

# COLOR & TYPOGRAPHY QUICK GUIDE

A Simple Guide to Help Your Brand Look Professional, Consistent, and Intentional



By Imaginary Friends design studios



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Professional, Consistent, and Intentional**

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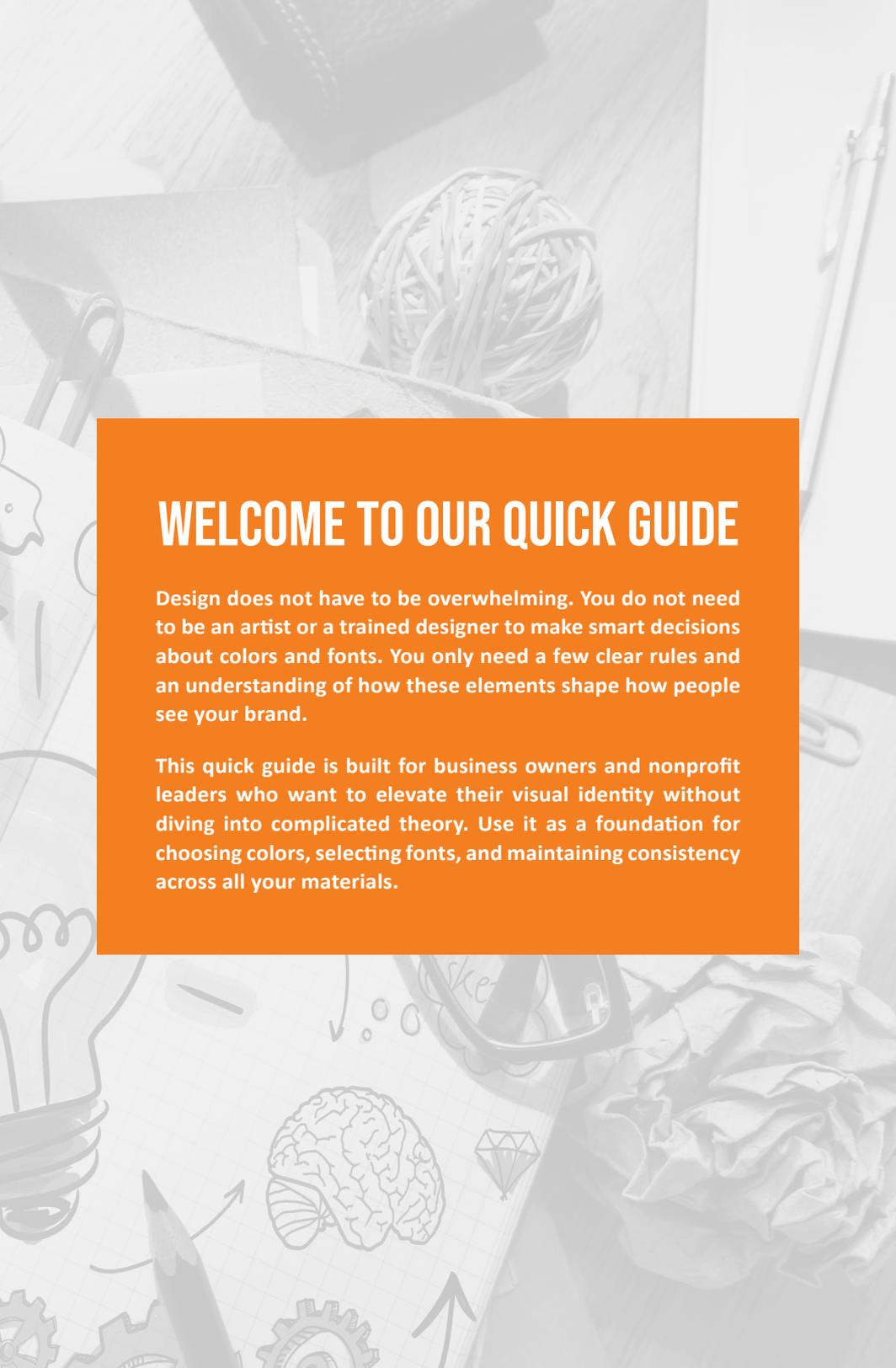
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A top-down view of a desk with various items. In the top left is a calculator. In the top right is a glass of water. In the center is a notebook with a paperclip. On the notebook are several hand-drawn icons: a magnifying glass, a document with a paperclip, a cloud, a speech bubble, a lightbulb, and a hand holding a pencil. A sticky note is attached to the bottom of the notebook.

to do list  
- brainstorm  
- research  
- sketch

A top-down view of a desk with a wooden surface. In the center is a ball of light-colored twine. To the left, there are several paper clips and a notebook with sketches of a lightbulb, gears, and a brain. To the right, there is a crumpled piece of paper and a pen. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light gray.

# WELCOME TO OUR QUICK GUIDE

Design does not have to be overwhelming. You do not need to be an artist or a trained designer to make smart decisions about colors and fonts. You only need a few clear rules and an understanding of how these elements shape how people see your brand.

This quick guide is built for business owners and nonprofit leaders who want to elevate their visual identity without diving into complicated theory. Use it as a foundation for choosing colors, selecting fonts, and maintaining consistency across all your materials.



# SECTION 1: COLOR BASICS

How to Choose & Use Brand Colors with Confidence

## Why Color Matters

Color is one of the fastest ways your audience forms an impression about your brand. It affects mood, emotion, trust, and even how memorable your business feels. A strong color palette helps your brand look polished and recognizable.

## The 4 Parts of a Simple Brand Color Palette

### 1 Primary Color (Your Anchor)

This is the main color associated with your brand. It appears most often in your logo, website, and printed materials.

Examples:

- Starbucks uses **green**
- Target uses **red**
- UPS uses **brown**



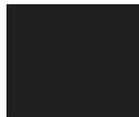
*Choose one color that represents your core identity.*

### 2 Secondary Color (Your Supporting Cast)

These reinforce your primary color and give you flexibility. Think of these as accents that complement, not compete with, your primary color.

Examples:

- One dark tone
- One light tone
- One neutral tone



### 3 Accent Color (Your Attention-Grabber)

Use sparingly for calls to action or important highlights. Your accent should contrast with your primary color for visibility.

Examples:

- A bright yellow button
- A bold orange alert banner

Click Here

WARNING

### 4 Neutral Colors (Your Foundation)

These ensure your designs never feel cluttered or chaotic.

Examples: white, black, gray, cream.



# SECTION 2: COLOR GUIDELINES

## Practical Rules that Keep Your Visuals Looking Clean

### ✓ Use Your Primary Color 60% of the Time

*Backgrounds, banners, icons, major shapes.*

### ✓ Use Secondary Colors 30% of the Time

*Headers, sidebars, supporting graphics.*

### ✓ Use Your Accent Color 10% of the Time

*Buttons, highlights, important messages.*

---

**This creates balance and visual harmony.**

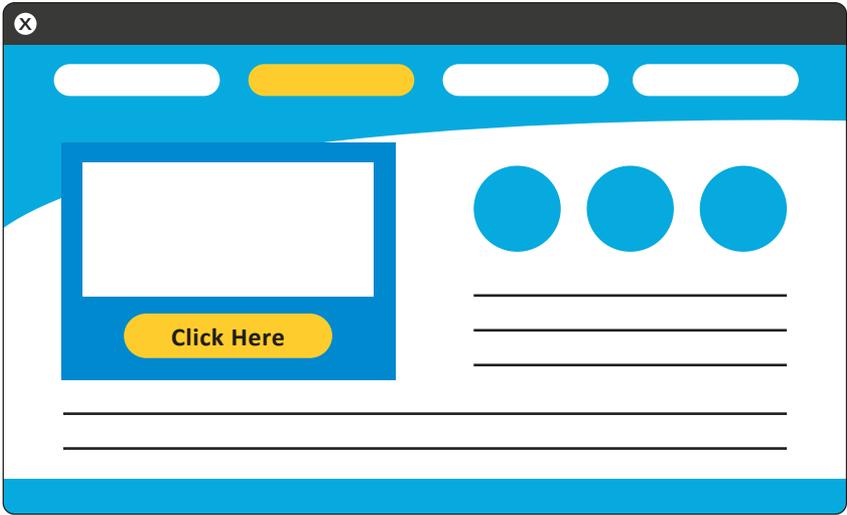
### ✓ Do:

- Stick to a defined palette
- Ensure text is readable on every background
- Use high-contrast colors for buttons and CTAs
- Keep things simple and consistent

### ✗ Do Not:

- Mix too many bright colors
- Change color tones every time you design something
- Use low-contrast text (yellow on white, gray on black)
- Choose trendy colors that do not match your brand

# SECTION 2: EXAMPLES



# SECTION 3: TYPOGRAPHY BASICS

How to choose fonts that support your brand instead of distracting from it.

## Why Typography Matters

Your font choices influence how professional, trustworthy, or approachable your business appears. Good typography creates clarity. Bad typography creates confusion.

### The 3 Types of Fonts You Will Encounter

#### 1. Serif Fonts

*Small decorative lines at the ends of letters.*

**Feel:** classic, trustworthy, traditional.

**Examples:** Times New Roman, Playfair Display, Georgia.

**Good for:** headings, elegant brands, professional industries.

#### 2. Sans-Serif Fonts

*Clean letters with no decorative strokes.*

**Feel:** modern, simple, friendly.

**Examples:** Helvetica, Open Sans, Montserrat.

**Good for:** body text, websites, presentations.

#### 3. Script or Decorative Fonts

*Stylized fonts that look handwritten or artistic.*

**Feel:** personal, expressive, creative.

**Use them very sparingly. Usually for:**

- A short heading
- A logo wordmark
- An accent or tagline

Never use them for long paragraphs.

# SECTION 3: TYPOGRAPHY BASICS CONT.

## Serif Font Examples

Times New Roman

**Baskerville**

**PLAYFAIR DISPLAY**

CINZEL

Georgia

Rockwell

Mrs Eaves Roman

Cambria

## Sans-Serif Font Examples

**Impact**

Arial

Roboto

Montserrat

Futura

Helvetica

Franklin Gothic

Open Sans

## Script or Decorative Font Examples

*Satisfy*

***Lobster***

*Noteworthy*

*Viktor Script*

*Bellagio*

*Rustic Farmhouse Script*

*Thirsty Script*

**FARMHAND**

# SECTION 4: SMART FONT PAIRING

How to pick fonts that look like they belong together.

## For Most Brands, Choose:

✓ **One Primary Heading Font**

*Serif or bold sans-serif*

✓ **One Body Font**

*Clean sans-serif for readability*

✓ **Optional Accent Font**

*A light script or alternate heading*

 **TIP**

Think of fonts like people at a meeting. Too many voices at once creates chaos. Two or three working together create clarity.

## Heading Here

This space is reserved for content that will be refined and finalized later. It provides a sense of structure and flow while allowing room for thoughtful messaging.

## Heading Here

This space is reserved for content that will be refined and finalized later. It provides a sense of structure and flow while allowing room for thoughtful messaging.

## ~~HEADING HERE~~

~~Itaque probit pro omnis maio  
quam dus *dolorum* aliquid  
elibus, et ide neceptionem fuga.  
Itat **vento** et moluptatendi  
sequis del eicac.~~

# SECTION 5: FONT GUIDELINES

## Easy Rules for Consistency

### ✓ Choose Fonts That Match Your Brand Personality

#### Friendly Brand:

*Round, soft sans-serif*

**Open Sans Bold**

#### Professional Brand:

*Balanced serif or clean sans-serif*

Montserrat Regular

#### Creative Brand:

*One expressive accent paired with a simple body font.*

*Brooklyn Regular*  
Calibri Regular for body text

### ✓ Use No More Than Three Fonts

#### Most Brands Thrive with Only:

- A Heading font
- A Body font
- An Accent font

### ✓ Use Size Hierarchy

Your audience should instantly understand what is most important.

#### Example:

- Heading: 32 pt
- Subheading: 20 pt
- Body: 14–16 pt
- Caption: 12 pt

### ✓ License your fonts properly

You should own or legally license the fonts in your logo and brand system. Never rely on default or unlicensed downloads.

# SECTION 6: TYPOGRAPHY DO'S & DON'TS

## ✓ Do:

- Keep spacing and alignment consistent
- Use proper font size (10pt for print, 16px for digital makes text easier to read)
- Use bold or color to emphasize key points
- Make sure your fonts work well on both print and digital

## ✗ Do Not:

- Use all caps for long sentences
- Mix too many decorative fonts
- Stretch or warp fonts
- Use tiny text
- Change fonts for every project

## HEADING HERE

This space is **reserved** for content that will be refined and finalized later. It provides a sense of **structure** and flow while allowing room for thoughtful messaging.

A clean header font with legible body text. There is enough breathing room between the lines of text and clear contrast through the use of bold text and color

## ~~HEADING HERE~~

~~THIS *Space* IS RESERVED FOR CONTENT THAT WILL BE REFINED AND FINALIZED LATER. IT PROVIDES A SENSE OF STRUCTURE AND FLOW WHILE **ALLOWING** ROOM FOR THOUGHTFUL MESSAGING.~~

Too many fonts that do not pair well together visually. The body text is too condensed and straining to the eye.

# SECTION 7: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

## A Simple Checklist for Non-Designers

### ✓ Color Checklist:

- I have a primary brand color
- I have 2 to 3 secondary colors
- I have one accent color for CTAs
- My colors do not clash
- My text is readable on every color
- My palette looks consistent across platforms

### ✓ Typography Checklist:

- I have a heading font
- I have a body font
- I have an optional accent font
- I do not mix too many styles
- My fonts match my brand personality
- My text hierarchy is clear
- My fonts are properly licensed



*Scan to Download a Color  
& Typography Worksheet  
to Help you Get Started*

# ENCOURAGEMENT FROM YOUR IMAGINARY FRIEND

Design does not need to feel intimidating. With a few clear rules, your brand can look intentional, consistent, and professional. Start small, keep things simple, and practice consistency. These are the same foundations used by large companies with big design teams.

And if you ever feel stuck or want a professional eye to refine your brand colors or typography, you have an Imaginary Friend for that.

**You do not have to build your brand alone.  
You have an Imaginary Friend for that.**

## BOOK YOUR SESSION

**Let's Create Something Amazing Together!**



**neversee.me**

**Scan the Code & Start Today!**

# ABOUT US

**Imaginary Friends design studios** is a creative strategy and design studio focused on helping businesses and organizations find clarity, confidence, and direction in how they show up in the world. For more than twenty years, Imaginary Friends has guided clients through brand identity, digital presence, and strategic engagement with a steady, mentor-first approach.

Often referred to as **iF**, the studio is known for blending thoughtful strategy with approachable creativity. The work is grounded in real-world problem solving, clear communication, and tools that are meant to be used, not admired from a distance. IF believes strong brands are built when identity, presence, and engagement work together and when people feel supported through the process, not overwhelmed by it.

From local startups and nonprofits to regional and national organizations, **Imaginary Friends** partners with clients who want more than surface-level design. The studio's role is to help untangle complexity, shape ideas into systems, and give teams the confidence to move forward with intention.

At its core, **iF** exists to steady the chaos, simplify the path, and help brands grow in ways that feel aligned and sustainable.

*You have an Imaginary Friend for that.*



