



## **What is the best preparation for a career in graphic design?**

Artistic teens interested in pursuing careers as graphics designers can prepare for a graphics design major while still in high school by selecting courses that will help them in their college endeavors. While a flair for the arts can be nourished by courses in the arts, there are actually several subjects that will benefit future college students as they take their first steps along the path to becoming graphic designers.

### Art Courses

Students intrigued by graphic design should take as many art courses as possible. Exploring drawing, painting, printing, photography, art history, digital imaging, graphic design and other similar subjects helps teens broaden their understanding of how art functions, refine their own art skills and develop a portfolio of varied works that might aid them in their college admission process. While in high school students should take advantage of courses or summer programs for high school students offered by colleges.

### Computer Courses

Computers are everywhere in the modern world, and art is no exception. Much of today's graphic design work is for websites. Many graphic design majors include web design in their curriculum. Classes in programming languages, computer graphics, desktop publishing, web design and computer animation can give students a real head start.

### English Courses

According to The Princeton Review, graphic designers report strong communication skills are vital to their professional success. A large part of graphic design involves creating effective advertising and marketing. Graphic designers must be able to sell a product, and they must be able to sell themselves and their work to the companies who hire them. The writing skills honed in English classes can prepare students to produce clean, error-free copy. More importantly, the analytical skills they learn can help them examine the message they are trying to get across and the audience they are trying to reach, enabling them to discover effective ways to communicate with their designs.

### Business Courses

Many graphic design majors require students to study business as well. It makes a great deal of sense; some graphic designers become entrepreneurs, operating their own graphic design firms. But, even when graphic designers are employed by newspapers, magazines, advertising agencies, public relations firms or graphic design companies, most of their clients are businesses. Understanding how businesses work aids graphic designers in better understanding and meeting their clients' needs. Business classes also prepare students to work within a budget while still producing the quality product promised.

## **Freshman Entry Portfolios for graphic design fields for top programs in the U.S.-**

### Rhode Island School of Design

Your portfolio should show a selection of 12–20 examples of your best recent artwork. We suggest that the work reflect the full range of your ideas, interests, experience and abilities in the arts to date. Work presented can be in any medium (including film or video), in finished or sketch form, and the result of an assigned project or a self-directed exploration. We strongly recommend that you include a few pages from your journal or sketchbook to indicate your process of research, thinking and investigation. Drawings- Provide two drawing samples, each done on a sheet of white paper measuring 16"x 20" (40 cm x 50 cm).

We consider drawing to be as much about process as presentation and encourage you to consider your drawing submissions as exercises in experimental thinking and risk-taking more than as final presentations or examples of technical proficiency. We do not value any particular style of drawing more than another, so feel free to explore the full range of possible expression in your drawings. We are looking for work that reveals your distinct point of view. Using existing images from others as the direct source for your drawings, however, is not recommended.

### Maryland Institute College of Art

The portfolio should be a selection of recent artwork that represents your artistic interests and demonstrates your technical skills and ability. You should include examples of artwork that reflect the full range of your ideas, interests, experience and abilities in the arts to date.

### Carnegie Mellon

You should begin thinking about your portfolio as early as possible. We advise you to consider your portfolio as a design problem: How can you best present yourself and your work? If you're concerned about not having enough work to show, or you don't have a portfolio, we recommend that you supplement your application with this year's Design Project. If the Design Project is the only component in your digital portfolio, we recommend that you attend the optional on-campus portfolio review session so that we can discuss your project assignments with you and better assess your potential.

Arrange your portfolio to tell a story about who you are. Select projects that show a range of media and subject matter, while still emphasizing your strongest work. Try to strike a balance between final work and process work (that is, work that leads to the final version.)

#### Include a Variety of Work

Your portfolio should be an organized presentation of 15-20 original projects, including work such as:

#### Drawings

- 2-D and 3-D design
- Color work
- Paintings
- 3D work
- Digital work
- Inventions
- Supplemental work

A sketchbook, which counts as one item, is strongly recommended

We also strongly recommend that you include a variety of drawings. Whether they come from life or from your imagination, they should represent original, creative work. This is true of either degrees in Design:

#### Bachelor of Design

The Bachelor of Design (BDes) degree is a four-year degree that offers three areas of design specialization: products (industrial design), communication (graphic design) and the design of physical and digital environments. Our curriculum emphasizes the importance of designing for the interactions between people, the built (designed) world and the natural world (environment).

IDeATe

## Design, Arts and Technology Study Opportunities

Carnegie Mellon University's diverse and top-ranked academic programs in computing, engineering, design, and the arts are uniquely positioned to serve students who have interdisciplinary interests bridging technology and creative practice. The Integrative Design, Arts and Technology Network (IDeATe) connects students and faculty from across the university through coursework and collaborative studio experiences. You have the opportunity to integrate a concentration with your degree in any of the following eight creative industry areas: game design, animation and special effects, media design, learning media, sound design, entrepreneurship for creative industries, intelligent environments and physical computing.

### Virginia Commonwealth University

#### Portfolio Requirements

Submit 12 to 16 works of art that you have created within the past two years that show your promise in visual art and design. Present your strongest work and demonstrate your potential to develop a diverse set of skills and ideas should you be accepted into VCUarts. We prefer to see a diverse range of 2D and 3D media.

Drawing from observation is recommended, while copying anime, cartoons, graffiti or tattoos is discouraged.

### Parsons

Portfolio: The portfolio must be completed in SlideRoom only. Freshman applicants should submit a portfolio of eight to 12 pieces. Portfolios can include drawings, paintings, photographs, digital media, design, three-dimensional work, Web design, animation, video, and other digital media. Transfer applicants should submit a portfolio of eight to 12 pieces in the area of interest.

Artist Statement: What do you make, how do you make it, and why do you make? Ultimately, where do you visualize your creative abilities and academic study taking you after your education at Parsons? (Maximum 500 words.)

### Pratt

The School of Design is made up of four of Pratt's oldest and most esteemed disciplines and includes undergraduate education in Communications Design, Fashion Design, Industrial Design, and Interior Design; as well as graduate degrees in Industrial Design, Interior Design, Communications Design, and Package Design.

Students applying to any of the majors below must submit a visual portfolio, described below.

- Art and Design Education (HS Art Teacher Preparation/Certification)
- Communications Design (graphic design, illustration, advertising art direction)
- Fine Arts (painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, jewelry, ceramics)
- Digital Arts (2-D animation, 3-D animation and motion arts, interactive arts)
- Fashion Design
- Undecided Art and Design
- History of Art and Design (BFA) (BA applicants see below)
- Industrial Design
- Interior Design

Visual Portfolio: The visual portfolio should consist of 12-20 pieces of your best work. It should consist of a variety of media and approaches. It can include assignment-based projects, self-directed work or pieces of a collaborative nature. The portfolio does not need to be major-specific and can include any type of work including paintings, drawings, sculpture, ceramics, etc. In addition, students must submit three to five observational drawings. Examples of observational work include landscape, still-life, self-portrait, figure drawings, and interior spaces.

Please do not include work that copies photographs, uses the grid system or directly replicates any other artist's work (including replicating anime drawings, cartoons, or video game character designs).