

# Intro to Graphic Design

## Lesson One

### What is graphic design?

Let's break up this phrase and take a detailed look at what it really means. According to Merriam-Webster (aka the dictionary), graphic design<sup>1</sup> is defined as:

*"the art or profession of using design elements (as typography and images) to convey information or create an effect."*

In essence, you are taking text and elements of design and putting them together in one format to create a message, invoke a feeling, promote a product, or induce a reaction (like a call to action).

Graphic design is everywhere, from packaging on millions of products, to Facebook® and social media memes, e-newsletters, flyers, postcards, logos, websites, product labels, billboards, etc. It's everywhere, whether we realize it or not. We live in a world where people want to see images more than they want to read an article. If the meaning of the article can be conveyed in a Facebook meme, then that's what is shared in social media. A really good design will draw you into purchasing that nifty gadget, sharing a post on Facebook, reading an article, or eating at a particular restaurant.

This course is going to focus on the basics of graphic design. In particular, we're going to discuss:

- the legality of graphic design (things to be aware of)
- the basics (importance of fonts, colors, white space, and more)
- the message (what idea you are conveying in the design)
- the design (setting up the design so that it flows the way it should), and
- the outcome (what you can do as a graphic designer).

Each lesson will end with an activity which helps to solidify the lesson. As we get further into the course, my suggestion is that you create multiple designs. The more you practice a skill, the better you will become.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/graphic%20design>

**Goals for this course**

By the end of this course, you should be able to create aesthetically pleasing graphics. As I mentioned before, this is a basic graphic design course and will cover just that ... the basics. We will not be using a particular software (like Adobe® Illustrator® or Photoshop®). In fact, you'll be using free software and design programs that are on the Internet. The end result is for you to learn HOW to create a unique, eye-catching, and interesting design, not necessarily work through a particular program.

SAMPLE

# Lesson #1 Assignment

For this week's activity, I want you to find three designs that catch your interest and answer these questions about each design.

**What makes the design stand out?**

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**What colors are in the design?**

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**How many images are used within the design? One, two, or none?**

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**Was it an image that caught your eye or the font? Perhaps it was the layout. Really analyze the picture to see what you like about it.**

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**What is the format of the design? Is it a flyer? A postcard? Perhaps it's the label on a market carton, or maybe it's a Facebook meme.**

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**Based on the graphic design, what is its purpose? Is it selling something? Are you to call a number and schedule an appointment?**

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