

Portfolio

Guide

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Portfolio Guide

Your portfolio and/or portfolio website should serve as a hub to showcase your work and projects you've done. You should include your most updated contact information and links to social media. Your portfolio is a place to show off your personality, allowing people to learn more about you as an individual.

Make your portfolio speak for you. Place your pieces primarily in one direction, either horizontally or vertically. Make it easy for the viewer to see your portfolio without having to turn your book around every few pages. Consider labeling each piece with a small description that includes your name, phone number, medium, project topic, and client if relevant. It is particularly helpful when dropping off your work. Never include original work in your portfolio, as it may become damaged or lost.

Creating a Portfolio Website

It's best to plan your portfolio website out in advance. Planning helps you choose the right pages and features to use that fit your style and personal brand. The right preparation makes your creative process faster and more focused.

1. Define Your Goals

Ask yourself: what is your website's purpose? Here are a few examples of site goals:

- Display a playful demonstration of your skills.
- To get hired.
- To sell your products or services.
- A place for all your projects to live.

Prioritize your purpose- what are the primary and secondary purposes? Remember, a website has layers, and they depend on what you're looking to achieve. Every page you create or feature needs to support your site's goals.

2. Curate Your Content

Once you have a goal in mind, it's time to gather the content you want to showcase. You should always lead a portfolio and website with your very best work, and not just a dozen or so random projects. A great practice is to make a list of all the projects you've worked on since being in school. Then mark the projects that you are most proud of; this will help you keep the selection as succinct as possible. It's recommended that you choose a minimum of four projects and a maximum of ten.

Remember, if you are uncomfortable with a piece, or feel that it requires a lengthy explanation, leave it out.

Although you may have a variety of projects, try and pick what's relevant for your career going forward in the particular field you wish to enter. For example, if you are applying for a position in graphic design, you should include pieces that showcase a range of your design skills and interests. Your portfolio might include corporate designs, such as logos, poster designs, and magazine layouts.

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Mistakes to Avoid

- Don't make your work hard to find. Assume your visitors are impatient.
- Don't assume your work can speak for itself. Provide context, tell a story, and describe your progress. Be short yet concise.
- Don't direct employers to social media channels where you've combined personal and professional experiences.
- Avoid poor use of language.
- Beware of using poor quality images.
- Make sure all the links in your site are working and directed to the right places.

Professional Success

A personal brand is a combination of your expertise, experience and personality. It's a key to your professional success as it revolves around how you present yourself to future clients, employers or collaborators. Defining a personal brand allows you to emphasize and visualize your strengths and passions. This helps set you apart from everyone else and make sure that people see you in the way you want them to.

Spend some time thinking about how your site should look, feel and behave. It's important to make sure that your style remains clear and consistent throughout your website. It should match your personality or the theme of your work.

Physical Portfolios

Do not use the same portfolio that you have been using for years. For each newly applied position, buy a new portfolio in a size that is easy to handle. Your portfolio case is the first thing a potential employer will see.

Consider using look books, line sheets, case studies and printed portfolios for in-person meetings. Use your portfolio as a prop during an interview.

There is nothing a creative recruiter or hiring manager hates more than a disorganized portfolio. A good rule of thumb when deciding on the size is to consider whether the reviewer will be able to easily view it while sitting at his or her desk. Desks are often small and cluttered, so an 8x10 or 11x14 portfolio is usually a good choice. Anything larger can become cumbersome for the person reviewing it.

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