrations, yet you always know it's Google. Their brand has enough clout to transform their recognizable logo into different configurations that are not only relevant and timely, but continue to solidify their brand messaging.

Both of these examples show that a dynamic logo is not just a random selection of icons or images hastily thrown together, but a thoughtful and strategic design approach that effectively communicates what a brand is all about, while invoking positive feelings in the viewer.

Examples: MTV, Hilary Clinton, Google, Nickelodeon and Virgin