

version 1.0

# BRAND AND DESIGN GUIDE



GRADUATELAND

Introduction

## MISSION STATEMENT

Branding can get a bad rap. If you listen to the haters they'll have you believing that branding is only about color schemes, logo versions, and typography. Obviously, that's why branding is never working for them, and why they walk around saying that it's bullshit.

It's not just about our logo, our website, our name, or even our product. It's much more than that. It's the intangible stuff that's hard to pinpoint. It's that feeling in your gut that separates the mediocre from the powerhouse brands.

A brand gives us a personality, it makes us trustworthy, and it helps people identify with us. Our brand is basically how people feel about us. Given the choice between two similar products with roughly the same price point, the stronger brand will always win the customer. Always.

At Graduateland,  
our mission is to provide  
a superior career portal  
that **students and graduates**  
recommend to their friends,  
**recruiters** prefer for their  
talent search, **universities**  
choose for their students,  
and **employees** are proud  
to be a part of.

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## BRAND PERSONALITY

If Graduateland was a person, what might that person be like? This is important because people trust people – not faceless corporations. With a distinct, authentic, memorable brand personality, our audience will feel like they are interacting with a person. One with character. With feelings. With emotions.

The personality of Graduateland is how the external world will see and engage with us. It should run consistently through all of our communication, design, and customer interaction – at all times, at every touchpoint.

### We are empowering.

clever  
educational  
inspirational

Graduateland empowers students and graduates to start their careers. We provide invaluable support for young talent trying to navigate the start of their professional lives whether they are dreaming about a career in teaching, management, engineering, or marketing.

### We are relatable.

straightforward  
informal  
human

Graduateland keeps it real. We stay away from corporate language and phony marketing spin because that's not how real people talk. It's important to us that people get a personalized experience with Graduateland, so being relatable and human comes naturally to us.

### We are helpful.

personal  
relevant  
friendly

Graduateland wants to help its users. Whether that's with finding a job nearby, creating a CV, or getting to know a certain company. Every single user has a different goal (and a potentially life-changing event ahead of them) and we take that seriously.

### We are fun.

playful  
lively  
enthusiastic

Graduateland doesn't take itself too seriously. We love jokes and stories and all those things that makes people smile unexpectedly, so we create those moments for our users too. By letting ourselves have fun, we make job search and recruitment a lot more enjoyable.

### We are international.

travel crazed  
curious  
globally oriented

With Graduateland, the global mindset is baked in. We're made up of 14 different nationalities, so being curious about the world is part of our DNA. This shows in the way we talk and in the products we provide: with everything from virtual events to internships abroad, we're making the world smaller.

**CONTENT**

# WRITING GOALS AND PRINCIPLES



## WRITING GOALS AND PRINCIPLES

### With every piece of content we share, we aim to empower.

Tell readers what they need to know, not just what we want to say. Give them the information they need and the opportunity to learn more.

### Inspire.

Create content that's authentic for our brand, designed to inspire and not to sell, and let it live in places where our users naturally spend time.

### Guide.

In order to truly help solve our readers' problems, writers for Graduateland should consider themselves guidance counselors for our readers. Be friendly and helpful whether you're leading them through educational content or explaining app features.

### To achieve those goals, we make sure our content is clear.

Know the topic you're writing about. Use simple words and sentences.

### Relevant.

Before you start typing you should know: 1) What purpose does this piece of content serve? 2) Who is going to read it? 3) What do they need to know?

### Personal.

Write like a human and make sure it's relatable and warm. Adapt your tone to the situation just like you would with face-to-face conversations.

### Helpful.

We exist to demystify the job search/recruitment experience and help solve any and all related problems our users might have.

# VOICE AND TONE



## VOICE

At Graduateland, we are aware of our voice and our tone. This section clarifies the differences between voice and tone and lays out the elements of each.

An easy way to remember it is this: You have the same voice all the time, however, your tone changes depending on the situation. For example, you might use one tone when you're eating dinner with your family, and another if you have an audience with the Queen.

The same is true for Graduateland. While our voice doesn't change much in the day-to-day, our tone changes all the time to accommodate the situation or emotional state of our readers.

**We've walked for many miles in our users' shoes, and we know that job search can be confusing, difficult, nerve-wracking, and downright frustrating.**

**That is why we speak like the experienced and supportive guidance counselor we wish we'd had ourselves.**

We take every hopeful student or graduate seriously, and we want to educate them without being arrogant or patronizing. Going for a conversational style and occasional humor, we attempt to bring joy to their job search and career advancement.

Whether people know what they want from us or if they've never applied for a job before, every word we publish educates and inspires. We make sure that every piece of content is loaded with clarity, wit, and empathy.

This means that whenever we write copy:

**1. We are straightforward**

We understand the situation our readers are in: one that's exciting but also sometimes nerve-racking and uncertain. We provide clarity above all and guide our readers through the ups and downs of landing their first job.

**2. We are genuine**

We relate to our readers' concerns because we were there ourselves not too long ago. We always speak to them in a familiar, warm, and accessible way.

**3. We are guidance counselors**

With our content, we make what's difficult seem easy. It's our job to demystify the job search experience, debunk the fairytales of career advancement and actually educate.

## **Graduateland's tone is usually informal but always clear ahead of entertaining.**

We always take our readers' state of mind into consideration. Are they frustrated about their job hunt not going well? Are they happy they just landed an internship? Are they confused and seeking our help on social media? Once we know their emotional state, we can adjust our tone accordingly.

Graduateland's content is targeted young students and graduates, so feel free to show a sense of humor when appropriate. However, we prefer being clear over being funny, so when in doubt just stay serious.

When in doubt, let these five adjectives guide your tone of voice:

**empowering**  
**relatable**  
**helpful**  
**fun**  
**international**

These five adjectives should always cover the main tone of voice of our company.

## Here are a few of the key elements of writing in Graduateland's voice.

### Use the active voice.

The active voice is more direct and forceful than the passive voice.

- ✓ Eric sent the application.
- ✗ The application was sent by Eric.

### Trim long sentences.

Limit the use of long sentences and be smart about weaving short sentences with longer ones. Variation is good. Consider the flow of the text.

### Fight the wall of text.

Break the text into more paragraphs; use subheadings; work with bullet points; add more full stops.

### Write positively.

Avoid negative words. Look for words like "can't", "don't", etc., and consider if there's a positive way of saying your piece.

### Steer clear of clichés.

Think outside the box and come up with your own linguistic images.

### Get rid of devil-words.

'Really', 'very', 'totally', 'completely', 'literally', 'definitely', 'certainly', 'probably', 'actually', 'basically', 'virtually' and all the other useless modifiers and words that don't add information to a sentence: Delete them.

# GRAMMAR, PUNCTUATION AND MECHANICS

## BASICS

### Write for people, not machines.

We do not game Google's algorithm with keyword stuffing. We do care about SEO but our philosophy is this: if we write for humans, the search engines will follow.

### Talk to ONE person, not the masses.

Use words like 'you' and 'yours' and I/we/us like you would in a normal face-to-face conversation.

### Be conversational.

With every piece of content think: would I talk like this at home?

### Ask questions.

It makes you feel more important, right? You feel more like we're having an actual conversation, don't you? Basically, questions make for a more engaging piece of content and will breathe life into our brand identity.

### Avoid clichés like the... chickenpox.

Get rid of buzzwords and common phrases that turn people off. However, altering clichés to fit the situation by replacing a few words or turning it on its head can be a refreshing, powerful change: that's always allowed.

### ~~Refrain from~~ Don't use fancy words.

Again, speak like a person (not a robot) and make sure you always choose short, clear, and direct words.

### Slice up chunky paragraphs

They are hard to read. Instead, write itsy-bitsy paragraphs of 1-2-3 sentences each. And stagger the length of the sentences to keep it interesting. Bullet points and subheaders make articles look sexy. Always go for sexy.



## GUIDELINES

### American vs British English

At Graduateland, we use British English. Most often that influences your language in the following three ways:

American words that end with “or” ends with “our” in British. So, whenever these occur we write colour not color, flavour not flavor and so on. British use “se” to American use of “ze”. So, we write “analyse” not “analyze”, alrighty?

Lastly, the British use “re” to the American “er” as in centre, not center.

These rules are important, and we should follow them always. But. We’re not so utterly anal that you can’t use any American words. Meaning you can still use words like ‘apartment’, ‘cookie’, ‘cell phone’ and ‘French fries’ even if most Brits would say ‘flat’, ‘biscuit’, ‘mobile phone’ and ‘crisps’.

We’ll totally forgive you.

### Abbreviations and acronym

If there’s any chance your reader won’t recognise an abbreviation or acronym, spell it out the first time you mention it. Then use the short version as you go

along. If the abbreviation isn’t clearly related to the full version, you should specify in parenthesis.

**First use:** Virtual Career Fair

**Second use:** VCF

Obviously, if the abbreviation or acronym is well known such as CEO or SWAT, use that instead (not sure why you would need to mention SWAT in Graduateland content, but you never know.)

### Active voice

Simple rule, easy to remember:

**Use active voice. Avoid passive voice.**

In active voice, the subject of the sentence does the action. In passive voice, the subject of the sentence has the action done to it.

- ✓ Hanna logged into her Graduateland account.
- ✗ The Graduateland account was logged into by Hanna.

Look out for word like “was” and “by” as they may indicate that you’re writing in passive voice. Scan for these phrases and rewrite passive sentences.

An exception can be made if you want to specifically emphasise the action itself over the subject. That’s fine in some cases. Like: Your account was reinstalled by our support team.

### Capitalisation

We use a few different forms of capitalisation. In title case, we only capitalise the first word, so not the first letter of every word which you see many places. We always capitalise Graduateland and Careerland – unless in an email address.

When writing out an email address or website URL, use all lowercase.

**pl@graduateland.com**  
**graduateland.com**

Don’t capitalise random words in the middle of sentences. Here are some words that we never capitalise in a sentence.

**website**  
**internet**  
**online**  
**email**

### Contractions

We love contractions. Because that’s how humans talk and we’re all for it. It gives your writing an informal, friendly tone. In most cases, use them as you see fit. Avoid them if you’re writing in-product text (e.g. buttons or hover explainers) that will be translated for an international audience.

## GUIDELINES

### Emojis

They're great! Emojis are a fun way to add humour to your writing and make it visually interesting. Use them every now and then when it fits the context.

### Numbers

Spell out a number when it begins a sentence (unless it's a title: then, it's your choice). Otherwise, use the numeral. This includes the ordinals, too e.g. 3rd, 4th.

- ✓ 10 things you can ask for instead of a raise
- ✓ Ten things you can ask for instead of a raise
- ✗ 10 new employees started in February, and 12 start in March.
- ✓ Ten new employees started in February, and 12 start in March.
- ✓ He won 2nd place.

It may feel odd to use '1' instead of 'one' sometimes. In that case, just go with your gut.

Numbers over 3 digits get commas

**Yes:** 999  
**Yes:** 3,000  
**Yes:** 200,000  
**No:** 4000

### Dates

In general, spell out the day of the week and the month. We only abbreviate if there are space issues e.g. in a Tweet or in our app.

- ✓ Wednesday, March 20
- ✗ the 20th of March
- ✓ Wed., Jan. 24
- ✗ Wednesday, March 20, 2019
- ✓ March 20, 2019

It's rarely relevant to mention the day and the year in the same sentence. Chose the most important element of the two.

Abbreviate decades when referring to those within the past 100 years.

The 80's  
The 00's

If you want to reference decades more than 100 years ago, you should be specific:

The 1900's  
The 1860's



## GUIDELINES

### Punctuation

#### Commas

When writing a list, use the Oxford comma.

- ✓ Sandra loves lasagna, ponies, and the Harry Potter books.
- ✗ Sandra loves lasagna, ponies and the Harry Potter books.

Otherwise, use a comma where it makes sense. Try reading the sentence out loud if you're in doubt. Whenever you take a breath, use a comma.

#### Full stop

Full stops go inside quotation marks. They go outside parentheses when the parenthetical is part of a larger sentence, and inside parenthesis when it stands alone.

**Like so:**

Then Denny said, "I got a new bike."  
I got a new bike (and I rode it to work).  
I got a new bike. (I bought it from Sam.)

#### Question marks

Like full stops, questions marks go inside quotation marks if they're part of the quote. They go outside parentheses when the parenthetical is part of a larger sentence, and

inside the parentheses when the parenthetical stands alone.

#### Dashes and hyphens

Use a hyphen (-) without spaces to link words or parts of words.

**First-time user**  
**Self-restraint**  
**Twenty-one and ninety-nine**  
**Book-loving student**

Please remember that hyphens are not interchangeable with other types of dashes.

With dashes, you have two options; en dash (–) and em dash (—).

The en dash (the shorter one) is used when you want to indicate a span or a range such as time, page numbers, or scores.

- ✓ It's scheduled from 4:30–5:00
- ✗ It's scheduled from 4:30-5:00

(Notice how the en dash is slightly longer than a hyphen.)

Now, the em dash (the longest dash) is used more artistically, for example, when you want to indicate a pause in a sentence. It's stronger than a comma but weaker than a full stop. You should also use the em dash when it's part of a name or title (see below). Basically,

the em dash is used to draw special attention to parenthetical information.

- ✗ Sustainability - Virtual Career Fair
- ✓ Sustainability – Virtual Career Fair
- ✓ London will continue to attract people from all over the world—especially Europe.
- ✓ The new girl—who was wearing purple shorts—entered the room.

#### Writing about Graduateland and Careerland

Graduateland is always capitalised. As is Careerland, and we never write Careerland.dk (only if used as a reference to our social tags).

#### Text formatting

You can use italics and bold for emphasis (but use it infrequently and deliberately). We do not use an underline, ever.

**DESIGN**

LOGO

Logo

**GRADUATELAND**

Our logo is the key building block of our identity and the primary visual element that identifies us.

The logo is a combination of the the glyph (icon) and our company name – they have a fixed relationship that should never be changed.



**GRADUATELAND**



**GRADUATELAND**

Logo

## CONSTRUCTION

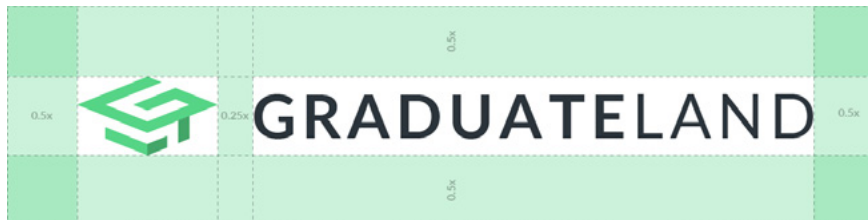
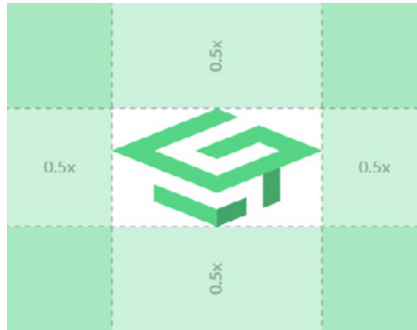
There should be enough breathing room around the logo so it isn't overcrowded.

**0.5x** is half the width of the glyph and should be applied as the padding on all four sides of the logo.

**For example:**

Glyph width = 100px

Padding = 50px



Logo

## PLACEMENT

When placing the logo, make sure that you leave enough space around it, so it doesn't overlap with other elements.

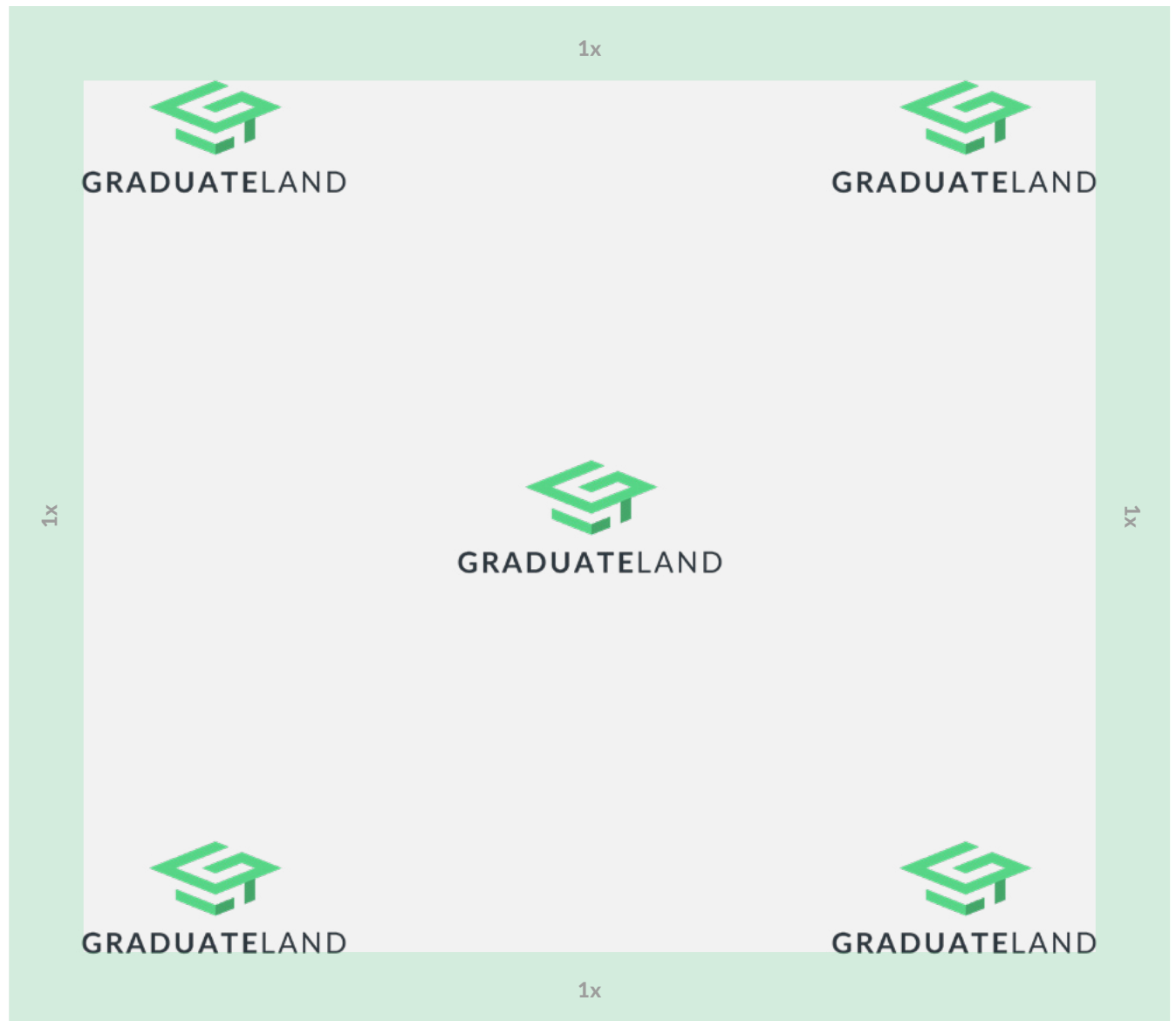
These are possible placements of our logo and glyph.

1x = width of the glyph

**For example:**

Glyph width = 100px

Spacing = 100px



Logo

## VARIANTS AND APPLICATION

These approved logo variations can be used in a variety of mediums.

Always make sure that the glyph has enough contrast and the wordmark is readable.





Logo

## VARIANTS AND APPLICATION



GRADUATELAND





Logo

## VARIANTS AND APPLICATION



GRADUATELAND



Logo

## VARIANTS AND APPLICATION



GRADUATELAND



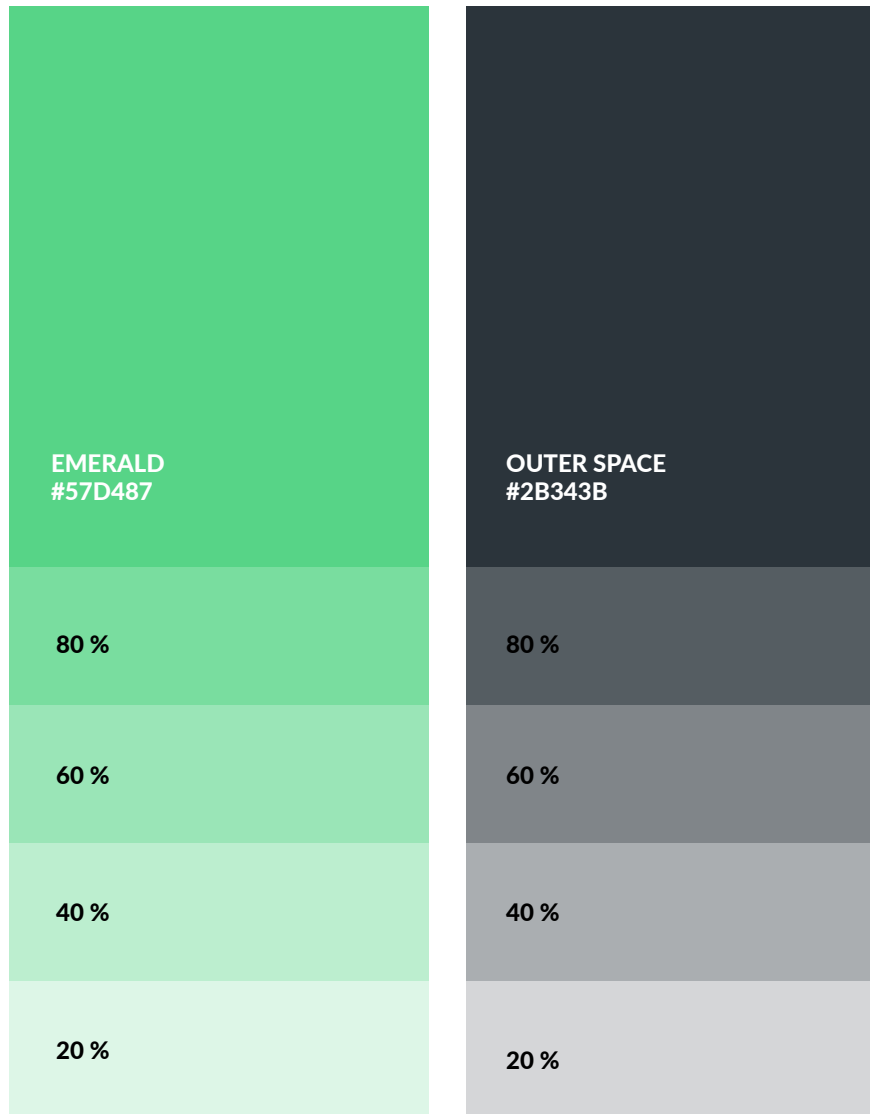
**COLOURS**

Colours

## PRIMARY COLOURS

These two colors represent our visual brand as recognizable identifiers of our company.

Use these colors for all internal and external visual presentations.



Colours

## SECONDARY COLOURS

Our secondary colors should  
compliment our primary colors and  
brand as a whole.

These colors should be used sparingly  
and only to accent and support our  
primary colors.

**PATINA**  
**#559287**

**80 %**

**60 %**

**40 %**

**20 %**

**CHATEAU GREEN**  
**#41A065**

**80 %**

**60 %**

**40 %**

**20 %**

**WILD SAND**  
**#F2F2F2**

**80 %**

**60 %**

**40 %**

**20 %**

**TYPOGRAPHY**



Utilising Google Fonts allows us to keep a consistent voice through type across print, web & other digital.

With a total of 8 styles for the font, there are endless possibilities for styling.

Font can be downloaded here:  
[fonts.google.com/specimen/Lato](https://fonts.google.com/specimen/Lato)

# Lato

## Letters

A Å Æ B C D E F G H I J K L M N O Ø P Q R S T U V W X Y Z  
a å æ b c d e f g h i j k l m n o ø p q r s t u v w x y z

## Numbers

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

## Special Characters

‘ ’ “ ” ( % ) [ # ] { @ } / & \ < - + ÷ × = > ® © \$ € £ ¥ ¢ ; , . \*

## Styles

**The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog**  
**The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog**  
**The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog**  
**The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog**  
**The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog**  
**The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog**  
**The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog**  
**The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog**  
**The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog**

*The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog*  
*The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog*  
*The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog*  
*The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog*  
*The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog*  
*The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog*  
*The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog*  
*The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog*  
*The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog*

Typography plays an important role in communicating our overall tone and quality. It ensures clarity and harmony in all our communications.

Keep the proportions close to this example, but feel free to adjust according to your needs.

Heavy, size 32

# Headline Colour

Regular, size 18

## Subheadline

Heavy, size 11

Et accullu ptatio consere stibusam, nemporp, ut oditias dunt, sit ressi dolorem facea cus modi aut dunt laborpos voluptius et aliquunt accat fugita inihitiam fugiasperae percia con rempore des quatus ipsae plignam fugit, omnis alitiur as sunt qui **offictemos reptatem**.

Italic, size 11

Atem qui optaerspere lictis as sinimo molupta tiaerfe runtis simi, erit optatium, consequ iderum re ommolore prenem quatiore et ut et quides restium sit opta ab inctia con rem et imolorestor alitass *itature ictissunt maionsendio* veratur?

Regular, size 11

Re officiisit iditi id es nus quatur si adiassimus et prest facerianto experum nos dolut velit aut qui nonsequi resequam qui doluptas acia consequas eosandest optiunt, ut ad mincimus, sitas iusam.

**IMAGERY**

Imagery

## PHOTOGRAPHY



Our images represent our brand personality.

We are trying to be authentic and relatable **when showing people**, so we portray our users in their natural environment and avoid a staged and unrealistic stock image feel.





*Imagery*

## DUOTONES

Sometimes we want to use images in a more decorative way, but still within the context of our idea.

For this specific situation, we can use Duotones to brand the stock images we find in our company colours. We can use this to bring in some variety, but still keep it consistent.

There are two variants to choose from, Duotone Grey and Duotone Green.



Imagery

## PATTERN OVERLAYS

It is also possible to use some shapes of our logos as overlays to add some more interest and make the images we use our own.

**This is a headline  
over two lines**

And here you can read a  
two lined subline as well



**This is a headline  
over two lines**

And here you can read a  
two lined subline as well



# ILLUSTRATIONS



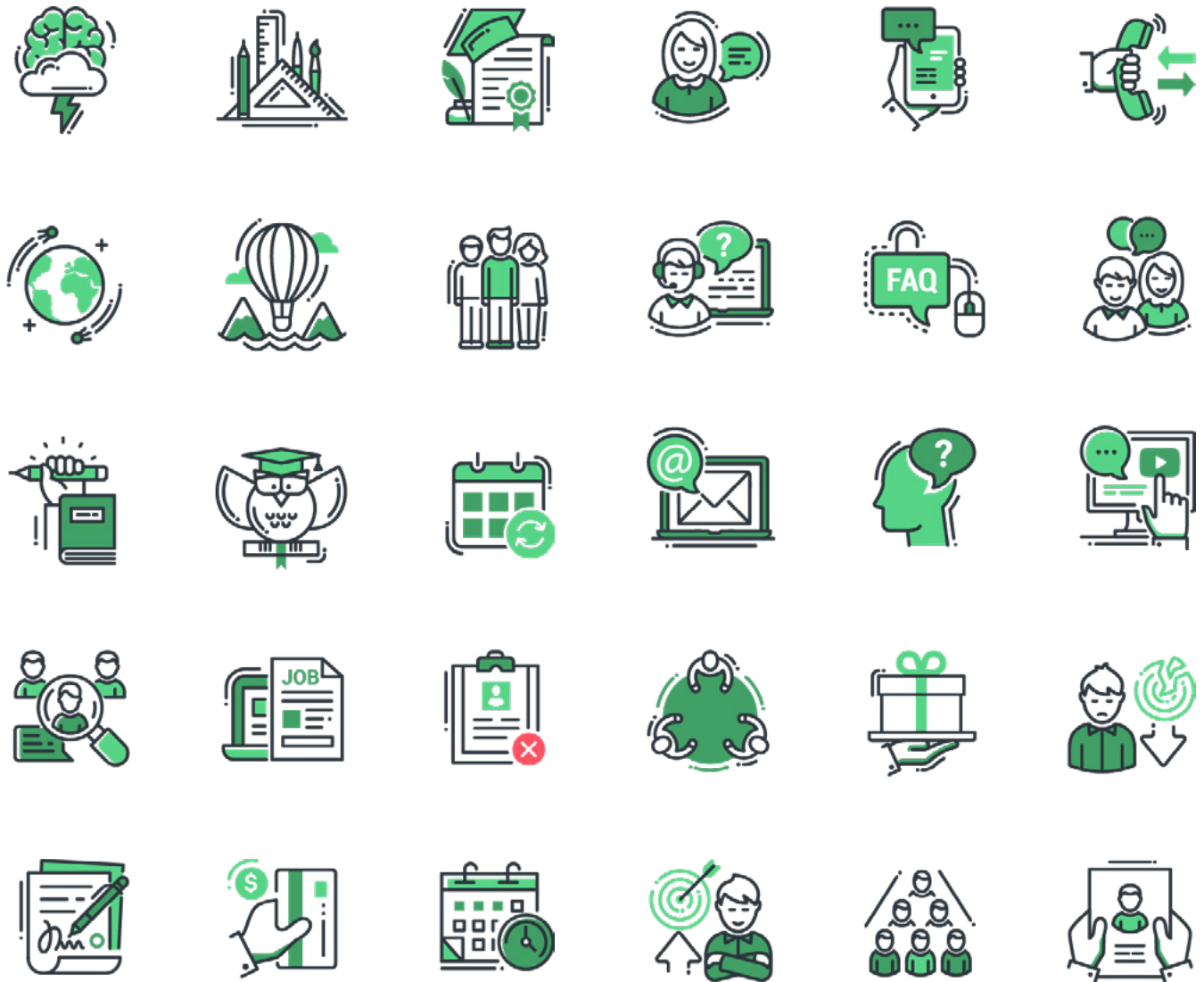
*Illustrations*

**ILLUSTRATIONS**

**coming up**

A large construction crane is silhouetted against a dark, overcast sky. The crane's lattice boom extends diagonally from the lower right towards the upper left. A bright green vertical bar occupies the left side of the image, partially obscuring the crane's structure. The text 'coming up' is centered in the middle of the image, overlaid on the crane's boom.

## ICONS



We can use icons to add value to our content and make it easier to understand. Therefore we only use icons sparingly and in an informational context, so not as decorations.

**EXAMPLES**

*Examples*

## PRESENTATIONS

coming up

A large construction crane is silhouetted against a dark, overcast sky. The crane's long jib extends diagonally from the lower right towards the upper left. The lattice structure of the crane is clearly visible. In the bottom left corner, there is a bright green triangular graphic element.

*Examples*

## **FLYERS AND POSTERS**

A large construction crane is silhouetted against a dark, overcast sky. The crane's long jib extends diagonally from the bottom right towards the top left. In the top left corner, there is a bright green geometric shape, possibly a triangle or a trapezoid, which serves as a background for the text. The overall mood is industrial and dramatic.

**coming up**

*Examples*

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

A large construction crane is silhouetted against a dark, overcast sky. The crane's lattice boom extends diagonally from the bottom right towards the top left. In the top left corner, there is a bright green geometric shape, possibly a triangle or a square, which partially overlaps the sky. The text "coming up" is centered in the middle of the image in a white, sans-serif font.

**coming up**

Examples  
**VIDEOS**

A large construction crane is silhouetted against a dark, overcast sky. The crane's long jib extends diagonally from the bottom right towards the top left. The lattice structure of the crane is clearly visible. In the top left corner, there is a bright green rectangular area. The text 'coming up' is centered in the middle of the image in a white, sans-serif font.

**coming up**

# RESOURCES



## Canva

Create posts for social media, flyers, brochures, posters, banners.

[canva.com](https://canva.com)

**User** sk@graduateland.com  
**PW** graduateland2019

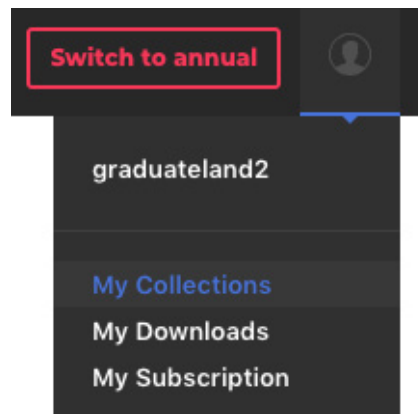
## Envato Elements

Find stock images, icons, illustrations, templates, graphics, mockups, video, audio.

[elements.envato.com](https://elements.envato.com)

**User** graduateland2  
**PW** KYYhfT4WG3Ea2HD

Find the icon sets and other curated material in **My Collections** under our profile in the top right corner.



## Duotones

Find images in our company duotones or upload and alter an existing image.

**Duotone Grey**  
[duotone.shapefactory.co/?f=f2f2f2&t=2b343b](https://duotone.shapefactory.co/?f=f2f2f2&t=2b343b)

**Duotone Green**  
[duotone.shapefactory.co/?f=57d487&t=2b343b](https://duotone.shapefactory.co/?f=57d487&t=2b343b)

## Unsplash

Find stock images for your content.

[unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)

## Brand Guide

You can find the brand guide and additional assets (i.e. logos) in the public Google Drive folder.

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1mmz6TSu98Pnf5zb-BdFpk-6a8dV4T35>

