



If you have to design artwork for t-shirts, here are some tips that will help you produce amazing designs.

1 DISCUSS WITH THE CLIENT THE DESIRED DESIGN.

Ask about the overall feel, such as funny, bold, masculine, etc., as well as what they do not want (including images, colors, fonts, etc.).

2 PICK THE SHIRT.

Think about the texture, thickness, weave, material, dyes and other specifics, which will all impact the production for the shirt.

TIP

If you need white in the design on a dark shirt, you are going to need an extra white plate too. This is "wet white" is usually the last color to print before the shirt is removed from the press and sent down the dryer.



3 REVIEW THE PALETTE AND CHOOSE THE RIGHT COLOR.

The most common colors to print on are white, black and gray; followed by red, royal and navy but remember that the darker the shirt, the more expensive it will be to print.

TIP

The more complicated you make the design with adding ink colors and print locations (front, back, sleeve, etc.) the more expensive it's going to be to produce.



4 CONTACT YOUR PRINTER.

Find out which software you should use for files (the three most commonly used are Illustrator, CorelDraw and Photoshop).

5 ASK FOR THE MAXIMUM IMPRINT DIMENSIONS.

This may vary from printer to printer as they may be using different equipment.

TIP

Art that has a 12-inch width can be used for adults and all the way down to youths ages 10-12 with the same set of screens.



6 DECIDE THE NUMBER OF LOCATIONS FOR GRAPHICS.

Each location requires screens, ink, set-up time, production time and labor and shops typically charge \$20 to \$30 per screen.

TIP

Get the shirt quote before working up the artwork so you know the boundaries and keep production costs lower.

If you add up all the colors (including the under-base plate and the wet white plate, if needed), you get the total number of screens used for a print location and this is how you will be charged by the printer.



7 CREATE ROUGH SKETCHES.

These quick and messy sketches will help you work out the design elements first.

8 FINE TUNE THE DESIGN:

- ✓ Check spelling
- ✓ Kern fonts
- ✓ Use consistent outline thicknesses and elements
- ✓ Make sure design elements relate to each other well
- ✓ Remove design elements that are not essential to the design
- ✓ Embrace white space



TIP

Avoid basic fonts (Comic Sans, Bradley Hand, Brush Script, Papyrus, Courier, Algerian, Hobo, Mistral, Curlz MT, Kristen ITC, Vivaldi, Viner Hand ITC, & Souvenir)



9 DON'T BE AFRAID TO FAIL!