

ART PORTFOLIO PREP

Selections for your portfolio should express your interest and aptitude for a serious education in the arts.

- The pieces you select should illustrate **diversity in technique and variety in subject matter**.
- You may **display work in any medium** (oils, photography, watercolors, pastels, etc.)
- Pieces can either black-and-white or color.
- Your work can **include classroom assignments, independent projects, and pieces from your sketchbook**.

What exactly is a portfolio? It's a collection of your best pieces of artwork that you submit for review when you apply to an art program.

make
a
list

The first step is to create a list of colleges that you are planning to apply to and contact each of their **admissions** departments to obtain their particular portfolio and admissions requirements. Sometimes they put the requirements online.

Most art programs will want to see works that fall into **three distinct categories: observational art, personal art or a home exam**. Some colleges will require a combination of two or three categories, and others will want to see only one category.

Observational Art

Observational art is drawing or painting in a traditional method using a still life, figure model, portrait or landscape as the subject and rendering the subject as accurately as possible. The image should not be taken from a photograph or the artists' imagination, but from real life. Size of the artwork should be approximately 18" x 24" or larger in scale and fill the entire surface of the paper or canvas. Most work in this category is done in pencil, charcoal, or other drawing mediums, but it can also include painting and collage.

Personal Art

Personal art is the work done outside of a classroom situation and reflects the artists' unique interests in use of materials, subject matter and concept. Work can be completed in any media including (but not limited to) drawing, painting, photography, mixed media, digital/computer art, film/video, ceramics, sculpture, animation and performance art.

Home Exam

The home exam consists of specific work that has been required by a particular college or department. (Example: Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) in the past has asked that all portfolios include a drawing of a "bicycle".)

Putting Your Portfolio Together

- Find out exact portfolio requirements for EACH college & abide to those requirements!
- Choose 12-20 pieces of your best work
 - Make sure they don't have tears or smudges!
 - Show a variety of Mediums
 - Make sure to have several "observational" drawings
 - Label each piece with your name, address, and high school.
 - Don't include artwork that has been rolled up-iron it if necessary (except oil or wax based mediums)

- Make your portfolio as clean and organized as possible. Group by categories (observational, personal, home exam)
- Protect your work, but make sure the package you select is easy to handle and does not interfere with the viewing of the artwork.
- Avoid loose sheets of paper between pieces.
- If you choose to mount or mat your work (not required), use only neutral gray tones, black, or white.
- Be sure paintings are completely dry before you place them in your portfolio.

Portfolio Case Options:

Zipper Case



Book with Sleeves



Write an Artist's Statement by Amanda Linn

1. To Get your Brain Going...

List individual words or short phrases that come to mind when asked these questions:

- What is your favorite art material? Why?
- How would you describe your artwork in an e-mail?
- Besides the work of other artists, what influences your artwork?
- What do you like best about being an artist?
- Why do you make art?
- What is most challenging about being an artist?
- How do you begin a piece of artwork?
- What does it mean when you say a piece of artwork "turned out really well"?
- What do you want others to feel or think when they see your artwork?

2. Artist's Statement Frameworks:

These frameworks will help you mold the words and thoughts from above into document form. Each paragraph should have 3 to 5 sentences. Most artists' statements are one page. Write in first person present tense- "I am" NOT "I was", "I do" NOT "I did".

Paragraph 1- Why do you do the work you do? Support your statement telling the reader more about your goals and aspirations.

Paragraph 2- Tell the reader how you make decisions before, during, and after the artwork is created. How and why do you select materials, techniques and themes? Keep it simple and BE SPECIFIC.

Paragraph 3- Tell the reader a little more about your current work. How did this work grow out of prior artwork or life experiences? What are you exploring, attempting or challenging by doing this work?

3. Helpful Hints:

- If you have trouble writing about yourself, write about an artist you admire. Then write about yourself from that point of view.
- Begin writing as if you were talking to someone about your art
- Have a friend ask you questions about your artwork. Take notes as you answer the questions
- Have someone who is not familiar with your artwork read your statement and ask you questions
- Create a statement that makes the reader want to look at and know more about your artwork
- Your statement should be more than just a description of your art and/or art process
- Read your statement aloud as you edit
- Have a classmate, the art teacher, another teacher, the janitor, etc. read your artist's statement while looking at your artwork

Example College Portfolio Requirements:

Freshman applicants should submit a portfolio of 12 to 20 pieces that represents your best and most recent work from high school (secondary school). Your portfolio can include examples of drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, and work in other media. It should emphasize your strengths. The portfolio may also represent your interests and involvement outside the classroom. It is strongly suggested that some samples of drawing from observation (rather than from imagination or copied from photographs) be included. http://www.mica.edu/Admission_and_Financial_Aid/Undergraduate_Admission_and_Financial_Aid/Preparing_Your_Portfolio/Portfolio_Preparation_for_Freshmen.html

Resources:

<http://artschools.com/resources/preparing-your-portfolio-for-college-admissions/#sthash.VHT5UaaM.dpuf>
<http://www.incredibleart.org/files/portfolio2.htm>

Great articles on Senior Art Portfolio Preparation:

- [Tips for Preparing Your Art School Portfolio](#)
- [Preparing Your Portfolio for College Admissions](#)
- [Karen Kesteloot](#) on YouTube has an EXCELLENT series on Portfolio Preparation! [What Are Colleges Looking For in Your Art Portfolio?](#) She also has a website-[PortPrep](#) !!
- [Writing an Artist Statement](#) by Amanda Linn