

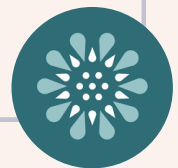
SCIENCE MAVEN
DESIGNS



Paisley Florals
Science Maven Designs

[See on all products...](#)

Spoonflower Success Plan



Workflow for successfully entering
Spoonflower Design Challenges



SCIENCE MAVEN
DESIGNS



Does this sound like you?

1. "I want to enter Spoonflower challenges, but I don't know where to start."

Many aspiring designers feel overwhelmed by Spoonflower's design challenges. Understanding the rules, creating a seamless repeat, and submitting a design can feel intimidating if you've never done it before. This eBook provides a clear, step-by-step guide to help you confidently enter your first challenge.

2. "I've entered challenges before, but my designs don't rank well."

It's frustrating to put time and effort into a design, only to see it rank lower than expected. This eBook breaks down what makes a winning design, from colour choices and composition to optimizing the voting thumbnail.

3. "My design looks great up close, but it doesn't stand out on the Spoonflower voting page."

When voters scroll through hundreds of designs, your pattern needs to be easily recognizable at a small scale. If the details are too tiny or the pattern too dense, it may not catch a voter's attention. This eBook will teach you how to preview your design at the same scale it will appear on the voting ballot and choose the right repeat size to make your design stand out in the competition.

Then you're in the right place!



Hi! I'm Erica!



I know patterns...

I am a self-taught surface pattern designer with a Master's degree in science. I bring scientific concepts and nature into my illustrations. I am passionate about sharing the magical worlds of science and nature through colourful, dense, and intricately repeating designs. I have owned my own design business for over 6 years.



I know how to teach...

I am also a science teacher in Toronto, Canada. I have been teaching science for over 20 years. I love taking complicated concepts and breaking them down so that even 5-year-olds can understand the amazing world around us.



Here are some of my designs that placed in the top 100 in Spoonflower design challenges.





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DESIGNS



Workflow

Successful Spoonflower
Design Challenge Entry

1

Choose a challenge

2

Read the guidelines

3

Research and plan

4

Create your pattern

5

Upload your design

6

Enter the challenge

7

BONUS: Past Challenges



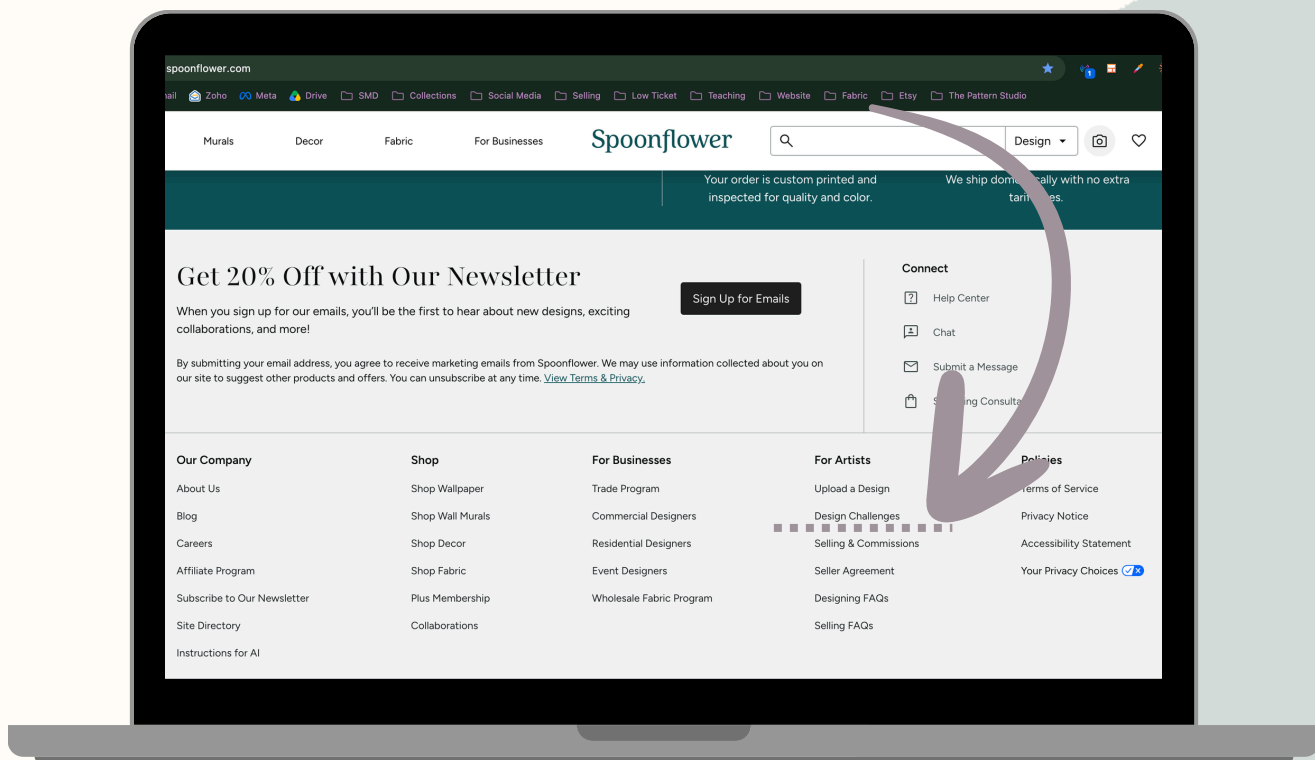
SCIENCE MAVEN
DESIGNS



1. Choose a challenge

Visit Spoonflower's Design Challenge page and select an upcoming challenge. On the main page, make sure you scroll down all the way to the bottom.

<https://www.spoonflower.com/design-challenge>



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2. Read the guidelines

Carefully review the theme, deadline, and any specific rules.

Title of theme



Explanation of theme

Deadline

Details

Focus on flowers as your primary subject matter. Use classic blooms or experiment with more abstract, stylized flowers to create a uniquely repetitive pattern that feels cohesive, much like the craftsmanship of block printing. Because entries will be shown on wallpaper, keep in mind a palette and scale that work well for interior design to turn any wall into a floral-filled masterpiece!

- Entries close Tue, Apr 8 at 3PM EDT. [View the full timeline](#) below.
- Designs will be viewed as a Wallpaper on the voting ballot. Acceptable repeat options for this challenge are Basic, Half-Drop, Half-Brick, Mirror.
- Designs previously uploaded on Spoonflower.com are not eligible for this contest. Designs do not require printed proofing to enter the contest.
- The popular vote determines the top 100 winning designs. Voters include Spoonflower artists and customers as well as the public.
- The top 100 designs receive prizes or benefits. [View the full prize list](#) below.
- View the full [Terms & Conditions](#) for this challenge.

[View less](#) ^

Application and size:
wallpaper
or fabric

Rules

Prizes

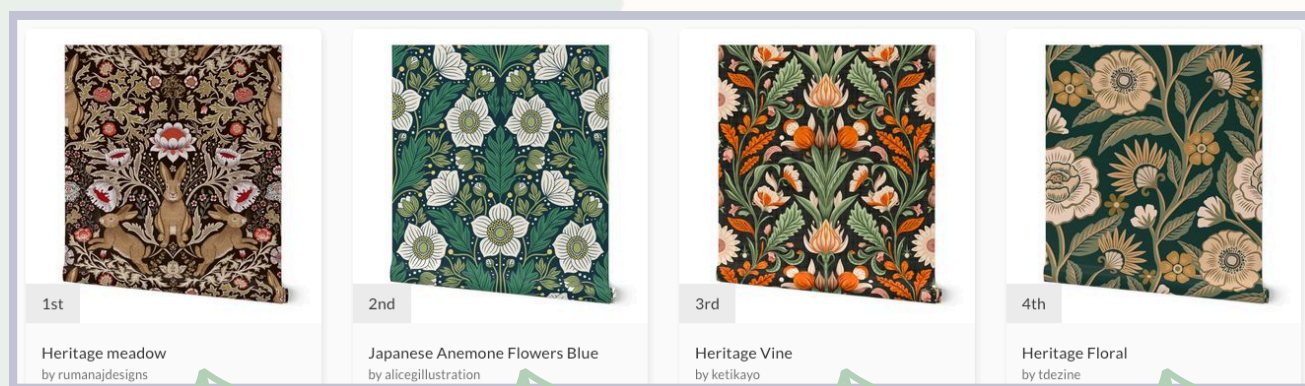
BACK



3a. Research and Plan

Look at past winners.

Heritage Revival



Very detailed
illustrations

Nailed the theme
of Arts and
Crafts

Eye-catching
colour palette

Beautiful rhythm
created by the
curving vines that
guide the eye

Tip: Check trending colour palettes on Spoonflower, Pinterest and Pantone. High contrast and unexpected colour combinations can help your design stand out.

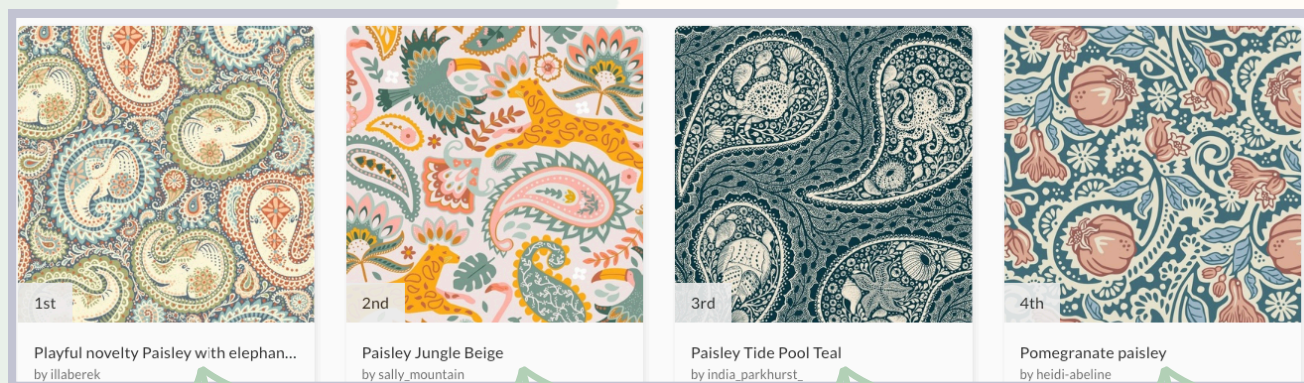
BACK



3b. Research and Plan

Look at past winners.

Novelty Paisley



Nailed the theme
of novelty paisley

Eye-catching
colour palette

Intricate and
engaging
illustration

Details and
composition are
clear in the
thumbnail

Tip: See where your creativity and imagination can take you. Who would have thought that elephant heads resemble paisley shapes? Before you draw, brainstorm as many ideas as you can.

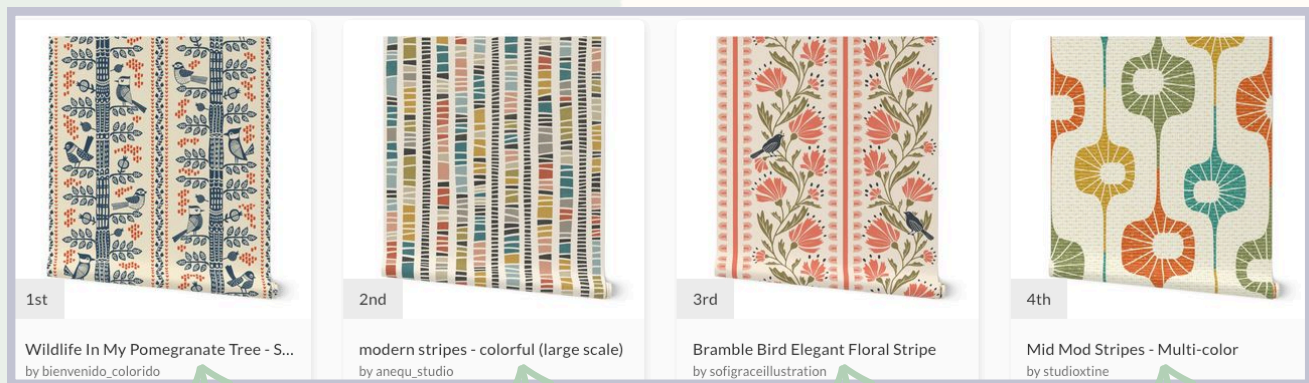
BACK



3c. Research and Plan

Look at past winners.

Sophisticated Stripes



Use of trending
Scandi style to
create stripes

Eye-catching
colour palette

Vines create lovely
flowing
composition

Simple design with
focus on texture

**Tip: Use interesting textures to
create depth in your patterns.**

BACK



3d. Research and Plan

Gather inspiration and sketch ideas.



Tip: Create a moodboard with images found on Google or Pinterest to help you choose your colour palette and your motifs.



4. Create Your Pattern

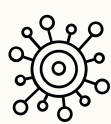
Use programs like Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator on either your desktop computer or your iPad or tablet. You can also use Procreate or Affinity Designer on your iPad or tablet.



procreate[®]



BACK



4. Create Your Pattern – Wallpaper

In order to create a design that will fit perfectly on one roll of wallpaper, make your design 3600 pixels wide and 5400 pixels long at 150 DPI (dots per inch). That way, what you see on your design canvas will be exactly what is printed on one roll of wallpaper. Your design will also show up as you see it on the design ballot for a wallpaper design challenge.

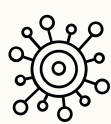
150 dpi

5400 px



3600 px

BACK



4. Create Your Pattern - Fabric

In order to create a design that will fit a fat quarter (this is the common size of a fabric voting ballot), make your design 3600 pixels wide and 3600 pixels long at 150 DPI (dots per inch). This is the most common size that designers work at in order to create a perfectly repeating square for application on fabric.

150 dpi

3600 px



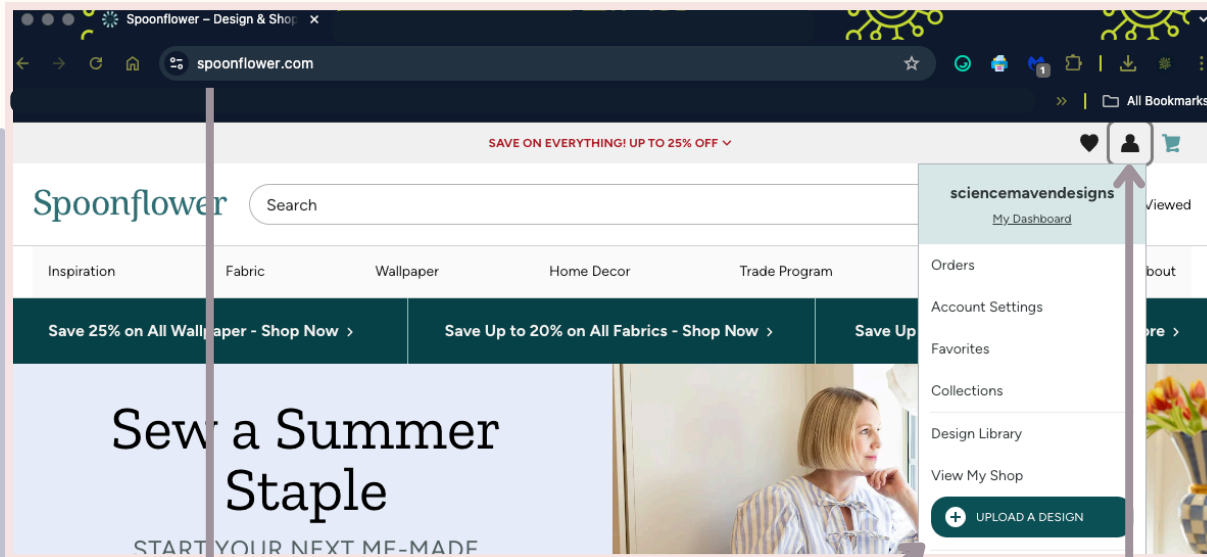
3600 px

BACK



5a. Upload Your Design

Upload your pattern to Spoonflower. You will need to agree to Spoonflower's terms of service. Remember that AI-generated patterns are not allowed.

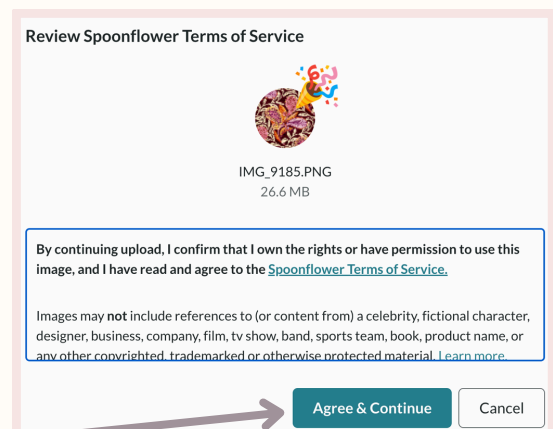


1. www.spoonflower.com

2. Log in to your account

3. Click on the person icon and select "upload a design"

4. Agree to Spoonflower's terms of service

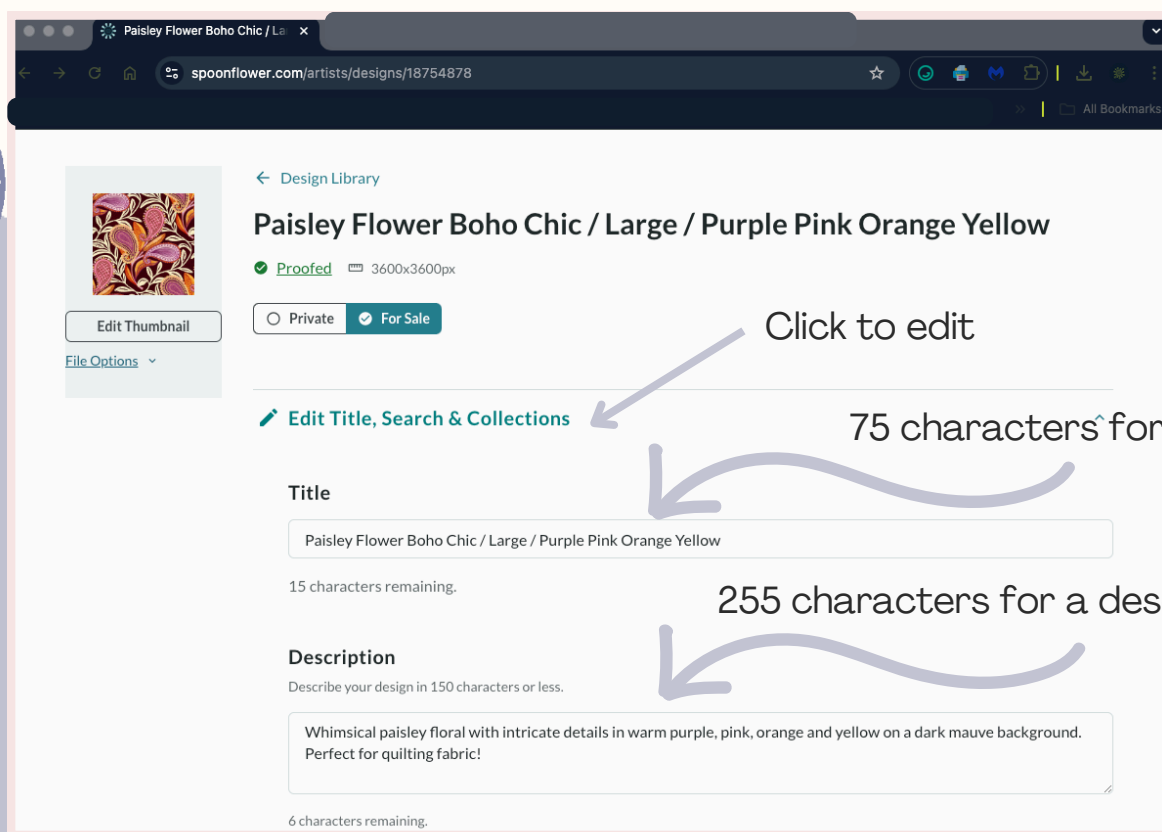


BACK



5b. Upload Your Design

Write a strong title and description.



The screenshot shows the Spoonflower design upload interface. The design is titled 'Paisley Flower Boho Chic / Large / Purple Pink Orange Yellow'. The page includes a thumbnail, a 'Proofed' status, and options to set the design as 'Private' or 'For Sale'. A link to 'Edit Title, Search & Collections' is highlighted with a purple arrow. To the right of this link, a purple arrow points to the title field with the text '75 characters for a title'. Below the title field, a purple arrow points to the description field with the text '255 characters for a description'. The description field contains the text: 'Whimsical paisley floral with intricate details in warm purple, pink, orange and yellow on a dark mauve background. Perfect for quilting fabric!'. The page also shows character counts: '15 characters remaining' for the title and '6 characters remaining' for the description.

Design Library

Paisley Flower Boho Chic / Large / Purple Pink Orange Yellow

✓ **Proofed** 3600x3600px

☐ Private ☒ For Sale

[Edit Thumbnail](#)

[File Options](#)

[Edit Title, Search & Collections](#)

Title

Paisley Flower Boho Chic / Large / Purple Pink Orange Yellow

15 characters remaining.

Description

Describe your design in 150 characters or less.

Whimsical paisley floral with intricate details in warm purple, pink, orange and yellow on a dark mauve background. Perfect for quilting fabric!

6 characters remaining.

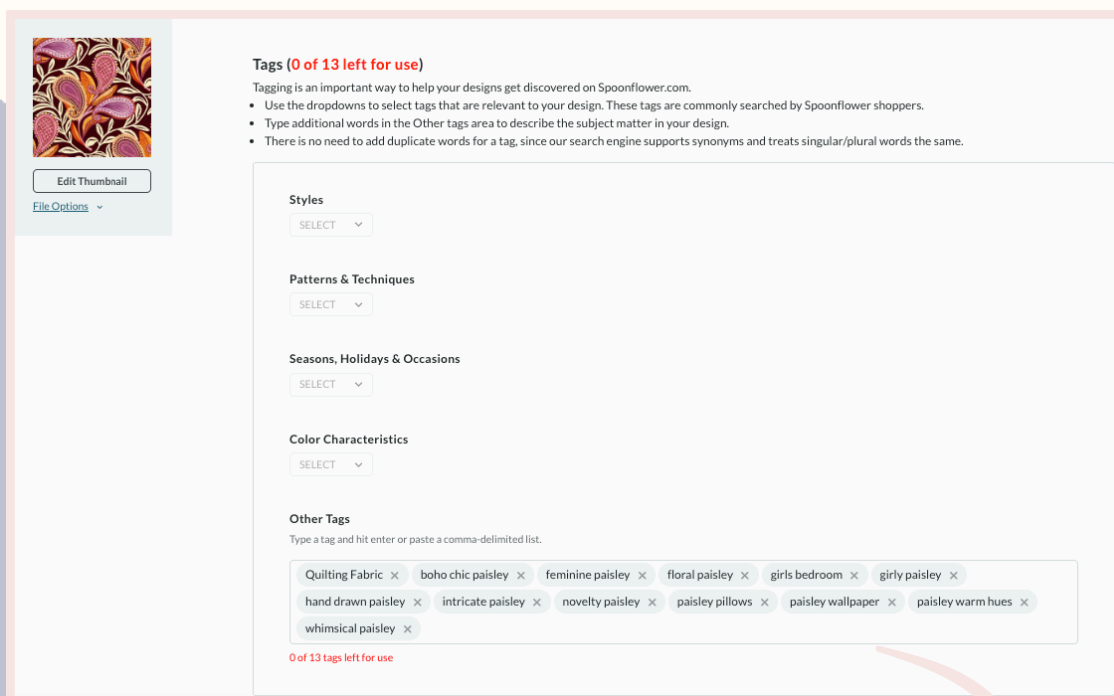
**Tip: Use ChatGPT to help you
write your description.**

BACK



5c. Upload Your Design

Include 13 tags. Think about the design style (eg. Scandi, damask or abstract), the techniques (eg. hand-painted or digital illustration), and the application (eg. fabric for children's clothing or sophisticated wallpaper).



Tags (0 of 13 left for use)

Tagging is an important way to help your designs get discovered on Spoonflower.com.

- Use the dropdowns to select tags that are relevant to your design. These tags are commonly searched by Spoonflower shoppers.
- Type additional words in the Other tags area to describe the subject matter in your design.
- There is no need to add duplicate words for a tag, since our search engine supports synonyms and treats singular/plural words the same.

Styles
SELECT

Patterns & Techniques
SELECT

Seasons, Holidays & Occasions
SELECT

Color Characteristics
SELECT

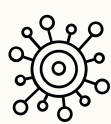
Other Tags
Type a tag and hit enter or paste a comma-delimited list.

Quilting Fabric x boho chic paisley x feminine paisley x floral paisley x girls bedroom x girly paisley x
hand drawn paisley x intricate paisley x novelty paisley x paisley pillows x paisley wallpaper x paisley warm hues x
whimsical paisley x

0 of 13 tags left for use

You can use 13 tags to list your design. You can either select your tags from the drop-down menus or type in your own. Use ChatGPT to help you write SEO-rich tags.

BACK



5d. Upload Your Design

Here is the same ChatGPT prompt that I use to write my title, description, and hashtags.

I just participated in this Spoonflower design challenge: **PASTE TITLE OF CHALLENGE FROM SPOONFLOWER**. Here are the details: **PASTE THE DESCRIPTION OF THE CHALLENGE FROM SPOONFLOWER**. I designed **DESCRIBE YOUR DESIGN**. Write me the top 20 SEO-rich tags to help promote my design. Make sure that each set of words is no longer than 20 characters, including spaces. List the tags in a paragraph with commas after each tag, keep spaces between the words. Make sure to include that it can be used for **WALLPAPER OR FABRIC OR HOME DECOR OR CHILD'S BEDROOM ETC** (whichever suits your design the best). Make sure to think about what a buyer would be searching for on this print-on-demand website.

Now create me a 255-character description of this product (it can't be any longer than 255 characters) that will help it be found on the Spoonflower print-on-demand website.

Now create me a title for this design. It should be in this format: Title / size / Colours. Add in the title and the colours sections. Leave the size section blank. The title can be no longer than 75 characters, including spaces. Do not include any commas.

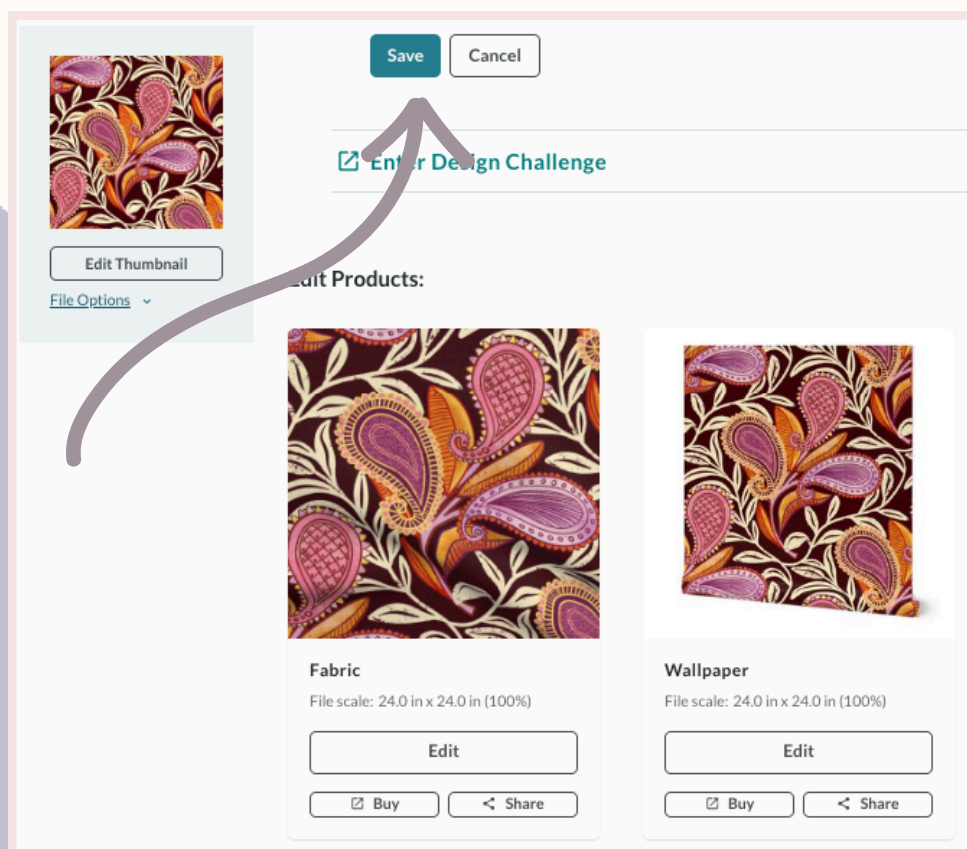
**You can also use Perplexity.com.
This is another great AI tool for
writing your copy in order to sell
your designs on Spoonflower.**

BACK



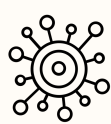
5e. Upload Your Design

Don't forget to save your work after you have inputted the title, description and tags.



Don't forget to click "SAVE"!

BACK



5f. Upload Your Design

Go back and check the design challenge details.

Details

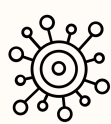
Paisley is known for its teardrop or abstract almond shape with intricate details. Reimagine this beloved pattern to breathe new life into its classic shape, blending it with novelty elements and playful concepts.

Use the original shape as a starting point to create something unexpected. Now's your chance to explore textures, lines, color palettes and a mix of motifs that would look precious on fabric.

- Entries close Tue, Feb 25 at 3PM EST. [View the full timeline](#) below.
- Designs will be viewed as a Fat Quarter of Fabric on the voting ballot. Acceptable repeat options for this challenge are Basic, Half-Drop, Half-Brick, Mirror.
- Designs previously uploaded on Spoonflower.com are not eligible for this contest. Designs do not require printed proofing to enter the contest.
- The popular vote determines the top 100 winning designs. Voters include Spoonflower artists and customers as well as the public.
- The top 100 designs receive prizes or benefits. [View the full prize list](#) below.
- View the full [Terms & Conditions](#) for this challenge.

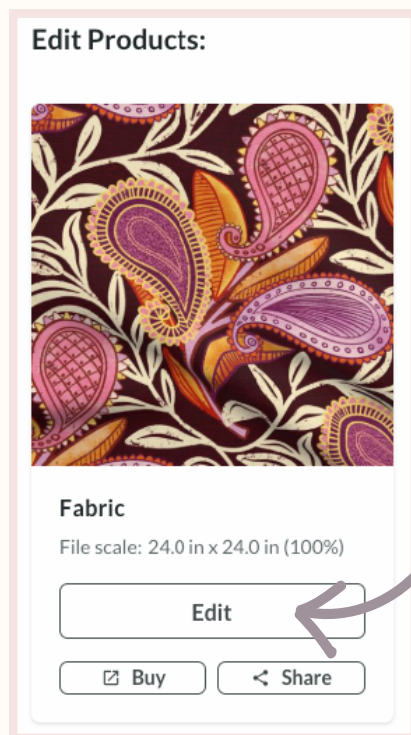
Check how the design will be previewed. Will it be on wallpaper? Or fabric? For this design challenge, the thumbnail used for voting will be a fat quarter of fabric.

BACK



5g. Upload Your Design

For this example, the design challenge will be viewed as a fat quarter of fabric. Scroll down until you see the option to edit as listed beneath the fabric thumbnail.



Click on edit

Tip: Use pattern templates to help you create well-composed designs.

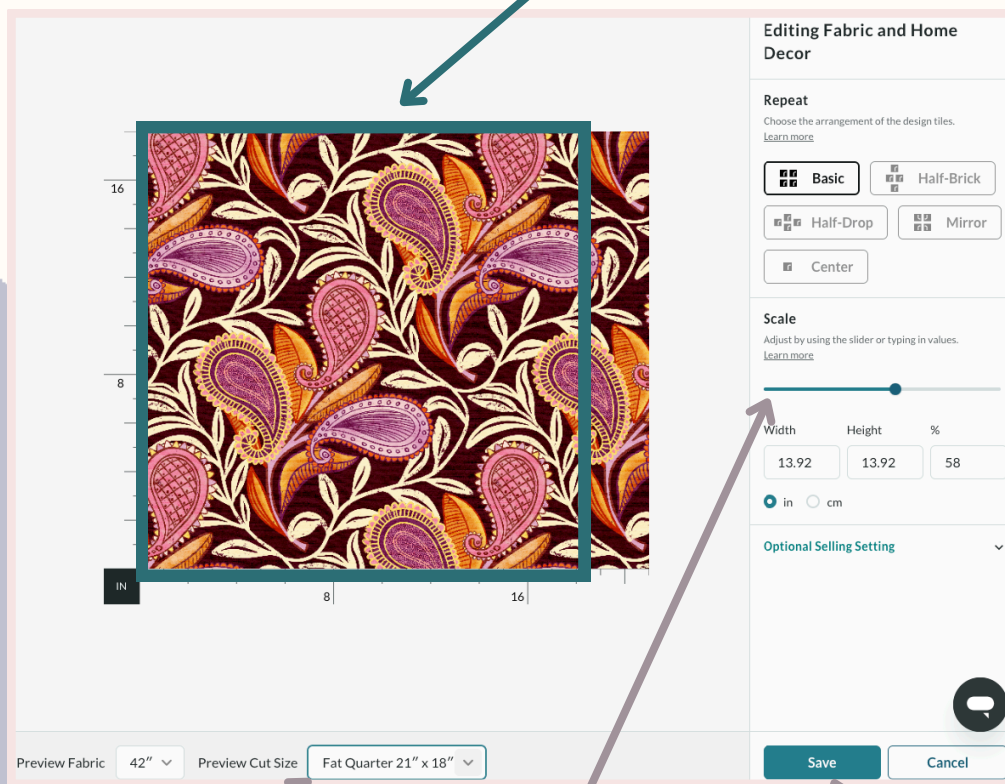
BACK



5h. Upload Your Design

Adjust the scaling to create a visually-appealing thumbnail.

Final voting ballot thumbnail



1. Select FAT QUARTER from the drop-down menu

2. Adjust the slider until the picture to the left looks like an appealing voting thumbnail

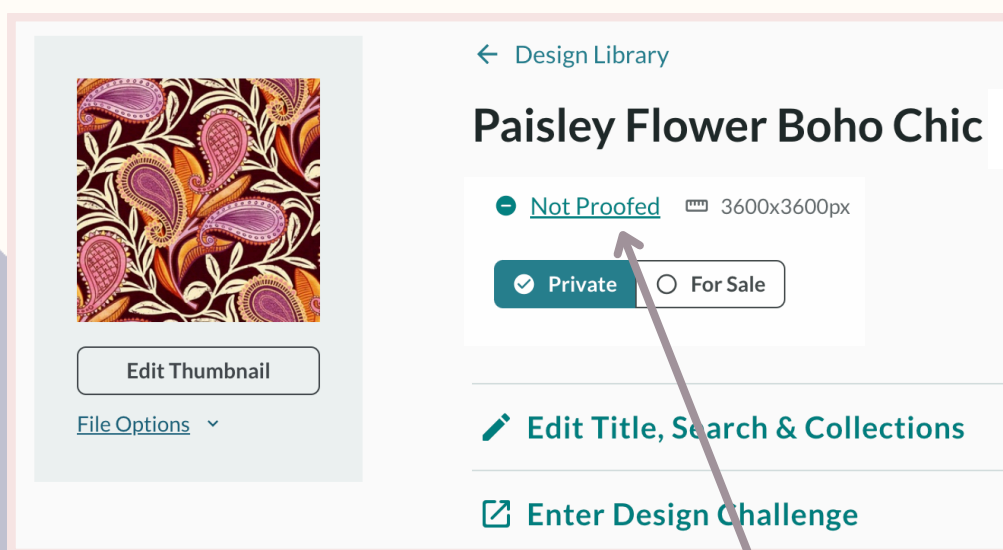
3. Click save

BACK



5i. Upload Your Design

Proof your design.



Click on “Not Proofed” to proof your design. You must do this before you can enter a design challenge.

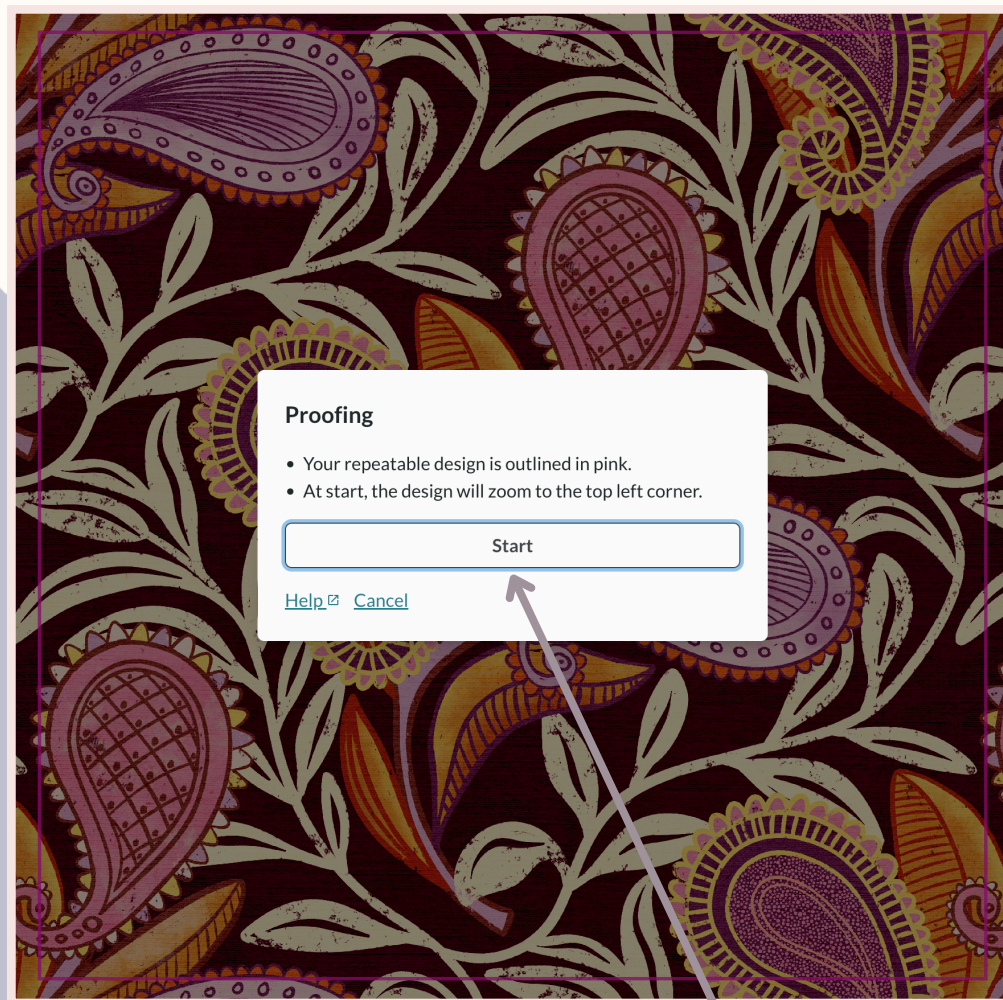
Tip: A Larger external monitor is beneficial when proofing designs.

BACK



5j. Upload Your Design

Proof your design.



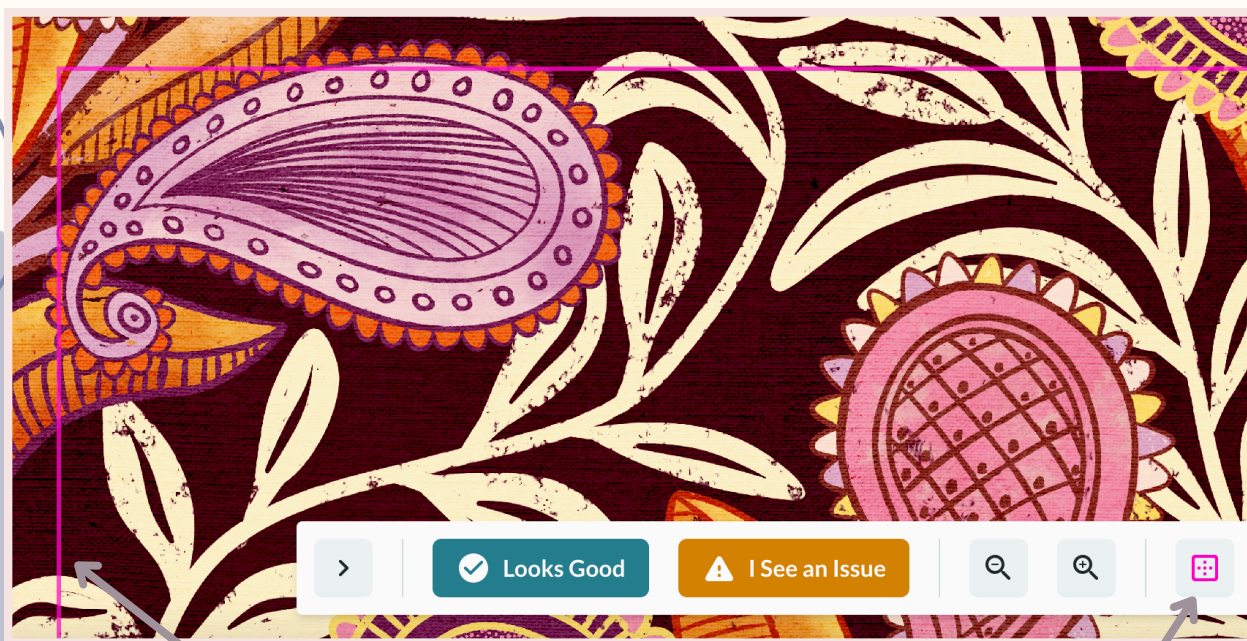
Click “start” to begin proofing your design

BACK



5k. Upload Your Design

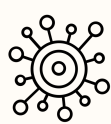
Proof your design.



Toggle this button on and off to show and hide the pink line that shows where the pattern tile repeats

Trace your eye along the edge of the tile (beneath where the pink line lies), around the entire tile, and ensure that no motifs are cut off or overlap improperly, or that there is a faint white line visible

BACK



5l. Upload Your Design

Set your pattern for sale.

Design Library

IMG 9185

Proofed 3600x3600p

Private For Sale

Edit Thumbnail

File Options

Edit Title & Search

Enter Design Changes

Sell your design on:

☐ Wallpaper

☐ Fabric and all home decor products

☐ Or sell on Tea Towels and Fabric only

Choose this option for your horizontal 27" x 11" design that you intend for Tea Towels but not other Home Decor or Wallpaper. Your design will print horizontally on Fabric but will rotate vertically for Tea Towels.

[Learn more](#)

☐ I understand that I will not be able to make image file or scale/repeat type changes to the design after it is marked for sale.

Save Cancel

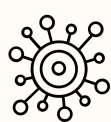
1. Click "For Sale"

2. Select wallpaper and / or fabric

3. Click "Save"

** Once you set your design for sale, you can't upload a new pattern tile, change the repeat type (basic, half-drop, half-brick etc.) or change the scale (make the pattern bigger or smaller for fabric or wallpaper).

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6a. Enter the Challenge

Once your design is proofed and set for sale (with a strong title, description and tags), you're ready to enter the design challenge!



Edit Thumbnail

[File Options](#) ▾

[← Design Library](#)

IMG 9185

✓ [Proofed](#)  3600x3600px

☐ Private ☒ For Sale

 [Edit Title & Search](#)

 [Enter Design Challenge](#)

Click to enter design challenge

In order to enter design challenges, your design must be set for sale.

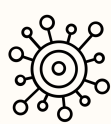
Additional steps may need to be completed before your design can be set for sale.

[Set Design For Sale](#)

[Cancel](#)

Don't forget that you have to put your design for sale (proof it, and the title, description and tags) BEFORE you can enter a design challenge.

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6b. Enter the Challenge

Make sure that your design does not include clip art, public domain imagery (like pictures from Google), or AI-generated images. Make sure that your design fits the theme.

Below is a preview of what voters will see, and our moderators will be checking for the following:



A great title
by sciencemavendesigns

1. What challenge do you want to enter?

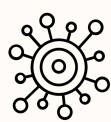
Challenge ▾
2. Entries that include clip art, public domain imagery or images generated using AI (Artificial Intelligence) are against the rules.
☒ My design does not include clip art, public domain imagery, or AI-generated images.
3. Does your design reflect the theme/prompt well?
☒ Yes
4. Does your design title reflect the theme/prompt well?

Title
A great title
62 characters remaining

Shoppers see this design title when shopping your products. It is also the title that voters will see while voting.

Select the design challenge from this drop-down menu

BACK



6c. Enter the Challenge

Congratulations on entering a Spoonflower design challenge! Once you have submitted the entry, you should receive a confirmation email.

5. Does your design description reflect how your design relates to the theme/prompt?

Description

An appropriate description

124 characters remaining

Shoppers see this description when on your add to cart pages. Challenge moderators also use this to understand your thinking.

Submit Entry

Edit Design Thumbnail

[Cancel and return to design library](#)

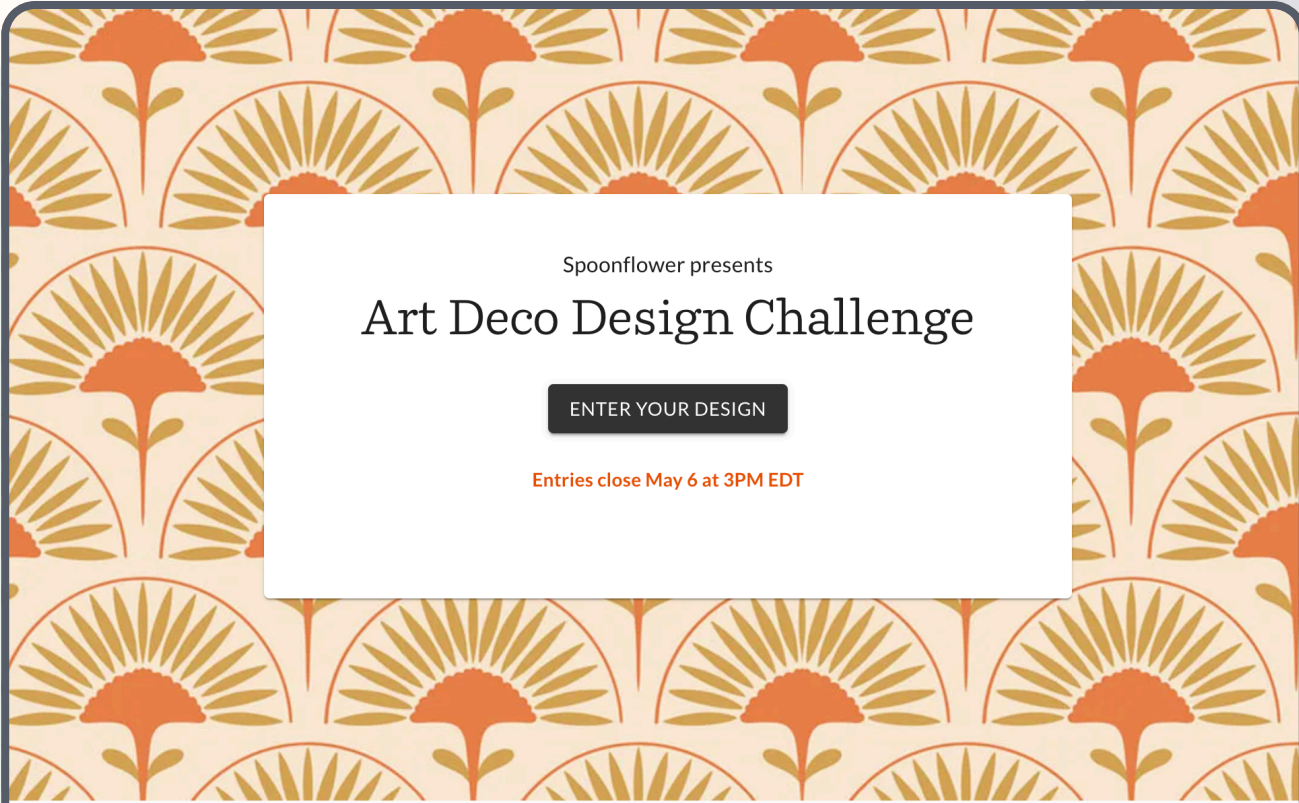
Submit entry! You're all set!

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Bonus: Past Challenge

Use this past challenge to practice following a brief, uploading, and scaling your designs.



Spoonflower presents

Art Deco Design Challenge

ENTER YOUR DESIGN

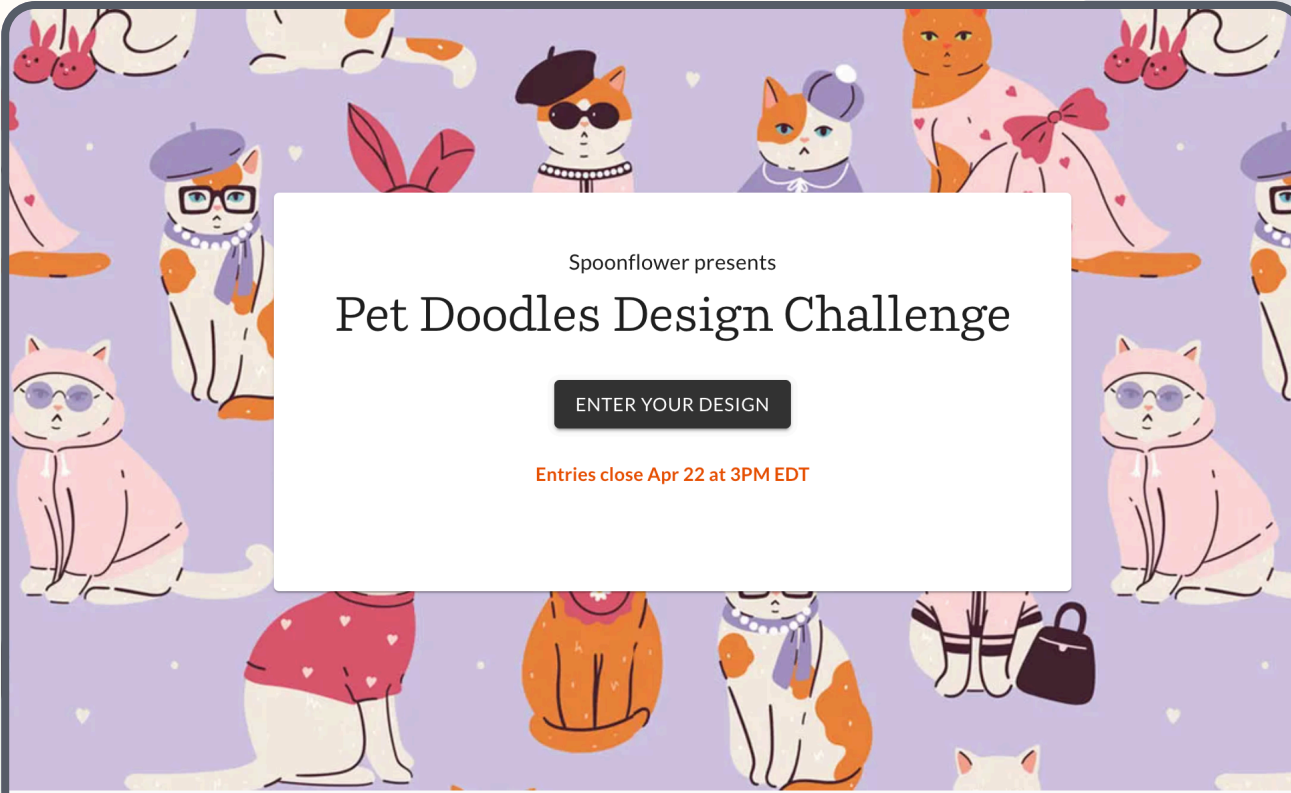
Entries close May 6 at 3PM EDT

If the extravagant lifestyles of the Jazz Age are your thing, we'd love to see your designs for this week's challenge: Art Deco. Designs that are bold, decadent and reflective of the Roaring 20's are welcome. Think geometric and symmetrical patterns with bold curves or sleek lines that were the bee's knees in the 20s.



Bonus: Past Challenge

Use this past challenge to practice following a brief, uploading, and scaling your designs.



Spoonflower presents

Pet Doodles Design Challenge

ENTER YOUR DESIGN

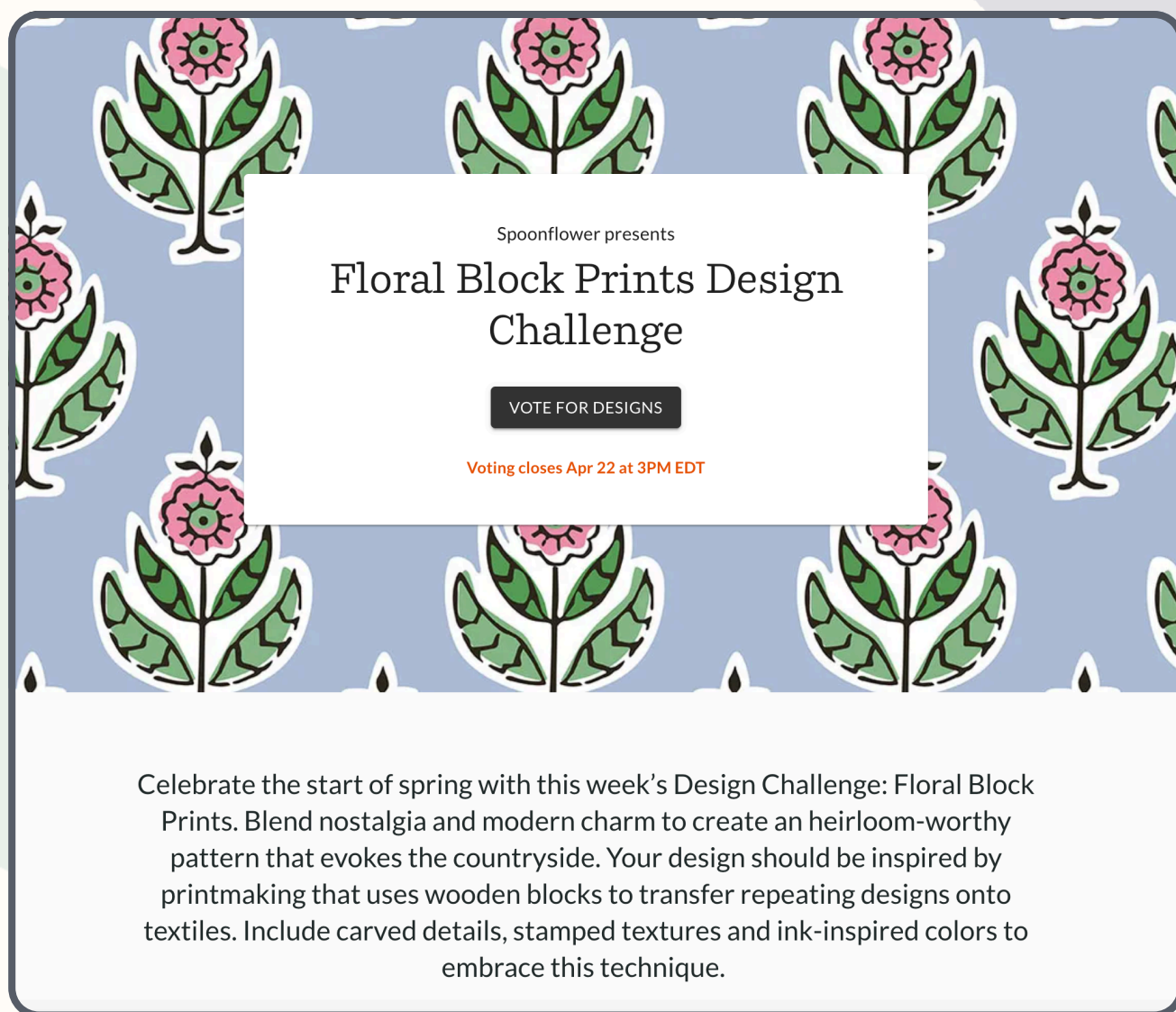
Entries close Apr 22 at 3PM EDT

Celebrate your favorite furry, feathery or fluffy friend in this week's Design Challenge theme: Pet Doodles! We're looking for a cute vibe that sparks joy – just like your pet. We want to see an aesthetic reminiscent of cartoons with fun animal motifs. Bring it back to your childhood for a playful “kidult” vibe. Be sure to brighten your design with vibrant, optimistic colors.



Bonus: Past Challenge

Use this past challenge to practice following a brief, uploading, and scaling your designs.

The banner features a repeating pattern of stylized pink flowers with green leaves on a light blue background. The flowers have a circular center with a green dot and radiating lines. The leaves are green with black outlines. The banner is framed by a dark grey border.

Spoonflower presents

Floral Block Prints Design Challenge

VOTE FOR DESIGNS

Voting closes Apr 22 at 3PM EDT

Celebrate the start of spring with this week's Design Challenge: Floral Block Prints. Blend nostalgia and modern charm to create an heirloom-worthy pattern that evokes the countryside. Your design should be inspired by printmaking that uses wooden blocks to transfer repeating designs onto textiles. Include carved details, stamped textures and ink-inspired colors to embrace this technique.



Bonus: Past Challenge

Use this past challenge to practice following a brief, uploading, and scaling your designs.

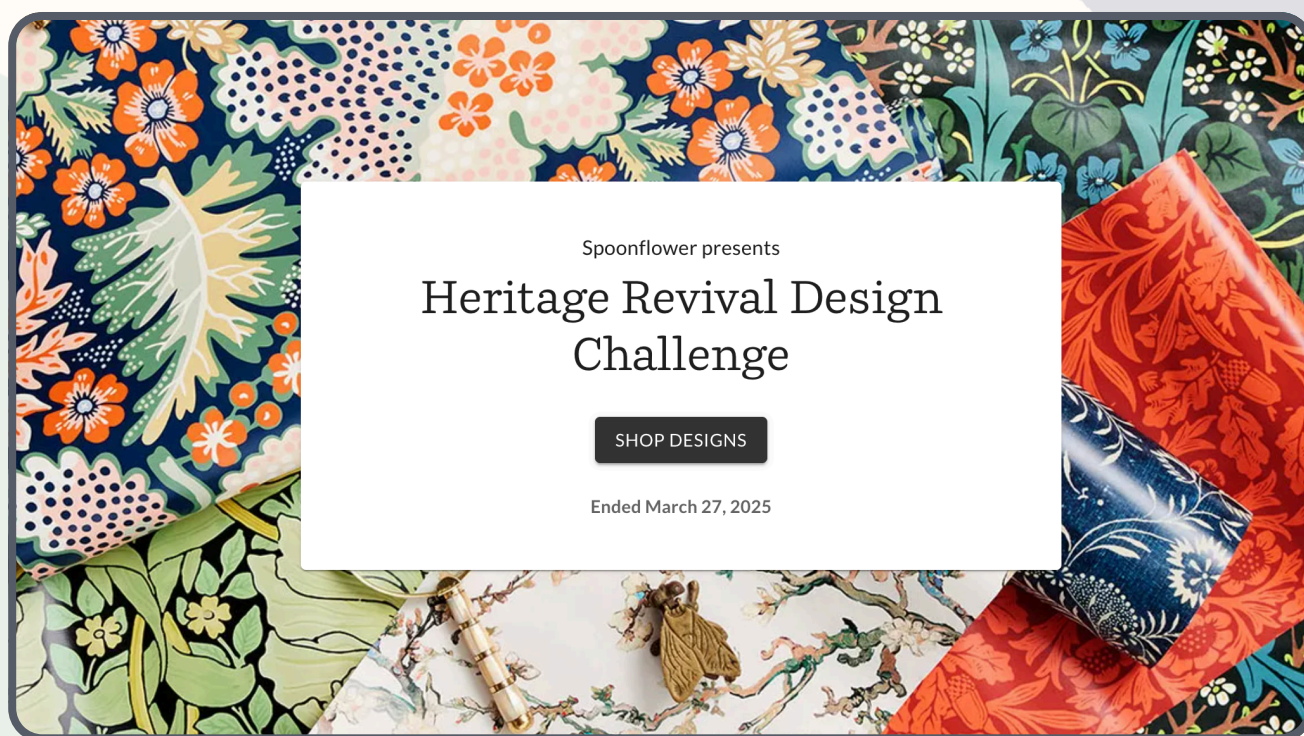


Let your creativity bloom this week with an entry in the Bold Florals Design Challenge! Think vibrant colors, maximalist prints and striking details for a bright design that celebrates the beauty of flowers. Use intensely rich hues and strong contrasts that demand attention for an entry that is sure to feel energetic and impactful.



Bonus: Past Challenge

Use this past challenge to practice following a brief, uploading, and scaling your designs.



In with the old! This week's Design Challenge theme is Heritage Revival. It's all about bringing renewed purpose to antique objects and designs from the past.



Bonus: Past Challenge

Use this past challenge to practice following a brief, uploading, and scaling your designs.



Timeless and traditional, stripes are always in style. For this week's Design Challenge, Sophisticated Stripes, we invite artists to reinterpret a classic and create an entry that makes a sophisticated statement. From awning stripes to pin stripes and everything in between, all scales and styles are welcome in this week's challenge.

BACK



Bonus: Past Challenge

Use this past challenge to practice following a brief, uploading, and scaling your designs.

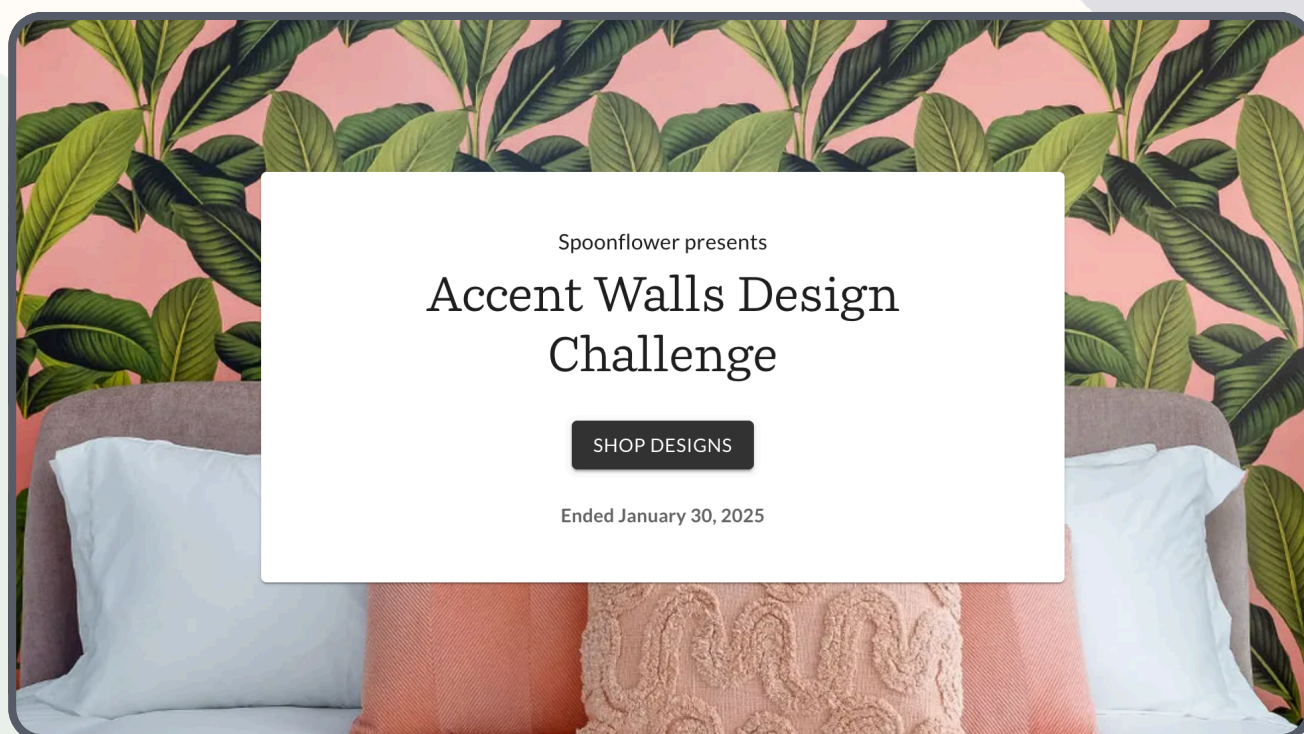


This week, we invite artists to simplify their entries with the art of “less is more” for the Minimalist Cheater Quilts Design Challenge. Using only two colors, master the look of minimalism with geometric shapes and classic quilt block patterns to create a contemporary creation that feels modern and effortlessly sophisticated.



Bonus: Past Challenge

Use this past challenge to practice following a brief, uploading, and scaling your designs.



This week's Accent Wall Design Challenge is all about creating designs that would make a statement with wallpaper. Consider bold, large-scale designs that would bring the wow factor to a single wall. An accent wall helps to draw the eye and define a space, so produce a print that'll add instant character and charm.



Bonus: Past Challenge

Use this past challenge to practice following a brief, uploading, and scaling your designs.



Spoonflower has once again partnered with Pantone to announce Color of the Year 2025, Mocha Mousse! We are challenging our artists to create stunning statement wallpaper featuring this crowd-pleasing neutral hue.



Bonus: Past Challenge

Use this past challenge to practice following a brief, uploading, and scaling your designs.

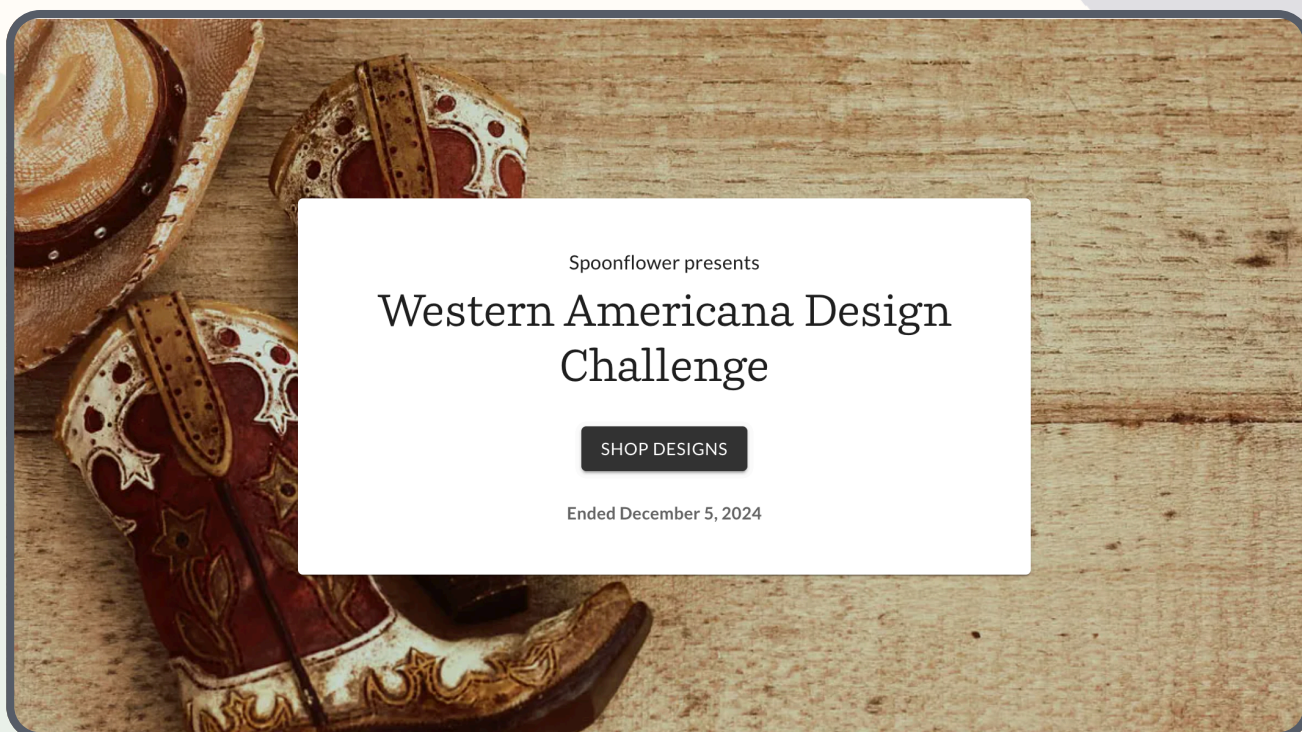


The wilderness is calling! Embrace the cozy charm of a rustic cabin in the woods in this week's Cabincore Wallpaper Design Challenge. Previewing a 2025 design trend, we're looking for designs that encapsulate the essence of cabin life, blending comfort with a touch of the great outdoors.



Bonus: Past Challenge

Use this past challenge to practice following a brief, uploading, and scaling your designs.

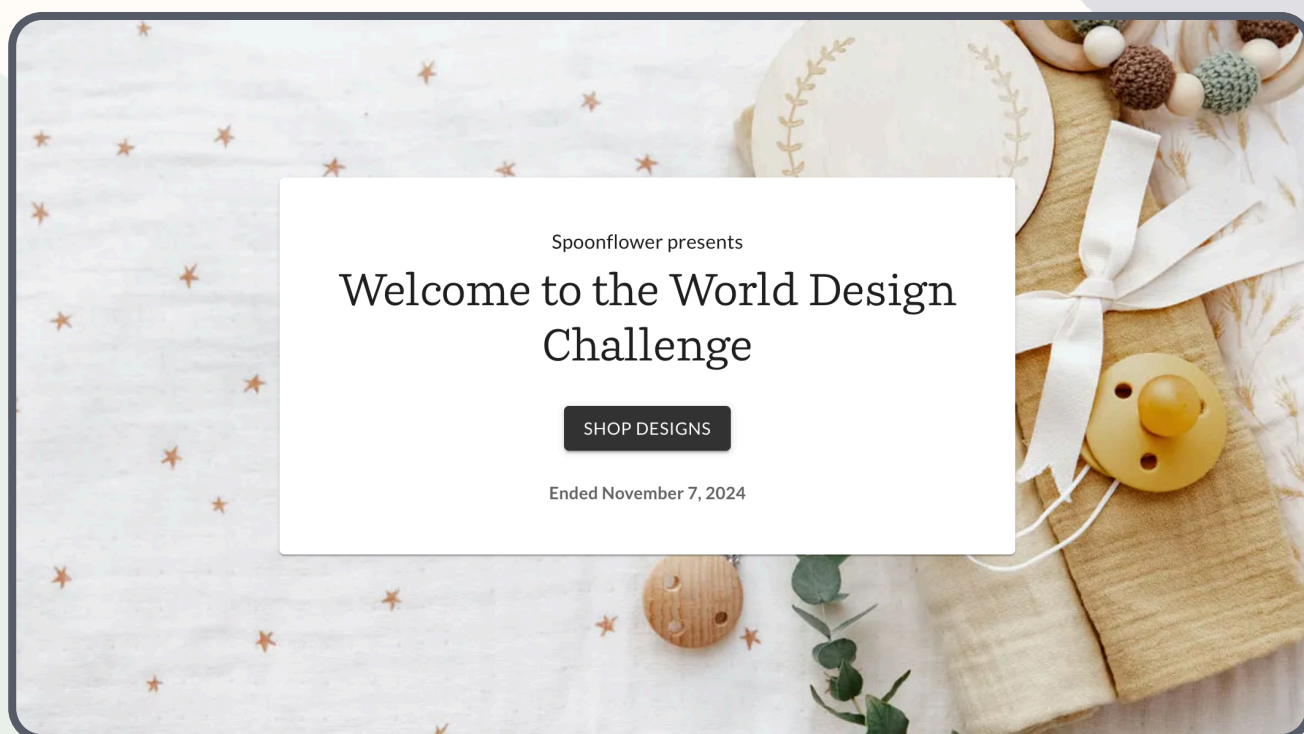


Immerse yourself in the spirit of the Old West in this week's Design Challenge: Western Americana. Celebrate the rich heritage and rugged landscapes in this adventurous frontier to create a crowd-pleasing design that looks like it would belong on home decor and apparel use cases you'd see in a saloon, on a ranch or at a rodeo.



Bonus: Past Challenge

Use this past challenge to practice following a brief, uploading, and scaling your designs.



Wrap yourself up in the design process and create a precious baby themed pattern for this week's Welcome to the World Design Challenge.

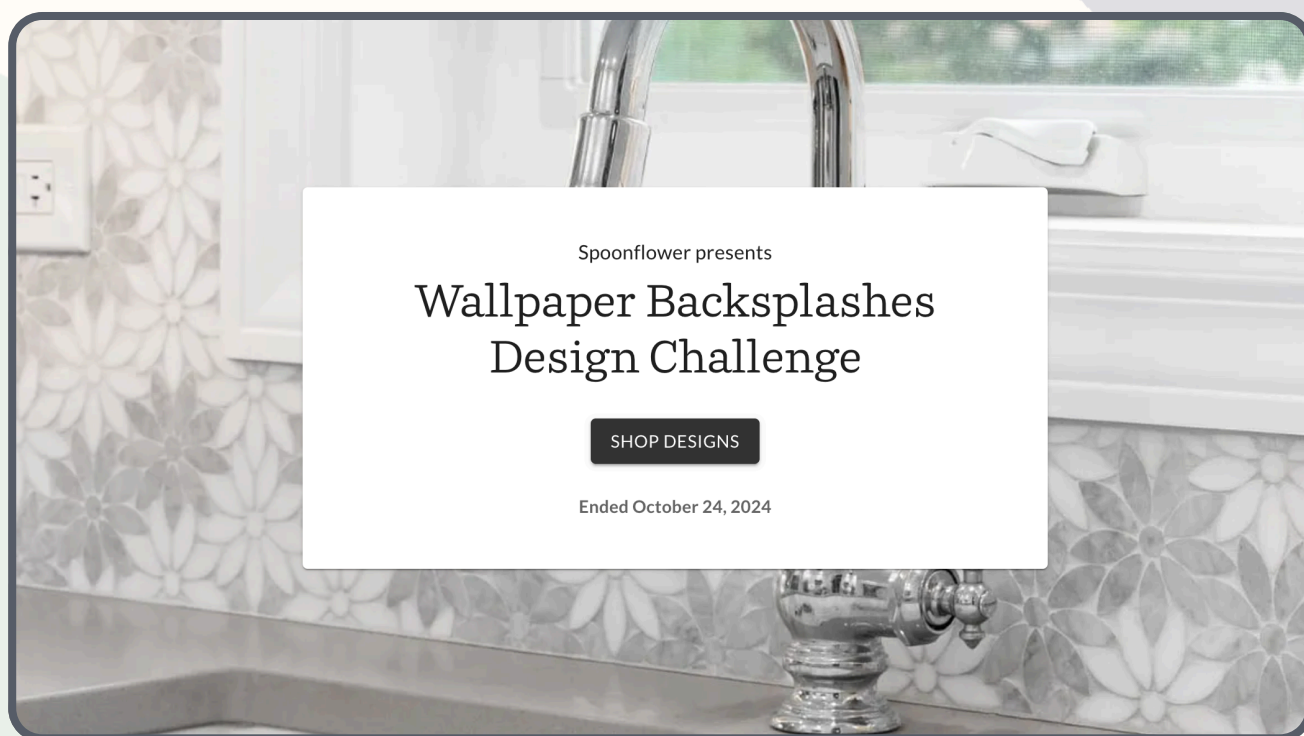
Details

BACK



Bonus: Past Challenge

Use this past challenge to practice following a brief, uploading, and scaling your designs.

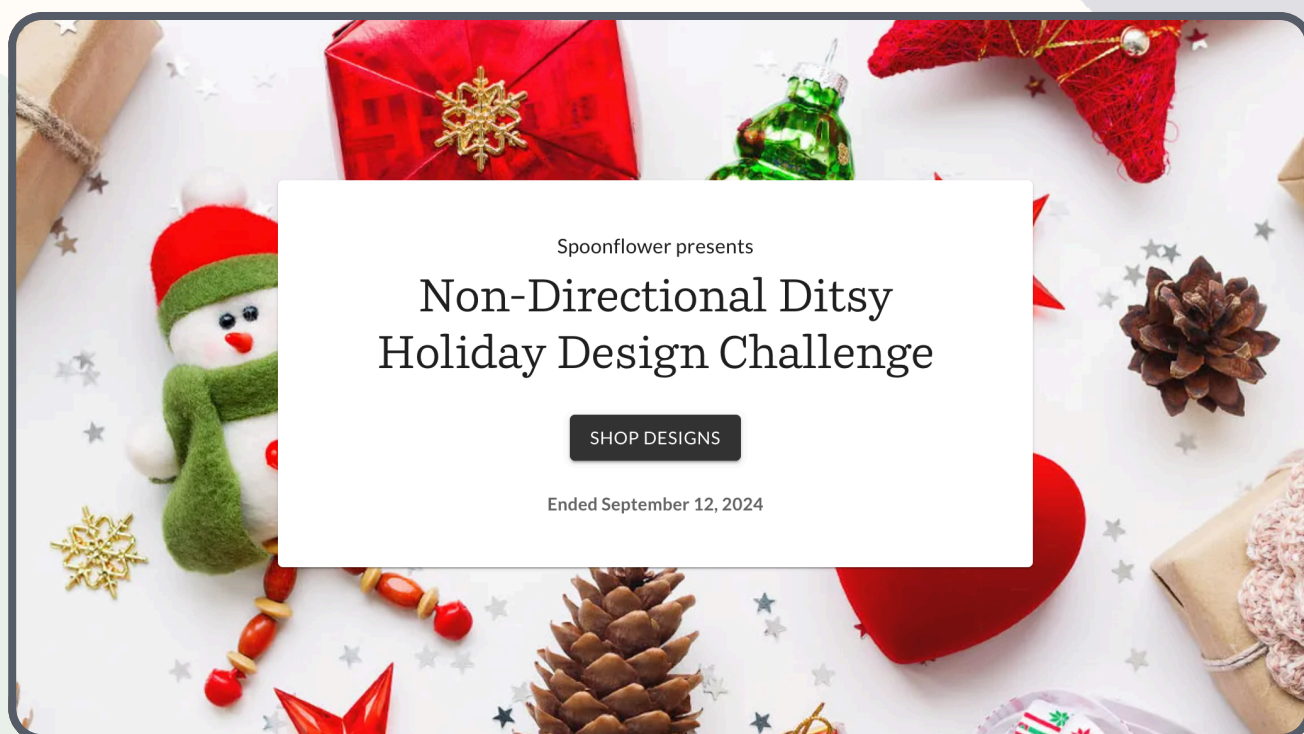


Spice things up with this week's Wallpaper Backsplashes Design Challenge. Create an entry that would look lovely as a backsplash behind a sink in the kitchen or in a bathroom, bringing an artful element to functionality. Get inspired and [shop all wallpaper for kitchens](#).



Bonus: Past Challenge

Use this past challenge to practice following a brief, uploading, and scaling your designs.



It's almost time to unpack those holiday decorations and deck the halls! Think small scale for this week's Design Challenge theme: Non-Directional Ditsy Holiday.

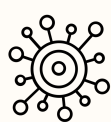


Bonus: Past Challenge

Use this past challenge to practice following a brief, uploading, and scaling your designs.



Prepare to be preppy for this week's Design Challenge: Preppy Wallpaper. Take inspiration from the Grandmillennial and Coquette wallpaper trends – full of frills, bows, and vibrant botanicals in colorful palettes, paired with classic patterns like pinstripes and small-scale gingham. Get inspired and shop the [Preppy Wallpaper](#) style collection.



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Good luck with your surface pattern design journey!



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