

CANVA LIKE A BOSS



Fake it till you make it with Canva. This mini guide turns you into a design wizard—no experience needed. Packed with sneaky tips, you'll be clicking, dragging, and pretending you're a pro in no time. Let's get you from "What's a Canva?" to "Yep, I made this."

The Stuff

WELCOME	3
GETTING STARTED	4
EDITING BASICS	8
THE TOOLBARS	16
TIPS & TRICKS	34
FREE VS PRO	42



Welcome!

Canva is EVERYWHERE. Even basic Canva skills are now marketable and essential — This guide will have you pretending to be a design wizard—only this time, you actually will be.

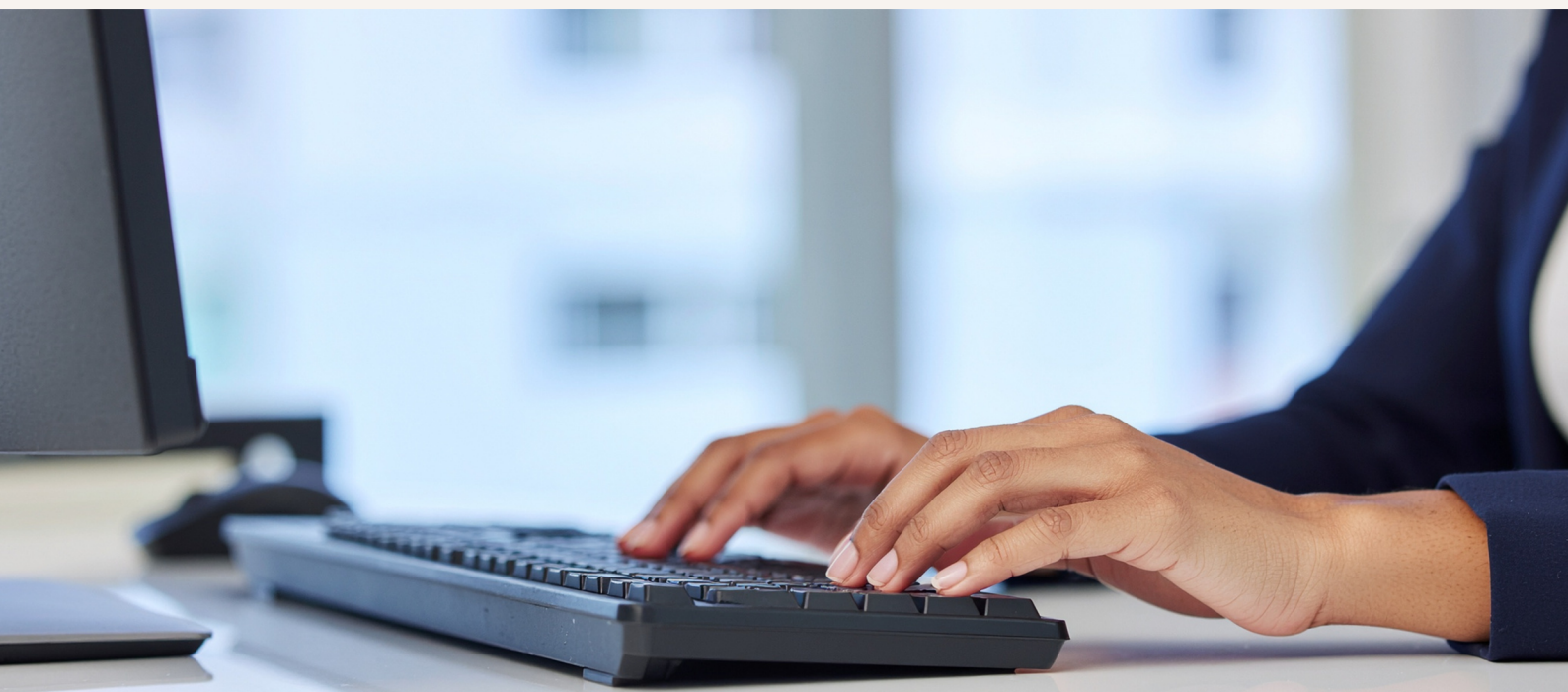
Canva lets you whip up everything from party invites and journal pages to social media posts and even full-on ebooks—without making you feel like you need a fancy art degree. Basically, it's design made so easy, even your pet could probably do it (if they had thumbs).

It's totally cool to edit and adapt purchased templates, but once you get the hang of it, you might surprise yourself by creating your own stuff from scratch — like social media posts, logos, or even products you can sell.

Many workplaces are adopting Canva, so to avoid looking clueless, it's a tool you should have.

Canva is jam-packed with features — but you don't need to learn them all today. Click things. Break things. Undo exists for a reason. Buy templates if it makes things easier while you learn.

This quick guide is here to make Canva feel less scary. So, go forth, overconfidently press Export, and pretend you meant to do that.



Don't Limit
Yourself



**GETTING
STARTED**

QUICK & EASY CANVA ESSENTIALS

GETTING STARTED

MAKE A FREE CANVA ACCOUNT

Canva is free and stupidly easy to join — like signing up for yet another app you'll actually use.

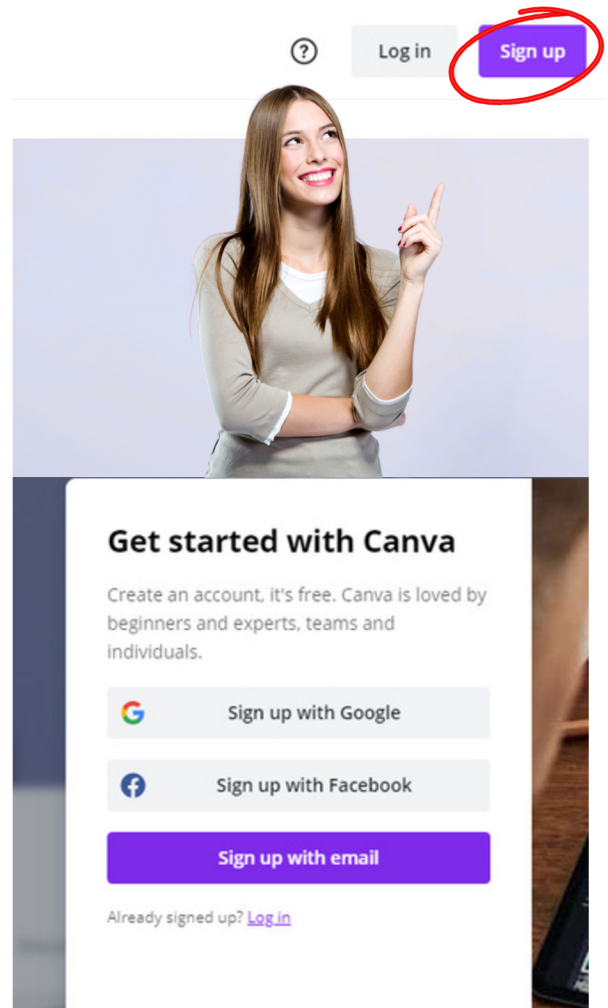
How to get in

- Go to www.canva.com and hit “Sign up” (top right).
- Pick a sign-up method and breeze through the short form.

What you get

- Instant access to a powerful, friendly design tool.
- Plenty of features with a free account. (Free vs Pro? See page 42.)

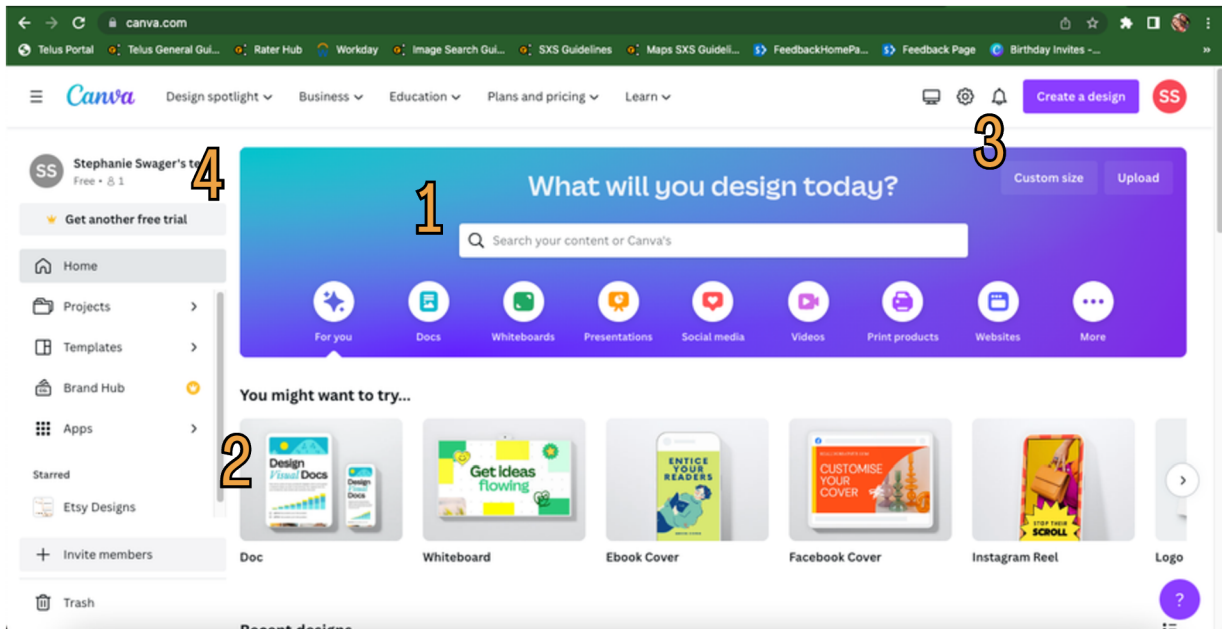
Next: learn the interface — click things, panic, undo, repeat.



QUICK & EASY CANVA ESSENTIALS

GETTING STARTED

THE LANDING PAGE



Welcome to Canva — a tidy, friendly workspace that helps you create with confidence.

Here's where you'll find the:

1. Toolbar (top): your shortcut to templates and quick access to projects you've already started.
2. Canvas (center): where templates and recent designs are displayed so you can jump straight into creating.
3. Custom size button: type in the exact dimensions you need — from a standard letter to a giant poster — and a blank canvas appears ready for your magic. Pre-set sizes are available if you prefer one-click convenience.
4. Sidebar (left): your home for designs, templates, folders, and the Pro upgrade. Use folders to keep things neat, to keep designs organized by category and if the sidebar feels busy, tap the three-line icon in the top-left to minimize it.

Tip: explore confidently, try things, and remember Undo is your best friend. You've got this.

QUICK & EASY CANVA ESSENTIALS

GETTING STARTED

LOADING A TEMPLATE YOU'VE PURCHASED

Make sure you are logged in to Canva.

Open the link provided with your template purchase.

A screen previewing the template will display (as per image on the right).

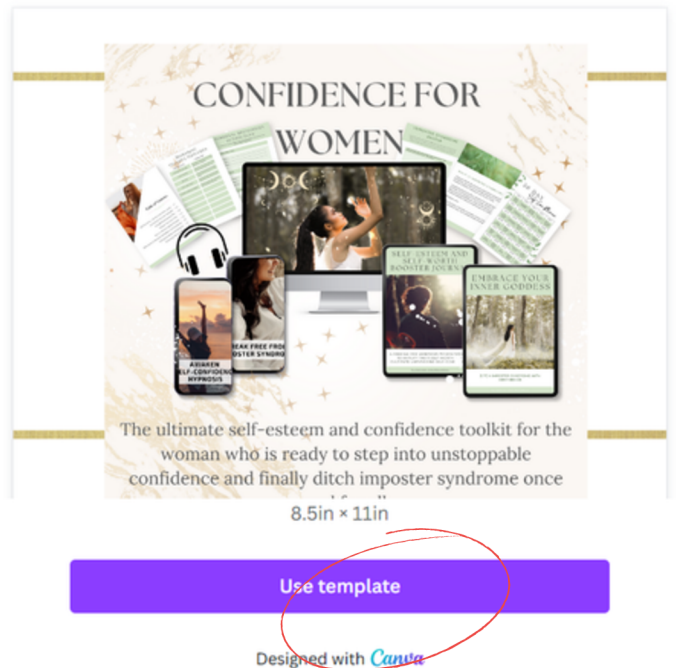
Click 'use template'.


The template will open in Canva, ready for you to edit.

You can make a copy of the template to preserve the original - once your template is opened, just head up to "File" at the top left and choose "Make a copy" from the menu.

Now the template is yours to do as you wish with! You can change colours, fonts, add or remove text, images, pages and more.

A template created by Emily Rainsford was shared with you, start designing now



Note.  When ever you see the crown icon as above, for example on fonts, elements, graphics etc, it denotes something only available to Pro users.



EDITING BASICS®

QUICK & EASY CANVA ESSENTIALS

EDITING BASICS

THE PROJECT WORKSPACE

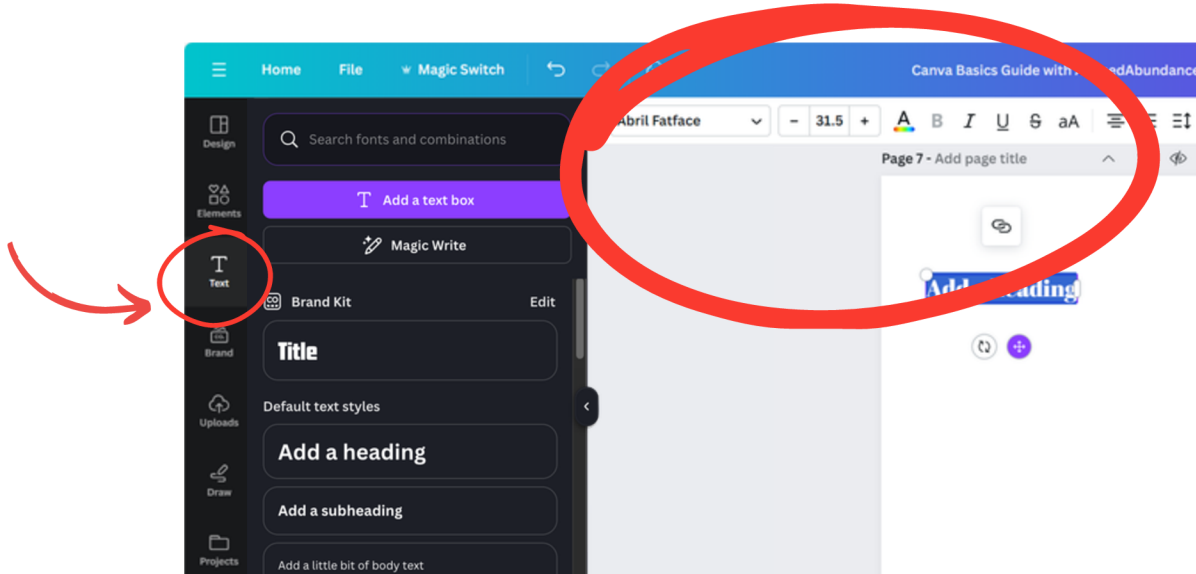


1. Zoom — use the slider in the bottom-right to zoom in for pixel-perfect tweaks or zoom out to admire (or panic at) the whole page. There's also a horizontal slider above it to nudge the page left and right so you can focus where it matters.
2. Grid View — click the four-square icon (bottom center/right) to hop between pages in multipage designs. Pick a page and Canva takes you there. Want full-screen glory? Hit the double-arrow icon to hide distractions and see your work in all its triumphant glory.
3. Sidebar — your design command center. Add elements, text, backgrounds, or upload your own images by clicking the relevant icon. Each section includes a searchable library so you can find what you need fast. Need more space? Minimize the sidebar with the small arrow on the right, and click it again to bring it back. Simple, powerful, and satisfying.

QUICK & EASY CANVA ESSENTIALS

EDITING BASICS

WORKING WITH TEXT



Adding text to a design is stupidly simple — the Text button in the sidebar lets you drop in a heading, subheading, body text, or plain ol' textbox in seconds.

Select your text option, type away, then use the toolbar at the top to pick a font, size, and color like you mean it.

Add extra text boxes for mix-and-match styles to build a look you actually love, or grab one of Canva's ready-made text designs for instant polish.

TEXT ESSENTIALS

Visby DemiBold	FONT SELECTION
9.5	FONT SIZE
A	FONT COLOUR
B I U	FONT STYLE
aA	TOGGLE TEXT CASE
≡	FONT ALIGNMENT
≡	LIST SETTING (DOT POINTS, NUMBERS OR NONE)
⇅	ADJUST THE SPACE BETWEEN LETTERS AND LINES
Effects	SPECIAL EFFECTS LIKE CURVED TEXT AND TEXT SHADOWS

QUICK & EASY CANVA ESSENTIALS

EDITING BASICS

WORKING WITH TEXT



ADDING TEXT

Adding text in Canva is easy—just click the "Text" tab on the sidebar or press the "T" key.

FONT SELECTION

Fonts have personality—they can be fancy, formal, quirky, or bold. Canva's got a whole bunch of fonts waiting for you in the "Font" dropdown once you highlight your text. Got your own brand fonts? You can upload those too! Play around until you find the perfect font that speaks your vibe loud and clear.

TEXT ALIGNMENT

You're not just plopping your text smack dab in the middle of your design. Play around with text alignment—slide it left, center, or right inside its box. This tiny tweak can seriously boost how polished and balanced your design feels!

TEXT EFFECTS (BOLD, ITALIC, UNDERLINE)

Text effects are like the spice rack of your design kitchen — a tiny pinch can make your text pop, but dump too much and it's a flavor disaster. The "Effects" button lets you bold, italicize, and underline your words, like giving them a little extra swagger. Use these sparingly to highlight important stuff or create some contrast — just don't turn your whole text into a neon sign!

LINE SPACING AND LETTER SPACING

Ever get that weird vibe where your text feels way too cramped or way too roomy? That's when line and letter spacing swoop in to save the day! Just highlight your text, hit the "Spacing" option, and watch the magic happen. Give your words some elbow room or squeeze them in for that snug, cozy look. Text styling made easy and fun!

QUICK & EASY CANVA ESSENTIALS

EDITING BASICS

COLOURS

Colours are more than just decorative elements; they breathe life into designs, set the tone, and evoke emotions. Canva understands the power of colour, providing users with an extensive palette and tools to ensure that your design radiates exactly the vibe you envision. This guide will illuminate the process of colour selection and application in Canva, from basic choices to advanced combinations.

NAVIGATING CANVA'S COLOUR PALETTE:

- To start, click on any design element (text, shape, background, etc.). A colour circle icon will appear in the toolbar.
- Clicking on the icon will unveil Canva's default colour palette. Here, you'll find a myriad of shades perfect for any design.

CREATING CUSTOM COLOURS:

- Want a specific shade? No problem! Click on the "+" symbol in the colour menu.
- You can now either use the colour picker to select a shade or input a hex code if you have one. Once chosen, your custom colour is saved to the palette for future designs.

USING COLOUR HARMONIES:

- Canva often suggests complementary colours based on the ones you've already chosen. These harmonious suggestions can aid in creating a visually appealing design.

APPLYING GRADIENT EFFECTS:

- Some elements in Canva support gradient colours. If available, you'll see the gradient option next to solid colours. Select it and then choose two colours to create a gradient effect.

THE COLOUR WHEEL AND COMBINATIONS:

- For those seeking advanced colour coordination, navigate to the 'colours' tab on the left panel. Here, you'll find the colour wheel tool, which helps in selecting analogous, complementary, or triadic colour schemes for a harmonious design.

APPLYING COLOURS TO MULTIPLE ELEMENTS:

- If you wish to apply a colour to multiple elements simultaneously, simply select all the desired elements (by holding down the Shift key) and then choose a colour from the palette.

USING BRAND COLOURS:

- For those with Canva Pro accounts, you can set specific brand colours that remain consistent across all your designs. This is immensely helpful for businesses or individual brands wanting to maintain a consistent visual identity.

QUICK & EASY CANVA ESSENTIALS

EDITING BASICS

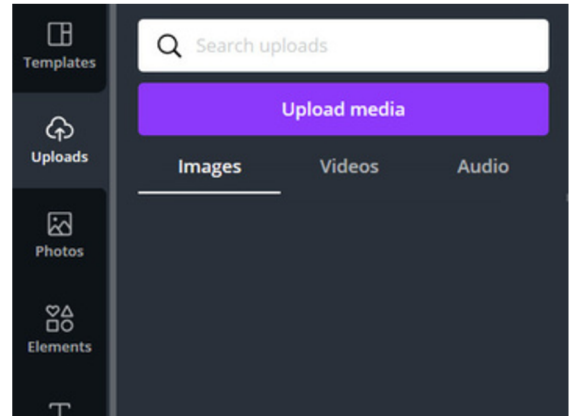
WORKING WITH PHOTOS

Uploading your own

It's easy to upload your own images to use in your Canva design.

Simply select "Uploads" in the left toolbar, click on "upload media" and you'll be able to browse your computer (or phone! Canva also has a very functional app) and find your images to upload.

The images you upload will stay in this uploads area to access any time, in any design.

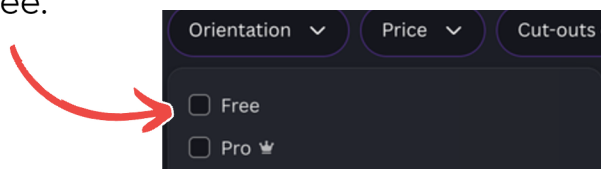
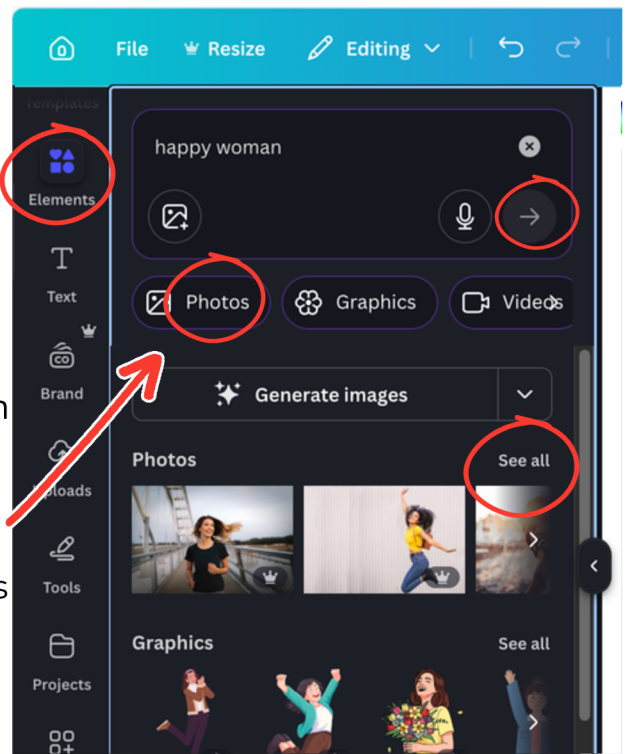


Using stock images

If you don't have your own images, you can select from Canva's extensive library. Simply select the "Elements" tab and start a search for the type of photo you'd like. Then you can click "See all" in the photos area to see more.

Once you have a photo you like, simply click on it to add it to your design, or drag it over. Remember, anything you see with the crown icon is only available to Pro members.

You can filter to see Free Images by selecting the Photos category and then scrolling across until you see Price. Click the dropdown and select Free.

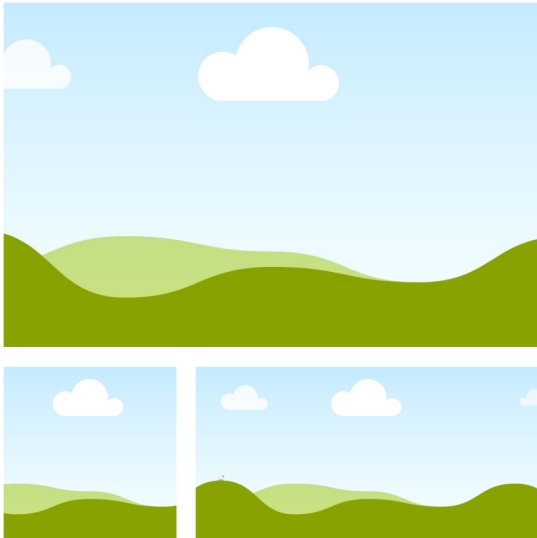



QUICK & EASY CANVA ESSENTIALS

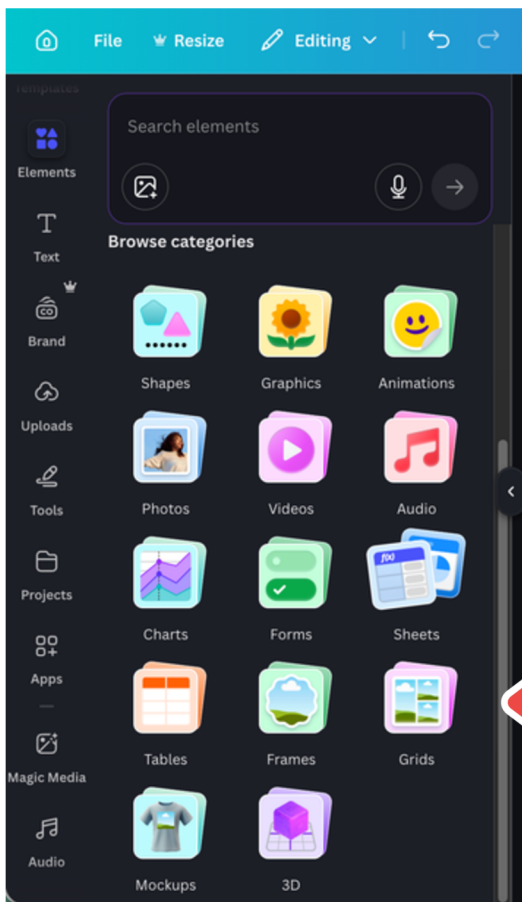
EDITING BASICS

WORKING WITH PHOTOS

Frames and Grids



FROM THIS  TO THIS



Frames and grids enable to you put stylish image placeholders in your document and easily drag and drop images into it.

The image will snap into the frame.

You can easily replace the image by simply dragging a different image into the frame from the Uploads or Elements sections.

Just hit the Elements tab and scroll down until you find the Frames or Grids sections.

QUICK & EASY CANVA ESSENTIALS

EDITING BASICS

WORKING WITH PHOTOS

Transparency

Transparency affects opacity (how see through something is) and can be applied to images, elements, text, and solid shapes.

ADJUSTING TRANSPARENCY

Click the item you would like to unlock.

A menu will appear in the top right of the screen.

Click the small, chess pattern icon.



A slider will appear, slide up and down for the desired effect.

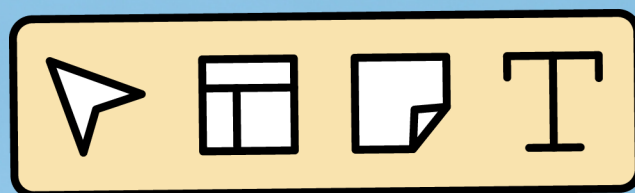


Transparency at 100%



Transparency at 30%

Big journeys
begin with
small steps



THE TOOLBARS

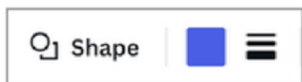
TOOLBAR TYPES

The top toolbar in Canva has a ton of features that change based on what item you are clicked on in your design. See the graphics below for samples. On the next few pages, you will see what each item in these toolbars can do.

TEXT TOOLBAR:



SHAPE TOOLBAR:



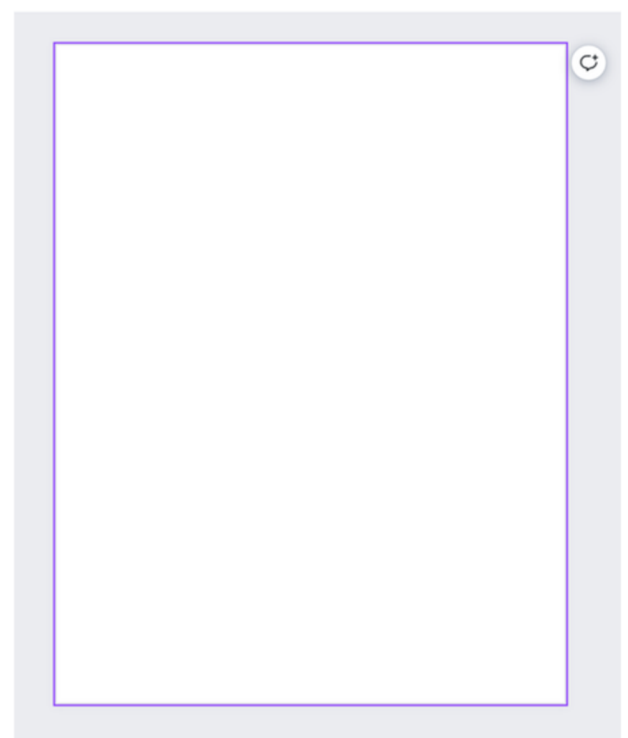
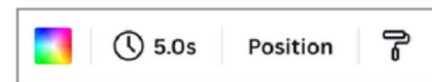
ELEMENT/GRAPHIC TOOLBAR:



PHOTO TOOLBAR:

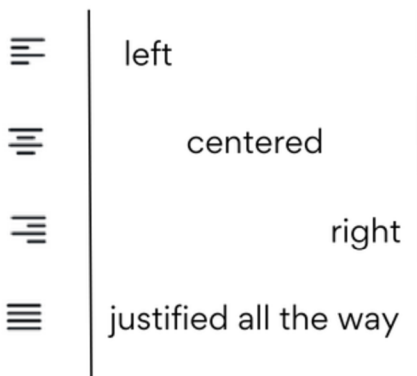
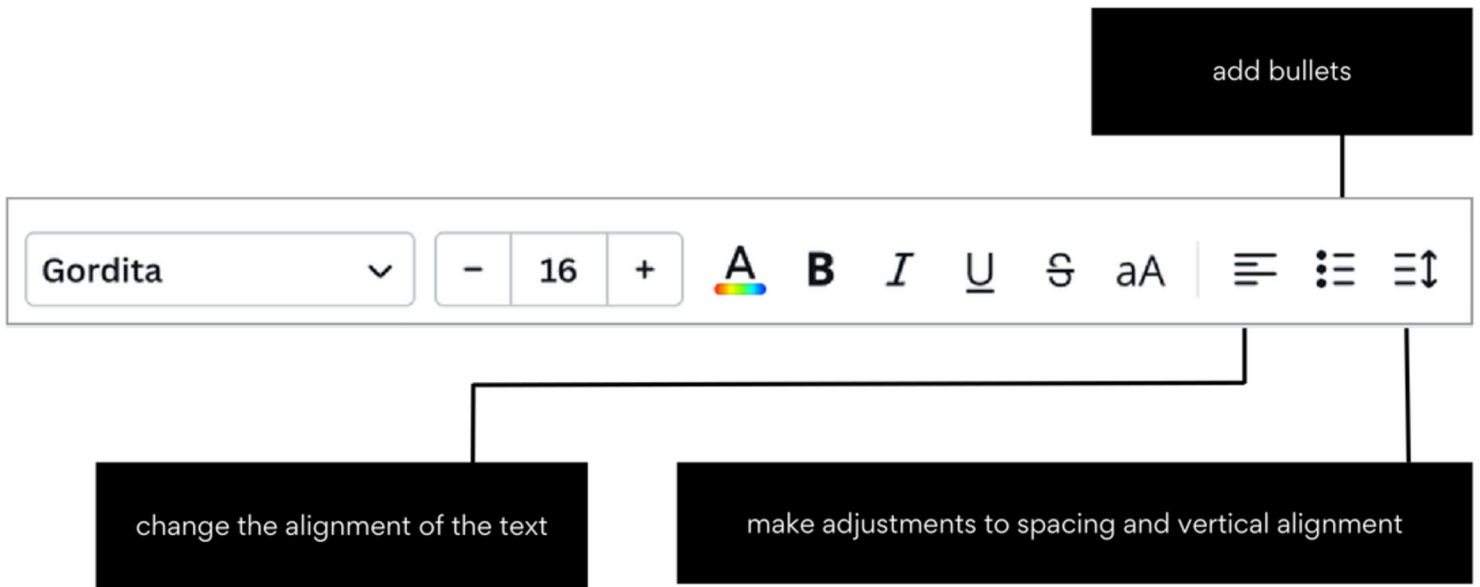
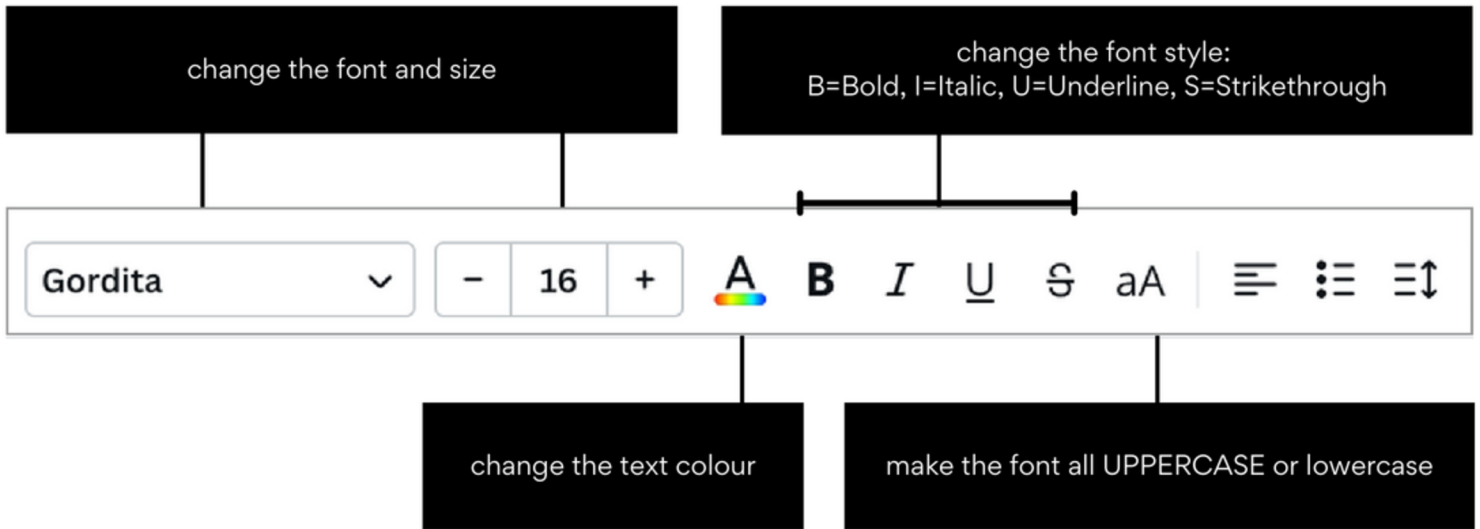


PAGE TOOLBAR:



TEXT TOOLBAR

If you are clicked on a text box, the callouts below explain what each item does in the toolbar.



TEXT TOOLBAR

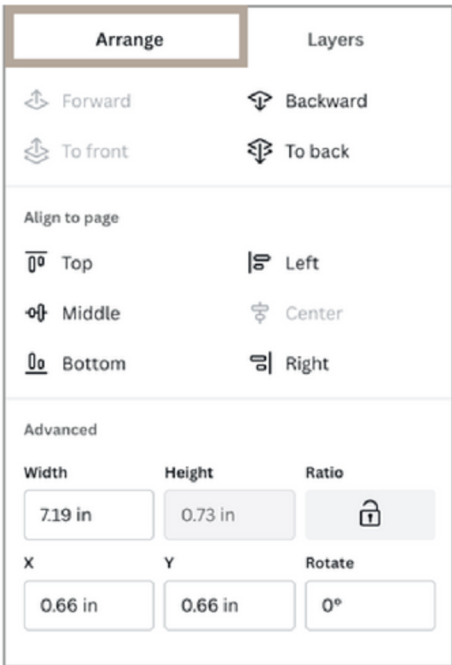
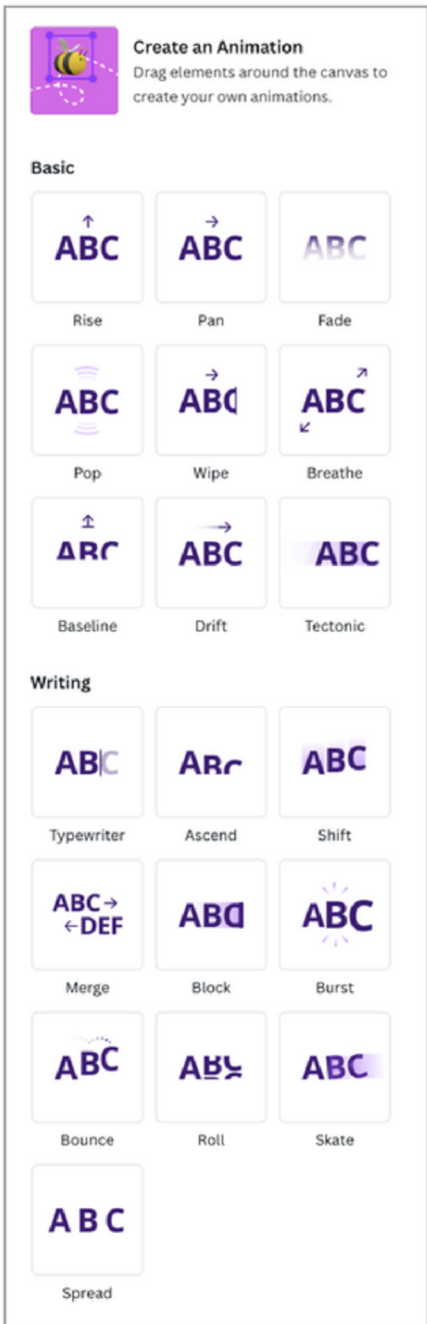
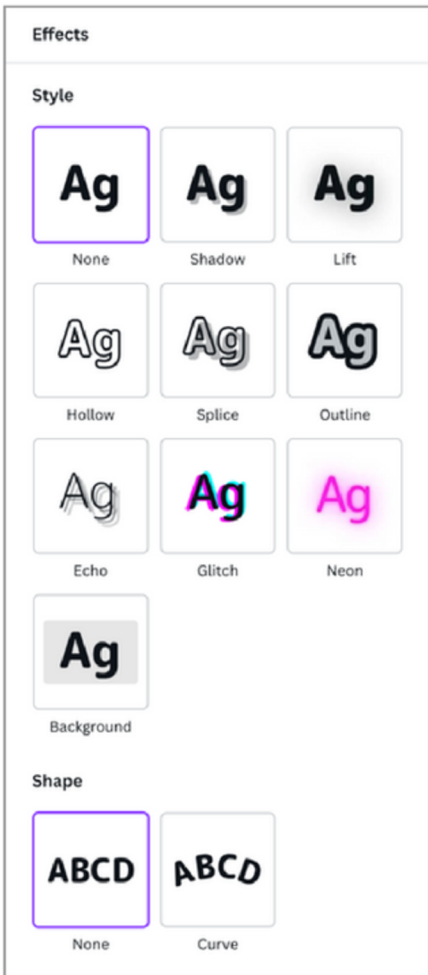
If you are clicked on a text box, the callouts below explain what each item does in the toolbar.



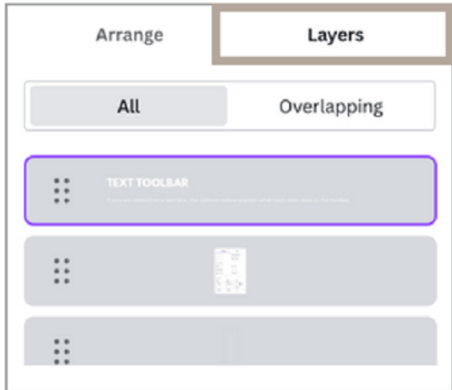
change effects in the text
have fun with this one!!

pre-set animations for text
(partial list shown)

arrange text
or align to page

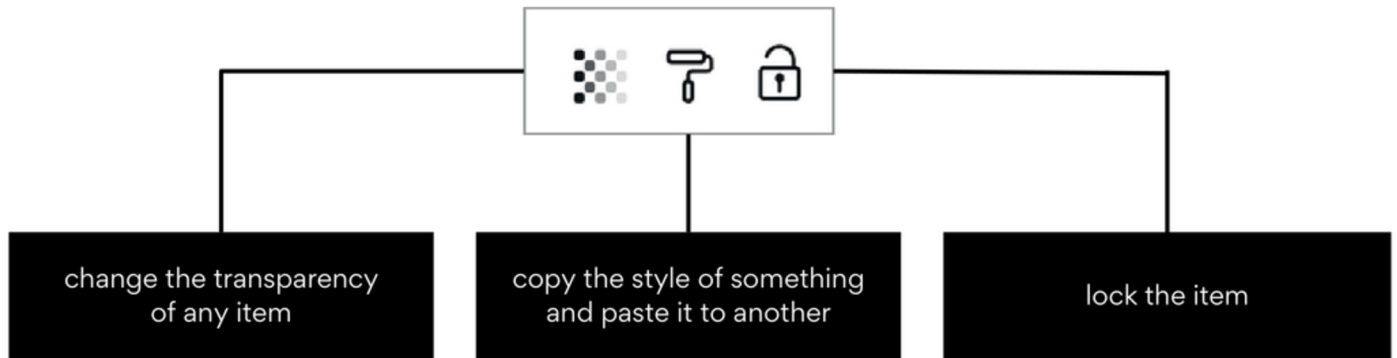


click on layers and
move them up and down
by clicking and dragging
each bar



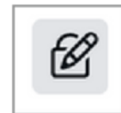
EXTRAS ON THE TOOLBAR

These items appear on most of the toolbars and function the same on each item.



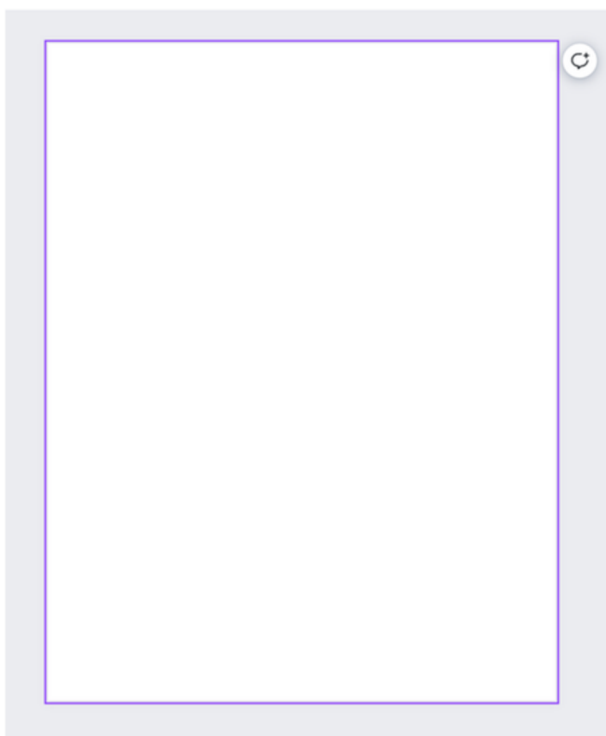
Transparency

100

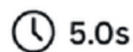


click to unlock

PAGE TOOLBAR:



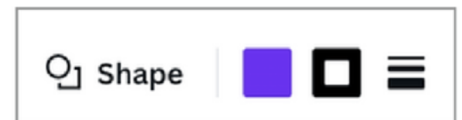
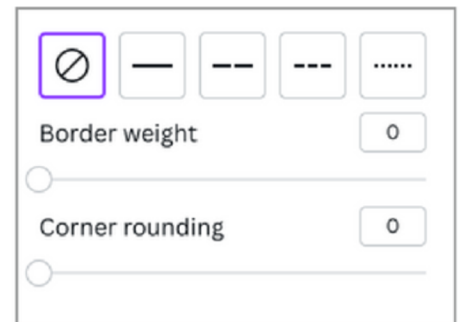
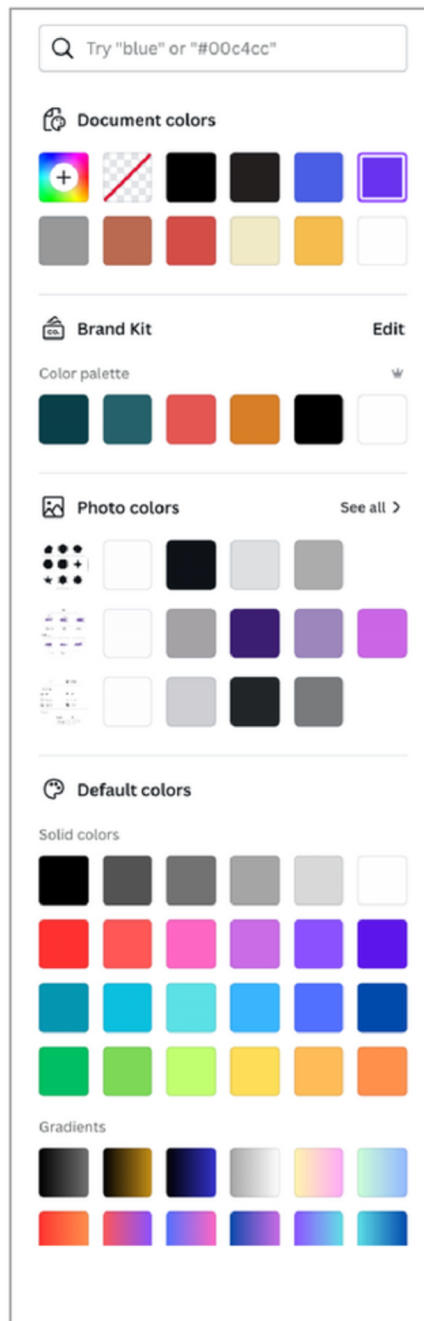
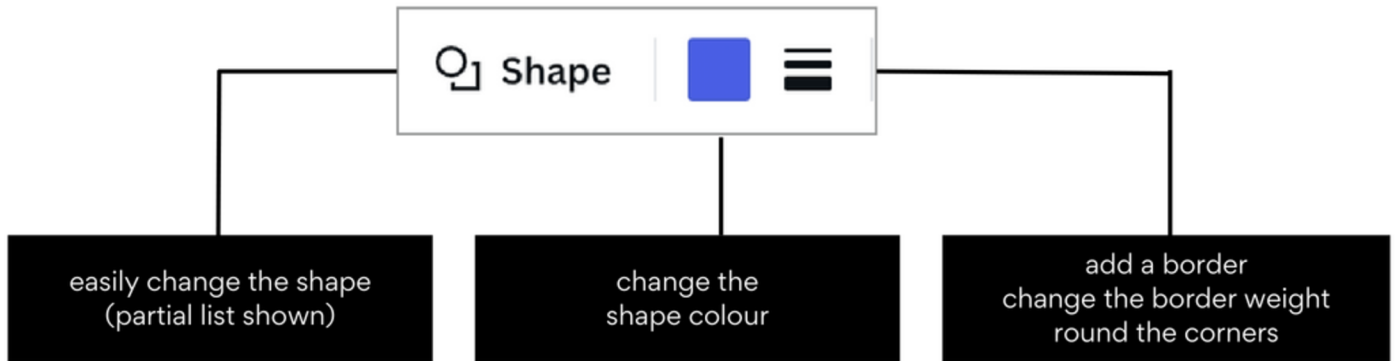
change the colour of the entire page background



adjust the timing of a page animation

SHAPE TOOLBAR

If you are clicked on a shape, the callouts below explain what each item does in the toolbar.



if you add a border you can change the colour

ELEMENT/GRAPHIC TOOLBAR

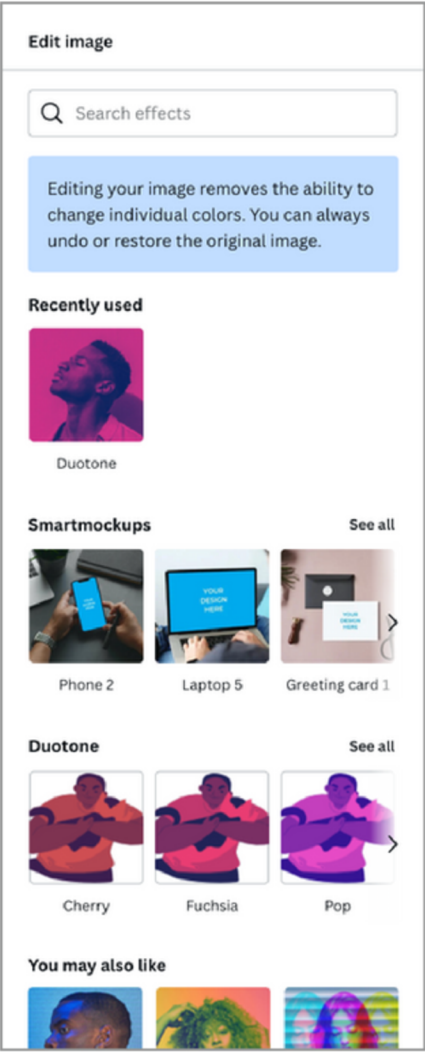
If you select a graphic element, the callouts below explain what each item does in the toolbar.



provides info on the graphic and allows you to find more!

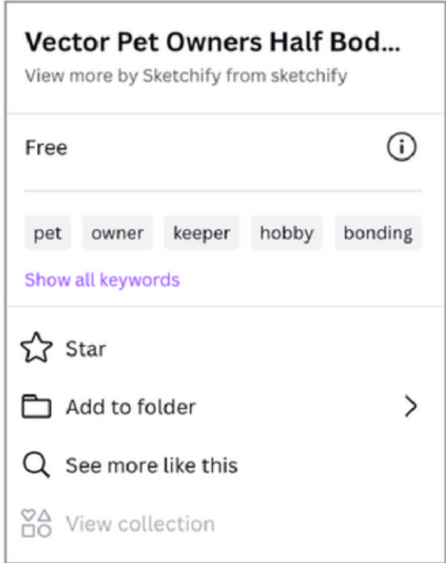
edit the colours in a graphic (note: does not always appear)

this menu will change but has a ton of options!



flip!

- ↶ Flip horizontal
- ↷ Flip vertical



crop image with different settings

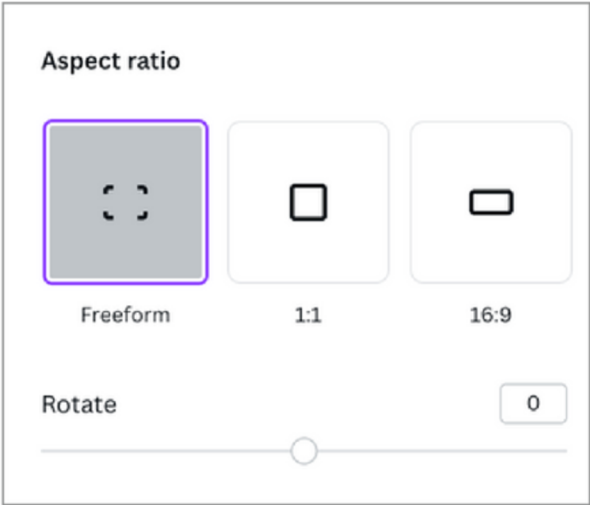
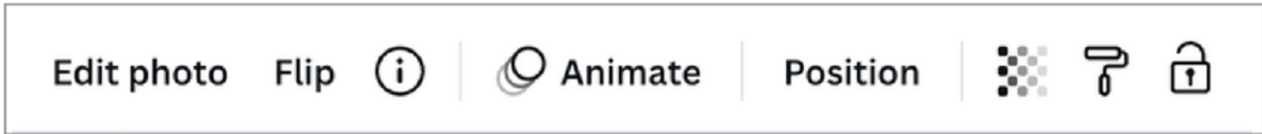
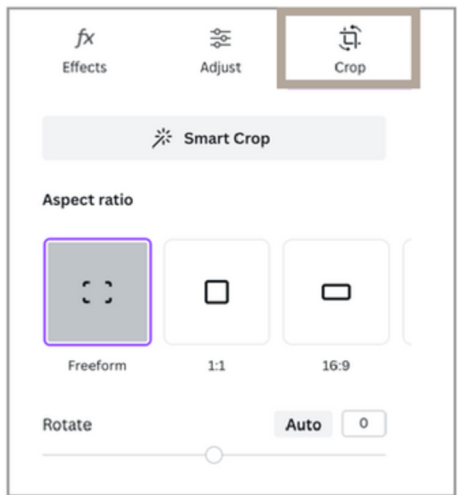
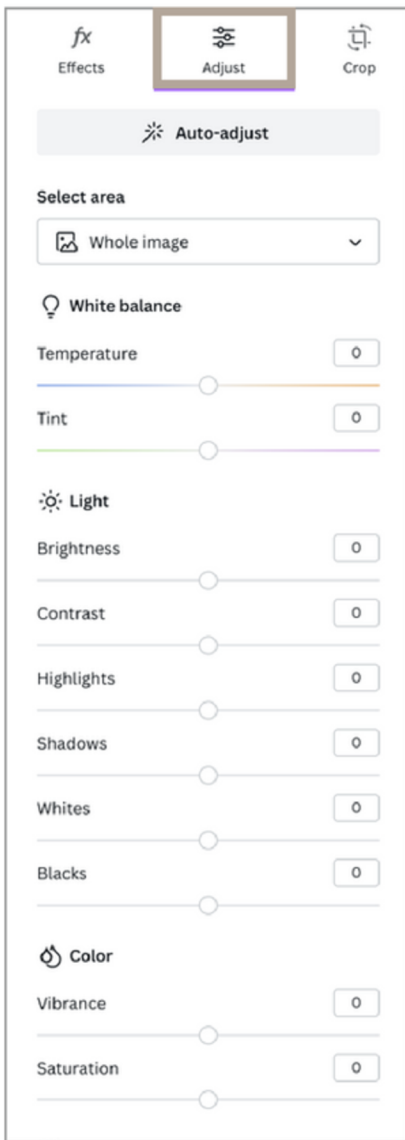
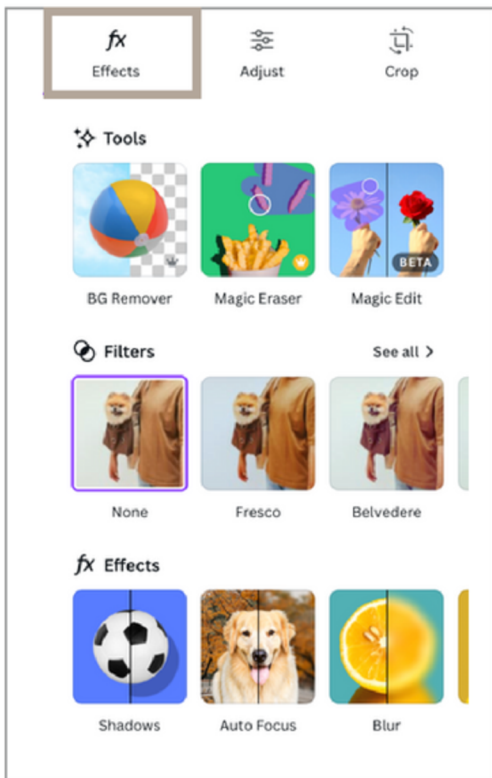


PHOTO TOOLBAR

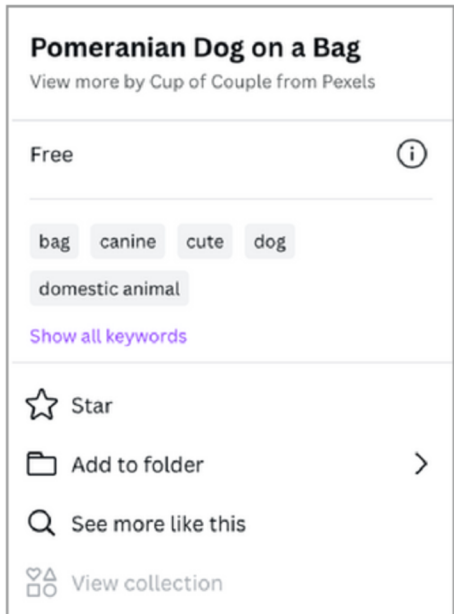
If you select a photo, the callouts below explain what each item does in the toolbar.



a TON of options to edit the photo!
 Effects: remove background, add a filter, add effects \ Adjust: make adjustments \ Crop: use crop tools



i
 provides info on the photo and allows you to find more!

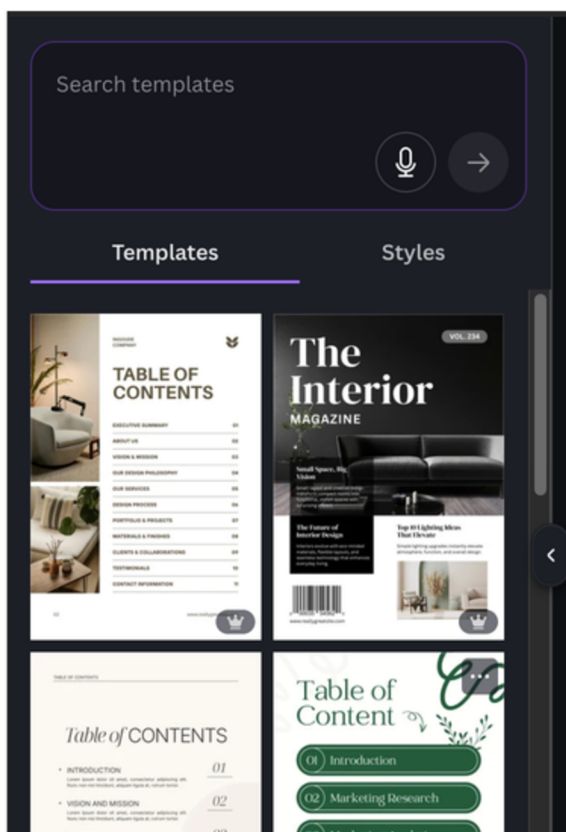
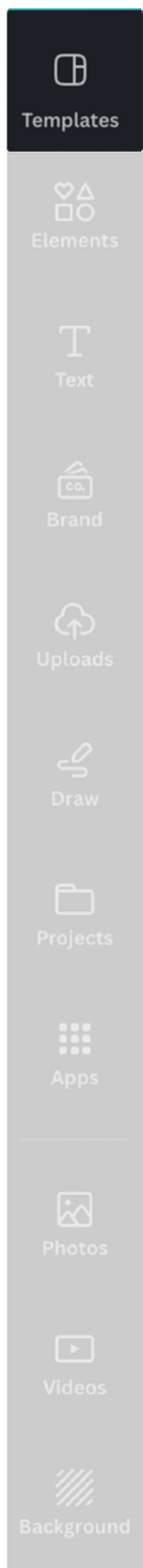


flip!

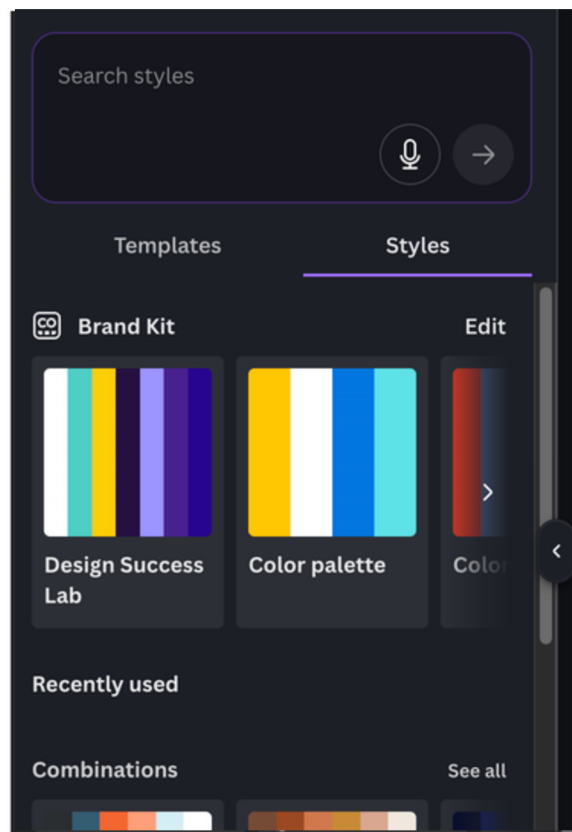
↔ Flip horizontal

↻ Flip vertical

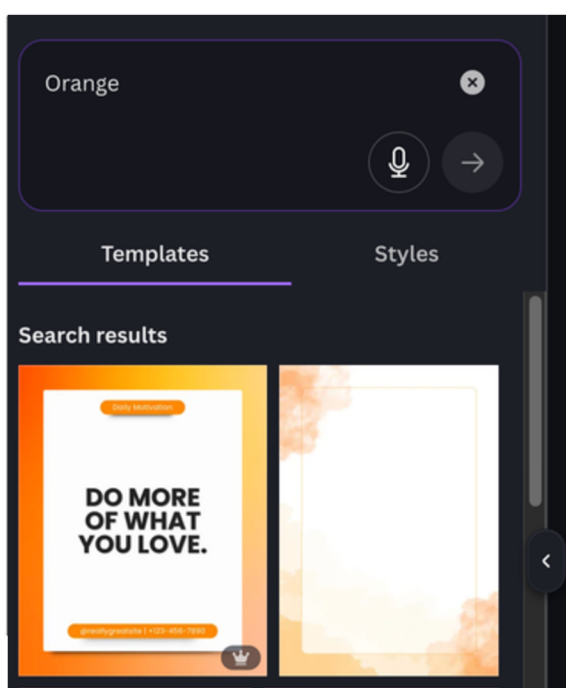
EDITOR BAR (ON THE LEFT SIDE)



Search pre-made Canva templates based on your file type

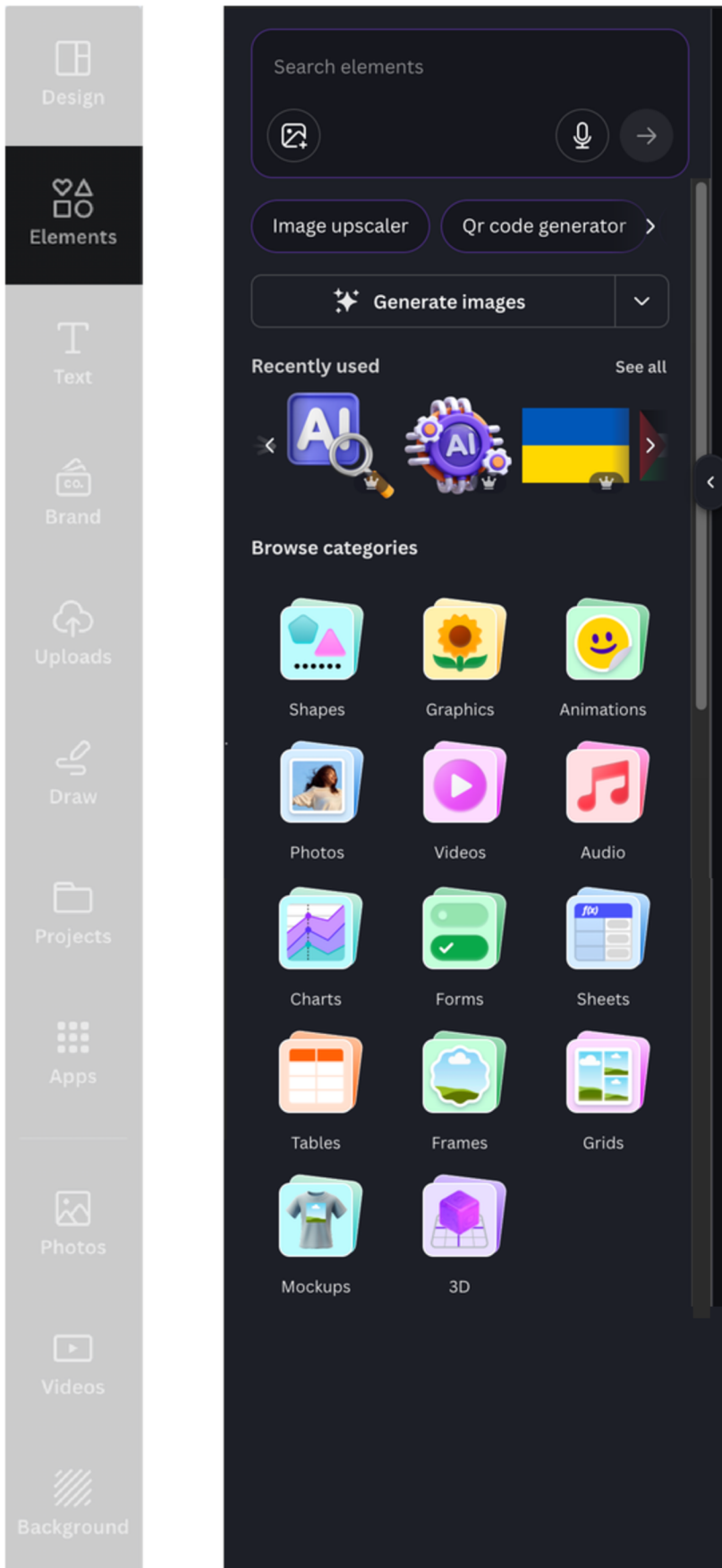


Click on Styles to pick by colour palette, font sets, images, etc.



Use search bar to filter templates by colour

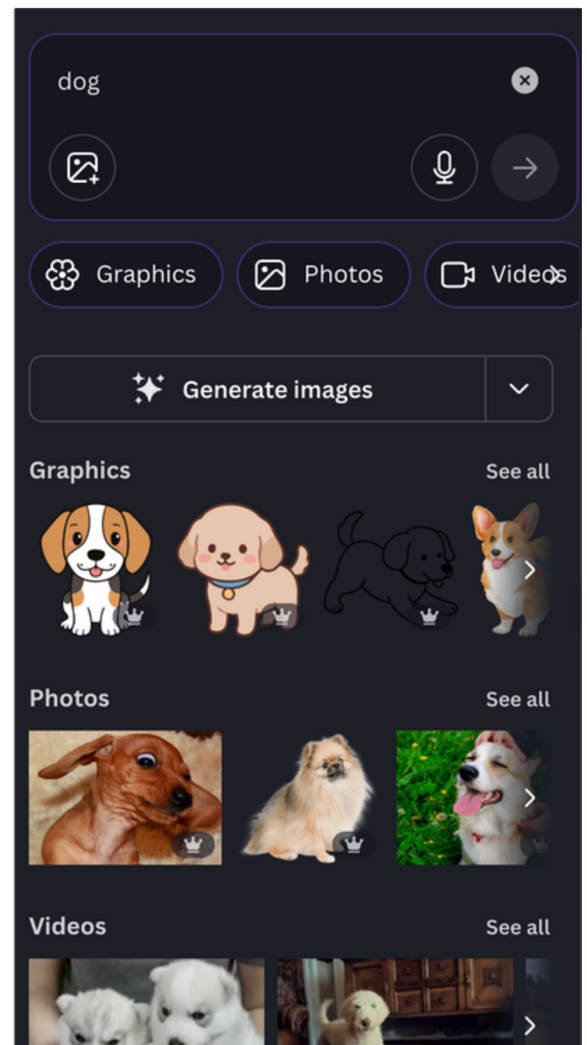
EDITOR BAR (ON THE LEFT SIDE)



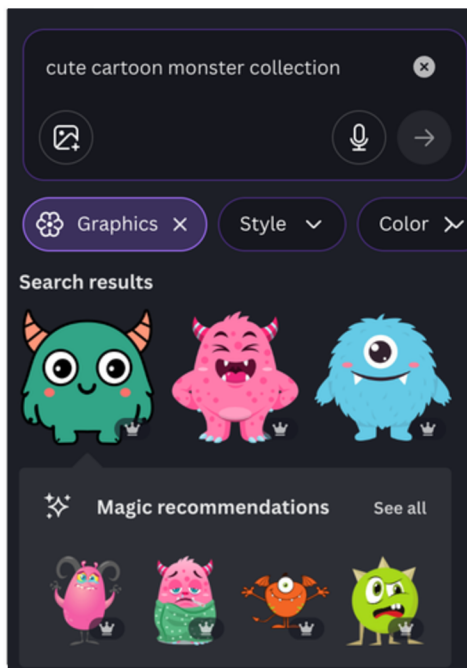
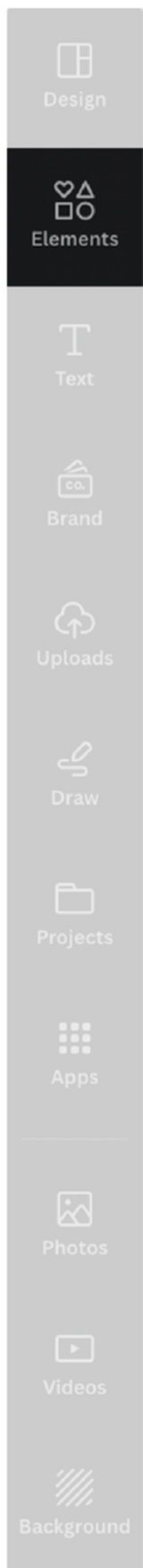
So many to choose from!

Search for an element and choose from:

- Graphics
- Photos
- Videos
- Shapes
- Audio
- Charts
- Tables
- Frames
- Grids
- Collections

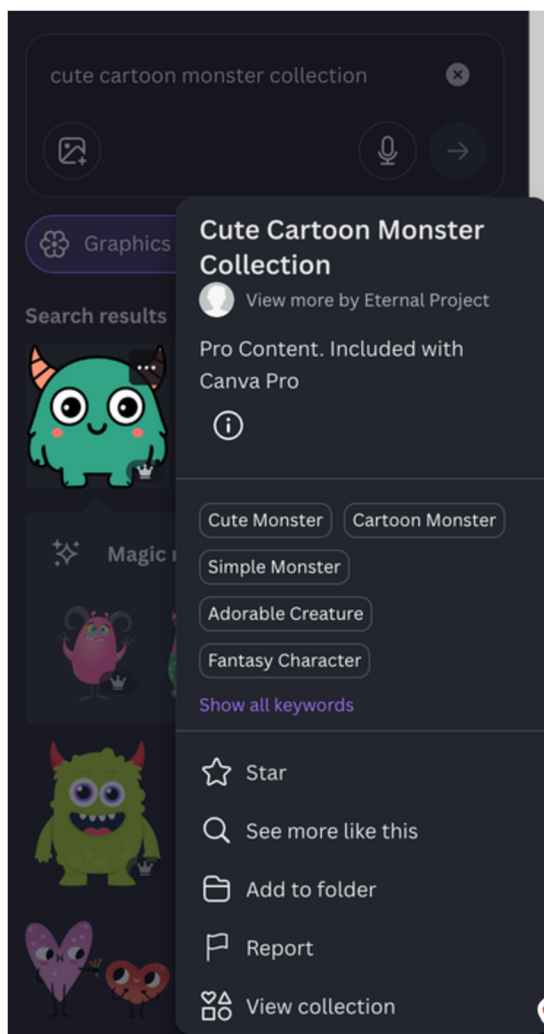


EDITOR BAR (ON THE LEFT SIDE)



TIP:

If you find an element that you like, see the “Magic Recommendations” to find more in a similar style.

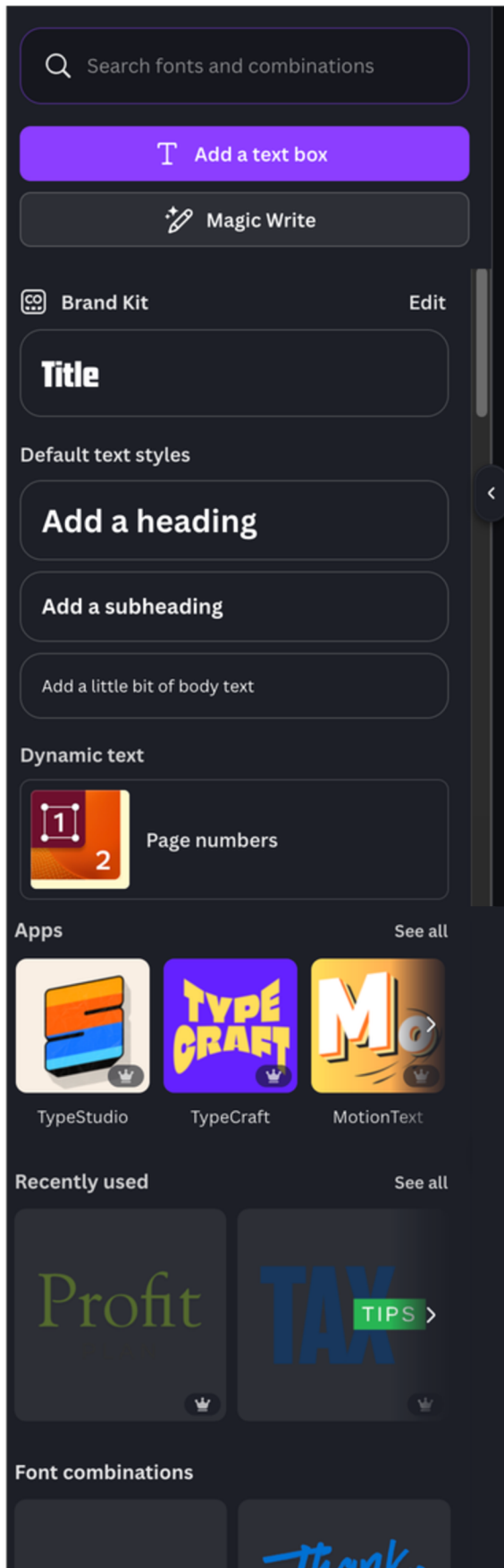
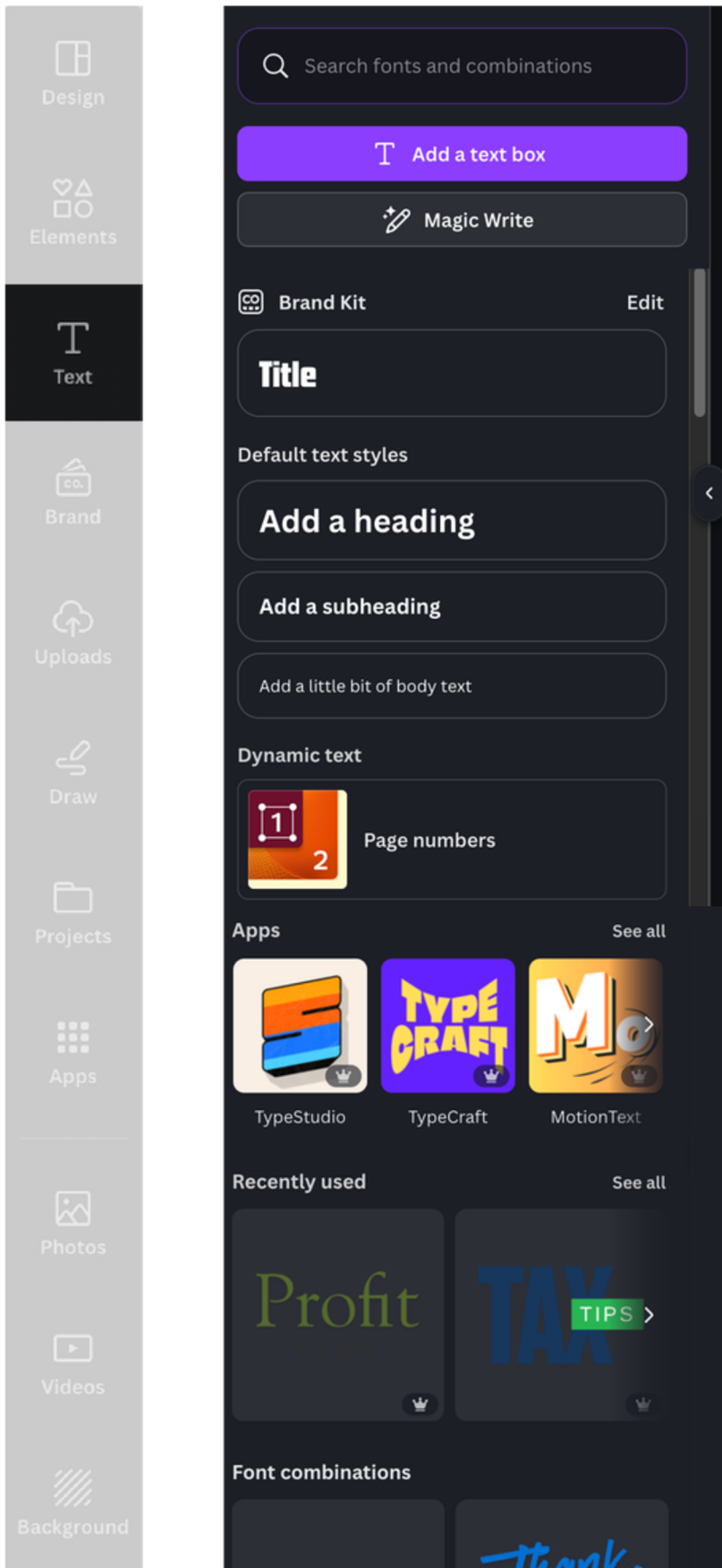


TIP:

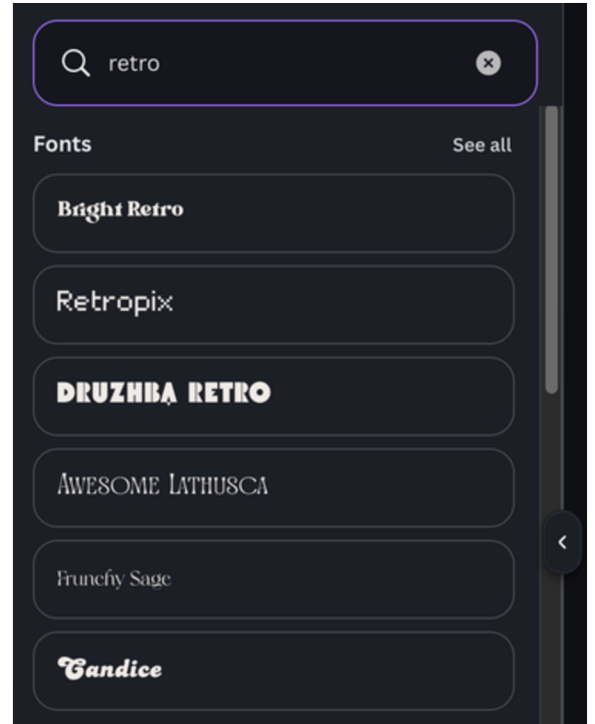
Click the 3 dots next to a graphic and when the pop-out menu appears, hit “View collection” at the bottom and all of graphics created by that artist will appear on the left.

A great way to use similar elements in one design!

EDITOR BAR (ON THE LEFT SIDE)

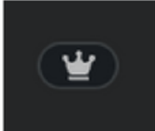


Search for a font style:

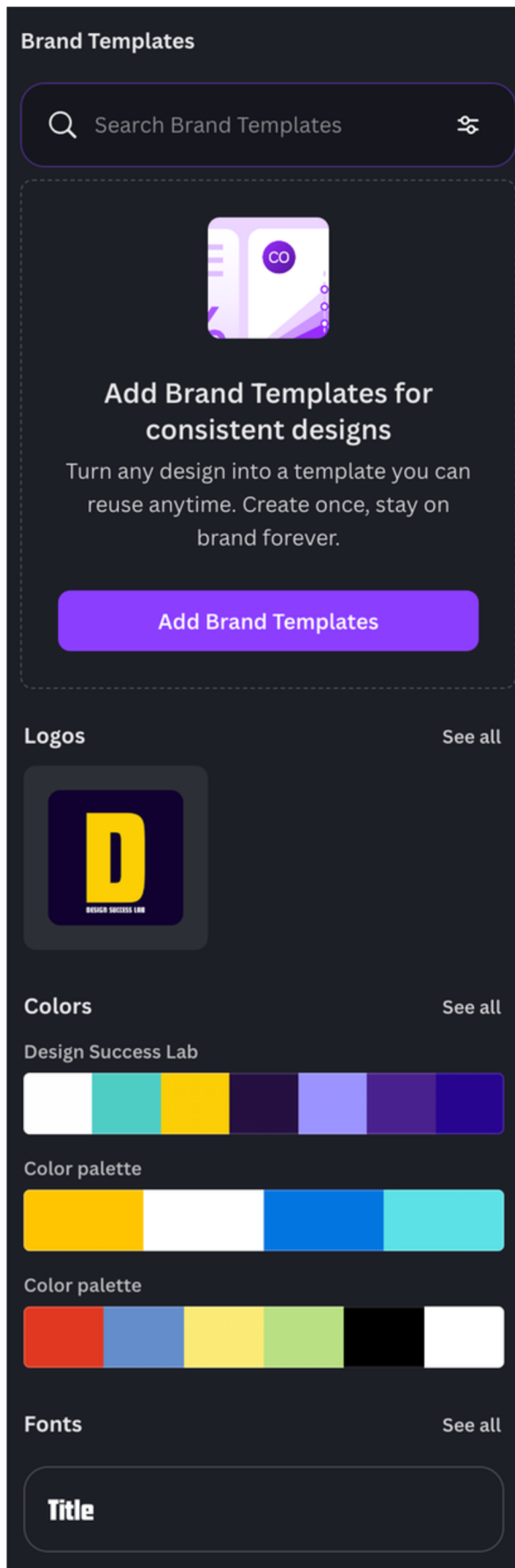


Use a pre-made font combination (you can fully edit!)



 This icon means it's a Canva Pro feature.

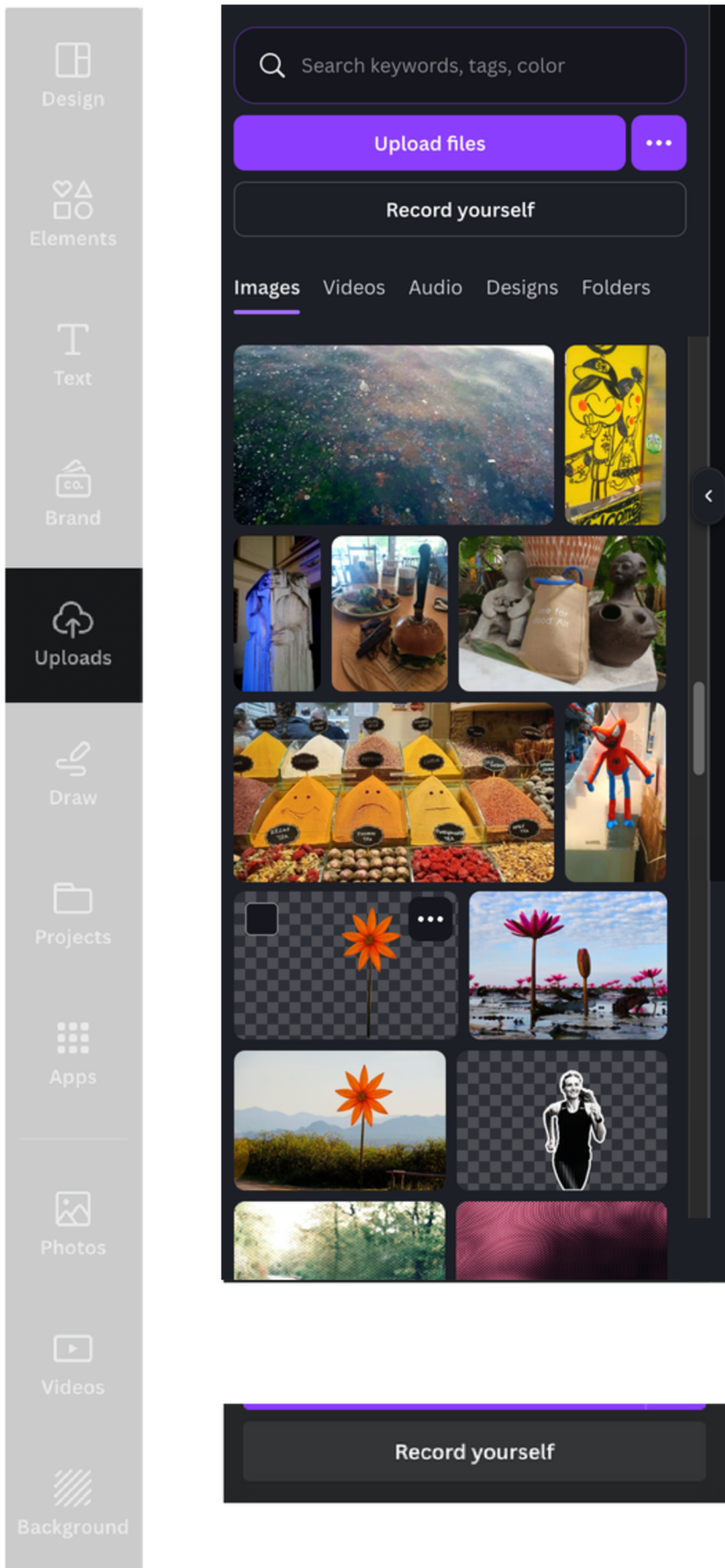
EDITOR BAR (ON THE LEFT SIDE)



Add your own brand items:

- Templates
- Logos
- colours
- Fonts
- Photos
- Graphics
- Icons

EDITOR BAR (ON THE LEFT SIDE)

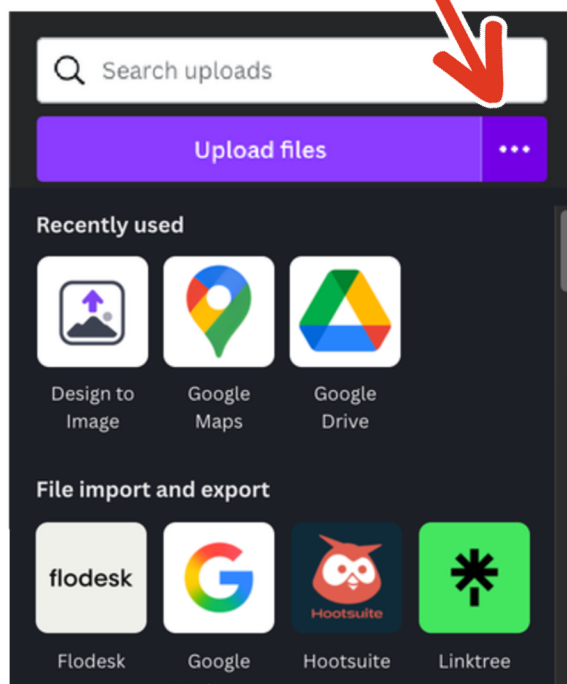


Anything you upload or place on the page will appear here.

- Images
- Videos
- Audio

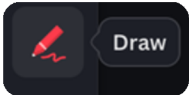
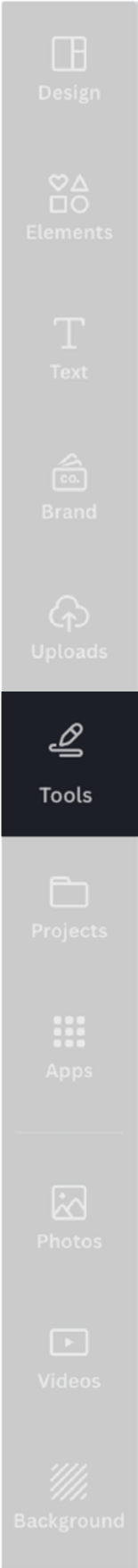
Click "Upload files" to upload from:

- Computer
- Google Drive
- Instagram
- Dropbox
- Google Photos



Click to record yourself in Canva!

EDITOR BAR (ON THE LEFT SIDE)



Click on draw then this toolbar will pop out.



select an item

change colour

Weight

Weight

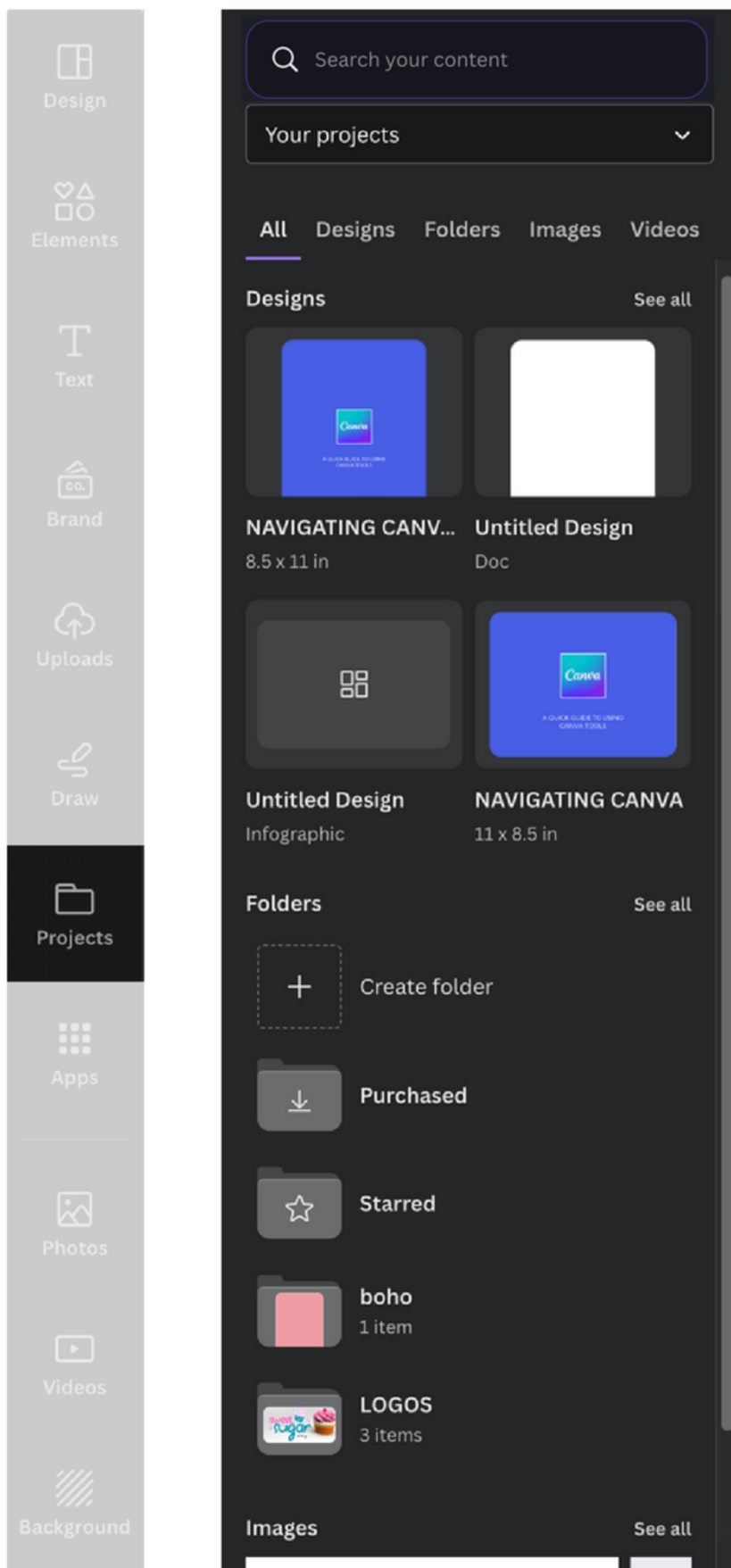
6

Transparency

100

A dark panel showing two sliders. The top slider is labeled 'Weight' and has a value of 6. The bottom slider is labeled 'Transparency' and has a value of 100.

EDITOR BAR (ON THE LEFT SIDE)

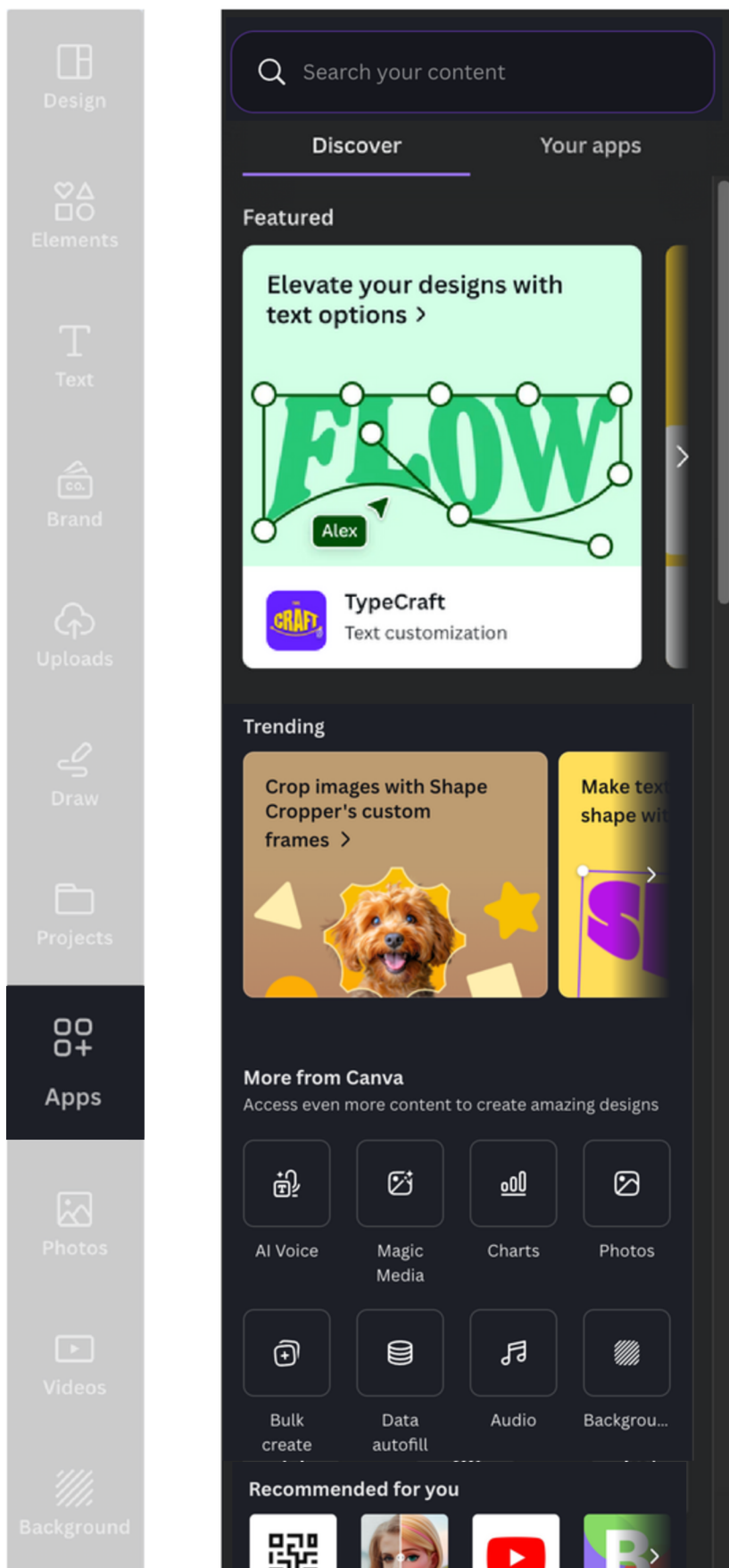


Everything you have created will appear here!

- Designs
- Folders
- Images
- Videos

You can search your content as well.

EDITOR BAR (ON THE LEFT SIDE)



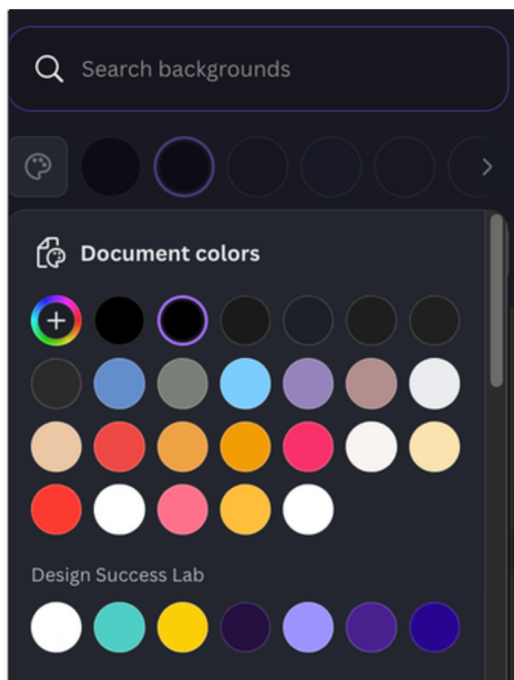
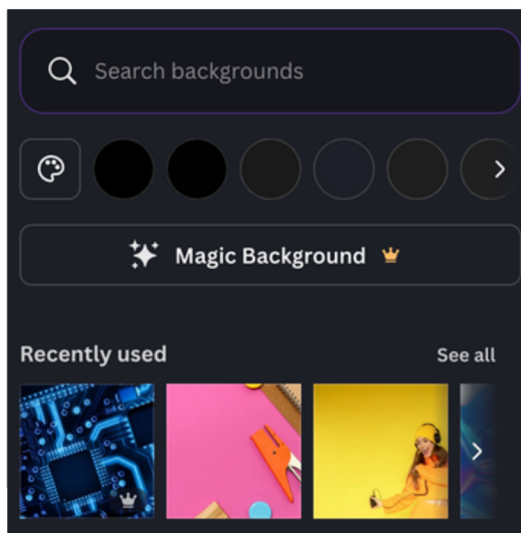
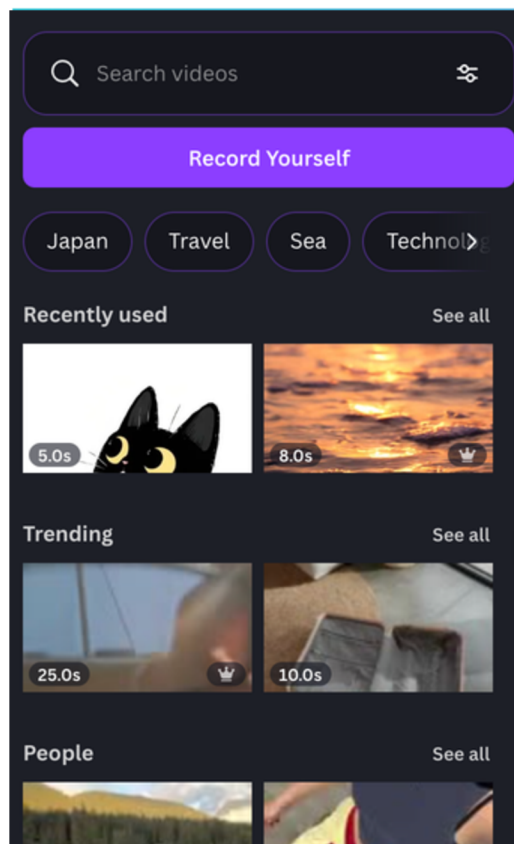
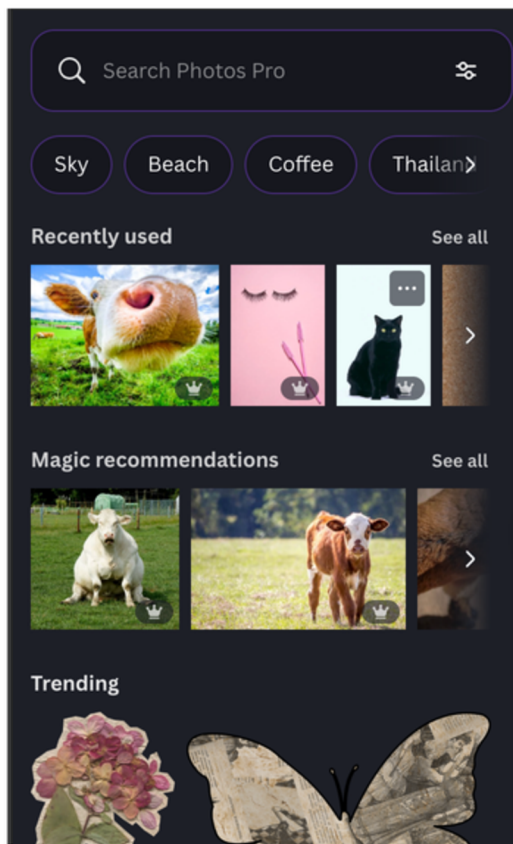
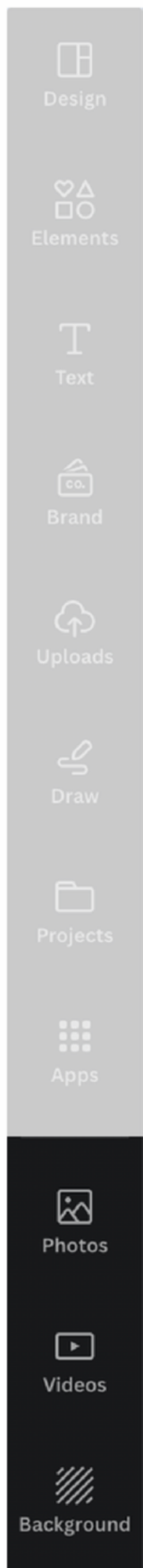
This would take another book to explain all of these!

Navigate through all of the extra apps that you can use in Canva.

Click on the app type to see even more (i.e. Charts).

Once you add an app, it will appear under "Your apps" at the top (and also on the bottom of the editor bar).

EDITOR BAR (ON THE LEFT SIDE)



These three features are a quick way to navigate to photos, videos and backgrounds.

Search by colour as well!

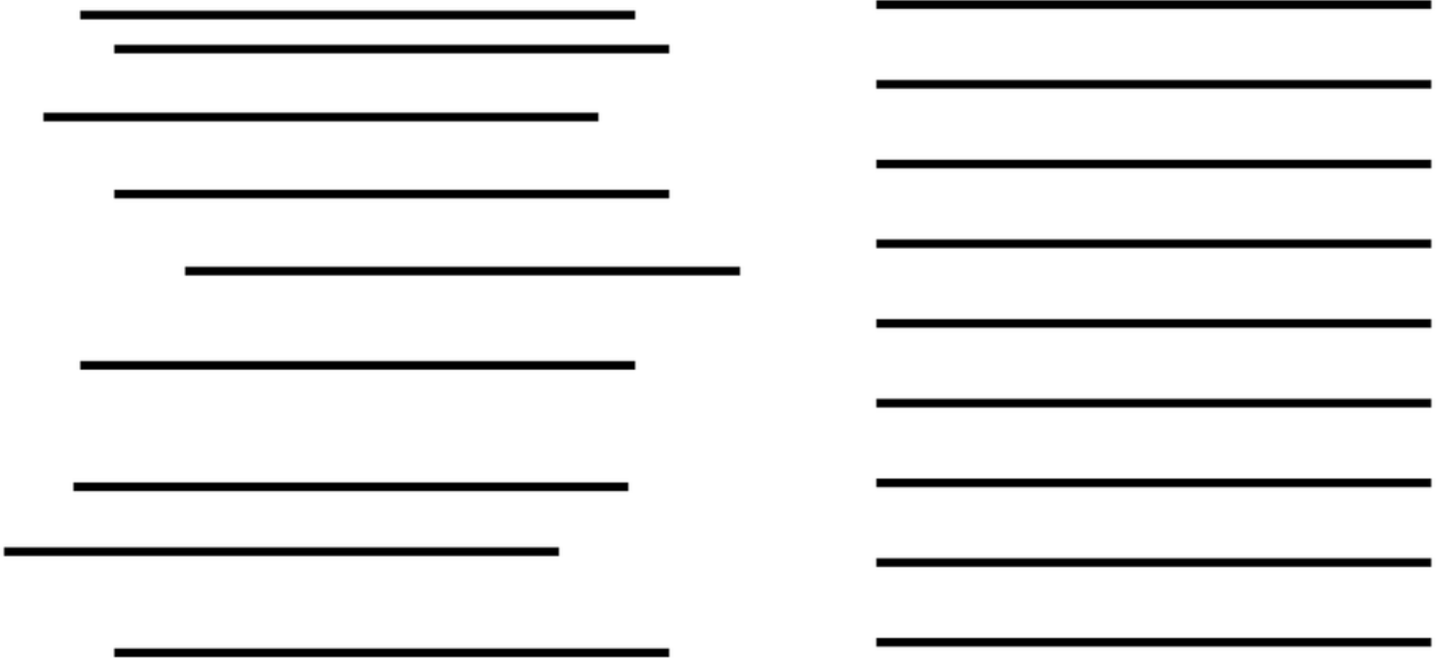


**TIPS &
TRICKS[®]**

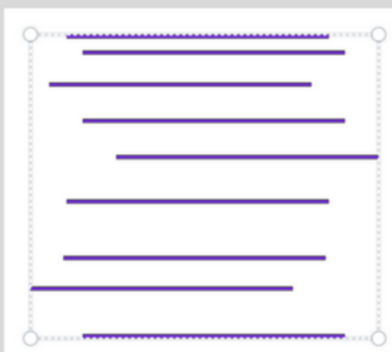
USE THE "TIDY UP" FEATURE TO ALIGN

from this

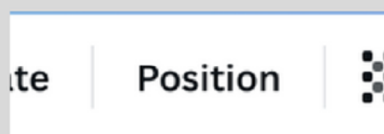
to this!



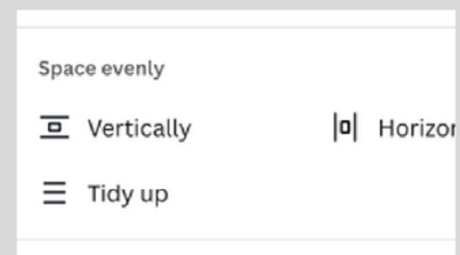
This works with any shapes, lines, images, etc. and aligns the objects both vertically and horizontally. Great for notes lines! Here's how:



Select all of the objects at once



From the top toolbar, click on "Position"



Click the "Tidy up" feature and you are done!

CREATE DIMENSION BY PUTTING TEXT BEHIND IMAGES

from this



to this!



Text on top of the house



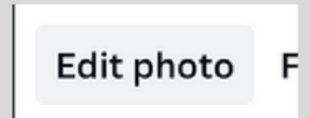
Text behind the house



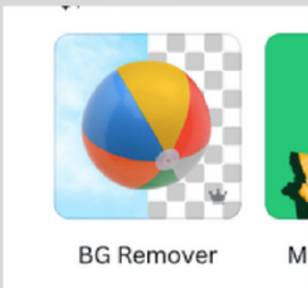
Place an image on your page



Select the image and duplicate it (hit command + D)



Select the top image only and hit "Edit photo" in the top toolbar

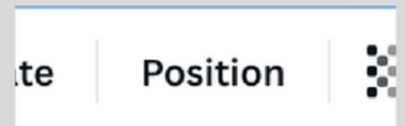


Select BG remover to remove the background (the sky in this example)



Now type your text (it will still be on top of both images).

Quick tip: Hit "T" for a text box



With your text selected, hit Position and move it Backward until it is between the two images. Make sure both images are placed in exactly the same place!

MAKE TEXT POP WITH A TRANSPARENT GRADIENT

from this

to this!

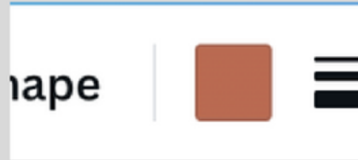


If your text is hard to read over an image, use a gradient shape over it and convert one end colour to 0% transparency (clear).
Step-by-step instructions on the next page.

MAKE TEXT POP WITH A TRANSPARENT GRADIENT



Create a rectangle
(type the letter "r")



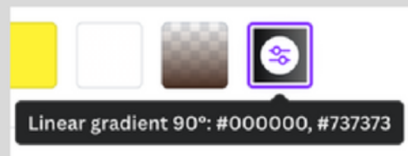
In the top toolbar, click
on the colour square



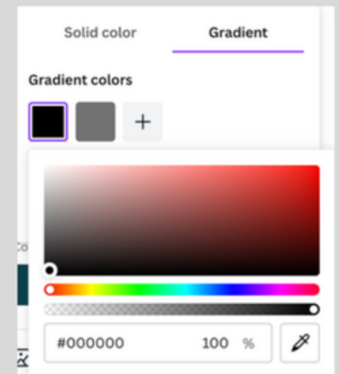
Select a gradient from the
bottom of the menu
(pick any one)



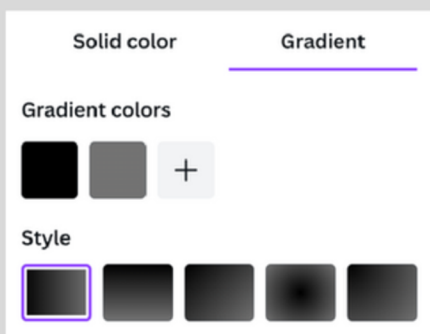
While clicked on the
gradient shape, click the
colour square again



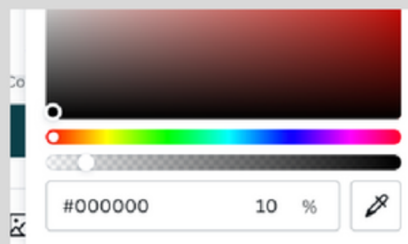
Hover over the colour to
see the purple slider bars,
then click on the sliders



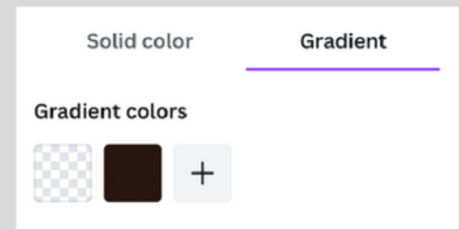
This menu will pop out.



Click on one of the colours
(black shown)



Slide the transparency bar
all the way left to 0%
(shown here at 10%)



The colours should appear like
this and you can place your
shape over your photo.

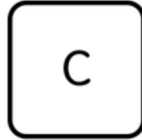


EYEDROPPER TIP! In Canva Pro, you can use the eyedropper tool to select a colour from something else (your image, a graphic, a colour of a shape, etc.)

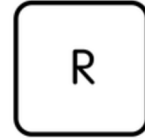
BONUS! MAC KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS



Add a textbox



Add a circle



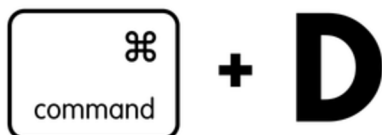
Add a rectangle / square



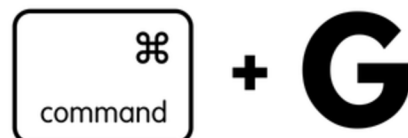
Make a font larger



Make a font smaller



Duplicate an item



Group items

FROM



Canva Keyboard Shortcuts

01. Moving Elements



Move element 1 pixel
arrow keys



Move element 10 pixel
shift + arrow keys



Deselect element
esc key



Move element up or down
command / ctrl + brackets / up
and down arrow keys



Select next or previous element
command / ctrl + alt / option
+ brackets

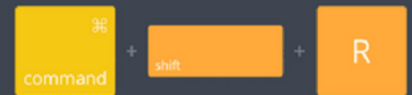
02. Text



Left align text
command / ctrl + shift + L



Center align text
command / ctrl + shift + C



Right align text
command / ctrl + shift + R



Copy style to another text box
command / ctrl + option / alt + C



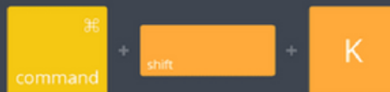
Paste style to another text box
command / ctrl + option / alt + V



Match textbox width in a group*
command / ctrl + option / alt + J



Add text element
T key



Transform text to uppercase
command / ctrl + shift + K

*works with, grouped textboxes (command / ctrl + G)

FROM



Canva Keyboard Shortcuts

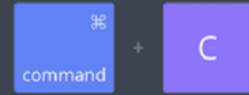
03. Other useful shortcuts



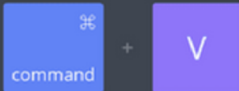
Start searching
Back slash key



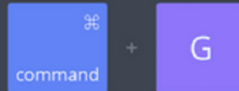
Delete selected element
delete key



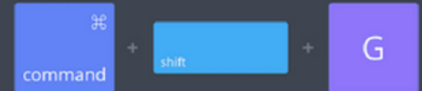
Copy elements
command / ctrl + C



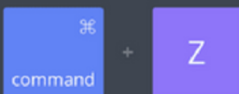
Paste elements
command / ctrl + V



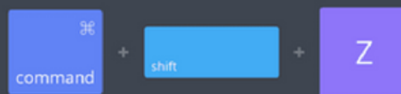
Group elements
command / ctrl + G



Ungroup elements
command / ctrl + G



Undo action
command / ctrl + Z



Redo action
command / ctrl + shift + Z



Increase grid padding
shift + alt / option + plus / hyphen keys



Zoom In/Out
command / ctrl + plus or hyphen keys



Select all elements
command / ctrl + A



Show grid lines
command / ctrl + colon (twice)



Resize proportionally
shift + drag



add or remove selected elements
shift + click surrounding elements



Select element behind
command / ctrl + click overlapping elements



Presentation mode
command / ctrl + shift + return / enter



Duplicate element
command / ctrl + option / alt + C



**FREE
VS PRO**



QUICK & EASY CANVA
ESSENTIALS

FREE VS PRO

DO YOU REALLY NEED A CANVA PRO ACCOUNT?

Canva is feature-rich, even with a Free account. You will soon get a feel for whether a Pro account will be beneficial for you once you start to play with the software. Here is an overview of the features and benefits of each option.

FREE

- ✓ Drag-and-drop editor for easy customizations
- ✓ 250,000+ free templates
- ✓ 100+ design types (social media posts, presentations, letters, and more)
- ✓ 1+ million free photos and graphics
- ✓ AI-powered design tools^ (Magic Write™, Magic Design™, Magic Edit, and more)
- ✓ Invite family, friends, and others to design together
- ✓ Wide range of printable products to design and get delivered to your door
- ✓ 5GB of cloud storage

PRO

Everything in Free, plus features you'll love:

- ✓ Unlimited access to premium templates and 100+ million premium stock photos, videos, audio, graphics and more
- ✓ Establish your brand's visual identity with logos, colors and fonts with up to 100 Brand Kits
- ✓ Resize designs infinitely with Magic Switch™
- ✓ Remove image and video backgrounds in one click
- ✓ Full access to Magic Studio, with over 20 AI-powered tools to supercharge your productivity and creativity
- ✓ Convert Presentations or Whiteboards to summaries, blog posts, emails, and more, plus reformat or translate any design, with Magic Switch
- ✓ Schedule social media content to 8 platforms
- ✓ Cloud storage (1TB)
- ✓ 24/7 customer support

^Usage limits and available AI-powered design tools vary between plans

Learn more about Canva Pro
<https://www.canva.com/pro/>

Here