

FOUNDERS & ENTREPRENEURS'  
BRAND PLAY BOOK  
10 PRACTICAL VISUAL BRANDING TIPS

# How to design a brand that looks like a million bucks without designer skills

BRANDSALON

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# If you're building a business, your brand matters.

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Not just because it should look good – but because it should communicate credibility, clarity, and confidence from day one.

As a founder or entrepreneur, you're asking people to trust you.

Your visual identity is often the first signal that you're serious about what you do.

And yet, branding can feel overwhelming. Which colors? Which fonts? Do you need a logo or is a nametag enough? What actually makes something look professional?

That's exactly why I created this Brand Playbook.

Inside, you'll find 10 practical visual branding tips designed to help you make confident decisions about your brand – even if you don't have designer skills.

These are the principles I've worked with for more than 22 years in visual branding – simplified, structured, and made actionable so you can apply them directly to your own business.

Because building a strong brand isn't about bigger budgets.

It's about intentional choices.

My hope is that these 10 tips give you clarity, direction, and the confidence to create a brand that feels aligned – and attracts the right clients.



**Let's build it  
properly from  
the start!**

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# 1. Start with clarity.

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## Before you design, decide.

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**What should your brand signal – instantly?  
Authority. Calm. Precision. Trust?**

Choose **three keywords** that describe what your brand should communicate.

These words become your compass.

Use them throughout the entire process.

Every time you make a decision – about color, typography, imagery, layout – pause and ask:

**Does this support my three words?**

If it doesn't, remove it.

This simple filter eliminates doubt.  
It prevents random choices.  
It creates consistency.

Your visual identity is not decoration.  
It is direction.



**Without clarity,  
design becomes noise.  
With clarity, it becomes  
positioning.**

**And positioning  
builds trust – before you  
say a single word.**

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## 2. Create a brand moodboard.

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### Collect before you create.

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**A moodboard allows you to see your brand before you define it.**

**Start in Pinterest.**

Create a new board called Your Brand Name – Visual Direction. Then begin saving images that feel aligned, without overthinking it.

**Look for:**

- Color atmospheres (not just single colors, but combinations)
- Typography styles
- Website layouts
- Photography mood (light, shadow, minimal, bold)
- Textures and details
- Packaging, editorials, interiors – anything that captures the feeling

Do not analyze yet. Just collect.

Once you have 30–50 pins, step back. Notice the patterns.

Are the tones muted or high contrast?

Do you lean toward minimal compositions or expressive layouts?

Is the mood calm and refined – or bold and energetic?

Refinement often reveals itself quietly.

**Now narrow it down.**

Remove anything that feels off-brand. Keep only what supports your desired positioning.

A moodboard is not about copying. It is about recognizing your aesthetic instinct – and shaping it with intention.

This becomes the visual filter for everything that follows.

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# 3. Choose one primary color and two secondary colors

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## Restraint creates elegance.

Choose one primary color – **your anchor**.

Add **one accent** color and **one neutral color**. Besides the three colors, also choose a text color (often black) and a logo color; either black or your primary color.

Nothing more.

Selecting a color palette built around one primary and two secondary colors makes the entire branding process significantly easier.

It removes overwhelm.  
It creates cohesion.  
It strengthens recognition.

Let your colors set the tone of your brand – but allow your imagery to carry the attention.

Your palette should frame your content, not compete with it.

When colors are controlled, your visuals stand out more clearly.

Too many colors create distraction.

### Color palette example:



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## 4. Only two fonts.

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# Typography defines tone

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## – quietly, but powerfully

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**You only need two fonts.  
That is enough.**

1. One font for **headlines** – with more character, personality and expression.
2. One font for **body text** – the one you use the most, and the one that must be effortless to read.

Your headline font creates emotion.  
Your body font creates clarity.

For body text, choose a ‘sans-serif font’:

Sans-serif fonts are typefaces without small decorative “feet” – such as: Lato, Poppins, Inter, or Roboto (and they are free fonts).

They are clean, modern, and especially easy to read on mobile screens.

Avoid fonts that are too thin. Light-weight fonts may look elegant on a large screen, but they disappear on smaller devices.

Make your headlines clear. Your headline font can have personality – but it must remain readable.

And always ensure strong contrast.

Light text on a dark background – or dark text on a light background. Avoid low-contrast combinations like beige on light pink or light grey on white.

Legibility is not optional. If people struggle to read, they leave.

Two well-chosen fonts – used consistently and with proper contrast – instantly elevate your brand.

*Inside my Brandsalon Course, I guide you through selecting and pairing fonts so your typography feels refined, balanced, and aligned with your positioning AND I show you where to find unique fonts!*

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# 5. Create a simple logo step by step. Simplicity is strength.

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**A logo does not need to impress.  
It needs to endure.**

Begin with your name.

Set your brand name in the headline font you selected earlier.

Write it in uppercase.  
Then in lowercase.

Uppercase often feels architectural – confident and structured.  
Lowercase can feel refined – softer and more understated.

Return to your three keywords.  
Which version aligns best with your direction?

Now refine.

Look at each letter carefully.  
Adjust spacing. Remove what feels unnecessary.

Extending the air between letters is a very powerful tool to make the logo font look unique.

More space often creates more elegance.

Remember – a logo can simply be a wordmark.

Your company name written in a considered way, without an icon or symbol.

Open Canva and experiment quietly.  
Test everything in black first.

Save your logo/nametag in the formats png and svg for digital use.

*Inside the Brandsalon Course, I show you where to find distinctive typefaces with strong character – fonts that give you a powerful starting point from the very beginning.*

Luxury is rarely loud.  
It is precise.

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## 6. Define your image style.

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Your visuals should belong  
to the same universe.

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**Light or shadow.**

**Minimal or expressive.**

**Structured or organic.**

Choose – and commit.

It can be a strong choice to work with images that are abstract and in lighter tones that complement your color palette.

Soft light, clean compositions, subtle textures.

When your imagery supports your palette rather than competing with it, your brand feels considered.

Be cautious with stock photography. It can quickly feel staged or overly “constructed.”

Instead, invest time in finding a cohesive image series that tells something about your brand or product.

**The atmosphere matters more than the subject.**

If this feels difficult, lean toward abstract imagery without people. Details. Surfaces. Light. Materials.

Abstract visuals often feel more timeless – and more premium.

Consistency builds recognition. Recognition builds trust.

*Inside the Brandsalon Course, we refine your visual language so every image strengthens your positioning – quietly, but powerfully.*

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# 7. Use consistent visual elements across all touchpoints.

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## Random visuals weaken perception.

### Every touchpoint is a signal.

Your website.  
Your social media.  
Your newsletter.  
Your presentations.  
Your invoices.

When these signals change constantly, your brand feels uncertain.

Use repeating layouts.  
Use your defined palette.  
Use your chosen typography.

Create a small visual system you can reuse everywhere. This creates rhythm. Structure. Recognition.

Consistency does not make your brand boring – it makes it trustworthy.

Your goal is simple:  
Your brand should feel recognizable before your name is even noticed.

### Pay attention to:

- Spacing and margins
- Text placement
- Background tones
- Image treatment
- Font hierarchy

Small repeated details create a cohesive impression over time.

Branding is not built in one moment. It is built in repetition – across every touchpoint.

*I share practical layout principles and visual frameworks that help you build a brand system – not just isolated designs, inside the Brandsalon Course,*

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# 8. Create a simple branding kit.

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## Once decisions are made, document them.

A brand that only exists in your head will constantly shift.

A documented brand becomes consistent.

Your branding kit should include:

- Key brand words (your three positioning keywords)
- Color codes (HEX and RGB)
- Typography (headline and body font, including weights)
- Image direction (light, contrast, mood, composition)
- Logo versions (primary, secondary, black, white)

You may also add:

- Spacing principles
- Background usage
- Simple layout examples
- Do's and don'ts

This does not need to be complicated. A clear, 5–7 page PDF is enough.

The purpose is not perfection. It is alignment.

When everything is documented, you stop re-deciding. You stop guessing. You start building recognition.

### **This is your foundation.**

Without structure, consistency fades. With structure, your brand strengthens over time.

*Inside the Brandsalon Course, you build a complete, reusable brand book – one you can confidently share with designers, photographers, collaborators, or VAs as your business grows.*

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# 9. Define your core message.

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## Your tone of voice.

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**Your core message is not only what you say. It is how you say it.**

It is the language you choose.  
The tone you repeat.  
The words you become known for.

Ask yourself:

- What do I want to be known for?
- What transformation do I offer?
- What problem do I solve – clearly and specifically?
- What should people feel after encountering my brand?

Your message should be simple enough to repeat – and strong enough to remember.

For most brands, an active language is more powerful than a passive one.

Instead of:  
“It can be helpful to consider...”

Write:  
“Start here.”

Clarity feels confident.  
Active language builds authority.

**Just as with your visuals, hold your message up against the three keywords you defined in step 1.**

Does your tone reflect them?  
Does your wording support them?  
Does your rhythm match your positioning?

If your brand signals precision – your language must be precise.  
If your brand signals warmth – your tone must feel human.

Alignment between visuals and voice is what makes a brand feel credible.

When design and language speak the same language, your brand feels intentional. Established. Trustworthy.

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# 10. Evaluate honestly.

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## Step back.

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**Create distance from your work.  
Look at your brand as if you were  
seeing it for the first time.**

Does it feel intentional?  
Would you trust it?  
Does it reflect the level you want to  
operate at – not where you started,  
but where you are going?

Consistency matters more than  
complexity. Clarity matters more than  
decoration.

Look at everything together:

- Colors
- Typography
- Logo
- Imagery
- Tone of voice

Do they feel aligned?  
Do they support your three keywords  
from step 1?

If something feels “off,” it usually is.

Refinement is part of the process.  
Strong brands are not created in one  
draft – they are shaped through small,  
conscious adjustments.

Perfection is not required.  
Clarity is.

This guide gives you the foundation –  
a structured starting point.

*If you are ready to go deeper – with  
more strategy, more refinement, and  
a complete step-by-step framework  
– that is exactly what we build inside  
the Brandsalon Course.*

Not just a brand that looks good.  
A brand that feels positioned.

**THE BRANDSALON COURSE  
DESIGN YOUR VISUAL IDENTITY**

**BRANDSALON**