

proj 1 | monogram creation

Students will use a combination of two or more letters to create individual monograms. This project explores typography, hand-lettering, and the fundamentals of logos.

objective Typography is at the heart of good graphic design, but many non-designers automatically believe this means choosing a font on a computer and typing. Typography, like all design, is about space as much as shape. The interaction between letterforms is as important as the letterforms themselves. Then the solid grouping of forms that appears when this skill is applied is also an excellent introduction to creating logos. All work is rendered by hand in this project with basic tools. Hand lettering is a style that is trending now, and does not require knowledge of design programs or computers.

At the conclusion of this project, students should realize that space is as important as shape when it comes to typography. Awareness of craft when creating a tangible object is also explored.

materials **Provided:** Grid Paper, Tracing Paper, White Paper, Single-Sided Laminating Sheet, White Bristol Board Art Tile 4 in. x 4 in., Magnetic Squares with adhesive, Carbon Transfer Paper
Required: Pencils, Erasers, Metal Ruler, Ultra Fine point black Sharpie marker, Xacto (and its #11 blade) Hard Rubber Brayer Roller, Self-Healing Cutting Mat
Optional: Ink Pens, colored pencil, and/or acrylic paint for extra credit.

overview

- For each of the following steps, do not rush. It is expected that you will go through a phase of boredom and into one of involved problem-solving and exploration as you evolve from **writing** letters to **drawing** shapes.
- To fully explore solid visual weight created by contained space, **do not draw any shape like a circle or rectangle around the letters** in an attempt to force grouping.
- Do not look online for any examples until after you begin to see the shape of the spaces around letters. Otherwise, you will inevitably copy what already exists instead of problem-solving on your own.
- Be aware the final canvas will be a 4 in. (inch) x 4 in. square, but preliminary exploration can use a smaller space.
- If color exploration is desired, it should not be used until the final step.
- Keep all paperwork as you develop your monogram, as it will be due at the end.

steps

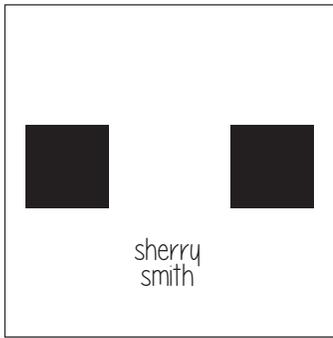
- 1 Write letters in normal handwriting on plain white paper. Explore print and/or cursive in uppercase and/or lowercase.
- 2 Begin concentrating on just 2 or 3 letters. As this project asks for a monogram, it is assumed students will use the initials of one's name, 3 letters are often more difficult than 2, so it is ok if the middle initial is eventually removed.
- 3 Taking these 2 or 3 letters, create more substantial forms by creating thicker letters. This step should not take long.

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- 4 Now play with styles (and therefore, shapes), each time doing this with the entire grouping of the letters. Suggested formats include: thick block letters, script, balloon, swirls, geometric, condensed, skewed, and interlocking.
 - 5 Take a break from drawing. Do the following:
 - See provided examples of monograms. Samples used in class: https://www.pinterest.com/nikki_arnell/monograms/
 - Notice how you are now “drawing” the letters as prescribed shapes vs. writing.
 - See how space itself becomes a shape.
 - We will discuss/review positive vs. negative space and the [Gestalt](#) Principles of Closure and Continuous Line.
 - 6 Grid and tracing paper will be provided, though neither is required as you begin exploring on your own. KEEP GOING - even if you become frustrated or bored. We will review the following:
 - Show how solid black vs. halftones of gray can create layering.
 - Why no color is allowed yet.
 - Consistency in space and shape should be used. Grid paper is especially helpful for this.
 - Identify how strong monograms have visual weight. See how this translates into logos with letters in the mark.
 - 7 Work and explore. Talk to your fellow students. Engage and suggest alternatives. Do not be stuck to a form if it isn't working. If you are quick to finish one, create another.
 - 8 *(Optional)* Only after thorough exploration of shape and halftone layering should color be introduced. It is not necessary and is sometimes a crutch to a poor form. Monograms, like logos, should be successful in black and white. However, if you would like, recall color theory and how colors relate to each other.
 - 9 When forms are finalized, use tracing paper to draw a finished version that fits within a 4 in. x 4 in. square.

Now to transfer your work to the bristol tile using carbon transfer paper and a very sharp pencil!

- 10 Place the carbon paper between your design and the medium you are transferring your image to with the black side facing down. Then trace the lines of your design with a pencil (or similar sharp tool).
- 11 Remove the carbon paper and see your design! Next make the work permanent by carefully drawing over the lines with the Sharpie. Carefully erase anything unwanted marks, though most carbon transfer black will not be affected.
Extra credit: add paint or other color to the bristol board.
- 12 Now protect the work with a Self-Laminating Sheet. Instructions provided in class and [here](#). Use the Brayer Roller to help remove air bubbles.
- 13 Once sealed, cut off excess using metal ruler, Xacto blade, and self-healing cutting mat.
Do not use scissors and do not cut on an unprotected surface!



- 1 4 Using pencil and ruler, lightly mark the middle point of each side (half of 4). Also mark .25 in. on each side of the board. Attach the two magnetic squares as shown below with reference to the measured points.
- 1 5 Write your name in Sharpie neatly on the back and you're done!

schedule **Wed Aug 21: Meet in HSS 2041**

Monograms workshop in class for this project. Be sure to show up with all required materials and be ready to work!

Wed Aug 21 - Mon Aug 26:

Refine your monogram and/or try more! YOU HAVE 5 DAYS. USE THEM.

Also complete weekly Typography Workbook.

Mon Aug 26: Meet in AA (Art Annex) 209

Review monograms in groups. In-class instruction how to transfer work to bristol board. *Project not due at end of class. Student may keep revising work until it is perfect before actually transferring to board.*

Reminder: Typography Workbook also DUE on this day.

Wed Aug 28: Meet in AA 208

We will be working on Software Review in this computer lab. If student has finished one magnet for Project 1 and would like another board, see Prof. Arnell with completed work.

Wed Aug 28 - Wed Sept 4: USE THESE DAYS! Remember you can also work ahead in your Typography Workbook so you have less to worry about later in the year!

Wed Sept 4, 1:00pm: Meet in HSS 2041

Project 1 DUE - 1 finished magnet and all other sheets of grid, tracing, or white paper showing progressive work.

Software Review and Typography Workbook also DUE on this day.

evaluation *You will be graded on the following:*

- Directions were followed accurately with absolutely no errors.
- Ideas successfully conveyed per objective via composition and awareness of positive/negative space.
- Successful exploration into shapes vs. space. Papers display this work.
- Final monogram has visual weight.
- Monogram is hand-rendered neatly on final magnet.
- Magnet craft is clean
(board not dirty, no air bubbles in lamination, magnets aligned correctly)
- Ambition - How much did you challenge yourself? Did you plan your time well?
- Cleanliness and Presentation.
- Participation in class discussions and critiques.
- Helpful to fellow students.

Extra credit possibilities:

- Multiple versions of final high-quality monograms.
- Exploration into color or ink.
- Magnet uses color well.
- Multiple high-quality magnets created.