

## Graphic design

### The Importance of Graphic Design

“A picture speaks a thousand words.” Never has this statement been truer than it is today. With fast paced lifestyles and knowledge driven economies, no one has the time to read a book, but everyone wants the information buried within a thousand books. What better way to feed such data hungry crowds than by using meaningful pictures that are wordless yet eloquent? With the human brain processing images 60000 times faster than text, it comes as no surprise that we are surrounded by graphics, and graphic design will continue to play a vital role in the ongoing digital age.

Graphic design permeates the information landscape. It can be found in newsprint, magazines, packaging, branding, websites, poster, books and signage. With everybody jumping on the social media bandwagon, graphic design plays a key role in Facebook slideshow adverts, Linked In infographics, Pinterest pins, Youtube Videos, Twitter gifs and even in any decent Blog post that is shared. You can't escape graphics in the “real world” either. From T-shirts to greeting cards, coffee mugs to personalized key chains, original artwork is what makes products sell.

### Graphics in Business

While some companies prefer to keep their head buried under the sand and shy away from graphic designing, most are embracing this brand new field with enthusiasm. As content driven marketing becoming the norm, smart entrepreneurs understand the vital role that visual content plays in attracting new customers. If they want more social media engagement, they use funny memes. If they want to drive attention to a new product – they use pie charts. If they want to narrate their brand story – they use whiteboard style animation videos. Successful businesses everywhere are using graphic design to enhance customer experience, improve product design, build brand recognition and bolster brand reputation.

Visual content is a powerful tool that helps create the face for an organization. Visualization begins with brand logo design where colors and symbols interweave to create an image that represents everything a brand stands for. While logos are big, it is immature to think that companies stop with them. Smart businesses build a cohesive corporate identity using photos, videos and other imagery that make the brand feel more real. Smiling shots of employees bring out company culture, video interviews of the CEO make the company feel dependable, thoughtfully crafted infographics make the company's performance stand out, and funny memes make the company seem trendy or “with-the-times.” This invisible brand storytelling can affect client perception subtly – making the company appear larger than what it is or better than it's competitors.

Good visual branding across all channels not only brings more business but also attracts the best talent. Top employees seek fun and flexible work environments and will often check out a company's social media pages and general reputation before applying. Enterprises that use employee and office images to highlight the

positives of working with them are seen as transparent, caring and supportive of staff. Companies that don't are seen as old fashioned, bureaucratic, slow and challenging employers. If companies don't narrate their brand story with compelling visuals, they are likely to stagnate due to the lack of creative talent. That is why big businesses continue to invest heavily in high-quality graphic design and designers.

### Graphics in Marketing

"Marketing is not a battle of products; it is a battle of perceptions." When the perceived value of a product increases in the mind of a customer, they build long relationships with that product and keep purchasing it. This perceived value can be increased through strong visuals, which have always been the corner stone of any marketing campaign. Graphics are used in everything from print media, business cards and digital media to outdoor advertising tools like billboards, banners, and flags. Good design attracts consumers, making them feel an instant connect with the brand. When consistent visual cues are used in everything from product design and packaging to advertisements in multiple channels, customers learn to identify and trust a particular company. These cues then trigger emotional responses, prompting customers to buy from "favorite" brands.

Compelling graphics also convey an ad message efficiently and persuasively. There are literally hundreds of advertisements competing for customer attention. Moreover, everyone today is time poor and habituated to faster means of communication. Only powerful graphics can stand out of the crowd and catch the eye of busy customers. Visual tools can communicate the key features of a product in the least possible time. Logos, colors, and symbols can combine with the ad message to communicate subtle information about a brand. For example, a bank may use green in its graphics to denote prosperity and growth or a telecom operator may use a handshake logo to indicate connection and trust. This subtle communication is possible only through intelligent graphic designing.

Packaging serves as the first point of contact for the customer with the product, and excellent package design is a critical component of marketing. Graphic designers convey brand personality in the shape, colors, textures, and other visual elements of the packaging. But this design has to include functional elements as well. How durable and sustainable should the packaging material be? Is the design protecting the product inside? Does the packaging allow for efficient transportation and storage? These are some of the problems that design experts solve as they come up with the best package designs for their customers. Their aim is to meet all the functional criteria while still creating packaging that meets the price point of the product. The packaging should make the client feel he has received value for money without making the item look overpriced.

Ultimately, graphic design in marketing begins with the product design itself. The product is the physical representation of the brands and should speak the brand's language. When the customer stands in front of an aisle with literally hundreds of similar products, a better-looking item is essential to grab attention. Most successful brands work on the design and functional aspects simultaneously. Efforts are put in to make sure that the product is aesthetically appealing and pleasing to the eye even as it is operationally sound. The brand

personality is embedded into the product from the start so that the final product is quickly known and trusted. This is particularly the case when reputed brands launch a new product or service. Thus graphics is the essence of marketing, and all businesses, big or small seek and retain creative designers to assist them in running memorable campaigns.

### **Influence other people's perception**

Graphics is a powerful tool that is used to shape the way the world sees an object. In our consumerist society, looks are everything, and most purchase decisions are made emotionally. No one cares about the real value of an item; all they care about is how the item makes them feel. Graphics influences the thoughts, feelings and ultimately the actions of the consumer compelling them to purchase a particular product. All growing businesses want to wield this tool, making graphic design a lucrative and long lasting career today.

Becoming a graphic designer will give you an opportunity to discover motivations, inspire actions, prompt decisions and drive growth. Play a key role in shaping business reputation while contributing to the bottom line. Find a platform that lets you showcase your art while being paid for your effort and time. Gone are the days when artists hung in the shadows, waiting for that big break which never came. The modern economy has made it possible for all types of creatives to turn their passion into a profession. Don't miss out – Give your career a head start by checking out these [exciting new online graphic design courses](#). Design experts will train you in all aspects of design – helping to make your dream a reality.

### **Beginning Your Designer Journey**

Most people have filled their high school notebooks with doodles and drawings expressing their creativity. But these artistic skills remain buried and undiscovered due to pursuing other careers or lack of knowledge of design technology. When you were in high school, the world was most probably not as digital as it is today. Multiple design avenues did not exist nor were there a proliferation of design tools that made art expression easier for everyone. If you are dissatisfied with your current job and are looking to do something that you love, graphic designing courses offer you the opportunity to make that change. Online learning makes design experts and principles of design accessible to everyone. Anyone can become a graphic designer today, no matter what stage of life or career they are in.

Whether you want a change of career, are looking at pursuing a new hobby or want to learn additional skills to enhance your current role, graphic design begins with developing an artistic vision. How are you going to see things from a more creative perspective? How are you going to improve existing solutions so that they offer more to your customers? Developing this kind of design thinking is the first step towards becoming a better designer. Such thinking does not happen overnight. It needs to be developed through imitation and observation. Just like a musician plays the songs of expert and famous musicians before composing his own, a designer follows and imitates design experts before creating his work.

You can learn a lot simply by keeping an ear to the ground and being aware of the latest stylish trends in the market. Social media makes art appreciation and art awareness more accessible. By customizing the newsfeed of graphic supporting channels like Pinterest and Instagram you can surround yourself with the best design examples of the day. Finding influencers and experts in the design world and following them religiously on social media gives you an opportunity to study their style. Be sure to follow a variety of art personalities – mix leaders and trendsetters with designers whose style you love. Also, find some people whose work you don't enjoy. Understanding what and why you don't like is an important process towards developing your visual style.

How are you going to find these artistic personalities worth following? Online design courses are the best place to begin. Anyone who has taken the effort to create a class and share their craft is truly passionate about the subject. There are courses on everything from web designing, video game designing and logo designing to product and package designing. Some courses focus on specific programs and tools to manage design workflow while others practice specific ways of problem-solving and thinking. For example, [this course on design thinking teaches research, story-telling and brain storming strategies to find innovative solutions to existing problems](#). By studying such comprehensive graphic design tutorials, you will gain deep insights into the creative process. Considering the work of professionals is the first step towards honing your own talent, vision, and skills.

### Learning the basics

Certain basic design principles and techniques need to be mastered to get started with your graphics career. These skills can be learned from a good online course. However, these must be combined with problem-solving skills. You need to be able to translate design techniques into customized solutions that meet your client's requirements. Traditional drawing skills are helpful in this regard. It is easy to sketch a solution framework and get feedback or communicate more with your customer. The final solution can then be implemented using design software you specialize in. Apart from basic drawing, you also need to have a thorough knowledge of:

**Graphic elements and principles**– Graphic elements include lines, shapes, proportions, color theory and texture while principles include grids, contrasts, spatial relationships, and patterns. An effective design combines these elements and principles, so they work together cohesively to create beautiful results. Awareness of which elements work with and which work against each other will lay the foundation for all your future design solutions.

**Typography** – Typography is the study of the font used in any artwork. The letters and other symbols in your message convey tone, meaning, and emotion. Detailed knowledge of different typefaces, what they represent, and how their presence will affect layout is crucial for becoming a good designer.

**Design software** – Graphic designers need to master basic design platforms like Illustrator, Photoshop, and InDesign. If you intend to expand your repertoire to include animation, slideshows, and other multimedia, you would also need to

learn programs like Acrobat that support more sophisticated design development. It is beneficial to have a principle-oriented approach towards learning any software. This is because there are numerous design technologies out there and newer ones are being developed every day. Depending on your project you may have to work on different platforms; also technology can become obsolete at any time. Good designers do not let their careers stagnate due to over-reliance on a particular technology. Instead, they focus on understanding software principles so that they can quickly adapt to new systems.

**Layout Optimization** – Every design has a purpose and designers need to learn to arrange their elements optimally to achieve that function. For example, a shop web page must be designed such that customers click the buy button. Or an infographic for a property rental website should highlight vacancies over other details. Layout optimization is the creation of this path guiding the customer towards the goal, without space wasting or cluttering the design.

**White Space Utilization** – White space or negative space is the portion of your design that is not occupied by any visual or written element. Good designers embrace this white space and use it to their advantage. Sometimes just a black dot against a white background will convey more meaning than a rainbow of colors. Graphic designers need to learn how to treat white space as an active element of their design and incorporate it effectively.

**Print design** – Graphic designers need to be mindful that most of their designs will be printed. Having knowledge of color space, printing processes, color separation, grid layout and master pages will go a long way in creating practical design solutions. You do not want to be the designer who creates something extraordinary, only to discover that it cannot be printed or used.

**Poster design** – Poster design is another aspect of graphic design worth exploring. It is different from print design because it covers much more than basic printing knowledge. Attractive posters weave in wit, humor and a call for action while also managing space restrictions. Posters need to convey meaning whether you are 50 feet away or five inches away from them. This makes poster design quite challenging and is a design topic worth exploring independently. You can play with scale, contrasts, and images to create some thought provoking visuals that won't be possible in other mediums. [This course on how to design posters](#) is a great way to learn and practice this niche.

**Three dimensional (3d) design** – While a majority of the graphics work today is still two-dimensional, it is worth noting the three dimensional future of graphic design. With 3d printers invented and accessible, thinking in 3d is fast becoming the norm. 3d printers convert digital files to actual, three-dimensional objects. For 3d printing to be successful, designers need to design 3d objects using specialized software like Autocad. These designs include information about the depth, weight, and volume of the object along with its 2d representation. Shell or boundary representation of 3d objects is another type of 3d designing which represents the surface of the object. Such images appear as 3d even though rendered in a two-dimensional system. These 3d design techniques are used heavily in video games, movies, and medical or engineering simulations.

Serious graphic designers should consider looking into 3d design to enter a very lucrative and niche graphics industry.

When you venture into your learning journey, you need to be aware of the learning style that best suits your needs. Do you prefer to read through theory before starting a project? Do you learn better through listening or through observation? Do you learn more by actively working on personal projects or do you learn better by observing others work? The best designing courses will not help you if they don't suit your learning style. Evaluate any course carefully, before taking it up. Make sure you find courses that can be customized to meet your learning pace and work within your schedules. Otherwise, an ill-matched graphic design course may discourage you. Don't lose motivation or doubt your abilities if you are not able to complete a particular course – explore other study options before giving up.

## Telling stories through your work

Good design is all about sharing your story with your audience. Designers master the art of telling stories that are:

- **Authentic** – Don't let sponsors or other vested interests influence your story to such an extent that it reduces credibility. Today's sophisticated audience can spot fake or exaggerated content from miles away. The point is to come across as genuine, even if you are trying to sell something. Honesty and transparency are the best means to establishing long and personal relationships with your customers.
- **Sensory** – The more senses that your design can engage, the more it will be remembered and the deeper impact it will have. Don't stop at visual; include textures, aromas, sound, and tastes into your design to create a wealth of experiences. These other sensory inputs don't actually have to be there – your design has to be clever enough to trigger the viewer to imagine these inputs – and fall in love with your story.
- **Archetype** – This refers to the main characters of your plotline. Some archetypes include the hero, the caregiver, the guide and the rebel. Using archetypes in your design thinking can help you create compelling visuals that your audience will immediately connect with.
- **Relevant** – Incorporating culture, current affairs and latest trends into your design story is an excellent way to grab audience attention. They will respond better if you present the right message at the right time when it is most necessary.

Here are some ways to develop your own story telling skills

### Be passionate about what you do

It is hard to work on a project if your heart is not in it. On the other hand, if you enjoy something, you won't mind devoting extra time and attention to the design until it comes out perfect. It may appear that you don't have much choice when starting out, but this is simply not true. The best graphic designers consciously

work towards taking their career in a particular direction. To start with, you may explore a few different options, but ultimately it is best to focus on one single aspect of graphic design and to become a master of it. This aspect should be the one that makes you tick. If you love number crunching, visualize data. If you enjoy playing online, design games or if you love reading, design book covers. The point is to pick one area of graphic design that matches your interests, your strengths, and your personality. You may be thinking if you pick one area it limits your job options. Actually, it works the opposite. A generalist is nobody's friend, but a specialist is chosen every time a job needs to be done.

Sometimes specialization is not so much about the product as it is about the design style. For example, some designers may focus on black and white design. They may create logos, websites, and advertisements that want this contrasting style of work. Others may focus on Adobe Lightroom Effects. (A design feature in the software) Again, they would create a varied body of work that requires this particular style. Similarly, you can choose to be an illustrator for children's books, CD covers and all types of print media or you could focus on experience design for mobile applications. It is a good idea to study and find work that takes your career in the direction of your choice. Don't narrow down too much to create dependencies, but don't be too broad either. Be patient, follow your gut and keep progressing in your area of interest. Carving out your niche takes time, but is definitely worth the effort.

### **Learn to find inspiration that meets your needs**

Once you know your personal goals, you can steer your ship in that direction. There are a plethora of online courses, tutorials, videos and articles that cover literally all aspects of graphic design. If you want to discover the answer to your questions, you need to be very specific with your searches. For example, if you search for Adobe Lightroom, you will get a broad range of results that might confuse you. But instead, if you search for Adobe Lightroom Effects for Portraits, you will discover information that better fits your needs. Self-taught designers are masters at finding online resources that will help in advancing their careers.

This kind of targeted searching will also assist you in solving any difficulties you face while designing practically too. For example, searching for how to design a flat icon with a long shadow will get you the exact answer for your design needs. But to be able to search in this way, you need to be aware of the correct design terms. It is a good idea to browse through an online design terminology glossary to be able to comprehend online resources as well as to frame your questions better.

### **Build your own design portfolio**

The exciting part of starting your designer journey is making your own portfolio. Personal projects are essential to have a solid body of work that you can showcase to prospective employers. You can build a reputation by sharing your work online and attracting followers, likes, and shares. The first step towards creating a great portfolio is dissecting the design process. When you recognize that every single illustration, logo and web page is a combination of shapes and lines, you will start analyzing designs better.

Give your creative muscles a workout by making educated guesses about other people's work. Jot down the steps the designer might have used to create the original design. Alternatively, you can expedite your learning curve by using design dissection software. These resources let you dig through a design to discover all the layers within it. Such analyzing will give you great insight into the work of master designers. It will also help you determine any knowledge gaps in your design process. Knowing what you don't know will give your learning fresh direction.

Once you have analyzed the process, you can start reproducing some of your favorite work. Don't hesitate to copy – this is part of the learning process. Your portfolio is not going to contain every piece of design you create. It is meant to show off your best work only. Imitating other people's work is the starting point for your portfolio; copied work is not going to go in it. The aim of this exercise is to reproduce designs only for personal study and not for self-advertisement. Flex your creative muscle, utilize both halves of your brain and master design techniques by duplicating the work of professionals. This will lay the foundation from which your own ideas will take off.

After sufficient practice of other people's work, you will be ready to start your own. You can gain inspiration from online design contests, or graphics exercises in your coursework. You can also find poorly designed websites and redesign them, come up with some T-shirt design ideas or volunteer with a not-for-profit and do some free work for them. The point is to find problems that require design solutions for you to provide. Creating new designs for existing solutions is an excellent way to showcase your out-of-the-box thinking abilities to prospective employers.

Now that you have created work that you are proud of, it is time to seek feedback. Criticism is scary, and no one wants to receive negative comments, go back to the drawing board, and start all over again. But this is the path of all creatives and learning to accept constructive criticism is the only path to self-improvement. Finding safe spaces to share your work is essential, and these people cannot be your family and friends! General feedback is not as useful as authentic feedback from master designers. Some online courses offer forum facilities to share your work for peer review. They even provide access to one-on-one training from the course instructors themselves. This individual review is probably the most beneficial way to improve as an artist. You can also seek out online design communities that welcome new members. Active communities are filled with designers who are happy to comment and like other's work while also sharing their own. Joining such communities is hugely beneficial to hone your craft and get noticed by prospective employers.

## **Practice your craft**

Malcolm Gladwell's popular research has revealed that 10,000 hours of deliberate practice can make you an expert at anything. To perform any task various portions of the brain need to activate simultaneously. The more you

practice, the more the brain optimizes for that particular set of coordinated actions. While this holds true for everything, from learning a new language to graphics design, there is a catch. If you don't correct your mistakes during practice, your brain will get hardwired to produce erroneous output! That is why it is vital that you focus on the quality of your designs while practicing, consistently pushing yourself to learn better even while learning more. Most of the time, it is up to the sincere student to practice efficiently. But when you learn graphic design, you need to find courses and learning material that support this too. Theory classes that keep feeding you information without presenting practice opportunities might not be the best option. If you want to take your design to the next level, it is vital to find courses that are iterative and hands on. For example, [this course teaches you the five core design principles](#) and shows you how to critique your work for better effectiveness.

### Earning while you practice

Freelancing is another area of opportunity for designers today. It is a flexible and low-risk work option that you can pursue even while studying online. Good freelancing sites have a plethora of entry level and small jobs available for you to sink your teeth into, even when studying for full-time career opportunities. All you need to start is a strong design portfolio and a computer with a reliable Internet connection. It is good to have your own licensed software, but many clients will also have their own licenses which they will let you use, should they hire you. You can offer low rates, take up small jobs that you are sure to succeed at and gain valuable real world experience. You can earn money while you practice, test your designs in the real world and gain feedback for your work too! The flexible nature of freelancing lets you challenge yourself across multiple design areas till you find the style you are comfortable in.

Hard work pays off, and no job is too small when you are starting out. Even if you get the opportunity to illustrate one page or design one logo, take it up. Every small step is taking you closer to your dream of becoming a great designer. If a friend comes up and asks you to design a T-shirt for their group – don't laugh them off! T-shirt and fabric design is a great career path for designers who love fashion too. Having some T-shirt design experience will set you apart and give you an edge over other designers. You could also consider designing your own T-shirt range and selling them on eBay or other commercial platforms. Not only could this become a potential side gig but also enhance your portfolio. T-shirt design stands out because you need to convince customers to purchase the design itself. To persuade a significant number of people that your design is worth wearing and worth saving as a keepsake, you need to come up with some incredibly clever stuff.

Good T-shirt designers focus on identifying their client's tastes. The T-shirt market is so large that you will find someone for every style – from gothic, to vintage to super colorful. But it is important not to mix-and-match across styles so that neither group likes it. Once you have picked your niche, start with the colors. As it is clothing, colors take on a whole new meaning. Choosing the right colors for the base and illustration will go a long way in getting your T-shirts to

sell. Even while composing, you need to think of the design in the context of the whole garment. Is there too much ink in my design making the shirt look heavy? Are some portions of the design attracting attention to odd parts of the torso? You also need to think about the printing costs of the design. Having too many colors or other complex elements that add to the price of the T-shirt could prove counter productive. After all, there is only so much that anyone would pay for a shirt. If you are interested in exploring this design niche further, [this fabulous course on all aspects of T-shirt design](#) is a great place to begin.

### **Be consistent in your work**

No matter what design you do, consistency is key to standing out. Consistency is not just about delivering high quality work all the time. It also includes creating a signature style that is unique to yours. It is best to add a subtle touch to your design that indicates that it is part of a larger umbrella work. This signature could be anything from the letter of your name embedded into the design to a little logo that blends into the artwork. May be you could have a particular color palette you work within, or you could add a distinctive effect to your patterns. Whatever you choose, the point is to have some self-imposed constraints on your design. These creative constraints will not limit you. On the other hand, they will open up your thinking and give you clear guidelines on how to proceed. Creative conditions will also add a layer of problem solving, giving your designs a clear edge in the market. Moreover, you will quickly be able to spot any copycats who attempt to rip off your designs. Don't get offended if you find a cheap copy floating around though – remember imitation is the best form of flattery!

Ultimately, consistency is reflected in your narrative style. What is the story you are sharing with the world? How do you want to influence the perspective of your viewers? The more you reflect on these questions, the better will be your design output. There is only so much that experts, courses, and tutorials can do for you. You need to find the purpose and motivation for your art within yourself. Whether you are making bold poster designs, or humorous character illustrations real life will always remain a source of inspiration. Good designers and artists are therefore always trying to enrich their personal life with a multitude of experiences. Traveling, trying out new adventures, meeting new people, experience new emotions, reading different books, volunteering for a cause – all these will improve the quality of your life and add depth to your work.

Some designers snap photos throughout the day of everything that catches their eye. These photos then serve as inspiration for putting their personal spin on the situation. For example, you need to design a logo for a florist. Looking through your image archive, you discover the shot of a flower taken from a certain angle, or a curling leaf tip. This shot was uniquely you – no one else is going to see the world the way you do it. When you create a logo based on this particular shot, you will create a distinctive design that meets the client's needs while still reflecting your personality. This is how master designers build their deep body of work.

Jotting down daily journals and random thoughts is another way to draw inspiration from personal life. Some designers also keep a little notebook with them at all times, to jot down ideas whenever inspiration strikes. Others make

creativity a part of their daily ritual. This could include old fashioned art journals which are painted in daily, scrapbooks, nature journals or regular creative projects. Mindfulness, meditation, and improving your observation skills in general, will go a long way towards making you a better designer.

### **Think outside the box**

Original design needs problem-solving and innovative abilities. Critical thinking skills need to be developed within the context of design. Expert designers usually approach the design process by clearly defining the problem. It is important not to get overwhelmed by emotions or perceive obstacles as too challenging for you. Very often mental blocks can become a bigger hindrance to your creativity than the problem itself. Good designers have the ability to break down the problem into smaller, more manageable pieces and solve it one step at a time. Writing down the problem in a few short sentences will help you analyze the root of the issue and work from there. For example, if you have to design a poster for a spring campaign of a clothing chain – you could frame the problem as – “I have to convince my audience that the new designs are vibrant, colorful and fresh while still being light and cooling for the upcoming hot days. They are affordable clothes that can be purchased in sets due to significant discounts.” Framing the situation like this will give you the nouns and adjectives that you need to translate visually.

Once you have framed the problem, you can approach it from multiple angles. Try to find the simplest and the most complex design idea for the problem. Then combine elements from both approaches to come up with a more balanced and sophisticated solution. You can also use problem-solving techniques like the problem tree – making a tree like map with the branches representing different elements of the problem and the leaves representing possible solutions. You can then pick the best leaves to create (in the words of Steve Jobs) “an elegant, really beautiful solution that works.” Even after you have created a design that seems perfect to you, think of ways to refine it. Expert designers prefer doing at least two revisions before presenting the design to the client. The aim is to keep refining your art until you have beaten your own best.

Even after a work is completed and used, it is important to regard it with a critical eye and accept all feedback. Don't just review the design; examine the process as well. Look back and think what you could have done better while approaching the problem. Could you have used better research techniques? Could you have asked different questions to your client? Could you have used different technologies? Analysis of the process will help you refine your design techniques that will ultimately result in better future output.

### **Conclusion – Act on your intent**

If you want to become a designer, but are still sitting on it – it is now time to act. There is so much information out there that it is easy to become overwhelmed and not do anything. Don't let analysis paralysis stop you from taking that first step. It is now time to start that introduction to graphic design course and study

it! If you have been searching (and searching some more) for the best product design courses or the most comprehensive design book, then now is the time to stop. Research is not a bad thing, but research that does not lead to action is. The best approach would be to pick one course, study it and implement it. That will give better direction for your next search. Proceed one course at a time until you have a portfolio ready to be used and a freelance gig waiting for you.

Graphic design is all about sharing a visual story with your audience. Your story will be well received only if it reflects your personality and passion for design. As you start working professionally, it becomes easy to lose your style in the effort to meet the requirements of your clients. But good designers learn to strike a balance between their work and their art. Only when the need for inner expression is satisfied will you be able to continue on your design journey. It is important to approach design from a long-term perspective and keep following your passion, without letting other people's opinions jade you.

### Key points to remember

- Graphic design is a lucrative career option with opportunities existing in multiple fields including business, marketing, product and packaging, games, books, posters, fabric, 3d printing, modeling, simulation and much more!
- Graphic design is ultimately about communicating an idea. It involves sharing a visual story with your audience and shaping their perspective. Graphic designers solve problems by getting people to look at the same object in different ways.
- You do not have to be overly artistic or even have a design school degree to become a graphic designer. With the proliferation of online courses, many graphic designers today are self-taught.
- Design technology has made it easy for many people to express their creativity. Mastering this technology is a crucial aspect of becoming a designer.
- Becoming a graphic designer requires a combination of technique mastery, creativity and communication skills. Design students work on all these aspects by studying and applying design principles to real-world problems. They participate in design competitions, open source projects and volunteer projects to gain practical experience.
- Building a strong portfolio is vital to progress as a designer. A good portfolio is original, shows off your best work and is focused on those design techniques that you want to make a career of.
- Graphic designers develop creative vision by following, studying and reproducing the works of other masters. They use social media to surround themselves with visual expression and artistic inspiration.
- While practicing design, it is important to receive critical feedback for your work. This feedback can be obtained by sharing your work in design communities, on social media, and in online design learning groups.

- Online graphic courses provide networking opportunities with master designers. One-on-one communication with them is an effective way to develop your craft.
- Freelancing or selling your designs is a great way to earn while you learn. It also gives you an opportunity to test the waters and see if anyone is willing to pay for your creativity. If you have the talent, you can easily turn these gigs into your main source of income.
- Graphic designers embrace creativity in all aspects of their life so that they can draw inspiration from real experiences and develop their unique artistic style that stands out in the crowd.