GRAPHIC DESIGN
MASTERCLASS
Document created by: Lindsay Marsh

TIPS   SOFTWARE ALTERNATIVES
SHORTCUTS   FONTS, PHOTOS, RESOURCES
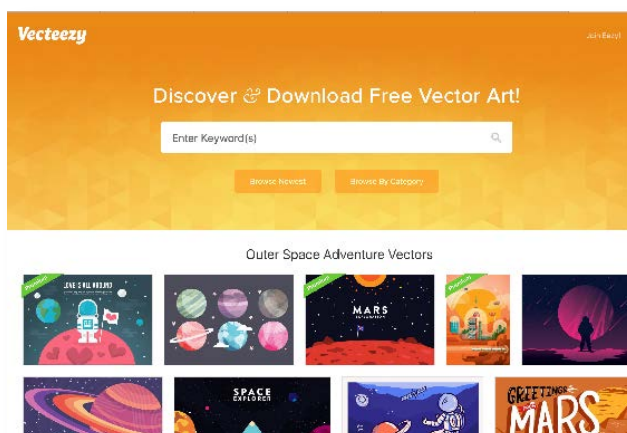INSPIRATION   COMPUTER RECOMMENDATIONS

THE
RESOURCE GUIDE
FOR GRAPHIC DESIGNERS

Illustrator Free Vectors

Make sure you check the licenses for each vector graphic. Vector graphics with a Creative Commons license are free to use for any project without having to give a credit or a reference.

Vecteezy.com

A great resource for vector graphics including illustrator swatches, vector objects and vector textures.

Vectorstock.com

Another great resource for vector graphics.

Freevector.com

Brusheezy.com

A great place to find Illustrator brushes.

Photoshop Free Resources

Make sure you check the licenses for each Photoshop resource. Resources with a Creative Commons license are free to use for any project without having to give a credit or a reference.

Brusheezy.com

This is also a great place to find Photoshop brushes too.

GraphicBurger.com

This is also a great place to download Mock-ups you can use in Photoshop to place your designs and graphics on mugs, t-shirts, signs or just about anything.

Pexels.com

Almost all of the photos available on this website have an open license (Creative Commons), meaning you can use these on both commercial and personal projects. You can find many free textures to use here for Photoshop.

FONTS

Make sure you check the licenses for each font. Most fonts you will find Online will tell you how you can use them. Some do not allow them to be used in logos, while others are open for commercial and personal use.

Fonts.google.com

A great place for finding free open source fonts to use. You can even search by font type to find a close match to a paid font you may like.

Dafont.com

My go-to website for finding fonts. When you download the font, check the folder; they come with an additional document that details the license for the font.

FontSpace.com

Another great free font resource. This website details the type of license the fonts have with a little more clarity.

Fontsquirrel.com

This website also has the option to purchase some fonts.

Font Manager

Font base is a great free font manager for Windows or Mac. Adobe creative cloud has some great font management features, but sometimes when you have 100's of fonts installed having a good way to manage all of those fonts is a great idea.

Fontba.se (Free)

https://fontba.se/

Font Finder

Have you ever seen an awesome font and wondered what it was? This is a great website to upload a snapshot of that font and it will find the closest match in its database. A website I use often to find fonts for clients when they really want to use a font they found.

Whatthefont.com

Adobe Capture CC

This one is new and produced by Adobe and is free to use for Adobe CC subscribers. You can hold up your phone and scan anything that has a font/type, on the screen or printed paper to locate a close match.

https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/adobe-capture-cc/id1040200189?mt=8

COLOR

Color.Adobe.com

You can import a photo and create a color palette out of it. Or, just create a color palette using the color wheel options.

Coolors.co

This one helps to automatically generate a color palette as well as show you popular color themes.

PHOTOS

Make sure you check the licenses for each photo. Photos with a Creative Commons license are free to use for any project without having to give a credit or a reference to the photographer.
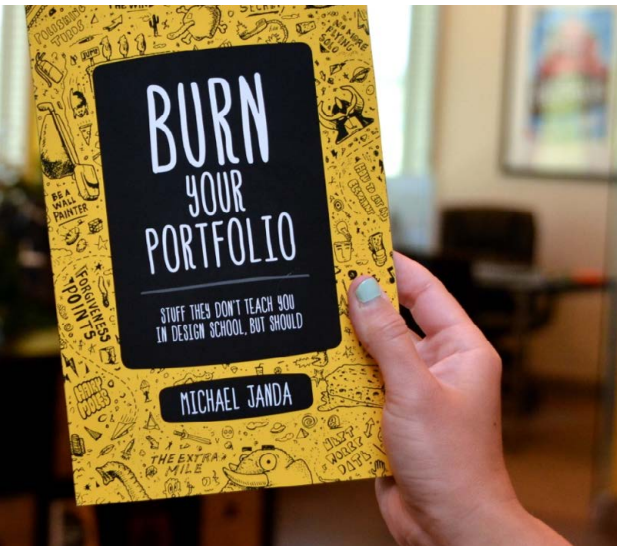
Pixabay.com

Similar to Pexels and might even be owned by the same company.

FreePhotos.cc

This website has a smaller pool of photos, but they are different than the above two libraries.

PHOTO SOURCE: michaeljanda.com/burnyourportfolio

Design Book Recommendations

It is great to supplement any graphic design training with a few good books. Some books I have either read or have had strongly recommended by some of my favorite designers over the years. Feel free to send your own suggestion of a great design book, I will be happy to add it here for other students.

Great suggestions in this article

https://www.creativebloq.com/graphic-design/books-graphic-designers-11135231
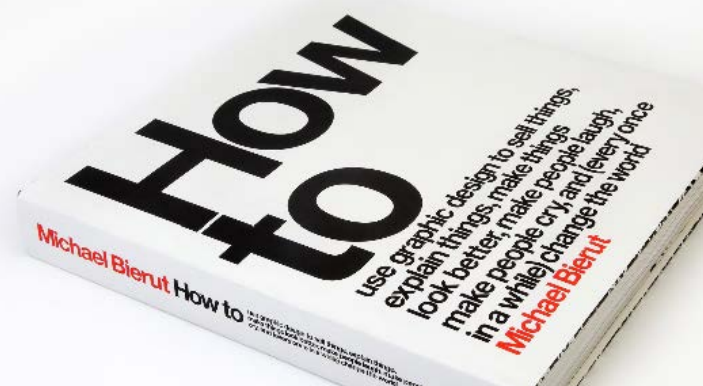
Graphic Design School:
The Principles and Practice of Graphic Design

Burn Your Portfolio
by Michael Janda

How to...
by Michael Bierut

FINDING INSPIRATION

I highly recommend the following websites for finding design and layout inspirations.

Behance.net

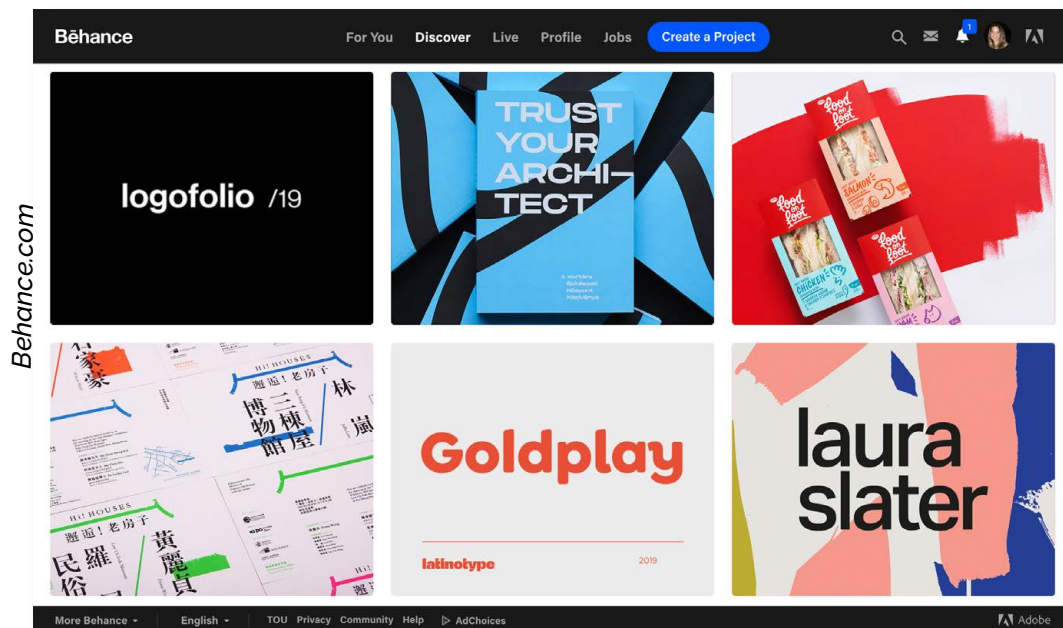*This is THE website where all of the best creative minds gather. Wonderful portfolios of work, which inspired several of my own design projects.*

Logopond.com

Need logo design inspiration? Look no further.

Dribbble.com

That is not a typo, the website name has 3 "B"s in the title. A great website for inspiration and one of the industry's most popular websites.

My Favorite Design Instagram Accounts to Follow!

@worldbranddesign
Branding and Package Design Inspiration

@george_bokhua
Logo Design to die for

@inspirational.branding
Brand Design Inspiration

@ianbarnard
A hand lettering GOD

@adobedesigners
Adobe's Official Account

@logotix
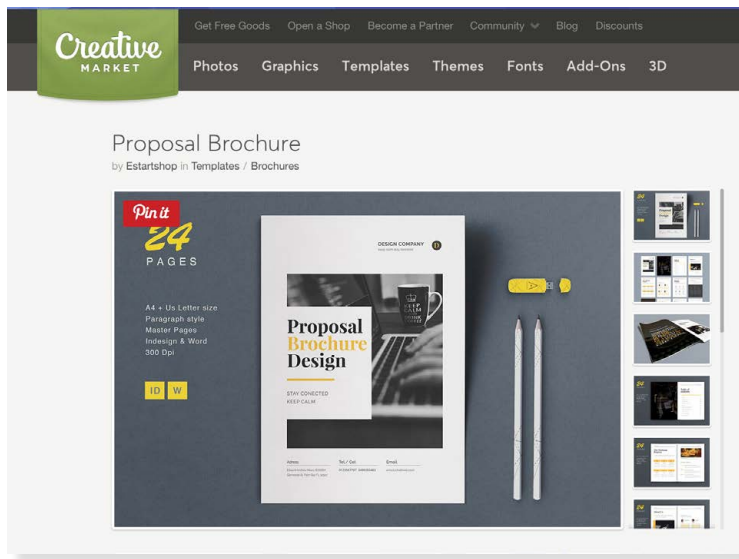*A little logo design inspiration*

@baugasm
A colorful and unique style to follow!

GRAPHIC DESIGN
MASTERCLASS

PAID *Resources*

Sometimes purchasing a paid resource is necessary to achieve a certain look or find just the right photo for your project. Listed here are some of the paid resources I use frequently.

CreativeMarket.com

istockphoto.com

*This is a great place for PAID photos. Paid stock photos do tend to have a higher quality, so sometimes they are necessary to purchase. The lower tier photos start at around **$12** per photo.*

Creativemarket.com

This website is full of wonderful paid resources that you can use with Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator or InDesign including: Brushes, Icons, swatches, vector graphics, photos and templates.

MyFont.com

If I ever need to purchase a font for client work or personal work, this is a great website to purchase full usage rights on fonts.

Adobestock.com

*Currently Adobe Stock is **$29,99** for a monthly subscription. You may only need a subscription if you plan to purchase more than 10 stock photos per month.*
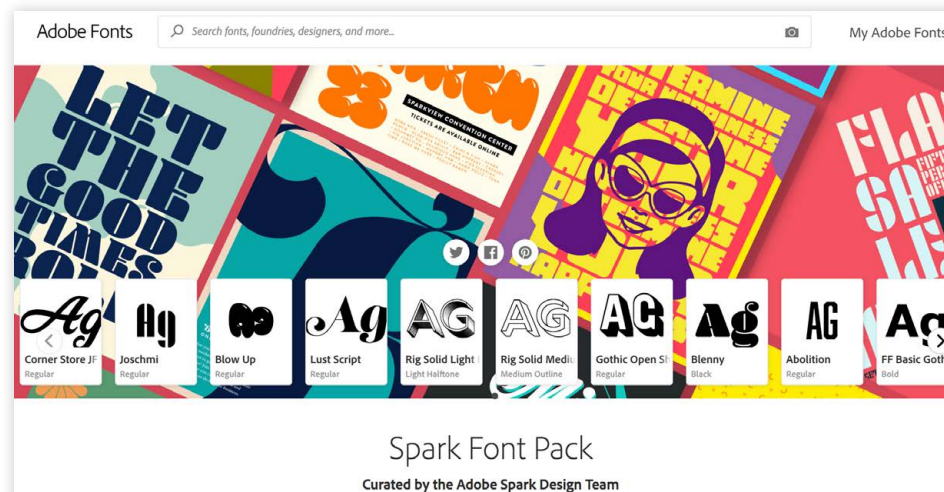
Adobe Creative Cloud

*Currently the Adobe Creative Cloud is **$52.99,** but there are special discounts for students and teachers of some Universities and non-profits.*
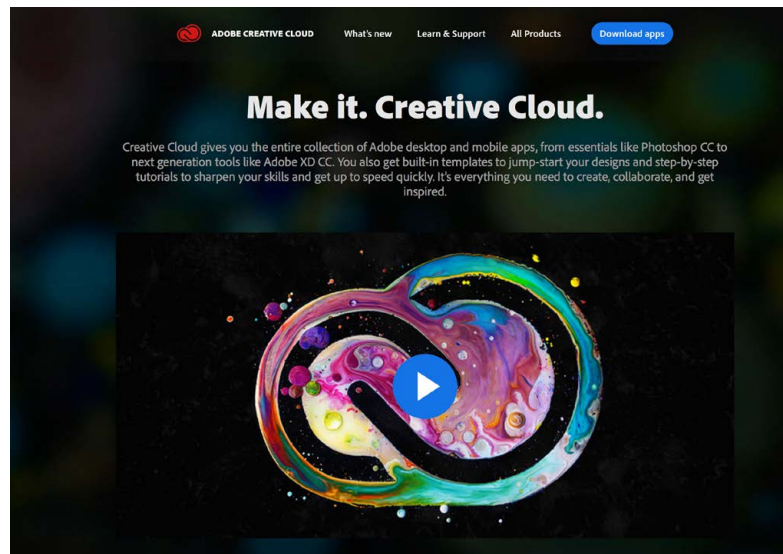
Adobe Fonts

Subscribers to the Adobe Creative Cloud have access to a huge library of fonts with free licenses! Most of these fonts are high quality paid fonts elsewhere. A GREAT value to anyone who already has a subscription!

Adobe.com

Spark Font Pack

Curated by the Adobe Spark Design Team

Keyboard *Shortcuts*

makeawebsitehub.com/adobe-creative-cloud-cheat-sheet
and
helpx.adobe.com/illustrator/using/default-keyboard-shortcuts.html

An ultimate guide for your keyboard shortcuts in Adobe programs.
*I use many shortcuts to save time doing repeat tasks and it really speeds up my workflow. I suggest you **learn one new shortcut each week** and add it to your routine.*

*Do not feel overwhelmed by having to memorize them all. **Write your keyboard shortcut of the week down on a piece of paper or stick it to the top of your screen.** Pick one you think you will use most frequently. Once memorized and incorporated into your regular routine start the next shortcut.*

Rarely do I memorize more than one at a time. There is so much to learn at this stage, the last thing you need is more homework, so take this slow and at your own pace!

My Favorites!

Ai

Toggle Fill and Stroke
Mac + Windows = **Press X**

Swap Fill and Stroke
Mac + Windows = **Shift + X**

Select Pen Tool
Mac + Windows = **The P**

The Eyedropper Tool
Mac + Windows = **Press I**

Ps

Go back in history one step
Control + Z (Win) / Command + Z (Mac)

Create a duplicate layer
Hold down option and drag your layer you want to copy and release
For windows users hold down the Alt key and drag

Zoom in
(Mac) **Command and (+)**
(Windows) **Control and (+)**

Zoom Out
(Mac) **Command and (-)**
(Windows) **Control and (-)**

Id

Quick Select the Type Tool
Mac + Windows = **Press T**

Toggle Artboard on/off
Mac + Windows = **Press W**

Add new page after last page
(Mac) **Shift+Command+P**
(Windows) **Shift+Ctrl+P**

Tools SHORTCUTS

Tool	Mac	Windows
Selection	V	V
Direct Selection	A	A
Group Selection	Shift	Shift
Magic Wand	Y	Y
Lasso	Q	Q
Pen	P	P
Add Anchor Point	+	+
Delete Anchor Point	-	-
Convert Anchor Point	Shift +C	Shift +C
Type	T	T
Touch Type	Shift +T	Shift +T
Line Segment	\	\
Rectangle	M	M
Ellipse	L	L
Paintbrush	B	B
Pencil	N	N
Blob Brush	Shift + B	Shift + B
Artboard	Shift+O	Shift+O

Ai

Tool	Mac	Windows
Eraser	Shift + E	Shift + E
Scissors	C	C
Rotate	R	R
Reflect	O	O
Scale	S	S
Width	Shift+W	Shift+W
Warp	Shift+R	Shift+R
Free Transform	E	E
Shape Builder	Shift+M	Shift+M
Live Paint Bucket	K	K
Live Paint Selection	Shift+L	Shift+L
Perspective Grid	Shift+P	Shift+P
Perspective Selection	Shift +V	Shift +V
Mesh	U	U
Gradient	G	G
Eyedropper	I	I
Blend	W	W
Symbol Sprayer	Shift+S	Shift+S

Tool	Mac	Windows
Column Graph	J	J
Slice	Shift+K	Shift+K
Hand	H	H
Zoom	Z	Z
Toggle Fill and Stroke	X	X
Default Fill and Stroke	D	D
Swap Fill and Stroke	Shift+X	Shift+X
Fill or Stroke w/Gradient	>	>
Fill or Stroke w/Color	<	<
None	/	/
Toggle 3 Screen Modes	F	F
Show/Hide All Panels	Tab	Tab
Show/Hide All But Toolbox	Shift+Tab	Shift+Tab
Increase Diameter	]	]
Decrease Diameter	[	[
Symbolism Tools: Increase	Shift+}	Shift+}
Symbolism Tools: Decrease	Shift+{	Shift+{
Toggle Drawing Mode	Shift+D	Shift+D

GRAPHIC DESIGN
MASTERCLASS

Lower Cost Design Software
Adobe Alternatives

AFFINITY Designer | AFFINITY Photo | AFFINITY Publisher

There are cases where you find the Adobe Creative Suite subscription a bit too costly to maintain. If that is the case you should check out the one-time purchase software from Serif called **Affinity designer, photo and publisher.**

Affinity design is a fantastic cheaper alternative to Adobe Illustrator. Affinity Photo replaces Photoshop and Affinity Publisher replaces InDesign. **All three can be used together to create similar projects that you see in this class.** I have even had some students use this software and still were able to work through the lessons. They are not an exact match and Affinity designer does lack a few tools, but none that are essential to completing basic graphic design tasks.

I prefer to work with Adobe products because I use more than just the classic design software that comes with it, I also use video production software from Adobe, For those who find themselves needing a cheaper option, you should look into these alternatives. **I even have a section in this course that walks through Affinity Designer as an alternative option**.

It may not be for everyone as Adobe's tools are fantastic professional level tools but not everyone can afford them each month.

YOUR ORDER SUMMARY

Affinity Designer Professional graphic design software		$49.99
macOS	1	🗑
Affinity Publisher Professional desktop publishing		$49.99
macOS	1	🗑

GRAPHIC DESIGN
MASTERCLASS

Computer Recommendations
For Graphic Designers

The most important factor in a great computer for a graphic designer is the **amount of RAM** it has not whether it is a MAC or a WINDOWS computer. Running Photoshop and other Adobe programs are **VERY Memory intensive.**

I once got a top of the line iMac and that included the lowest available RAM simply to keep costs down and got 8GB, which I thought would be fantastic. Photoshop can take up to 6GB by default (Although you can change this in the program settings), but it does not leave a ton of RAM for other programs to switch between, it was horribly slow when opening larger documents.

"The most important factor in a great computer for a graphic designer is the amount of RAM it has not whether it is a MAC or a WINDOWS computer."

I recommend getting a laptop or desktop with at least **16GB of RAM to be able to have a smooth experience** (32GB would not be too much either for any intense video or photo editing projects).

I have done all my work in the last 4 years with an iMac pro 15-inch laptop. I used to have a 17 inch but found it to be too big to travel with, so the 15-inch worked out great. It is now 5 years old and holding up nicely, so **never feel you have to have a brand new one.** I enjoy macs because of the better color/resolution with screens but a windows laptop or desktop will suite you just fine since most modern screens come with fantastic color representation.

Mac or Windows?

With Macs costing 2x or sometimes even 3x the price of a comparable windows computer cost can be a factor in choosing which way to go. **There is a reason why macs are more costly,** they use better materials for construction, have better support and an easier to use UI with less downtime due to virus or "bugs". Windows are very affordable though and run all other design programs with ease.

Retina display or not?

A retina display is a high-quality screen resolution that displays pixels on the screen at around a 300 ppi (pixels per square inch). Traditional monitors had a 72 ppi screen resolution. They increase the cost of a laptop/desktop computer but it can be worth it being able to see that higher resolution. This can also help print designers as our goal with print design is to keep our images crisp (not blurry) for printing, which is 300 (DPI), **and to be able to see how that resolution looks on screen is very helpful.**

Laptop or Desktop?

I prefer a laptop because of the portability and being able to bring my laptop with me on trips and to the coffee house. I have a larger 30-inch imac, but still find myself gravitating toward the laptop to keep work all in one place. This is totally a personal choice but laptops have caught up with desktops in recent years in terms of ram and CPU power.

GRAPHIC DESIGN
MASTERCLASS

Popular places to find freelance design work

Fiverr - Not worth pursuing to make a full-time income, perhaps to practice. I have talented students that are struggling to get even one job from this site, and they have a great portfolio. That does not mean do not try, **but be aware of the stiff competition for lower priced jobs.**

Upwork.com - **A much more reputable place to find some good short and long-term contracts** with projects ranging from $100 even up to $10,000. The only issue here is standing out among those who have been using the platform for years and have built up many reviews and stats that make them stand out to those who are jobs. This is where you may have to lower your price below what you feel comfortable with for a few jobs so you can start to get some reviews and reputation on the platform, then you can raise your price back and then slowly push those prices higher. I have many students who try this platform and have gotten a job or two, but rarely (it does happen) it turns into something they can do full-time, although, I did have one student make over $30,000 on the platform in one year.

Facebook or social media connections Finding small business groups and communities online and getting to know the members there slowly, and then approaching them about needing graphic work. I would not approach them right away about this without contributing something to the community as it may seem like spam. **This takes a lot of time commitment**, but I found a few great clients by connecting with them on Facebook and other social media platforms in small business groups.

Indeed.com - Or any other job listing website are still good places to find non-profit and government type jobs. This largely depends on where you live, as some countries will have a limited selection here.

LinkedIn - This could be a good place to start building connections, but with linked-in to work well you have to start out with a few connections in the industry first. This one is more for finding that "friend of a friend who might know of a job" kind of situation. Not something to spend hours on but **just seeing if you can build a network of connections** that you can work to find opportunities.
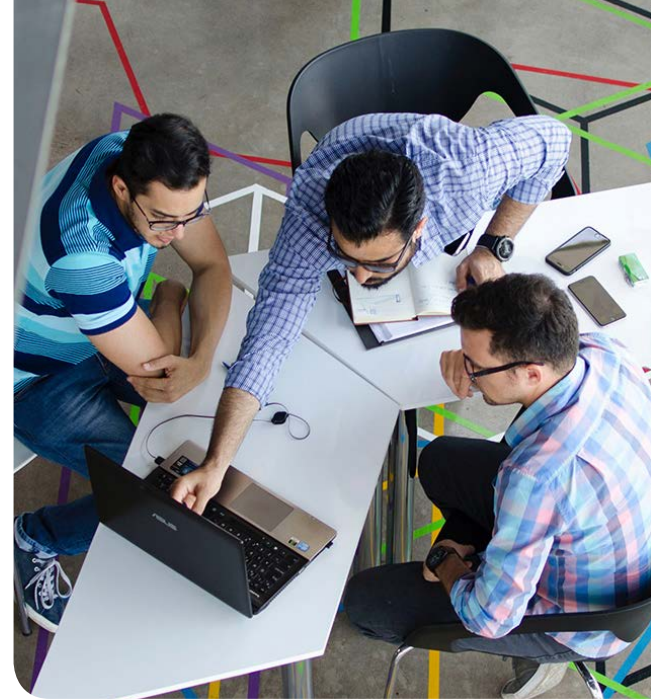
My suggestion: **locally sourced clients are the best**. You can see them face to face (or at least via phone) and you know how to market to the local audience or know how to design for them at least. My first four clients were all local, and they referred me like crazy to clients further away, and the rest was history. **I never had to seek out work again, they found me!**

I was able to build a portfolio from those first few clients to land larger more regional clients. Then you get the attention of ad agencies and you can start doing consulting work or maybe even land a full-time agency job (if you are interested in a salaried position).

It can be a slow build of your client base and portfolio, but over the years it can really start to turn into a full-time career. And very enjoyable one at that! It depends on how much you are willing to practice. It also comes down to making clients HAPPY. I mean giving them what they want but also providing them VALUE. I think a lot of designers think the trendy cool designs gets them jobs, but it is the practical projects that really pay the bills.

Want to find out more about how to go freelance with the design skills you will learn in this class and find clients?

I have a brand new course out called *the Freelance Masterclass for Creatives* where we build a personal brand, portfolio, learn how to find and land clients, set goals, write your bios, price your design work, write contracts and work with difficult client situations. A discount is available in the "bonus section" of the course in a coupon master list downloadable resource.

HEALTHY HABITS FOR
GRAPHIC DESIGNERS

Graphic Design can involve long periods of sitting and fine hand movements. These articles will help you be aware of your posture and ways to take frequent breaks to keep yourself healthy.

5 Common Health Issues Graphic Designers Should Watch Out For

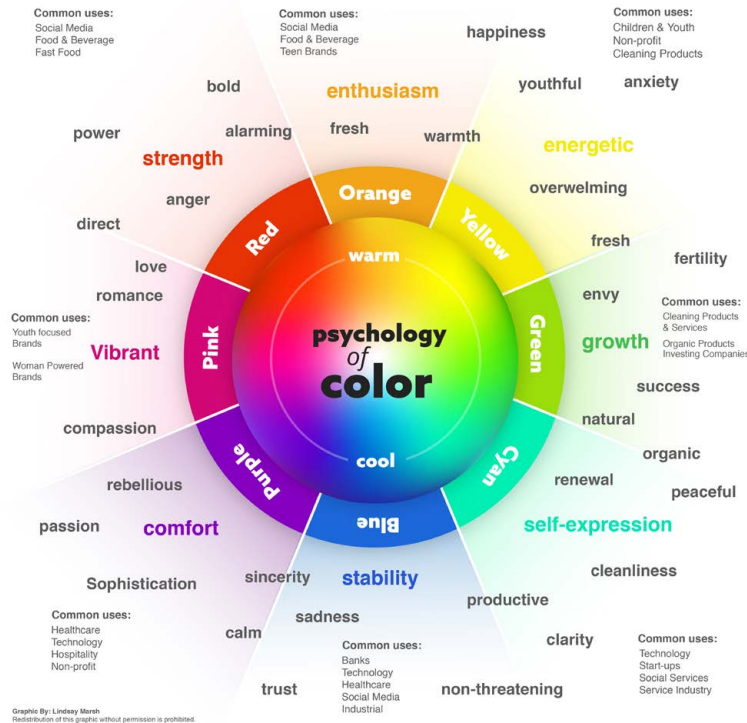*http://vectorvice.com/Blog/2016/06/5-common-health-issues-graphic-designers-should-watch-out-for/*

Designers Guide to Staying Healthy

https://www.creativebloq.com/career/designers-guide-staying-healthy-81516248

GRAPHIC DESIGN
MASTERCLASS

Helpful Resources
In the Theory Section of this Course

There are several helpful resources you can download when you get to the theory section of the course. Make sure to not miss those! These are custom crafted resources that talk about many of the terms and ideas you will learn throughout this section. If you have ideas for other helpful resources, please reach out to me! Happy to create more.