

THE BEGINNER'S
GUIDE TO LOGO DESIGN:
**HOW TO CREATE A LOGO
EVEN IF YOU CAN'T DRAW
TO SAVE YOUR LIFE**



LogoMaker

Most new business ventures need a logo. But not many of them can afford to hire a big design agency or even a freelance designer to do the work. Not to worry... Logomaker can help you create a fantastic new logo—even if you can't draw anything more than a stick figure.

Want to learn the basics of logo design? Check out the six short chapters below and you'll be designing a new logo in no time. Seriously, it's that easy.



CHAPTER 1

DO YOU REALLY NEED A LOGO?

Before you design a logo or hire a designer to do it for you, you need to know whether you really need a logo or not. This page will help you find out.

[Click here](#) to read Chapter 1.



CHAPTER 2

WHAT CAN A GREAT LOGO DO FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

Did you know that a logo can change a customer's behavior? It's true. This page will tell you more about that, and what else a logo can do for your business. [Click here](#) to jump to Chapter 2.



CHAPTER 3

POSITIONING—THE FIRST STEP TO DESIGNING YOUR LOGO

Before you get into the nuts and bolts of logo design, it helps to understand a little bit about positioning and what your new logo will represent. [Click here](#) to go to Chapter 3.



CHAPTER 4

WHAT KIND OF LOGO—ICONIC, TYPOGRAPHIC, OR COMBINATION?

There are three basic logo types. Here's how to choose the one that is right for your new venture. [Click here](#) to read Chapter 4 now.



CHAPTER 5

CHOOSING A FONT AND COLORS—PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

This is where it all comes together, the steps to follow as you create your own logo design. You'll learn how to use Logomaker's design tool to create a logo you'll love. [Click here](#) to go to Chapter 5.



CHAPTER 6

NOW YOU HAVE A GREAT LOGO, WHAT'S NEXT?

Getting a logo is just the first step. Next you'll want to put it on your website, business cards, Facebook, and other marketing materials. [Click here](#) to read Chapter 6 now.

Once you've read the six lessons above, you're ready to design your own logo. [Click to start your logo now.](#)

Would you rather receive these lessons in a 6 part email series? If so, [click here](#).

CHAPTER 1

DO YOU REALLY NEED A LOGO?



DO YOU REALLY NEED A LOGO?

You probably didn't expect that question.

After all, we're a logo company. We don't make any money when customers don't buy logos. So you might expect us to say, "Of course you need a logo!"

But the truth is, you might not.

We want to make sure you really need a logo and you're not throwing away your money.

So here are a few things to consider first:

WHAT A LOGO DOES

The most important thing that your logo does is help your customers recognize and remember your business or product.



If you want to see this in action, have a friend pour you a glass of Coca-Cola and a second glass of Pepsi Cola. Then hide the bottles.

Can you tell which cola is which just by looking at the brown fizzy liquid in a glass.

Neither can anyone else. In fact, a lot of people can't tell the difference when they taste them!

But if the glass or bottle has a logo, you immediately know which cola you prefer.

Your logo works the same way. It helps customers remember feelings and experiences associated with your business. If those interactions are positive, clients are likely to return when they need your service again.

Do you have a product (like cola) that is easy to confuse with a competitor's product or service? Do competitors offer something similar? Then you need a logo.

WHAT A LOGO DOESN'T DO

Now consider a second kind of business.



John owns a pet-sitting company. When he launched his business, John created several hundred flyers that he delivered to his neighbors. He didn't just drop them in their mailboxes. Rather he would talk with the pet owners he met and describe how he could help them. Several hired him.

John has something else going for him—there's no one else in the neighborhood offering a similar service.

Does John need a logo? That's a harder question to answer.

A logo can't create positive experiences for potential customers like John did as he visited with his neighbors. And it can't tell his story. But it can represent both of those things once a customer gets to know him.

John might decide not to spend money on a logo yet, as he is just launching his new business and finds it easy to meet new potential customers. But later, when his business grows, he may decide to get that logo after all.

YOU NEED A LOGO IF:

- you want to look more professional.
- you have one or more competitors offering a similar product or service and you want to stand out and get noticed.
- you use business cards, a website, or other marketing materials and want to demonstrate that you are qualified and competent.
- you want to raise money from investors or sell your business someday.
- you want to grow your “brand” and sell additional products and services, or franchise.
- you want customers to remember you.

Once you’ve thought about the concepts above, you should have a better idea as to whether you really need a logo or not. [Go to the next chapter](#) to learn what a logo can do for your small business.

Would you rather receive these lessons via email? If so, [click here](#).

DON'T WANT TO WAIT TO DESIGN YOUR LOGO?



Think you know enough to create your own logo now? [Click here](#) to give it a shot. It’s easy. Simply choose an icon, add your company name, pick a color or two and arrange the elements into your own logo. Best of all, you can try the online builder free.

CHAPTER 2

WHAT CAN A GREAT LOGO DO FOR YOUR BUSINESS?



A good logo can do more than make a business card look good. Here's the low down:

GREAT LOGOS ARE GAME CHANGERS. **HERE'S HOW THEY DO IT.**

In the world of logo design, you hear a lot of promises about what a logo will do for you and your business. Stuff like:

- A logo will make you look more professional.
- A logo will help your customers remember you.
- A logo will help you stand out from the competition.

All of that is true.

But did you know that a logo may actually change the way your customers act and think?

“Wait,” you’re probably thinking, “Did you just say a logo can change a customer’s behavior?”

Yes. That’s exactly what we are saying.

Or at least, that’s what a couple of researchers at Duke University found when they studied what affect a logo can have on consumers.

Turn the page to see what they did.

WHAT SCIENCE SAYS ABOUT THE POWER OF LOGOS

Consumers were shown an Apple logo (Apple is well known as a “creative” brand and their slogan at the time of the experiment was “Think Different”) or they were shown an IBM logo (IBM was better known at the time as a safe, traditional, and non-creative choice—they still are), then consumers were asked to complete a standard creativity test.

The logos were shown so quickly (13 milliseconds) that the participants in the study didn’t consciously know which one they had seen.

What do you think happened?

The people who had seen the Apple logo performed better on the test.

Significantly better.¹

Just seeing the Apple logo made people think more creatively.

And just to make sure that this wasn’t a fluke, the researchers did the experiment again, this time using the logos for Disney and E! Network.



This time participants were shown the logos then they took a standard test to measure honesty.

Any guesses what they found?

The consumers who saw the Disney logo were more honest on the test than those who saw the E! logo.



SO WHAT DOES THIS ALL MEAN FOR YOU?

First, let us be clear. We're not saying your logo will make people more creative or honest.

But it can have subtle affects on your customers, especially once your logo has become familiar to them. They will begin to associate the experiences and feelings they have when doing business with you—and they'll remember those feelings when they see your logo.

You probably see this happen in your own life. Consider how you feel or what you think about when you see the Wal-Mart logo. Is it different from what you think or feel when you see the Target logo? Or the Nordstrom logo?

Before you read the next chapter, think about what ideas, thoughts, and feelings could be associated with your business. Next you'll learn about how you can make sure your customers will experience those feelings when they see your logo (hint: it's called positioning).

Would you rather receive these lessons via email? If so, [click here](#).

DON'T WANT TO WAIT TO DESIGN YOUR LOGO?



There are four more lessons, but if you think you know enough to create your own logo now, you can [click here](#) to give it a shot. It's easy. Simply choose an icon, add your company name, pick a color or two and arrange the elements into your own logo. Best of all, you can try the online builder free.

¹ Automatic effects of brand exposure on motivated behavior, Fitzsimons, Chartranel, and Fitzsimons, Journal of Consumer Research, Vol. 35. 2008.

CHAPTER 3

POSITIONING— THE FIRST STEP TO DESIGNING YOUR LOGO



So far we've learned a bit about whether you really need a logo (if you're still reading then you probably agree that you do) and the power that a good logo can have.

In this chapter, we're going to learn a little more about marketing. Specifically the ideas, feelings, and experiences that your customers associate with your business.

POSITIONING

The concept of positioning comes from an article written by Jack Trout and Al Ries in 1969.² They wrote about how products and companies can hold an important "position" in the minds of the people who use them.

Let's look at some examples.

Which car do you think of when you think safety? For most people, the answer is Volvo. Volvo has done a very good job of holding the position of safety in the market for automobiles.



Here's another.

Which laundry detergent is best for protecting colors? If you said Cheer, you're not alone. Tide is known for getting whites whiter. So Cheer took all the other colors. Cheer has worked hard to hold this position in the minds of laundry detergent buyers.



Last one.

Which shipping company do you choose if it absolutely, positively has to be there overnight? FedEx, of course. There are lots of shipping companies, but FedEx holds the “overnight delivery” position in our minds.



But here's the most important thing about positioning. Can you name another car company that represents safety? Or a laundry detergent that's great for colors? Or a shipping company known for overnight delivery?

Probably not.

And that's critical. Because our minds are programmed to remember the important stuff. We don't need five solutions for overnight delivery. So we just remember one.

Do you know how many shampoo brands there are at drugstore.com? Hundreds. But chances are you only remember the names of a few of them. Because those are the ones you need or use. There's no point in remembering the others.

Choosing a position for your product helps customers remember it.

POSITIONING YOUR PRODUCT

Now think a bit about your product or service.

What does it help your customers to do? How does it benefit them? Who uses it and what do they like? Who buys it and why? What emotions are associated your product—is it serious? Is it whimsical? Does it bring relief? Does it need to be trustworthy or playful or adventurous or extreme?

How does your product compare to your competitor's? How is it different or better?

Is there an idea that represents what it does? Is there an idea that you can “own” when referring to your product? Is it the safest? The oldest? The best technical solution? The most effective? The first of its kind? Does it have the most power? Is it the softest?

Find the idea that describes your product and sets it apart from the competition. This is your product position.



WHAT'S THE POINT OF ALL THIS?

Now, you may be thinking, “Why am I worrying about this. What I really want is a logo. Let's get on with it.”

Okay, in the next chapter we'll talk specifically about logos.

But in order to do that right, you need to know how you want to position your product or service. Knowing your product's position will enable you choose the right icon, a good font, and even colors that will help customers recognize you and come back for more.

So go through the exercises above. [In the next chapter](#), we'll start the design process.

Would you rather receive these lessons via email? If so, [click here](#).

DON'T WANT TO WAIT TO DESIGN YOUR LOGO?



You've read the first three chapters (there are just three more), but if you think you know enough to create your own logo now, you can [click here](#) to give it a shot. It's easy. Simply choose an icon, add your company name, pick a color or two and arrange the elements into your own logo. Best of all, you can try the online builder free.

²“Positioning” is a game people play, Al Ries and Jack Trout, Industrial Marketing, June 1969, pp 51-55.

CHAPTER 4

WHAT KIND OF LOGO— ICONIC, TYPOGRAPHIC, OR A COMBINATION?



Now that you’ve thought about the ideas that your product or service can represent (last chapter—if you missed it, [click here](#)), you’re ready to start thinking about the design of your logo.

THREE DIFFERENT KINDS OF LOGOS

Your logo has two basic purposes. The first is to represent your product and associate it with the idea your product represents. The second is to help your customers recognize your product, which happens every time they see your logo.

Of course, there are millions of logos in the world. All of them can be categorized into one of three groups: iconic, typographic, or combination marks. Let’s take a quick look at the differences.

ICONIC LOGOS

Iconic logos (also called symbolic logos) are simply shapes or icons that are easily recognizable and represent a company or idea. An iconic logo either literally or abstractly represents your product, or the idea your product represents.

Because an icon alone doesn’t include any text to clarify its meaning, if a consumer isn’t familiar with the logo, they may not associate it with the product it represents.

Let’s take a look at some examples.

The Nike swoosh is among the most recognizable abstract iconic logos in the world. It represents a wing and speed, but it isn’t either of those things. Today when we see the Nike swoosh, we think of shoes, athletic equipment, competition, and athletes like Michael Jordan and Tiger Woods.



The Shell logo is another good example of an icon, this time it's a literal representation of the company's name. When you see the Shell symbol on a sign, you immediately know what kind of gas/service station you are at and the kind of service you can expect from the company.



Lastly, let's take a look at the VW logo. It's a symbol made up of the company's initials. It doesn't include the name VolksWagon, but it quickly conveys the ideas associated with the company and name: irreverence, fun-to-drive, affordable engineering, etc.

All of these logos say something about the product or company they represent, but they do it with a symbol that doesn't literally "say" anything.



Iconic logos are generally best used by organizations with large marketing budgets that can spend the money required to make these logos familiar, through big ad campaigns and repeated exposure. For this reason, we discourage most of our customers from using a logo that only consists of an icon.

TYPOGRAPHIC LOGOS

Typographic logos are also known as logotypes or word marks. These logos are uniquely styled type or font treatments of the product or company name. Because there are thousands of fonts, there are literally thousands of options available when it comes to creating a typographic logo.

When it comes to typographic logos, choosing the font makes all the difference. Take a look at these examples:

Disney's word mark uses a font based on Walt Disney's handwriting. It is whimsical, fun, and creative, which are the ideas the Disney brand represents to its customers.

FedEx is a great example of a typographic logo that uses color to separate the two word parts (representing Federal Express, the company's original name). Also note that the spacing in the type creates a subtle arrow shape between the E and the X that points forward.

Another great example of a word mark is the easily recognizable Coca-Cola logo. This is simply the company name in a unique script that has come to represent "the real thing" around the world.

Logotypes or word marks are often a good option for small business because they include your product or company name, so customers don't have to think too hard to remember it. With the right font, you can create a mark that is both recognizable and represents the ideas you brainstormed while reading the last chapter.



COMBINATION LOGOS

This is the most common type of logo we see. It combines a unique icon with a type treatment of the product or company name, hence the name combination mark. Combination logos have the advantages of both icon and word marks. They include a symbol that can represent the ideas your product represents. And they include your product name in an appropriate font so customers easily remember who you are. Again, let's look at some examples.

McDonald's is a great example of this. Their mark is the easily recognized Golden Arches, but they also include their name in the logo, either in red, or in white when printed against a red background, making the whole logo so easily recognizable you know it in an instant. Notice that the McDonald's logo doesn't include a hamburger, fries or any of the other products that McDonald's sells.



The I ♥ NY logo is another great example. By using the ♥ as a graphic stand-in for love, it forces your mind to "think" about the logo, making it more memorable. The simple type treatment of the rest of the letters makes the logo easy to apply to all kinds of things that New York has to offer.



Another example of a combination mark is the Red Lobster logo. By combining the restaurant name with a graphic depiction of a red lobster, you immediately recognize the sign (before you can even read the words) and know exactly where you are and what kind of food you can expect.



Combination marks are the most common logos used by small businesses because they offer the advantages of both symbols to help represent a business's main idea, and the potential to create a great type treatment with the product name. This is the kind we generally recommend to our customers.

Incidentally, the Logomaker tool makes it easy to choose an icon from a catalog of about 10,000 and match it with one of almost 50 fonts to create an awesome combination logo. But more about that in the next chapters.

SO WHAT KIND OF LOGO IS BEST FOR YOU?

Think about it and in our next chapter we'll learn about putting it all together with colors and fonts.

Would you rather receive these lessons via email? If so, [click here](#).

DON'T WANT TO WAIT TO DESIGN YOUR LOGO?



By now you pretty much know the basics. The next lessons cover colors, fonts, and creating your logo. But if you want to try creating your own logo now—it's easy—[click here](#).

CHAPTER 5

CHOOSING A FONT/ CHOOSING COLORS/ PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER



In this chapter we learn (finally) about putting your logo together.

Think back over the last couple of lessons about the ideas you want to associate with your product or company and the kind of logo (iconic, typographic, or combination) that you want to create. Today we'll use that to create your new logo.

STEP 1: PICK AN ICON

If you have decided to create a combination logo (we generally recommend this to small business owners), the first step is to consider the ideas you want to associate with your logo ([from chapter three](#)). Can the idea be represented literally or would you be better served with an abstract icon that can mean anything?

Once you know the answer, you have two options. You can work with a designer to create a logo that matches your vision. Or you can use a design tool like the one at [Logomaker.com](#) and choose a professionally designed icon available there.

Because this guide is designed for the do-it-yourselfer, we are going to describe the process using the Logomaker design tool. If you would prefer to work directly with a designer but don't know one, email us at support@logomaker.com and we'll put you in touch with one of our favorites.

Now [click here](#) to launch the Logomaker design tool (requires Flash) and you'll see a list of industries. Click on the industry closest to your business idea, then select either a letter-based icon, symbol-based icon, or an abstract icon. From there you can search through hundreds of choices to find a symbol that will work well with your business name.



If you can't find exactly what you're looking for, consider widening your search. An abstract logo in your industry may work well as an accent for your company name. Choosing an attractive graphic that matches the personality, service, or product, or name of your company

is a core component of making a great logo. But that doesn't mean you have to box yourself in with a literal representation of your name or product.

It may take a bit of practice and some creativity to try to figure out how an abstract icon could represent your brand. Try thinking in terms of feelings and ideas, like speed or progress. Maybe you can't find the perfect image of a racecar or cheetah, but something abstract like curved lines or a swoosh could create a sense of motion and speed.

STEP 2: ADD YOUR COMPANY NAME

Once you have an icon selected, it's time to add your company or product name. If you're using the Logomaker design tool, this is easy. Simply type the name into one (or both) of the text boxes and choose a font that matches the style of your icon.

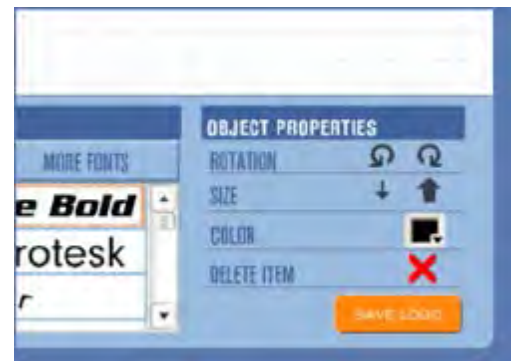
STEP 3: CHANGING COLORS, SIZE AND LAYOUT

Again, using the Logomaker design tool, it's easy to make adjustments to the design of your logo. On the lower right hand side is an OBJECT PROPERTIES list where you can rotate or adjust the size or color an object or line of text. You can also delete each item.

You can increase or decrease the size of the company name (the font) depending on how you want to emphasize it. First select the line of text, and then under OBJECT PROPERTIES, click one of the arrows to increase or decrease how large or small the object is. The larger arrow that is pointing up increases the object size, the thinner arrow pointing down, decreases the size of the object.

If you want to rotate an object or line of text, simply choose the item, and then select the circular arrows to the right of Rotation under Object Properties.

Naturally, if you select the arrow that is on the right, the item will rotate clockwise, and if you select the arrow on the left, the item will rotate counterclockwise.



Once you've made your adjustments and have a logo you like, hit save and you're done. You can either download the free web logo HTML snippet, or you can purchase high-resolution files to use however you wish.

Obviously, if you are working with a designer, they will tackle most of these tasks for you. They'll create the icon, recommend fonts and colors, and present you with several options for your final decision.

WANT TO KNOW MORE? **GET THE FREE USER MANUAL**

The instructions here are meant to be a simple description of the process of designing a logo with the Logomaker tool. If you want a more in-depth description of how to use the tool, as well as several examples of logos built using Logomaker and the thinking behind them, [click here to download our free Logomaker User Manual](#). It describes all the ins and outs of creating a logo with our design tool.



A FEW THINGS TO AVOID

Before you finish the design of your logo, here's a short list of things to leave out of your logo. Leaving them out will help your logo look more professional and clean.

1. Legal phrases like Inc., Corp, LLC, and LLP.
Big company logos don't include them, so why should you?
2. Taglines.
Taglines change, but your logo won't. So just leave them out of the logo design.
3. Addresses, phone numbers, and websites.
Again, these things change. Include them in your advertising, but not your logo.
They just make your logo look crowded and complicated.

TRY IT YOURSELF NOW

That's it. Now that you know what to do, it's time to put your new skills to work. [Click here](#) to try the Logomaker online design tool. Give it a try now.

Would you rather receive these lessons via email? If so, [click here](#).

DON'T WANT TO WAIT TO DESIGN YOUR LOGO?



With this lesson, you now know what to do. The next lessons covers what to do after you've got your logo. So it's time to try creating your own logo now. It's fast, it's easy, and you can try the Logomaker builder free with no obligation to buy, so [click here](#) now.

CHAPTER 6

NOW YOU HAVE A GREAT LOGO. WHAT'S NEXT?



If you've followed along for the past couple of chapters (especially [the last one](#)), you've thought hard about what your company stands for and what your logo represents in the eyes of your customers. You've thought about the best kind of logo for your company—iconic, typographic, or a combination of the two. And you've taken a few minutes to create a great new logo using the online Logomaker application.

Now the questions is...

WHAT SHOULD I DO WITH MY LOGO?

Well, the sky is the limit. You can check out our [Put Your Logo to Work page](#) on our website for lots of ideas on how you can use your logo to grow your business.

But how you use your logo really depends on the kind of business you are running. A restaurant owner will want to put her logo on everything from the menu and store signage to staff uniforms (t-shirts, golf shirts, or full outfits). While a consultant may only need a logo on his business card and website. Think about where your customers will should see your logo and make a list.

LET'S START WITH THE BASICS— BUSINESS CARDS AND STATIONERY

Most businesses use business cards as a handout at conferences, to new customers and potential partners, and to drop in those “win a free lunch” fishbowls at your favorite restaurant. Here's how to put your logo on a business card.

First, start by downloading the EPS file for your logo. This is a special file that can be used by professional printers for everything from business cards to posters. You won't be able to open this file without special design software, but your printer will be able to open it. Some online printers prefer working with a JPG or PNG. If that's the case, download those files (large)



from your Logomaker account as well.

Next, visit your printer, either online or off. We highly recommend [these guys](#) (that's who we used to print our business cards) and they have a lot of experience working with files from Logomaker. You can use your files with any printer of your choice.

Choose a template from their collection, upload your logo, and add your contact information to the card. In most cases, you'll receive your card order within seven days of approving your final artwork. If you choose to use a local printer, you may get your cards even faster.



PUTTING YOUR LOGO ON A WEBSITE OR FACEBOOK PAGE

These days, a strong online presence is critical for most small businesses. Creating a great looking website doesn't have to be difficult or time consuming. And creating an awesome Facebook page where you can reach out to your customers is easier than ever. Here's how:

Start by downloading one of the JPG or PNG files from your Logomaker account. Choose the size depending on the space you have to use, but we recommend either the small or medium sizes in most cases. If you need a website, [click here](#) to try the Logomaker site builder where you can choose from several templates, change the colors, easily add pages, update text and photos, and in most cases, be up and online in less than 30 minutes.



Some website builders have rigid requirements for file sizes. If you can provide us with the exact pixel dimensions, we can usually help you get a custom size image. For this service,

email support@logomaker.com with your username and order ID and the exact dimensions required by the website builder. Depending on the work involved, there may be a small fee for this service.

For a great Facebook page, we recommend [this page builder](#) ([click here](#) to check it out). Their drag-and-drop campaign builder allows you to create powerful viral promotions, sweepstakes, photo and video contests, and lead capture forms. They can also help you distribute coupons and cross-promote your company's other social networking accounts, all in a matter of minutes.

SHIRTS, MUGS, PENS, NOTEBOOKS AND A LOT MORE

You can put your logo on just about anything. Need poker chips for a company party? How about hats for your employees? Decals for your vehicles? Ever wanted to put your logo on a can of soda? Our promotional products partner has done it all—umbrellas, first aid kits, stress relievers, tote bags.

Want to put your logo on a green sequin fedora with flashing LEDs? They can even do that. Download the EPS file from your Logomaker account, then [click here](#) for more information.



Before we go, you may want to log into your Logomaker account and download all of your files and keep them in a safe place. We'll also keep them on file if you need to come back again, but it's always a good idea to have all the files ready when you need them.

Well that's it. No more lessons. But if you like what you learned, you may want to consider signing up for our free small business newsletter. It goes out once a month and is full of useful marketing ideas and offers that will help you grow your business. To sign up, [click here](#).



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