



GRAPHIC DESIGN

HOW TO BE A SUPERB GRAPHIC DESIGNER

1/3

Document designed/updated by Hester 03 06 22

JOIN AIGA

Join AIGA (the professional association for design)!

Check out the events offered by the national and regional chapters. AIGA Memphis and AIGA Birmingham are the closest chapters.

aiga.org

JOIN THE MSU AIGA STUDENT GROUP

Become an active member of the MSU AIGA Student Group!

instagram: [@aigamsu](https://www.instagram.com/aigamsu)

ENTER COMPETITIONS

Entering juried student competitions is an important part of continuing your education in Graphic Design at MSU.

Recognition through these competitions is great for both you and our program and is a major reason why our program has garnered national and international acclaim. You never know what a judge might pick, so put yourself out there! Most competitions have entry fees, but they are a worthy investment.

- AAF American Advertising Awards
- Adobe Design Achievement Awards
- Communication Arts
- Creative Quarterly
- DSVC National Student Show & Conference
- Flux National Student Competition
- GLITCH National Student Competition
- Graphis New Talent



GRAPHIC DESIGN

HOW TO BE A SUPERB GRAPHIC DESIGNER

2/3

LOOK AT GRAPHIC DESIGN

One of the most important things you can do as a beginning graphic designer is to open your eyes and mind to the world. Be inspired to be a great designer by looking at superior graphic design. Many publications offer discounted subscription rates for students.

MAGAZINES/PERIODICALS

3×3

Communication Arts

Creative Quarterly

Emigre

EYE

GRAPHIC (South Korea)

HOLO

IDEA (Japan)

Illustration Magazine

Lürzer's Archive

Novum (Germany)

UPPERCASE

Wired

BOOKS

History of Graphic Design by Meggs + Purvis

Graphic Design: A New History by Eskilson

Letterwork: Creative Letterforms in GD by Neuenschwander

Typography: An Encyclopedic Survey by Freidl, Ott, + Stein

Graphic Style: From Victorian to New Century by Heller + Chwast

Understanding Comics by McCloud

Envisioning Information and Visual Explanations by Tufte

Typographica by Poynor

Robin and Lucienne Day: Pioneers of Modern Design by Jackson

20th Century Pattern Design by Jackson

Genius Moves by Heller + Illic

Logo Design Love by Airey

Seventy-nine Short Essays on Design by Bierut

Typology by Heller + Fili

Vintage Type and Graphics by Heller + Fili

Made You Look by Sagmeister

Things I Have Learned In My Life So Far by Sagmeister

The Vignelli Canon by Vignelli

Popular Lies about Graphic Design by Ward

LOOK AT ART TOO

Go to museums. Hit up the library.

We'll help you get started... Look at anything about Jean-Michel Basquiat, the Bauhaus, Herbert Bayer, Aubrey Beardsley, David Clowes, Robert Crumb, Robin and Lucienne Day, Charles and Ray Eames, Emigré, Hannah Hoch, David Hockney, Paul Klee, Joan Miro, William Morris, Paul Rand, Bradbury Thompson, Maira Kalman, El Lissitzky, Picasso, Alexander Rodchenko, Jan Tschichold, Chris Ware, Andy Warhol, printmaking, book design, bookmaking, calligraphy, and photography...



GRAPHIC DESIGN

HOW TO BE A SUPERB GRAPHIC DESIGNER

3/3

DO ART

Draw, paint, print, build, sew — make art! Work with your hands! Fine Art is an integral part of a strong graphic design career and is one of the reasons why the work from the MSU Graphic Design concentration is so strong.

DO GRAPHIC DESIGN

Practice making graphic design. Make projects for yourself. Try to recreate pieces of design that appeal to you. Make work for events/people/things (posters, flyers, etc.) you care about. Volunteer your skills to worthy causes.

DO SOFTWARE TUTORIALS

Do the tutorials that come with graphic design software (Adobe Creative Cloud, etc.). They may seem boring, but it helps more than you can imagine to familiarize yourself with the basics of the software. You'll definitely be ahead of the game if you spend some time with these.

lynda.com / skillshare.com

GET A JOB

Think about getting a summer internship or job at a printer, design firm, advertising firm, newspaper, magazine — working anywhere related to graphic design is only going to help your abilities as a beginning graphic design student.

Once you've completed your first year of GD courses (GD1, Type1, and GD2), you'll be ready to apply for more demanding/competitive design internships. These internships may qualify for college credit but we'll discuss this when you're in GD1/Type1.

GET OUTTA THE HOUSE

Go to museums, zoos, exhibits, parks. See the stuff there is to see and look at the signage, displays, and other graphic design that helps you experience the place. Go on trips and keep a visual journal of your travels. Attend conferences to meet other designers and possible future employers.

KEEP A SKETCHBOOK

Entering the graphic design concentration does not mean your days as a Fine Artist are over. Far from it. Keep a sketchbook to record ideas that you have, ideas that inspire you. Do thumbnails of designs you see or imagine. Mark it all down. You never know.

COLLECT AND PLAY

Gather different and interesting paper samples, borrow or buy interesting art materials to experiment with, experiment with scanning real objects on the glass top, etc. Experiment!