

# STICKIN' TO IT

## 24 DAYS OF STICKERS

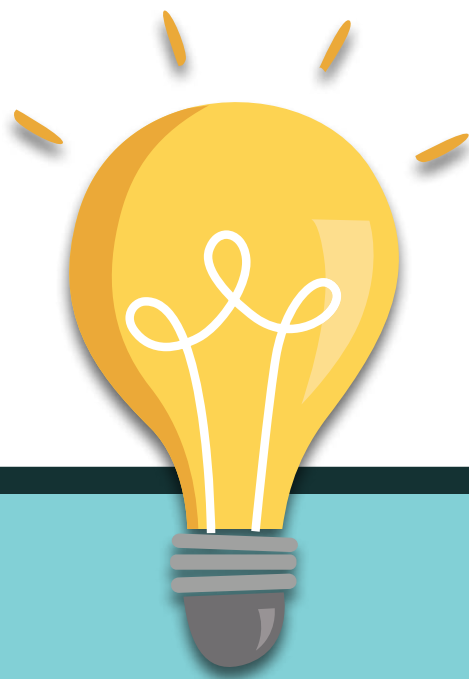
A CASE STUDY BY NAOMI SWEET

# THE OBJECTIVE

Have you ever wanted to make cool stuff, but you never set apart time to do that? This was my case. I've always wanted to create stickers, but putting aside time and being held accountable were the hardest parts. Balancing school, work, a social life, etc. can easily take priority over passion projects, which are just as important for an artist's creative growth.

# THE SOLUTION

To overcome this, I decided to start a 24-day challenge, where I would create a sticker a day completely from scratch, and post the final results on my social media pages by midnight. Because this was my first time doing this, I knew my process and learning curve would change over the month. Therefore, I made sure to include a recorded screen timelapse video to show my process from start to finish on each sticker. Posting these videos along with a mockup of my stickers brought attention from my social media audiences, and people started commenting on my daily posts. This increased a sense of accountability and engagement with real viewers that were looking forward to my future posts.



# MY APPROACH

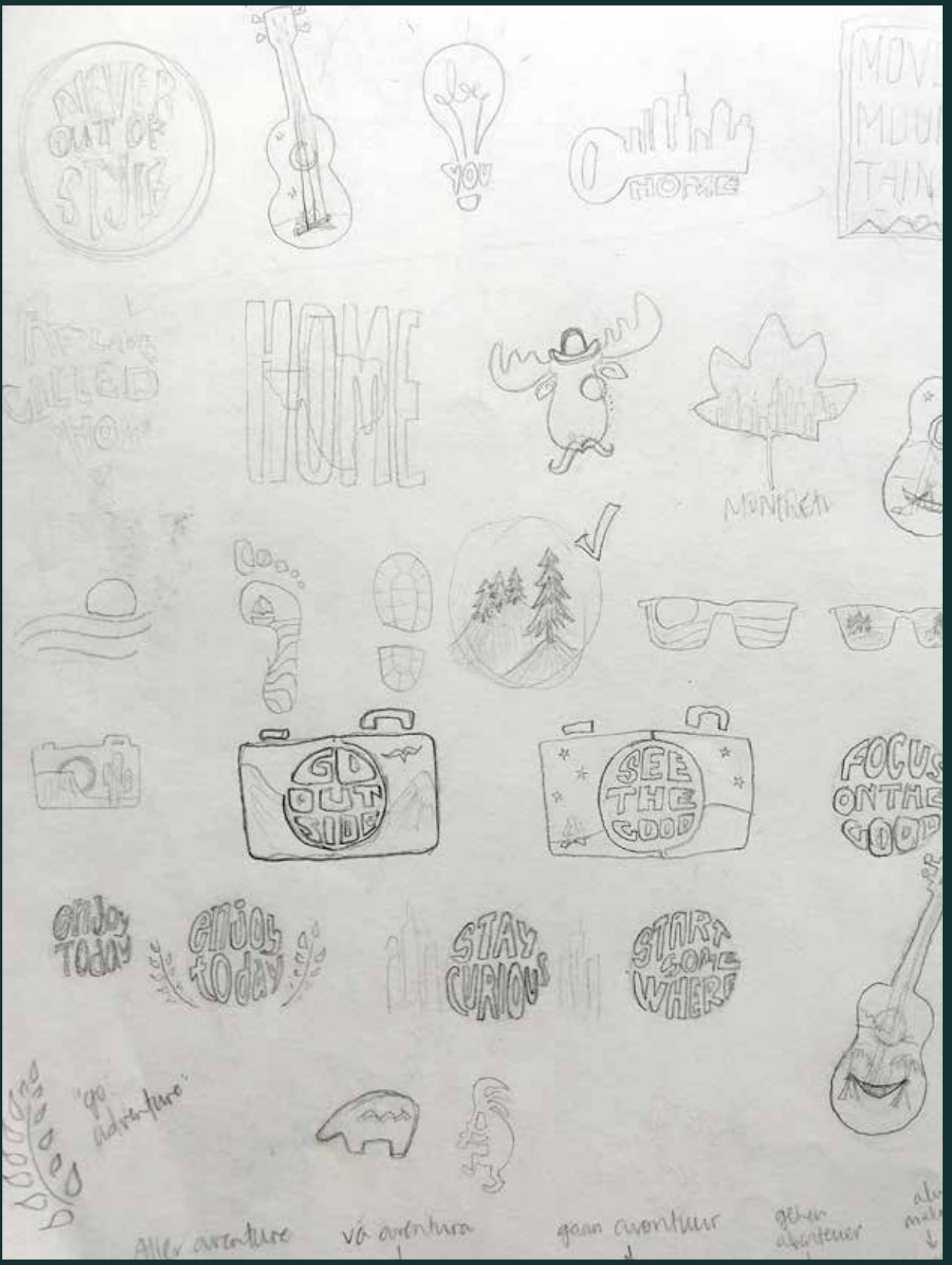
24 days is a lot! At first, just the idea seemed overwhelming...and then I began to sketch, and that feeling just escalated!

My thought process was that if I sketched out at least 24 ideas, I would be ok! So, this is what I started with on “Day 0” before I began designing them in Adobe Illustrator. Sad story, I ran out of ideas by day 7. Granted, these original sketches did spark some ideas towards the end, even though the final stickers were drastically different from my original ideas.

From “Day 7” on, my process was coming up with a sketch in the morning, spending around 6 hours creating it in Adobe Illustrator, and posting it at the end of the day. This process felt like running off of pure adrenaline and inspiration (probably more the adrenaline side).

An upside to this was that I came up with ideas that I never thought of on “Day 0”. Something would happen in the morning that would spark a random idea for the sticker that day!

My favorite example of this was Day 18!

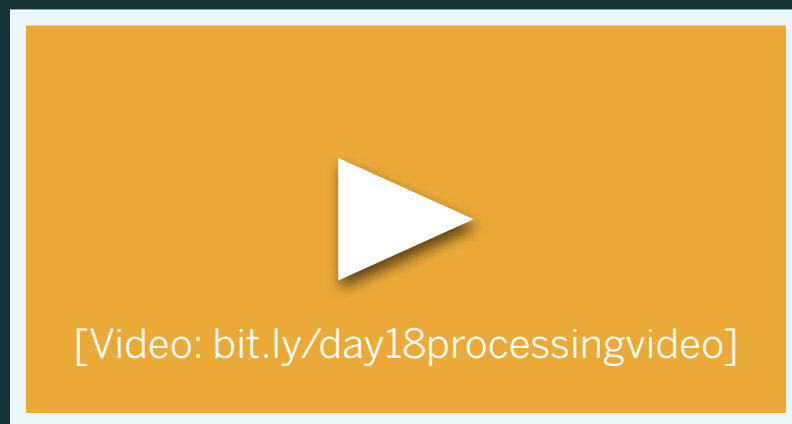




# DAY 18



It was 2:00 PM, and I still hadn't come up with an idea. While walking between classes, I ran into a friend, and I asked them to give me a random word. They said, "burrito". And that's what sparked this idea! I never would have thought of it during my original sketching process. Though the idea was clear at first, the process was a different story:



I wanted this sticker to look cartoonish, but not flat. In order to accomplish this, I added highlights and shadows to the sombrero and especially the tortilla. As you can see in the video, the highlights of the hooves were originally wrong, because they were facing each other, making it look like there were two light sources. I changed all of the highlights and shadows to show a light source coming from the left. To create the dark "inside" of the sombrero, I used 1 radial gradient and 2 linear gradients. After doing so, I could immediately see an improvement in depth to the sticker.

Despite the rough start in coming up with ideas, I feel I did have successful days where the final product was worth the work going into it!

# DAY 8

**\*\*Link to Process Video: [bit.ly/day8processingvideo](https://bit.ly/day8processingvideo)\*\***







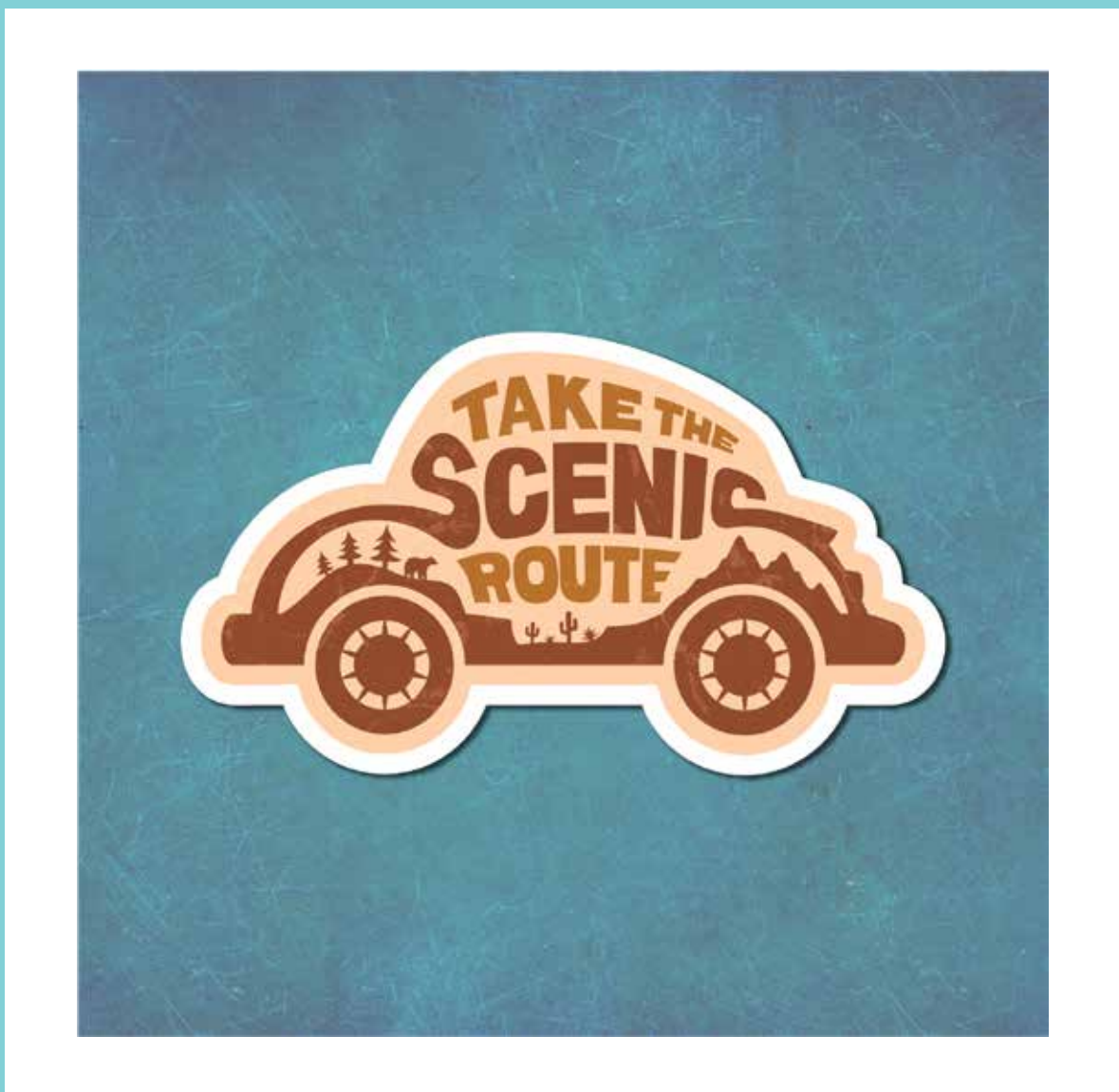
## ORIGINAL SKETCH

As you can see, my original idea was more complicated. I ended up completely removing the text at the bottom, and using the tag on the shoe instead for the message. To denote the Converse brand and put a twist on “All Star”, I decided to use “Be a Star instead”.

Honestly, this was the sticker I had the most fun seeing come to life! Since it was my first time using the Line Width tool in Adobe Illustrator, I had fun creating those thick, bold lines to add character and a unique twist on this classic brand. The difficulty I ran into with this sticker was making the shoe laces look like they actually went underneath each other. I had to build the shapes and cut them to where I could add shadows that made sense.

Some stickers, I had an idea in mind of what I wanted the end product to look like, and I wouldn't stop working on it until I felt the overall quality was up to par. This Volkswagen Beetle, for example, took 7 hours to complete when I could have found a stopping point after just 4 hours. What isn't shown in the video is around 25 color schemes and texture combinations I tried with it until I found this rustic look.

# DAY 18



## ORIGINAL SKETCH



The typography here wasn't completely thought out. My original idea was to shape the words to simply fill in that blank space. I got the idea of attaching the "S" and "C" of the word "scenic" to the car outline as I was adjusting it for hours in Adobe Illustrator. In fact, after 2 hours of trying this original sketch design, I decided to completely re-sketch it, and that's what design is shown in the video below.

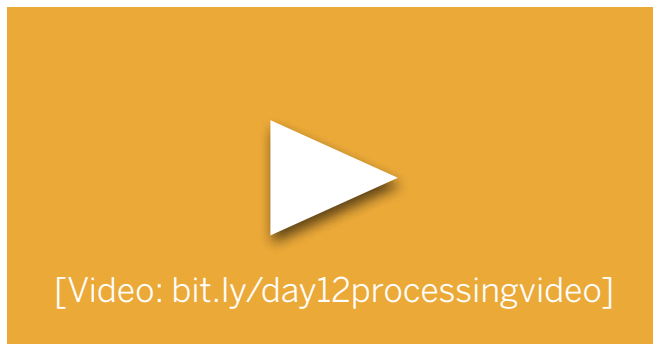


[Video: [bit.ly/day19processingvideo](https://bit.ly/day19processingvideo)]

# MAIN TAKEAWAYS

The main principle that I learned during this project was to “Kill your Darlings”, meaning that you can’t be attached to any of your ideas so much that it impedes your progress. There were several times that I had to either re-sketch my original idea, or change the design in Illustrator to overcome obstacles with composition, colors, lines, etc.

Look at just how much this lighthouse idea changed throughout the process:



## THINGS I WOULD CHANGE

Honestly, I'm still not satisfied with how this lighthouse sticker turned out. If I were to redo this one, I would:

- 1.) Change the light at the top to look less fixed, since lighthouse lights rotate 360 degrees.
- 2.) Change the texture. I was trying to make it look weathered, but it looks more like moss or slime because it's oddly transparent.
- 3.) Incorporate the message. Usually what makes stickers more interesting is what you're trying to say with it. Nothing really makes this lighthouse stand out or different from other lighthouse decor. Perhaps if I had used more of the storm idea in the lighthouse design, that would have incorporated more of a message.
- 4.) Include more hierarchy, or exaggerate a specific feature. This leads the eye through the design.

# IMPROVEMENTS

With this 80's rock sticker, I struggled with making one part stand out from the other. In order to create hierarchy, I made the hand bright and colorful, and the microphone more neutral, as a secondary element.

This improved the design, and brought life to the sticker. I used the chord of the microphone to lead the eye back through to the hand and give it some ground.

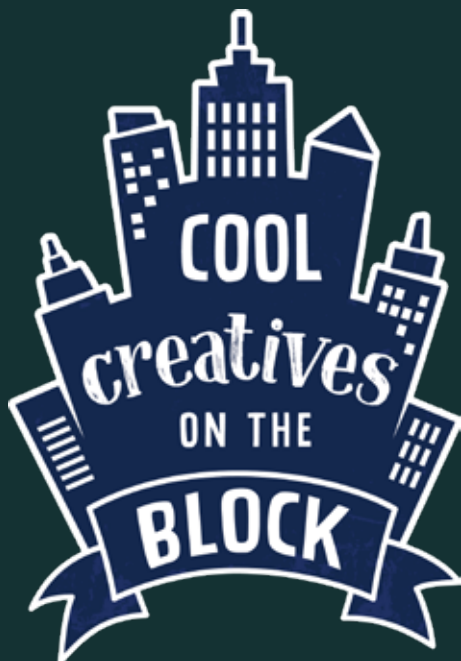
One thing that shocked me was how much better I got at using Adobe Premiere because of the time-lapse videos. I had never touched that program before this challenge. Recording my screen also helped me think about the least time-consuming way to do things. Although my go-to tool is the Pen tool, I discovered more how to create designs with the blend tool, line-width tool, blob brush tool, and puppet warp tool.

















# CONTACT ME



Thanks for checking out my 24-day sticker challenge! It was definitely a rewarding project. I've become more efficient in the amount of time I spend creating things, and have branched out with different techniques. Because of my audience and their interest, I've decided to sell my work on my website!

Check it out at [www.naomisweetcreations.com/sticker-shop!](http://www.naomisweetcreations.com/sticker-shop!)



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All of the sticker process videos are posted on my Instagram!