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Find the Art Career You've Always Wanted - Design Programs Articles



An Illustration Nation: Find the Art Career You've Always Wanted!

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The Children's Book Council (CBC) estimates about 5,000 children's books are produced annually. The children book market is only one of the niches for illustration jobs. If you're interested in a career in illustration, think first of school - The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) says that it may be "very difficult to become skilled enough to make a living without some training" in illustration.

Learn Illustration? How? Where?

First off, you should determine whether you're dedicated and talented enough to begin an illustration school. The BLS estimates that "competition will be keen" through 2012. Even though the job market for illustration will grow as fast as average, there will be more individuals looking for the open jobs.

If you're ready for an illustration career, then your best starting point is to enroll in a bachelor's program, either in art practice, illustration itself, or even graphic design; yes, you heard right - [graphic design](#). Illustration now involves the use of computers, especially for salaried full-time illustration jobs. A [Bachelor's degree in Graphic Design](#) can help you learn the technology aspect of illustration.

Lucky for you, Design Programs has a [full listing of illustration schools](#). Make sure the school you're exploring is accredited. *The Design Programs illustration school listing* contains only accredited institutions.

Which Skills and Talent Should I Have for Illustration School?

A lot of hard work and skill goes into a comic book, feature animated film, or cartoon. then illustration may be the perfect career for you. If you were an art studio junkie in high school, then chances are you may want to go down the path of illustration.

Illustration is a varied field. There is cartoon illustration, comic book illustration, courtroom sketching, and digital illustration and art. Each specialized illustration job may have its own specialized degree, such as medical illustration. The Association of Medical Illustrators offers this observation: "The majority of medical illustrators in the profession have a master's degree from an accredited graduate program in medical illustration." Attending a medical illustration school should be a prerequisite in your mind to entering this type of illustration career, but be sure to bring you're A-game. Medical illustration has only five accredited programs in the U.S., and each school has just 3 to 12 students in each program.

The Portfolio: The Be-all and End-all of an Illustration Career

The Children's Book Council (CBC) says that an individual's illustration portfolio "should present a sampling of an artist's work, including a range of work in both subject matter and mediums."

"It should reveal an illustrator's individual strengths and not just an ability to conform to some perception of what a publisher will like."

Your portfolio demonstrates, not only your best work, but it should also span a wide range of subjects. It should show the caliber of the clients you've worked for - whether freelance or full-time - and the professionalism of your work. Displaying your illustration portfolio on the web is not only the preferred

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format for most prospective employers, but is among the most common formats for the portfolio of illustration artists.

Even if you have not yet begun an illustration career or school, you should gather and create images for your portfolio. Your portfolio will help set you apart from other illustration school applicants and increase your chances of being accepted.

About the Author

Jonathan Haeber is a terrible illustrator, so he tries his best to make up for his inadequacies by being an avid photographer. Perhaps in another world, in which his drawing hand had better fortune, he would have succeeded in illustration. Instead, he writes occasionally about Art and Environment. His articles have appeared in a number of magazines and newspapers and he has served as a staff photographer for a California daily. He holds a dual bachelor's in English and Geography from the University of California.

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