# THE
# PORTFOLIO
# TOOLKIT

# INTRODUCTION

This toolkit is designed to help students understand and discover how a portfolio works and what is essential to add in order to be ready for the workplace. It will contain resources from LinkedIn, examples of actual portfolios, and tips to help students succeed in presenting a good and well thought out portfolio.

Ideally, this toolkit will be free and accessible to all design students and easily accessed through an online PDF for students to view and/or print.

# TOOLKIT CONTENTS

# WHY A PORTFOLIO?

*The following pages will be laid out in a PDF portfolio form for your convenience. You are welcome to use the template, simply enter in your content where the topic is discussed.*

*Traditional print PDF Portfolios should be 11x17.*

## Why Make A Portfolio?

For a graphic designer or anyone that is involved in the creative industry, having a portfolio is a must– no questions asked. A portfolio reflects your creativity and showcases your work to the potential clients. It serves as a true example of what you are capable of and what abilities you have to offer.

## Why Make A PDF Portfolio?

In this section, we will discuss how to create a professional PDF portfolio that will assist you on your journey to employment and beyond. A PDF portfolio can hold a recruiter or client's attention longer, has fewer constraints as you don't have to work with code, and allows you to tell a more vivid story than online counterparts.

# YOUR NAME

Design Portfolio

*The image to the left is an example of the first page in your own portflio.*

*As we discuss the many elements required in a portfolio, this will act as a template.*

## CONTACT INFO

Web Presence URL
Email Address
Art Inastagram Handle

## Why a Professional Image is Essential

A professional picture is not the same as a mugshot. Your goal is to appear approachable and personable. If you begin an interview with a handshake and big smile you should emulate that same greeting in your profile picture. However, it is important that your photo doesn't appear too casual - think professional yet friendly.

Introduction

Web Presence URL          Email Address          Art Inastagram Handle

## HELLO

Include an imagethat represents you such as a headshot.

Write a short professional bio. You can include where you live or where you work now, your professional identity (the type of work you make) and your career highlights (awards, exhibitions, publications, etc.)

*A good balance between the information and engagement of the reader is the key to writing an effective designer bio.*

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# TITLE OF PIECE
## Category or Medium

*Consider making a title page for each project as an introduction. Include a photograph that shows your piece.*

Include a representative image of your final product to demonstrate the artwork.

**Client:** Company Name
**Dates:** 0.00.00- 0.00.00
**Task:** Logo Design
**Tools:** Adobe Illustrator

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*Give an overview of you project. State if there was a creative prompt or goal if there was one. If the work was self-initiated, be sure to reflect this as well.*

Title of Piece

Web Presence URL          Email Address          Art Inastagram Handle

# CONCEPT OVERVIEW

## How to Write a Project Summary

A project summary is a paragraph that contains a concise, comprehensive overview of an entire project and its key details. It usually consists of a project's objectives, background information, requirements, problems, analysis, and conclusion.

## State Your Project Goals

What did the client ask you to do?  What was the briefing? What was the main challenge and measure of success? Did you have a certain idea or expectation for the project when you began?

Include a photograph that demonstrates your concept or the prompt of your piece.

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## Images

Make sure to document your design process. This can range from original sketches to the development of your design through showcasing multiple drafts - be sure to describe how and why you made changes as this project developed.

Consider a layout that lets you include a sentence or two beside each image, so you can explain your process and give us insight into what we're seeing. A bunch of photos on a page might look pretty, but your potential employer or client needs context. We need to understand who you are, how you work and how you might contribute to our team/culture.

*Sometimes it is just as important to show research and concept development than the final product. Share your sketches and design choices here.*

Title of Piece          Web Presence URL          Email Address          Art Inastagram Handle

# PROCESS

Include images of research and inspiration.
Show your process work.

### Design Choices

Be sure to show your design choices. Why did you use these particular fonts? How do the colors support the meaning, tone, and overall purpose of the product?

### Design Challenges

It is important to state what was challenging about the project. This will allow others to understand not only the project better, but also who you are as a designer and your problem solving skills.

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## Mockup Images

Mockups can be great. They make your design look more professional and help the client get an idea of what design can look like in real-world context.

Using mockups can make your portfolio look really well polished. But don't overuse them - try to keep projects unique, not every project requires a mockup. Also, try to avoid using the same mockup over and over and over again.

A great mockup site:
**mockupworld.com**

*State the outcome or result of your piece. What did your piece accomplish? How did your audience interact with it? Add relevant additional information. If your deliverables or method of installation is significant, show images and explain here.*

Title of Piece            Web Presence URL            Email Address            Art Inastagram Handle

# FINAL

Include images of your final product. Add multiple shots if necessary.

## The Solution

Did you feel proud of the result? Did it exceed your expectations? Did it increase the client's sales by 2000%? Don't get too technical or share some crazy analytics report (and definitely do not make anything up), just include a brief sentence or two that shares how the project was successful. A case study should ideally be a success story. If it's not, tell us why the project is still valuable or meaningful (maybe the client didn't choose your favorite concept for example, but you still love the work you did) and what you learned from it.

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*This would be the last page of your PDF portfolio. Ideally your portfolio will showcase 4-6 quality projects.*

# THANK YOU

## CONTACT INFO

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Email Address
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# THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

## What Projects to Include

Curating the perfect graphic design portfolio is critical for designers everywhere. Regardless of whether you work freelance or full-time, a sleek graphic design portfolio is important!
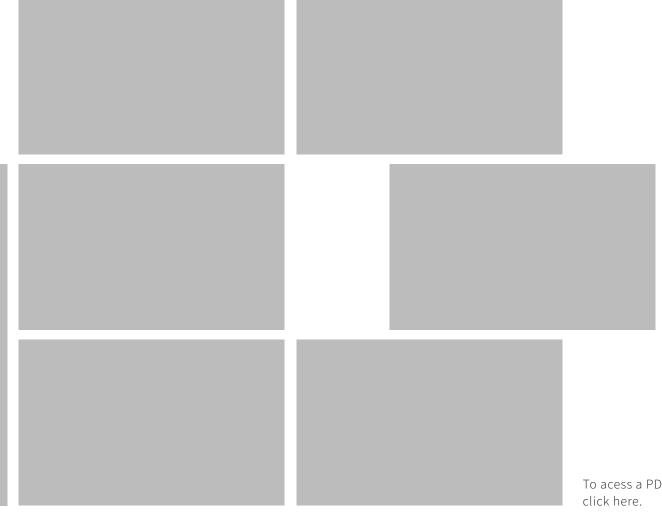
It's important to show off your skills and objectives as a designer in your portfolio. You may have many designs to share with potential clients, so it's key you carefully select which ones to include in your portfolio. You want to showcase the cream of the crop and display diversity in your work. Remember to understand your specialties in order to convey your strengths through your portfolio! Above all, it's vital your portfolio showcases your ability and evolution as a designer.

*Types of projects to consider could be business branding essentials, Web design, entertainment, product packaging, and advertising.*

## Design Tips

One of the golden rules of great typography is to either use very different fonts or very similar ones. If they are somewhat similar, it won't work.Based on this rule, choose your case study's typography before getting to work, and use the same typography everywhere, including your images. This will ensure that your images with text on them will visually blend well with the rest of your case study.

It's best if your case studies follow the color scheme of the project you are presenting. So, select one or two main colors from the project. We will call these colors your accent colors. Use these colors throughout your case study, consistently for a clean and put-together look.

To acess a PDF portflio template click here.

# GET LINKED IN TO LINKEDIN

**Important reasons to create a LinkedIn account:**

1. You can tap into its powerful job board
2. You can build your brand
3. It can help rank your name on Google
4. It maintains your rolodex of contacts
5. You can research companies and its employees
6. It can help you tap into industry news
7. Network, network, network!

## How to Find Courses and Add Verified Skills

What you'll need to do is look up something that you're interested in and see which best suits your needs. Once you do that you can either save it for later or you can complete the course at that time. After completing the course you should get a certificate showing that you have passed and have mastered that section. Some courses take longer than others so choose wisely!

Did you know that LinkedIn, the professional social networking platform, has actually been around longer than Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram? But it's more relevant now than ever.

Why? Because it hosts more than 600 million professional profiles, which means nearly an unlimited supply of network connections and job opportunities. From seeking a new job to maintaining your personal brand, using LinkedIn is an important part of being a full-fledged professional in any industry these days.

## How to Network and Make Connections

For this you'll need to look up the position or job title you're interested in and see if there's any openings. If there are any openings you can apply for the job through LinkedIn. If you're just setting up your account there will be an option to add your resume to your account and it makes it much easier to apply because you can just add your resume, fill out the job application and you're done!

**What to include in your portfolio:**

- A professional photo
- Summary of industry experience
- Expertise and education
- Portfolio work and link to host site or PDF

*https://inside.ewu.edu/careercenter/resumes/*

## Resume

A graphic designer should use a traditional resume format, just like everyone else. Instead of making your resume act as your creative portfolio, you should include a link to your online portfolio with examples of your work.

*https://inside.ewu.edu/careercenter/interviewing/*

## Interviewing

Prepare yourself in advance and be confident in your skills since the hiring manager wants to meet the graphic designer behind the portfolio. The interview gives you an opportunity to have a conversation, learning more about the team and the job and what you have to offer the company.

*https://inside.ewu.edu/careercenter/cover-letters/*

## Cover Letter

Cover letters are one of the first ways you connect with a company. These brief documents are sent to potential employers along with your resume. The cover letter goes beyond your resume, it expands on your top design projects and successes. Your cover letter should outline your skills, experiences, and passion for design.

*https://inside.ewu.edu/careercenter/*

## EWU Career Services

The EWU career services is a great resource for all students. This program will cover all these important assets at length and help you along the way. It is a career management tool for jobs & internships, career advising appointments, and career development events.

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