



HIRE ME?!

THE PORTFOLIO HANDBOOK

A GUIDE TO CREATING YOUR DESIGN PORTFOLIO

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WE MADE THIS FOR YOU.

Creating a portfolio can be an immense undertaking. It requires a deep understanding of yourself and reflection upon who you want to be. It not only documents part of your past, but it's built to forge a particular future.

As you sort through past projects, it's a time of self-reflection. Strengths as well as weaknesses become apparent. All the while, it makes your eyes widen as you notice how much self-growth can happen from one project to the next.

This book was put together for the purpose of facilitating higher-quality portfolios. It will not cover project processes, but will act as a guide to documenting a project well for your portfolio. We hope the book will ease some of the anxiety around creating your first portfolio and then later exist as a helpful reference book to check a newer portfolio concept against.

It's too subjective to say that there is any one-right way to create a portfolio, just like there isn't any one-right-process to design. Being fresh, surprising, and creative is part of our job. Following this book may not lead you to the most super-awesome portfolio of all time, but it will provide a solid foundation on which to showcase your super-awesome designs.

Class of 2012 Industrial Design, DAAP, University of Cincinnati

INTRO

PROBLEM STATEMENT RESEARCH CREATION VALIDATION FINALIZATION

STORY-BOARD

WRAP-UP CONCLUSION

The Strokes

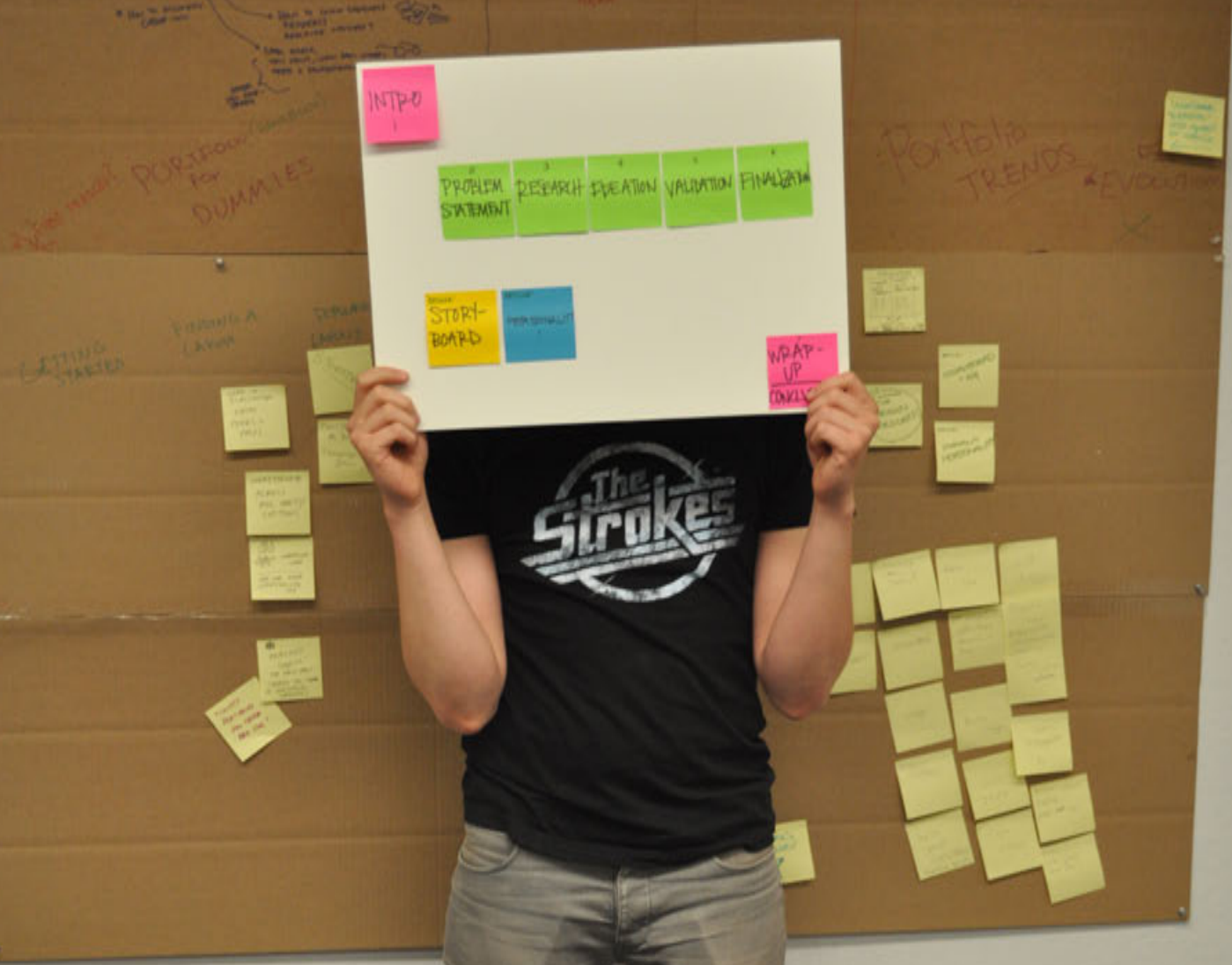


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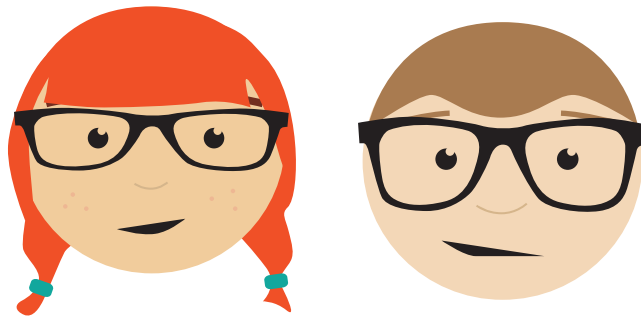
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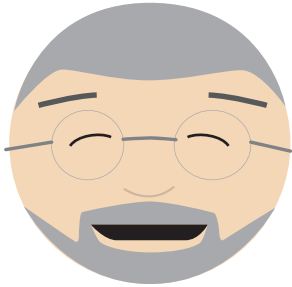
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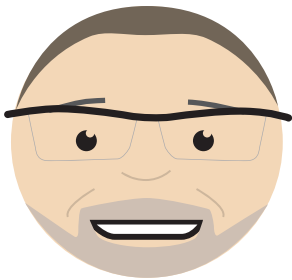


*MEET CASEY & JON.
THEY ARE MAKING A PORTFOLIO TOO.
THEY FEEL A LITTLE VULNERABLE.*



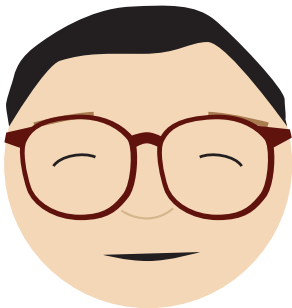
.....

*THIS IS SOO-SHIN. HE'S THE TOP DOG.
HE'LL KEEP YOU ORGANIZED.*



.....

*THIS IS DALE. HE'S GOT AN EYE FOR FLAIR.
HE KNOWS HOW TO TELL A STORY.*

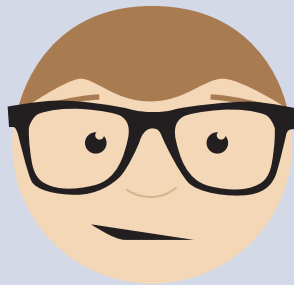


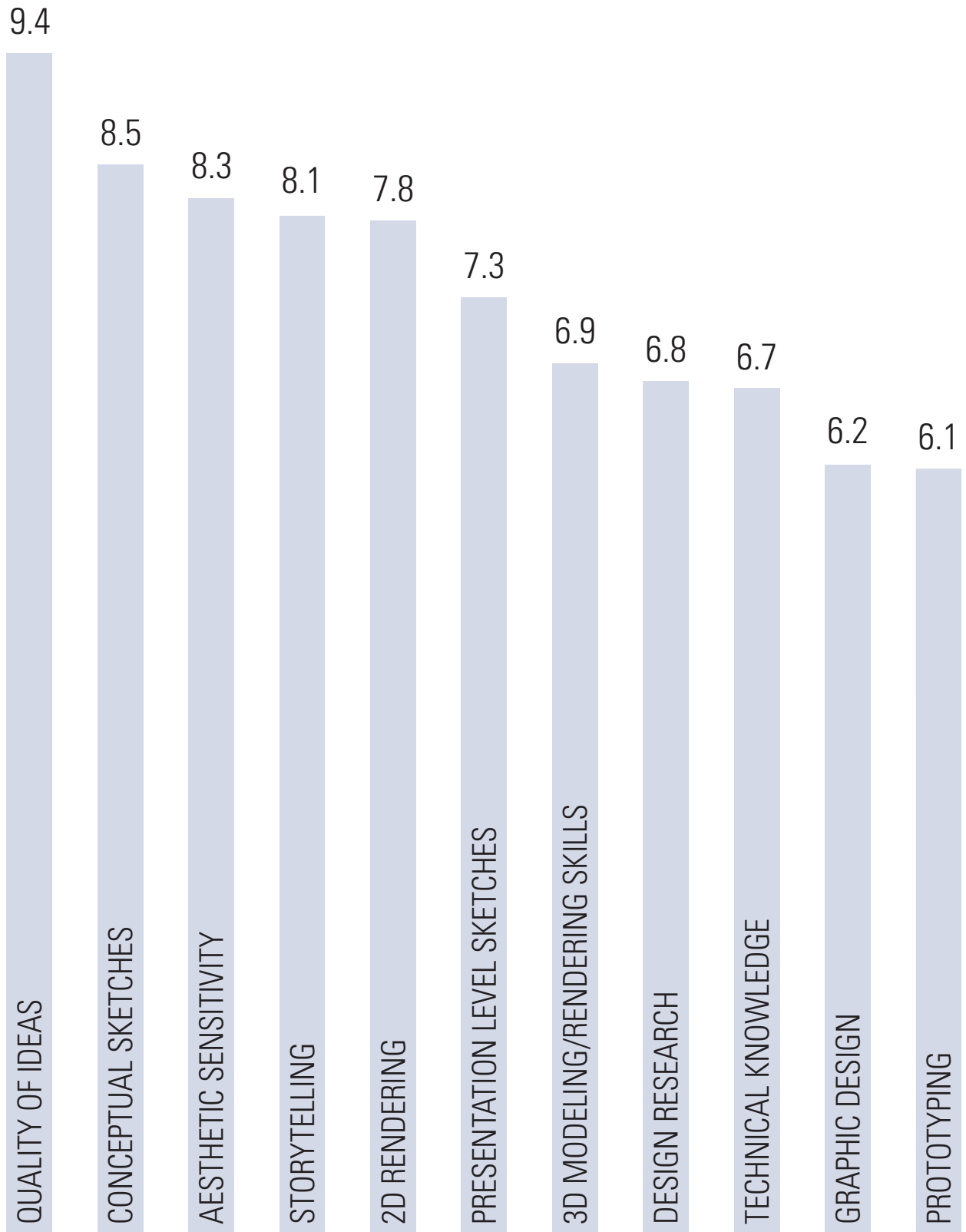
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*THIS IS TONY. HE KNOWS EVERYTHING.
HE'LL HELP YOU WITH TECHNICAL STUFF.*

*WHAT ARE "THEY"
LOOKING FOR?*

DUDE, I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT PEOPLE EXPECT TO SEE IN MY PORTFOLIO. WHAT DO I NEED IN THERE TO GET A JOB?





*These are the results of an anonymous survey.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Remember: your portfolio is not about you; it's about what you can do for an employer. As you're creating your portfolio, ask yourself, "who is my audience?" Are you applying to a corporation? A consultancy? A toy company? Your portfolio should align to your employment goals.

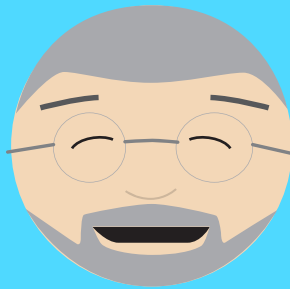
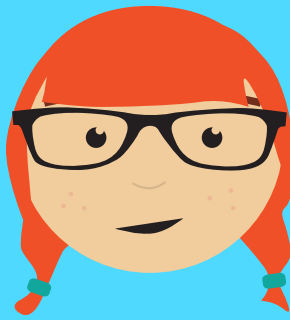
We asked co-op employers to rate the skills they look for in students on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being of little importance and 10 being absolutely imperative. According to the data, employers most value the quality of ideas presented, followed by competency in conceptual sketching and ideation. They cared least about graphic design sensitivity and skills in the shop. Take these findings with a grain of salt: the designers we were able to contact mostly worked at consultancies, and the data could easily shift if the focus was placed in another area of the design world.

Prospective employers will not spend much time looking through your portfolio. You'll get just a few seconds of their time (seriously); you'll only as long as it takes to flip through the PDF you send them. Organize your work so that your best project is the first project they see. You should also end your portfolio on a high note. It's important to learn to self-edit; don't include work that you aren't confident in and aren't comfortable talking about.

HOW AND WHERE TO START

- 01 - HEALTHY HABITS*
- 02 - SHOWING OFF YOUR DESIGN*
- 03 - PHOTOGRAPHY*
- 04 - KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE*
- 05 - VOICE & PERSONALITY*
- 06 - HIERARCHY*

OK...NOW WHAT?



HERE ARE SOME THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND.



Keep an inspiration folder and populate it often. Check blogs daily (Industrial Design Served, core77, Gizmodo, Engadget, MocoLoco, etc.).



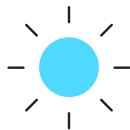
Lay off the coffee; it'll rot your stomach.



Keep a calendar. It helps keeps due dates manageable. Sync it with your smartphone and **KEEP ON TOP OF ASSIGNMENTS!**



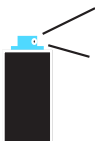
Try to introduce yourself to upperclassmen. They're a wealth of knowledge and are always willing to help. Have them critique your portfolio.



Go outside once in awhile. I know it feels like you're not being productive, but leaving the building once in awhile can be hugely impactful to your creativity.



Talk to the engineers and scientists (and the RPC!) to see what is possible before finalizing your design.



Don't paint or use chemicals outside of spray booths. At the end of the quarter the studio is a toxic wasteland and it's bad for all of us.



Sometimes mocking things up in foam and paper can be more useful than sketching.



If you have to pull an all nighter before final crit, try to make it two days before. There's nothing worse than being a zombie during a long critique.

HEALTHY HABITS

TIPS TO KEEP YOU ALIVE AND SANE

Being an industrial design student isn't always healthy. Working late nights and long hours can take its toll on you, but there are a few things that can help you feel better and work more effectively.



Consider packing lunches for school; eating fast food every day for lunch is bad for you, not to mention expensive.



Jesus Saves often and in iterations.



A lot can be learned from collaborating with other design majors as well as engineers.



Having fewer possessions makes it easier to be a nomadic design student.



It's not the end of the world if your critique goes badly. You can always fix it in your portfolio!



Universities have extensive libraries. Use them once in a while.



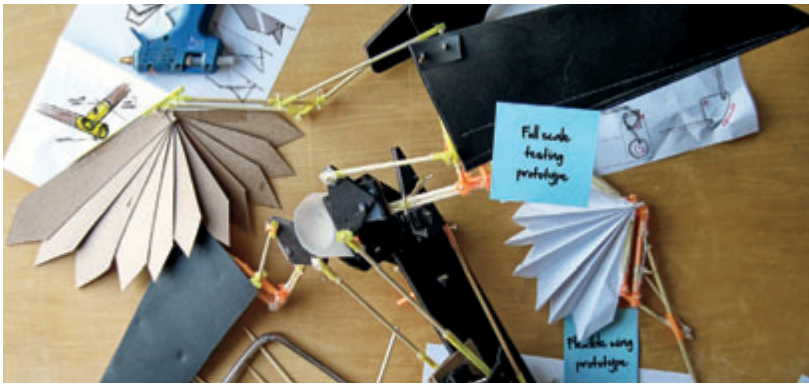
Don't forget to eat. It's easy to forget.



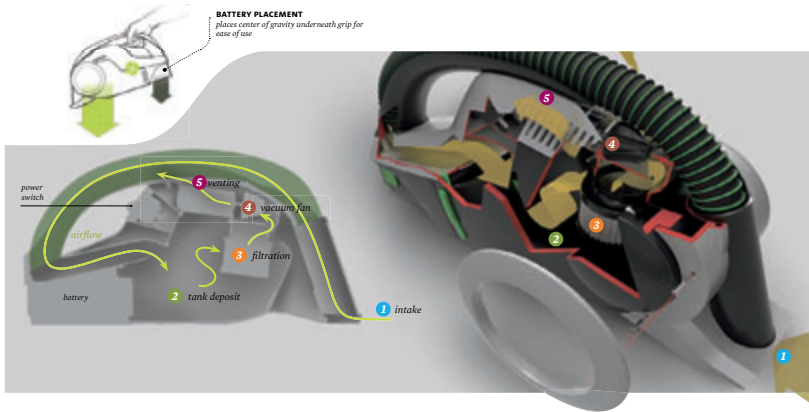
Keep a sketchbook with you as often as possible.



Photograph everything, from sketching to prototyping.



PROCESS



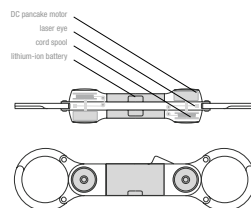
FUNCTION



HERO



Instead of taking the suspect's arms to the cuffs, OX takes the cuffs to the suspect's arms.



MONEY

SHOWING OFF YOUR DESIGN

After putting together all of the necessary process work for a project, the final product visualization is used to seal the deal. You can approach this a number of different ways. First, decide whether or not you want to express your final product in the form of a render or a photograph. If your model turned out well and will look good with a bit of Photoshop magic, use it. Otherwise a render is fine.

As always, make sure to tell a story with your product visualization, otherwise it's just another image on a white background. You can do this using a few techniques.

1. Focus on context. A contextual shot (often called a money shot) puts the product in an environment or in use. It completes the story, and at a quick glance somebody can look at your project and “get it”. Say you finished designing your soap bar and you have a nice physical model with some packaging. Go put it by the sink, next to your toothbrush, and take a picture. Take a photo of someone who fits your demographic removing it from the package. Professionals want to see a strong sense of story, and the money shot is one of the best tools to accomplish this.

If you need to do a 3-D rendering

for your money shot, bolster your render scene with some environmental objects. Say you designed a kick-ass pencil sharpener. Place it on a surface that resembles a tabletop and take 5 minutes to model up a pencil and some sheets of paper. There are some resources online that offer free environmental models for this purpose. Check out 3DContentCentral.com for nuts and bolts, Archive3D.net for furniture, and Turbosquid.com for everything else.

2. Focus on the features and benefits of your product. If you just designed a power tool that has an articulated handle that moves in a unique way, show how it's positions help the user get into places they could never get to before. If you've spent the time investigating how your product will actually work, show that in a cutaway drawing or an exploded view. It doesn't have to be entirely realistic as long as it shows thinking and consideration.

3. Focus on process. You've just spent an entire quarter developing an ergonomic kitchen implement, and the process to get to that point wasn't easy. Besides the obligatory endless sketching, you've made several models out of pink foam, and have 20 iterations modeled in 3D. These are all valuable pieces of your process and need to be

documented. Lay all the models out in a composition, throw in some printouts of other iterations, and make it exciting. Having all of this additional process in one place can make for a powerful full-bleed image.

4. Focus on composition. This is the almighty hero shot. Its purpose is to create pure desire for your product. Think of it in terms of a print advertisement. Consider how print advertisements use lighting, perspective, camera angles, and depth of field to create a stunning image. The electric razor you spent all semester designing needs a product shot worthy of a magazine. If the business end of the razor is the most exciting, get a bug's eye view of it. Make it epic; this is a chance for you to show a view of your product that otherwise might not be seen. Consider adjusting the focal length of your camera (whether it's a real camera or the one in a rendering engine) to capture the details you want and blur ones you don't. Check cool magazines such as *Wired* or *Good* for inspiration.



A basic guide to *PRODUCT PHOTOGRAPHY*

(AND HOW TO NEVER SCREW YOUR PHOTOS UP)

The photo of your finished project can determine whether an employer's going to think it's PHENOMENAL or just OK.

A DSLR (digital single-lens reflex camera) is desirable but definitely not required to take awesome shots. (Even if you don't own one, consider borrowing one from someone else in your studio).

Most likely the most important aspect of your photograph is your depth of field and a DSLR can help you control this exactly the way you want:

Aperture: The size of the hole that light will enter, measured in F-stop. The smaller the F-stop, the larger the hole will be and therefore the more light will enter. The more light that enters, the shallower the depth of field.

Use a lower aperture for extreme dramatic effect; to make your object up close in focus and the background completely blurred out. Use a higher aperture for keeping more of the image in focus behind the focal point; ideal for large installations or scenes where the background should be in focus.

Shutter speed can be used to your advantage as well. A shutter speed of 1000 means the shutter will open for one thousandth of a second, while one of 2" will open for two whole seconds. If you have the depth of

field you want but your images are too bright, try increasing the shutter speed. If your images are too dark try, decreasing it. Taking a picture at a lower shutter speed could help you capture a graceful blur of motion, or you could arrange a way to have your object stay perfectly in focus while the rest of the background is whizzing by at light speed.

ISO: The lower the number, the richer the colors. The higher the number, the grainier the

DSLR or point-and-shoot, just know how to use your camera!

photograph. Ideally, you want to shoot in the lowest ISO possible, but sometimes you need to shoot at a higher ISO due to low light or because you're trying to capture something that's extremely fast (especially when these are factors you can't control when shooting outside). Using a tripod can help you shoot easier at a low ISO.

Don't freak out if you don't own a DSLR. The main advantage of DSLRs is the direct control over settings they allow and the ability to use interchangeable lenses. Quality point-and-shoots have much of the image control and quality of a good DSLR.

It doesn't matter what type of camera you use if you don't set your scene to be appropriate for your project. Consider what's most important scene for your product shot:

Would it be best to shoot it in a solid white photo studio? The photo studio is perfect and would meet all your needs. If you don't have access to one, there are plenty of alternatives to making it work with what you've got (such as websites like <http://www.diyphotography.net/homestudio/cheap-homemade-diystudio-no-lighting-needed>). Make sure your camera's light settings are set to the lights you're using in the studio. (You don't want goofy yellow or blueish looking images.)

Would it be best to shoot the product in the environment it would normally be used or found in? In this case, your background could be equally as important as the product itself. What you choose to include in the shot and the angle you take your photo at are just some of the factors that affect the story you're telling about your product. This means you need to think constantly about what you're trying to communicate with the image you're taking.



*ARE YOU A CONSULTANT OR
CORPORATE DESIGNER?*

Figure out where you belong in the design world.

QUIZ!

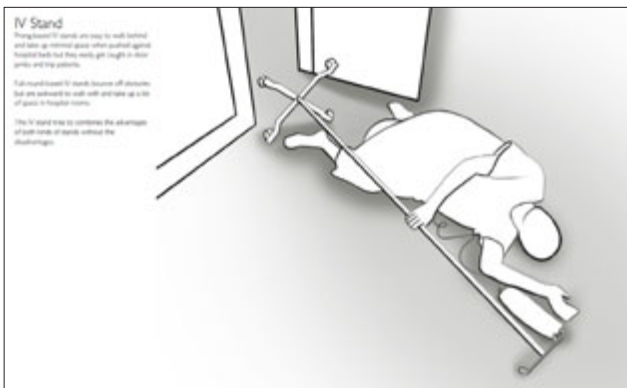
(circle one)

Would you like a little extra money or a little extra coolness?	money	coolness
Do you sketch your favorite product over and over again or are you promiscuous with what you sketch?	monogamous	promiscuous
Do you leave your pant leg rolled up after riding a bike?	roll it down	leave it up
Can you pass a drug test?	yes	no
Are you better at Powerpoint or InDesign?	PowerPoint	InDesign
Would you prefer working in a cubical with an Aeron chair or in a dilapidated warehouse?	cubical	warehouse
Do you see yourself primarily as a person or a designer?	person	designer
Do you have a mustache, tattoos or wear feathers in your hair?	no	yes
Do you really care if your shampoo has sulfates in it?	no	yes
Do your shoes give shoes to poor children?	no	yes
Do you want to live close to home?	yes	no
Would you like to live in the suburbs or the city?	suburbs	city
Do you like to drive your car or ride your bike?	car	bike
Which Macrobrew do you prefer: High Life or PBR?	High Life	PBR
Do you prefer Xbox or Wii?	Xbox	Wii
Would you prefer to shop at Whole Foods or a farmer's market?	Whole Foods	Farmer's Market
Do you brush with Crest or Burt's Bees toothpaste?	Crest	Burt's Bees
Do you prefer glossy or matte?	glossy	matte

If you circled mostly out of the left column you are a corporate whore! If you circled mostly out of the right column, you are an insufferable hipster and belong in a consultancy. Please don't take this survey very seriously; it will look dated soon.



From top-left: Tracy Subisak's ninja page, Morgen Depenthal's cover page, Matt Gill's last page, Steve Speaker's tipped over user. Casey Schneider's portfolio cover page shows a great combination of harmonious voices. The simple photograph of the bouncing balls blends with the rounded typeface (Quicksand) perfectly.



VOICE & PERSONALITY

DON'T BE BORING!

Every graphic element has its own voice. A specific typeface, a color block, a photo, an infographic... everything has a visual language it speaks. Putting elements together that don't speak with a singular voice makes the page become cluttered and visually confusing. Every project you design has a tone, whether it's an undercover graffiti jacket or an adorable cow milkshake-maker. The graphics you choose need to reflect the tone of that project. Font, color, photographs, icons and layout all need to promote the idea behind the project. This is an opportunity for you to pull the audience completely into your thought process.

Spend time figuring out what kind of designer you want to be. Do you love the details? Form finding? Discovering elegant mechanical solutions? Are you in to sustainable design, social design, or transportation design? Once you've got an idea of who you want to be, tailor the voice of your portfolio to speak to that passion. Yes, it's difficult, and yes, you won't know right away what you're really into, and yes, your passions will change and evolve. A portfolio is a living document. It should always be evolving and changing with your growth as a designer so let it speak to who you

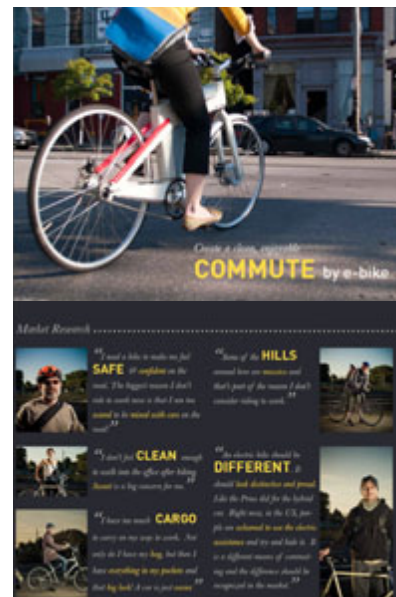
are, but also who you want to be. Creating a portfolio that speaks to those you want to learn from is your foot in the door. You'll land jobs you're more passionate about and you'll get to network with people you actually want to learn from.

Naturally, your personality will be demonstrated in your portfolio. Some people recommend you to strictly use your portfolio to get a job and advise you that people will get to know your personality once they hire you. If this is your philosophy (or even if it's not), just remember that all of your content reflects your work ethic. Clean up your sketches, use nice photos, use a consistent font and layout, spell check...DON'T BE LAZY! Make sure you work on your content first before you attempt to demonstrate personality with things like cover pages or cover letters. Your personality will come through in your work.

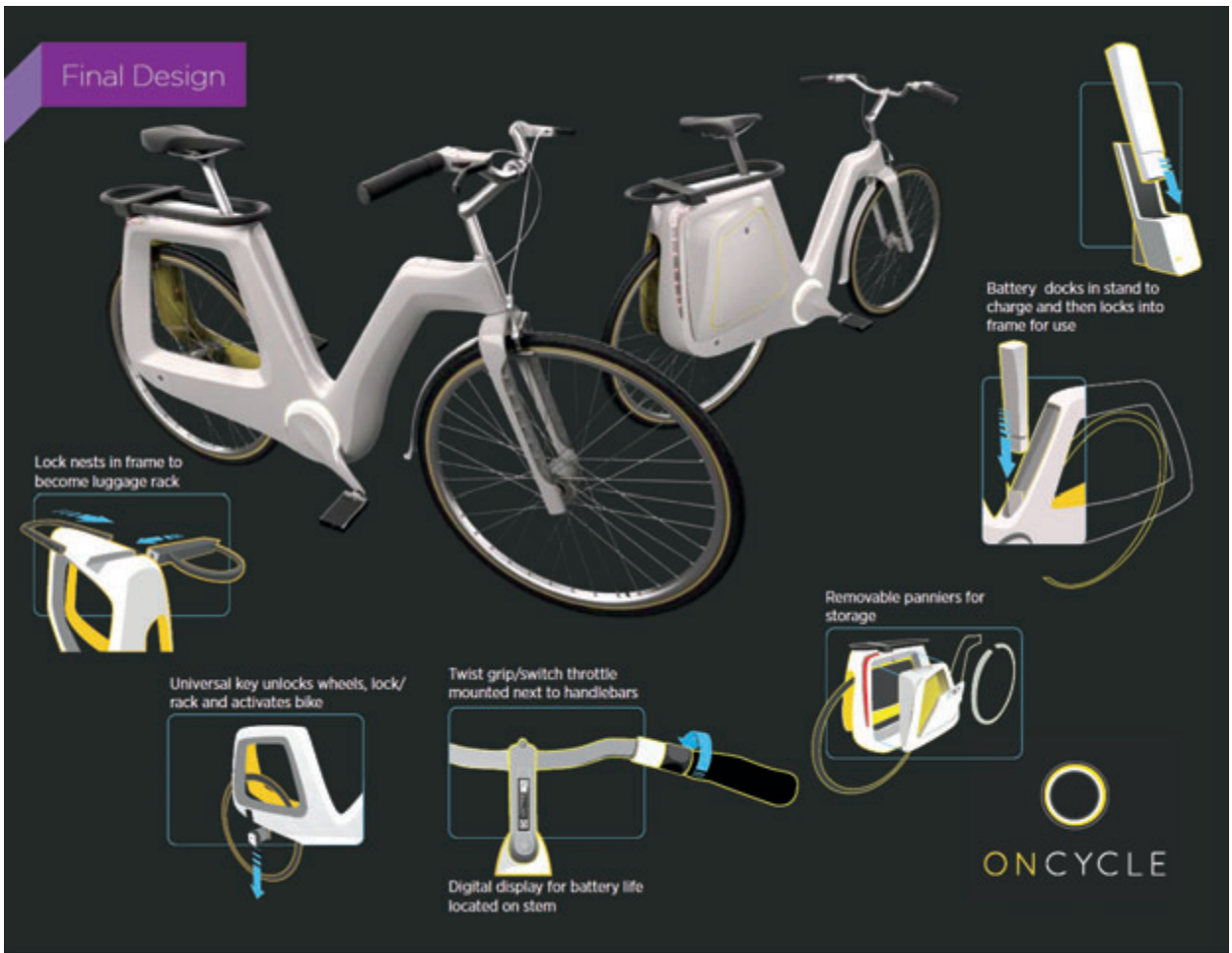
Tracy Subisak's ninja outfit (2010) is a great example of using the content of your projects to show some of your personality. Depending on where you apply, employers understand that not all of your content will be ten-week-long projects. Although a project for ninjas is pretty quirky, Tracy still highlights her sketching skills and

her ability to think about soft goods. A cover page is obviously the first impression and an employer can use it to get a feel for your personality. Don't go overboard with graphic content, keep the message simple, and have fun with it.

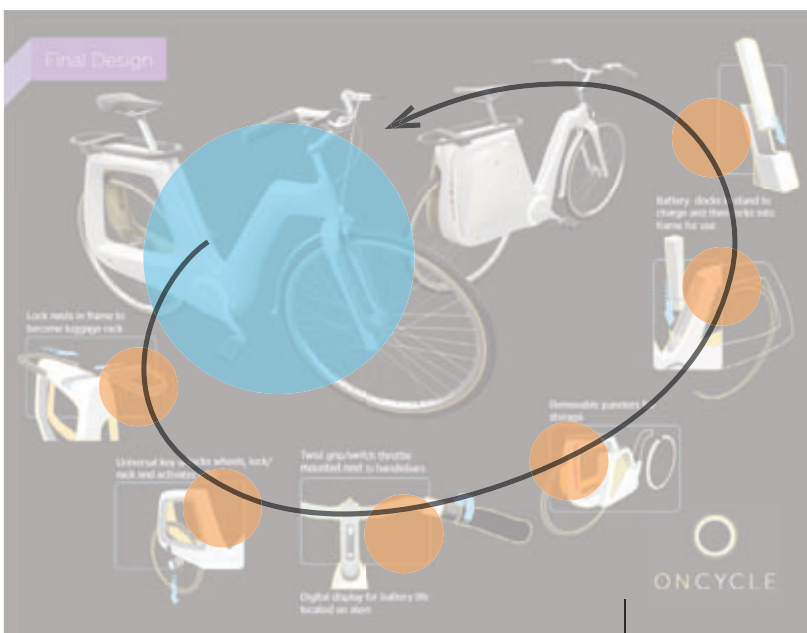
Some people like to write a little paragraph describing their design philosophy or their personality. (Jince, Aaron). Occasionally, people like to add their other skills, such as fine arts, photography, or character design, to the back of their portfolio.



Two pages from Charlie Barrett's portfolio showing harmonious voices in the text, colors, and photography.



Matt uses dotted lines & color flares to explain the various components of his bike project.



- IS THE MOST IMPORTANT CONTENT THE MOST PROMINENT?
 - THINK ABOUT HOW THE FOCUS RELATES TO THE CONTENT AROUND IT.
- DO YOUR EYES FLOW AROUND THE PAGE?

HIERARCHY

ESTABLISH PRIORITIES

“Apparently I need better visual hierarchy. What the hell does that mean?” We know you’ve asked it. We have. Some fancy-pants designer takes a peek at your portfolio and says something to the effect of “I’m not sure what to look at first on this page. It’s nice stuff but it’s chaotic. You need clearer hierarchy.” Then they walk away because you’re too nervous to ask them what they really mean by hierarchy. Sure, you understand the concept. Visual hierarchy is the organization and prioritization of information in relevant meaningful ways. That’s a pretty accurate description, but let’s break it down. Think of it the same way you’d tell a joke. For example, a fish runs into a cement wall and says ‘DAM!’ Har har right? Most student’s portfolios

would tell the joke like this: CEMENTDAM&DAMNGET IT?!?! The audience could sort of break down your meaning if they thought really hard and spent lots of time on it but they’re not going to do that. Each page of your portfolio needs to tell a clean, concise story about what you’re showing. It doesn’t need to be a literal story, you can have a sketch page that’s only drawings but the hierarchy of the images draws the audience through the sketch process. Hierarchy is a fancy word for having something worthwhile to say and being able to say it well. Make your punch line actually have some room to punch.



Storyboard

sto-ry-board (n): graphic organizers such as a series of illustrations or images displayed in sequence for the purpose of pre-visualizing a motion picture, animation, motion graphic or interactive media sequence, including website interactivity.

CREATING THE DOCUMENT

07 - USE INDESIGN

08 - GRIDS

09 - TELL A STORY

10 - RESUME

11 - PLACING CONTENT

12 - ALIGNMENT

*VOICE, PERSONALITY, WHEN DO I GET TO START
MAKING THIS THING IN PHOTOSHOP?*

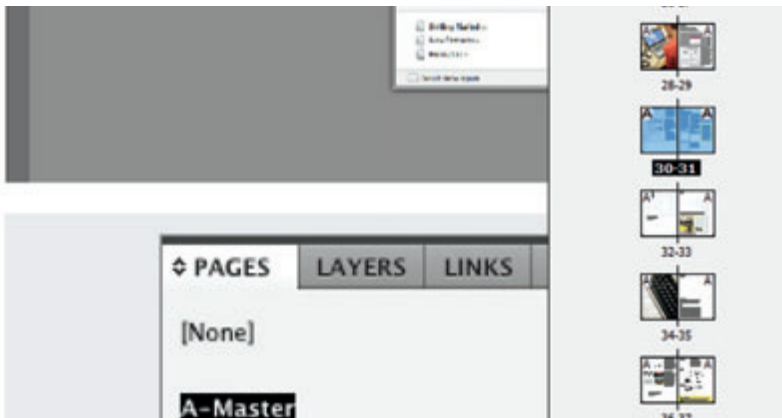
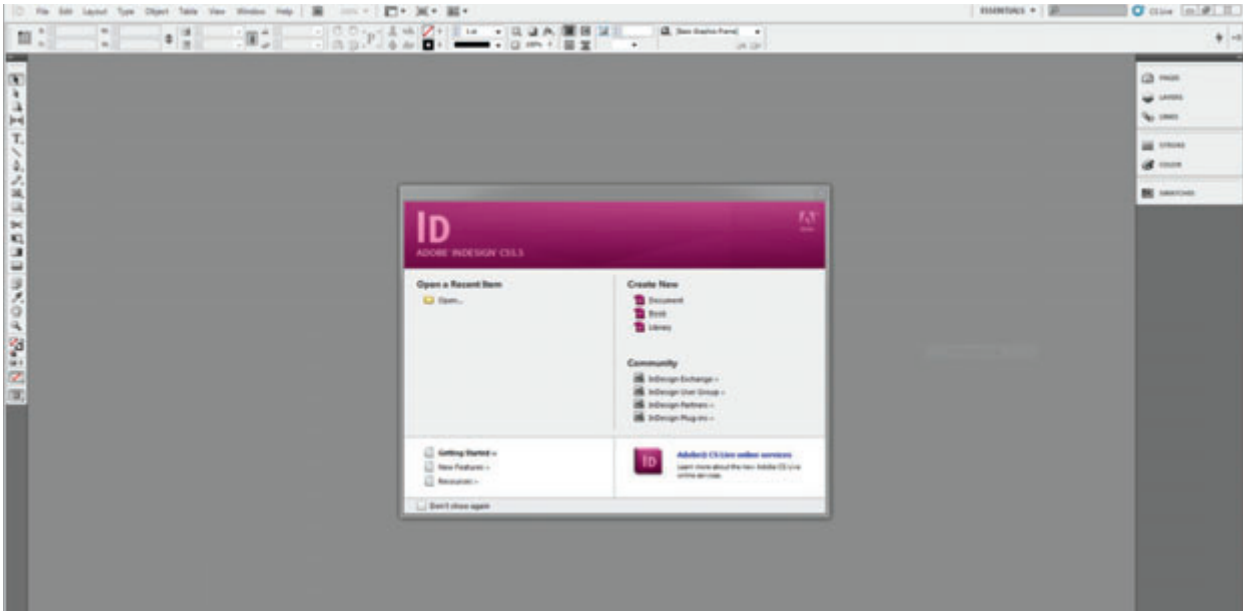


*PHOTOSHOP? HAH! YOU NEED INDESIGN TO
ORGANIZE YOUR CONTENT.*



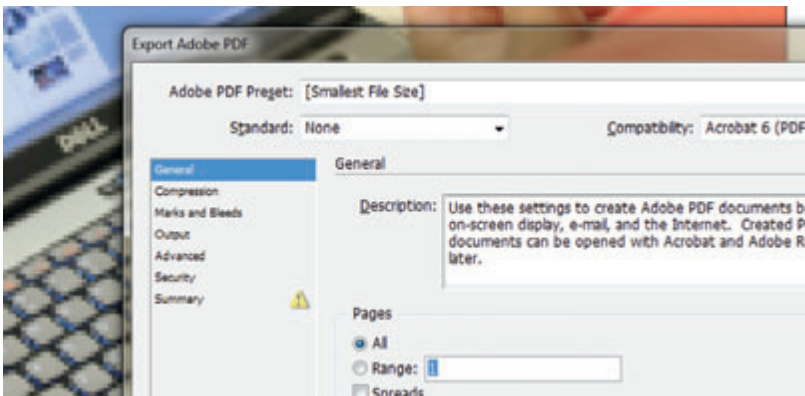
USING INDESIGN

THE GOLD STANDARD FOR CREATING YOUR PORTFOLIO



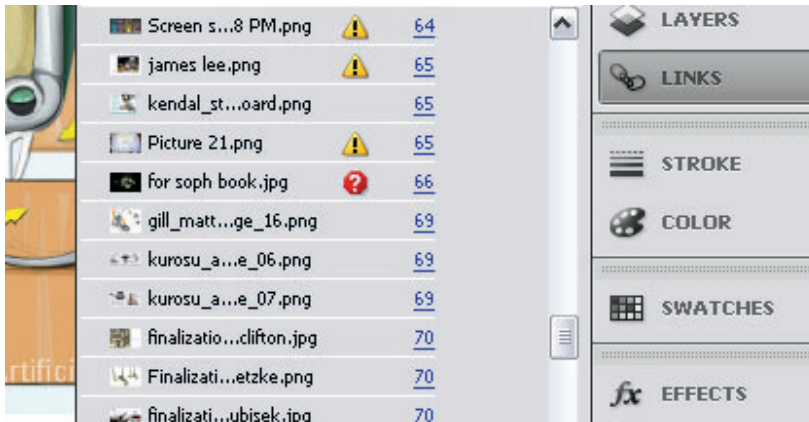
MASTER PAGES

Master pages are used to automatically insert layout elements on various pages. All elements of the master page are placed onto any page you choose, and these are by default not selectable when you are working on individual pages. This allows you to further develop the page without worrying about accidentally modifying the pre-defined elements (such as page numbers, grids and guides, and graphic elements).



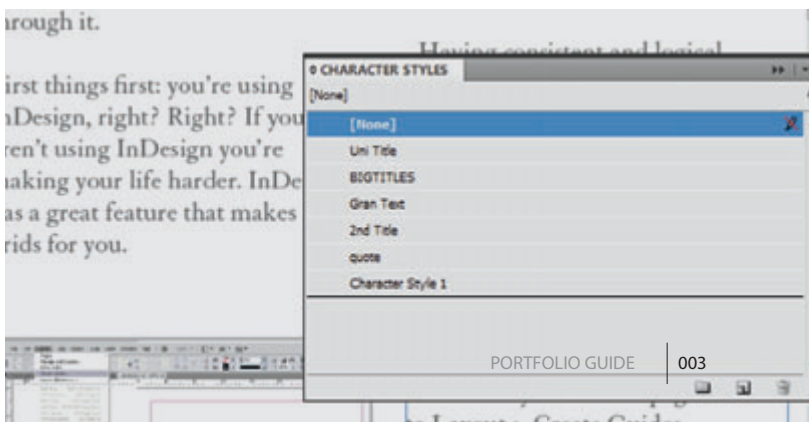
FROM WEB TO PRINTING

InDesign allows you to have control over your export settings, from a high-quality print to a lo-fi web version. You can also establish bleeds, gutter and slug dimensions. These are key if you are printing a portfolio.



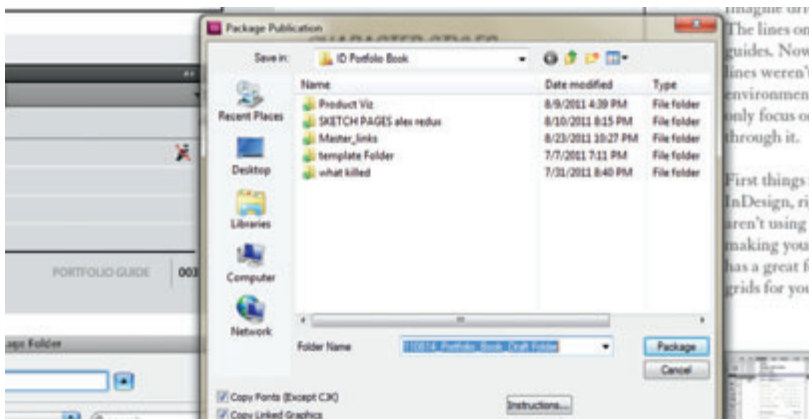
AUTO UPDATE PAGES

If you have an image that has been modified in another program such as Illustrator or Photoshop after it was placed in InDesign, a small yellow triangle warning sign will display in the Links panel. Just click on the link and the link will update immediately. There is no need to manually replace images after you update them.



CHARACTER STYLES

Let's say all of your titles need to be a certain font, size and color. You can set all of this information in a Character Style Sheet and then apply it to each title with a click. Now, let's say that you decide that the titles are too small and they all have to be made 4 points bigger. Just go to your Character Sheet, modify the size and everything associated with that character style will update.



PACKAGE

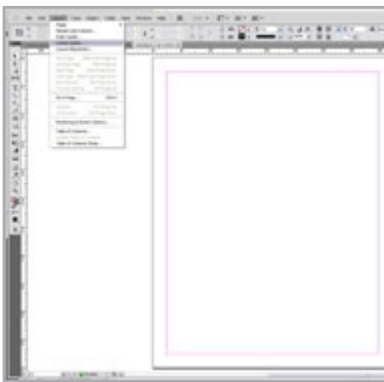
After you're done, you can package your PDF and create a single folder that contains all your fonts, images, and linked files. This makes backing up your work super simple. Preflight also ensures that there are no RGB colorspace pics in a CMYK doc (key for printing).

USE A GRID

GRIDS ARE A GREAT WAY TO LAY OUT YOUR CONTENT

Use a grid. Seriously! A grid is not an arbitrary smattering of guidelines across the page. It's a legitimate structural guide. Imagine driving in a new town. The lines on the road act as your guides. Now, imagine if those lines weren't there. It's a stressful environment where you can only focus on one thing - getting through it.

First things first: you're using InDesign, right? Right? If you aren't using InDesign you're making your life harder. InDesign has a great feature that makes grids for you.



There are examples of grid systems on the following pages that you can use as a guide.

Use your grid to line up your graphics exactly and to inform yourself as to where things look evenly placed. Use a copy and paste workflow to keep titles, subheadings and different blocks information all in the exact same place.

Having consistent and logical alignments throughout your portfolio is essential. It's important to stick to your grid. Arbitrary combinations of columns, lines, and rows do not project a logical

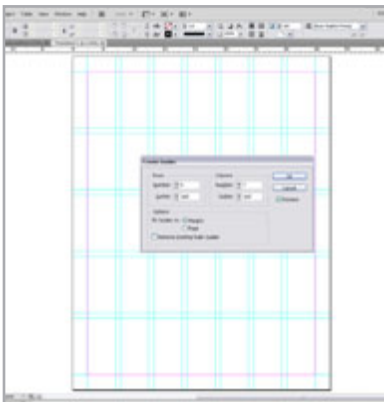
sequence of information. A 3 x 3 grid is the easiest, but feel free to experiment with 11 x 4, or 7 x 7. Look at some cool-kid magazines (NYLON, i-D, Metropolis) and copy their grids. Their grid systems are complex but consistent throughout and make sense for the content displayed on the page. Choosing the right grid and sticking with it will make your portfolio look baller.

"Less is more. Your work should be the first thing people see. No crazy logos for your name, use simple, readable fonts, and no outrageous visual punctuation. You want people concentrating on your work and not the graphics that accompany it."

- Marnie Meylor, Mayo Clinic

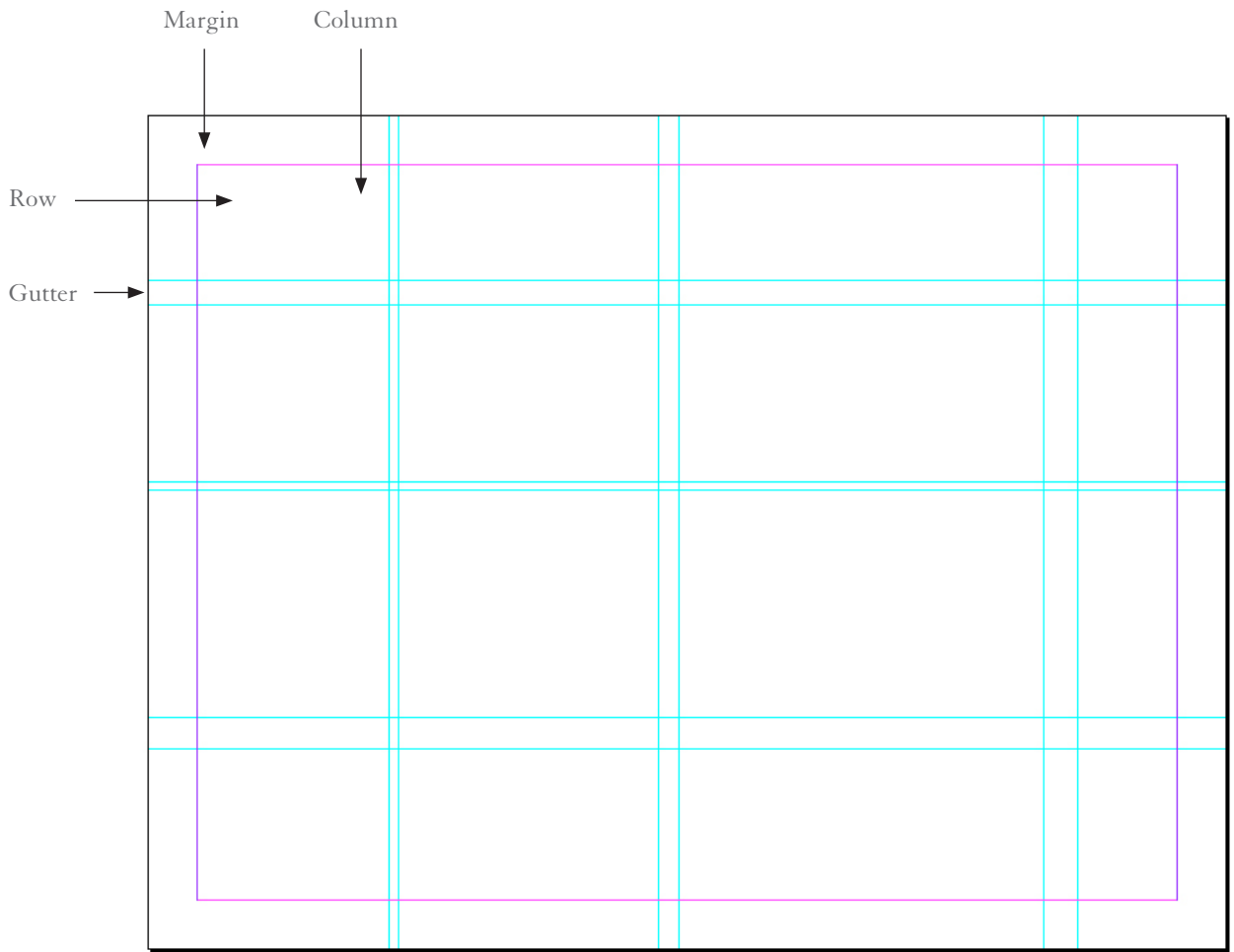
STEP 1

Click onto your master pages. Go to Layout > Create Guides.



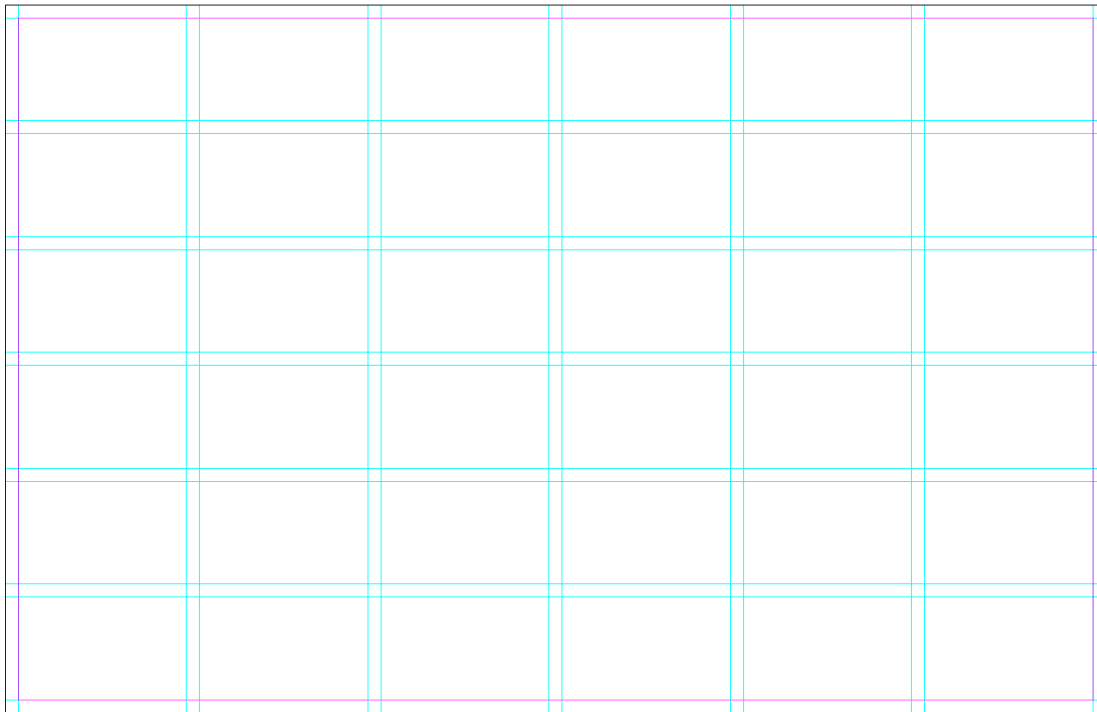
STEP 2

Choose the number of rows and columns to create your grid. The guides feature also lets you control your gutter (the space in between grid sections) and whether your margin is or isn't included in the grid.

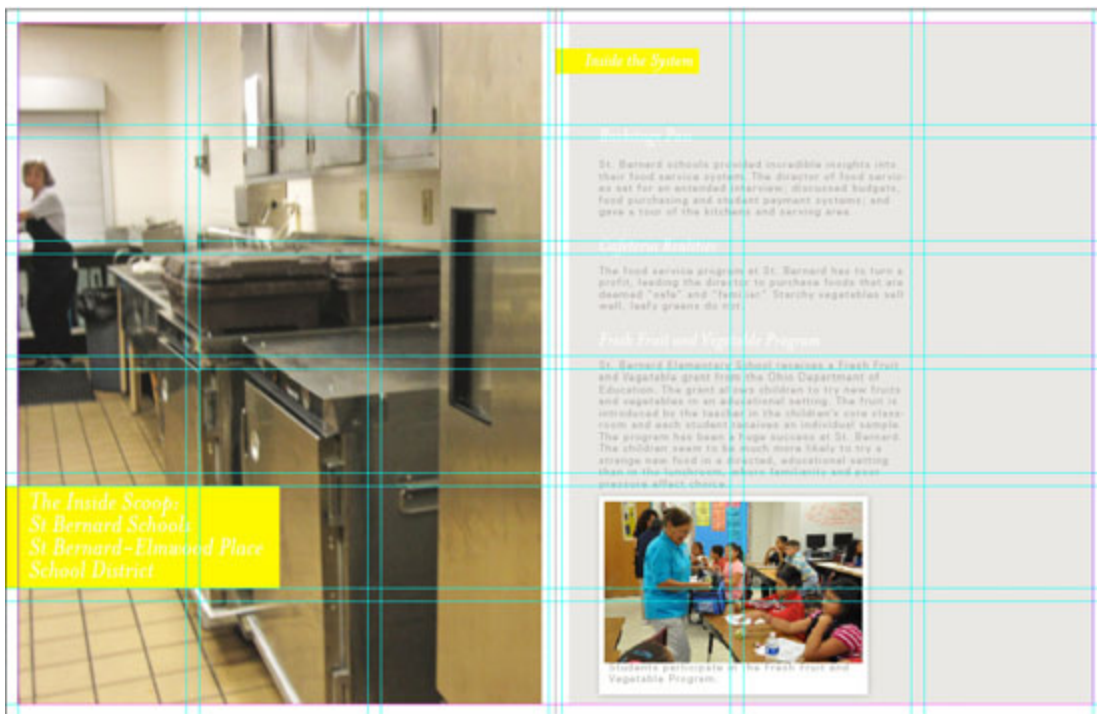


This grid illustrates things to avoid:

- Uneven columns
- Uneven rows
- Uneven gutters



This is an example of a clean 6 x 6 grid. The rows, columns, and gutters are clean and logical.



This is an example of a 6 x 6 grid in use in a portfolio.



...the way ...
...to ...

...that story ...
...I know ...

...million years ...
...I love you ...
...as born ...
...all luck you up ...
...duh hahaha ...

...in lo e with you ...
...at you know ...
...can, t read ...
...onathan ...
...m addict d to you ...
... (This M achine has becom ...
... HI ... IN A LY EWRITER ...

I
CAPS LOCK IS ON
v
o
Love and happiness

TYPOGRAPHY

It's four in the morning, you've just tossed back a little bottle of Five Hour Energy, and you're thinking to yourself, "I need to pick a font. Everyone else is using Helvetica/Futura/Univers...I want to be different. I want to stand out. I know! I'll use Curlz!"

Stop.
Right.
There.

Fonts are not a good way to differentiate yourself. Your work *is*. It may be tempting to make a splashy page with crazy fonts, but unless you've thought it over (and it still seems like a good idea when you've finally gotten some sleep), then step back from the computer and settle down with your wild ideas. And Curlz? What were you thinking? Go to bed.

The fonts you choose to use will dramatically affect your portfolio. One big mistake that many portfolio newbies make is allowing your text to take away from your work. Your type should be readable when important and nearly fade into the background when it's not essential. Typography is more than just choosing a font; it is about making your information legible and readable while still keeping an aesthetic layout. The following is a quick run-down of the basics so you can avoid common mistakes. The more you know...

Serif

Sans-Serif

I BE TITLE
I'm a sub-heading
I'm just body text.



CHOOSING A TYPEFACE

There are two families of typefaces: Serif and Sans-Serif. Serif type has a short line or finishing stroke on the end of each character. Serif typefaces are more traditional and formal and are easier to read in a large block of text. Serifs help guide the reader's eye along the page. Sans-serif typefaces do not have finishing strokes. They are modern, less formal and easier to read in titles and small amounts of text.

MIXING TYPEFACES AND HIERARCHY

Too many typefaces can confuse the reader and become distracting. Keep the number of typefaces to three or less to better create a hierarchy on the page. Choose typefaces that compliment each other in mood and energy. Then create a hierarchy of text by giving each typeface a set purpose in the portfolio (ex. A bold sans-serif for titles and a light weight serif for body text). With this organization, the reader will know what information is being delivered and where to look for specific information.

WHEN IN DOUBT

Typefaces vary greatly in style and attitude. There is display type, script, hand-rendered type and more, but for the purpose of a portfolio it is best to stick to simple, clear, legible typefaces. Here is a list of safe typefaces to use when you just aren't sure, as well as a list of typefaces to avoid at all costs!

GOOD FONTS

Gotham

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Gill Sans

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Helvetica

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Univers

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Baskerville

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Futura

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Bodoni

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Clarendon

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

FONTS TO AVOID

Comic Sans

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

ROSEWOOD

**THE QUICK BROWN FOX
JUMPS OVER THE LAZY DOG.**

Brush Script

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Papyrus

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.



Caution

Font ≠ Typeface: A typeface is the design/body of work of a character set. A font is the delivery mechanism of those characters. If a typeface were a song, a font would be the MP3.

LEGIBILITY

The most important part of text is that it is readable. The typeface can be perfect but if you can't read it, perfection doesn't matter. There are many aspects to typography that affect the legibility of your text. First there is the size- make sure the body text is not below 10pt. Next there is the use of white space; you must let the type breathe. Leading is the vertical spacing between lines of text. Proper leading keeps the reader's eye from losing its place between lines. It also affects the overall aesthetic style of a page. Kerning is the spacing between individual characters and tracking is the spacing between groups of characters- both affect the flow of text. A readable page requires adequate contrast between the text and background. For example, white text on a 30% gray background is not very legible, but white text on 70% gray is clear.

LEADING

- ✗ Nam, suntium qui omnis et qui tem quo odissitate liatia quatiis resent. lbus natet rem eum, venim dolesti ntotatur minullabori odit atem illant et, quatatur arumquam, cusci occusam que perorporio ma debis eatincte pliquas volupta sitibus amendis.
- ✓ Nam, suntium qui omnis et qui tem quo odissitate liatia quatiis resent. lbus natet rem eum, venim dolesti ntotatur minullabori odit atem illant et, quatatur arumquam, cusci occusam que perorporio ma debis eatincte pliquas volupta sitibus amendis.

KERNING VS. TRACKING

Kerning
Kerning

Tracking
Tracking

CONTRAST

I'm at 30% gray!

I'm at 70% gray!

TEXT LAYOUT

Alignment - Generally it is best to align text to the left because this is the way we are used to reading (centered and right-aligned text can be used in moderation). Justified text (when text is aligned to create straight edges on both sides) can be used in moderation as well, but it can create a rigid and unnatural feel with awkward spacing).

Measure - The length of a line of text (aka column width). The length of the text affects the movement of the reader's eye. If the length is too long, the eye may be lost in the transition from line to line. If it is too short, the reader's eye may tire. A line of text is usually about 50 characters across and no more than 65 characters across.

Rag - The uneven vertical edge of a block of type. The rag affects the flow of the reader's eye, so try to avoid a shaggy rag.

MEASURE

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>✗ Dinosaurs are my most favorite thing ever. If you hired me I can tell you all about Apotosaurs, Oviraptors and the Archaeopteryx. But all pale in comparison to the designosaurus.</p> | <p>✓ Not only are dinosaurs my favorite thing but they should be YOUR favorite thing. Who the hell can resist the mystique of the world's true monsters? A bygone era of the most epic creatures to ever touch the surface of the planet. Of course, if you don't believe in that sort of thing dinosaurs won't necessarily be your favorite thing.</p> |
|---|---|

RAG

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>✗ Now on to robots. If robots are not the absolute amazingest creations you have ever seen then I just don't know what we could possibly say to one another that would be worthwhile for either of us.</p> | <p>✓ But perhaps, you do not enjoy all the same things that I do. You should know that is okay and that no matter what happens I will respect you if you format your text in a way that is not atrocious. Are you really reading this? I'm not.</p> |
|---|---|

Stefan Starr

College Address:
1000 Clifton Ct.
Cincinnati, OH 45219
(123) 555-1234

Permanent Address:
21 Thompson Ave.
Cleveland, OH 45342
(123) 555-0000
(123) 555-2222

sstarr@email.uc.edu

Education:

University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH, College of Design, Art, Architecture, and Planning, (DAAP) Fashion Design, Class of 2011.

Miamisburg High School, Miamisburg, OH, Diploma, June 2006.

Work Experience:

Isle of Skye Cashmere

Intern: Assisting clients with choosing merchandise. Ordering fabrics, and clothing from vendors. Running the store myself and organizing orders for merchandise.

Garan Inc.

Intern: Assisting designers with lineplans. In charge of samples and keeping track of them. Organizing lineplans, pitches and other information for the designers.

Jack's Aquarium and Pets

June 2007-Present

Sales Associate: Assist Customers with questions, run the cash register and count money at night, maintain care of animals and fish.

Qualifications:

Adobe Creative Suite 2: Indesign, Golive, Illustrator, and Photoshop.
Microsoft Office 2000: Word, Excel, and Powerpoint.

Design Skills: Flat sketches, Garment construction, Textiles, Pattern making and Forecasting

Activities:

College

Rally Cats, Fashion Appreciation Society

High School

Varsity Gymnastics Captain, Wind Symphony and Honors Band, Marching Band, JV Volleyball, Outdoor Club, Choir, National Honors Society.

Awards and Scholarships:

College

Starving Artists Scholarship

High School

Dean's List all four years, Honors Diploma, National Honors Society, Volunteer hours award, Four year athletic award.

References:

Available upon request.

A BAD RESUME

Arbitrary graphic treatments detract from the content. Too much variation in text alignment and centering of the name and e-mail address contribute to this resume's lack of readability.

While your name is important, the content of your resume is what employers want to see.

MAKING A RESUME

OR MAKING OVER A RESUME

STEFAN STARR

1000 CLIFTON CT. | CINCINNATI, OH 45219
SSTARR@EMAIL.UC.EDU | 123 555 0000

EDUCATION University of Cincinnati | Cincinnati, OH
College of Design, Art, Architecture, and Planning, (DAAP) Fashion Design, Class of 2011

Miamisburg High School | Miamisburg, OH
Diploma, Graduated June 2006

WORK EXPERIENCE Isle Of Skye Cashmere | Cincinnati, OH
Intern: Assisting clients with choosing merchandise, ordering fabrics, and clothing from vendors. Running the store myself and organizing orders for merchandise.

Garon Inc. | New York, NY
Intern: Assisting designers with lineplans. In charge of samples and keeping track of them. Organizing lineplans, pitch sheets, and other information for the designers. Assisting new born designers with the Spring 2009 line.

Jack's Aquarium And Pets | Cincinnati, OH
Sales Associate: Assisting customers with questions, running the cash register and counting money at night. Maintain care of animals and fish.

QUALIFICATIONS COMPUTER SKILLS
Adobe Creative Suite: Illustrator, Indesign, Photoshop, and Galleo.
Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, and PowerPoint

DESIGN SKILLS
Flat Skewing, Garment Construction, Textiles, Pattern Making, Trend Forecasting, Fashion Drawing, Fashion Buying, and Computer Aided Design.

ACTIVITIES COLLEGE
Bally Cats, Relay for Life, St. Vincent De Paul Charity Fashion Show

HIGH SCHOOL
Varsity Gymnastics Captain, Wind Symphony and Honors Band, Marching Band, JV Volleyball, Outdoor Club, Honors Choir, National Honors Society

AWARDS COLLEGE
Starring Artists Scholarship

HIGH SCHOOL
Dean's List all four years, Honors Diploma, National Honors Society, Volunteer Hours Award, Four-Year-Letterman Athletic Award.

References available on request.

A GOOD RESUME

This resume does a good job of staying clean and concise. The hierarchy is conveyed well thanks to consistent formatting. The variation of font weight and style within a single typeface helps reinforce the importance of each body of text. The white space makes the content more approachable and easier to read.

PERSONALITY

IDEATION

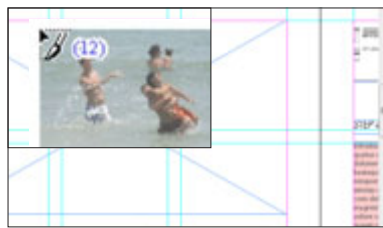
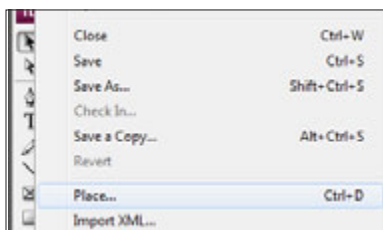
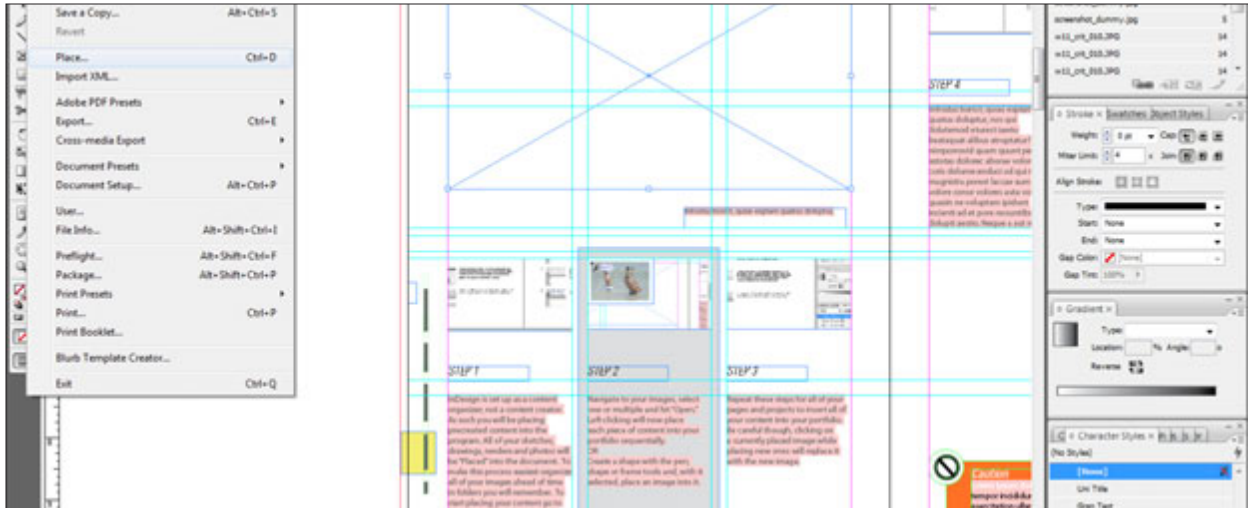
CHET

LASSLOW



PLACING CONTENT

EASILY ORGANIZE ALL YOUR PHOTOS, RENDERS AND SKETCHES.



STEP 1

InDesign is set up as a content organizer, not a content creator. As such you will be placing pre-created content into the program. All of your sketches, drawings, renders and photos will be “placed” into the document. To make this process easy, organize all of your images ahead of time into folders you will remember. To start placing your content go to File>Place... (Ctrl+D or Cmd+D)

STEP 2

Navigate to your images, select one or multiple and hit “Open.” Left clicking will now place each piece of content into your portfolio sequentially.

OR

Create a shape with the pen, shape or frame tools and, with the shape selected, place an image into it.

Tip: Ctrl/Cmd+shift while dragging will resize images proportionally.

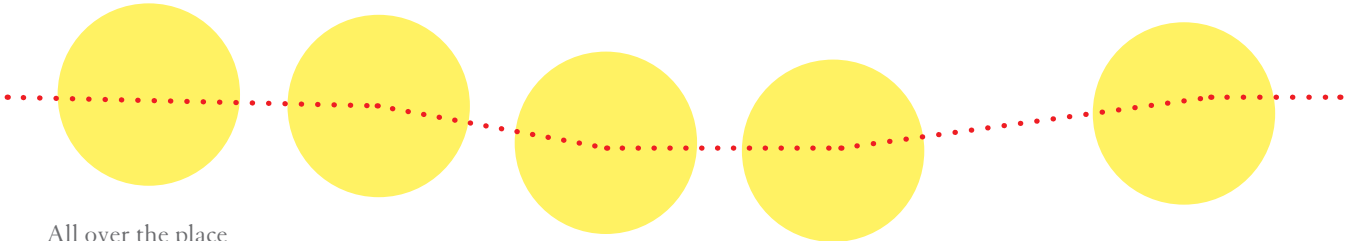
STEP 3

Repeat these steps to insert all of your content into your portfolio. Be careful though: clicking on a currently placed image while placing new ones will replace it with the new image.

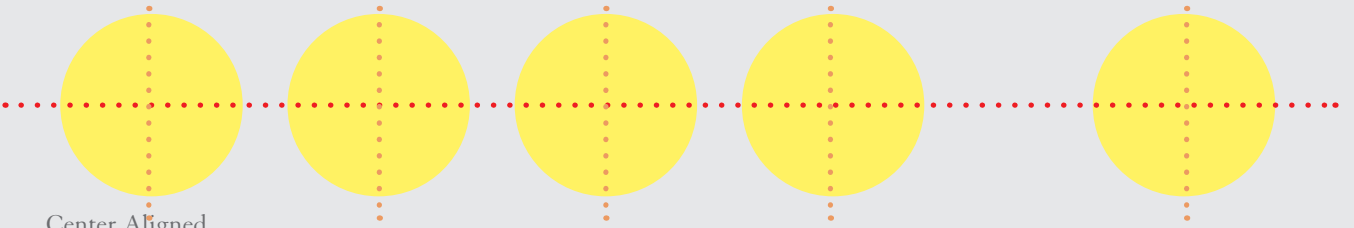


ALIGNMENT & DISTRIBUTE TOOL

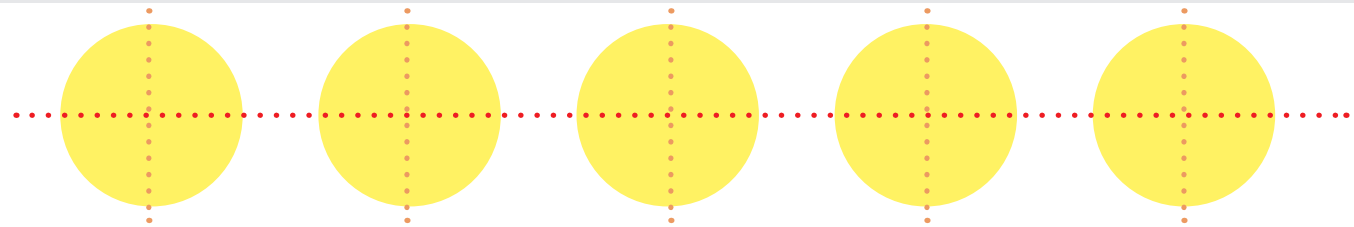
A GREAT WAY TO MAKE SURE OBJECTS/TEXT ARE PROPERLY ALIGNED



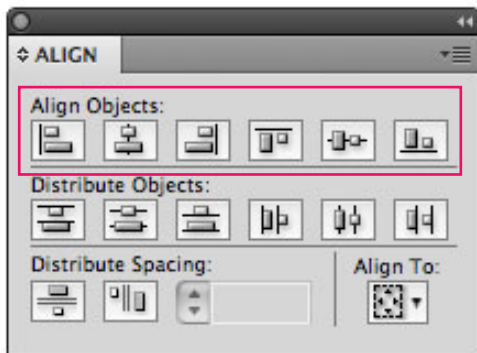
All over the place



Center Aligned

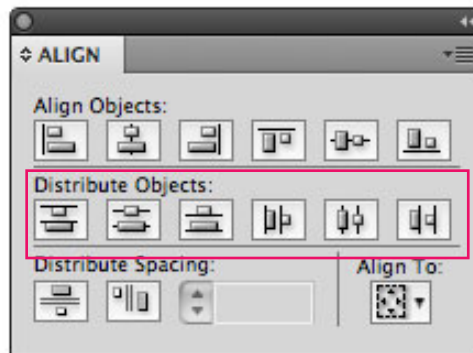


Center Aligned and Vertically Distributed



ALIGNMENT TOOL

The alignment tool is a great tool to help make sure your text boxes are perfectly lined up. Select all your desired text and choose the corresponding alignment option.



DISTRIBUTE TOOL

The distribute tool is a great way to get evenly spaced items. It works wonders when trying to show lots of concepts.

TELLING A STORY

13 - STORYTELLING

14 - RESEARCH

15 - BRAINSTORMING

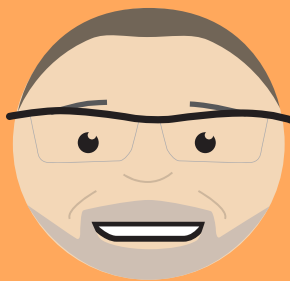
16 - IDEATION

17 - SKETCHES

18 - VALIDATION

19 - FINALIZATION

FINE. I GUESS I WON'T USE PAPYRUS IN MY PORTFOLIO. NOW AM I READY TO START PUTTING IT TOGETHER?



YES, BUT HOLD ON JUST A MINUTE. YOU NEED TO CONSIDER THE STORY YOU'RE TELLING.



TOW
ISN'T
PRACTICAL

IMPOSSIBLE

STORAGE
ISSUES

You can't use
~~the~~ walker as
a weapon

CAN'T
FIT IN
CAR

ENVIRONMENT
NOT FOR


COFFEE
HARD TO
WALKER

WALKER
ISSUES

per holder
too low
⇒ people here to
lean their body
⇒ they will fall off

All your hand
are occupied
Gives you no
support.

TOPPED
WHEELS

opening a walker in
a kitchen to open
a bottom cabinet
is impossible.

TOILET
PAPER
POSITIONING

GETTING
INTO CAR,
does it access
your body


WHERE DO
I PUT HAND
WHEN AT
THEATRE

FOUR
GRIPS
ACCESS
TO CLEAN

REAR
VIEW
MIRROR

You get a lot of
blisters in your
and when using
the walker

Cleaning your
hand is big issue
when you use the
walker.

NAME/
LABEL


STRAGGLED
TURNING

WHEEL-LETS
SNAG ON
DIFFERENT
SURFACES

Not very
heavy.

You can always
sit on it when
waiting

STORYTELLING

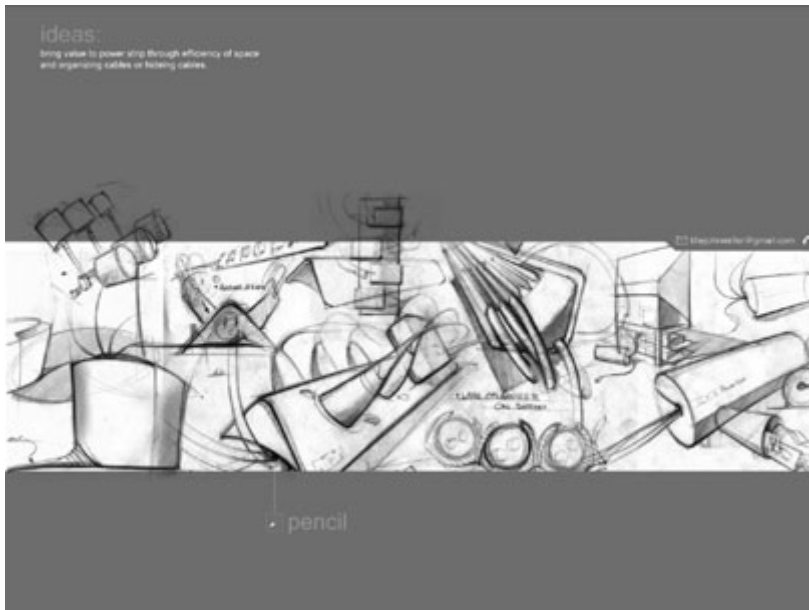
You have all your content. Now what do you do with all of it? How do you organize it? Where do you begin? Storytelling can give you the structure and the pizzazz to interest your reader.

Storytelling is a part of human nature. Throughout history and culture, it has been the way we express our ideas in an appealing, organized manner. Even the most basic of narrative structures use identifiable beginnings, middles and endings.

With industrial design portfolios, there are many ways to go about explaining your product, system, or service. One approach is to simply tell the story of your solution, being sure to explain the full scope of how it works. The most standard portfolio method uses the design process to explain how a solution was found. For this reason, we've decided to focus on dissecting the typical chronological order of the design process - problem statement, research, ideation, validation/prototyping, and finalization - to tell a great story.

HOW DO YOU TELL A STORY?

It's easy. Think of your portfolio as a conversation. The way you lay out your content helps direct that conversation. We all have different ways we like to tell stories. Similarly, we all have different stories about our products. The traditional method for storytelling is the chronological process. Conveniently, this is the same as the way we work on our studio projects. There's also the product manual method. This method is good for when you want to leave out everything except the final solution. One other way to have your portfolio talk about you is to focus or highlight on a particular set of skills. In the end, it's up to you to choose a method that best fits your work. After all, this is your story to tell, not ours.



HIGHLIGHT YOUR SKILL

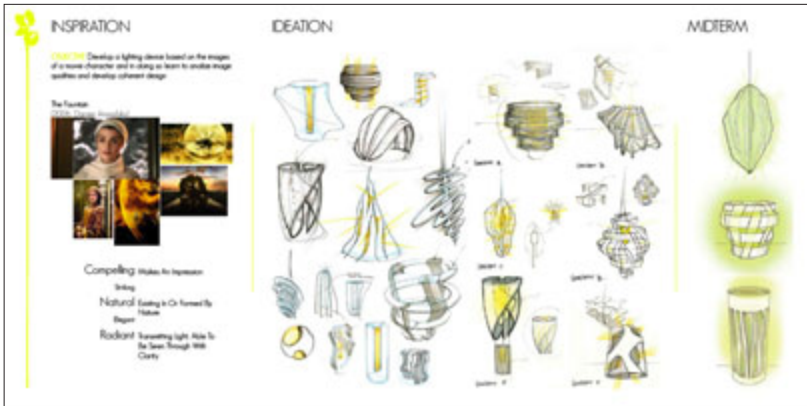
“I kick ass at sketch renders.”
Sometimes, that's all you want and all you need to say. John Miller has a portfolio that doesn't fuss with the confusing intricacies of a complex process. His story focuses on his skills, his attention to detail, and his interest in electronics.





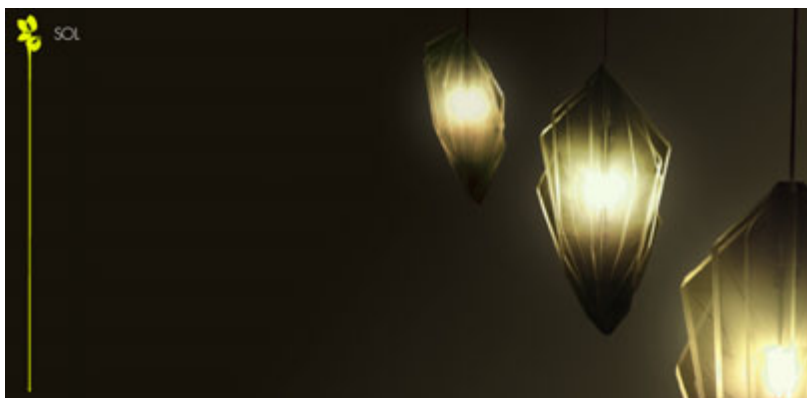
PRODUCT MANUAL

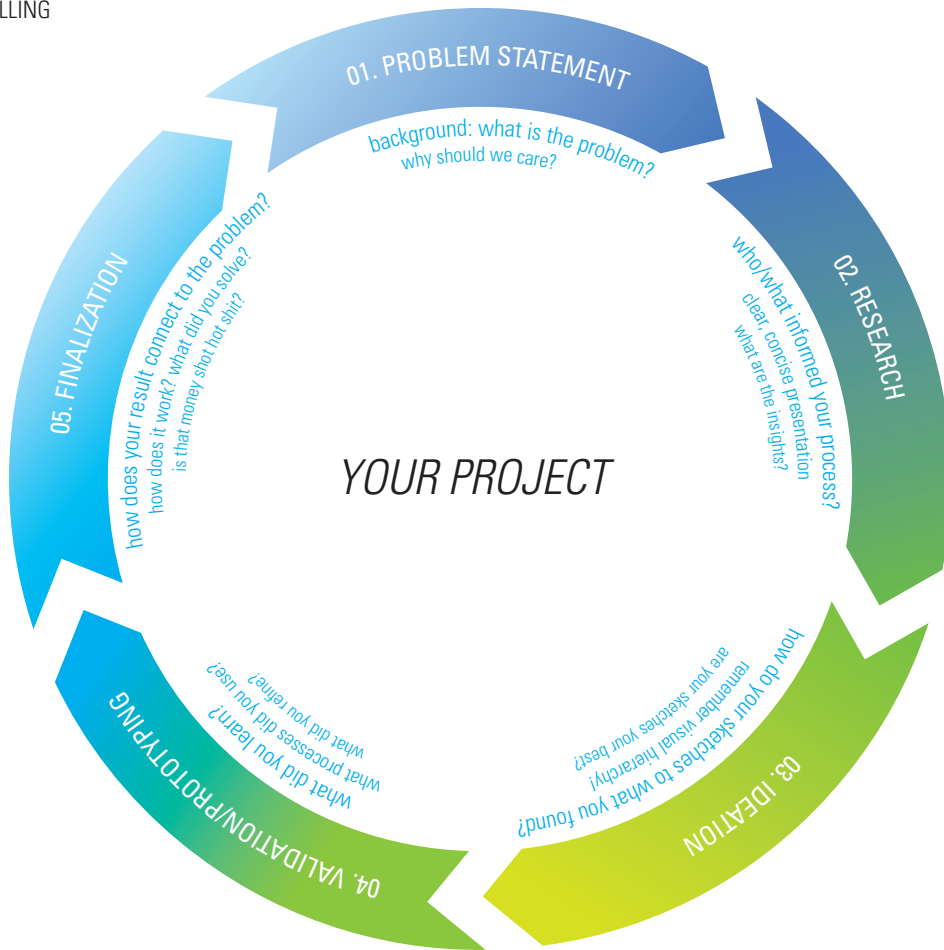
Another story you can tell will focus solely on the end solution. Sexy photo-real renderings, beautiful in-context models, or informative step-by-steps, will be sure to convince someone that your product is real. Oliver Muller's portfolio takes a page to highlight attention to feature considerations, plus it shows he can make a bad ass model.



CHRONOLOGICAL PROCESS

For simplicity's sake, this is the story we're going to tell. Most portfolios use this because a reader can clearly understand how the designer arrived at a final solution. By understanding the beginning and middle processes that connected to a final solution, the reader can connect on a deeper level. To put it simply, reading a novel page by page is a lot easier to connect to a story and a character in a novel than jumping between chapters.





THE CHRONOLOGICAL STORY...

Remember learning about the Hero's Journey way back when in English class? You can think about your project in a similar way- your project is essentially the hero. You want to make sure your reader is invested in your hero and can follow your project's storyline.

One way to make sure you are actually telling a story is to remember the connections between each part of the process. Ask yourself, "Does this page connect well with the last page?" It sounds

obvious, but sometimes it's about remembering to write down why you drew that certain sketch on your page, what part of the problem it addresses, or why you picked that particular image on your inspiration board - making it all as simple to understand as possible.

It's easy to see if your story makes sense by reading out the headlines of each page. Organization at this level of hierarchy will help you, just as if someone were to read the title of a newspaper article.

Employers get scared seeing a lot of text, but they also don't like to be left in the dark. Use your words to effectively describe your process, sell your way of thinking, and interest your reader in your project.

COVER PAGE/PROBLEM STATEMENT

It's really important to explain your problem! Einstein once said "If I had an hour to solve a problem, I'd spend 55 minutes thinking about the problem and 5 minutes thinking about solutions." A cover page or problem statement can set the tone of your project and hook your reader. Use this as an opportunity to intrigue your potential employers. It's your first chance to introduce the story of your project, show how you think, and interest them in your solution.

Whether you state a problem, introduce a character, introduce an important challenge, or even give the reader a visual sneak-peek of your design, it's up to you to decide what is most important.

Since ID portfolios are notorious for using rhetorical questions (and a lot of employers have seen the same projects), make sure your problem statement is unique. Hopefully you asked questions that are more meaningful than "what could a bowling ball box look like?" One example could be, "Using minimal cardboard, how can a box support the weight of a bowling ball?" You could also introduce your problem by using inspirational forms as criteria to inspire a bowling ball box.



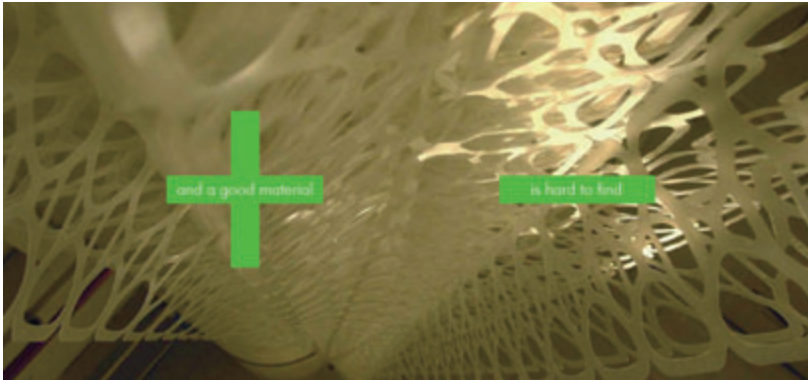
SIMPLE ILLUSTRATIONS

This is an example of using hierarchy to present a design problem. The simple illustration has the most visual presence on the page, while the pink text provides a greater understanding of the topic without becoming overwhelming. As a result, you continue through this problem statement with a clear takeaway.



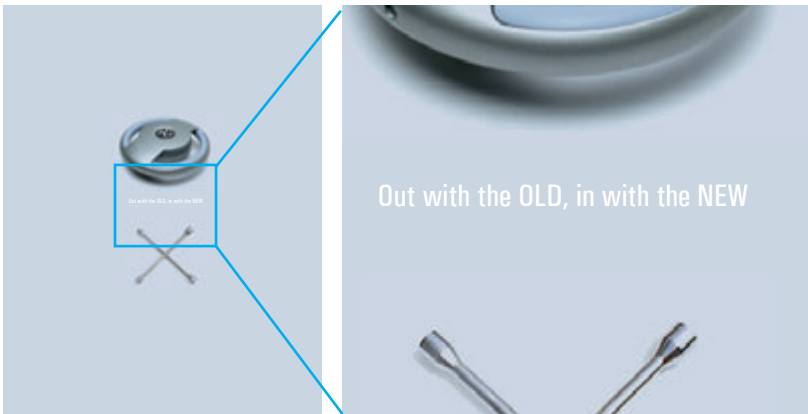
STORY WITH STEPS

Renée does a really good job of spreading the problem out and presenting it in a clear, concise way. The viewer gets a very clear picture of the problem that he is trying to solve through the use of very simple, easily recognizable icons. There is a hierarchy of text to support the visual components.



FULL BLEED PHOTO

A full bleed photo is definitely eye-catching. A simple picture can help express your story so you don't have to use as many words.



COMPELLING STATEMENT

Ed Mangum's cover pages show a beautiful picture of his final product and a clever statement that makes you want to turn to the next page. It's a unique approach that utilizes an advertising approach to hook the reader.



MINIMALISM

In Rachael Stefanussen's portfolio, she emphasizes the importance of her questions. She uses simplicity to her advantage. Her cover pages set the tone and give the problem a lot of weight.

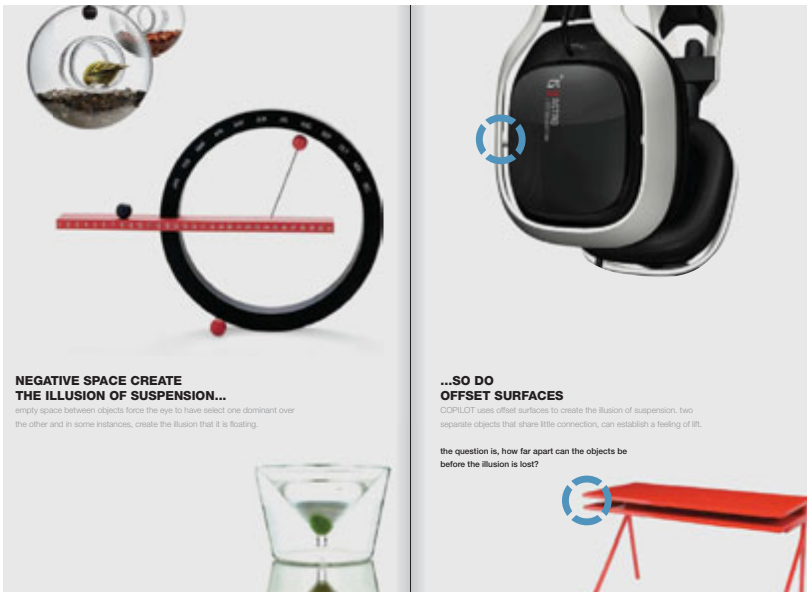


RESEARCH

Research offers a story about empathy. It is a tool to explain what drove the opportunity in your design concept. Employers value projects with empathy because it humanizes and validates your product. At this stage in the game you really want to show that you know the depth of the problem and what you are going to focus on to solve it.

Showing research in a portfolio doesn't mean that you bombard the viewer with facts. Instead, you should highlight the issues that you really honed in on to enhance your story. A lot of times using one page to explain all of the key insights can be confusing, so utilize storyboarding or lists to help break down your research.

Use research to highlight the way you think. The key findings or questions you ask can be meaningful to employers.



INSPIRATION PAGES...

Inspiration pages are just that—a way to show what inspired your product. Don't show too many images. Showing only the best examples (and pointing out what makes them successful) can be much more effective than a cluttered page of dozens of objects.



... & OPPORTUNITY SPACES

Plotting an array of competitive products on a two-axis graph can reveal market opportunities for your product. In this example, the designer compares competitors based on two factors: how high- or low-end they are (horizontal axis) and how athletic or traditional they appear (vertical axis). Plotting the items this way revealed an opportunity space in the upper-right quadrant for a new quiver that is both athletic and high-end.



Storytelling Tip

Remember who your audience is! Most industrial designers don't like to read all your words, so make sure your most important thoughts stick out quickly—whether it's actually making description words bigger, keeping it concise, or losing the wordy paragraphs!



DATA HIERARCHY

When presenting statistical data, remember to **limit information** and **use an effective hierarchy**. Too much information can bore or intimidate the viewer. This page is successful because the designer calls out one piece of data as being most important. Less important, but still relevant, data is represented in smaller graphs and given less visual space.



MOOD BOARD

You may decide to include a mood board to communicate the emotions you want your design to convey. If you do, don't let it get too cluttered. **This board is successful because each element is purposeful and has room to breathe.** In addition, the environment in which the items are placed contributes to the overall "tone," or feel, of the page.



TASK ANALYSIS

Is your product an evolution of an existing product? If so, **tell the story of the current product.** Here, the designer shows the problems involved with apprehending a suspect with a pair of traditional handcuffs. **Problem areas should be clearly identified to communicate design opportunities** (such as this page, in magenta).

Storytelling Tip

Does it flow? If you can read a clear, understandable story by stringing the headers/biggest words on your pages together, than you are in good shape!



BRAINSTORMING

Brainstorming is representative of the nebulous beginning.

This is the part of the portfolio that some designers get most excited about. Whether you love brainstorming or not, it's a vital part of the design process. There are always new ways to approach this process, but just make sure it's conveyed in an understandable & meaningful way.

Brainstorming can start anywhere: mind mapping, sketching, free association... anything that will help you get ideas down on the page. If you choose to include your brainstorming phase in your portfolio, don't worry about how dumb the ideas might appear. Rather, focus on communicating how your brainstorm led to your best ideas and how you organized the chaos.



POST-IT NOTES HELP

Post-it notes have become an icon of the brainstorm process. Whenever possible it's recommended to pair your words with a quick sketch on the post-it. Using different colored paper is a useful way of tracking different types of information.



GRAPH

Plotting on a graph gives your data dimensions. Graphs are commonly seen in portfolios and are fairly easy to comprehend.



CATEGORIES

Post-its are easy to organize and then reorganize into groups or categories as you think through your information. This type of process may be better left for your process book.



LINKS

While plotting your linked ideas may be visually stunning, it doesn't say much more than "I did this." If linking ideas is key to your design process, for the sake of brevity, isolate them and showcase them beautifully in your portfolio.



WEB

Also visually stunning, yet hard to comprehend. Focus on a way of being able to distill this activity and then feature only the most insightful points that led to your end result.



BRAIN MAP

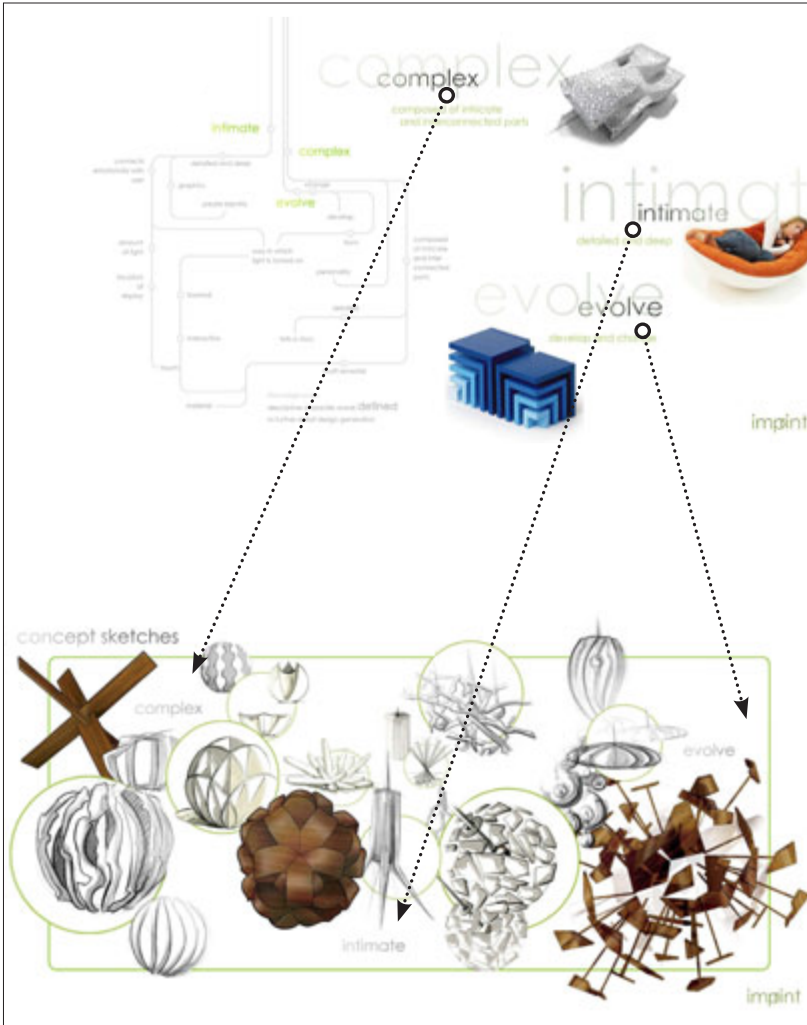
If it fits and it's legible, put it in. Make sure to highlight the key points and make them stand out. Brain maps are fun to linger on.



IDEATION

This is where you show how you think.

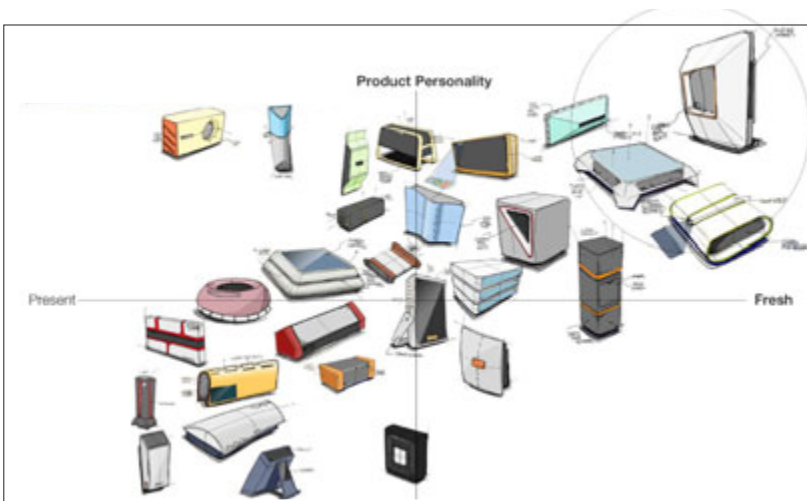
Many students make the mistake of simply covering pages with sketches. Though your sketches may be beautiful, that's usually not the point. Rather, **you want to communicate your thought process**. Always link your sketches back to your initial problem and research, showing how you worked towards solving the problems identified.



LINK YOUR RESEARCH...

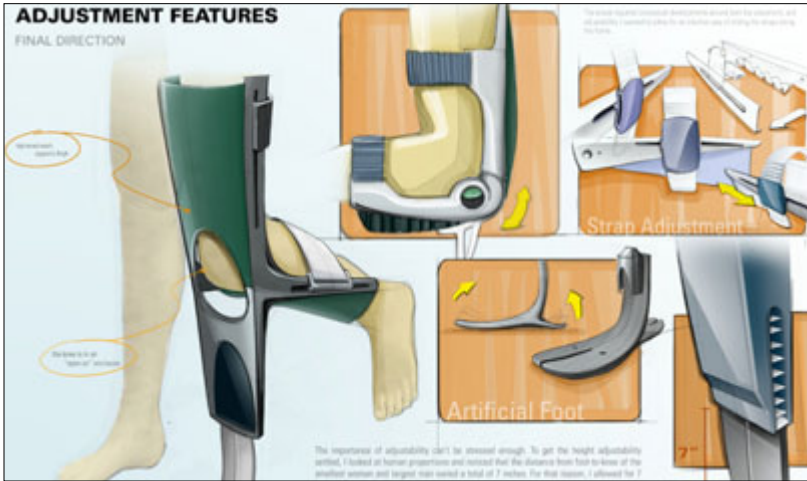
...TO YOUR SKETCHES

In these two pages, the designer links the key words from their research to the sketches that they inspired. This is another great example of hierarchy-making the key points stand out by making the text larger on the page.



THOUGHT PROCESS

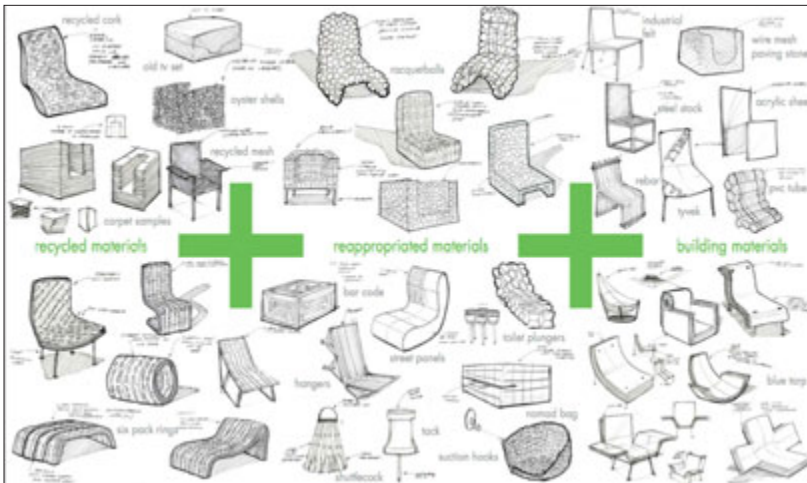
The point of a sketch page is to convey your thought process. Placing your ideas on a spectrum, or (in this case) a two-axis chart, can show what emotions you were attempting to convey and how your sketches worked towards those goals-ideally, "moving towards the upper right."



CONTEXT!

Always show your concepts in context - whether that context is a hand, a leg, or anything else that can help communicate scale and method of use.

This page also does a good job of “bucketing” features into boxes, making it clear which sketches relate to which.



KEY DESIGN POINTS

Here, the designer calls out three key points-- “recycled materials”, “re-appropriated materials” and “building materials.”

Loosely grouping sketches into these three main categories helps communicate the designer’s intent.



ORTHOGRAPHIC SKETCHES

Your sketches don’t have to be 3-D perspective drawings to communicate your ideas well.

Here, the designer cleaned up his 2-D orthographic drawings and colored underneath them in Photoshop to communicate color and material choice.

Varying the size of objects also helps draw the viewer’s eye to more important ideas.



SKETCHES

Well here it is, the thing most synonymous with the word designer: sketches. You want them to look hot right?

All that time and commitment; they should look like diamonds spilling from your page. This is all about capturing attention and tantalizing the visual cortex. Spending time organizing your sketches and making them *pop* will also help you understand how to become a better sketcher.



THE SEXY SKETCH PAGE

Making a good sketch page can be a challenge, but there are still a few guidelines that can help make your composition more interesting.

Don't be afraid to greatly vary the sizes of sketches, making your most important ideas the largest. Letting a few sketches hang off of the side of the page is another great way to make your composition more dynamic.

Overlapping sketches, like those shown in the center, can help lead the viewer's eye around the page.

Adding shading and placing shadows underneath your objects can also help make your sketches pop.

Be careful not to over-do it, however. Sometimes, all it takes is shading one or two sketches to make a clear, understandable page.

Caution



Use this kind of page sparingly, if at all. Making a good ideation page means having more than hot sketches. Employers really want to see how you think, and doing that effectively means arranging your ideas in a way that communicates a hierarchy of importance. Using call outs is another way to let the viewer know what you were thinking without you there to talk about it.



THE NOT-SO-SEXY SKETCH PAGE

This page illustrates common mistakes some beginners make on their early sketch pages.

There is not a single sketch here that breaks the edge of the page, making the composition appear very static.

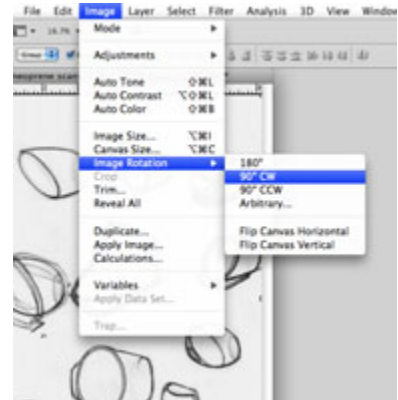
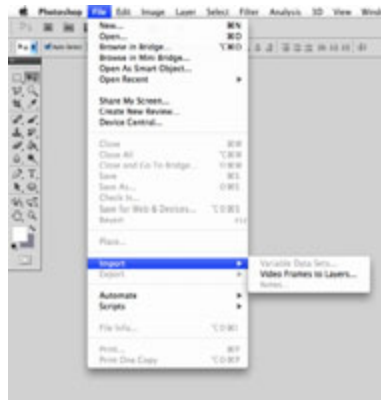
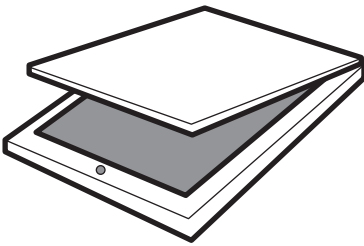
In addition, the lack of scale variation reduces overall visual interest and increases confusion, as the viewer has little indication of which sketches should be viewed first.



BEFORE ADJUSTMENTS

SCANNING SKETCHES

CLEANING UP SKETCHES IN ADOBE PHOTOSHOP



STEP 1

- Use a good scanner! Always use a scanner to transfer your sketches from paper to your computer. Never use a digital camera (this will distort the image and perspective).

STEP 2

- Open Photoshop and go to File>Import to find your scanner.
- Import your scan. If your sketch is black and white, import in grayscale.
- Make sure you use a high enough resolution (150 DPI is a good standard because it will look nice in print and on screen, but not take up too much space on your computer).

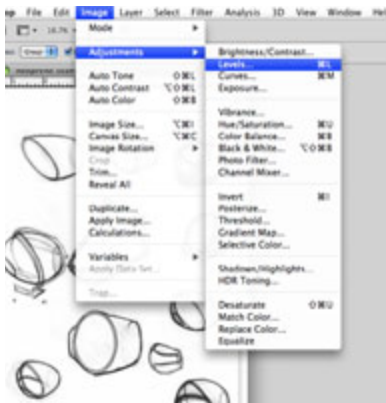
STEP 3

- Rotate the page to the proper angle, then crop the page to include only the image you want.



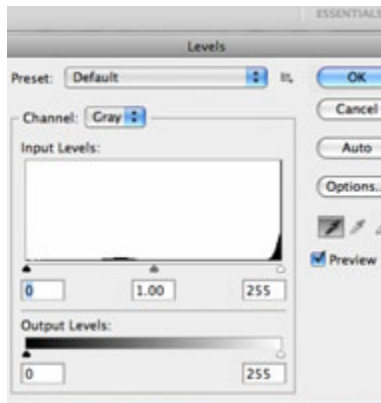
Quick Tip

Back-sketching: remember you can always re-sketch or “back-sketch” your drawings to make your portfolio better. One way of doing that is using your original scan as an underlay and sketching over it in Photoshop or Sketchbook-pro.



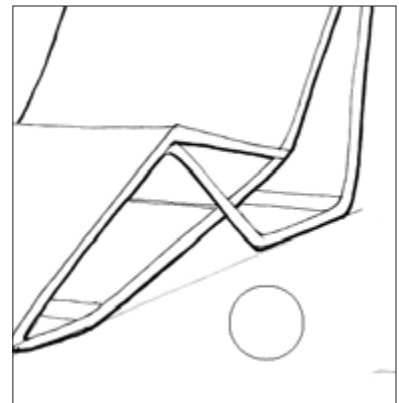
STEP 4

- Open Levels (Image > Adjustments > Levels).
- Here is where you can change the value of your drawing to make the whites white and the blacks black.



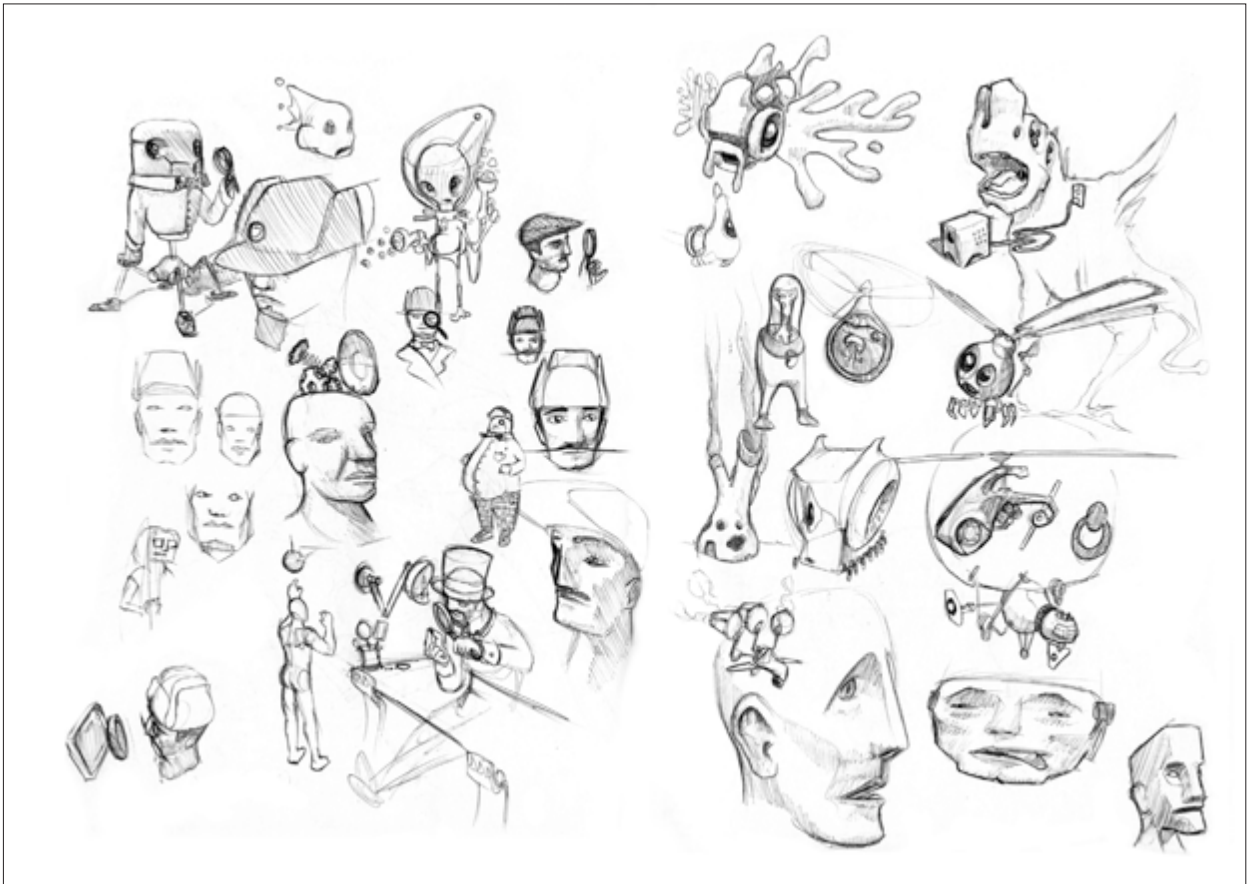
STEP 5

- Click on the left eyedropper in the line of three on the right. Use this eyedropper to indicate where on your image should be true black.
- Click on the left eyedropper and hold Alt while you click on the spot on the drawing that should be black.
- Next, use the right eyedropper to pick true white. Hold alt and pick an area on your drawing that should be pure white.



STEP 6

- Erase the extra lines and smudges on the drawing and you are good to go! Now shade, color or place the sketch in your portfolio.



AFTER ADJUSTMENTS



THE HISTORY OF...
[Article text]



USING INDESIGN

[Article text]

Serif Sans-Serif

THE TITLE
[Article text]

DIVIDE
[Article text]

[Article text]

[Article text]

USE A GRID

[Article text]

[Article text]

[Article text]

[Article text]

[Article text]

[Article text]

[Article text]



[Article text]



VALIDATION

“If at first you don’t succeed try, try again” is the mantra for the validation phase and is a very important part of storytelling. This is the meat and potatoes of design process, where employers get to see which of your concepts worked...and which concepts didn’t.

Nobody’s design is perfect on the first shot, so don’t be afraid to show your mistakes. Mistakes lead to further developments and help you discover how you can improve your designs. Be sure to document EVERYTHING, including those really quick pink foam models. You aren’t going to be keeping those under your bed forever and even if you do, they’re sure to get crushed. Show off your crappy, cobbled-together sketch models. They are rich with information and are as valuable (if not more) to the design process as having really hot sketches.

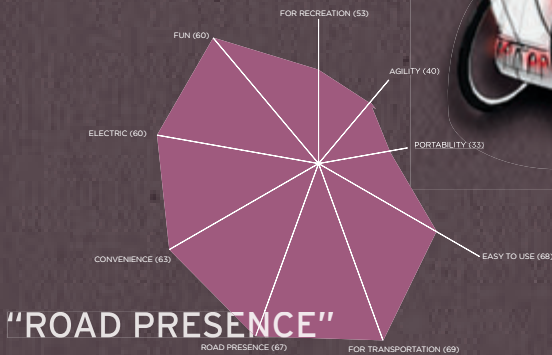
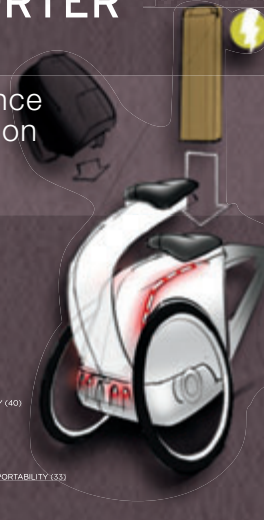
CONCEPT EXPLANATION

This is a good example of illustrating the point of a concept and the reactions of those who were asked to give their input. By displaying feedback given by the typical user, the design becomes more valid, giving your concept more weight as a desirable solution.



THE "TRANSPORTER"

- increase road presence
- increase transportation identity
- focus on storage



"ROAD PRESENCE"

"TRANSPORTATION"



Storytelling Tip

Remember the clearer you can make your information the better! When you finish a page, ask your grandma what she thinks it is about. Does she get it?



SKETCH MODEL

Photos of in-use sketch models illustrate that you have an understanding of how a product will be used in its intended environment. They will further communicate the design of the product by showing scale.



WORKS IN PROGRESS

Show, don't tell. An intriguing photo of a project in the works will let your viewer know the project is in progress and is on its way to further refinement.



CHANGE IN DIRECTION

Pages like this are useful if you discover that your concepts really miss the mark. Instead of disregarding all of the hard work that you did up to this point, this page marks a change in direction and demonstrates your ability to realize your faults, regroup, and take a different approach.

Pages like this also act as a good segue. Instead of throwing your viewers a curve ball, you are letting them know you went back to the drawing board.

Sketch model

sk-e-ch mod'l (n): an object used to arrive at a final solution by taking initial concepts and putting them into 3-D form using various salvaged materials to make Frankenstein of a product



FESTOOL
CLEANTEC

FINALIZATION

Finally! You've introduced your audience to your design problem, taken them through the research, shown them how that research evolved into ideas that you validated and tested - now it's time to present the final concept.

In its simplest form, the finalization phase in your portfolio is the chance to show off your final design. A “money shot”—usually kept on its own page—conveys the emotional pull of your design. Follow it with a few pages explaining your product's functionality and show how it integrates with the lives of potential users.

You can show a few more things depending on what skills you want to communicate. Showing how you modeled, sanded, and painted the final prototype would be vital if you hope to find a co-op in a model shop doing similar work, for example.

But don't take our word for it! Use your designer's intuition to help yourself decide what parts of the process to show and what parts aren't so important. Be creative and have fun with it.



EXTRA GRIP

Blade guards double as additional grips.

THE MONEY SHOT

The simplest part of your finalization page(s) will be the glamour shot, or “money shot.” Don’t be afraid to let it take up a good part of the page, or even go over the edge of the paper.

This page is especially effective because the designer included hands to show scale and method of use.

EASILY CHANGE GRIPS

Clamp collars allow grip to be easily changed when worn



GAS-THRU HANDLE

Pneumatic hoses pass through handle in order to make tool more mobile.

EXPLODED VIEWS

Exploded views are cool. Not every project needs one, however.

If your exploded view is concise and shows you’ve been thinking about how it all fits together, include it.

In this example, the designer shows how the handle of his “jaws of life” (shown above) work. By showing only one small element of the product, visual clutter is erased and the overall message of functionality is enhanced.



LINKING YOUR INSPIRATION... ...TO YOUR FINAL PRODUCT

These two great pages show what objects and forms inspired the final concept.

Linking the final concepts directly back to those forms - and speaking about how they contributed to the design - can make a lot of sense out of what is usually a mystery.



PRIORITIZE FEATURES

When communicating your product's features, always remember to prioritize (hierarchy!).

Here, the designer wanted to communicate the folding element of the design first and foremost, while he subordinated the other features by making them smaller.



THE STEP-BY-STEP

Products are meant to be used—show it!

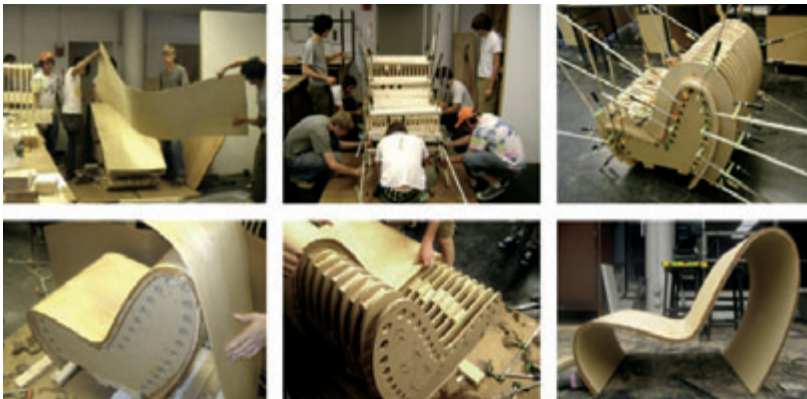
Showing a simple step-by-step (remember, less is more) can be a great way to show off your clever interaction ideas.



SKETCH RENDERS

if you're presenting a smaller project, don't feel like your finalization pages have to show a 3-D model.

If you're adept at sketching and Photoshop rendering, this is a great place to show off those skills.



PHYSICAL PROTOTYPING

Did your project involve making a final physical prototype? This is the place to show your model-making process, if you wish.

Be careful not to show too much. This page is successful because the photos are clear, the subjects fill the frames (crop!), and each photo shows a different skill.



Quick Tip

Thumbnail! One of the easiest ways to work through your portfolio's layout is to sketch out thumbnails. No computer or Wacom necessary, just grab a pen and start drawing out some miniature boxes to use as your pages. You can quickly throw around layout concepts this way.

THAT'S A WRAP

Developing a portfolio is like telling a story. It may be a struggle for you to decide what to include, so ask yourself “What am I trying to say about my process?” or “How does this contribute to my story?”

Everyone has their own way of thinking about things. The way you tell your story indicates whether or not you are a good fit for a company. The purpose of creating your portfolio is to get yourself a job that caters to your strengths, not to overwhelm you with the amount of work you need to improve.

Celebrate your own design sense and what you bring to the table. Tell your story and make sure it has future employers sitting on the edge of their seats, wondering what comes next.

ASKING FOR ADVICE

20 - PROFESSIONALS

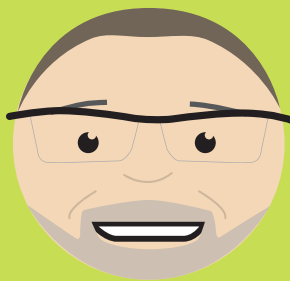
21 - MING HSIEH

22 - KRISTEN BECK

23 - DAN CLIFTON

24 - JINCE KURUVILLA

*I DON'T WANT TO ASK THIS GUY FOR HELP
BUT I KNOW HE'S DONE A COUPLE OF THESE
BEFORE AND WORKED AT SWEET JOBS*



*GROW SOME BALLS, DON'T BE AFRAID OF
ASKING FOR ADVICE.*



ASKING FOR ADVICE

Sometimes the best ideas come from people that aren't you. So don't be scared, go out there and learn from the upperclassmen, your professors, ask your previous coworkers, even ask your classmates. Obviously, they have opinions!

Organizing a personal meeting to evaluate your portfolio can be useful. Sit down or ask them to evaluate each page, to understand if you are conveying a successful message, and what you could do better. Don't forget to write what they say down, their knowledge is valuable and could help you get that next job you want. This could take some time, so maybe offer to get a coffee with them!

If you can start a conversation with them, you can understand what isn't working in your portfolio, learn from their previous mistakes, and hear about their work experience. Just remember, they were once in your shoes and probably can relate at some point to crying at 4 in the morning.



wisdom from above with: **PROFESSIONALS**

WHAT THEY WISH THEY HAD KNOWN

We contacted many industrial design professionals (many of whom hire interns) and asked them what they wish they had known when they were putting together their first portfolios. Here are some of their responses:

“Leave space for things to breathe. The more graphics, the more it looks as though someone is trying to cover up a weak skill.”

“Use appropriate screen proportions for layouts. Unless you are being hired for full-time, no one reads print-outs.”

“The importance of ideas over the ability to draw.”

“Document EVERYTHING. Do honest self-editing. If you think something can be better, fix it...Storyboard your project before you start, make sure you know what the story is and how to tell it. What’s the problem? Who are the “characters”? How can you build the plot so that your viewer stays interested and wants to see more?”

“Show variety in your work.”

“I wish I would have toned down my graphics. I applied a template that was essentially a shape framing each project. I’ve learned to appreciate subtle details and white space a lot more.”

“Quality not quantity. The ability to tell a story of a product development process from start to finish, highlighting difficulties and key decisions along the way.”

“Tell stories through visual: no one likes reading.”

“When I started I didn’t realize how small a time window you have to gain a reader’s interest. Sometimes you get less than a minute for your portfolio.”

“Different companies like different portfolios: Astro likes consumer electronics and fancy sketches/renderings, Smart likes good process and story, as well as tons of iterative prototyping, and experimental projects.”

“While the graphic design should not be a crutch to hide bad content, your content won’t be communicated well if you

haven’t laid your portfolio out in a pleasing way.”

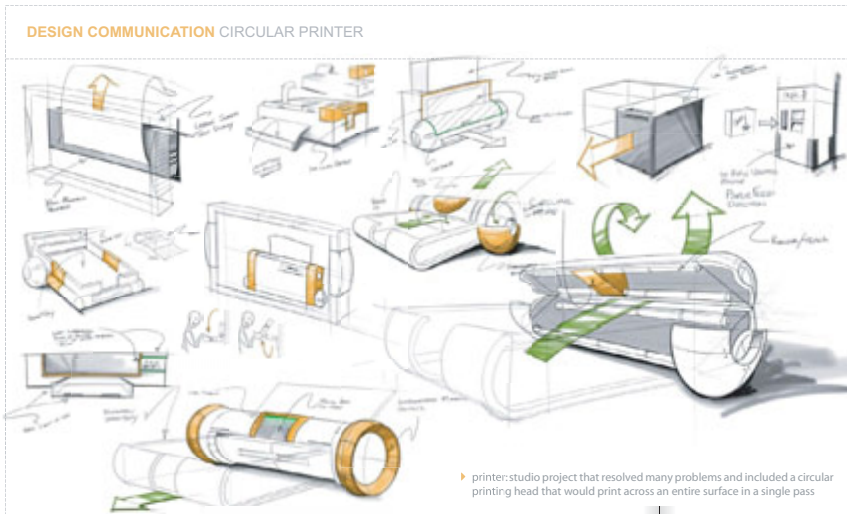
“Don’t feel like you have to tell a complete story on every project. The portfolio itself should have an over arching story, and the end of that story should be why I should care about you, why I should hire you amongst all the other graduates. Differentiate yourself. Build a world through the portfolio in which the only outcome is you working here.”

“Create a visual style guide for yourself as a brand (portfolio, CV, websites, etc.) sharing similar fonts, graphic elements, etc. - Learn from others, see as many portfolios as you can.”

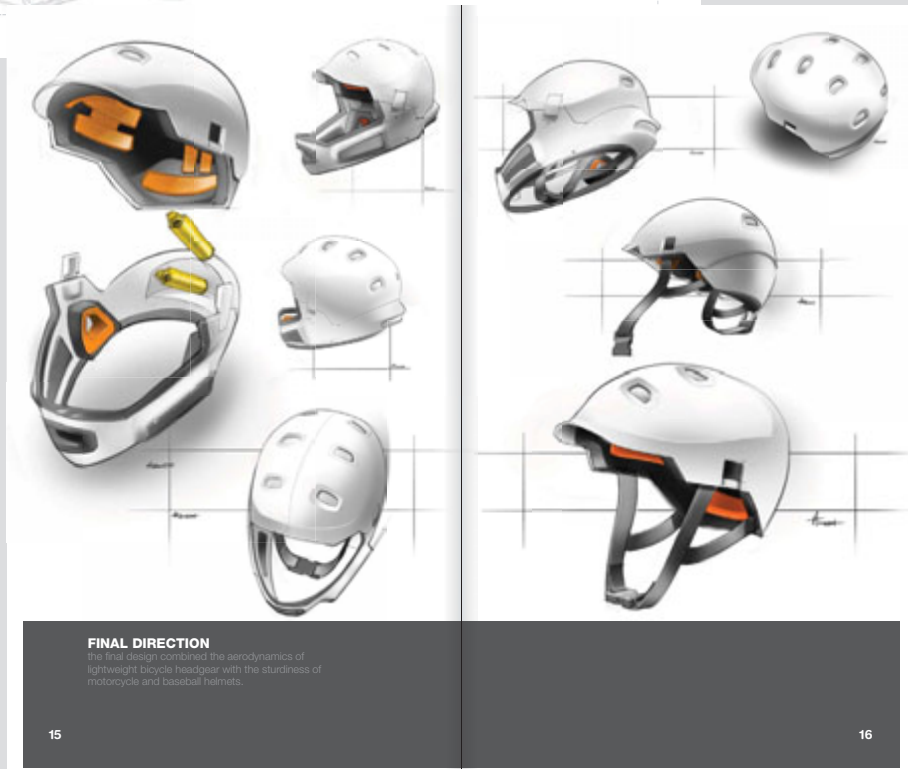
“Make sure you have a closing page to re-sell yourself. They just looked at all your hard work. Make sure the last visual they see is your name. It could summarize your skills with bullet points and re-state your name and contact info.”

*These are the results of an anonymous survey.

"After much trial and error, I was able to focus on what I wanted my work to say and not let my poor layout interfere with my message."



Defining your style takes time. These are examples from Ming's sophomore, pre-junior, senior portfolios

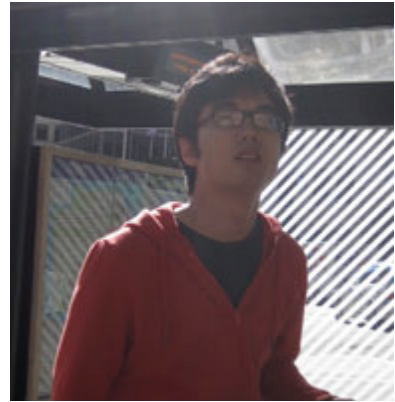


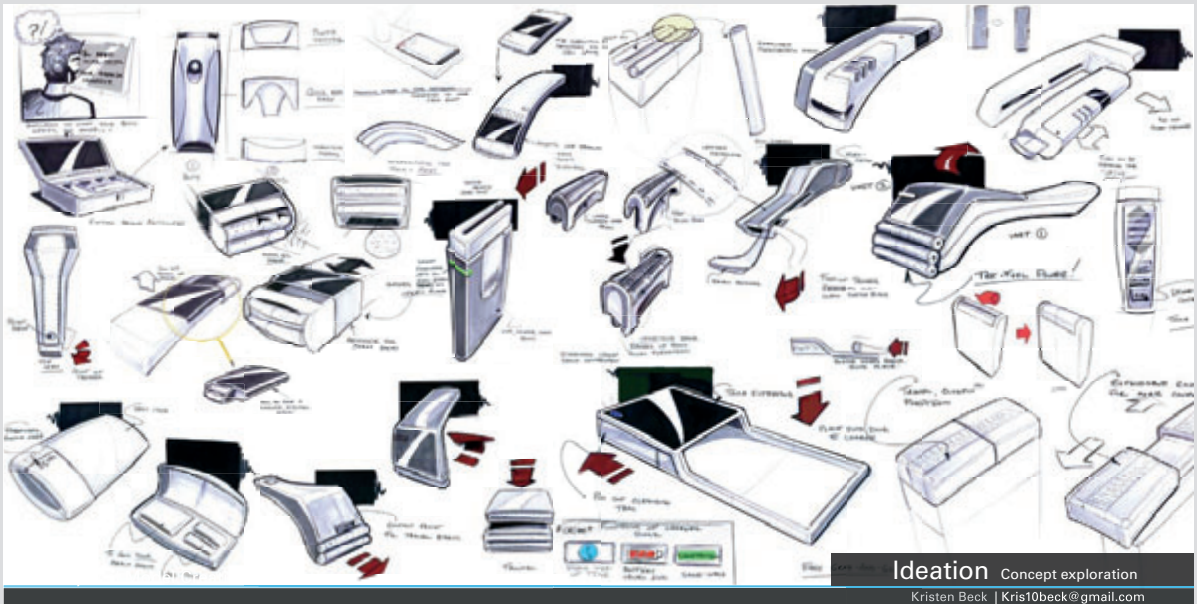
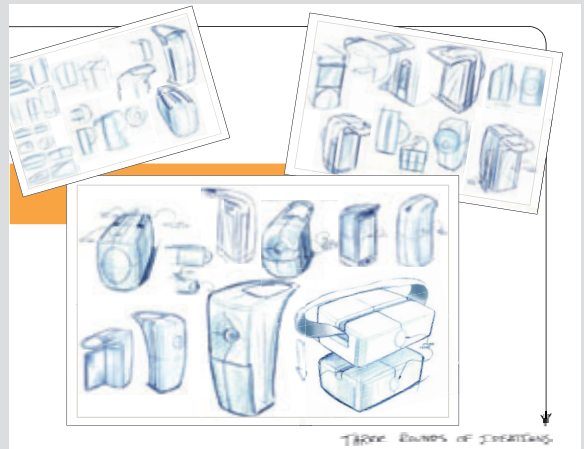
i'm not a graphic designer
MING HSIEH
 UCID'09 @ ASTRO

I'm not a graphic designer and will never consider myself one. However, I feel that one of the major flaws of ID students is our lack of graphic design knowledge. We don't understand basic graphic fundamentals that our peers in graphic and digital design would learn in their first years of college. ID students (and our portfolios in particular) suffer greatly because of this...sadly ironic as our profession is centered on the visual. Our efforts during the academic quarter are instead focused on the sweet render, sketch page, and other assets that will satisfy our project criteria.

If designers are typically visual learners, why do many later struggle (sometimes without knowing) with portfolios? This can be explained

in part by a general lack of time – the two weeks we are given to produce portfolios at school is possible, but it takes much longer to create something clean and professional. Time constraints aside, most portfolios suffer from some combination of poor planning and use of an inconsistent grid that result in ambiguous storytelling, a frustrated viewer, and no job. The good news is, the fix is relatively simple and doesn't require months of preparation. When developing my portfolio, planning the story of each project FIRST, along with a consistent use of a grid, was my method of choice. After much trial and error, I was able to focus on what I wanted my work to say and not let poor layout or graphic assets interfere with my message.





top to bottom: Kristen's pre-junior, senior portfolio

things i wish i knew:
KRISTEN BECK
 UCID'10 @ BOULD DESIGN

Things I wish I knew about making my portfolio:

It has been kind of surreal sitting on the other side of the fence, looking at hundreds of portfolios. I always said I would be the kind of person who would read through every project. Now, I see what everyone was saying about how portfolio viewers spend about a second and a half on each page. Looking at portfolios is only a tiny fraction of an industrial designer's job. Just like that. Bam. Bam. Bam. All those hours and hours of work assembling your portfolio won't count for anything if it does not draw people in immediately and then reveal deeper detail upon a second glance. Here are 10 things that I learned.

1. Find inspiration for your portfolio. I keep a binder with really interesting magazine layouts, photography, color usage and typography. It helps me to see how they created 1-2-3 hierarchy and font size. I even keep portfolios when people let me so I can see different vantage points. Your inspiration can be digital, too.
2. Ask someone better than you. I guarantee they will be flattered to show you some new tricks. Ask them where they learned from. Don't be afraid to ask someone else for help.
3. Don't avoid redoing things.

If you are not 10000000% proud of your project/sketch/render/whatever.....redo it. No excuses.

4. Don't clutter. I'm serious. Don't do it. It takes more control and understanding of relationships to create a page using just one or two images rather than haphazardly throwing on stuff.

"All those hours and hours of work assembling your portfolio won't count for anything if it does not draw people immediately and then reveal deeper detail upon a second glance."

5. Your portfolio is a story. I know you have heard this before, but your project is a story. Who is the protagonist? What is the problem? The solution? Talk your project out verbally and set it up so it is understood this way.
6. Back it up. Back it up again. Now, back it up again, save it to a disc and send it to family in a completely separate location. Nothing could be more tragic than a hard drive



drop, a theft or a spilled glass of liquid on your years of work.

7. Passion. Some of the coolest portfolios I have seen came from kids from unheard-of design programs that didn't offer 'cool' sponsored projects. They sought out their passions and then executed personal projects (soft goods, sketching classes, etc.) Show initiative to go above and beyond the call of duty.
8. It's a lot easier when you have a plan. Thumbnail out even the roughest of sketches and you will have a better idea of your plan of attack. Putting in that hour of planning will save you many hours down the road.
9. Make friends with a graphic designer. Unless you are a trained in graphic design, make friends with someone who has mad graphic skills and ask them to critique your portfolio.
10. The grid is your friend. It might be painful, but make a template and stick to it using guides and grids. Like in rule #8, the more you plan out, the less of a pain it is later to add projects.



dezeen.com



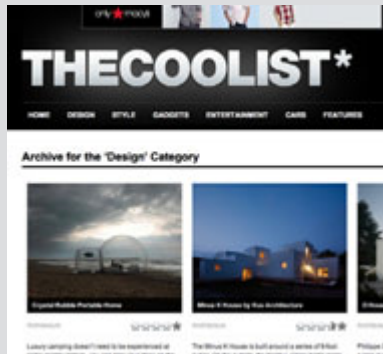
uncrate.com



archdaily.com



engadget.com



thecoolist.com



coroflot.com



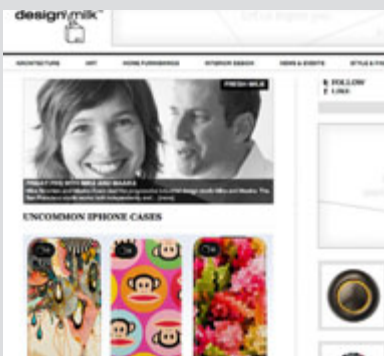
id-mag.com



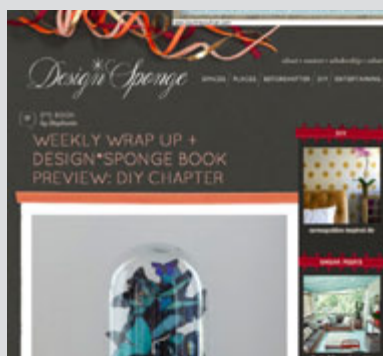
core77.com



notcot.org



designmilk.com



designsponge.com



contemporist.com

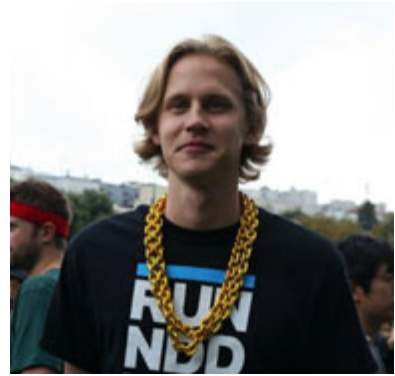
finding inspiration
DAN CLIFTON

UCID'09 @ NEW DEAL DESIGN

The main disadvantage of being a young designer is lack of experience. You lack not only technical design skills but also an understanding of and exposure to good design. Most sophomores don't really get design yet. The more you are exposed to good design, the sooner things will click.

Students should have knowledge of modern designers and their work. You may know the classics like Eames and Frank Lloyd Wright, but do you know who is at the forefront of design today? I know this is not the easiest or fastest thing for students to learn - especially when you are still learning the basics of design - but this exposure can help jump start the development of your design sensibilities.

Students should be reading blogs and magazines like crazy. Soak up as much knowledge as possible. Not only do these sources provide a picture of design today, but they're also a huge source of inspiration.



What is Yerba Mate?

- ...is a warm infusion made with the leaves of the Mate plant
- ...Extremely popular in Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay
- ...Coffee-free alternative to Coffee
- ...facilitates focus, alertness, and wakefulness






Product Analysis

- ...Amount of accessories is overwhelming
- ...Case adds a huge cost to final price
- ...Power button is in an awkward position
- ...Slippery plastic
- ...Precision grip is uncomfortable
- ...Clippers feel clunky
- ...Clipping the clippers creates a nuisance

Project Goals

- ...Clippers should be cordless
- ...Must use low-cost production methods
- ...Need to accommodate both precision and power grips
- ...Should have friction-friendly material
- ...Change blade
- ...Better power button placement





YOU WON'T LEARN THIS SITTING AT A DESK.

Ditching class to spend a day working at a Produce Stand never felt so good.


2.5
Hours of Video Shot


342
Pictures Taken


24°F
Working Temperature


10
Hours Spent Working

To truly understand the life of a Findlay Market vendor, I spent a day immersing myself in the daily rituals of the humble produce salesman. Being present during the entire experience of setting-up, taking-down, and maintaining the stand helped me develop empathy towards a collaborative solution. Jeff, pictured above, revealed fascinating insights into the delimiters and pain-points of the produce vending experience.



Caveman Week Conclusion:

TECHNOLOGY IS PULLING US APART

STIMULI HAS TAKEN OVER "ME" TIME.

Over the course of a week, we noticed that we had a lot more "downtime" than in the past. Solitude provided us with a chance to reflect - something our addiction to technology takes away from us.

WE'RE LONELY & AWKWARD W/O OUR GIZMOS.

We often use tech as a safety net. It provides us with a comfort zone in situations that "challenge" us. Without tech, we found ourselves in random interactions with all walks of life, which ended up making us a few more friends.

WHAT HAPPENED TO OUR ABILITY TO FOCUS?

Towards the end of our "week off," we noticed something strange; we could focus better. Who'd of thought that one could concentrate better when they're not constantly being bombarded by texts, music, and RSS feeds. Was multitasking really that efficient?

COMMITMENT IS AN ANTIQUATED CONCEPT.

Maps anywhere, music anywhere. Whatever you want, you can have. With digital tech, you can make any boring interaction interesting, but without, what are we left with? We are left to commit to our plans, which made us think more deeply about making them in the first place.

PEOPLE DEMAND INSTANT ACCESS TO YOU.

By the end of our "week off," we had nearly every close relative & friend pissed off at us. But why? Because THEY demanded to connect to us. Where do we draw the line between personal space and constant availability?

top to bottom: Jince's pre-junior, senior portfolio

storytelling from above with:
JINCE KURUVILLA
 UCID '11



Storytelling is one of the most crucial parts of your portfolio. A good story (coupled with great content) can woo even the toughest HR reps. The difficulty in storytelling, however, is weaving the right story through your individual projects and your portfolio as a whole.

Storytelling comprises of many angles, but two of the more important ones are Branding and Voice. Branding is basically your visual aesthetic. This entails the nitty gritty of your portfolio including the type, colors, grid, etc. You need to ensure that you maintain a consistent theme throughout your portfolio. Voice is the manner in which you tell your story. If you take a look at upperclassmen portfolios, you'll see different tones people take - some playful, some dark, some reserved, others bold and brash. As a sophomore, try to remember that simple and direct usually works best at this level, but don't be afraid to experiment - always get a second opinion, though, and for the love of god stay the hell away from paint splatters.

You probably don't have many projects. The few you have probably suck. It's okay, we've all been there before. In a situation like this, it's crucial that you figure out which

specific story you would like to tell. Why should someone waste 35 seconds of their life flipping through your portfolio? (Believe me, 35 sec is a luxury!) What's the story you're trying to tell? Are you trying to show employers your badass sketching skills? Your attention to detail when CAD modelling? Both?

"As a sophomore, try to remember that simple and direct usually works best at this level, but don't be afraid to experiment - always get a second opinion, though, and for the love of god stay the hell away from paint splatters."

Organize your portfolio projects to help tell that story. Experiment with the order of your projects, and portfolio elements. Sometimes, having your resume and bio at the beginning is the wisest decision: it sets precedent to who you are and gives a prelude to your portfolio.

Sometimes keeping those assets in the back makes more sense: a lot of employers just want to see the meat of your portfolio before they hear about how you were on the Chess team in high school. Either way, the organization of projects and elements sets the pace and tone of your portfolio.

The key to a good story is the ability of others to understand your original narrative. Don't design your portfolio in a vacuum. Sketch things out, iterate, and get feedback from EVERYBODY. Make sure your story is translatable to both your older professors and your dorky classmates.

JOBS THAT WE'VE HAD!

ETHICON
ROCK-TENN

P+G

HASBRO
WRIGLEY
ELEVEN
TEAGUE

CONTINNUUM
tool.

WHIRLPOOL
astro

RADIO FLYER
Little Tikes

JOBS WE'VE BEEN DENIED.

ELEVEN

tool.

astro

ETHICON

P+G

Little Tikes

HASBRO

WHIRLPOOL

TEAGUE

RADIO FLYER

CONTINUUM

ROCK-TENN

WRIGLEY

*Don't get discouraged.
We've been rejected
plenty of times. It
doesn't reflect poorly
on you-just keep
trying. It happens to
the best of us!*

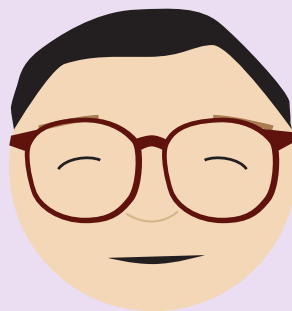
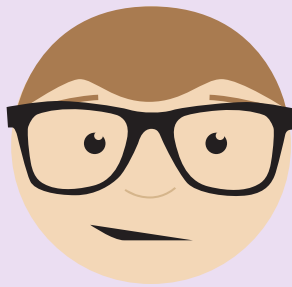
EXPORTING A PORTFOLIO

25 - INDESIGN PDF

26 - SIZE REDUCTION

27 - PRINTING TIPS

*WHERE'S THAT BUTTON THAT LETS ME EXPORT
MY PORTFOLIO TO A PDF?*

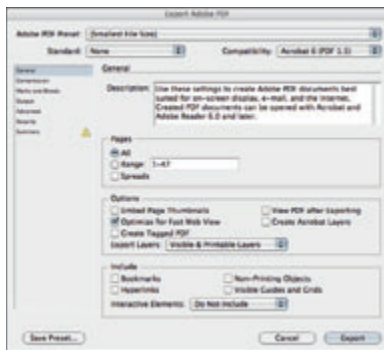


I THINK THEY SELL THAT AT STAPLES.



INDESIGN PDF

EXPORTING A PDF FOR WEB USE.



STEP 1

- Choose File > Export.
- For Save As Type (Windows) or Format (Mac OS), choose Adobe PDF (Print), and then click Save.
- Choose [Smallest File Size] from the Adobe PDF Preset menu.



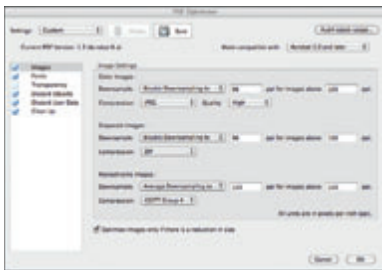
STEP 2

- In the Compression area, downsample images to 96 pixels per inch, select automatic compression, and select High-image quality for color and grayscale images.
- Click Export



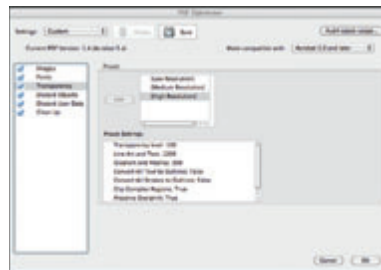
SIZE REDUCTION

FURTHER SIZE REDUCTION IN ADOBE ACROBAT PRO



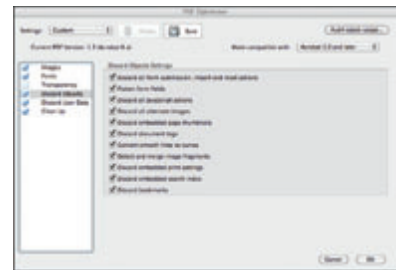
STEP 1

- Open file in Adobe Acrobat Pro and choose Advanced > PDF Optimizer.



STEP 2

- Select High Resolution in the Flatten Transparency menu. This option sometimes makes your portfolio larger. Try it first without this option.



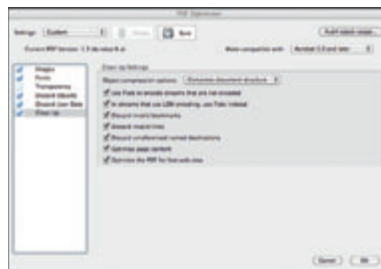
STEP 3

- Select Everything in the Discard Object Menu



STEP 4

- Select Everything in the Discard User Data



STEP 5

- Select Everything in the Clean Up Menu
- Click Export



PRINTING TIPS

HOW TO PRINT CORRECTLY

DOUBLE CHECK YOUR WORK

No. TRIPLE check your work. Read through your portfolio yourself, and then give it to a couple of your peers to proofread. Printing without revision can lead to errors in spelling, alignment, and continuity.

150 IS A MAGIC NUMBER

If you're printing your portfolio, make sure your image resolution is at least 150 DPI.

TEST PRINT

Your colors, gradients, and transparencies may not always print as expected. Print quality is determined by a huge number of factors. Test prints allow you to make sure you're getting a quality print before shelling out a lot of cash.

LEAVE ROOM FOR BINDING

Make sure your margins are big enough for binding! The last thing you want is cheap plastic coil binding running through your text and images.

PAPER CHARACTERISTICS

Printing establishments will offer three options of paper finishes: Glossy, Satin, and Matte. Glossy paper will give you richer colors, but is often too reflective. Matte is great for printing text, but can make your images appear flat and dull. Satin falls between glossy and matte and is a safe bet for portfolios. Satin is gonna make you look good.



Caution

Don't Stretch Images It automatically destroys the credibility of your skills. This will be a deal breaker for employers. Besides, why would you want to stretch an image when the Shift key is so close by?



GOOD LUCK

Portfolios are a bitch to make.

At its basest level, a portfolio is a collection of work you've completed. At its loftiest, a portfolio is a visual representation of your thought processes. It's your face to the world and it had better be a good one. Portfolios are one of the most stress-inducing aspects of your design life right now (and they rightly should be).

A portfolio gets you a job, and that job gets you experience, and that experience will make your portfolio better and better. It's a cycle that all starts right now, with your first portfolio.

Now...before you go and jump off the roof in utter exasperation, remember that portfolios are never good on the first go-round. Whether you're a sophomore or a professional with 25 years of experience, it's going to suck the first time you sit down and start hashing out your next draft. That's OK. Right now, you're surrounded by people who may be competing with you for jobs, but we are all actually pulling for each other. That's the joy of a design studio.

You've made a portfolio and you may think it looks pretty good, great even, but show it to any one of your fellow ID students and they'll pick holes in it like moth in a wool coat. It's not out of malevolence, but, just like your mom harping on you to stand up straight, it's for your own good. Talk to everyone you can about your portfolio, and actually listen to their advice. You're going to get quite a bit of conflicting input but eventually you'll be able to condense the critiques into actionable items to change. Look at and critique other people's portfolios, too. Find out what you really love in someone else's portfolio and do it in your own. The more you develop the language of portfolios and critiques, the better you will become at expressing design intents in your own portfolio.

So there you have it, just about everything we know about crafting a portfolio. Think of this as an overall guide, and send us your stuff. We'll want to see it and we're all a bunch of opinionated hooligans who will tell you what we think. Our degree is only worth as much as the following graduating classes make it worth. Be better than those who came before you. Build on our experience. Learn from our mistakes and from our successes. Be honest with your studio mates, watch out for each other, demand the best from everyone around you, and never take the easy way out. Portfolios tell your story, but we're all here to make sure that the story is a good one.

CREATED BY:

CARLIE BARRETT
ALEX BROERMAN
EMMANUEL CARRILLO
MORGEN DEPENTHAL
KEVIN DOYLE
ALLISON DUNPHY
MATT GILL
NATALIE MIKLOSIC
SAMANTHA GUSTAFSON
MEI HSIEH
AARON KUROSU
RACHEL LANG
ANDREW LEEMHUIS
JON PANICHELLA
CASEY SCHNEIDER
JAMES SLOSS
STEVE SPEAKER
AARON WATKINS
JACKLYN WONIGER

THANK YOU, WE LOVE YOU

We'd like to shout out special thanks to the people who made this book possible:

Mike Roller assigned this book as a project in his Design Communications class. Without his enthusiasm for improving the design community, this book wouldn't have been possible. Special thanks to Mike Roller.

Darrin Hunter generously allowed us to use his examples of resume makeovers and gave us some much-needed graphic design feedback. Special thanks to Darrin Hunter.

Design Professionals provided invaluable insights into their experiences with creating and evaluating portfolios. They offered great advice supported by years of experience. Special thanks to: Rachel Kroft, Chris Witham, John Murphy, Bryan Hammer, Richard Kuchinsky, Tom Pelzer, Jacob Ballard, John Turner, Jaime Sanchez, Julius Tarnig, Doug Laib, Marnie Meylor, and everyone else who gave us their thoughts and advice.

Recent UCID alums wrote "Wisdom from Above," offering relatable advice and perspectives. Special thanks to Jince Kuruvilla, Ming Hsieh, Kristen Beck, and Dan Clifton.

Class of 2012 Industrial Design, DAAP



WE WANT TO HELP.

PORTFOLIOS ARE A BITCH TO MAKE.

That's why we wanted to help. It's been a while since we were sophomores, but we never forgot the emotional roller coaster of trying to get our first job (we still go through it). Looking back, we wish we would have known what we know now. This book is for you: a collection of our knowledge passed down to you in the hopes that you become better designers, better professionals, and better people.

-UCID 2012