



THE PINNING CLUB

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PIN DESIGN 101

HOW TO CREATE PROFESSIONAL
LOOKING PINS

Visually appealing pins play a fundamental part of your pinning strategy and will improve your click through rate enormously. Furthermore, having a selection of pin templates enables you to create a whole suite of fresh pins for your content, allowing it to be seen by the maximum number of pinners possible.

This document is intended as a guide to creating visually appealing pins using graphic design advice and Canva.com as your design platform.

REMEMBER THESE GUIDELINES WHEN CREATING YOUR PINS:

1. Use the Canva pin template if possible
2. All pins should be portrait in shape and of the 2:3 ratio
3. Pin sizing at 1000 x 1500 is a great starting point
4. Add text overlay to add your call to action or clear messaging on pins
5. Don't forget to include your logo or website address
6. All pin images shared should be created specifically, don't share direct from Instagram
7. Ensure you own the copyright on images or use those which are copyright free

USE THESE GRAPHIC DESIGN TIPS TO CREATE PROFESSIONAL PIN TEMPLATES

PHOTOS

- **Select the photos for your pin carefully:** Choose portrait pictures over a landscape shape. If you do want to use a landscape ensure it looks effective even when cut to fit the size.
- **Select high-resolution photos:** Avoid anything pixelated, blurred or under-exposed

TEXT OVERLAY

- **Don't overuse fonts:** Select a maximum of 2 or 3 fonts for each pin.
- **Choose sans-serif fonts where possible:** Fonts such as Bebas Neue, League Spartan, Open Sans, are the graphic designers preferred selection
- **Pair fonts from the same font family:** Open Sans, Montserrat, Lato are a font family with several options to choose from. Sometimes even just pairing an uppercase bold font with a light italics font of the same family is enough to convey an effective, cohesive look.
- **How to pair different fonts:** If you don't know which fonts work nicely together you can use this very useful Canva article as a reference <https://www.canva.com/learn/the-ultimate-guide-to-font-pairing/> or refer to the text layout options on the dark grey panel on the left of the screen when you use the text tool. A further font pairing tip: Mix different categories such as a sans-serif plus a serif or a sans-serif plus an handwriting. Handwriting fonts are really popular and they can add a lot of personality, but please ensure they are legible, so choose something easy to read and use it sparingly, for just one keyword in your title, for example.

- **Create short and sweet text overlay:** Rephrase your blog post titles to be more concise and therefore more eye-catching. Text colours: Aim to stick to black, white and charcoal grey. Some words look good when highlighted and sometimes a coloured text can be super pretty but pay attention to the readability. So, no neon or bright colours (Cyan, Magenta and Yellow are rarely easy to read), nothing too pale (if the background is not dark enough).
- **Avoid certain fonts:** It's a joke in the design community that these fonts have been abused over the years and they are now considered unpleasant to be used in modern typography. There are so many professional, modern and attractive free fonts (Canva has a huge selection of awesome fonts) that there is no need to use these.

FONTS TO AVOID*

Arial

Bradley Hand

Brush Script

CHARLEMAGNE STD

Comic Sans MS

Cooper Std

COOPERPLATE

Courier new

Hobo std

Impact

LITHOS PRO

Lucida

Ocr A Std

ORATOR STD

Papyrus

STENCIL STD

Tekton Pro

*Please note that this is a common opinion shared between graphic designers, but there are no technical reasons to avoid these fonts. These fonts have been used (and abused) a lot in the past and now they are no longer perceived as modern, professional or up-to-date in general. That doesn't mean you can't use them if you love them, just be aware that probably they won't attract many clicks or views.

COLOURS

- **How to use the photo colours:** A great way to select colours for your pins' text and elements (lines, frames, shapes, etc) is to start from the picture's colours. To be sure to find the exact colours of your pictures you can use the Canva Color Palette Generator tool. Using the same colour palette from the photo ensures a cohesive and appealing feel to the pin <https://www.canva.com/colors/color-palette-generator/>
- **Using Canva's Colour Wheel:** Another awesome tool on Canva is the Color Wheel which can help you understand colour theory and effective colour combinations. If you want to use it for text please always remember the readability criteria. To use it in the most effective way, try to stick with the monochromatic and the analogous colours. Complementary colours are the hardest to combine in an appealing way: purple and yellow can be beautiful together but can also result in something unappealing if not calibrated in the right way. Triadic can be good but don't overdo it, usually, two colours are enough in a pin. Tetradic can be pretty hard to use and in a pin you don't need so many colours. <https://www.canva.com/colors/color-wheel/>

LAYOUT

- **How to make your text pop:** Use a shape layer underneath the text to ensure it stands out (a square, a rectangle, a circle). Use it at 100% opacity or increase the transparency, it's up to you, but the more opaque it is, the easier will be to read the text particularly if the picture is busy.
- **Leave a border around your text:** Wherever you place your text remember to keep it at least 0.5 cm away from any edge/border/side. The text needs "air to breathe".
- **How to use Canva's align guide:** When you move something around in Canva you'll see hot pink lines. Those lines are Align guides. Use those to see if the elements are centred properly which helps obtain a nice balance and that's key to have an awesome pin design. The Position tool on the Canva bar will help you to do it even faster, just select the elements and text you want to align and click on the centre option.

- **Using Canva Templates:** Canva has dozens of great templates that can help you start. Choose one that is very similar in terms of theme, overall look and number of words to your pin so it will be easy to adapt it. If you start with a template that was well balanced but you ended up moving everything around, changing the amount of text and the colour scheme, there is a chance it won't work well as the original template.

CANVA

- **Canva usage:** A general tip to use Canva at its best, is to take a random template and try to use all the tools in the toolbar, to see what they do, how they work etc. Playing around for as little as 15 minutes can help you a lot to figure out all the different options and tools you have available.

Thank you to Francesca – [the Traveling Graphic Girl](#) – for her tips and guidance in making professional looking pins.