

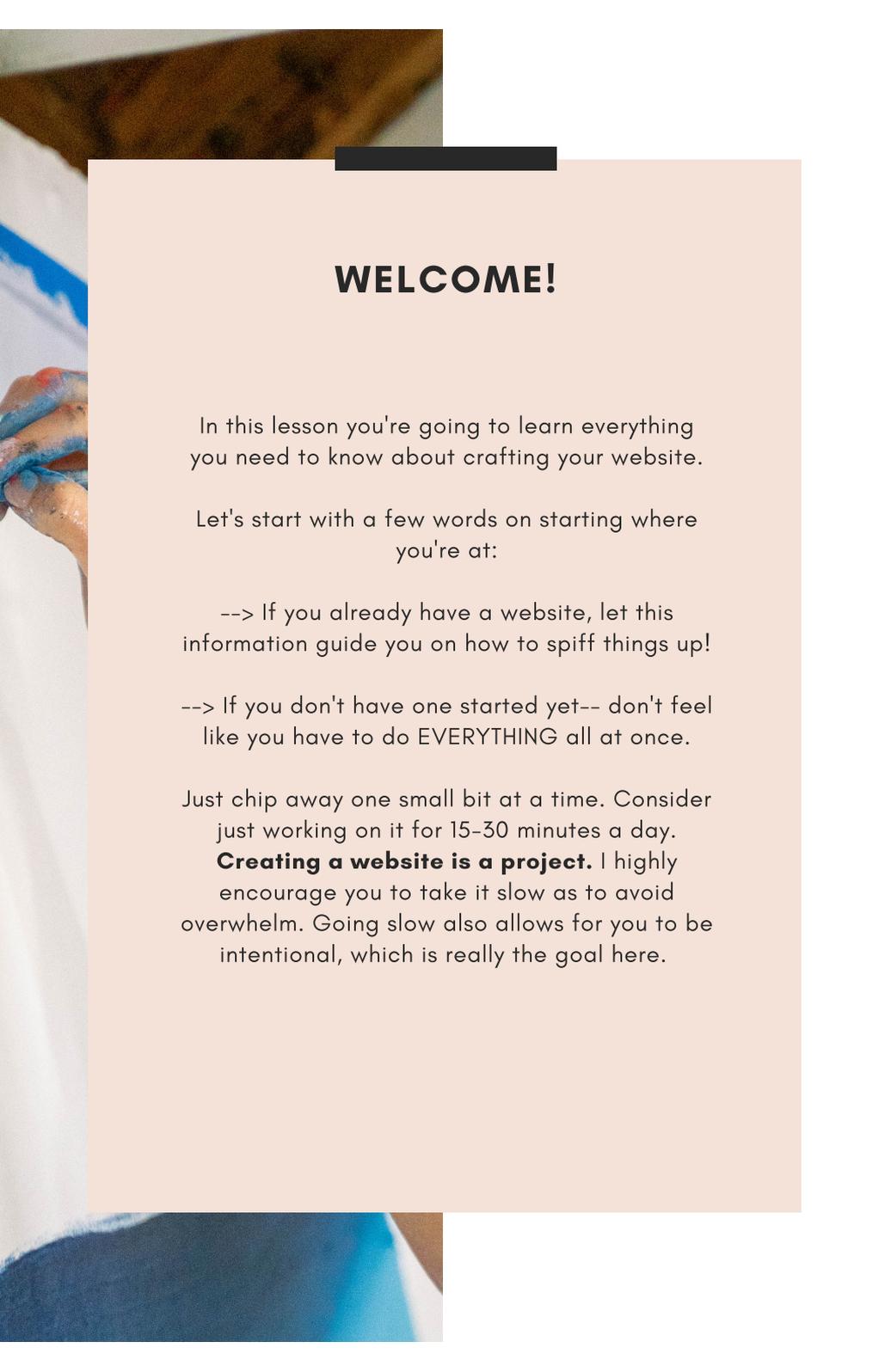


THE ART BIZ ROADMAP

PDF GUIDE

Week One: Foundations

Lesson Two:
Crafting Your Website

A hand is shown painting a blue and white design on a white surface. The hand is positioned on the left side of the frame, with the fingers holding a brush or tool. The background is a light beige color with a dark horizontal bar at the top. The text is centered on the page.

WELCOME!

In this lesson you're going to learn everything you need to know about crafting your website.

Let's start with a few words on starting where you're at:

--> If you already have a website, let this information guide you on how to spiff things up!

--> If you don't have one started yet-- don't feel like you have to do EVERYTHING all at once.

Just chip away one small bit at a time. Consider just working on it for 15-30 minutes a day.

Creating a website is a project. I highly encourage you to take it slow as to avoid overwhelm. Going slow also allows for you to be intentional, which is really the goal here.

A Digital Tour Through Your Creative World

Your website should be a place where people can go to DIVE DEEPER into who you are and what you do. It's the corner of the internet that belongs to you and you alone.

These days, the first thing anyone does when they're interested in you is look up your website. So you want your virtual home set up to convert those onlookers into fans.

People typically buy art (especially original art!) from those they trust and feel a connection with. Your website serves as a place for people to get to know you, and develop that sense of intrigue with what you make and who you are as an artist.

It's the jump off point for sales, long term customer relationships, and exciting opportunities.

A website v. Etsy (or other online market place)

You may be wondering: *Can't I just sell my work on Etsy? It's already set up and easy to use.*

My answer is: Yes! You can if you want to!

But Etsy and other online market places are NOT a replacement for your website. Etsy can't convey your world and your brand the way a website can. It doesn't establish the same level of trust. And--you don't own it!

If Etsy feels like the best way for you to sell your work, I encourage you to link up your Etsy to your website where your shop would be.

Regardless, the place you should first be directing people is to your website.

LOGISTICS

If you don't yet have a website set up, I recommend building one with either **Wix** or **Squarespace**

These are customizable, easy-to-use platforms. I personally use Wix because I love being able to "drag and drop" my entire design.

However, while Squarespace is a bit less flexible, it tends to look a little more professional if you're not visual-design savvy.

Don't want to spend too much time fiddling around with a layout? Both of these have excellent pre-designed layout options that look totally professional.

Have the big bucks to spend? Hire someone to set this up for you once you have your copy writing and images gathered! If getting down and dirty with a website feels like a total drag, asking for help can be a life saver. If outsourcing doesn't feel doable for you however, putting one together with one of the above options is intuitive and user-friendly.

Branding + Intentionality

Remember the questions you answered in the previous lesson? That's all going to come into play as you create your website.

As far as your website goes, your brand should shine through in:

- The visual aspect (design, colors, and images)
- The written aspect (your bio and other copy)

We're going to address both of these here in this lesson.

In addition to showcasing your work + communicating your brand, your website is also a place to call out to your ideal buyers and opportunities.

The idea is to present yourself and your work in a light that:

- Is true and authentic to what you do (first and foremost)
- Is packaged in a way that SPEAKS to those who want to connect with your work

With that in mind, I encourage you to ask yourself the following as you create your website:

**When it comes to your vision and who you'd love to be drawn to your work, what is important for you to highlight, share or say on your website?*

**How can you show these ideal buyers that you're exactly what they've been searching for?*

**What kind of visuals and words call out to + resonate with THEM ?*

Let's Talk Visuals

The design and presentation of your website should:

- HIGHLIGHT your work (not distract from it)
- Be in line with your brand
- Mirror the aesthetic of your work (not required, but highly recommended to further communicate your brand + essence)

This doesn't need to be super fancy or complicated! It can be as simple as your menu text being done in your main colors, uploading your signature as your logo, or letting things be bright and fun if that's the style of your work.

Have fun with it!

And my personal advice is this:

When in doubt, opt for minimal . It's a sure fire way to let the images of your work shine on their own.



VISUAL BRAINSTORM

Use the following prompts to stir up some ideas for how the aesthetics of your website can mirror the elements that define your art.

Visually, what does all of your work have in common with each other?

What words would you use to describe your work? (Bold? Calm? Oceanic? Energizing? Etc.)

Are there certain colors or a type of palette that tends to reoccur in your work? If so, what?

What mood or feeling would you like viewers to feel when they experience your work?

Let these answers about your work translate into your website's colors, design, layout, etc.-- even if it's just in one or two small ways.



The Essential Elements

While there are a million and one ways to set up your website, I recommend you incorporate the following into your layout:

- A Home Page:** A place to highlight exactly what you want to be seen, invite visitors further into your world and direct them to where you want them to go
- An About Page:** Your bio and information about your work
- Contact Info:** Very important! How do you want people to get in touch? And what do you want them to get in touch about? This could be it's own page or information in the header or footer
- Newsletter sign up** (*we'll talk about this in a couple weeks!*)
- Showcasing of your work:** There're many ways to do this and I'll be going into that below.

Other elements it MIGHT include (completely dependent on what's relevant to you as an artist):

- Info about the process for custom pieces
- FAQ's (on shipping, process, etc.)
- Photos of your studio and /or process
- A page about your story
- Your CV and/or a list of past clients +projects
- Your shop or a link to your shop

Copywriting For Connection

What you say about yourself and your work on your website should give the reader more of a way to make a CONNECTION with who you are and what you make. It doesn't have to be stuffy or complicated, but it should simply give more insight into what you create than could be gleaned from just a photo.

ABOUT

This is your chance to let people get to know WHO is behind the beautiful work they see. It can be just a paragraph, or much lengthier, but the idea is to give people some insight into who you are as a human. It's your place to share a couple things that feel important for people to know about you as the artist. This is also a good place to do a little humble-bragging about your accomplishments, too-- but not necessary!

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

If you've been to art school and/or want to orient your website toward high-end gallery representation, you can consider including an official artist's statement. However, for the purpose of selling your own work, my opinion is that a statement of this nature is not totally necessary. As far as attracting buyers, my recommendation is to say a few things about your work (i.e. an "about the work" section) to give visitors a deeper understanding of what they're looking at.

The goal being to help them to connect with it.



PROMPTS FOR YOUR BIO

Where are you from and where do you currently live/work?

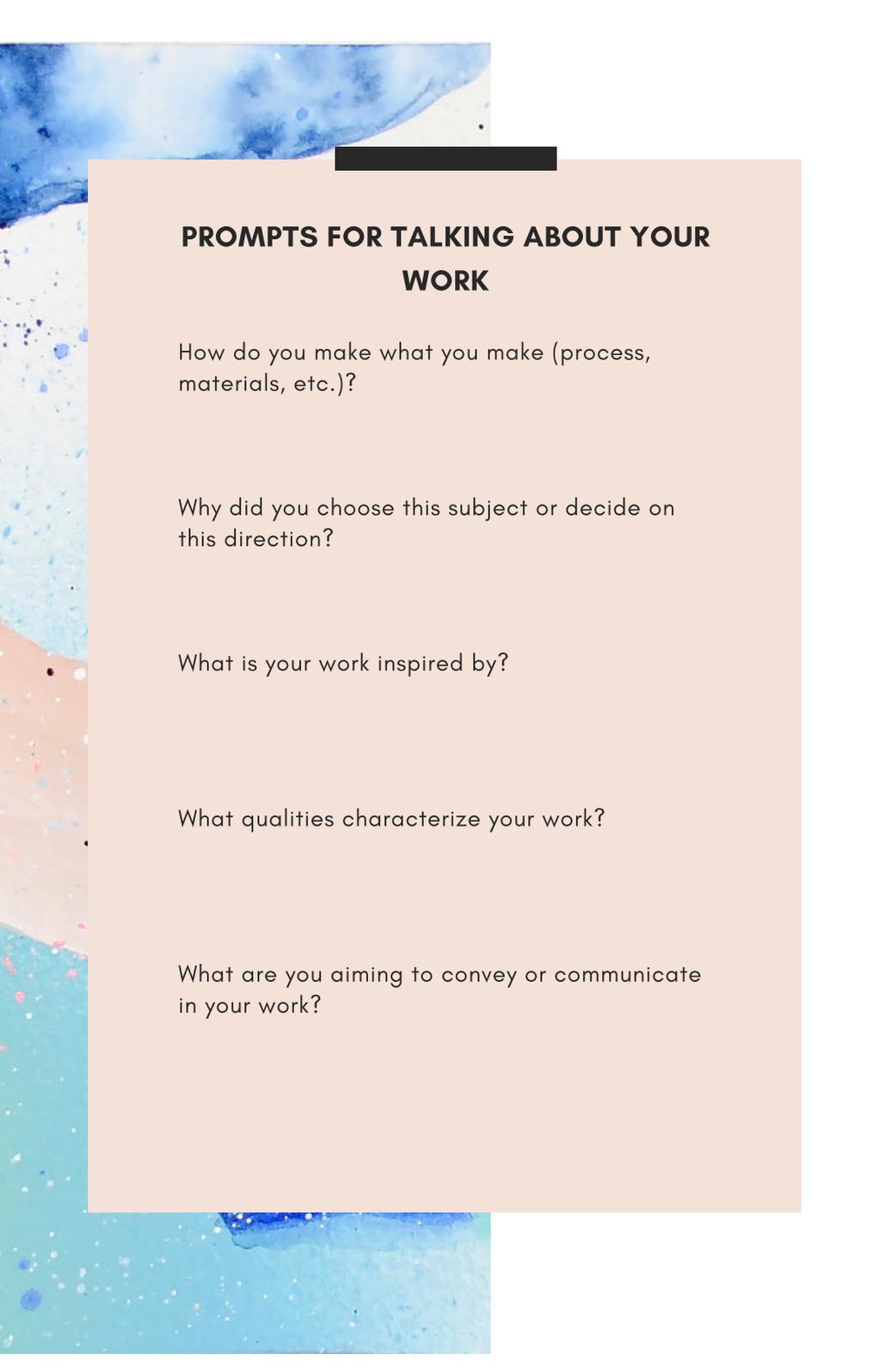
Did you attend school or receive any awards? If so, what/where? Or are you self-taught?

What are one or two personal details about how you spend your time outside of making art?

Any passions, interests or fun facts worth noting? Maybe a degree in biology or a passion for organization? These things make you multi-dimensional!

What part of your background, experiences or interests influence what you create?





PROMPTS FOR TALKING ABOUT YOUR WORK

How do you make what you make (process, materials, etc.)?

Why did you choose this subject or decide on this direction?

What is your work inspired by?

What qualities characterize your work?

What are you aiming to convey or communicate in your work?

Showcasing Your Work

We'll talk about the nature of **how** to take great photos next week. But as it pertains to your website set up: the idea is that you have them! One of the objectives of your website is to show off your work. It should act like a digital portfolio.

Ways you can incorporate photos of your art into your design + layout are:

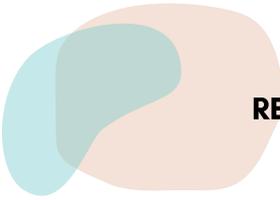
--Have a portfolio or "work" page that showcases your best pieces

.--Your shop can serve as a showcasing if most of what you'd like to show are current pieces

-- Highlight your best photos / pieces / projects on your home and about pages

-- Incorporate photos in your design

-- Show photos of your work in context if you have them (in homes, galleries, or even a wall in your own home or studio to)



RESEARCH + TREAD LIGHTLY

On a final note, one of the best ways to learn about what you like and don't like in a website is to **look at a lot of them.**

Start with other artists and makers you admire and take note of their layout, design and words. You'll quickly get a feel for your own preferences and gain ideas for how to craft your own.

As you get things up and running, I recommend starting with the bare minimum: photos of your work, contact info and a bit about you. You can add on and build it out from there. Just having a place for people to land (that feels intentional, even if it's minimal!) is SO much better than nothing. And you'll feel so much more official having it out there.



That concludes Lesson Two of this week.
I'll see you for the next one!