

10 LOGO + MISTAKES TO AVOID

CHEATSHEET





LOGO PRINCIPLES

welcome and thank YOU for downloading the 10 Logo Mistakes to Avoid.

BEFORE you engage with a designer or online Logo creator, check out this list of grand mistakes to avoid, PLUS what consists of a great Logo.



1. TOO COMPLEX

Simple logos are more memorable as they allow for easier recognition; however, for a logo to be memorable and stand apart from the crowd, it must have something unique about it, without being too overdrawn. Not only does simplicity make a logo more memorable, but it also makes the logo more versatile, meaning it can work over more mediums. For example, a logo should work on something the size of a postage stamp and on something as large as a billboard.



2. RELYING ON A SPECIAL EFFECT OR COLOUR

If a logo requires colour or special effects to make it a strong logo, it's not a strong logo. To get around this, always work in black and white FIRST and then add the special effects or colour later. This allows you to focus on the shape and concept rather than the special effects. Don't use drop shadows, embossing, or other layer styles to gloss up logos — a good logo will stand on its own. You can also make different variations of a logo to ensure it works in colour or grey scale.



3. TYPOGRAPHICAL CHAOS

Typography in logo design can make or break a design, so it's vital you know your typographic ABC's. A logo should be kept as simple as possible while still portraying the intended message, and for this to happen, one must consider all typographic aspects of the design.

Don't use too many fonts or weights (two maximum). Don't use predictable, crazy, or ultra-thin fonts. Pay close attention to kerning, spacing, and sizing and most importantly, ensure you've chosen the right font(s) for the project at hand.



4. POOR FONT CHOICE

As touched on above, when it comes to creating a logo, choosing the right font can make or break a design. Font choice can often take as long as the creation of the logo mark itself and it should not be done briskly.

Spend time researching all the various fonts that could be used for the project, narrow them down further, and then see how each one gels with the logo mark. Don't be afraid to purchase a font, modify one, or create your own. Also, keep in mind how the logo's font could be used across the rest of the brand identity in conjunction with other fonts and imagery.

5. USING RASTER IMAGES

A logo should be designed in a vector graphics program such as Adobe Illustrator to ensure that the final logo can be scaled to any size, enabling the logo to be applied easily to other media. A vector graphic is made up of mathematically precise points, which ensures visual consistency across all mediums and sizes. A raster image (made out of pixels, such as what you would find in Photoshop) can't be scaled to any size, which means at large sizes, the logo would be unusable. Use a vector graphics program when creating logos.

6. SETTLING FOR A MONOGRAM

One of the more common mistakes of the amateur logo designer is trying to create a monogram out of the business' initials (e.g. Becky's Florist would become a logo made out of B & F). Although this sounds like a smart solution at first, it's rather difficult to build credibility or convey an intended message with just the initials of a company. You can certainly explore this route, but don't settle on it unless you can create an original, creative, and memorable solution that reflects the business' goals. Also, try not to shorten a business name into acronyms until it has been around for a while or if it suits the target goals. HP, FedEx, IBM, and GM never started out as acronyms — they became acronyms after many years of high-profile exposure.



7. USING VISUAL CLICHES

Light bulbs for 'ideas', speech bubbles for 'discussion', swooshes for 'dynamism', etc. These ideas are often the first things to pop into one's head when brainstorming, and for the same reason should be the first ideas discarded. How is your design going to be unique when so many other logos feature the same idea? Stay clear of these visual clichés and come up with an original idea and design.

8. COPYING A DESIGN

It has to be said, but it's an all-too-common practice these days. A designer sees an idea that she likes, does a quick mirror, colour swap, or word change, and then calls the idea her own. Not only is this unethical, illegal, and downright stupid but you're also going to get caught sooner or later. Do not use stock or clip art either — the point of a logo is to be unique and original.

9. FOLLOWING A TREND

Design trends come and go, hence being a trend. Some trends stick for a long time while some remain as periodic fads. While it is essential to keep up with the latest trends, you should not rely entirely on them as it leads to your logo and brand becoming dated quickly.

10. MISALIGNED WITH YOUR BRAND GOALS

Understand your brand Strategy and Personality fully before even thinking about your logo. Logos don't have to be static symbols, they can adapt, change and be anything they want to be, as long as it ties in to the brand's goals and ethos.



5 FUNDAMENTALS OF A GREAT LOGO DESIGN



A LOGO MUST BE SIMPLE

A simple logo design allows for easy recognition and allows the logo to be versatile & memorable. Good logos feature something unexpected or unique without being overdrawn.



A LOGO MUST BE MEMORABLE

An effective logo design should be memorable and this is achieved by having a simple, yet, appropriate logo.



A LOGO MUST BE TIMELESS

An effective logo should be timeless – that is, it will stand the test of time. Will the logo still be effective in 10 or 20 years. Bear in mind that it is ok to re-brand.



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A LOGO MUST BE VERSATILE

An effective logo should be able to work across a variety of mediums and applications. For this reason, a logo should be designed in vector format, to ensure that it can be scaled to any size. The logo must work in just one colour too.

Note: The difference between vector and raster graphics is that raster graphics are composed of pixels, while vector graphics are composed of paths. A raster graphic, such as a gif or jpeg, is an array of pixels of various colours, which together form an image. A vector graphic, such as an .eps file or Adobe Illustrator file, is composed of paths, or lines, that are either straight or curved



A LOGO MUST BE APPROPRIATE

How you position the logo should be appropriate for its intended purpose. For example, if you are designing a logo for child care centre, it would be appropriate to use a childish font & colour scheme. This would not be so appropriate for an accountancy firm.

Want to learn more about Brand Building, Brand Identity, and achieve a spot on Logo Design to complement your brand goals?

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