2026 ADOBE INDESIGN FUNDAMENTALS

Welcome to Adobe InDesign 2026. Learn essential beginner-to-intermediate graphic design and layout techniques used to create clean, professional documents. Ready to take the next step in your skillset?

Lesson 1: Getting Started with Adobe InDesign

Learn the basics of navigating the InDesign interface & understanding how professional layout documents are built.

- Lecture: Raster versus Vector in layout workflows
- Lecture: Handling placed media and linked assets
- Lecture: Artificial Intelligence features currently available
- Creating & managing new docs, presets, workspaces
- Interface essentials and key panels
- Anatomy of frames, placeholder text, & Properties panel

Lesson 2: Working with Text and Images

Combine formatted text and images into cohesive layouts using modern InDesign workflows.

- Creating professional-looking text quickly
- How frames and images interact and update dynamically
- Working with swatches & color extraction to build themes
- Exporting clean, presentation-ready documents efficiently

Lesson 3: Focusing on Raster Images

Understand image formats, resolution, and quality management inside InDesign.

- Common image formats used in layout projects
- Resizing, cropping, and positioning images correctly
- Using the Properties panel for image control
- Understanding fitting options and best practices

Lesson 4: Fundamental Layout Workflows

Learn core layout techniques used in real-world publishing projects.

- Typography fundamentals in InDesign and Adobe Fonts
- Creating and managing text columns
- Styling pull quotes, captions, and credits
- Creative typography techniques without breaking structure

Lesson 5: Pages and Spreads Essentials

Master page management and document structure.

- Pages versus Parent Pages and their modern usage
- Navigating and customizing the Pages panel
- Working with facing-page spreads
- Creating automatic page numbers
- Working with layer effects and object effects

Lesson 6: Packaging and Export

Prepare documents for delivery, archiving, and collaboration.

- Export options available in InDesign
- Creating professional PDF exports
- Templates, IDML workflows, and backward compatibility
- Packaging projects for transfer or long-term storage

Lesson 7: Graphic Design in InDesign 101

Create and manage graphic elements directly inside InDesign.

- InDesign versus Illustrator for vector artwork
- Creating and editing basic shapes
- Combining shapes with effects
- Buttons, lower thirds, and custom layout elements

Lesson 8: Custom Creative Framing + Styles

Build reusable design systems using styles and custom framing.

- Custom frame and shape creation
- Advanced typographic features such as fractions and contextual alternates
- Paragraph, Character, and Object Styles as workflow foundations
- Improving layout precision and alignment

Lesson 9: Working with Complex Vector Images

Manage detailed vector artwork inside layout documents.

- Working with layered vector maps and diagrams
- Feathering edges and soft selections
- Expanding and contracting selections
- Foundations of Select Subject and masking workflows

Lesson 10: 2-Sided Designs + Stylizing Tricks

Design multi-sided documents with consistency.

- Business cards, postcards, and folded layouts
- Generated content features inside InDesign
- Styling titles with blend and overlay techniques
- Borrowing and adapting stock design elements
- Reliable sources for free and licensed assets

Lesson 11: Multi-panel Project Part I

Plan and build multi-panel documents with consistent branding.

- Project planning for brochures and fold-outs
- Color themes using CMYK and Spot Color strategies
- Creating simple brand elements and logos
- Working panel by panel using shared styles
- Managing linked vector updates efficiently

Lesson 12: Multi-panel Project Part II

Advance multi-panel layouts with automation and metadata.

- Drop caps and advanced paragraph styling
- Text blurbs and next-style workflows
- Batch image handling techniques
- Working with slugs for internal and external use
- Embedding authoring and copyright metadata

Lesson 13: Working with Color & Color Settings

Control color accurately across print and digital projects.

- Primary color modes used in design workflows
- Color considerations for different file formats
- Creating custom swatches, patterns, and gradients
- Importing and exporting color presets

Lesson 14: The Perfect Text + Columns & Grids*

Refine alignment and structure for professional layouts.

- Creating polished text and titles
- Advanced paragraph alignment and grid usage
- Managing complex multi-column layouts
- Working with Text Wrap and layered artwork

Lesson 15: Multi-Level Layouts and Text Flow

Design complex publications with flowing content.

- Creating and saving layout templates
- Managing layered content across long documents
- Inline imagery and anchored objects
- Handling linked content and troubleshooting updates

Lesson 16: Object Styles + Dynamic Captions

Maintain consistency using styles and metadata.

- Using metadata for batch workflows
- Understanding Object Styles and their advantages
- Creating Object Styles from existing objects
- Applying and editing Object Styles
- Static versus Dynamic Captions
- Managing caption updates and metadata changes

Lesson 17: Creative Design + Batch Techniques

Speed up production using grouping and batch edits.

- Working with grouped artwork
- Troubleshooting loaded cursor behavior
- Editing grouped content from Parents to Pages
- Managing layer priority and targeting

Lesson 18: A Quick Overview of A.I. in InDesign*

Understand how AI currently integrates into InDesign workflows.

- Features considered AI-assisted in InDesign
- Working with Adobe Firefly and Adobe Express
- Firefly content workflows into InDesign
- Practical AI-assisted layout and production use cases
- Where AI stops and human control matters

This outline represents a general overview of topics covered in class. Lesson order and content may be adjusted or combined as needed to create the most effective learning experience. Due to frequent application updates, provided books and materials may not always reflect every feature discussed in class, including Adobe's own documentation, which can occasionally lag behind current versions. We will always strive to provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available. Students are encouraged to take notes during class and to take full advantage of Training Connection's audit option, which allows you to retake the course at your convenience.