We’re building this brand together.

THE BASICS

Thanks for taking the time to explore Swing Left’s Visual Brand Guide. These are guidelines, not rules. You can use the tools inside to create communications that empower and inspire your community to take action and make meaningful change. You understand your needs and your community better than anyone—so take the ideas here and make them your own!

This is a living document
Great design is responsive—to the moment and to this movement. The principles and design choices in this guide represent our current best practices, but our system will continue to be updated.

Design builds trust
Great design helps communicate messages, tell stories, and can directly impact our ability to inspire and drive action. Design isn’t about making things “pretty”—it’s about effectively conveying ideas and information in a resonant, accessible way. Consistent design is a key to creating a trustworthy brand.

We’re building this together
If you have questions, concerns, or great ideas to share, we want to hear from you! Email design@swingleft.org or tweet using #SwingLeftDesign and let’s get a conversation going.
This is Swing Left’s primary logo, which you can use in social media graphics, flyers, signage, and more! The logo is most legible when you keep the following in mind:

**Contrast between the logo and the background**
On dark, simple backgrounds (top left) the logo can be used in either full-color or in 1-color white. On red (bottom left) there’s not enough contrast between the red “Swing” and the background, so it should be used in white.

**Space between the logo and other content**
Give the logo room to breathe. Make sure the area around the logo is clear of competing text and visuals.

**Alignment within the composition**
In most cases—like in a graphic for Twitter, or on a flyer for an event—the logo should typically reside in the corner or on the edge of a composition. Use the logo to help define the margins of your design (the space between the edge of a composition and where the content begins.) To help with readability, these margins should be generous and even all around your document.
**Margin**

Make sure there’s space between the edge of a composition and where the content begins.

The margin at the top, bottom, left, and right are all equal. Content should stop at the dotted lines.

**Alignment**

Notice that the Swing Left logo has a swoop at the top of the “i” that sits above most of the letters, and part of a “g” that goes below. When aligning the logo, ignore these parts! The bottoms of the flat, lowercase letters should touch the edge of the margin.
Swing Left’s primary typefaces are Bitter and Open Sans—
they’re open source, built into Google Docs, and free to
download and use.

Swing Left uses Good Pro in a heavy, condensed style for
big, bold headlines—particularly when space is limited—and
Fineday, a whimsical script, as an accent in small amounts.

**Two typefaces, a lot of variety**
Bitter and Open Sans both come in a variety of weights.
You can use font weight, size, capitalization, and letter spacing
to change emphasis and visual heft of pieces of copy.

**Keep it readable**
Sometimes designs require typefaces that are more
distinct or expressive—like when you’re hosting a themed
event, or trying to convey a certain emotion in your design
through type. It’s OK to experiment with other fonts,
but try not to use more than three per design and, most
importantly, remember that readability is always the most
important factor in choosing a typeface.
COLOR

Color can help increase contrast and hierarchy in a design. Warm colors like red and yellow are dominant—they come forward in a design and the eye is drawn to them. Cool colors, like blue, are recessive—they often fade backward, causing other colors to appear more prominent.

OK, THERE IS ONE RULE
Though these colors are chosen to work well together in a variety of combinations, you should avoid putting light blue directly on top of red, and vice versa. When these colors touch they create a “vibrating” effect that can make some people feel sick!

WHICH COLOR TYPE TO USE
HEX: Web color
RGB: Digital-only designs
CMYK: 4-color print designs
PMS: Offset printing & merch
IMAGERY

Images of places and people can help give context to your designs and convey your organizing work in a relatable way. You should try to use your own photos whenever possible, but if you need to use others’ photos, remember:

**Creative Commons & Public Domain**
Most images online are not free to use. Make sure you’re only choosing images licensed under Creative Commons or that are in the Public Domain. Be sure to include proper attributions in your design.

[Learn about Creative Commons](#)

**Free stock photos**
Free stock photos can make excellent background images, but should be used sparingly.

[Find stock photos at unsplash.com](#)
**FULL COLOR**
If the photo is the most important part of your design, consider using it in full color. Be mindful of placing text, other visuals, and the Swing Left logo over busy, colorful photos, as these additional elements will be much harder to read.

**COLOR SCREEN**
A color screen makes an image 1 color—where deep blacks are the color you choose, and lighter colors become lighter tints of that color all the way to white (no tint.) These images are still high contrast, so be careful with additional elements.

**OVERLAY**
Overlaying a semi-transparent photo on a color reduces contrast and makes an image recede in the composition. This technique is ideal for background images in designs where you have a lot of text that needs to be more dominant.
Let’s make things from all this stuff.

SOME STANDARD SIZES

Now that you have the basic building blocks for Swing Left-branded designs, you can start making all the things you need! Here are some common sizes and formats:

**PRINT (SAVE AS PDF)**
- 8.5x11 doc
- 11x17 poster
- 5x7 postcard

**DIGITAL (SAVE AS PNG)**
- 1920x1080 video
- 1080x1920 Instagram story
- 1000x560 twitter graphic
- 1200x628 FB ad/meta/share card image

Find templates
Check out the Swing Left brand in action.

FOLLOW ONLINE

The best way to see the Swing Left brand in action is to join the conversation online on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

You can find plenty of inspiration and ideas on the @SwingLeft national social media accounts, and be sure to follow other local Swing Left groups who are taking these guidelines and making them their own.

Follow on Twitter

Like on Facebook

Follow on Instagram