# Let Me Illustrate My Point: Choosing and Using Clip Art

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**T**hink back to the last time you bought something that needed assembly. Likely the instructions included drawings or illustrations to help you understand what the words were saying. In fact, the drawings may have been all you needed to complete the assembly. This is the power of illustrations that accompany what we read. Our comprehension rises dramatically when we also have something to look at.

When designing a brochure or flyer for your company, or when creating a newsletter, you can use this fact to your advantage by including clip art within the body of the copy. In graphic design, the term clip art refers to a broad category of non-photographic images that can be used to illustrate text. The name comes from the way images originally were packaged – bound in a book from which users could cut out (or clip) artwork to place in layouts. When desktop publishing replaced manual layout, users stopped clipping and began scanning the images. Now clip art books have been replaced by digital compilations available on CDs or even downloaded from web sites.

## About clip art
Like original artwork, clip art comes in many styles and is often arranged into a collection of art on one subject or topic. Common subjects are holidays, food, business images, animals, plants, and people. Clip art can also include symbols and visual elements such as dingbats, horizontal lines, bullets, and frames.
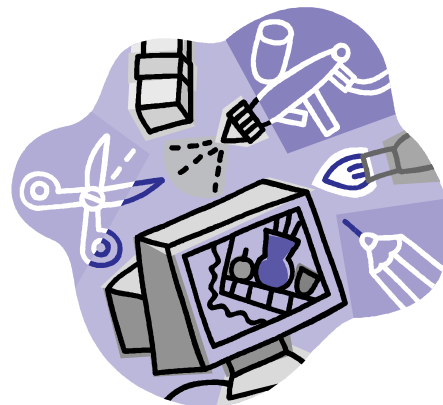
Clip art is available in a variety of image file formats including EPS (Encapsulated Postscript), TIFF (Tagged Image File Format), JPEG (Joint Photographic Experts Group), GIF (Graphics Interchange Format), WMF (Windows Metafile) and PNG (Portable Network Graphics). Some of these formats (EPS, TIFF, some JPG) are suitable for print; others (JPG, GIF, PNG) are for web design. Still others (WMF) are for use in specific software programs (Microsoft Word or PowerPoint). Clip art comes in both bitmap and vector formats.

## Ownership of clip art
To safely use clip art without copyright infringement, it is important to understand the difference between clip art that is in the public domain and clip art that is owned by someone. Here are the basics:

All intellectual property (writing, images, illustrations, photographs, etc.) belongs to the person who created it, and that person may impose conditions or terms of usage on anyone else who wants to use the intellectual property.

Failure to honor the terms of usage is a violation of the intellectual property owner's rights.

After a certain amount of time, intellectual property passes into the public domain. A work in the public domain is a creative work that is not protected by copyright and which may be freely used by anyone. There are several reasons why a creative work is not covered by copyright, including:

- the term of copyright for the work has expired
- the author failed to satisfy statutory formalities to perfect the copyright
- the work is a product of the U.S. Government.

Anything published before 1923 is now in the public domain. Unpublished works created before 1979 began to pass into the public domain on December 31, 2003. The absence of a copyright notice on works published before March 1, 1989 puts them in the public domain (with some exceptions). Once an image has passed into the public domain, there are no restrictions on its use. You can make changes, add color, resize, even resell the image.

Be aware that most clip art is not in the public domain. There is a common misconception that images available for free on web sites are in the public domain. This is not so. Often free clip art on the web has terms of use stated somewhere on the site. Images scanned from sources such as magazines, books, greeting cards, coloring books, etc. are copyrighted and cannot be used without written permission. Most cartoon characters (Disney characters, for example) are copyrighted.

Do not assume that an image is in the public domain because it does not have a copyright symbol © or has not been registered with the U.S. Copyright Office. In fact, the Copyright Act of 1976 eliminated this requirement (though legal registration does benefit the copyright owner if there is an infringement). Copyright is established when an original work is created, composed, or written and fixed to a tangible medium such as paper, canvas, recording, hard drive, film, etc.

*"Do not assume that an image is in the public domain because it does not have a copyright symbol..."*

*"You'll also want a variety of types of images..."*

## Sources for clip art

There are many collections of clip art offered for free on web sites. An easy way to find these is to use a web browser, specifying the subject of interest. Be sure to search the site for the stated terms of use. It is also prudent to e-mail the Webmaster for permission to use the individual images you are downloading, then print and file the response.

Commercial clip art collections, often including royalty-free illustrations, are also available on the web. Some vendors offer individual images; most have entire collections for sale; others offer a subscription service. There are general collections and also specific categories such as children, religion, or Americana.

Key points to consider when choosing a collection are style, variety, and format. You may develop preferences over time, but initially look for a wide range of styles such as modern, retro, or cartoon. You'll also want a variety of types of images such as food, people, and shapes. Here are some sites you can try:

http://creative.gettyimages.com/photodisc (Photodisc, Getty Images and Artville)

www.dgusa.com (Dynamic Graphics)

www.eyewire.com (The Image Club)

www.ronandjoe.com (Art Parts)

www.lifeart.com (health and medical)

www.onemileup.com (military and aviation)

www.novadevelopment.com (Art Explosion)

www.hemera.com (Big Box of Art series)

www.clipart.com (subscription service)

## File formats for images

When you are selecting the images, pay attention to the file format and match the format to the intended use. For example, if you are adding clip art to a brochure that we will print for you, select an image in TIFF or EPS format. This is especially important if we will be printing in two colors or in full color, since we will need to make separate press plates for each color and some file formats do not support color separations.

**Q.** *If I purchase a clip art image or collection, are there any restrictions on its use?*

**A.** Yes. Any image not in the public domain will have terms of use specified by the copyright holder. A common restriction on use is that an image cannot be shared with others or resold by you. The restriction against resale means that you cannot put together a collection of clip art you have purchased from one or more vendors and offer it for sale. It also means that you cannot use an image on a product for resale such as a t-shirt or coffee mug.

Your agreement to honor the terms of use is covered by a license agreement – the contract between you and the copyright holder. Use of clip art images in printed material such as ads, brochures, newsletters, and flyers is normally covered by the license agreement. But if you wish to incorporate an image into a product for resale, you may have to obtain additional usage rights from the copyright holder.

*"...terms of use is covered by license agreement..."*

# Disguising A Clip Art Image

One disadvantage to clip art is its ready availability and the consequent risk that others may be using the same images you have selected. To disguise a clip art image, learn to view it as the sum of its parts, then alter the parts to create something new.

- **Make a change**. Study the clip art carefully, separating it into its constituent images. You may find one that can stand on its own or be used as a theme throughout a document. Or create a new image by combining two or more images. Cropping, rotation, and flopping are other ways you can alter an image.

- **Be creative with color.** Image editing tools such as Adobe Illustrator make it possible to add color to black and white, either overall or selectively. You can also change the color of colored images, either to match a color palette or to add interest by using unexpected colors for the image.

- **Crop in unexpected ways.** Draw attention to the key element of an image by cropping unexpectedly. Cut the image vertically down the middle; the human mind will complete the missing elements but will focus on the part of the image you have retained. Or crop most of the image away so that the reader has to stop to determine what the image is.

- **Use special effects.** Using special effects programs, you can distort the clip art image. Elongating, changing the angle, and adding edge effects are just a few possibilities.

- **Think geometrically.** Symbols, shapes, borders, rules, and frames can be the building blocks of a custom image. Try different combinations or overlapping in a collage effect.

- **Cut the clip art clutter.** Clip art is abundant and fun to use and adds interest to copy. Yet too many pictures on a page make it hard for the reader to concentrate on what the document says. Use clip art in moderation and with purpose to support your text or illustrate a point.

There are no specific rules on how many images on a page is too many. But unless you're creating a product catalog or a yearbook, if there are more than three or four images the page may have too much clip art.

*"This is particularly useful for direct mail marketing..."*

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Please Route to the Printing Buyer

# Create A Logo In Four Steps

**I**DEA **C**ORNER

*"It is also acceptable to use more than one typeface in the logo..."*

**A** creative solution to designing a logo for your business is to construct it from clip art. Following a simple four-step process will allow you to produce several possible choices.

**Step 1: Decide on an idea.**
Many businesses have images with which they are commonly associated. A construction company might be represented by heavy equipment or building materials and a real estate firm by homes or buildings. But if you are seeking something more unique, think creatively. Is there a special feature of your business that can be illustrated? Do you have a slogan or catch phrase that can be represented by an image? Are you located in an area that has distinct geography? Does the name of your business suggest an image?

**Step 2: Select the illustration.**
Every picture tells a story. Look carefully at images to see what they bring to mind. You will probably notice that the style of an illustration greatly influences your reaction. For example, a cartoon of a wolf tells a different story than a realistic illustration.

**Step 3: Select a type style.**
For a logo, you might consider using a display typeface – a face you can use in point sizes larger than standard body text that still looks graceful and balanced. This design feature means you can enlarge the name of your company to achieve a bold-looking logo. It is also acceptable to use more than one typeface in the logo, particularly if the name of the company includes abbreviations like "inc." or "co."

**Step 4: Put it all together.**
Finalizing the design requires experimentation. Try several different ways of assembling the illustration and type, and don't forget to try at least one unconventional layout. Also experiment by reducing and enlarging the individual illustration and type elements.