



A Guide to Create A Portfolio

Depending on the job opportunity or grad school program you are pursuing you may be requested to submit a portfolio of your work. You may also decide to create an online portfolio of your work if you are in job fields such as marketing or graphic design. This guide was created to assist you in learning how to create a paper and online portfolio. This guide will focus on what a portfolio is, why you should consider creating one, and how to develop one. The final section will provide a comparison of a print vs. a digital format to help you decide on which format will work best for what you want to showcase. At the end of the handout you will find recommended websites to use to create an online portfolio. Please note most websites highlighted start with a free trial but will come with a charge when you choose to go live.

What Is A Portfolio?

A portfolio is a paper or online collection of your best projects that represents who you are, the types of work you produce, your personality, and your experience. There is no “one way” to create a portfolio, but there are basic elements that should be included. This guide will cover what those elements are.

Why Should I Create A Portfolio?

A professional portfolio is a career development tool that can be used for a number of purposes.

- **Telling Your Professional Story In A Compelling Way:**
 - Use your portfolio to communicate your strengths, talents, and core values in a way that also enables you to integrate your work experience and education.
- **Helping Establish Credibility:**
 - Enabling your work to be seen by others gives you the opportunity to showcase your capabilities and the range of projects you have been part of.
- **Enabling Someone To Visualize Working With You:**
 - Your portfolio allows someone to experience your results. This enables them to visualize and get a feel for what it is like to work with you creatively and professionally.
- **Experiencing Your Work:**
 - People tend to identify more closely with products they have experienced and seeing your work can help establish a favorable connection.
- **Showcasing Your Creativity:**
 - You can use your portfolio to showcase your work in whichever format highlights it best. Examples include YouTube videos or podcasts. There is no limit to what formats you can use.
- **Supplementing Your Verbal Skills:**
 - Having a visual reference for your work can help guide how you explain it so the conversation is less of a Q&A and more of a discussion on your skills.
- **Demonstrating Consistency:**

- You can use your portfolio to communicate your personal brand and the message you represent within your work.

How Should I Create A Portfolio? What Should I Include?

Your portfolio is a representation of your personal brand, your skills, and the types of projects you have worked on. Follow these tips for how to structure both a paper or online portfolio.

- **Determine What You Are Trying To Accomplish:**
 - Example: Is your portfolio being used to demonstrate skills highlighted on your resume? Your portfolio should then support the qualifications you have listed there.
 - Example: Is your portfolio being submitted as part of your application to be considered for a grad school program? Your portfolio should then highlight the range of projects you have been part of and the wide skills-set you have developed.
- **Make It Easy To Navigate:**
 - When you are showcasing multiple projects, placing everything on one page can be overwhelming- use categories to group similar projects together and to demonstrate the range of your skill-set.
 - Example: You are a Marketing Generalist who has skills in Social Media Strategy, Website Design and Product Launch Campaigns. You'll want to have examples of all of these types of work in your portfolio, but within different sections.
- **Share Who You Are:**
 - When you include an "About" section you can share details about who you are personally and professionally as well as what your style is. This enables someone to get an idea of what it would be like to work with you.

What Format Do I Choose? Print or Online?

Your portfolio is a key component of highlighting your work and your skill-set to others so choosing the right format is essential. There are benefits and some drawbacks to both a print and online format and this section is going to cover what those are.

Print Format

| Benefits | Drawbacks |
|--|--|
| Demonstrates the quality and detail of your images viewed physically on a page | High cost of printing |
| Complete control over who sees your work | Possibility of losing it and having to start from the beginning with assembly |
| You avoid the potential of technical issues when showcasing your portfolio | Bulky and awkward to carry around Chance of ruining pages if something is spilled on them |

Online Format

| Benefits | Drawbacks |
|---|---|
| Access to templates that assist you with portfolio design | Likely you will have to pay for a website and domain name |
| Make changes easily as you can add new work instantly | Potential of experiencing technical issues |
| Save money by not having to print everything | Limited to no control over who can view your work |
| Your portfolio will come with a link that makes it easy to share and send | Unless you create your portfolio as a single PDF the file size could be large making it harder to share |

Recommended Websites For Online Portfolio Creation

- **Carbonmade- carbonmade.com**
- **Crevado- crevado.com**
- **FolioHD- foliohd.com**
- **Journo Portfolio- journoportfolio.com**
- **Portfoliobox- portfoliobox.net**
- **Portfoliopen- portfoliopen.com**
- **Weebly- weebly.com**
- **Wix- wix.com**