

DESIGN FOR ORGANIZING

Visuals are powerful. Using visuals in your campaign, whether that means lawn signs or graphics for social media, boosts your message. People respond to visuals, social media algorithms favor posts with images attached, and even if people don't read your text they will look at your photos. That means your visuals need to tell your story and move people to action.

Like everything else in your campaign, you need to **think about your goal** for your visuals and the audience you're trying to reach. First, think about the people you're trying to reach and what message will resonate with them. Second, think about what you want those people to do. Your answers to these questions should guide your design.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- **Message.** To have a good visual, you need to start with a good message. Visuals should complement your message. Have a compelling, consistent, and concise message that controls the frame of the issue. (Need help developing a message? [Get help now.](#))
- **Call to Action.** Make sure you have a goal for what you want people to do—make sure your visual communicates that call to action. Have one call to action per visual, and make it clear.
- **Photos.** Not every visual uses a photo, but chances are you're likely to want to use some of your own photos at some point. Get in the practice of taking good photos at your actions and events that you can use to tell your story.

FREE ONLINE DESIGN TOOL

[Canva](#) is a great online design tool for both digital and print materials. It's free to use, though some images must be purchased. Canva offers free templates for flyers, posters, social media graphics and more, and keeps templates updated with the best sizes for social media platforms. [Check it out.](#)

CORE ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

- **Make the most important information stand out.** Your call to action is likely the most important part of your visual, and you want to make it stand out. Be sure that people can clearly see what it is you want them to do. That also means you don't want your design to be cluttered—leaving empty space is a good thing.
- **Keep it simple and consistent.** Use the same colors, fonts, and types of photos to keep your visuals consistent across your campaign. Consider creating a list of what colors and fonts to use to keep your design consistent. Don't use more than two fonts in a visual.
- **Choose fonts wisely.** Be sure the font is easy to read. Avoid really small font—it's better to have less words than to have font that's too small. Sans serif fonts are best for headlines, and serif fonts are best for text blocks.
- **Use your own photos.** Close up photos, where you can see people's eyes, are often the most compelling. Take photos at your actions and events and take photos of people holding signs.

EXAMPLE: FORE RIVER RESIDENTS AGAINST THE COMPRESSOR STATION

The Fore River Residents Against the Compressor Station are a great example of consistency, using their logo as a social media icon, on lawn signs and stickers, and as signs at every protest.



EXAMPLE: PROTECT SOUTH PORTLAND

When ExxonMobil planned to reverse the Portland Pipeline, which threatened to bring oil from Canada's tar sands into their community, they organized to pass the Clear Skies Ordinance that stopped corporate oil in its tracks. They designed stickers and T-shirts for the campaign that matched the color of their logo.



EXAMPLE: SAVE FOREST LAKE

Save Forest Lake was fighting Casella, a multibillion dollar company who wanted to put a landfill in their backyard. They needed people to vote yes in a community vote to stop the project. This message clearly conveys their "no landfill" message, the action they want people to take, and where to go for more information.



EXAMPLE: NO SHARON GAS PIPELINE

No Sharon Gas Pipeline defeated a major pipeline project and then went on to work for clean energy in town. This graphic clearly conveys their message and where to go for more information.



CLEAN ENERGY NOW
NoSharonGasPipeline.org

EXAMPLE: GROWING WITHOUT GARBAGE

Growing Without Garbage was fighting a landfill expansion and they needed to build their list to pull off a community vote and find volunteers to make it happen. This graphic conveys their “stop landfill expansion” message, states clearly the action they want people to take, and has their logo at the bottom. It was shared on social media with the link to sign up.

