

How Designers Do It: 15 Easy Steps To Design an Infographic From Scratch – Design School

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(<https://designschool.canva.com/blog/create-infographics/>) · by

Caitlin Jordan · April 29, 2015

Have you ever had a TON of information you needed to get out but don't know how to do it effectively?

Fret no longer. Today you will learn how to relay mass amounts of information in an effective, beautiful way. That's right, we're talking infographics.

You may be asking yourself, 'what is an infographic?', and the answer is pretty simple. Essentially, an infographic is a visual representation of information. Rather than having blocks and blocks of text that people will never read, you give them the same information in a different way — and in one they will easily understand.

People are visual. In fact, we only remember 20% of what we read. Just imagine all of the important things you read on a daily basis and shrink that down to less than a fourth of what you started with. Kind of scary, huh? We're visual because our brains are, 90% of what the brain processes is visual in one way or another. So, if you can present information visually, you can communicate it much faster and more effectively. This is why infographics are so popular. They are a great way to present information in a visual and easy-to-understand format. They are also a great way to present information in a way that is easy to share and easy to use. So, if you are looking for a way to present information in a visual and easy-to-understand format, infographics are a great option. They are a great way to present information in a visual and easy-to-understand format. They are also a great way to present information in a way that is easy to share and easy to use. So, if you are looking for a way to present information in a visual and easy-to-understand format, infographics are a great option.

than we do text.

This holds true online as well. The most shared and liked things on social media are images. Traffic has even been shown to increase by as much as 12% when you publish something like an infographic online, so why aren't all brands doing it?

Infographic designer Anne Sanders

(<https://www.behance.net/asandersdesign>) shed some light on infographics for brands who want to market with them.

“Make sure you know exactly what you want and are able to provide a designer with content. Your infographic should be educational or entertaining, not a push to buy something. Establish yourself as a leading resource of information in your field, and customers will remember you and seek you out.’

This holds true for a lot of brands that use infographics, like USA Today, NY Times, and Google. Utilize the following 15 steps, and you'll be on well your way to designing some awesome infographics.

01. Process Your Data

Whether you're responsible for finding all of it or it's handed over to you, odds are, you'll be sifting through a ton of information. It's important to not just skim over it, little nuggets of awesome stuff can be hiding inside all of that text – it's your job to find it. The information is the most

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important part, making this the most important step. It is what builds your infographic, after all.



A compilation of selfies taken in NYC broken down into gender and age
(<https://www.wired.com/2014/02/explore-world-selfies-new-data-visualization-tool/>)

Here you can see there is a lot of information that needed to be gone through. The ages and genders of people's Instagram selfies in New York were organized and designed into something meaningful. You can read about the team

behind this here
(<https://www.wired.com/2014/02/explore-world-selfies-new-data-visualization-tool/>).

02. Check Your Sources

Make sure all of the information that will be going into your infographic is credible. Just like all of those papers you had to write in school, your infographic is only as credible as its least credible source. Don't get yourself into trouble by displaying inaccurate information.



An example of an infographic containing important info that would need fact checked
(<https://dribbble.com/shots/289947-Infographic-Poster-Full/attachments/11371>)

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Here you can see an infographic designed by Jeremy Fleischer containing a lot of information that would have been fact checked. Company records could have been pulled to make sure the numbers align, as well as track the logo evolution.

03. Create a Wireframe

A wireframe is just a skeleton of what you're working with. You should always make it before you begin designing. Laying out where everything will go in advance (including text and images) will save you time and frustration. Using a wireframe will allow you to see if everything flows nicely and makes sense.



An infographic with a clear story that needed mapped out beforehand
(<https://www.behance.net/gallery/21179181/Interstellar-Timeline>)

This infographic by Dogan Can Gundogdu is about a movie, so it has a clear story. A wireframe of the storyline would have been created beforehand, to make sure all the important parts were included in the correct order.

04. Format with Purpose

Some information will need to be depicted in a certain way. Don't use a format just for the sake of using that format, try to get creative. You can show information in all kinds of ways, like diagrams, pie charts, flow charts, and maps (really the list goes on and on)

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the list goes on and on).



A city guide that chose to display landmarks with iconography

(<https://www.behance.net/gallery/10351307/Kuala-Lumpur-city-guide>)

This city guide created by Jing Zhang is a great example of getting creative with information. Rather than just showing a photo of the subject matter, she illustrated icons to represent each one. This gives the guide a friendlier feel, and as a whole reads easily.

05. Have a Story

Having a clear message will result in a successful infographic. Make sure your story is ready to go when you begin your wireframes, you should never start designing until you know what you're trying to say. The story should dictate the design, not the other way around.



An infographic that tells a clear story and presents the information in a logical way

(<https://www.behance.net/gallery/10274209/Oil-Spill>)

This infographic about an oil spill by Mayra Magalhaes illustrates a clear story. It is told in a logical way, and you understand exactly what you're getting into from the illustration. The bullets are numbered clearly, so you don't have to guess where you should begin and end

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have to guess where you should begin and end.

06. Set the Tone

Be sure the voice of your infographic matches the subject matter. If it's serious, be serious. If it's lighthearted, be lighthearted (you get the picture). If the voice doesn't match that can be confusing for the reader, and infographics are all about being easy to understand.



An infographic using the appropriate tone for the subject
(<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/287597126180165298/>)

This infographic from ADHD Canada uses tone to their advantage. ADHD is a serious subject, but the goal here is to educate about handling it. The tone is clear and instructive. The information is delivered in a way that feels authoritative, and makes what's being said believable.

07. Think Outside of Type

When you have the opportunity to show something visually, take it (remember, we pay more attention when it's visual). Don't rely on fancy typography as a crutch. Utilize illustrations, charts, icons, and graphics as much as you can, it creates more visual interest.



An infographic relying heavily on visuals versus text
(<https://dribbble.com/shot/1309613>)
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Activity/attachments/181413)

This infographic by Piotr Kwiatkowski relies on simple charts and graphs rather than the text. The text is still there, but is used to supplement the charts. A good rule of thumb is to keep your text on a separate layer in whatever program you're working in. Toggle it off every now and then to see if everything still makes sense. You may find you can eliminate the type altogether.

08. Still Consider Your Type

Yes, you were just told to not rely on type. Yes, you are being told to still care about it. Typography is still an important part of infographics when it's needed. Make sure the typefaces complement each other as well as the graphics you're using. Type should never detract from your visuals.



An infographic using type that complements the graphics (<https://dribbble.com/shots/1293248-Mountains-and-Oceans-Infographic/attachments/179730>)

This infographic by Bureau Oberhaeuser uses minimal type, yet still pays great attention to it. The type works well with the imagery, and even though you may not read in that language, you can see the relationship between the two.

09. Control Color

Most infographics will be viewed online, so consider colors that work well on a screen. Avoid bright neon colors that can

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cause stress to the eyes when viewed online. Keep in mind the majority of social media sites your infographic could be shared on have white backgrounds. Choose a contrasting color to make sure it doesn't get lost.

Determine a color palette that works. Sticking with three colors is a good rule. If you need more, add shades and tints of the ones you're working with. If you have trouble coming

up with your own color schemes, there are a lot of online resources that create colors schemes for you.



An infographic with a successful color scheme
(<https://www.behance.net/gallery/8067551/Imaginary-Factory>)

This infographic by Jing Zhang uses a very successful color scheme. The colors work well together and are easy on the eyes. Three main colors are used (greenish blue, orange, and yellow) and various tints and shades of those colors are added in to provide contrast.

10. Utilize White Space

It is important to let the information breathe. The more white space the less the viewer feels overwhelmed. Don't overcrowd. Stay organized and it will make a cleaner design, which is more approachable and easier to follow.



An infographic that successfully uses a lot of white space

(<https://www.behance.net/gallery/6745371/Infographic-Resume>)

Zhi Liang's resume is an infographic, and what otherwise could have been a ton of cramped information has been turned into something incredibly easy to read. There is plenty of space between everything, allowing readers to quickly process.

11. Take a Break

Infographic creation is hard work, go ahead and take a break. Sometimes projects are incredibly lengthy and time involving, and sometimes you just aren't into the subject matter personally. Stepping away for a few moments can keep you from making poor decisions (like rushing through to finish). Come back with fresh eyes and you will feel more inspired.



An infographic chock full of information that may require you to step away and rest your eyes
(<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/441282463461188651/>)

This infographic about canning is full of great information. Designing and staring at all of that information for hours on end can be tiring. Rather than rushing to finish and making

poor design choices, take a coffee break (or tea, if that's what you prefer). Come back when you're in the right mindset to create something awesome.

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12. Beware of TMI

Information overload is overwhelming. Don't put in anything unnecessary. Try to break it down into six main points at most, and break it down even farther into sections if you need to.



An infographic that successfully breaks up information (<https://dribbble.com/shots/229611-Social-Food-Truck/attachments/5956>)

This infographic about food trucks by Lindsey McCormack breaks up the information really well. There is a clear section for everything, and the information isn't invading each other's space.

13. Proofread, Proofread, Proofread

Did I say proofread? Everyone makes mistakes, we're only human. However, if you don't check over your work and miss a glaring typo, you could look bad to the client. Even worse, if the client doesn't catch that typo and it's published, they can get a lot of flack, which in turn falls back on you. It's truly a lose-lose situation.



An infographic that would have a large fanbase sure to point

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out any flaws

(<https://www.behance.net/gallery/21230309/SKYRIM-Infographic>)

This infographic map of the game Skyrim by Tjaard du Plessis is a great example of being sure to proofread. Something as large as Skyrim has a huge, dedicated fanbase. Accidentally misspell something and you'll be sure to hear it.

14. Test Along the Way

Waiting until you're finished to test out your infographic could result in having to start over. Ask people to take a look at what you've been doing to make sure it makes sense. If only you understand what it's saying, it's not doing the job of infographic very well.

An infographic with a lot of pieces to test
(<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/165436986283177030/>)

This infographic about social media sickness is very involved. It would have been important to get others' feedback to be sure it communicated the same way to everyone, whether it be changing some of the characters, or adding the description boxes underneath them.

15. Make Revisions

Infographics are most likely shared online, which means there is always an online discussion after it's been published. Make changes as they're needed when they're

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brought to your attention. Correct any inaccurate information and update as needed, especially when the subject matter is ever changing.



An infographic on a subject that can constantly be updated (<https://dribbble.com/shots/334953-Going-Global-Infographic/attachments/15387>)

This infographic created by Kyle Anthony Miller about e-commerce can be updated year after year. Inevitably, the statistics will change. This is a great opportunity to constantly update your marketing materials. Once a new set of numbers comes out, plug them in and republish. Keep the old ones for your record, and to show how things have changed over time.

Infographics work because that's how our brains work. Visuals attract our attention and help us retain information easier. Infographics have such an effect on us they impact what we buy and what sites we visit (that's good for brands).

Listen to what Anne Sanders (<https://www.behance.net/asandersdesign>) has to say about successful infographics. 'Be sure your infographics are both visually appealing (that's what grabs attention) and easy to follow (that's what keeps the attention).'

Awesome infographics are absolutely within your reach if you follow these important steps, and to make the process even smoother. Canva has a ton of resources for you to

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