



GRAPHIC DESIGNING

An Introduction of Graphic Designing



As graphic design continues to grow more and more essential to business success and brand identity, it should come as no surprise that the popularity of graphic design is expected to rise. Brands have less time than ever to connect with prospective customers: A recent study concluded that the average attention span has fallen to just eight seconds, down from 12 seconds in 2000. Competitive brands need visual content that's eye-catching and engaging—and that's where graphic design comes in.



Learning Graphic Design

Becoming a professional designer takes practice, but there are a variety of different projects and activities you can tackle to improve your skills in the process. For example, a class on botanical drawing can make you

a better freehand designer. A class on calligraphy could help you with typography and font design. And trying out comic book art could change your perspective on character design and mascots. Graphic design often requires a broad set of technical skills, and practicing techniques that are out of your comfort zone can be a fun way to prepare yourself. Here are some great places to begin.

Take a Graphic Design course: If you're trying your hand at graphic design for the first time, there's no better place to start than online graphic design courses. Learning the basics will help you tackle design projects on a variety of different platforms, and as you pursue more specific avenues in graphic design, you can look for classes that are more tailored to your interests. Some graphic design classes will teach you how to design games, while others might focus on logo design tips, or crafting book covers. Whatever the subject, investing your time and effort into design courses will help you grow as a graphic designer over time.

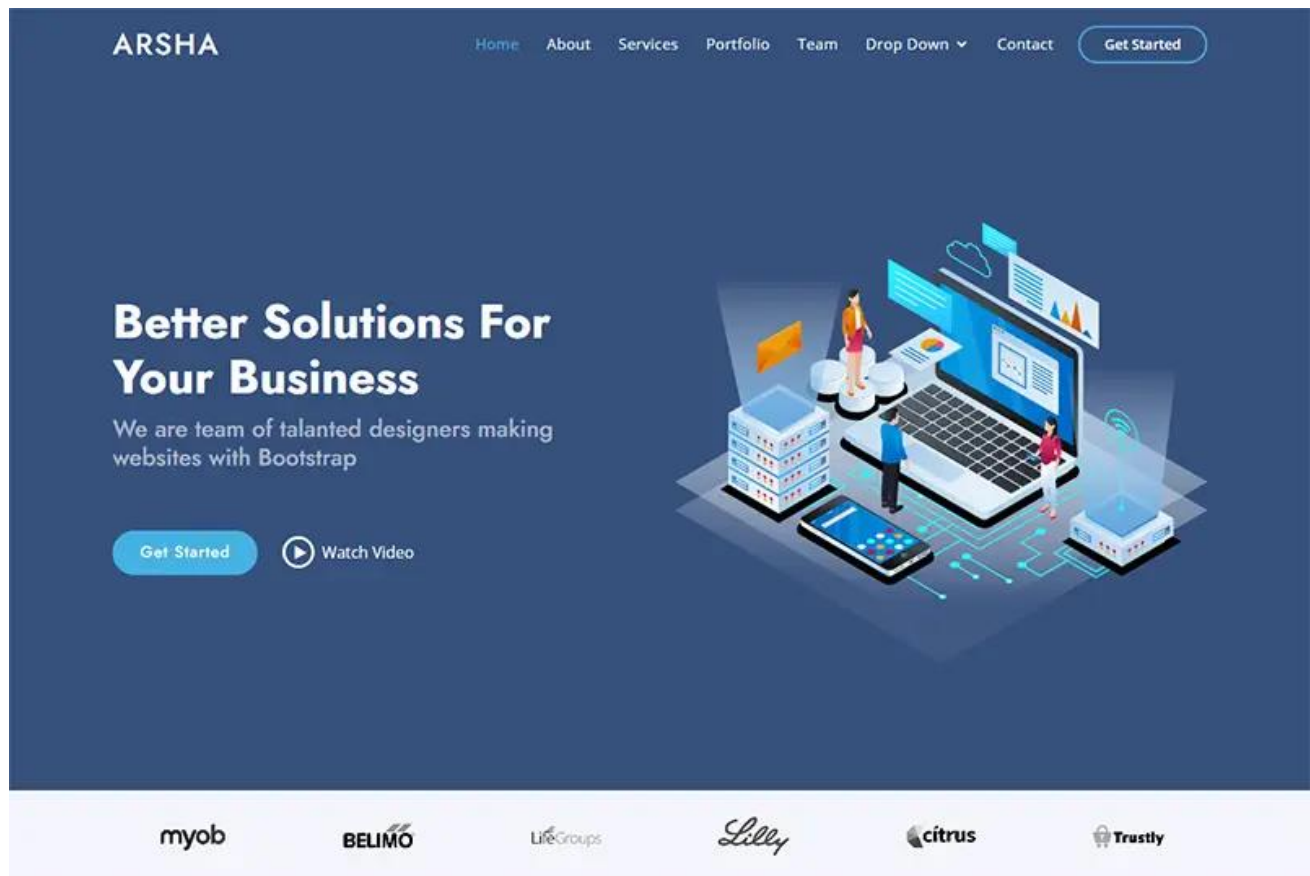
Seek Out Freelance Work: Freelance design work enables many up-and-coming graphic designers to build their portfolio and client base, even if they aren't devoted to graphic design full time. Upwork and Fiverr are just a few platforms that connect graphic designers (and other professionals) to businesses in need of their services. Working with clients as a freelancer can be a productive way to build your portfolio, practice your craft, and earn money, all at the same time.

Build an Online Portfolio: Maintaining a portfolio on websites like Dribbble and Behance can be incredibly helpful in attracting new clients. Each platform serves as a visual search engine for those in need of graphic design inspiration. They also allow graphic designers to showcase their best creations and solicit feedback from other designers."Keep in mind that your portfolio is constantly evolving and changing as your skills

improve,” says graphic designer Derrick Mitchell in his class, Building Out Your Design Portfolio. “As you’re able to create newer and better work, filter out the old stuff that’s not as appealing anymore or that might not relate to the work you’re trying to attract.”



Create a Website: Graphic designers can also benefit from producing a strong personal website. While it may be necessary to take a web design course to learn the ropes, it can pay off when you have an easy-to-find portfolio and can attract new business. This class from illustrator Mimi Chao is a wonderful how-to guide for building a portfolio website—with no coding required. On your site, try to use a combination of clean and attention-grabbing design, and be sure to include a resume and examples of your work.



ABOUT US

Design a T-shirt: Designing t-shirts is another way for aspiring graphic designers to gain exposure, improve their craft, and earn new business. To get started, try taking a course that focuses on creating compelling t-shirt graphics—designer Christopher Delorenzo’s Hey, Cool Shirt is a good start. T-shirt design courses guide you through the entire design lifecycle, from researching brand goals to packaging your work to be properly printed.



Research Other Graphic Designers: Look through the works of notable designers to pinpoint what about the design you find interesting. Then, try recreating the designs using your own language and style to shape the outcome. Start with the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Collection: This digitized collection features works by world-renowned designers from a wide variety of eras and design movements. In scrolling through the collections online—and later doing your best to create an interpretive design inspired by them—you can educate yourself about famous visual movements while also practicing fundamental graphic design skills.

Remember, graphic design is about telling unique stories—ones that will inevitably end up shaping the world around us. By practicing various design projects, be they through online graphic design courses or freelance projects that test your skills, you can create work that shapes your perspective and changes the environment around you for the better.

How Perspective and Skill Can Shape Your Designs

Learning graphic design might seem like a daunting task. After all, the best graphic designers know how to use multiple different kinds of software. They can create icons from scratch. They can make t-shirts, design their own fabrics, print posters, and many things in between.

But to be successful, it is important to find the right learning method for you. Some students prefer to learn graphic design by doing—taking a handful of core design principles, like design theory or the golden ratio in art, before applying them in a hands-on way. Other students prefer watching a series of lectures and taking detailed notes on concepts. By understanding the way you learn best, you will be better equipped to grow as a confident graphic designer.

Becoming a professional graphic designer starts with perspective. Prospective students will need to look at everyday objects with a new lens. Everything—from the packaging that cradles a new electronic device to the advertisements you see on television to the fabric design you see on clothes—is produced by a team of graphic design professionals.

Graphic designers use specialized applications built specifically for different projects. A professional graphic designer might use Photoshop to edit and retouch vector designs, or use Illustrator to create vectorial illustrations. Graphic designers also regularly work with Sketch, to create website mockups; Axure, to build product mockups and prototypes; and InDesign, to create presentations and marketing materials.

But design isn't just related to creating various business materials. Design thinking is a concept that can be applied to many different areas of daily life. From the layout of your office to the visitor flow on your favorite

website, design thinking is always at play. Consider these other popular design categories.

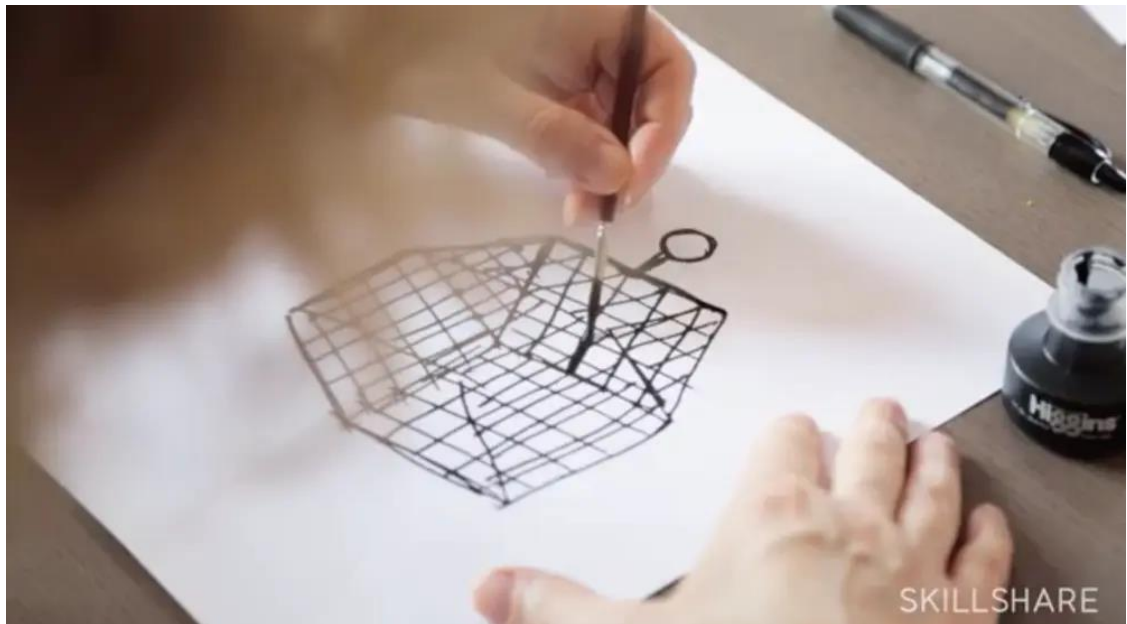


Image from Ellen Lupton's Skillshare Original, "How Posters Work"

Poster Design

How frequently have you been inspired to see a new movie as a result of an eye-catching poster? To design posters well takes skill and technical knowledge, and poster design has a long history of influencing graphic design trends.

"Sometimes people say, 'Oh, the poster is dead, it doesn't exist anymore.' If you're saying that, then your eyes aren't open. because posters are everywhere," says Ellen Lupton, a museum curator and the instructor behind Skillshare Original Demystifying Graphic Design: How

Posters Work. “Pay attention to how they grab us, to how they bring us into a special world—even for just a few seconds.”



Book Cover Design

Book cover design is another genre that has influenced other areas of graphic design, from theories about complementary colors to even the most basic element of design. Take the well-known works of book cover designer, and the current Associate Art Director at Knopf, Chip Kidd. Kidd is credited with designing the book covers of *1Q84*, *The Mind's Eye*, and *The Snow Was Black*, among hundreds of other covers.

“You’re creating a piece of visual material, but it’s a piece of art that’s in service to another piece of art,” says Kidd of the medium in his course *Introduction to Book Cover Design: Making Stories Visual*. Kidd’s work has made him an iconic name in the design world, with a TED Talk on the importance of design thinking and a National Design Award for Lifetime Achievement. But getting started with book design doesn’t take a high-profile job or even a paid assignment. “Pick a book, preferably one that you love, and look for clues about what could and should be done with the design that perhaps was overlooked before,” Kidd suggests. Then, just keep creating. “It’s very important to try and create fresh work. You are only as good as the next thing that you’re working on, and I think that’s actually a pretty healthy attitude to have.”



**YOUR
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2022
COVER DESIGN



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Graphic Design

**CORPORATE
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Character Design

Character design—creating a company mascot or cartoon—will require you to think about drawing people, animals, or other figures in a in order to achieve a specific result. Coke’s Santa Claus, for example, features a warm, round, and jovial figure. He is well aligned with Coke’s design language. IBM, on the other hand, features an industrial-looking bumblebee in its well-known advertising posters. The bee is in keeping with the company’s conservative and forward-thinking values. Try taking a class on character illustration and see what ideas come up for your brand or project—you might be surprised.

Icon Design

Icon design is an important aspect of graphic design that many people don’t understand well. “A good way to think about the power of visual communication is to think about the most important information that you encounter on a daily basis, and that’s health and safety information,” says Edward Boatman, co-founder of the Noun Project and the instructor of Icon Design: Creating Pictograms with Purpose. “That information is almost always communicated visually through pictogram. That’s because these little images can make a huge impact, they’re incredibly powerful.”

These simple, straightforward images might seem easy to design, but creating a meaningful icon takes skill and a discerning eye. Each individual design in a series of icons must be bold and easy to understand, and you must be able to deliver a precise template on which your client can base future designs.



Ryan Putnam's nature self-portrait from his Skillshare Original, "Exploring Your Illustration Style"

Graphic designers who are serious about improving their work should consider investing their time in developing a unique design language. Doing so can help designers to create visuals and products that have a meaningful impact on an organization, or even the world.

Telling Stories Through Branding

Good design tells a compelling story, and how you tell that story will vary depending on the design language you use. IBM, for example, has a well-known company logo and recognizable design. Paul Rand, the mastermind behind it, introduced the now-famous eight-bar IBM logo in the early 1970s. He was also the creator of the celebrated Eye, Bee, M poster from 1981. His work contributed to IBM's transformation from stodgy punch-card machine company to one known for making high-quality computing equipment. Thanks in part to the way

Rand produced his designs, IBM is widely known today as a highly professional and successful technology company.

Coca-Cola's approach was different, but no less effective. The organization has a clear design language: It conveys playfulness and whimsy as opposed to conservative business efficiency. The world-famous Coca-Cola logo was designed around when the company was established in 1885. Since then, the iconic image has continuously evolved, staying true to the original design language while tweaking the details for different results. The color red was added in the late 1940s, allowing for more eye-catching signs in store windows. The white wavy line below the text, known as a Dynamic Ribbon Device, was added in 1969—and is still used today. The brand's friendly, warm, and creative design language allows Coca-Cola to continue to be regarded as a friendly brand beloved by millions of customers.



Image from Sophia Yeshi's Skillshare Original, "Great Graphic Design: Create Emotional, Gripping Typographic Art"

For a more recent example, look at the compelling design language developed by Slack, an instant messaging platform used by businesses across the globe. While other work-oriented instant messaging platforms exist—some offered by large organizations like Facebook, Microsoft, and Atlassian—Slack remains a leader in the space thanks in part to their design language. Within the Slack platform, you'll find emojis that playfully convey the latest information about product updates, a clear use of color that makes finding and reading messages visually pleasing, and helpful icons placed throughout the platform. The Slack interface is friendly, inviting, and intuitive. As a result, people who start using Slack on a trial basis usually like the experience enough to become long-term users.