

Visual branding checklist

Whether you think you just need a logo or an overflowing library, this list will help you determine what you really need in your branding toolbox to create an exceptional (and share-worthy) brand experience for your people.



YOUR VISION AND GOALS

Answering these questions will allow you to build a branding system that's meaningful and aligned to your goals. So it's crucial to not skimp on the honesty here, and if it's accessible to you, steal the ear of a business friend or hire a brand or strategy consultant to support you in working through this.

- Who do you want to work with (don't know? [Grab my Get More Fab Clients training to figure it out!](#))
- What's your vision for your business? What does the future you want for it, and your people, look like?
- What's your purpose in your business? How do you want people to feel when they interact with you?
- What makes your business different? What's the big result you provide ([I share a secret formula for this here](#))
- What do your people resonate with?
- What are their values? ([highly recommend that training for nailing this](#))
- What kinds of experiences are they looking for when hiring someone in your field?



THE CREATIVE DIRECTION

A great starting point is to think about how you want your people to feel and what they're drawn to. Then you'll infuse yourself, your values and beliefs into the mix too.

- Avoid looking for inspiration inside of your industry
- A colour story ([I've got 24 free and designer-approved palettes for you to grab here](#))
- Typography styles for your logo, marketing materials and website
- Illustration inspiration for any patterns or icons you may want to include
- Website designs and user experiences you love
- Print, packaging or marketing materials that you find beautiful, inspiring and aligned with your dream clients
- Stock photos that embody the mood and tone you're looking to create in your brand experience (try Unsplash or Pexels)
- Don't get hung up on designing any kind of grid-based layout that'll take hours to refine. Rather take a few moments to consider what you like about each image you find, and use that as your inspiration instead of the actual image.

Logos that are adaptable

It's not impossible to brand yourself with just one logo, but you'll find that variations allow you to keep your branding looking good (and crisp) across all uses.



Primary logo

- This one's going to be your main brand symbol or signifier and will be what you'll use to represent your brand in most cases.
- You want this one to have good legibility, even at a smaller size, so avoid lots of tiny details here.



Stack/horizontal

- This is a version of your primary logo in a different layout.
- If your primary logo is horizontal, you could do a vertically stacked option, for applications like profile images, business cards or anywhere that doesn't give you enough width to display the primary logo.
- If your primary logo is vertically stacked, you could do a horizontal option, for applications like website nav after page scroll, product packaging, pinterest graphics.



Word mark

- This one's handy to have, if your primary logo includes a monogram or illustrative element. This is great for text-based document that get branded like contracts.



Brand mark / monogram

- This is a standalone signifier for your brand. It's usually comprised of the first letters of the business name (or even just 1 letter) or an illustration that represents the business name.



Alternate marks

- These could include a combination of a brand mark and tagline, or illustrative element and stack, for example. They can add depth and richness to a layout, or enhance overall brand emphasis.

Colours that work well together

I recommend less is more, and you can always build on a base colour palette in the seasons to come, or when you work with a professional designer.

- Primary bold — your main brand colour
- Primary neutral — your main background colour
- Primary accent — your ‘pay attention to me’ colour
- Secondary neutral — your secondary background colour
- Button — your CTA and web-button colour
- Copy — your dark colour used for small headings and paragraph copy
- If you’re wanting a designer-approved colour palette, [you can find 24 of them here](#) — with keywords that describe each palette’s individual mood and tone so you can make the best choice for your brand.

A good quality font hierarchy

Just like with your colour palette, I recommend erring on the side of less with fonts.

- You’ll want to choose 2-3 fonts that will cover everything from Heading 1 to captions.
- A key thing to look for in font combinations is contrast. This could be a serif/sans serif combo, or a heavy/thin combo, or a wide/narrow combo.
- The hierarchy comes in with font size and weight. The bigger and heavier the font, the higher up in the hierarchy of information it is.



Templates

There's not getting around the fact that templates will make your life easier. Much easier! You can create templates for anything and everything you do regularly.

- Style the template with your visual branding elements so all if you have to do is copy and paste the new content in
- Keep consistency across multiple applications for templates and ensure you're using the same brand assets in the same places (same colours for links, same font for headings, same logo for brand emphasis)
- Templates could include:
 - Pinterest graphics
 - Instagram reel covers
 - PDFs or free resources for your blog
 - Client documents and communication
 - Marketing materials
 - Printed stationery
 - Youtube thumbnails and end screens
 - Podcast covers and marketing graphics



Rules and guidelines

Okay, maybe not quite sexy, but setting up some rules to guide how you use your branding assets will help you maintain a consistent brand image when you're creating content, I promise.

- Decide which logo you use where
- Determine which colour options you'll have for your logo and stick to them. I recommend one dark (for light backgrounds), one light (for dark backgrounds), one white and one black. This should cover all your bases.
- Which brand colours will you use for backgrounds? Which will you use for headings?
- If you have illustrations, how are you using them?
- If you have a tagline, which logo will you be pairing it with?



A brand photoshoot

Nope, this isn't a must but it really does elevate your brand experience tremendously.

- Decide what kinds of brand/business imagery you and your people resonate with. Snoop around on Instagram and see who your people follow.
- Partner with a photographer whose style you enjoy.
- Keep your brand tone and mood top of mind. How do you want people to feel when viewing your images on your website or Instagram? How can you bring that mood into the photos with location, props and styling.
- What colours do you want to include in your photos? Where can you find or create that kind of palette? Location, fashion, furniture and decor?
- Do you just want photos of yourself or some you could use a stock/texture/background photos?
- Create a Pinterest inspiration board and share it with your photographer. I'm sure they'd be keen to know what you have in mind.
- Consider drawing up a shot list to keep track of what shots you're hoping to get.



Hi! I'm Lorin Galloway

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I create intimate brand strategy, beautiful visual branding and rocking 'from-scratch' websites for business owners who want more clarity, confidence and growth and less rules, formulas and lost-in-the-crowd brand voices. So that they can have the business they dream of having.

WANT THE BUSINESS YOU DREAM OF HAVING, TOO?

Book a complimentary call and we'll kick it off by looking at your business vision and how we can support it with intimate strategy and design.

[Book a free call](#)