



TIPS FOR CREATING BRANDED DESIGNS IN CANVA

The screenshot shows the Canva website homepage. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for Home, Templates, Features, Learn, Pricing, and a prominent purple "Create a design" button. To the left, a sidebar shows a "Personal" account summary with 81 items. Below the sidebar, there are sections for "Home" (with links to All your designs, Shared with you, All your folders, and Trash), "Team" (with Create a team), and "Tools" (Brand Kit, Video, Poster, Presentation (16:9), and Instagram Post). A "Content Planner" section is also visible. The main content area features a large, colorful "What will you design?" banner with a search bar and icons for For you, Presentations, Social media, Video, Print products, and More. Below this, there's a "You might want to try..." section with thumbnail previews for a video, poster, presentation, and Instagram post. At the bottom, there's a "Recent designs" section with a placeholder image and a "Try Canva Pro" button.

Canva vs. Adobe Creative Cloud Express

UW-Madison has an enterprise license for Adobe Creative Cloud software, which is free to all university faculty, staff, and student workers. Adobe software is the industry standard for graphic design and includes InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop, After Effects, and more.

UW-Madison does not have an enterprise license for Canva, but we understand that many university employees appreciate the ease of use of this product.

If you are familiar with Canva but prefer to use a campus-supported software with the features of a pro account, check out [Adobe Creative Cloud Express](#), which functions similarly to Canva. It's free and included with the rest of the Creative Cloud Suite.

The screenshot shows the Adobe Creative Cloud Express web interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with icons for Home, Projects, Brands, Libraries, and Learn. Below the navigation is a search bar with the placeholder "Search all templates". A large purple "+" button is prominently displayed, followed by the text "Create a new project". To the right of this are buttons for "Custom size" and "View all >". The main content area features several template cards: "From your templates" (a dashed square icon), "Instagram story" (yellow card with text "Find your voice at work"), "Instagram post" (pink card with text "Quit Caffeine"), "Facebook post" (green card with text "Living Sustainably 101"), "Poster" (blue card for a "Creative Writing Workshop"), and "Logo" (grey card with a handwritten "Hazel"). Below this section is a "Try a quick action" section with tabs for "Recommended" (which is selected), "Image", "Video", and "PDF". Under "Recommended", there are four buttons: "Remove background" (with a photo icon), "Convert to GIF" (with a video camera icon), "Resize video" (with a video camera icon), and "Resize image" (with a photo icon). At the bottom left is a "Recent" section with a message "You currently have no projects." and a "Get started" button. On the right side of the interface, there's a sidebar with a red vertical border containing the following steps:

- Go to <https://www.adobe.com/express/>
- Click on "Sign in"
- Click on "Log in with Adobe ID"
- Use your wisc.edu email and then click "Continue"
- You will either log in with your NetID or click on "Company or School Account," if prompted

HOW TO GET THERE

What can I do to stay on brand when working in Canva?

1

USE BRAND COLORS

Our university has specific brand colors that are instantly recognizable to our audiences. Not just any red will do. We have colors that are used for print (posters, brochures, flyers, etc.) and colors that are used for digital spaces (social media posts, TV displays, PowerPoint presentations, etc.). So before you start your project, you'll want to ask yourself whether it will be printed or viewed on a screen.

Print



#CD1543 #FFFFFF #231F20 #E6E7E8 #BCBEC0

Digital



#C5050C #FFFFFF #494949 #9B0000

2

SELECT THESE FONTS

Not all fonts are available in Canva. These include our feature brand fonts: Verlag and Vitesse. As alternatives, we have selected the following typefaces that are available in the free version of Canva.

Now

Similar to Verlag. Can be used for titles, subheadings, body copy, etc.

Merriweather

Best for longer paragraph (body) text. Can be used sparingly for titles or subheads.

3

UTILIZE CAMPUS PHOTO LIBRARIES

Professional photos can enhance your work and bring visual variety to your communications, but they must be selected with care, used appropriately, and be relevant to your message.

Questions to ask yourself when choosing images:

1. Does this photo relate to the content in the material I'm creating?
2. Am I using this photo in an appropriate and accurate context?
Keep the original context of the photo in mind and ensure that you're not changing the content of the photo by presenting it in a different or misleading context.
3. Has my use changed the original meaning of the photo? The content of a photo must never be changed or manipulated.

UW-Madison Photo Library

uwmadison-photos.photoshelter.com

Photo usage guidance + links to other campus photo libraries

brand.wisc.edu/multimedia/photography



4

CHOOSE FROM HUNDREDS OF GRAPHIC ELEMENTS, ICONS, AND ILLUSTRATIONS

We have a ton of fun graphics available to download on Box in a variety of colors and file types, all helping to keep the tone and look of the UW-Madison brand. They are also categorized by print or digital use, so you know which ones to use for a given project.

Brand Elements Package 1

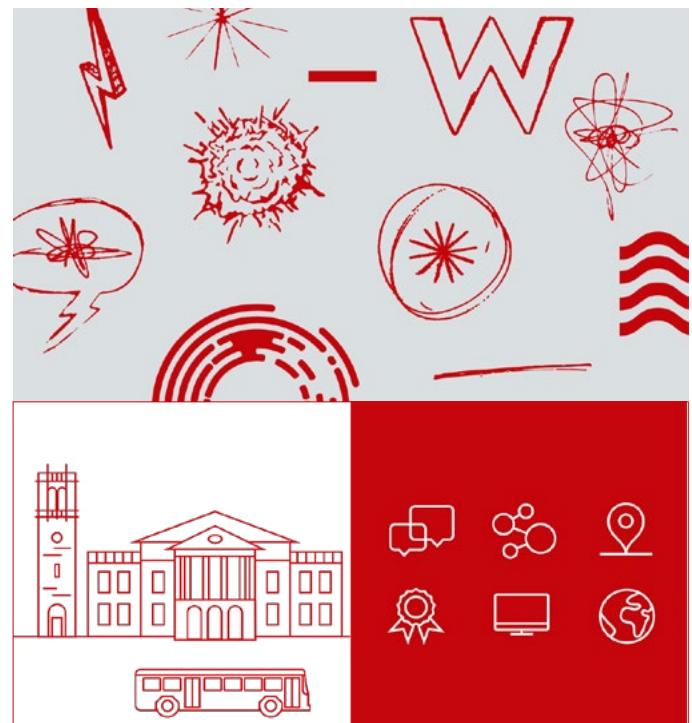
uwmadison.box.com/v/brand-elements-package1

Brand Elements Package 2

uwmadison.box.com/v/brand-elements-package2

Icons and Illustrations

uwmadison.box.com/v/icons-and-illustrations



5

UPLOAD AND USE YOUR UNIT'S LOGO

(when appropriate)

Not all materials need a logo. Social media posts, for example, do not, because they come from your account, so your audience knows who you are. But if you're creating a flyer to hang around campus, adding your logo would be beneficial.

The most current departmental logos can be found at: brand/wisc.edu/logo-generator

Create your departmental UW logo
Create a full suite of print and digital logos for your unit using a tool that lets you specify line-by-line placement of your information.
[Create Logo](#)

Search for an existing logo
Once we've created your suite of logos, you can access and download the files anytime by searching for them here:
 [Search](#)
• Master's in Sports Leadership-School of Education
• School of Education
• School of Education Department of Educational Policy Studies

Type in your unit name.

Choose Your Logos
[Print Logos \(PDF\)](#) [Digital Logos \(PNG\)](#)

Logos for Print Projects (PDF)
 Full Color Flush Left

School of Education
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Two Color Flush Left

School of Education
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Black & White Flush Left

Don't See the Logo You Need?
If you need a different file type from those provided for specialized projects, please contact University Marketing.
brand@umark.wisc.edu
608-262-0948

Select the version you need. Download and save it. Then upload to Canva.

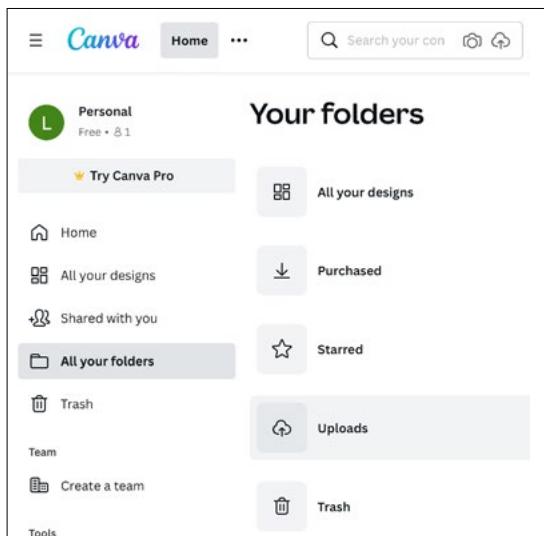
Great! Show me how.

FIRST, UPLOAD BRAND GRAPHICS AND LOGOS TO CANVA

You will need some time for this initial set up, but once you have uploaded graphics to Canva, they will remain there and be ready for any project you create.

1. Look through the Box folders linked in **tip 4 above**. Download and save any of the files that might be useful for your projects.
Note: Canva accepts jpg, png, tiff, svg, and mov files, so you'll only want to download these formats.
2. If you don't already have your logo saved somewhere, you can go to the Logo Generator linked from **tip 5 above** and search for, download, and save your logo.
3. In Canva, go to **All your folders > Uploads**. Then click on the **Upload button** and navigate to the folder where you saved the graphics.

Note: You can select multiple files at once to upload. Free Canva users can upload up to 5GB of media.



TO ADD COLORS AND PHOTOS, START A PROJECT

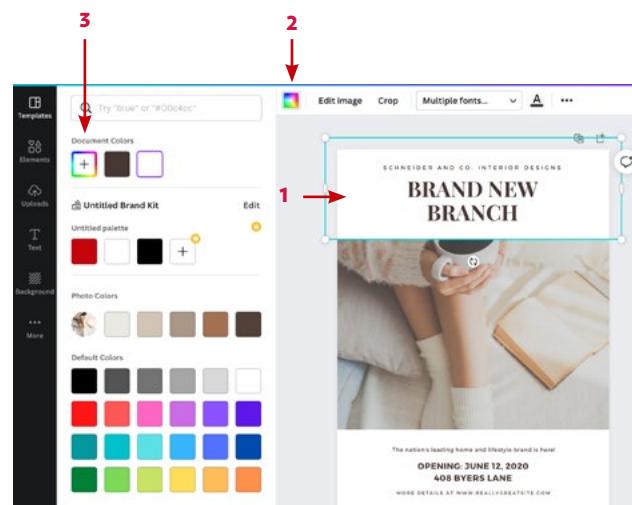
We'll use a poster as a print example.

In Canva, go to **Templates > Marketing > Posters**

You can choose to create a blank poster or select one of the templates.

To add brand colors to your document, 1) click on an element in the template, such as the white rectangle at the top of this screenshot. 2) Then click on the rainbow-colored square at the top. This will open a window that will allow you to add your document colors by 3) clicking on the + square. Now you can add all of the brand print colors from **tip 1** by copying and pasting the hex codes.

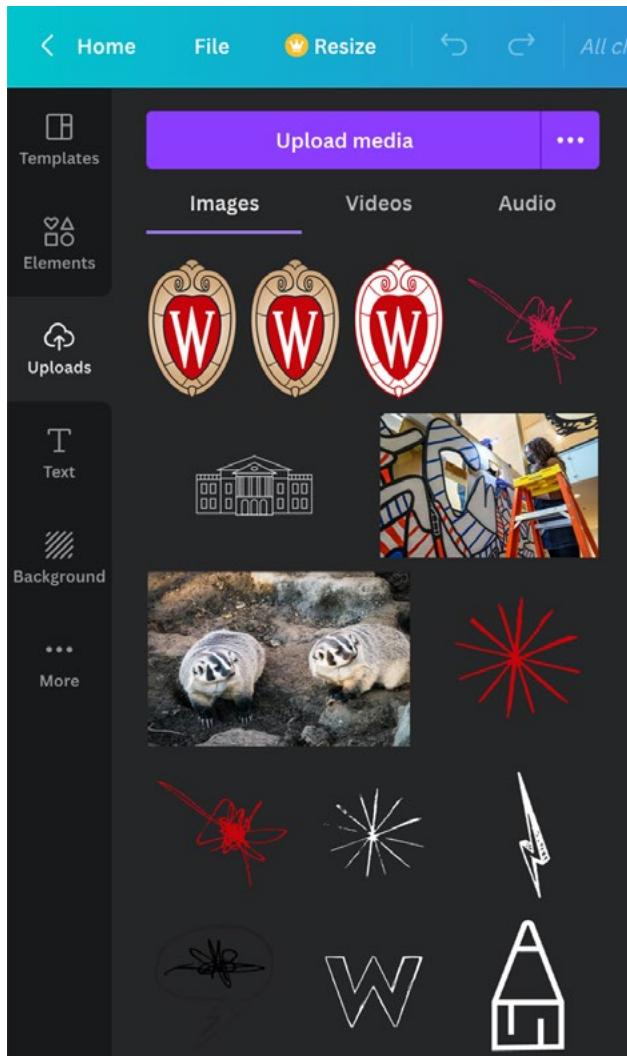
Note: You will have to add colors each time you create a new document unless you duplicate your project to use again.



To add photos to your document, either download and save relevant photos from one of the campus photo libraries (**tip 3**) or use your own if they're high quality and relevant.

Note: Photos on the Internet are typically protected by copyright law and are not allowed to be used without explicit permission from the copyright holder. If you don't know the status of a photo you would like to use, it's best not to use it.

Click on **Uploads** and then on the **Upload Media button** to navigate to the saved photo(s). Once in the uploads folder, you can click on any image in that folder to add it to your document.



TO CHANGE FONTS

Simply use the text tool to highlight or select document text. A dropdown menu of fonts will appear. Choose from one of the fonts recommended in **tip 2**. You can decide which font weight looks best for your design.

Note: The free version of Canva requires that you select the fonts you want from the dropdown for each newly created document.

EXAMPLE OF BRANDED POSTER CREATED IN CANVA



DIGITAL MATERIALS

To create on-brand digital materials in Canva, such as Instagram stories or presentation designs, follow the same steps outlined above. You'll choose a template that matches the type of document you're creating and keep in mind that the colors for digital are different from the colors for print.

There are other distinctions between preparing files for print and digital that we will not detail here, but for Canva, the best rule of thumb is to use large graphics/photos to keep your designs looking as crisp as possible no matter what kind of material you are creating. Photos that are 1MB or larger will usually reproduce well.