



Tips for Preparing Your Portfolio

If you are planning to attend college in one of the arts many of them will require a portfolio, or collection of your artistic works.

For many schools, portfolios may not be required, but they tend to enhance an application or may provide scholarship opportunities. For each artistic major you are applying to at a different school, you should look to see if there are specific portfolio requirements.

Types of Portfolios

A portfolio is a collection of your best artistic work that is presented in a professional manner in the format requested by the university. Usually, this is 10-20 different works depending on your medium. These artistic works shouldn't be done all together but ideally, this is a collection selected from work you have done throughout high school.

Architecture arts portfolio should demonstrate strong spatial understanding and creative skills through the inclusion of samples like observational sketches, CAD drawings and building interiors and exteriors.

Visual arts/design portfolio should include 2-D and 3-D works executed in any medium that demonstrate both creativity and a grasp of basic artistic techniques and principles.

Digital art portfolio composed of digital or time-based media should demonstrate a basic mastery of the concepts of composition as well as effective use of software or other relevant digital tools.

Performing arts audition, whether performed on-site or submitted digitally, should demonstrate strong characterization, energy and physical commitment to the role.

Writing portfolios should demonstrate the applicant's ability to create clear and compelling copy across a variety of genres.



Best Practices

- **Create** artwork early and often.
- **Build** your creative ideas by keeping them in a sketchbook or journal.
- **Take** art classes.
- **Experiment** with different media and techniques.
- **Work** from direct observation, when possible
- **Use only original work**—don't “borrow” images or use content that is not yours to use.
- **Save** all your work throughout high school so you can pick the best pieces for your final portfolio.
- **Submit** images and content that has the highest resolution.
- **Seek feedback** from peers, teachers, professionals, and representatives of the university that you want to attend.

Artistic Things to Consider

Composition—placement or arrangement of elements in a work.

Drawing—demonstration of line weights, mark-making, proportion, and medium.

Design—overall unity achieved by combining elements of art and principles of design.

Value—relative darkness or lightness of a color.

Spatial perception—understand the spatial relationship between objects, as well as foreground, middle, and background.

Technique—skillfulness in the use of fundamental methods and media.

Color perception—general sensitivity to color and sophistication in its application.

Originality—capacity to think independently and transform the predictable into something new; the quality of being new and original.

Conceptual awareness—an expression of a clear idea and effective use of materials and processes to strengthen the concept.

Aesthetic awareness—a guiding principle in matters of artistic beauty and taste.

Resource material adapted from scad.edu/portfolio and <https://blog.academyart.edu/10-tips-to-create-a-noteworthy-art-portfolio-for-college-admissions/#.Xx26LpP2In4>