

PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIOS

Tips for Design Students Seeking Employment

Preparation

- + Be selective in choosing work to showcase your skillset and abilities. **Less is more!** Fewer projects will allow you to showcase your **best** work.
- + Exhibit your creativity through composition, graphics, and organization.
- + Demonstrate your design training with varied projects, software skills, and conceptual approaches.
- + To get started, think about how magazine layouts keep readers' attention and bring focus to certain elements.

Organization

- + Open with your **best** project and close with your second-best or one equally as powerful.
- + Avoid chronological order in a professional portfolio. Tailor the organization of your pages to flow naturally.
- + There is no specific number of pages or projects, but only show your best, and remember - **less is more!** Respect the employers' time and strive to be clear and concise with your presentation.
- + Place your resume at the end to add personal depth to your design work and to reinforce your abilities.

Text

- + Text should not compete with or obscure your images. It exists to identify a project and your design concept.
- + Include the completion date, location, your specific contributions, and the instructor's name or firm.
- + Credit appropriately. If you include professional work, check with the firm for permission.
- + Be concise, use a font that is legible, and **proofread all of your text.** Typos can cost you a job offer!

Size & Shape

- + Feel free to be innovative in the presentation of your portfolio. Keep in mind the concerns of a potential employer: whether it will be printed or viewed on a screen, ease of handling for hard copies, and legibility.
- + For hard copies, consider size, shape, paper weight/quality, backing, and various binding methods to ensure individuality of your work and presentation.
- + Read application requirements carefully for specific submission guidelines and size restrictions.
- + Understand the **differences between a full portfolio versus work samples** and contact Career Services for clarification and advice.

Tips

- + Employers appreciate your hand sketches, diagrams, and anything that shows the development of a concept.
- + Artwork, photography, and freelance projects can be selectively included to present a holistic view of talents.
- + Create continuity among your resume, cover letter, and portfolio by using the same font, layout, and theme.
- + Be sure to ask for a variety of opinions! **A professional portfolio is only as strong as your weakest piece.**