

Graphic designer: job description

What does a graphic designer do? Typical employers | Qualifications and training | Key skills

Graphic designers/artists design graphics for use in media products such as magazines, labels, advertising and signage. Typical activities include:

- liaising with clients to determine their requirements and budget
- managing client proposals from typesetting through to design, print and production
- working with clients, briefing and advising them with regard to design style, format, print production and timescales
- developing concepts, graphics and layouts for product illustrations, company logos, and websites
- determining size and arrangement of illustrative material and copy, and font style and size
- preparing rough drafts of material based on an agreed brief
- reviewing final layouts and suggesting improvements if required
- liaising with external printers on a regular basis to ensure deadlines are met and material is printed to the highest quality.

Graphic designers work mainly nine-to-five, but deadlines may require working additional hours. Opportunities for graphic designers exist in cities throughout the country, although freelance designers can work from home.

Career development will more than likely require frequent job movement to widen your experience and develop your portfolio.

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Typical employers of graphic designers

- Advertising agencies
- Large print houses
- Brand agencies
- Signage companies
- Book, magazine and newspaper publishers
- Multimedia companies including the games industry and web development
- Television and broadcasting companies
- The packaging industry
- In-house graphic design services of major national and international organisations and companies

Qualifications and training required

While entry is open to non-graduates, preference will be given to those with relevant degrees. A degree in graphic design is advantageous although other art and design subjects will be accepted. A range of relevant postgraduate programmes are also available in many higher education institutions.

You will need work experience and a portfolio of work to show employers. This can be obtained through internships and holiday work. Employers also

expect a good knowledge of design software, such as Quark Xpress, InDesign or Illustrator plus photo-editing software, such as PhotoShop.

Vacancies for graphic designers attract strong competition so [speculative applications](#) are advisable.

To find out how to get into a career in this area via a school leaver route, visit the [media section of TARGETcareers](#), our website aimed at school leavers.

Key skills for graphic designers

- Excellent IT skills, especially with design and photo-editing software
- Exceptional creativity and innovation
- Excellent time management and organisational skills
- Accuracy and attention to detail
- An understanding of the latest trends and their role within a commercial environment
- Professional approach to time, costs and deadlines

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