

BUILDING YOUR STRATEGIC PORTFOLIO

Architecture

Today, we will cover...

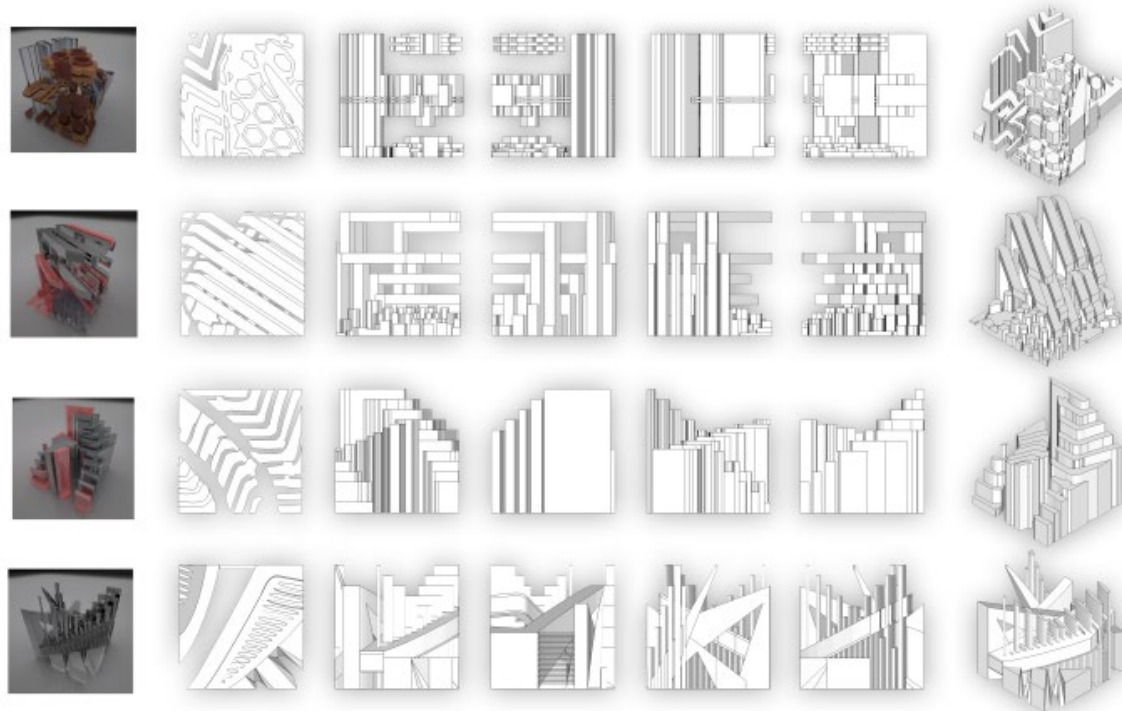
- 1** What is a professional portfolio?
- 2** Who is your audience?
- 3** Which type of professional are you?
- 4** Which format suits you better?
- 5** Which type of structure suits you better?
- 6** What should you include?
- 7** Next steps

What is a professional portfolio?

A portfolio is...

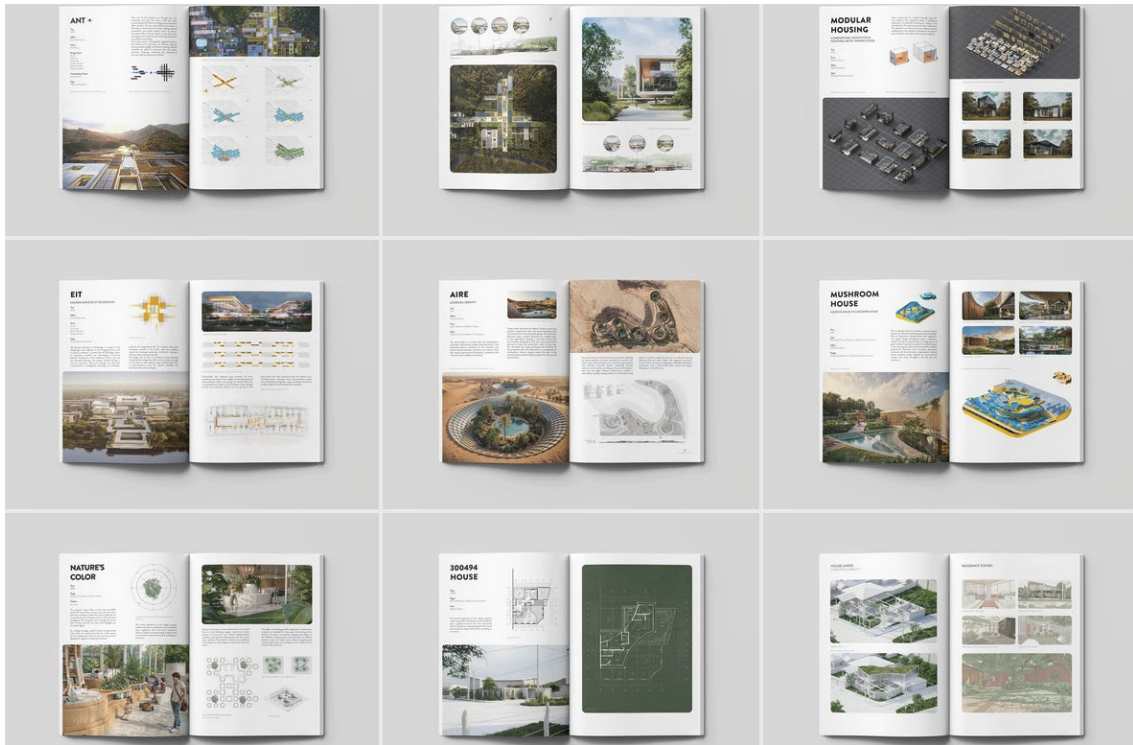
...one of the most important **marketing tools** a designer should possess.

a **timeline and record** of experience that demonstrates your skills, methods and capabilities.



Source: [Thomas at Ashcan Art, 2018](#)

What should a professional portfolio show?

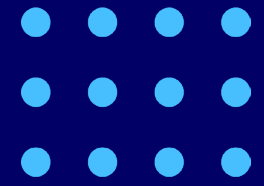


Source: [Roberto Vargas, 2026](#)

A portfolio needs to show and provide...

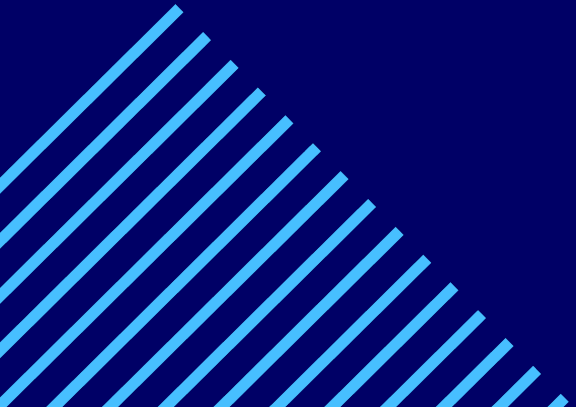
...a clear image of the range, amount and diversity of your skills, knowledge and current experience.

...proof that you are capable and have experience in different fields and with different techniques and tasks.



2

Who is the
audience?

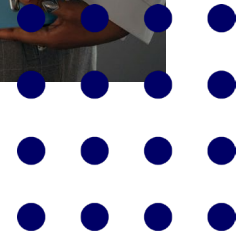


Target audience

Recruitment approach



Client approach





Recruitment approach

Do some research online...

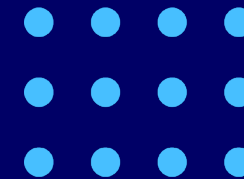
- Try to find out how the recruitment process will be and who will be reviewing your material (HR, Manager, Director, etc...)
- Show in your portfolio that you fully understand the role you are expected to perform, but also offer a fresh and innovative point of view.
- Consider the company's needs and wants, not yours

Client approach

Do some research online...

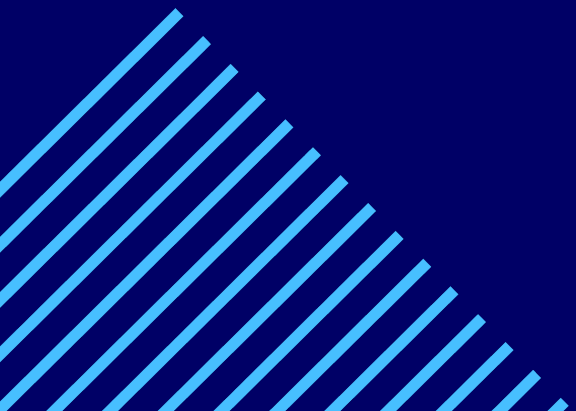
- Try to find out information about the company/client and their objectives.
- Highlight the projects that are most relevant to them and focus on those that you think can bring a new perspective to the firm.

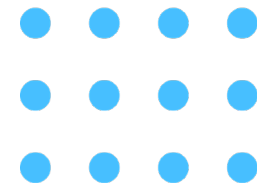




3

Which type of
professional are you?





Architecture Studios

Architecture firms assist clients on the design and construction of functional spaces. The role of an architect is to become their client's advisor, to help them define and achieve their goals.

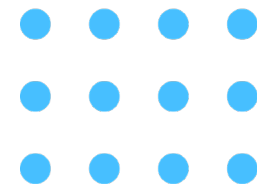
Skills

- Creativity and technical skills
- Innovation and adaptability
- Ability to work with tight deadlines
- Teamwork
- Motivation

Role Types

- Design Architect
- Technical Architect





Architecture Studios

Design



Urban
Planning



Sustainability



Restoration



Lighting
Design



Workplace
Consultancy

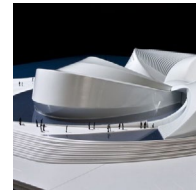


Interior
Design



Landscape
Design

Tools



Model Maker



Rendering



Research &
Development



BIM
Coordinator

Management

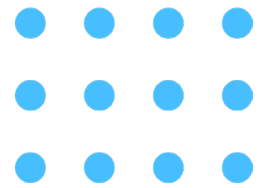


Project
Management



On-site
Supervisor

Real estate development



Real Estate Development Companies *assist their clients with the required technical advice in order to buy, build, sell or manage their portfolio of properties, that can vary in typology, scale and location.*

Skills

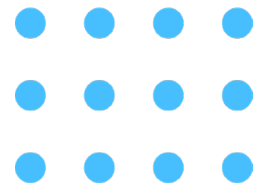
- Communication skills (both written and oral)
- Client-Orientation
- Teamwork skills
- Quantitative and analytical skills
- Market knowledge

Role Types

- Architect
- Building Technician
- Asset or Portfolio Manager
- Analyst
- RE Consultant



Corporate sector



In-house Technical

Departments *that assist their own Corporations on the design and construction of functional spaces aligned with their standards and needs.*

Skills

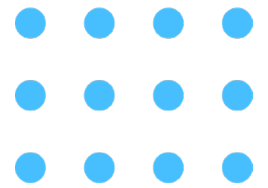
- Technical and problem-solving skills
- Innovation and adaptability
- Detail and Results-oriented
- Great communicators
- Teamwork

Role Types

- Architect
- Technical Advisor
- Space planner
- Interior Designer
- Strategic designer



Consultancy



Consulting firms *advise companies on a variety of functional issues. The role of a consultant is to become their client's advisor, to help them define and achieve their goals.*

Finance, Business and
Legal Environment



Arch. & Eng.
Environment

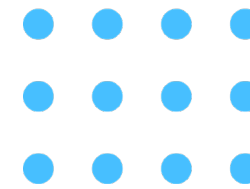


Skills

- Excellent academic records
- Reasoning and problem-solving skills
- Quantitative and analytical skills
- Great communicators
- Teamwork

Role Types

- Architect
- Technical Advisor
- Strategic designer
- Researcher
- Sustainability, Landscape, Lighting, Interior Design, Workplace consultant....



Public sector and social/cultural companies

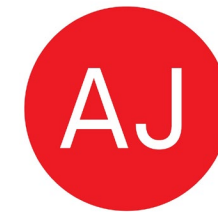
Public Sector and Social /Cultural companies look for in-house professionals that advice them on their specific needs. These type of positions are frequently for limited periods of time to cover that need, especially in the Public Sector.

Skills

- Commitment to excellence
- International Experience
- Innovation and adaptability
- Great communicators
- Languages

Role Types

- Architect
- Technical Advisor
- Strategic Designer
- Graphic Designer



ADDITIONAL CAREER PATHS

Furniture Design



Source: [Andreas Janson](#)

Product Design



Source: [Arvind Krishna Sushil](#)

Fashion Design



Source: [IE Fashion Runway Show](#)

Lighting Design



Source: [Carmenza Henao](#)

Stand Design



Source: [Sak Design](#)

Graphic Design



Source: [Liz Nikol](#)

ADDITIONAL CAREER PATHS

Virtual Reality Designer



Source: [Paper Birds](#)

Creative Direction



Source: [Lambs and Lions Berlin](#)

3D Artist



Source: [Gensler](#)

ADDITIONAL CAREER PATHS

Photographer



Source: [Luzestudio](#)

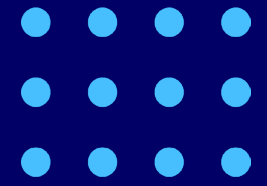
Editor & Writer



Source: Architect Magazine Middle East

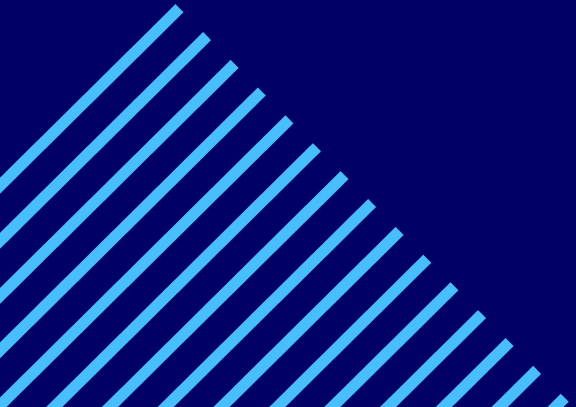
Entrepreneur

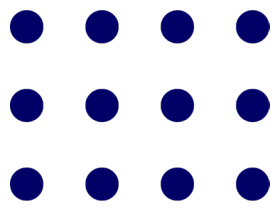




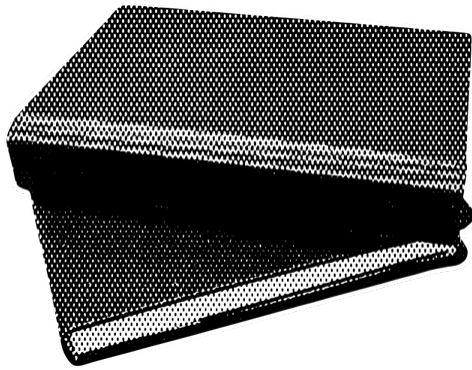
4

Which format suits
you better?





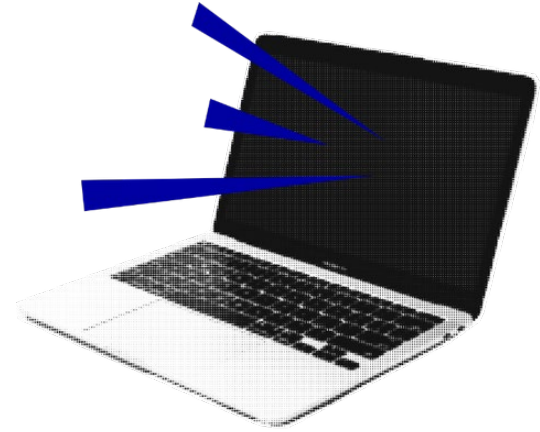
TYPES OF FORMATS



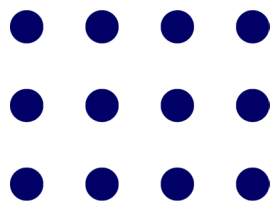
Classic



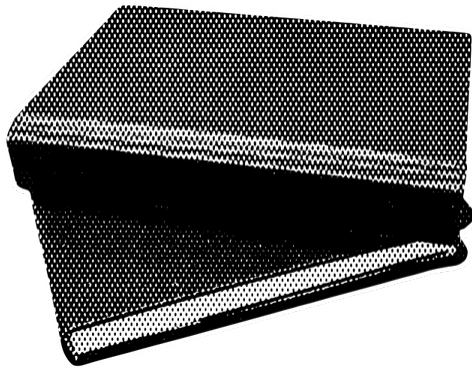
Digital



Web Based



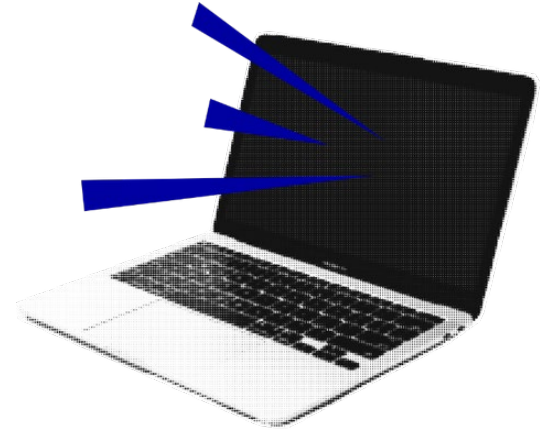
TYPES OF FORMATS



Classic



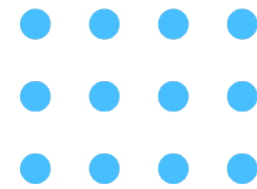
Digital



Web Based

static

dynamic



Classic version

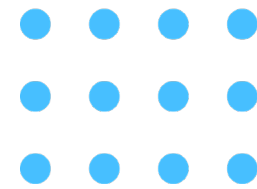
- An actual **book of various sizes** with printed examples of your work still serves a purpose in today's "digital world."
- There are several ways to present such a portfolio, from placing prints in a pre-made book with sleeves, to creating your own custom bound book.



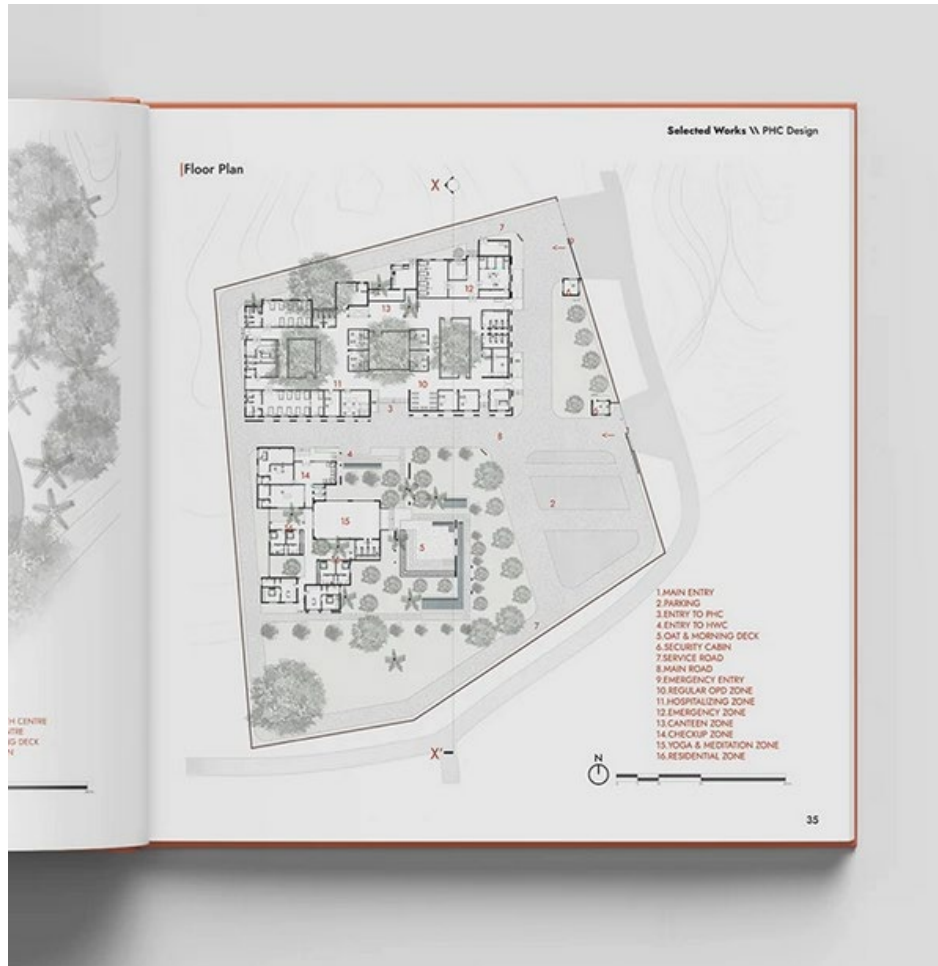
Source: [Edanur Utkan, 2022](#)



Source: [Archontia Manolakelli, 2022](#)



Classic version



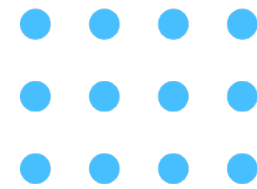
Advantages

- Shows your work in its actual, final format
- Great for showing off print design
- Can be brought to a meeting and shown without a computer

Drawbacks

- Must be delivered by mail or in-person
- If you happen to meet a potential client or employer, you are left without a portfolio

Source: [Alok Bansode, 2025](#)

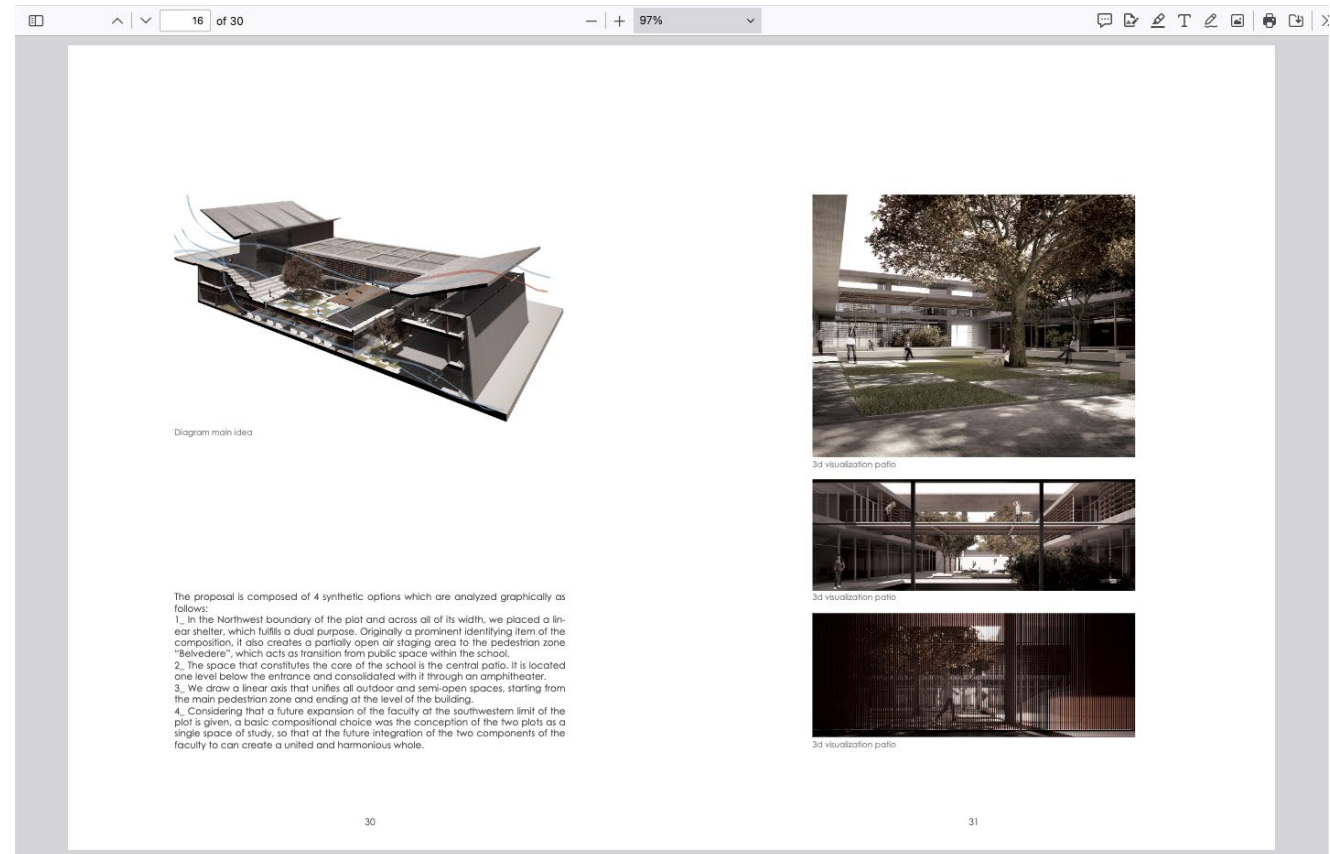


Digital version

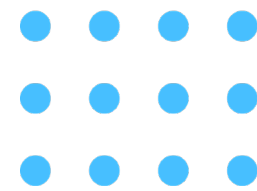
Creating a portfolio as a PDF is becoming more and more popular.

Using Acrobat, multi-page PDFs can be created from layouts created in a graphics software program (such as InDesign or Photoshop).

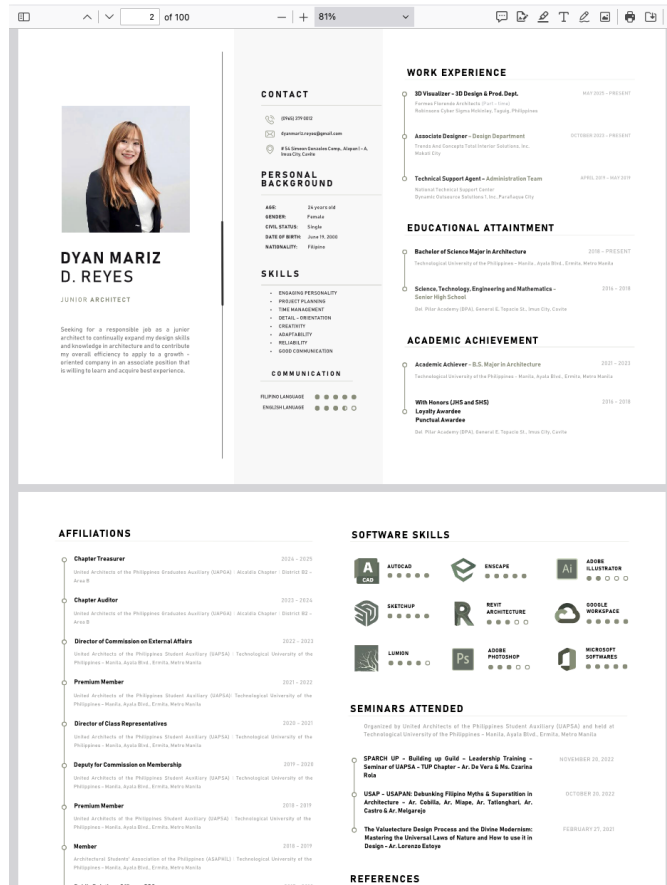
The result is a brochure-style piece that shows examples of your work along with descriptions of projects and related information.



Source: [Xirokostas Michail, 2016](#)



Digital version



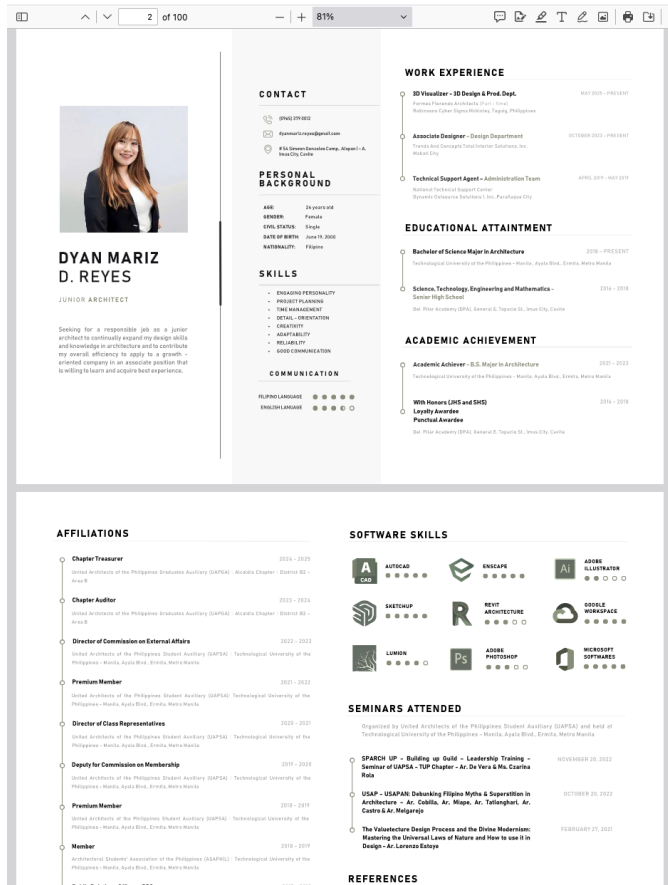
Advantages

- Easy to email
- Control over layout without having to worry about browser and web issues
- The PDF itself serves as an example of your layout and typography skills
- Can be printed with consistent results
- Relatively quick and free to create

Drawbacks

- Relies on the user to save and open the file
- Less effective for showing web design projects

Source: [Dyan Mariz, 2025](#)



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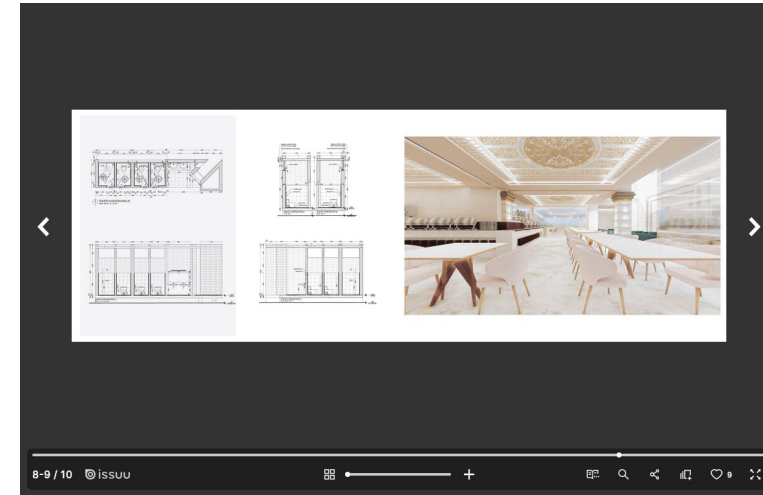
- Relies on the user to save and open the file
- Less effective for showing web design projects

Do not under any circumstances send JPEGs or PNGs, this will look extremely unprofessional!!

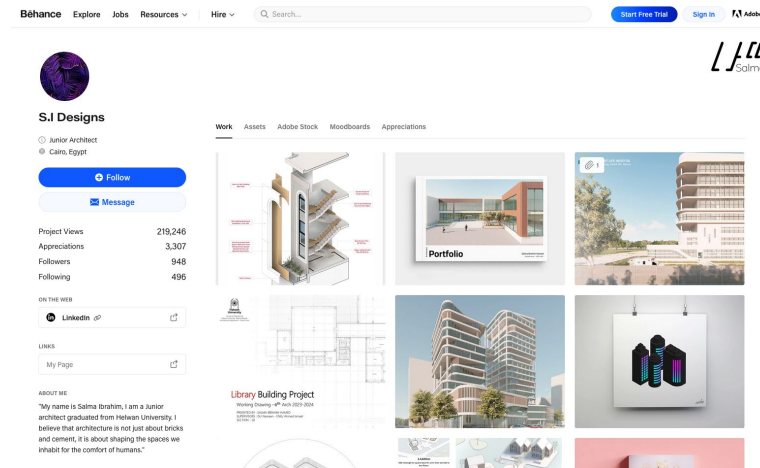
Source: Dyan Mariz, 2025

Web-based version

- A web hosted portfolio, is a digital portfolio that has been uploaded and stored onto a specific website.
- This could be a section on your own personal website or more commonly a dedicated hosting site such as Behance or issuu.

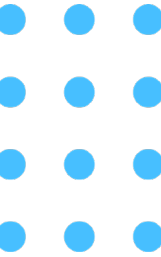


Source: [Bank Sancharee Sristy's portfolio](#), hosted on issuu



Source: [Salma Ibrahim's portfolio](#), hosted on Behance

Web-based version

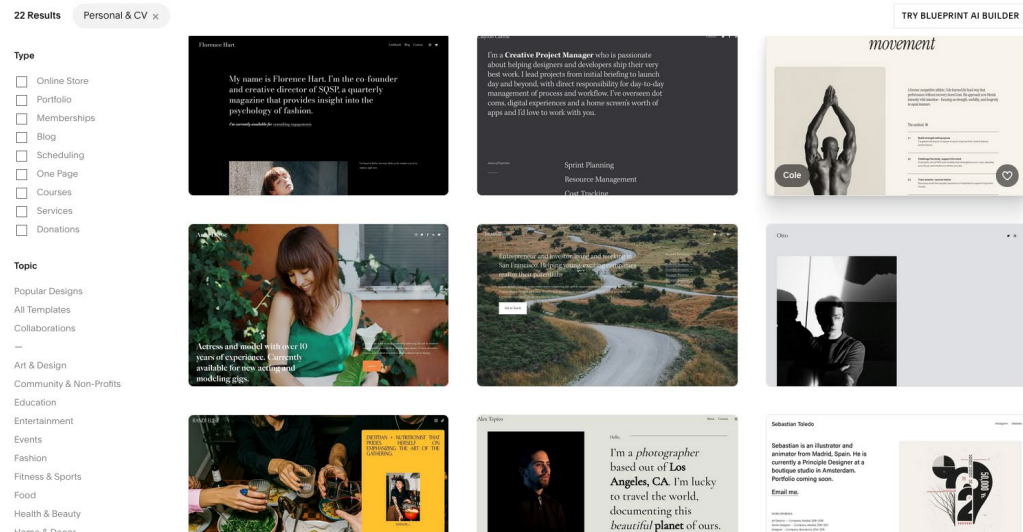


Advantages

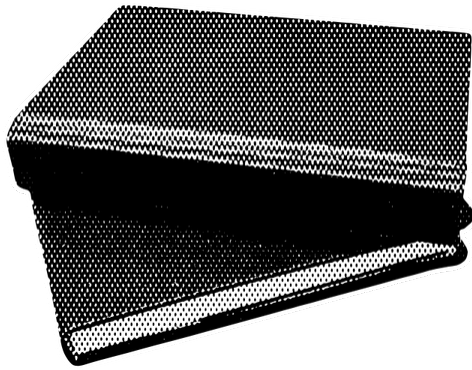
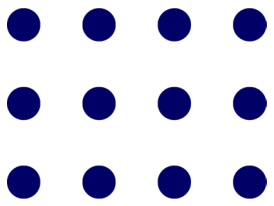
- Easy to share
- Can be updated at any time without having to send out a new document or print out a new book
- Can provide a look into your personality
- Allows for an interactive presentation of your work

Drawbacks

- The most time consuming to create
- You have to worry about it looking or behaving differently from computer to computer
- You need the technical knowledge to set it up
- Expensive to hire someone to develop it for you
- In most cases you will have to pay for a domain name and monthly web hosting



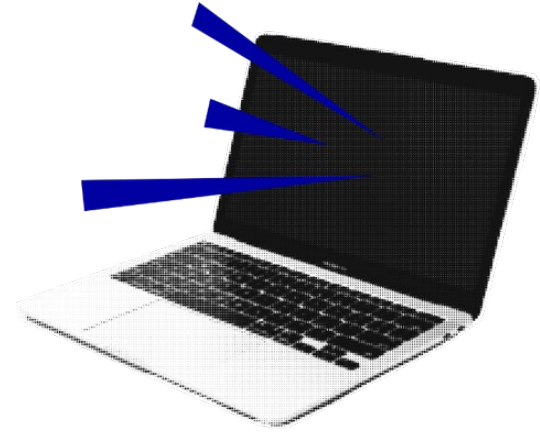
Squarespace templates for portfolio websites



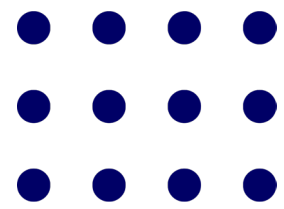
Classic



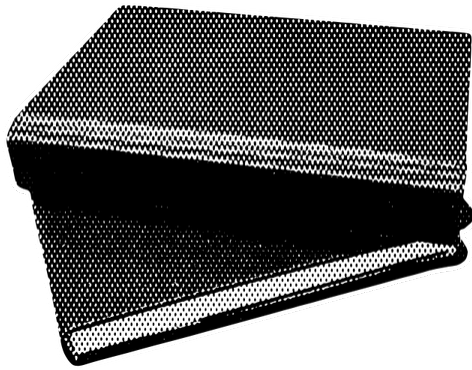
Digital



Web Based



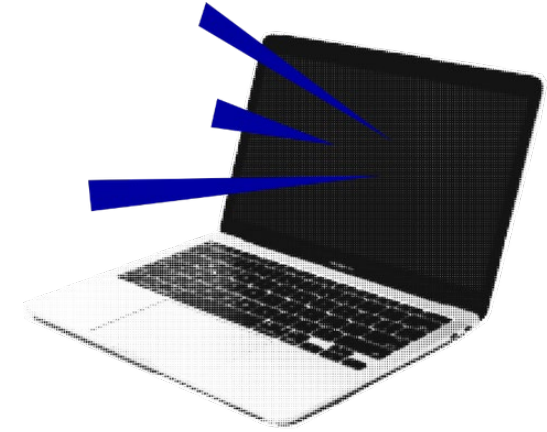
interviews



Classic



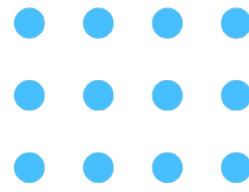
Digital



Web Based

applications

Key drivers



Size

If sending your portfolio in a PDF format, make sure that the file size is no larger than 5MB (15MB max) to enable it to be easily sent via email.

If using [WeTransfer](#) or [Dropbox](#) keep in mind that this adds an additional layer of inconvenience for the interviewer and the link to it is temporary.



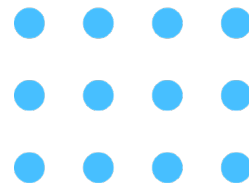
Scale

Ensure that your portfolio can be read at smaller scales, larger scales are generally fine and rarely required, but an **A3 portfolio** is very likely to be printed at A4 by the interviewer (saving paper and ink), and so must be legible for it to be successful.



Source: [Adina Rose Bauman, 2020](#)

Key drivers



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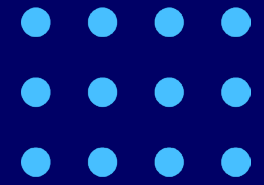
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The easier you make it for the recipient to view your work the more likely they are to engage with it ...it's not always initially based on the quality of work!!!

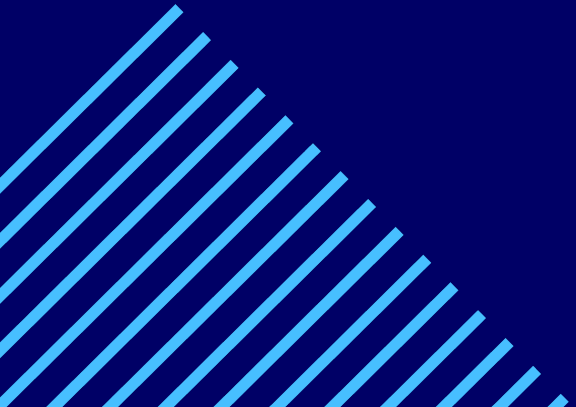


Source: [Adina Rose Bauman, 2020](#)



5

Which type of
structure?



The structure

1
Cover

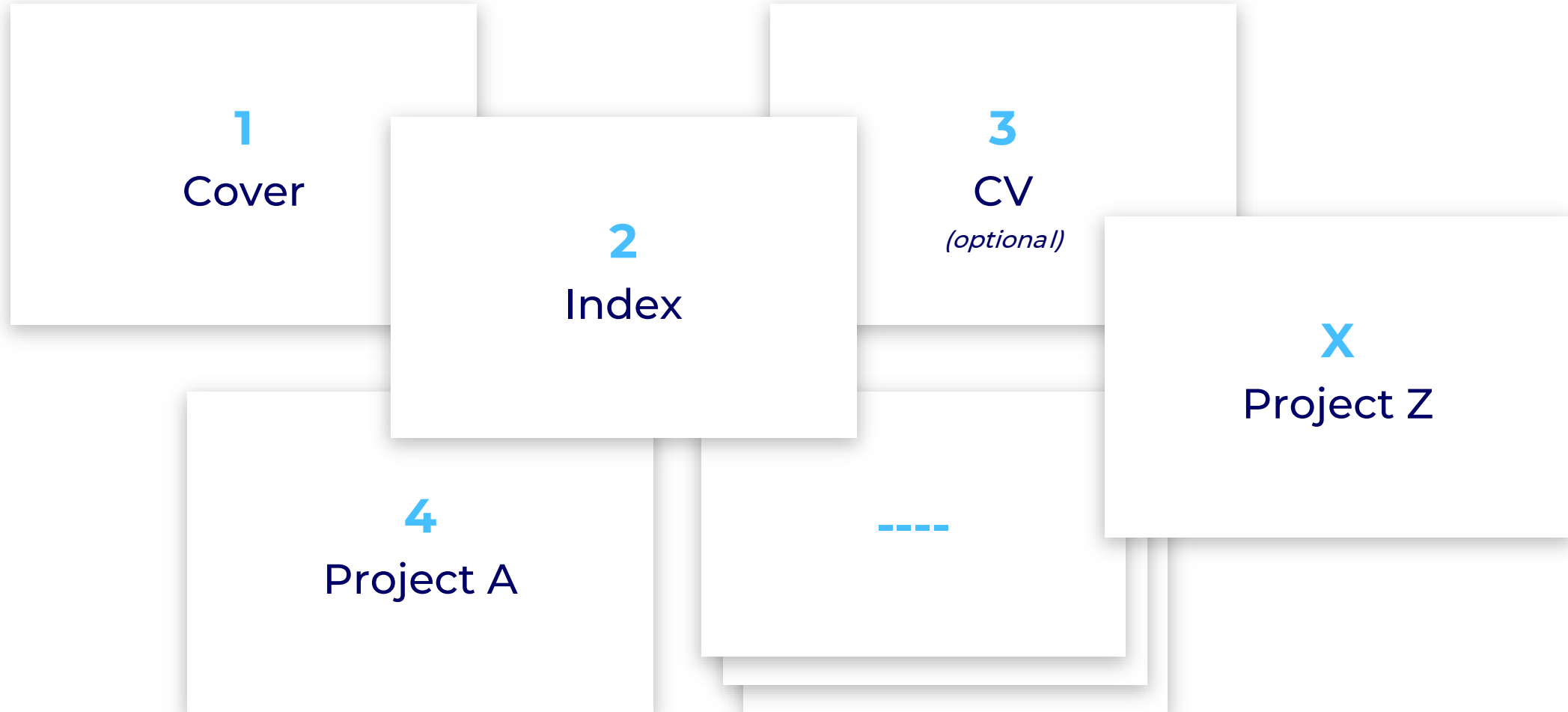
2
Index

3
CV
(optional)

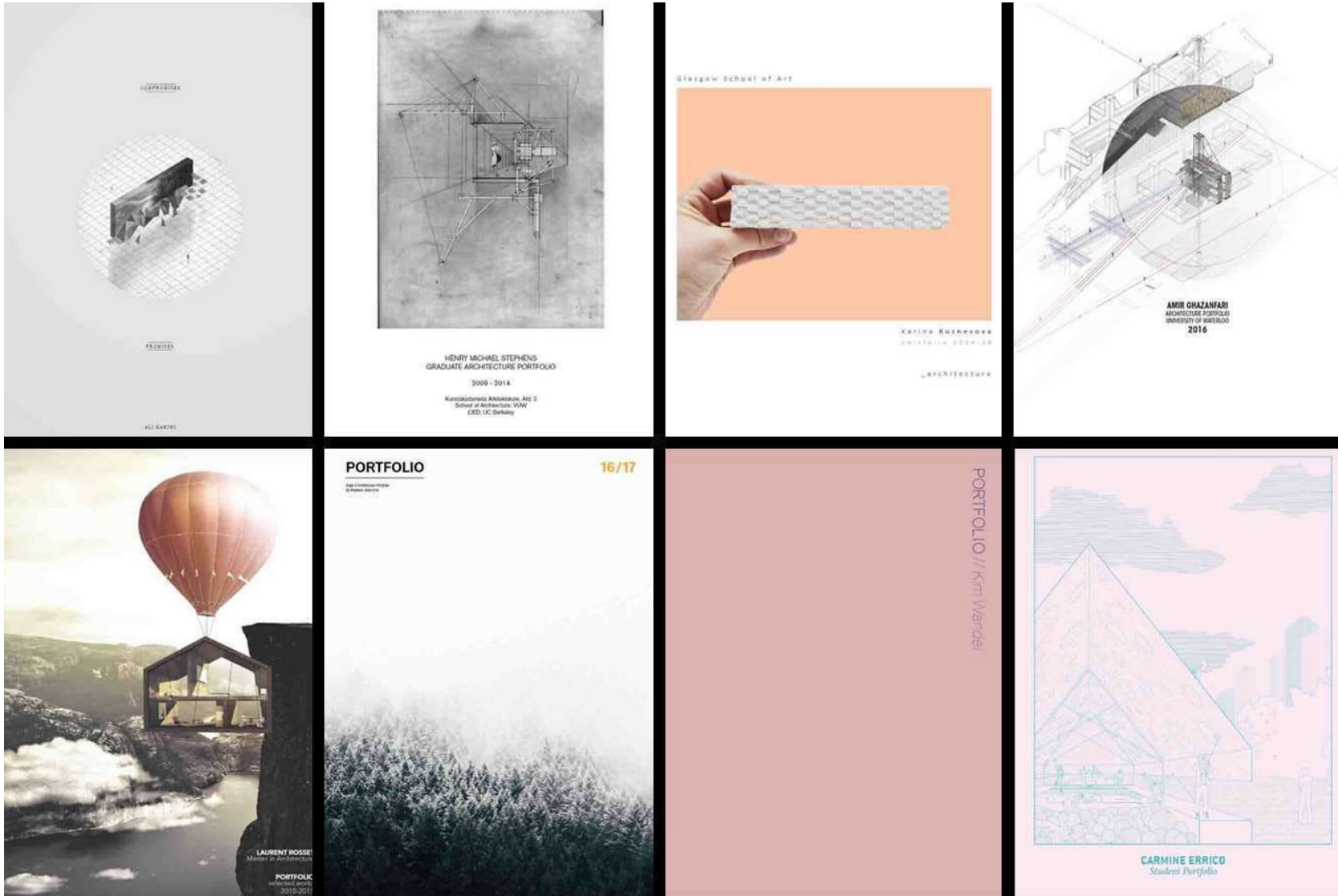
4
Project A

X
Project Z

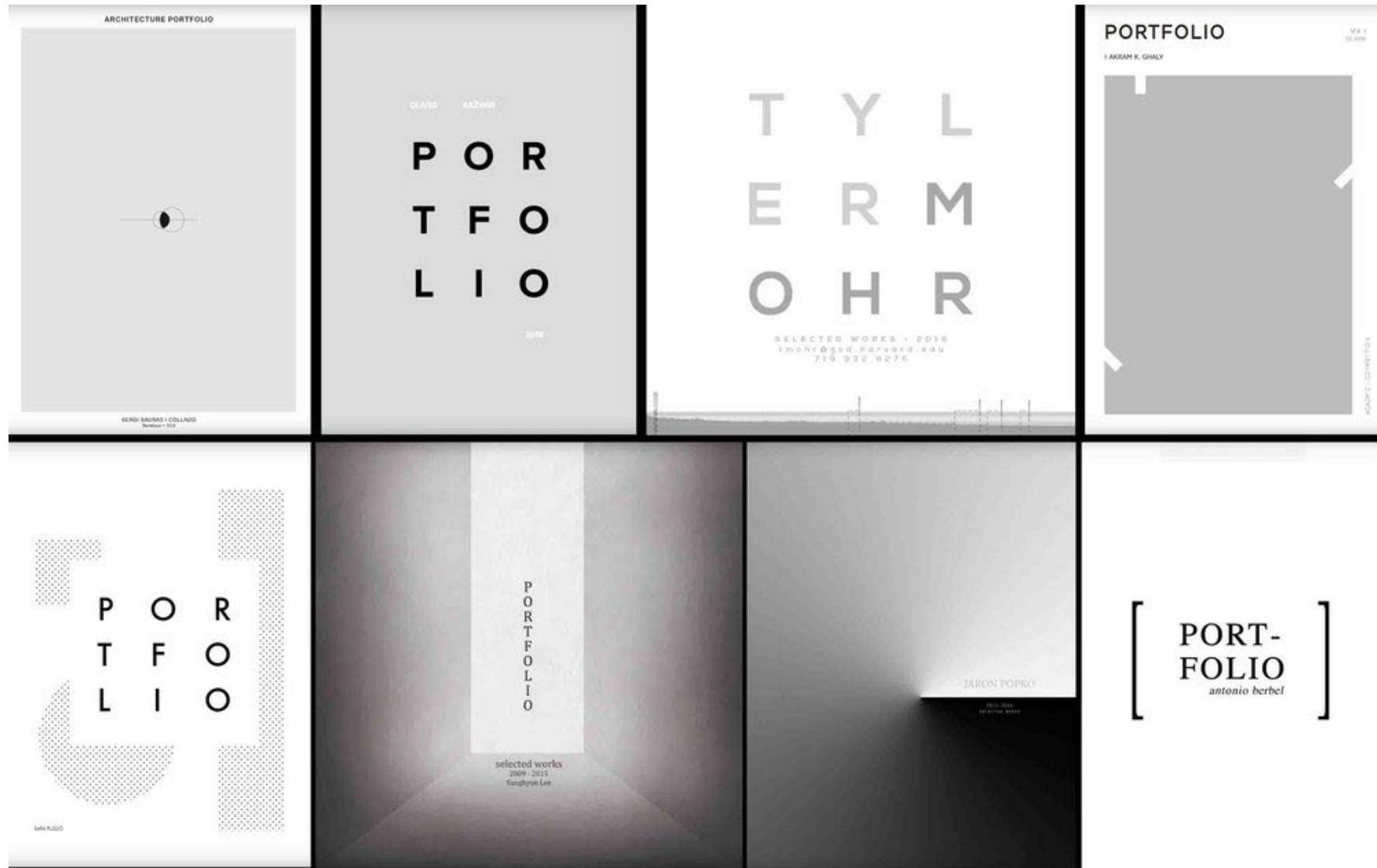
The structure



Front cover



Front cover



Static or dynamic structure?



Source: www.bookmobile.com

Juan Felipe Goldstein Design Co.

PROJECTS ABOUT CONTACT

Juan Felipe Goldstein Architecture+Design



Juan Felipe Goldstein Design Co | Founded 1992

Source: www.juanfelipegoldstein-design.com

Key concepts

Layout

Avoid clutter and don't be afraid of white space. If you use little white space, ensure your layout is clearly structured so that the portfolio's contents are easy to absorb.

Details

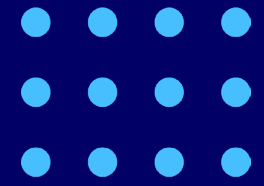
Often, the strength of a graphic design lies in small details. Use certain layout rules consistently and it will give your portfolio a sense of cohesion.

Order

Reverse chronological order; It helps to tell the story of your professional development and your career.

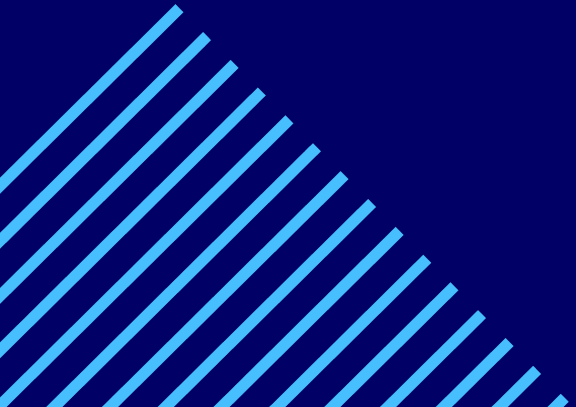
Source: [Cezary Kostecki](#)

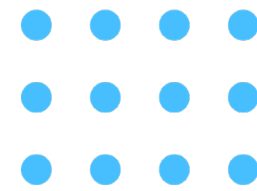




6

What should
you include?





Content

As you progress through architecture school, internships and the profession, so too must the content of your portfolio:

Student

Your portfolio will most commonly consist of academic and theoretical work from architecture school.

Architect

Greater and more diverse mix of academic, design and built work experience with more content of the last two.

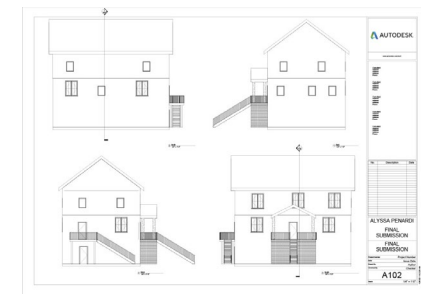
Architectural Assistant

Diverse mix of academic and design experience.



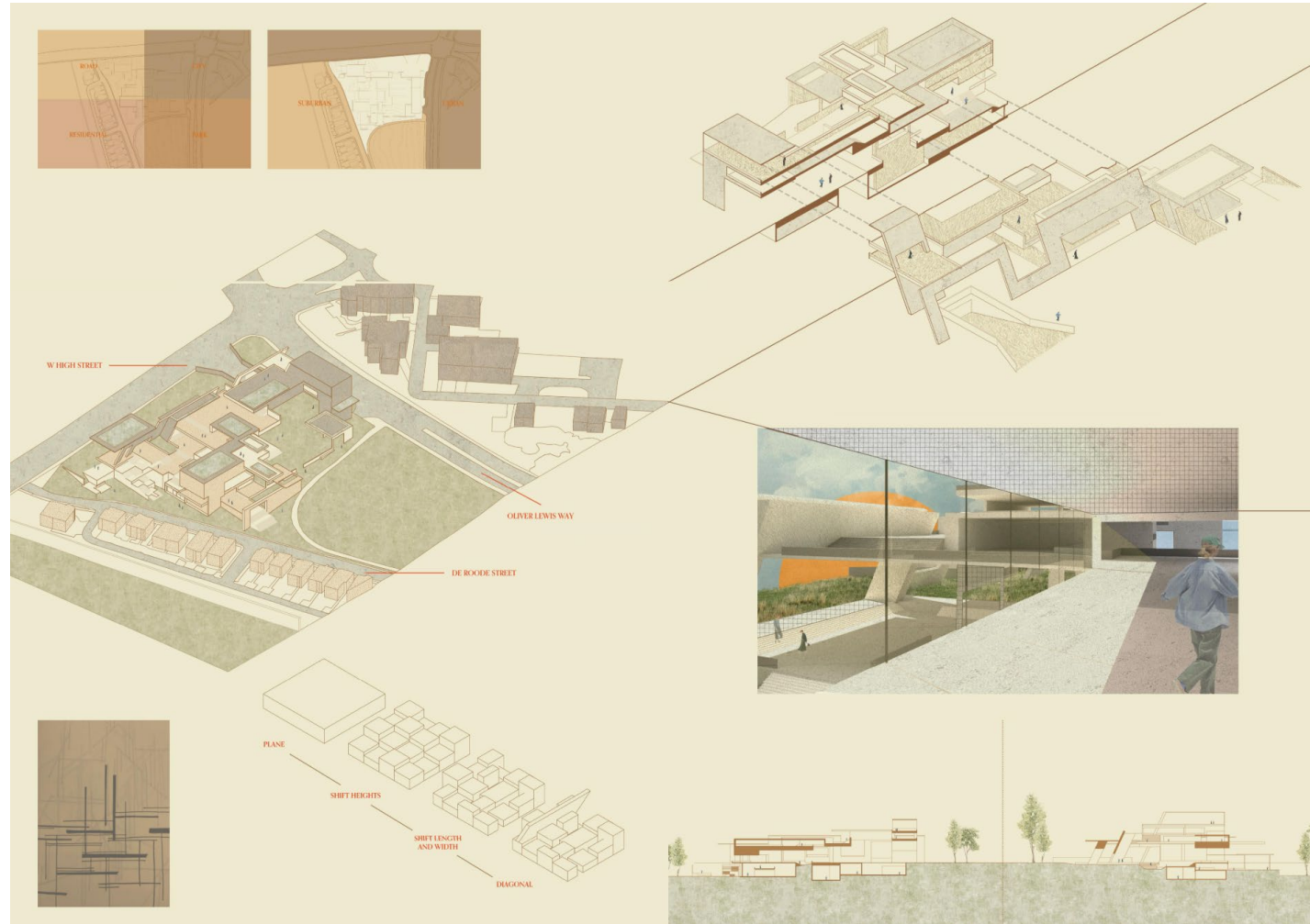
Set of skills to display

- ✓ Hand sketching and drawing (freehand / **digital**)
- ✓ Construction detailing (and knowledge)
- ✓ Architectural visualization (showcasing atmosphere, story, narrative)
- ✓ Creative problem solving
- ✓ Model making
- ✓ Versatility (showing other interests such as photography, sculpture, furniture design, film making)
- ✓ Visual / graphical communication (software and digital skills)
- ✓ Industry involvement (blog, published work, lectured)
- ✓ CAD skills (general software skills)
- ✓ 3D modelling (general software skills)



Sources (top to bottom): [Liz Steel](#), [Bastian Marzoli + P  n  lope Escallier](#), [Alyssa Penardi](#)

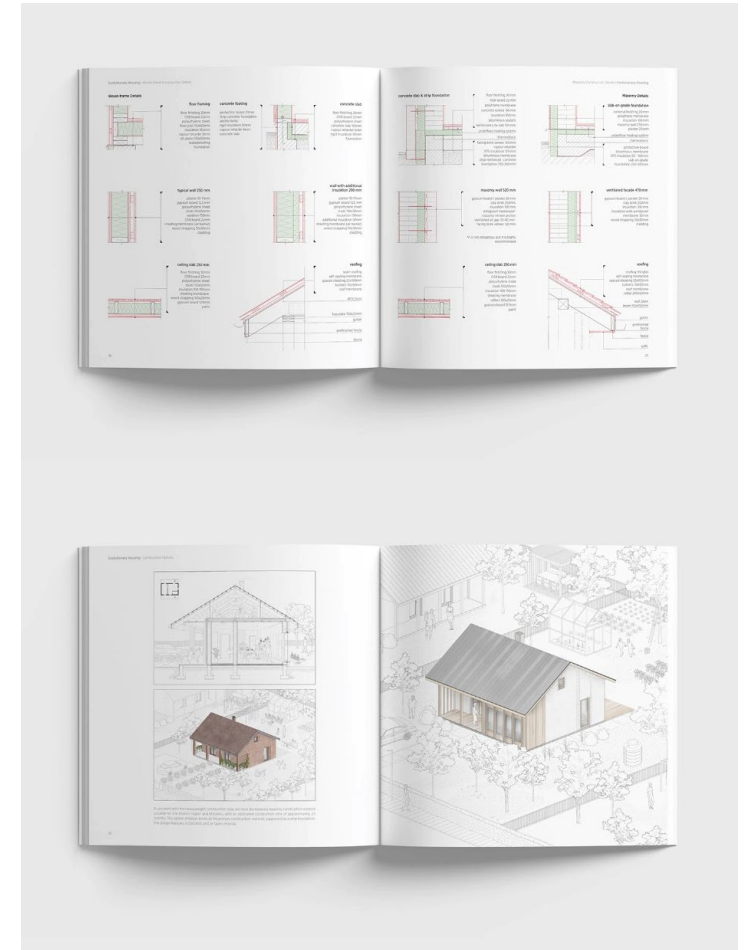
Set of skills to display



Source: [Shae Stephens, 2025](#)

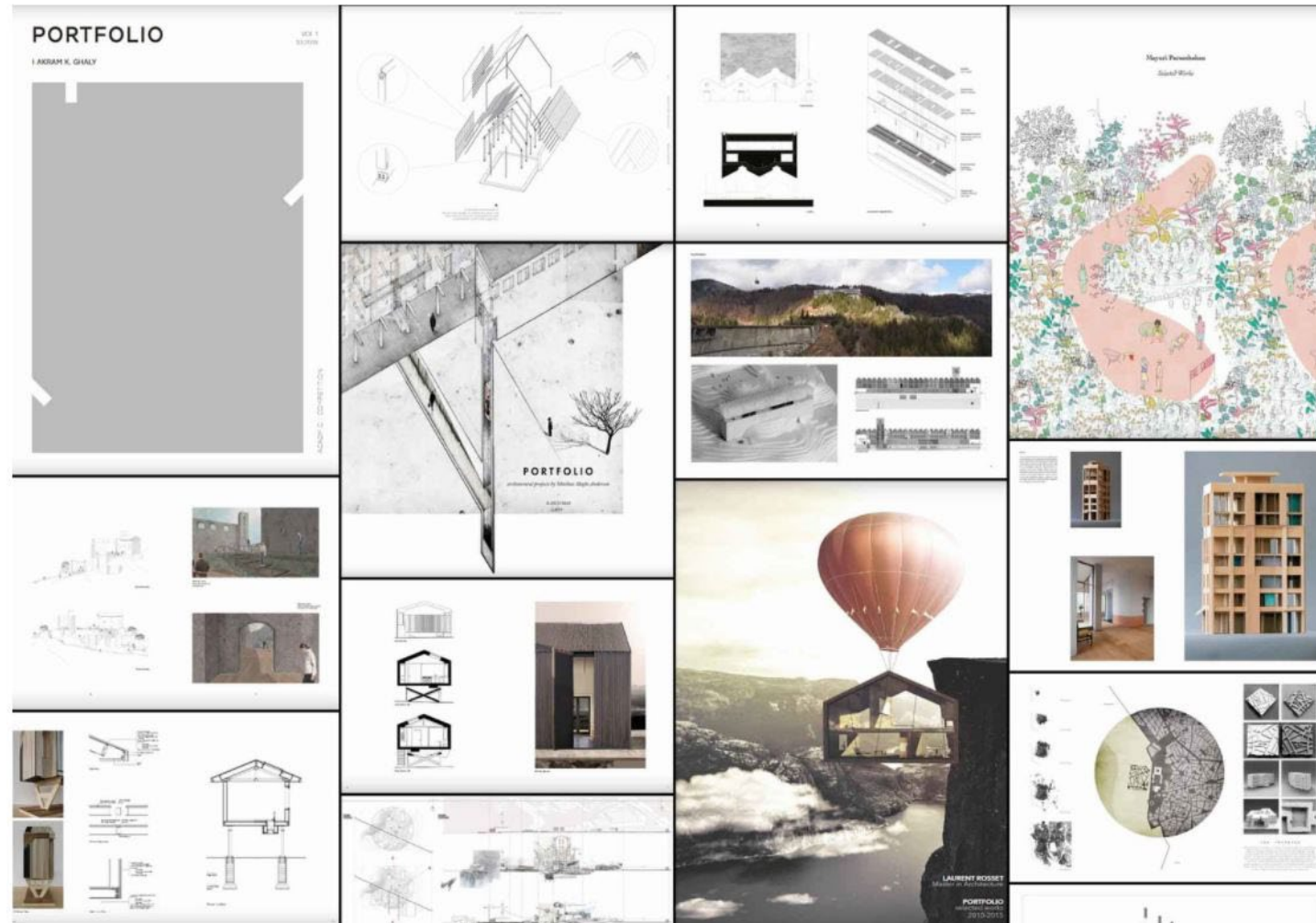
Self-evaluation process

- ✓ Selection of successful projects and experiences
- ✓ Avoid the trap of presenting every single project
- ✓ Aim to show only your best and most relevant work
- ✓ If you have doubts about a project, its results, or you think it doesn't suit the firm's profile, leave it out.
- ✓ Demonstrate your range of skills, diversity of experience and be available to present it in a variety of media.



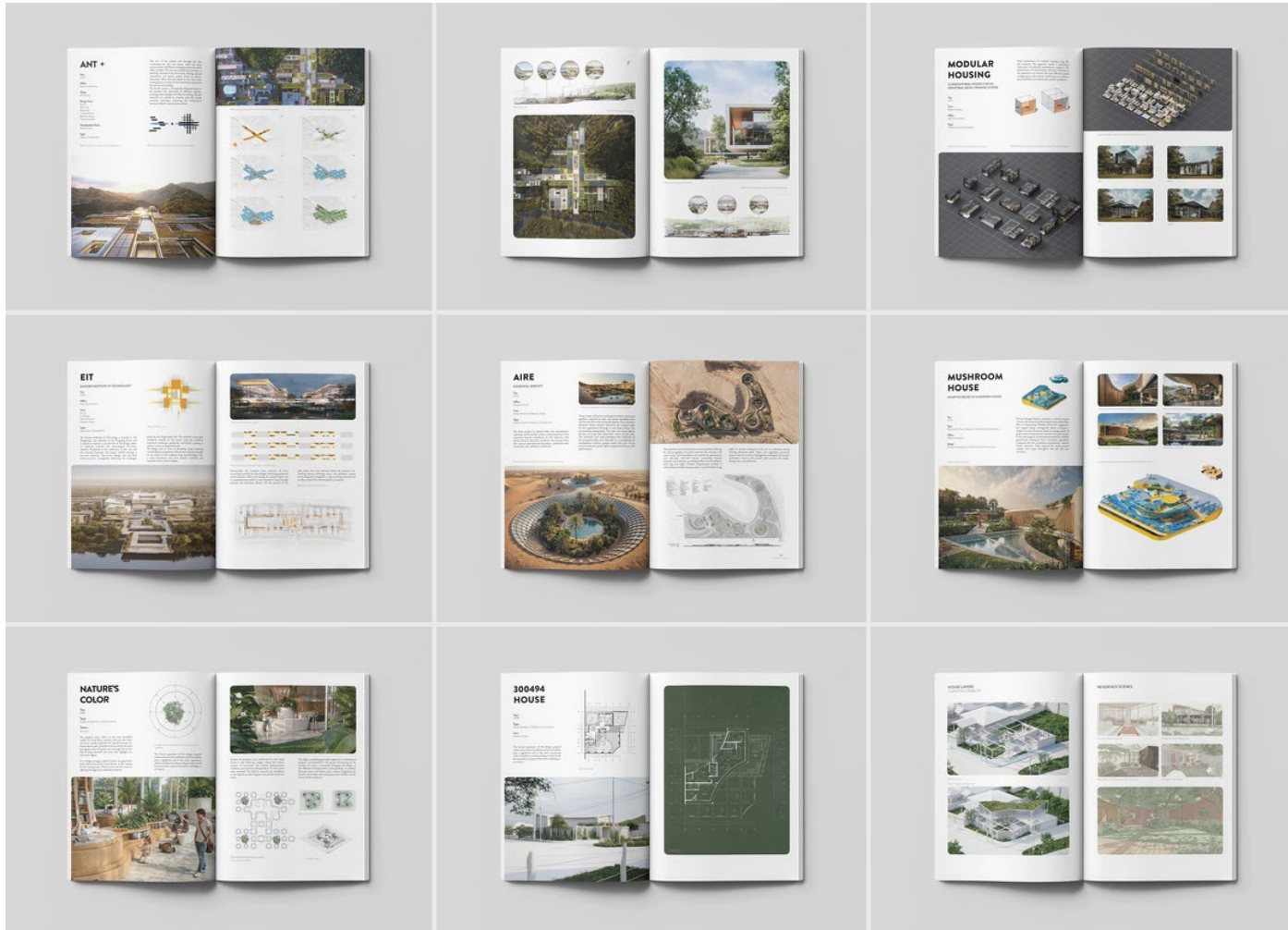
Source: [Darya Zhukouskaya, 2024](#)

Architecture portfolio



Source: www.archisoup.com

Architecture portfolio



Source: [Roberto Vargas, 2026](#)

Product portfolio

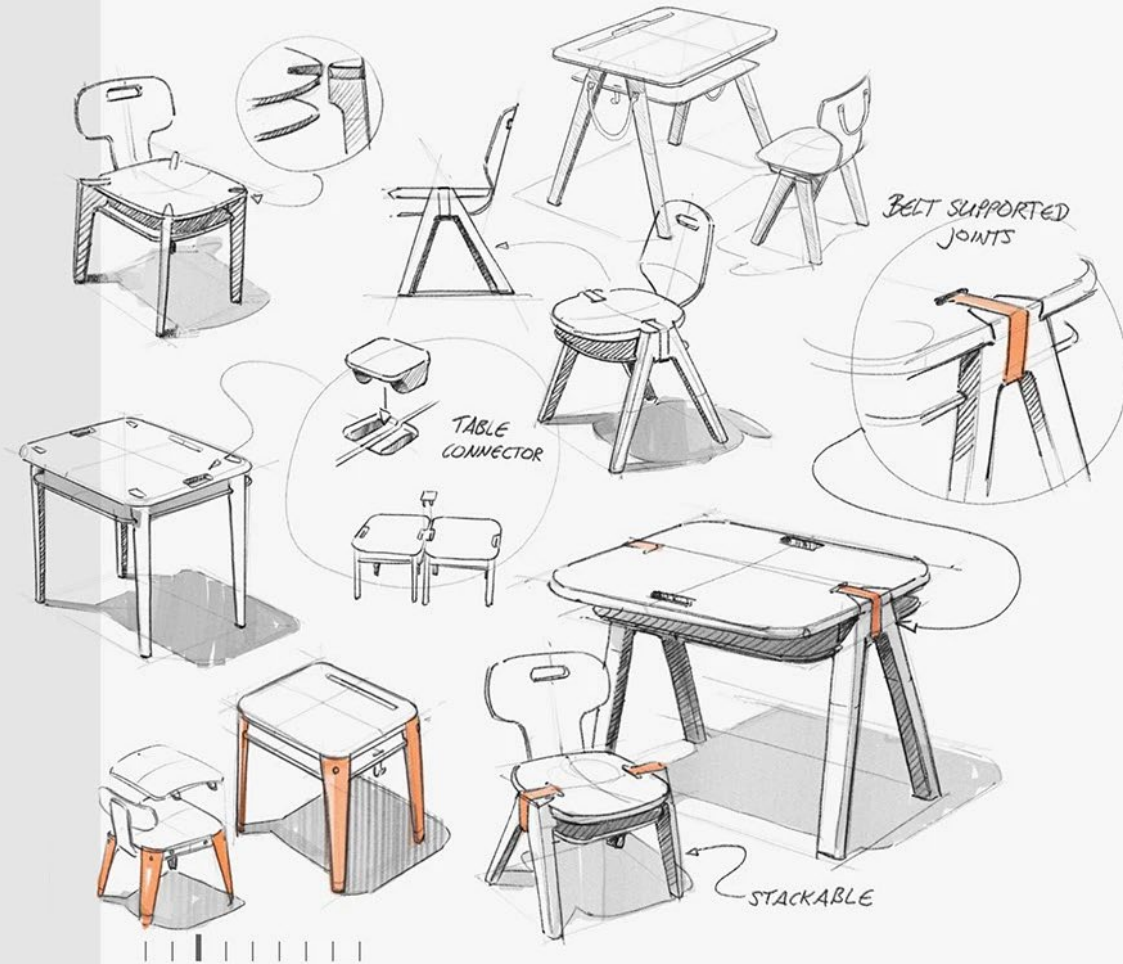


Photo: Anna Taffner

Project
01
02
03
04
05
06

Development

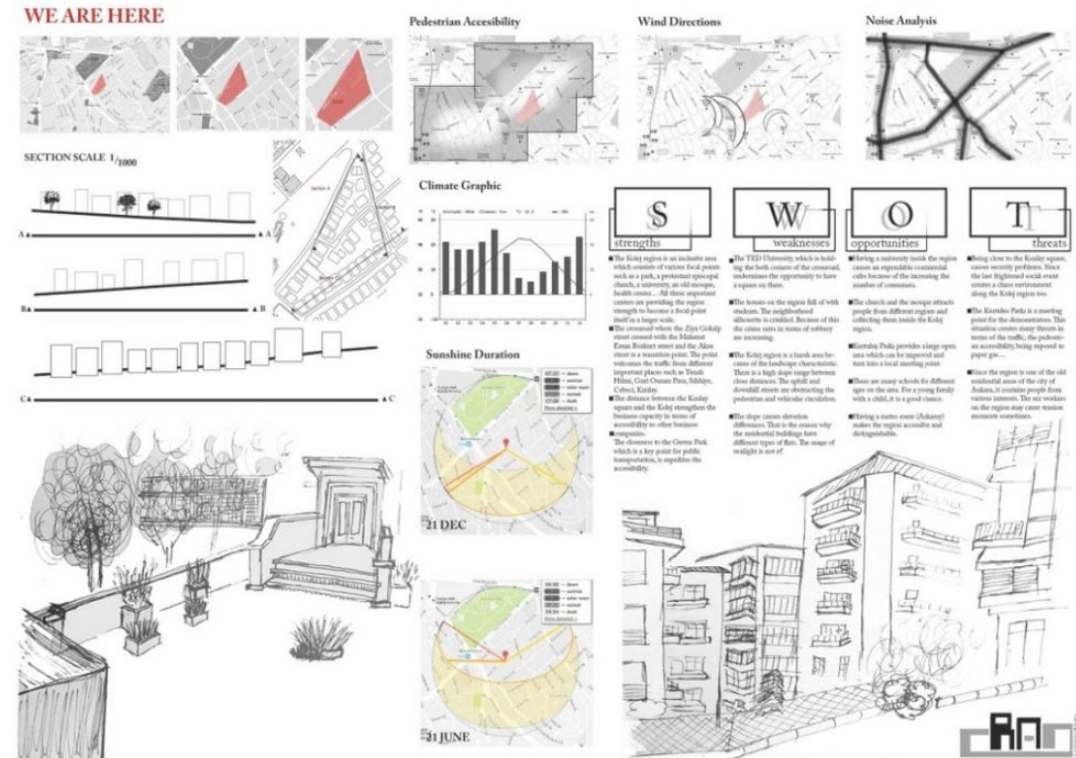
Lots of sketching, paper mockups, and a rough 1:1 wooden model led to the final design. Leading factors for the development were the stackability of the chairs, manufacturability, and the inclusion of nomadic elements.



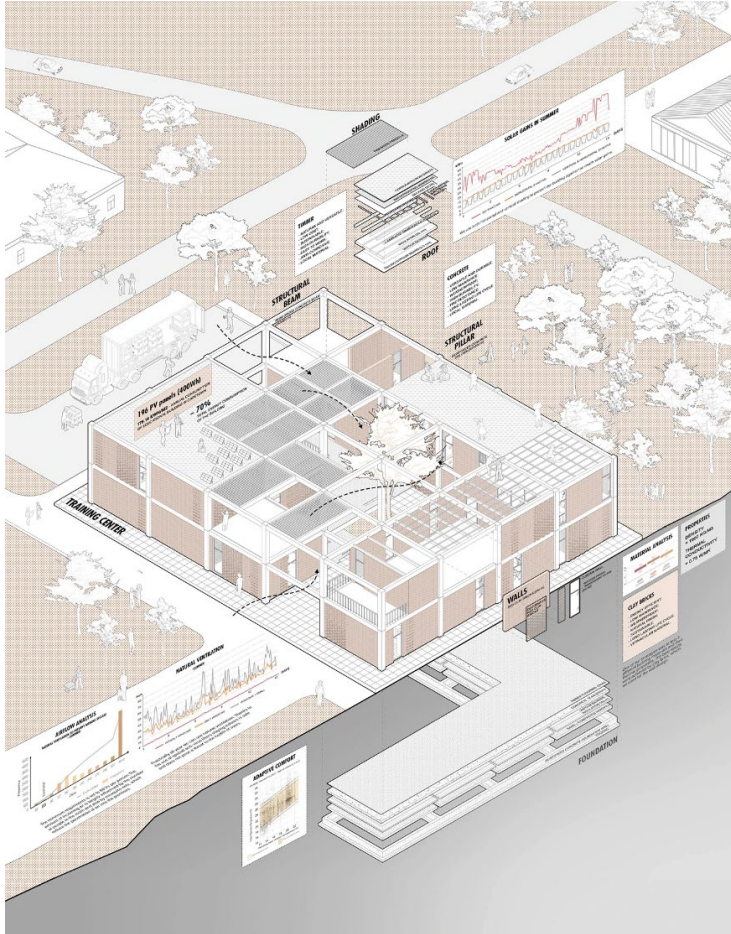
Source: [Dominik Scherrer, 2023](#)

Common mistakes

- ✗ Too much information
- ✗ Lack of hierarchy
- ✗ Typos and mistakes
- ✗ Excess of creativity

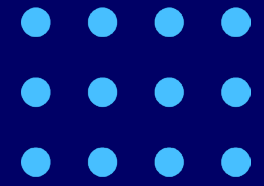


Final tips



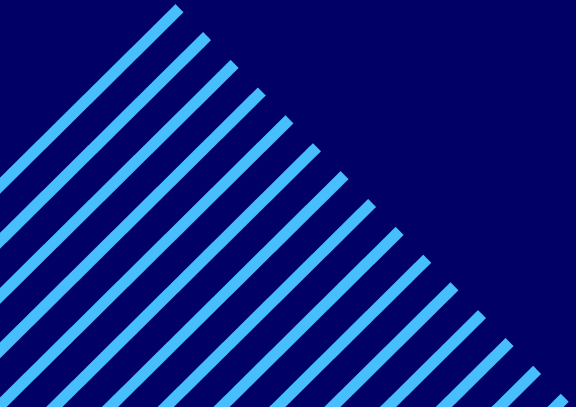
Source: [Darya Zhukouskaya, 2023](#)

- ✓ Portfolio should be aligned with your CV
- ✓ Less is more here, so quality over quantity
- ✓ Match your skills with the company needs
- ✓ Include team projects
- ✓ Don't be afraid of blank space
- ✓ Update frequently
- ✓ Pay attention to fonts and grammar



7

Next steps...



Next steps

- ❑ Design your Portfolio Strategy
- ❑ Follow the Index questions to make sure you cover all the relevant points
- ❑ Draft an initial version of it



THANK YOU!