

# KU Visual Identity

## Best practices and rules for usage



# Definitions

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When we, as marketers, work to create relationships with our audiences and establish recognition across higher education, we must interact with the concept of brand and its related terminology. This can pose difficulties; ***brand*** as a concept can be nebulous and subjective, and individuals can use and define terms in different and even contradictory ways. For that reason, we provide our definitions of key brand concepts in this document.

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# Brand

Although many definitions of brand exist, most marketing professionals agree that a brand is not one discrete thing. Our brand is a collective perception, an idea created from people's interactions with the university, both deliberate and unintentional. Our brand is basically our reputation with prospective students, parents, civic leaders, alumni, donors, research foundations, and the general public. We have an integral but limited ability to define KU's brand, but we can describe it through ***positioning*** and express it in ways that can be gathered into a ***platform. Branding*** is the work of developing both.

Find out more about KU's brand: **[brand.ku.edu](https://brand.ku.edu)**

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## Visual identity

Visual identity is a set of components that provides a consistent and recognizable image for customers. Visual identity involves **graphic design**, but can also include product design, environmental design, photography, apparel, and other visible aspects of an organization.

Keep in mind that visual identity addresses sighted people. Those who are blind or partially sighted cannot interact with visual identity as they do with **messaging**, employee interaction, product feel, or other nonvisual aspects of **brand expression**.

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## Logo

Often the highest-profile element of a brand's visual identity, a **logo** is a single image exclusively associated with an organization. New organizations create logos intentionally during brand development, while heritage organizations often establish familiar graphics as logos based on a single image's recognizability, customer affinity, or organizational importance.

To reflect shifting external perceptions or internal priorities, an organization might create a new logo as one part of a comprehensive **rebranding** process.



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## Signature

A signature is a repeatable **mark** that explicitly names an organization. As is the case with the University of Kansas, a signature might include a logo as part of its assemblage of elements, also known as a **lockup**. A signature may use the **typeface** established in a brand's visual identity, a modified version of that typeface, or another typeface altogether, exclusively reserved for the signature. Sometimes, the type-based design of a signature is known as a **wordmark**.



# Design using KU's visual identity



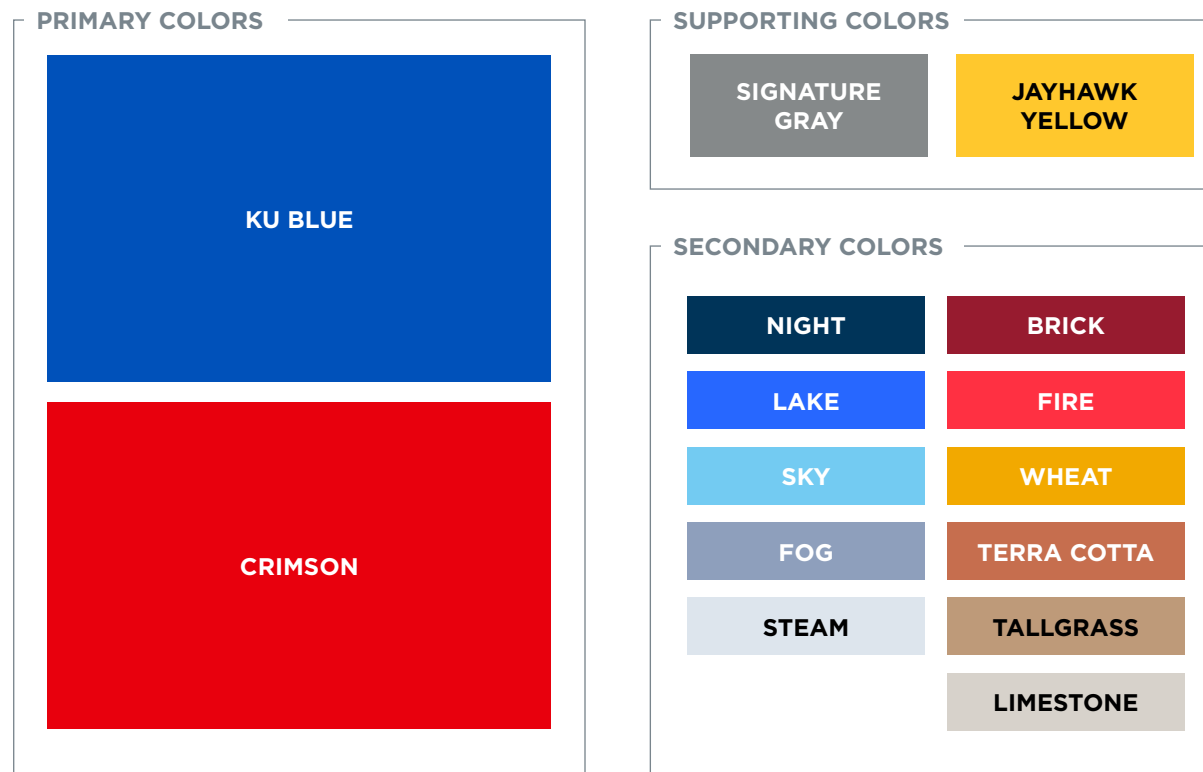


We recognize the significance that hundreds of offices and divisions place on an affiliation with the university's name, and the value of that affiliation in strengthening the brand. However, like many large universities and corporations, we must decide how far to extend our brand.

In response, we have created guidelines that allow units to create their own connection to the KU brand, with rules that shape the use of colors, images, typefaces, and marks.

# Color

Color is possibly the most significant element in our identity system. Crimson and blue have long been KU's identifying colors. Our color palette includes those traditional crimson and blue colors, but it also provides an extended palette of complementary and secondary colors. Those provide options that range from cool-hued reverent designs to multicolored celebrations.



Avoid using colors that could appear to represent other Midwestern institutions, especially Big 12 member schools.

## Colors and color combinations to avoid:

maroon and gray, green and yellow, yellow and black, purple, gold and black, red and black, maroon and white, orange, burnt orange

# Typography

The appropriate use of fonts creates an affiliation with the university. With typography, our goal is to visually share information about KU's dedication, creativity, and might. Use this range of typefaces for your branded KU designs:

**Roc Grotesk** is a bold and precise sans serif with a range of five widths, which reflects the breadth of KU's research. Use the wide width to give your statements a resolute punch.

**Moret** introduces an ethereal spirit of magic, inspiration, and imagination in the air.

**Freight Pro** is good for headlines, subheads, and display type. Freight Text Pro is good for body copy. KU uses Freight Pro as the serif typeface online and in email, but it can also be used for body copy in print.

**Halyard** is good for headlines, subheads, display type, body copy, and captions. KU uses Halyard as the sans serif typeface online and in email, but it can also be used in print.

The licenses to all of these fonts are available to KU faculty and staff through your **Adobe Creative Cloud** accounts.

Our premium typeface selections include GT Flexa, United Sans, and Gotham Narrow, but they are for use by professional designers only and require purchasing licenses to use.

*If none of these fonts are available, use Arial for a fallback sans serif typeface, and use Palatino for a fallback serif typeface.*

Section 1:

## **How to show affiliation with KU**

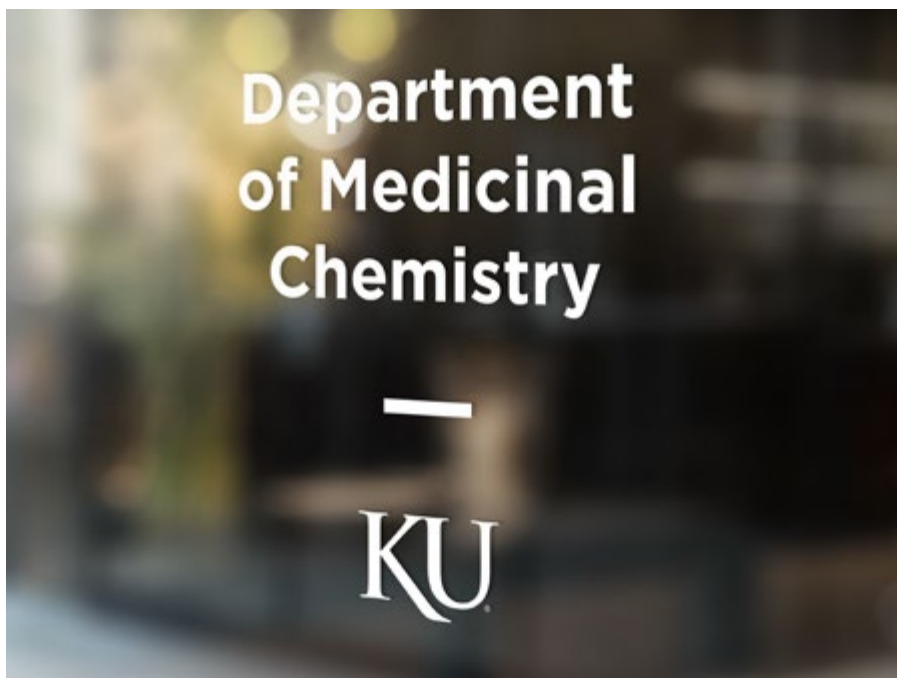
## Vehicles



Consistent use of the signature on official vehicles unifies the fleet and provides a visual identity on campus and off. Use the vertical signature on the driver and passenger side doors.

For more information, contact Facilities Services at [facilities@ku.edu](mailto:facilities@ku.edu).

## Event displays and environmental signage



Simplicity and consistency convey competence and credibility. For on-campus use, display your unit name with the KU logo; for signage or table dressing use off campus, use a full KU signature.

All permanent building and wayfinding signage should be coordinated through Facilities Planning & Development at 785-864-4770.

# Stationery



For consistency in communications from the university, stationery items should be ordered from the university's official vendor, Printing Solutions. The layout and marks used on these materials may not be altered without approval from KU Marketing.

For a complete listing of products and options available:

**[brand.ku.edu/stationery-orders](https://brand.ku.edu/stationery-orders)**



## KU staff apparel



Consider purpose. If identification from a distance is necessary, choose a simple KU logo or Jayhawk rather than a signature.



Consider medium. If embroidering a mark, a bolder design that uses KU's logo and sans serif typeface will provide better results than the fine details of a signature.



# Email signatures

## Best practices

- Focus on clarity and brevity.
- Size the type at 12-14 points.
- Use common, simple fonts such as Helvetica, Calibri, or Arial. Unusual or decorative fonts may not display correctly for all people.
- Don't include logos, graphics, or vcards because they add file size and can appear as attachments.
- For accessibility, choose a single color such as black or dark gray. Avoid other colors.

## Slogans/Quotes

We discourage the inclusion of quotes or taglines because readers unfamiliar with KU may think of them as university views rather than personal sentiments.

## Pronouns

Personal pronouns may be added below the contact information in any email signature. We suggest a format with the word "Pronouns:" followed by the pronouns you use.

## BUILD YOUR EMAIL SIGNATURE

### Start with the basic info and add what you need.

#### Basic info

*Every KU staff and faculty email should include a signature with these details. Below elements may be added.*

#### First and Last Name

Title

Name of unit

The University of Kansas

#### Phone numbers

*Add relevant phone numbers if you often receive calls from an outside audience or have numbers other than your own that are important.*

785-864-0000 (office)

785-000-0000 (appointments)

785-000-0000 (mobile)

#### Online contacts

*If you choose to include social media links, use plain text without icons. Icons will be too small to view on a mobile device.*

Jay.Hawk@ku.edu

divisionurl.ku.edu

Facebook | Twitter | Instagram

*Use simplified URLs (without "http://www.").*

#### Physical address

*If you meet often with students or visitors, include a street address or complete mailing address.*

The University of Kansas

1450 Jayhawk Blvd.

Lawrence, KS 66045

# Official KU marks



A logo's primary purpose is identification. But beyond this basic function, a logo can grant legitimacy and even evoke emotion.

The university's official marks consist of the KU signature, the KU logo, and the current Jayhawk. No other mark, including unit signatures, may be created by any unit of the University of Kansas other than KU Marketing.

To ensure quality and consistency, mark usage is strictly managed by KU Marketing and KU Athletics' licensing director.

# Choosing the right mark

When selecting a mark, consider tone, audience, and medium:

## UNIVERSITY SIGNATURE



Use the KU signature for academic or administrative communication, especially with audiences who may not be familiar with the university.

## LOGO



Use the KU logo when a design clearly references the University of Kansas and in instances where size might affect legibility.

## JAYHAWK



The Jayhawk may be used as an alternative to the KU logo.

Request these marks at [brand.ku.edu/logo-request](https://brand.ku.edu/logo-request)

# Unit signatures

The university signature is the preferred mark, but some units also have a unit signature. When using a unit signature, use the KU primary signature. It is the preferred format in almost all cases.

## KU PRIMARY SIGNATURES



Preferred format for most uses.



## UNIT PRIMARY SIGNATURES



Unit primary signatures are best for on-campus uses or when communicating with alumni and current students.



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## Basics of use

An official mark should appear on all external university communications, including the front or back cover of all folded print material. In most cases, a mark is meant only to identify, not to serve as a primary design element. Make marks only as large as necessary for legibility, and establish a clear visual hierarchy with their placement and proportion.

# Signature usage

The Trajan font was customized for the logo and logotype, so no part of the KU signature should be reset.


## CLEAR SPACE & MINIMUM SIZES

*Spell out the University of Kansas within a sentence or headline and use the signature elsewhere as support.*




### Clear space

Clear space is the specified area of empty space surrounding official KU marks. No words, graphic elements, or other marks should be used in this space. Clear-space requirements must be observed in all circumstances.

 The clear space is relative to the size of the signature and should be one-half the height of the KU logo (x) on all sides.

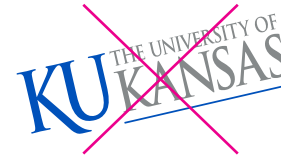
### Minimum size

 The height of x should not be less than three-eighths inch in print or 55 pixels in interactive uses.

Find more complete information at [brand.ku.edu/guidelines/design/official-marks](http://brand.ku.edu/guidelines/design/official-marks)

## OFFICIAL KU MARKS

## INCORRECT USAGE



Don't stretch, distort, or rotate.



Don't change colors.



Do not remove any part of the signature or otherwise alter it.



Don't add words or graphics to the signature.



Don't create a decorative pattern with the signature.



Don't use the signature on a background that provides insufficient contrast.



Don't use drop shadows or other background effects. Use only subtly to enhance legibility when needed.



Don't crop or obscure any part of the signature.

# Unit signature usage

The Trajan font was customized for the logo and logotype, so no part of the KU signature should be reset.


## CLEAR SPACE & MINIMUM SIZES

*Spell out the University of Kansas within a sentence or headline and use the signature elsewhere as support.*




### Clear space

Clear space is the specified area of empty space surrounding official KU marks. No words, graphic elements, or other marks should be used in this space. Clear-space requirements must be observed in all circumstances.

 The clear space is relative to the size of the signature and should be one-half the height of the KU logo (x) on all sides.

### Minimum size

 The height of x should not be less than three-eighths inch in print or 55 pixels in interactive uses.

Find more complete information at [brand.ku.edu/guidelines/design/official-marks](https://brand.ku.edu/guidelines/design/official-marks)

## OFFICIAL KU MARKS

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Don't stretch, distort, or rotate.



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Don't add words or graphics to the signature.



Don't create a decorative pattern with the signature.



Don't use the signature on a background that provides insufficient contrast.



Don't use drop shadows or other background effects. Use only subtly to enhance legibility when needed.



Don't crop or obscure any part of the signature.



# Logo usage

Use the logo solely as a logo, not as part of a sentence or headline.

*Example:* Explore KU

*Not:* Explore KU

## CLEAR SPACE & MINIMUM SIZES



*The KU logo is a federally registered trademark, and the ® must always accompany the logo when used by itself.*

### Clear space

Clear space is the specified area of empty space surrounding official KU marks. No words, graphic elements, or other marks should be used in this space. Clear-space requirements must be observed in all circumstances.

$\frac{1}{2}x$  The clear space is relative to the size of the logo and should be one-half the height (x) on all sides.

### Minimum size

$x$  The height of x should not be less than one-quarter inch in print or 55 pixels in interactive uses.

## INCORRECT USAGE



Don't stretch, distort, rotate, or change colors.



Don't create a new logo using the logo as an element.

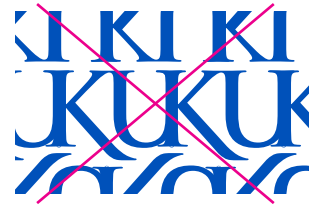


Don't use the letters KU in a typeface to take the place of the logo or other official mark.



*Office of Student Activities*

Don't add words or graphics to the logo.



Don't create a decorative pattern with the logo.



Don't use the logo on a background that provides insufficient contrast.



Don't use drop shadows or other background effects. Use only subtly to enhance legibility when needed.



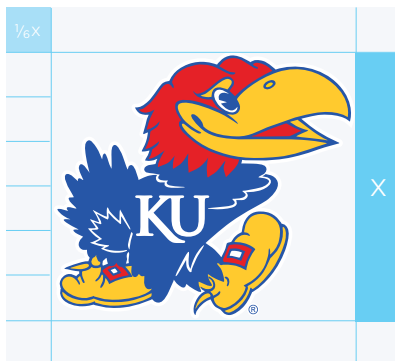
Don't crop or obscure any part of the logo.

Find more complete information at [brand.ku.edu/guidelines/design/official-marks](https://brand.ku.edu/guidelines/design/official-marks)

# Jayhawk usage

The Jayhawk can face either right or left. The Jayhawk is a federally registered trademark and must always be accompanied by a ®.

## CLEAR SPACE & MINIMUM SIZES



### Clear space

Clear space is the specified area of empty space surrounding official KU marks. No words, graphic elements, or other marks should be used in this space. Clear-space requirements must be observed in all circumstances.

$\frac{1}{6}x$  The clear space is relative to the size of the Jayhawk and should be one-sixth of the height (x) on all sides.

### Minimum size

$x$  The height of x should not be less than one-half inch in print or 55 pixels in interactive uses.

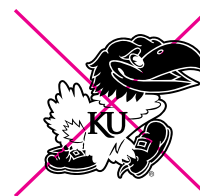
## INCORRECT USAGE



Don't stretch, distort, rotate, or change colors.



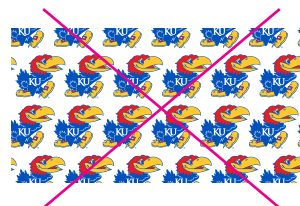
Don't create a new logo using the Jayhawk as an element.



Don't use the Jayhawk in a way that makes the body appear lighter than the head.



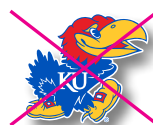
Don't add words or graphics to the Jayhawk.



Don't create a decorative pattern with the Jayhawk or any part of the Jayhawk.



If placed against a dark background, use the version of the Jayhawk with a white outline.



Don't use drop shadows or other background effects. Use only subtly to enhance legibility when needed.



Don't crop, delete elements, or obscure any part of the Jayhawk.

Find more complete information at [brand.ku.edu/guidelines/design/official-marks](https://brand.ku.edu/guidelines/design/official-marks)

## Establishing unit identity

KU units derive their identities from their affiliation with the larger university. Therefore, ***creation of unit logos is not permitted***. Their use isolates units, weakens their audiences' association with KU, and creates a sense of incompatibility or competition between the unit and university.

Designers should seek creativity within cohesion, and units should turn to the visual identity's expressive range for a look, feel, and tone they can own without disavowing KU's valuable brand.

*Read more about unit-signature eligibility in the eligibility requirements section of this guide.*

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## Unit name artwork

Although most KU units are not eligible for their own unit signatures, all KU units are able to identify themselves alongside KU marks: the KU logo, Jayhawk, university signature, or, if relevant, the unit signature of the parent unit. When this kind of construction is necessary — for signs, marketing collateral, and the like — communicators can create limited-use lockups of the unit name styled with a KU mark.

The arrangement of a KU mark with a unit's name should be determined by the context. For example, the imprint space on a ballpoint pen likely benefits from a horizontal arrangement of the KU mark and unit name. A small brochure might look best with a vertically stacked arrangement. Swag items, such as shirts, mugs, or tote bags, are often best served with more original artwork. Use KU typefaces and colors that provide the best tone for the context, and be sure to observe the clear space requirements of the KU mark in use.

# Unit name usage

No one configuration of a unit name + KU mark should be used repeatedly or in all circumstances. This “rubber stamp” approach would create an ersatz logo, which is prohibited by the visual identity guidelines.

**Units that need assistance creating name artwork can request a simple lockup from KU Marketing via this form.** We will provide a variety of files with the unit name and KU logo and KU signature in the most-requested colors and formats.

Find more complete information and the request form at [brand.ku.edu/guidelines/design/unit-identity](https://brand.ku.edu/guidelines/design/unit-identity)

## EXAMPLES OF UNIT NAME ARTWORK



Possible artwork solutions for KU units to identify themselves alongside KU marks.

# Unit name Jayhawk artwork

KU Marketing can also create a single, one-time-use art file with a unit name and Jayhawk. **Units can request a file here.** Note that the team typically needs at least 10 working days' notice to create this file.

EXAMPLES OF A UNIT NAME JAYHAWK ARTWORK.



Operations



Public Management  
Center



Center for Sustainability,  
Environment, Health  
& Safety

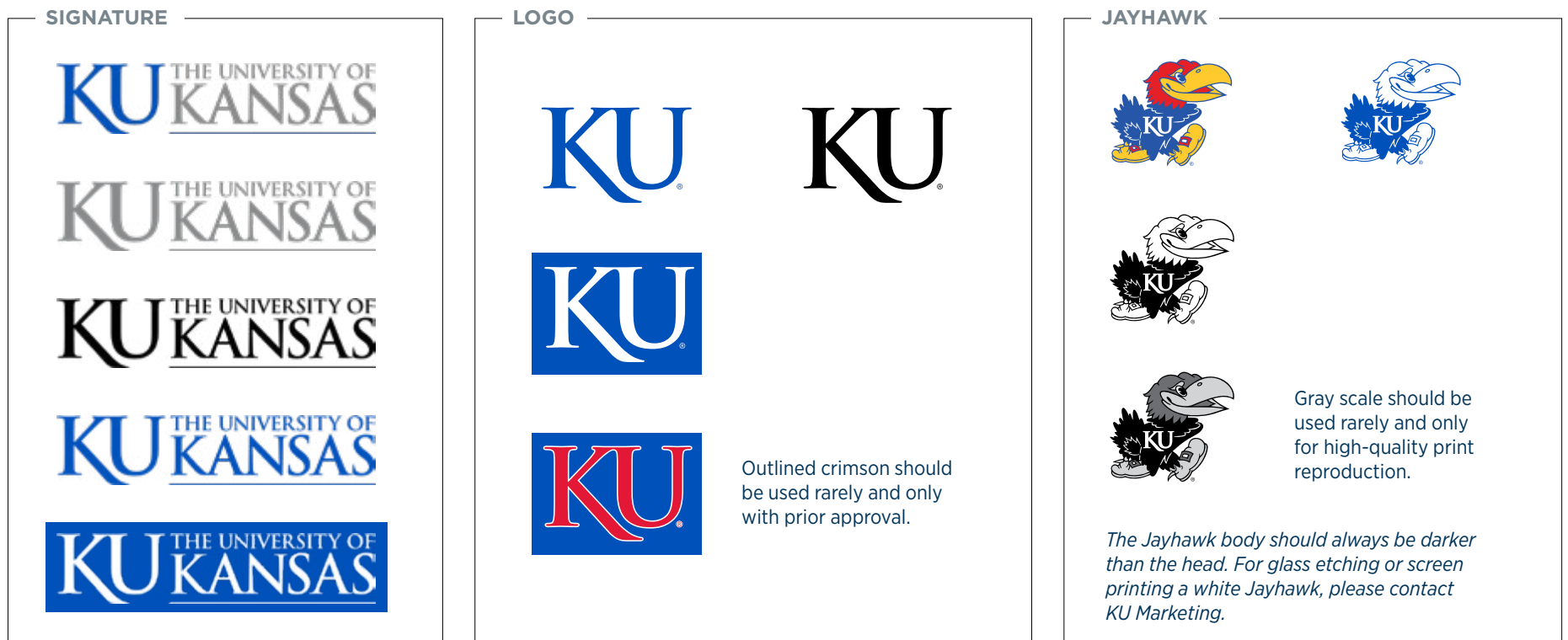


Center for Sustainability,  
Environment, Health  
& Safety

Find more complete information and the request form at [brand.ku.edu/guidelines/design/unit-identity](https://brand.ku.edu/guidelines/design/unit-identity)

# Color

Each KU mark has approved color variations. No other colorways should be created.



Printed applications should use the CMYK color and/or Pantone (PMS) version of the marks, while web or screen-based applications (video, presentations, mobile, etc.) should use the RGB color space with hexadecimal or RGBA values.

# Quality



**Raster images**, such as digital photos, are made of pixels at a specific resolution. Avoid resizing raster images because they will be distorted. JPEG, GIF, and PNG are all raster formats.



**Vector images** are far more flexible. They are constructed of scalable data points that are recalculated when resized. EPS and SVG are both vector formats. All KU marks should be reproduced from original vector files whenever possible.

*You may not be able to edit files in certain image formats without specific software. Microsoft Office can import and display these formats, and any commercial print vendor can work with all of them.*



# File formats

**JPG** is the most common raster format. With .jpg or .jpeg files, pay attention to resolution and file size to reproduce images at the desired quality.

**PNGs** are suited for web use but not for print. They allow transparency when overlaying images. PNG files are set up in the RGB color space.

**EPS** is a vector format intended for high-resolution print graphics. Vendors prefer EPS files.

**SVG** is a vector format for graphic display on the web. Its small size and scalability make it ideal for responsive web design and low page-load times.

# Internal co-branding

Marketing for events, programs, and sponsorships may refer to multiple KU units. To simplify the visual representation, identify these entities by name, not with a unit signature, alongside KU's primary signature.

## HORIZONTAL USE

Two units:



More than two units:



## VERTICAL USE

Center the text and separate units with commas, with care taken to not break unit names across lines.



College of Liberal Arts & Sciences,  
Center for Orientation & Transition Programs,  
KU Writing Center, School of Business

# External co-branding

When the University of Kansas partners with other established organizations or institutions, it is important to preserve the integrity of our mark.

- Clear space should be doubled from the normal value to avoid being in close proximity to the other brand marks.
- The KU mark should appear in the first position whenever possible.
- The university logos should appear in equal proportion to the other logos.
- Simplify designs when possible. Select neutral colors that work well with all partners' graphic elements.

## UNIVERSITY CO-BRANDING



Co-branding at the university level is always preferred.



*Use a rule to create additional separation.*



## UNIT CO-BRANDING

*Provide ample space between the KU listing and the rest of the logos to maintain clarity of organization.*



College of Liberal Arts & Sciences,  
Center for Orientation & Transition Programs,  
KU Writing Center, School of Business



College of Liberal Arts & Sciences,  
Center for Orientation & Transition Programs,  
KU Writing Center, School of Business

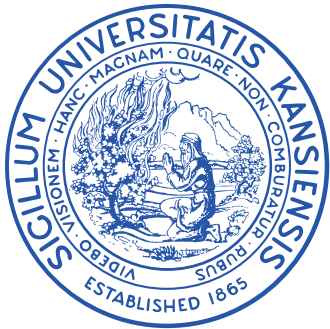


# University seal

The university seal is reserved for use by the Office of the Chancellor and the Office of the Provost on materials of an official or ceremonial nature, including diplomas, documents, and a limited number of other Commencement-related items.

The seal may not be used as an identifying element, design element, or decorative element by any other KU entity.

The offices of the chancellor, executive vice chancellor at the medical center, university registrar, and the registrar's office at the medical center have ownership and usage rights to devices that can emboss or impress the university seal on a document. No other office may own or use such a device.



# Historic Jayhawks

Throughout KU's history, the Jayhawk has been illustrated in many ways. Some of these illustrations are familiar and even beloved by the KU community. However, the 2005 illustration with the Trajan KU is an official, trademarked logo for the University of Kansas. This logo is by far the most recognizable element of KU's visual identity.

The use of other Jayhawk imagery not only confuses audiences outside of the KU community but dilutes the KU brand. Permission for use must be granted by KU Marketing. When use is granted, historic Jayhawks must appear with the year of first use centered in sans serif font below the image. Ideally, all six historic Jayhawks should appear together.



1912



1920



1923



1929



1941



1946

# Historic Jayhawks

While it is an official historic Jayhawk, JayDoc is not typically part of the lineup of historic Jayhawks. It is only used by the KU Medical Center.

JayDoc cannot be used for current business purposes. Only student groups and the alumni association can use the marks. Student groups nor the alumni association can grant permission to use the JayDoc.



# Eligibility requirements



The University of Kansas brand is intangible — an idea in the minds of the KU community — but the visual identity that reinforces and elevates that brand must be clearly defined, with rules that shape the use of colors, images, signatures, and typefaces.

The use of the KU name holds the most important place within the brand standards, and our signature policy reflects this, strengthening the brand with judicious, limited eligibility for the signatures that pair university entities with the KU name.



This is both brand-focused and practical; like many large universities and corporations, we must decide how far to extend our brand.

However, we recognize the significance that hundreds of offices and divisions place on an affiliation with the university's name. In response, we have created guidelines that allow these units to create their own connection to the KU brand.

# University signature

The official signature of the University of Kansas conveys the university's identity and reinforces the KU brand to our audiences, including prospective students and parents, civic leaders, alumni, donors, research foundations, and the general public.

The signature, which uses Gotham and Trajan typefaces, appears on official communications and documents for external audiences.



# Unit signatures

A relatively small number of university entities are eligible for unit signatures, which formally link key divisions to the KU primary signature. The following units are eligible for unit signatures, created by KU Marketing:

- Lawrence campus
- Kansas City, Wichita, and Salina campuses
- Edwards Campus of Overland Park
- Chancellor's office
- The College of Liberal Arts & Sciences and its two schools: School of the Arts and School of Public Affairs & Administration; School of Architecture & Design; School of Business; School of Education & Human Sciences; School of Engineering; School of Health Professions; William Allen White School of Journalism & Mass Communications; School of Law; School of Medicine; School of Music; School of Nursing; School of Pharmacy; School of Professional Studies; School of Social Welfare
- KU Libraries
- Provost's office
- General counsel's office
- Admissions office, international admissions office, Center for Orientation & Transition Programs, Financial Aid & Scholarships, graduate studies
- KU Student Housing
- KU Public Safety
- Transportation Services
- Major research administrative units and KU's 12 designated research centers. These are the Office of Research, KU Center for Research Inc., Achievement & Assessment Institute, Biodiversity Institute and Natural History Museum, Center for Environmentally Beneficial Catalysis, Center for Remote Sensing of Ice Sheets, Hall Center for the Humanities, Higuchi Biosciences Center, Information & Telecommunication Technology Center, Institute for Bioengineering Research, Institute for Policy & Social Research, Kansas Biological Survey, Kansas Geological Survey, and Life Span Institute.
- KU Endowment, KU Alumni Association, Kansas Athletics, the Memorial Unions
- Dole Institute of Politics, Spencer Museum of Art, Hall Center for the Humanities, Lied Center, Wilcox Classical Museum, Spencer Research Library
- KU Medical Center's 21 designated research centers and institutes. These are the Alzheimer's Disease Research Center; University of Kansas Cancer Center; Center for Children's Healthy Lifestyles and Nutrition; Digital Health/Co/Lab, Frontiers Clinical and Translational Science Institute; Hoglund Biomedical Imaging Center; Implementation Science for Equity COBRE; Institute for Advancing Medical Innovation; Institute for Neurological Discoveries; Institute for Reproductive and Developmental Sciences; Jared Grantham Kidney Institute; Juntos: Center for Advancing Latino Health; Kansas Center for Metabolism and Obesity Research COBRE; Kansas IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence; Kansas Institute for Precision Medicine COBRE; Kansas Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Center; Kansas PKD Research and Translation Core Center; KU Diabetes Institute; Landon Center of Aging; Liver Center; and Midwest Stem Cell Therapy Center.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

## Identifying other KU units

All academic departments and other offices and divisions that are not listed above may refer to the guidelines for creating a visual link to the KU brand, or request assistance creating unit name artwork, at **[brand.ku.edu/guidelines/design/unit-identity](https://brand.ku.edu/guidelines/design/unit-identity)**.

# Licensing



# Licensing

The Trademark Licensing Office works closely and in partnership with the Collegiate Licensing Company ([www.clc.com](http://www.clc.com)). CLC assists the Trademark Licensing Office in extending our brand to officially licensed products, as well as in the protection of the icons that have become associated with KU over time and enhance the university's image. The most common trademarks and additional licensing information may be seen at **KU Athletics**; however, the university retains the rights to many icons and verbiage that may not be depicted.

Find more complete information at **KU Athletics**.