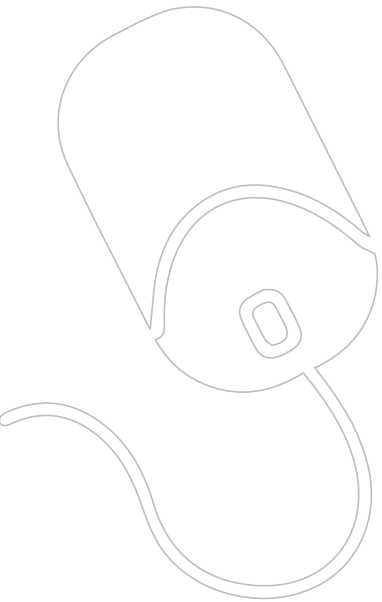The Ultimate Guide

TO GOING FREELANCE

All the resources you need for
your step-by-step transition

skillcrush

If you're reading this, you probably don't need to be convinced about all the plus sides of freelancing—choosing when to work, where to do it, what kind of projects to take, who to work with...Ahhh, sweet freedom!

But, as sweet as it is, freedom always comes with a price. To be a successful freelancer, you need to learn a specific set of skills that will help you set prices, work with clients, manage time, and ultimately, make a living freelancing.
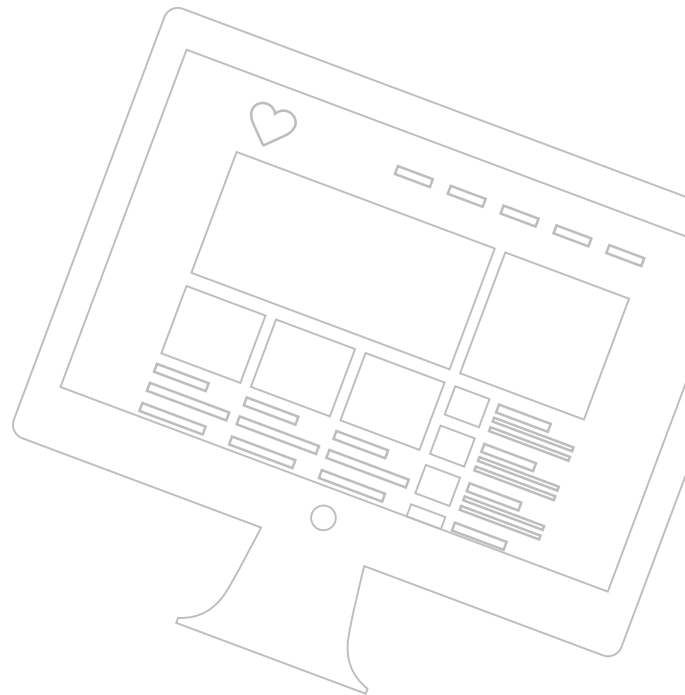
Whether you're wondering if you're really cut out for freelancing or if you're overwhelmed about managing it all, this round-up of resources pulls together all the information you need to transition into freelancing, broken down into 4 manageable phases:

☐ **LEARNING THE TECH SKILLS YOU NEED TO GET STARTED**

☐ **GETTING INTO THE FREELANCE MINDSET**

☐ **BUILDING A CAREER SAFETY NET
(SO YOU CAN SAY GOODBYE TO YOUR DAY JOB!)**

☐ **QUITTING YOUR JOB!**

For each phase of transitioning into freelance, you'll find TONS of useful articles and resources to get you on the right track.

Read through them now to help you wrap your head around all the aspects of working for yourself, and then save this guide for handy reference whenever questions pop up later as you're making your way in your freelance career.

Tip: *Throughout this guide, the* 🔻 *symbol indicates that the resource includes a FREE download. Follow the links to get instant access.*

1

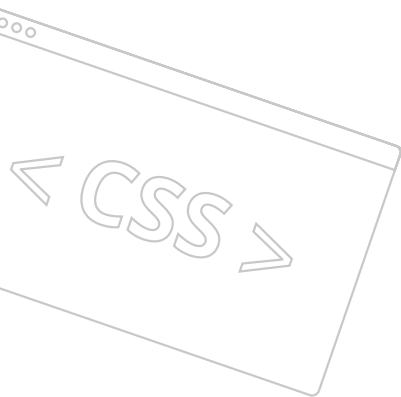## GET THE TECHNICAL
SKILLS *you* NEED

(Hint: Learn to code!)

The first step to being ready to be your own boss is to get a set of in-demand skills, and the hottest skills today are tech skills. Clients and companies are constantly on the lookout for talented professionals to design and develop websites and apps. So, if you're ready to change your life , your first step is to learn some valuable tech skills.

For web design, that means UX and design fundamentals, and, for web development, HTML and CSS.

To start doing exciting work building websites for clients, learn workflow tools like Git and GitHub, plus start programming with JavaScript, jQuery, and Ruby, for example.

And if you're ready to level up, you can go beyond the basics to amp up your skills with systems like WordPress and frameworks like Ruby on Rails.

To see if you've got what it takes already, check out these convenient checklists complete with resources and more references:

WEB DESIGNERS:

- Tend to be more visual + artistic
- Like making things look beautiful and feel wonderful to use

Find out exactly what you need to know to be a web designer here:

ARE YOU READY TO BE A WEB DESIGNER?

OR

WEB DEVELOPERS:

- Tend to be logical problem solvers
- Like to build things and make them work in clever and efficient ways

Find out exactly what you need to know to be a web developer here:

ARE YOU READY TO BE A WEB DEVELOPER?

Do you need to brush up on your tech skills or start at the very beginning? Our Web Designer and Web Developer Blueprints are perfect for aspiring coders who are starting at square one.

WEB DESIGNER BLUEPRINT

Are you infatuated with the idea of being a digital designer but you don't have the tech chops? Or maybe you love the idea of being an online educator or customer service rep but the idea of using HTML + CSS on the daily sounds a little foreign. Our Skillcrush Web Designer Blueprint has your name all over it.

YOU'LL LEARN:

✓ To Design & Code Your Very Own Website

✓ Photoshop for Web Design

✓ To Design for Your Users

What Are You Waiting For?

Invest In Yourself, Invest In Your Future.

SIGN UP NOW

The Web Designer Blueprint is a three-month long online course that includes everything you need to get started in web design: structured lessons, useful exercises, master classes with industry experts, killer cheatsheets and sample files and instructors there to help guide you every step of the way! *Find out more at skillcrush.com/blueprint/ web-designer!*

Your Blueprint is structured around three core classes:

skillcrush **100**
UX AND WEB DESIGN

skillcrush **101**
HTML AND CSS

skillcrush **300**
WEB DESIGNER APPRENTICESHIP

WEB DEVELOPER BLUEPRINT

Product design sounds like a pretty cool gig, huh? Getting paid to invent cool products all the livelong day? Yes, please! If you are stoked to start creating but you're lacking some of the necessaries – like knowledge of a programming language like Ruby or JavaScript – Skillcrush is here to guide you. Check out the Skillcrush Web Developer Blueprint and get tinkering.

YOU'LL LEARN:

✓ To Build Websites from Scratch

✓ To Translate Designs into Code

✓ To Launch Your Very Own App

What Are You Waiting For?

Invest In Yourself,
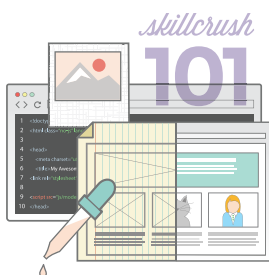Invest In Your Future.

SIGN UP NOW

The Web Developer Blueprint is a 3-month long Blueprint that includes everything you could possibly need to get started the right way: structured lessons, useful exercises, master classes with experts, killer cheatsheets and instructors there at every step along the way! *Find out more at skillcrush.com/blueprint/web-developer!*

Your Blueprint is structured around three core classes:

skillcrush 101
HTML AND CSS

skillcrush 102
JAVASCRIPT, JQUERY AND APIS

skillcrush 104
RUBY, GIT AND SINATRA

ADVANCED BLUEPRINTS

If you are already comfortable using HTML and CSS, or if you are already off to a great start when it comes to web design and development, you might be ready to dive into one of our advanced blueprints:

Freelance WordPress Developer

AVERAGE SALARY: $85,000

Are you ready to learn one of the most marketable skills on the planet? Do you want to land a side project that pays more than your monthly salary? Are you sick of being dependent on expensive templates that aren't QUITE right, or having to call your developer every single time you need to make even a tiny tweak? Then, my friend, it's time for you to learn WordPress.
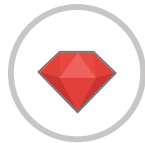
YOU'LL LEARN:
- ✓ To Code and Launch Custom WordPress Sites
- ✓ Plugins for SEO, Analytics and More
- ✓ To Pitch and Land Your First Paying Client

What Are You Waiting For?

Invest In Yourself, Invest In Your Future.

SIGN UP NOW

Ruby on Rails Developer

AVERAGE SALARY: $108,000

Ask any industry pro what technology you should learn to build custom web applications and they will all say the same thing: Ruby on Rails. What makes Rails so special is that it is both incredibly complex and unbelievably simple, making it the perfect choice for beginners and experts alike. If you want to get hired full-time at a major tech company (or start your own tech company), this is the technology you must learn.
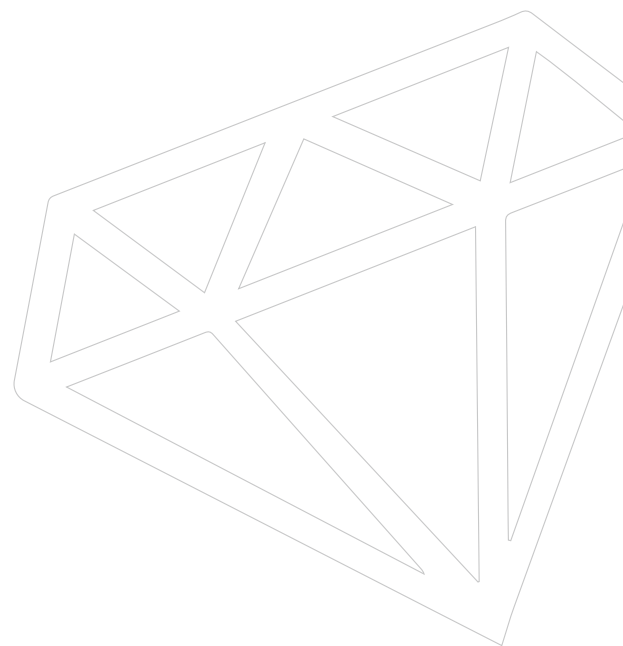
YOU'LL LEARN:
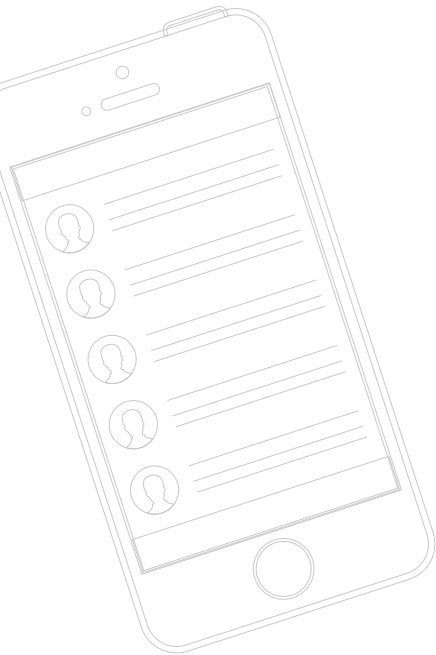
✓ To Build Complex Web Applications
✓ To Work On An Existing Ruby on Rails Project
✓ How Tech Companies Use Rails

What Are You Waiting For?

Invest In Yourself,
Invest In Your Future.

SIGN UP NOW

Responsive Web Designer Blueprint

AVERAGE SALARY: $92,000

If you've ever built a website, chances are, you've heard the question, "Is it mobile friendly?" With more and more users accessing the Internet from mobile devices, creating responsive websites has never been more important. If you are a smartphone addict and are obsessed with streamlining the mobile experience, then Responsive Web Design and Development is for you. And if you want to get hired to do frontend design or development at a tech company (or meet the demands of freelance clients), responsive design skills are a must.

YOU'LL LEARN:

- ✓ To design and build mobile-friendly sites
- ✓ To optimize designs for the mobile web
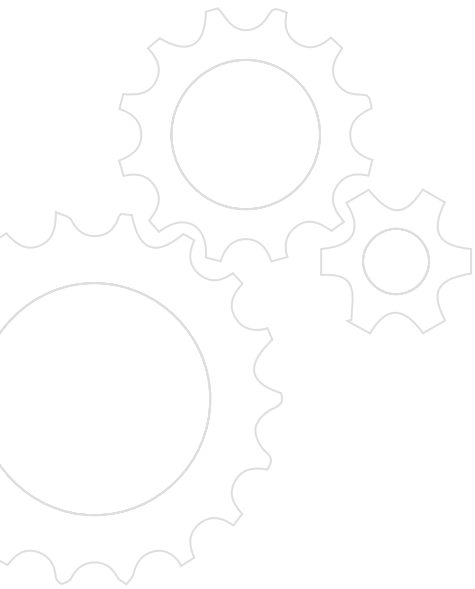- ✓ To create interactive, adaptive user experiences

What Are You Waiting For?

Invest In Yourself,
Invest In Your Future.

SIGN UP NOW

2
Think LIKE A FREELANCER

Now that you're ready to wow the world with your fancy new tech skills, you need to make sure your way of thinking is also primed and polished to deal with the challenges of freelancing and that you're prepared to handle working with clients all on your own.

You might be surprised that the way you think has more impact on your success as a freelancer than your current skill level. Learning to think like a freelancer, from getting into the developer mindset to working past self-doubt, is the difference between quitting after your first setback and learning from it.

How to Think Like a Programmer: The Developer Mindset

Things Every Awesome Web Developer Knows How to Do

⬇ How to Stop Second Guessing Yourself Immediately

Already got your head in the freelance game? Awesome! But you're not the only person you have to worry about it. A lot of new freelancers struggle with or worry about the prospect of working directly with clients. Read up on how the most successful freelancers communicate and interact with clients:

9 Ways to Make a Great First Impression on Your New Client
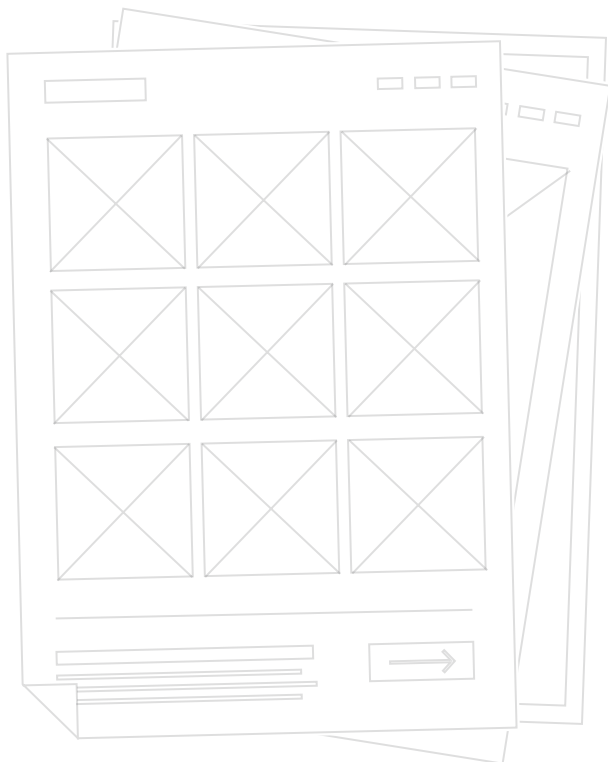
21 Steps to Making Grumpy Clients Happy

9 Free Email Templates to Get You Out of Sticky Situations with Clients

⬇ What to Do When Your Friend Becomes Your Client

Tip: *Throughout this guide, the* ⬇ *symbol indicates that the resource includes a FREE download. Follow the links to get instant access.*

And as most freelancers will tell you, the key to a stress-free relationship with your client is to make sure you get everything on paper first. Be sure to talk to a legal professional before nailing down a contract to use with clients, but first check out resources to figure out what to watch out for when it comes to the legal side of freelancing:

The Ultimate Guide to Freelance Contracts
The Dangers of DIY Contracts, from attorney Basha Rubin!

3

Build YOUR SAFETY NET

Even if you're mentally prepared to tackle problems like a pro and keep clients happy, you should still create your own job security by learning to avoid common freelancing pitfalls and getting your rates right from the start. Building a safety net means you won't end up in a bind, unable to make rent or find another client, for example.

And creating your own job security as a freelancer comes in 2 phases.

First, get familiar with the freelance landscape. What expenses can you expect? How much money do you need to make? How much can you charge for your work? Get answers to questions like that in these articles:

14 Ways to Stop Relying on Job Benefits
⬇ The Real Cost of Going Freelance
14 Things You Need to Know About Freelance Taxes
The Ultimate Guide to Setting Your Freelance Web
⬇ Design Rates
How to Get Paid as Much as You Deserve
⬇ The Foolproof Formula for Calculating Your Price
⬇ 5 10-Minute Tricks to Make More Money Freelancing

And once you have a good idea of the logistics, take some time to ensure you don't get
caught in common pitfalls.

50 Tools You Need to Get Your Freelance Business Started
5 Mistakes New Freelancers Make
7 Common Mistakes Freelancers Make

Tip: *Throughout this guide, the ⬇ symbol indicates that the resource includes a FREE download. Follow the links to get instant access.*

4
GO *for* IT!

You've done what it takes to get this far. Even if you don't feel 100% ready, you have to start sometime. Either way it's time to stop dreaming and start freelancing!
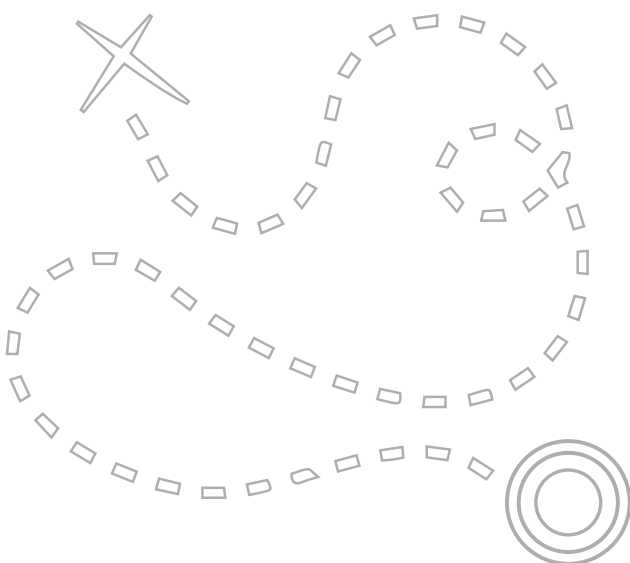
First, gain experience and build up your portfolio by doing smaller projects in your free time:

5 Freelance Projects You Can Do for $500

Do You Need a Freelance Job now? Send These 5 Emails

13 Ways to Make Your Unpaid Project Really Pay Off

10 Ways to Build Your Personal Brand (and why you should)

How to Build an Impressive Portfolio When You're New to Tech

AND WHEN THE MOMENT COMES AND YOU'RE FINALLY READY TO KISS THE CUBICLE GOODBYE, MAKE SURE YOU **QUIT YOUR JOB THE RIGHT WAY:**

Everything You Need to Know about Quitting Your Job

HAVE YOU JOINED *the* CLUB?
Find more on our blog

If you found this resource (and the ones listed here) helpful, there's even more to discover on the Skillcrush blog.

We share top career advice, inside tech tips, real-life stories of getting into tech, and tons of FREE guides, worksheets, and resources.

Sign up for our newsletter now so you won't miss a post. Each week, we send you 2 researched, detailed, easy-to-read articles to help you harness the power of tech and get the career you deserve.

Join thousands of happy readers! Here's what a few of them have to say:

> "I read a blog post every day and learn something new. The resources you give us are priceless!"

— SARA EVANS —

> "I have been on your mailing list now for 8 months and in that time alone I saw the platform grow so much. Seriously, in the online education space you guys have some of the best content marketing. (Some online learning platforms neglect it entirely, while others only post articles about latest updates or course offerings, which is a bore.) Skillcrush actually generates valuable content for readers."

— LAURENCE BRADFORD —

"The 99 Tech Terms You Need to Know When You're New to Tech has been a big help! I love materials that cover the basics."

APRIL HARRIS

"Skillcrush, Thank you for offering such a great newsletter to your subscribers. The content that you send out is always helpful and something that I can refer back to as I improve my coding skills. I especially love your PDF quicksource guides."

JUBILEE GRACE

"Your email newsletters, videos and articles are so inspiring, I really look forward to them and I love your attitude, all of you, and the great images. You make me feel included in a world where it seems everyone is an expert, and I wanted to say thanks."

ATTY CRONIN

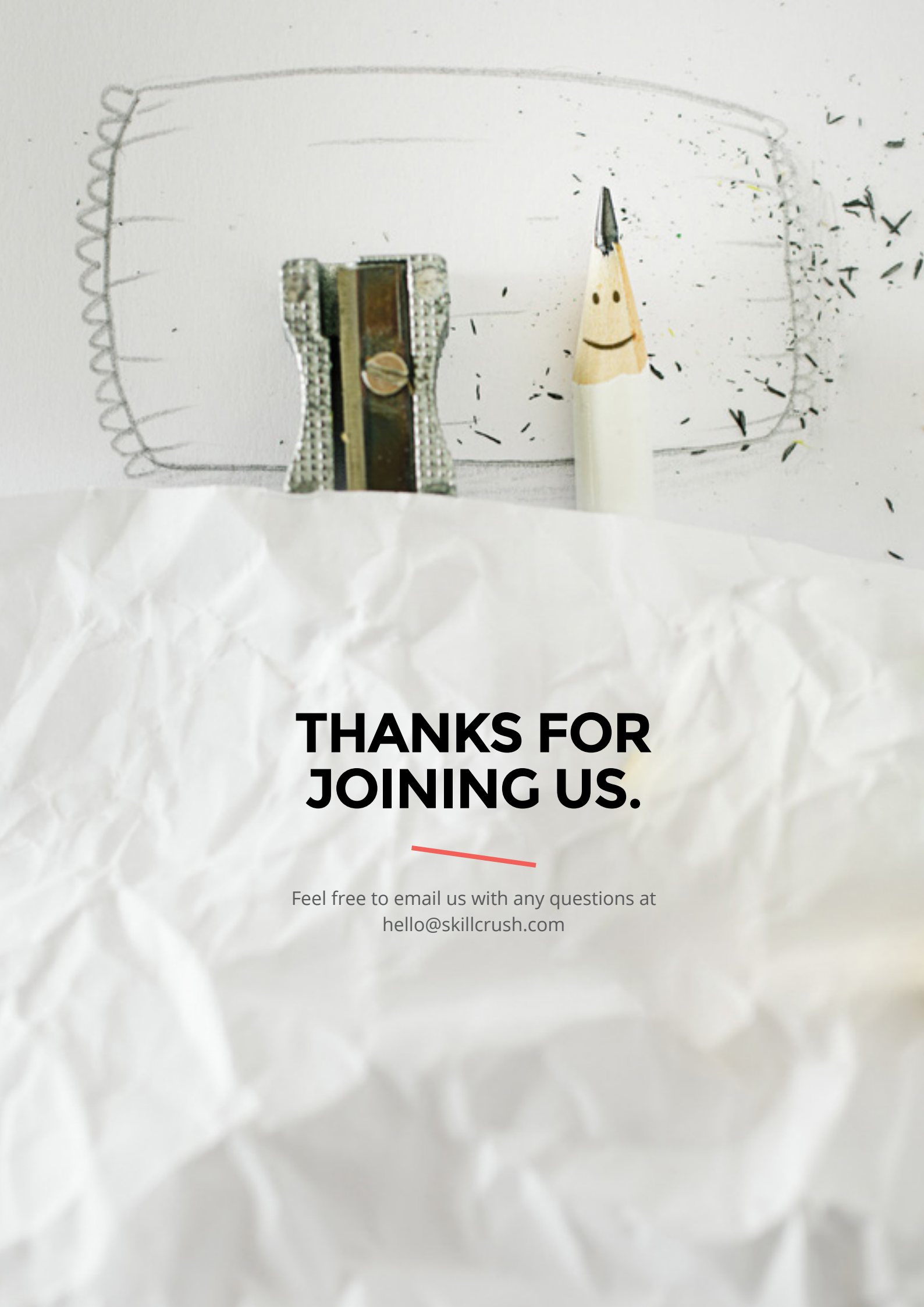"I love your blog posts! They always end up being my lunchtime reads at work!"

CAROLINE KIM

WHAT *are* YOU WAITING FOR?

Sign up to our newsletter now so you won't miss a post.

SIGN UP NOW

THANKS FOR JOINING US.

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Feel free to email us with any questions at
hello@skillcrush.com