

## Creating a portfolio for work

Your portfolio is key to getting the job you want so anything you can do to keep it fresh and exciting will enhance your job prospects. It needs to be both commercial and imaginative.

It's a good idea to have two versions—a physical one that you can carry around with you and a website version that can be easily accessed on the internet.

### Physical portfolio

- **Tailor made**  
The specific content and format of your portfolio will depend on your discipline, but you should always tailor the contents to fit the needs of each prospective employer. You will need to research each company in advance to determine what is required.
- **Organised**  
Keep in mind that you may have to drop-off or post your portfolio and so may not be there to explain the contents so ensure everything in the portfolio is self-explanatory. Ensure the contents are easy for the viewer to navigate. It helps to group work into categories and add pagination or tabs for easy reference.
- **Presentation**  
Take time to mount things perfectly. Presentation counts for an awful lot. Invest in some really good mounting or displaying materials.
- **Information**  
Include full information about each piece of work you are including: the title (make one up if you need to); the size in millimetres of the original; the medium used; who has the copyright; when the piece was completed; and details of any brief you were given.
- **Self-promotional items**  
When you drop off your portfolio, include a cover letter and copy of your CV. Try to include a postcard or small booklet with selected images of your work that can be easily kept on file for future reference. Always be professional and avoid any gimmicky self-promotional items.
- **Sending your portfolio**  
If you are posting your portfolio, send only A4 colour copies - these can be replaced but originals can't. Also, A4 copies will fit into a standard filing system. Package it sensibly so it's protected in the post but easy to open. Double-check that you are sending it to the right address.
- **Self-addressed envelope**  
Include a self-addressed envelope - that way, if they don't want to use it they can send it back.
- **Covering Letter**  
Include a covering letter stating why you are interested in this particular job and what you feel you have to offer. You should also ask them to return your submission, if they don't want it, along with some feedback that you can use to develop your portfolio.
- **Contact details:** Make sure your contact details are clear: name; address including postcode; telephone numbers and times to call; email address and website address if it shows good examples of your work.

## Website Portfolio

- **Searchable text format**  
Be sure to include full contact information somewhere on your site in a searchable text format.
- **Showcase your work**  
If you've developed websites for clients, don't just list the URLs - include images of those projects with captions.
- **Organisation**  
Sort the work into categories and make it easy for the viewer to navigate back and forth. Your goal is to keep prospective employers captivated.
- **Links**  
Keep download times to a minimum and always test first before making the site available to the public. Test it thoroughly to make sure that everything displays the way it should and that prospective employers won't receive error messages.
- **Get feedback**  
Ask for feedback from as many people as possible – tutors, family, friends etc.
- **Professionalism**  
Remember, this is a career-related site so keep it professional. Don't mix in irrelevant images - they could easily alienate potential employers.