



HOW TO

CREATE A STYLE GUIDE

AND WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Introduction

WHY YOU NEED A STYLE GUIDE

A style guide is a document that defines and outlines all aspects of your brand's visuals and messaging. It acts as a reference manual for anyone working on your brand, ensuring that everything you create – from social media posts to your website – feels cohesive, professional, and uniquely yours. This consistency is crucial because it allows your audience to recognize and trust your brand, no matter where they encounter it.

WHY CONSISTENCY IS KEY

Consistency is about ensuring that every time someone sees your brand, it looks and feels the same. This doesn't mean every piece of content looks identical, but rather, that every piece aligns with your brand's tone, colours, fonts, and visual elements. This alignment builds recognition (people remember you), trust (people believe in you), and professionalism (people take you seriously).

KEY ELEMENTS OF A STYLE GUIDE

Below are the essential components of a comprehensive style guide. Each section includes definitions, explanations of why it's important, and practical examples.

We have created some style guide templates for you to use. Just adjust each section to represent your brands unique visuals.

[STYLE GUIDE TEMPLATES](#)

Logo Guidelines

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Your logo is the centerpiece of your brand's identity. It's often the first thing people recognize, so it must be used correctly to represent your brand consistently.

COMPONENTS OF LOGO GUIDELINES:

- **Primary and Secondary Logo Versions:**
 - **What It Means:** Your primary logo is your main logo design, while secondary versions are alternate formats that fit different spaces or uses.
 - **Why It's Needed:** Different formats (e.g., horizontal vs. vertical) make it easier to use your logo in various contexts without altering its identity.
 - **Example:** A square version for profile pictures, a horizontal version for website headers, and a simplified version for small icons.
- **Minimum and Maximum Sizes:**
 - **What It Means:** Minimum size ensures your logo is still clear when shrunk down, while maximum size helps prevent oversizing.
 - **Why It's Needed:** Logos lose quality and become unreadable if they are too small, while an oversized logo can dominate and overwhelm other content.
 - **Example:** Specify that your logo should not be smaller than 1 inch wide to keep it clear on small materials.

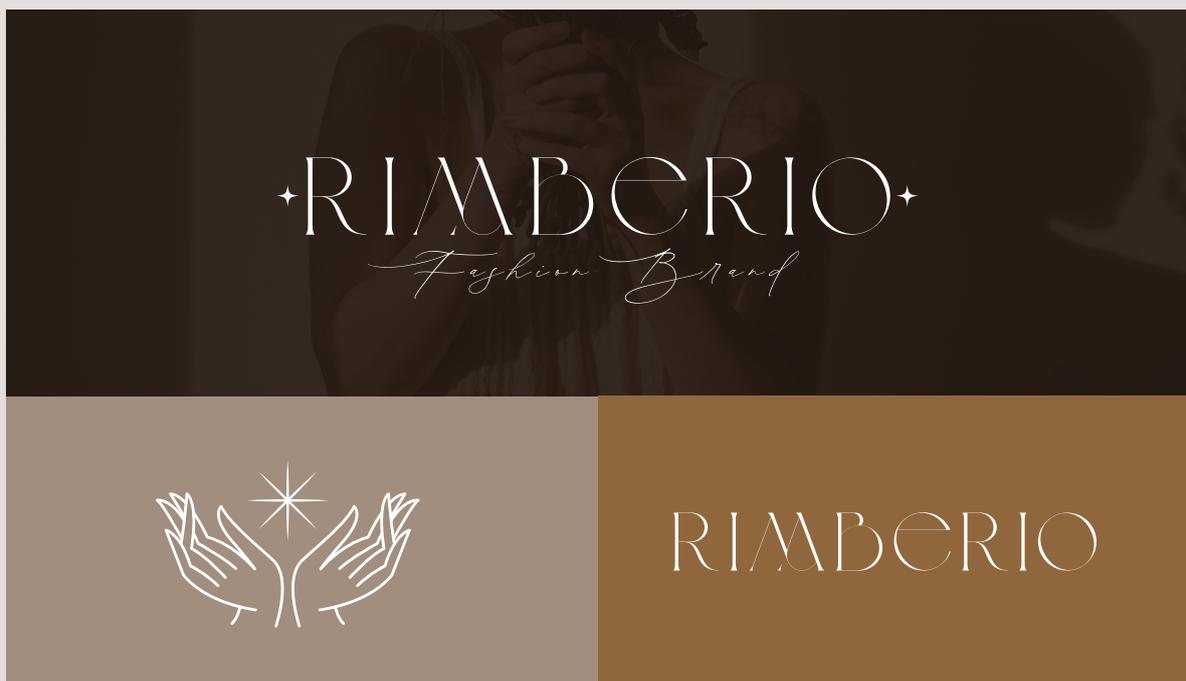
- **Clear Space Requirements:**

- **What It Means:** Clear space refers to the buffer zone around your logo, free of other text or images.
- **Why It's Needed:** This keeps your logo from appearing cluttered and ensures it stands out.
- **Example:** Define a minimum amount of space (e.g., "one logo-width of space") around the logo to maintain clarity.

Additional Tips:

- Include incorrect examples, such as distorted or recoloured logos, to show how not to use the logo.

LOGO SAMPLE



Colour Palette

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Colours trigger emotional associations and help convey your brand's personality. A consistent colour scheme ensures your brand feels unified across all visuals.

COMPONENTS OF COLOUR GUIDELINES:

- **Primary colours:**
 - **What It Means:** Primary colours are your main brand colours, used prominently and consistently across all major brand materials.
 - **Example:** A financial company may use blue and grey as primary colours to convey trust and professionalism.
- **Secondary colours:**
 - **What It Means:** Secondary colours complement primary colours and can be used for accents or additional visual interest.
 - **Example:** A wellness brand might add earthy tones like greens or browns to its primary colours of blue and white.
- **Colour Codes:**
 - **What It Means:** colour codes (HEX for web, RGB for screens, CMYK for print) specify the exact shades for each colour, preventing variations.
 - **Example:** HEX #4A90E2 for blue ensures the same blue appears on all digital materials.

Why Defining colours is Essential: Without standardised colour codes, you risk subtle colour variations that make your brand feel inconsistent. Imagine a recognizable red appearing slightly pink or orange depending on where it's printed or displayed.

Need help finding your perfect brand colours? Our guide to [Colour Psychology](#) might help!

Typography

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Fonts set the tone of your written content. Using the same typefaces consistently helps reinforce brand identity and enhances readability.

COMPONENTS OF TYPOGRAPHY GUIDELINES:

- **Primary Fonts:**
 - **What It Means:** Primary fonts are the main fonts for headings, subheadings, and body text.
 - **Why It's Needed:** Consistent use of primary fonts ensures all written materials look cohesive.
 - **Example:** A clean sans-serif font like Helvetica for headings and a serif font like Georgia for body text.
- **Font Hierarchy:**
 - **What It Means:** Hierarchy defines font sizes and weights for different text elements (e.g., headings vs. body).
 - **Why It's Needed:** A clear hierarchy makes content easier to read and understand.
 - **Example:** Headings in 24pt bold, subheadings in 18pt semi-bold, and body text in 14pt regular.
- **Line Spacing and Letter Spacing:**
 - **What It Means:** These settings control the distance between lines and letters.
 - **Why It's Needed:** Proper spacing improves readability and avoids crowded or sparse text.
 - **Example:** Line spacing of 1.5 for body text and letter spacing of +1 for headings.

Pro Tip:

Include downloadable font files or links so team members can access the correct fonts.

COLOUR PALETTE AND FONT SAMPLE

colour Palette



Individual Font

A A
Dream Avenue

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Mauris consequat posuere metus, ut suscipit nunc iaculis id

A a

Dream Avenue

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Mauris consequat posuere metus, ut suscipit nunc iaculis id



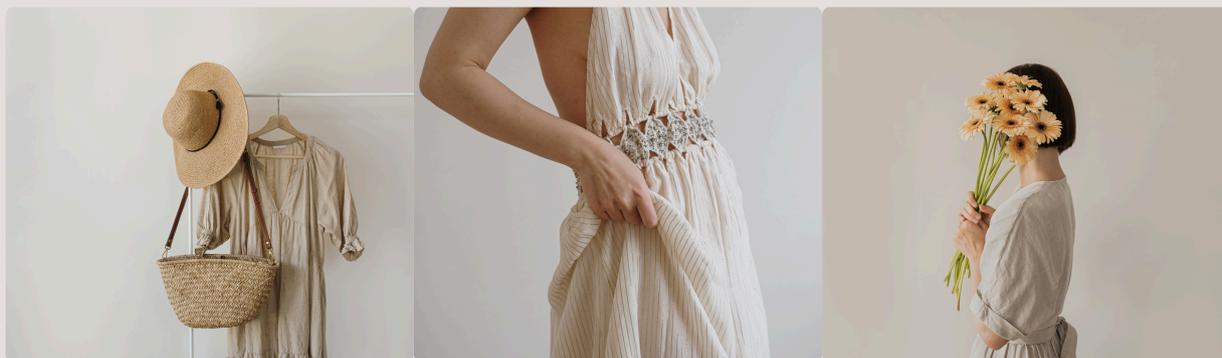
Imagery & Photography Style

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Photos and visuals convey mood and context, helping to tell your brand's story. Using a specific style consistently makes your brand more recognizable.

COMPONENTS OF IMAGERY GUIDELINES:

- **Image Style:**
 - **What It Means:** Image style defines the look and feel of the photos, such as light and airy, high-contrast, or muted tones.
 - **Why It's Needed:** Consistent image style helps reinforce the brand's personality and target audience.
 - **Example:** A fitness brand might use high-energy, action-focused images, while a wellness brand might favor soft, serene photos.
- **Do's and Don'ts:**
 - **What It Means:** Specify acceptable image types and those that don't fit the brand.
 - **Example:** Do: Candid lifestyle shots. Don't: Overly staged stock photos.
- **Brand Colours in Photography:**
 - **What It Means:** Ensure that any colours in photos align or complement brand colours.
 - **Why It's Needed:** This subtle consistency reinforces the brand's visual identity.



Voice & Tone

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Voice is the unique personality in your brand's written content, while tone adjusts to fit specific situations. A consistent voice and tone ensure that your messaging sounds unified and reliable.

- **Brand Voice:**

- **What It Means:** Voice is your brand's overall personality (e.g., friendly, expert, witty).
- **Why It's Needed:** Defining your brand's voice creates a recognizable personality across platforms.
- **Example:** A friendly, casual voice that uses contractions and approachable language for a lifestyle brand.

- **Tone for Different Platforms:**

- **What It Means:** Tone may change slightly depending on the context (e.g., social media vs. email).
- **Why It's Needed:** Adjusting tone helps connect with audiences in various scenarios.
- **Example:** Social media tone may be upbeat and conversational, while email tone might be more straightforward.

- **Do's and Don'ts:**

- **What It Means:** Specific words or phrases to use or avoid to maintain consistency.
- **Example:** Do: "Let's get started!" Don't: "Get ready for a ride!"

Final Checklist For A Complete Style Guide

To ensure your style guide is thorough and actionable, check off the following:

- **Logo:**
 - Primary and secondary versions, minimum and maximum sizes, clear space guidelines, and correct/incorrect usage examples.
- **Colour Palette:**
 - Primary and secondary colours with HEX, RGB, and CMYK codes, plus mood descriptions.
- **Typography:**
 - Primary fonts, font hierarchy, line spacing, and downloadable links.
- **Imagery:**
 - Image style description, brand colour inclusion, and do's and don'ts.
- **Voice and Tone:**
 - Brand voice description, platform-specific tones, and example sentences.

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STYLE GUIDE TEMPLATES

Conclusion

Creating a detailed style guide may take time initially, but it's an investment that pays off by keeping your brand consistent, professional, and recognizable across all channels. This guide is your team's roadmap, ensuring that everyone speaks the same visual language for your brand.

FURTHER READING:

CANVA'S GUIDE TO BUILDING A BRAND KIT

CONTENT MARKETING INSTITUTE ON CONSISTENT BRANDING

CHECK OUT OUR STYLE GUIDE TEMPLATES

COLOUR PSYCHOLOGY GUIDE

PHOTOGRAPHY TIP SHEET