

Hands-On Design & Creativity

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Ready to Go on an Adventure?

As designers, our software skills are a huge advantage, making it easy for us to branch out into new creative realms, but—only if we're willing to put down our mouse now and then. After all, studies show that creating with our hands is as good for the brain as it is for the soul!

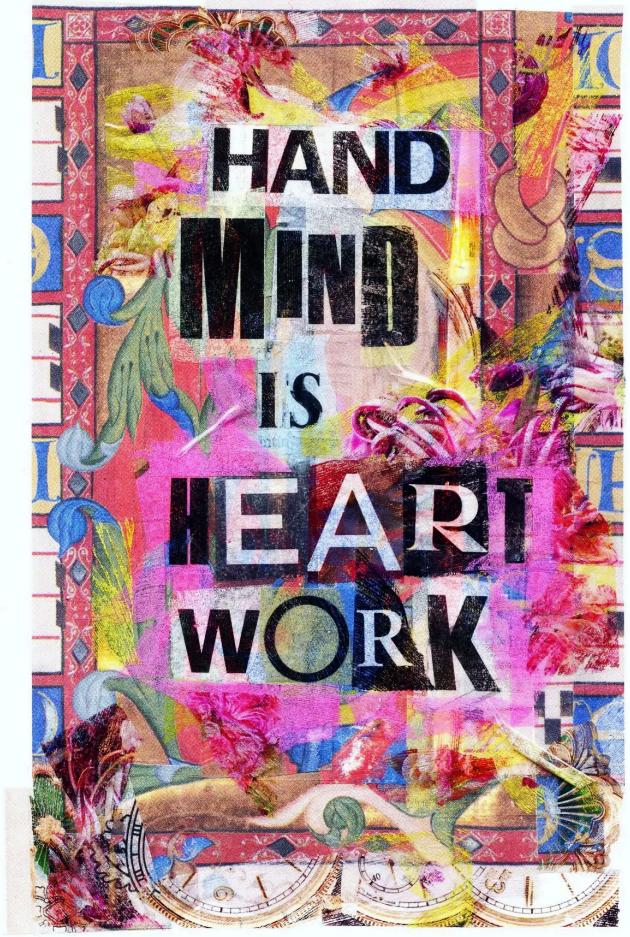
In this session, Khara Plicanic shares what's possible when you mix Adobe know-how with analog play, some glue, and an endless amount of curiosity.

You'll (re)discover:

- Easy ideas for adding more hands-on creativity to your life
- Resources for ongoing exploration and experimentation
- Delightful ways analog elements can enhance your digital projects

Recomending Reading

- **Hand Mind Connection** (An essay aka: Handmind in Covidtide by Alan Jacobs)



Collage by Austin Kleon

Cross-Stitch

Whether you're stitching on paper or fabric, it's super easy to get started!

Create your own design in *seconds* with this hack: can use InDesign with a free "stitch" font, then just print it out on thick card stock and pre-punch the holes, trace it onto the material of your choice using a heat-erasable pen, or print it directly onto Sticky Fabri-Solvy—and start stitching!

Materials

Cross-stitching requires very few materials. All you need is:

- A design (search Etsy or make your own!)
- embroidery floss (cheap!)
- embroidery needles (cheap!)
- something to stitch on (paper or fabric like 14-count aida)
- hoop (if desired)
- something to poke holes with (if stitching on paper)—a needle shoved into a cork works great!

Resources

- FREE tutorial from **yours truly** on Michaels' website for making cute pins/keychains/magnets
- Adobe Valentines (download FREE with code CREATIVEPRO)
- Free We With Me Valentine
- Learn to create cross-stitch patterns in Illustrator

- Free “stitch” fonts
- Sticky Fabri-Solvy: Printable rinse-away pattern transfer
- Frixion Pens: Heat-Erasable ink
- Check out StitchPeople for a systematized way to create your own cross-stitch portraits!
- Like it spicy? Look into Subversive Cross-Stitch

Crochet / Knitting

Crochet is such a great hobby! You can take it with you anywhere—and it doesn’t require batteries!

- I have a slew of beginner crochet classes on Skillshare where I walk you through simple and quick projects from start to finish, teaching you everything from how to hold your yarn, to how to read a pattern.
- Check out this amazing knitting font system/tool from Knit Hello.
- If you’re interested in crocheting graphed designs, look into Corner to Corner (C2C) crochet, crochet graphgans, tapestry crochet, and more!

Printing on Fabric

Did you know that you can have your designs printed directly onto fabric? Whether you’re designing in Illustrator, Photoshop, or something else, Spoonflower has loads of resources to inspire and empower you. From there—the possibilities are endless!

Resources

- Spoonflower: Print your designs on fabric!
- Learn how easy it is to create Cut & Sew projects
- Check out their Artist Corner for more detailed information, FAQs, and tutorials for designers

Embroidery

- I loooove the look of embroidered photos! For details, check out this tutorial on Spoonflower showcasing the work of Robert Mahar.
- Peggy Dean also has a Skillshare class on this subject.
- **Yours truly** has a new FREE video-on-demand class on Michaels’ website about stitching on paper!
- Check out the fascinating history of embroidery’s role in WWI

Flower Pounding

If you’ve got weeds in your yard, you can easily turn them into art with just a hammer! You can “print” your creations on fabric

or paper, then add details with a pen, marker, paintbrush—or sewing machine! Check out this free tutorial.

Papercraft

Working with paper is amazing! It's readily available, generally pretty inexpensive, and all you need to get started (besides the paper) is some scissors and glue!

Resources

- This is the tutorial I followed to create the hidden panel card for my son's birthday party. No special tools were required, just paper, scissors, a ruler, and some adhesive.
- Paper engineer and designer, Kelli Anderson has a fascinating blog, a captivating series of books, and is all around inspiring.
- If you fall in love with paper crafting, at some point, you might want to explore cutting machines like the ones from Cricut. They offer a lot of options at a variety of price points.
- Some of my favorite paper crafters (with excellent cut files) are Mary at SVGcuts and Mandee from Designs by Miss Mandee.
- If you want to brush up on how to prep Illustrator files for a cutting machine, Mandee has a great series of tutorials.
- If you're into junk journals, check out Nataša from TreasureBooks on YouTube. She's beyond brilliant.
- Cricut curious? Check out the CreativePro livestream for a look at how to design for cutting machines with Illustrator!

Paper Beads

If you haven't tried making paper beads in awhile, it's worth revisiting! Inspiration abounds on YouTube and there are loads of easy (and non-toxic) ways to seal your beads and really level up their finish with regular Mod Podge, Dimensional Magic (also by Mod Podge), or UV resin.

- Inspiring tutorial from Nataša of TreasureBooks
- How to make long, flat paper beads
- Great basic tutorial from Mod Podge
- Incredible options for sealing and finishing your paper beads (Dimensional Magic is another alternative to UV Resin)
- Even more great ideas for finishing off your beads—this time with embossing powder

Print Making & Collage

In the same vein as papercrafts, print making and collage are another accessible way to explore hands-on crafting.

Resources

- Wendy (from WillaWanders.com) has loads of tutorials, inspiration, and online community. She often collaborates with other mixed-media artists to offer an incredible online learning opportunity in the form of Fodder School.
- GelliArts is the maker of the Gelli Printing Plate. Their blog is bursting with tutorials and inspiration. Here's a quick video with the basics.
- Another great beginner's guide video, this time from Susan Clifton.
- Gel Printing 101 tutorial from Lou Collins.
- One of my favorite printmaking YouTubers, FroyleArt.

LEGO/Brick Printing

- LEGO: Lots of Dots
- Prixel: kits & accessories
  (super rad 20pg idea book available for free)
- Open Press Project
- Ogden Contemporary Arts
- LEGO Dots + Gelli Printing

Paint By Number

When was the last time you enjoyed the meditative process of a good ol' fashioned paint-by-number kit?

These aren't necessarily the kits you remember from childhood. These days, there's a wide range of styles available—and it's also super easy to create your own designs!

Resources

- Upload your own photo or illustration to PBNify.com and create your own masterpiece. Or create a kit and give a ready-to-paint gift to someone special.
- PinkPicasso has a great selection of kits for grown-ups to enjoy. They also offer custom kits.
- SimplePainting also has a wide selection of ready made kits.
- Want to paint your own design but don't want to mess with putting it all together yourself? Check out CanvasByNumbers.

Lasers!

Lasers come in a variety of sizes, powers, capabilities, and technologies (like C02 lasers vs. diode lasers) for everyone from entry-level hobbyists to shop keeping professionals. Check out xTool and GlowForge for info, tutorials, inspiration, and more.

CosPlay: Worbla & EVA Foam

If you have dreams of making your own armor or super hero costume (or anything else you can dream up) you'll want to look into EVA Foam and Worbla. There's a robust community of makers with loads of tutorials,

Resources

- Worbla USA
- SKS Props

Fake Bakes

Ok, this may be the one thing I haven't yet figured out how to tie back to digital design skills, but it's so fun that I had to share! "Fake Bakes" are when you craft/sculpt realistic looking treats from utterly inedible materials. Essentially, they're delicious *looking* sculptures—that you definitely shouldn't eat. You can search YouTube and find a million tutorials and examples. My favorite fake baker is Dawn from ThePineTree. Her banana split tutorial is a real winner!

Random

- Locomotion Anamorphic Pottery
- Pig Pen Cipher Font
- Want to channel your inner rage productively? Check out the Craftivist Collective.
- In Defense of Temporary Obsessions, Ankita shah

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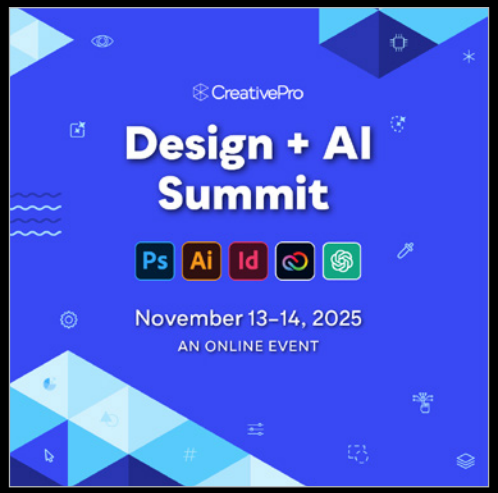
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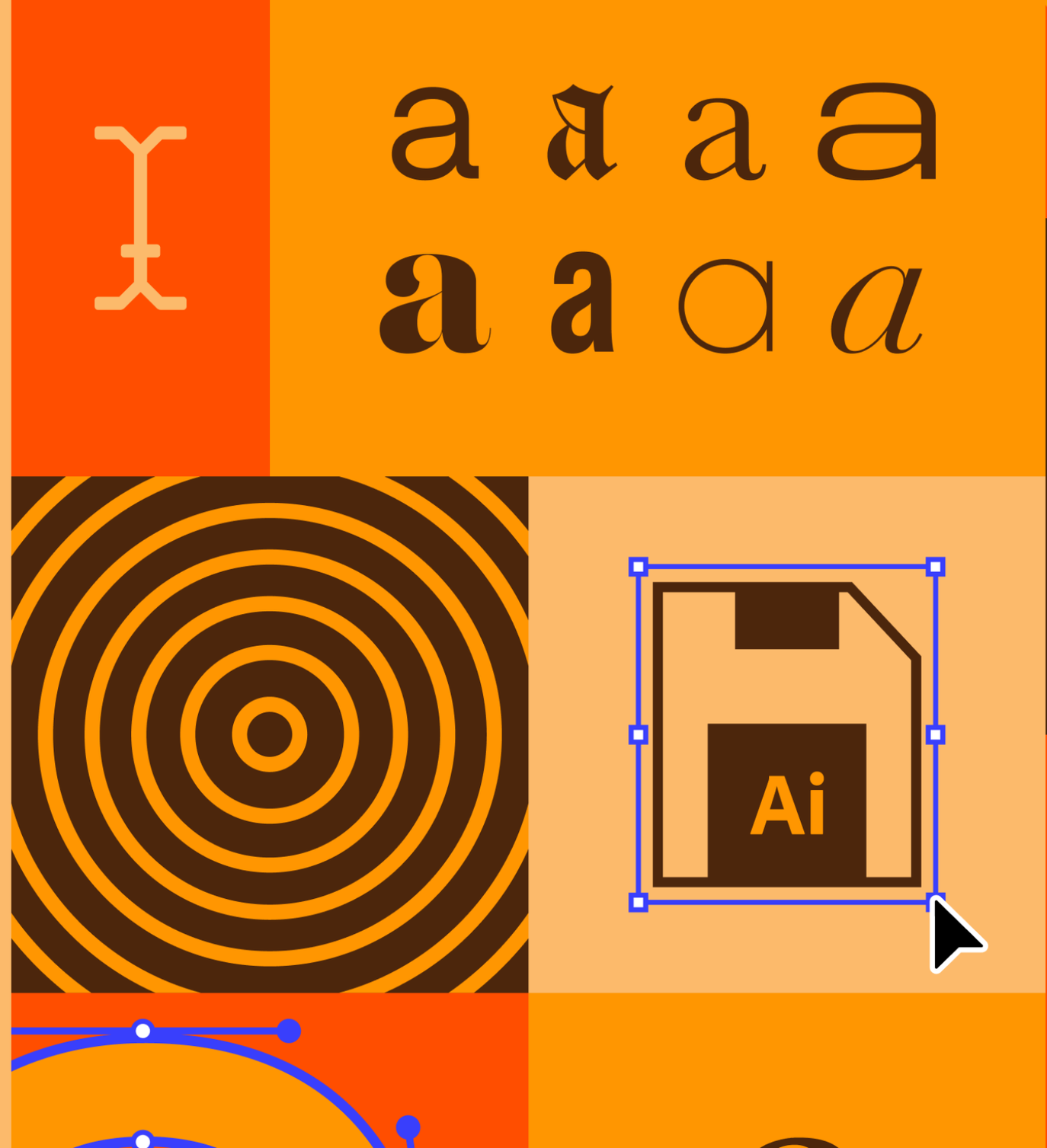
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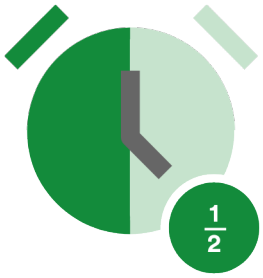
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1/2

"We spend **half the time** we used to getting creative approved."

Source: PageProof Customer

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Source: PageProof Customer



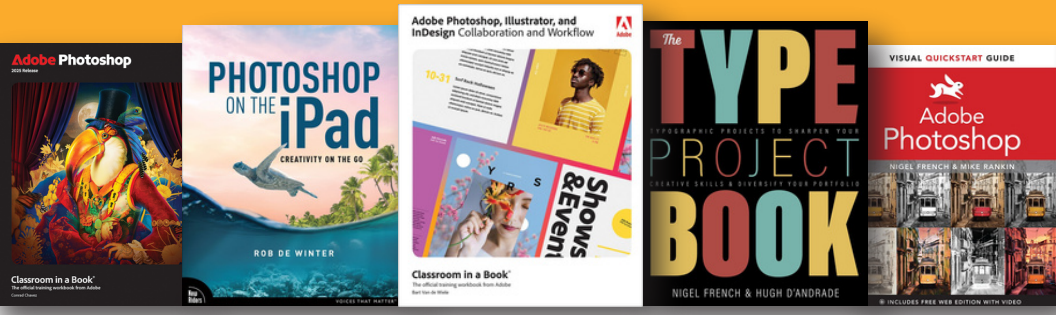
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The Graphic Artists Guild

About the Guild

The Graphic Artists Guild's primary purpose is to help our members compete effectively in an ever-changing field. We enable graphic artists and other design professionals to build and maintain successful careers by providing skills and support—from advice on the daily tasks of running a creative business to going to bat for our creative community with business and government leaders.







Our Mission

The purpose of the Graphic Artists Guild is to promote and protect the social, economic and professional interests of its members. We are committed to welcoming, serving and improving conditions for graphic artists at all skill levels while raising standards for the entire industry. In addition to creative professionals, our members include educators, intellectual property lawyers, artist representatives, and others in related and supporting industries.

Why join us?

The Graphic Artists Guild helps members thrive in a changing industry by providing skills, support, and advocacy for creative professionals. Want to become a member?

Use the code **2025CPW** to receive a 20% discount on your Annual Pro or Leader Membership



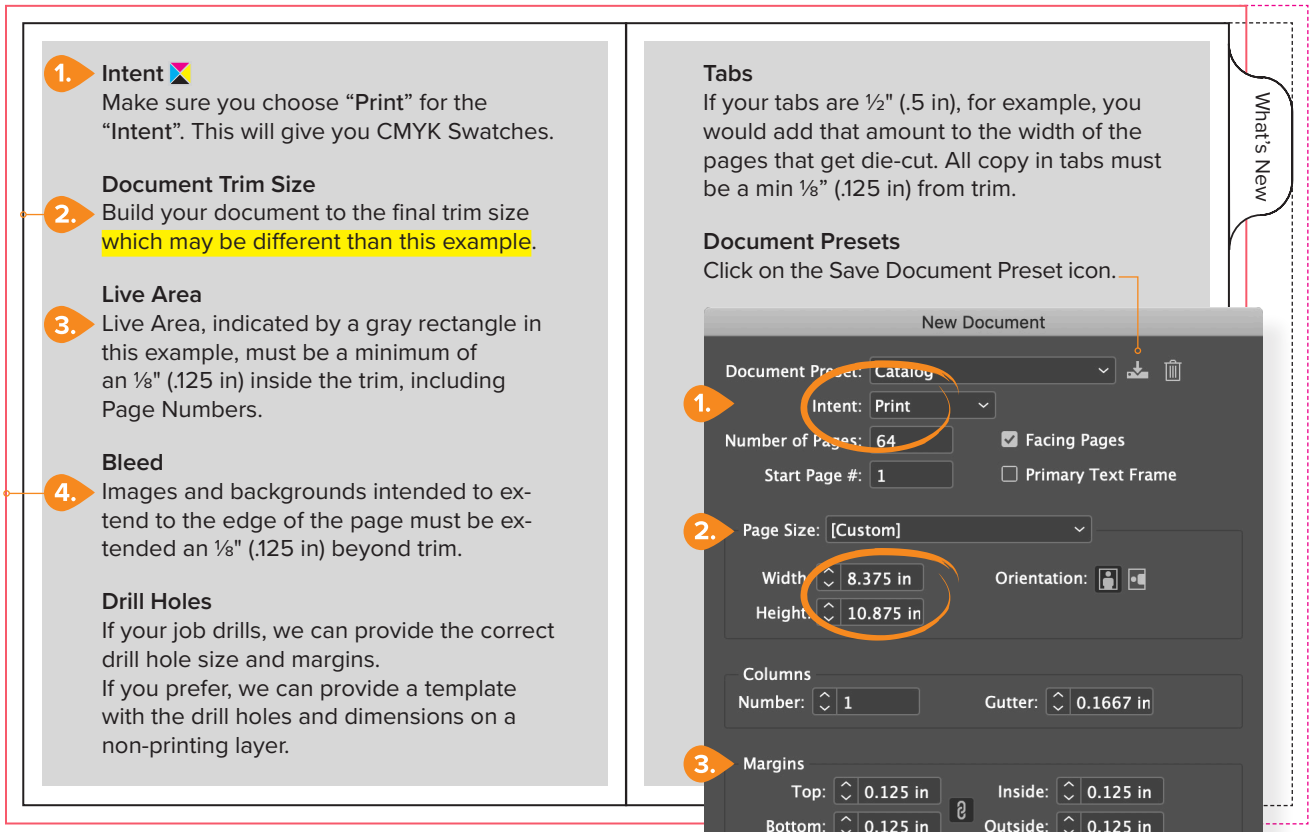
Quick Start Guide

05.16.2025

InDesign–Getting it Right, Right from the Start

Document Setup

Properly setting up your document is crucial. Start by making sure your document is setup to the correct trim size with a minimum of ⅛ inch (.125) margins and ⅛ inch (.125) bleed.



Legacy 'New Document' Dialog

TIP Catalogs and Magazines are typically set-up as **Facing Pages** (two-page spreads), but PDFs should be Exported as **Pages**, **not Spreads**. Of course there are some exceptions. Please contact us with any questions.

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