SKILLSTACK SUITE

Graphic Design & Visual Communication

Course guide — the working principles behind layouts people can actually read, plus a production workflow that scales past one-off files.

What this course is

Design is decision-making under constraints, not decoration. This course teaches the small set of principles that explain why most amateur layouts feel wrong — hierarchy, contrast, spacing, alignment and restraint — then builds a repeatable production workflow so you are not reinventing every file. It is aimed at people who need to produce good work reliably, not at building a portfolio for design jobs.

Who it is for and what you will be able to do

- Marketers, founders and operators who produce their own visual assets
- Anyone whose work is being let down by presentation rather than substance
- By the end you will have a working type system, a colour system, a reusable template set, and a finished multi-asset campaign
- No prior design training assumed; no expensive software required

Module outline

#	Module	What you build or produce
1	Seeing before making	Critique vocabulary — naming what is wrong before trying to fix it
2	Hierarchy	Deciding what the eye hits first, second, third, and enforcing it
3	Typography	Typeface pairing, scale ratios, line length and leading that stay readable
4	Colour	Building a restrained palette, contrast ratios, and accessible combinations
5	Space and alignment	Grids, margins, optical alignment, and why whitespace is not wasted
6	Composition	Balance, focal points, and directing attention through a layout
7	Imagery	Selecting, cropping, and treating photography so it supports rather than competes
8	Brand systems	Turning one-off choices into a documented, reusable system
9	Layout for formats	Social, slides, print and web — what changes and what does not
10	Production workflow	File structure, naming, versioning, and export presets
11	Templates	Building a template set that others can use without breaking it
12	Working with feedback	Presenting choices, handling vague critique, and iterating without redesigning

Tools and setup

Any capable editor works — the principles are tool-neutral. You need something that supports layers, guides, type controls and export presets. Free options are sufficient throughout; the course does not require a subscription.

Practice track

Each module ends with a build task. Do them in order — the later ones assume the earlier artefacts exist.

- Critique three existing assets in writing using the module 1 vocabulary.
- Build a type scale and test it at three sizes.
- Build a five-colour palette and check every text/background pair for contrast.
- Rebuild one of your critiqued assets applying hierarchy and spacing only.
- Document the system in a one-page reference.
- Build a three-asset campaign from the templates.
- Hand the templates to someone else and watch what breaks.

How you know it worked

Checkpoint	Standard to hit
Type system	Readable at smallest intended size; scale is ratio-based, not arbitrary
Palette	Every text/background pair meets accessible contrast
Rebuilt asset	A viewer can name the intended reading order unprompted
Template set	Someone else produces an on-system asset without asking you questions
Campaign	Three assets read as one family across different formats

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