SKILLSTACK SUITE

Graphic Design & Visual Communication — Cheat Sheet

One page to keep open while you work.

Keep this open while you work. These are the decision rules, not the theory.

Quick reference

Term / step	What it means in practice
Entry point	Where the eye lands first — decide it, do not discover it
Hierarchy	Decisive differences, not subtle ones. Squint test
Type scale	One ratio (1.25 / 1.333), body first, headings derived
Measure	45–75 characters per line
Palette	Neutral + dominant + one accent + three tonal steps
Contrast	Check every text/background pair before committing
Spacing unit	One unit and multiples of it — never arbitrary
Optical alignment	Round shapes and quotes nudge past the line
Crop	To the single element carrying the point
Template test	Someone else uses it without asking you questions
Vague feedback	Translate into a named defect before acting
Change rate	One variable at a time

Rules of thumb

- Name the defect before you touch anything.
- If the hierarchy does not survive squinting, it is not hierarchy.
- Spacing solves more problems than colour does.
- Whitespace is structure, not leftover.
- Design social for thumbnail legibility first.