

# MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

## Graphic Standards Guidelines

**S**

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## Why a graphic identity system?

Michigan State University is a complex organization. Much of its success depends on the ability to communicate as one university with many different audiences across many different types of activities.

A graphic identity system unifies the university visually. Whatever the medium—publications, Web sites, advertising, signage, video productions, letterhead, or business cards—layout, color, and typography are orchestrated to convey a unified “signature.”

These graphic standards guidelines present the strategy for managing the university’s graphic identity system.

## The logotype

### Description

The words "Michigan State University," a registered trademark, are represented graphically in a logotype that comprises electronically produced letterforms in the Arrow typeface. The distribution of space between the letterforms in the logotype has been carefully manipulated to establish a consistent rhythm despite the variation in the shapes of the characters.

The logotype is intended to emphasize "Michigan State," the two words that distinguish this university from others. The words "Michigan State" always appear above and are separated by a bar from the word "University," which is a third smaller in size.

Versions of the logotype are available on the University Relations (UR) Web site at [ur.msu.edu](http://ur.msu.edu). For questions regarding electronic versions of the logotype, please contact UR at 355-7505.

### Use

The logotype may not be commingled with other marks. It may not be altered in any way except to be enlarged or reduced proportionally. The typeface may not be changed; the size and spacing of individual elements may not be changed. The logotype may not be adorned with boxes, bars, rules, or other embellishments.

MICHIGAN STATE  

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UNIVERSITY

**SOME EXAMPLES OF UNACCEPTABLE LOGOTYPE USE**

MICHIGAN STATE  

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UNIVERSITY

*Unacceptable: Do not distort the proportions.*

**MICHIGAN STATE**  

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**UNIVERSITY**

*Unacceptable: Do not change the typeface.*

Michigan State  

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University

*Unacceptable: Do not use lower case letters.*

MICHIGAN STATE  

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UNIVERSITY

*Unacceptable: Do not enclose the positive version in a box.*

# The block "S"

## Description

Michigan State University's block "S," a registered trademark, is vertical in stature and contains subtle graphic styling that makes it unique among similar letterforms. There are two distinctive graphic characteristics of the block "S": the white space within the body is smaller on the top than on the bottom, and the corner cuts are deeper on the top than on the bottom.

Because of this custom graphic treatment, it is impossible to communicate a verbal or mechanical blueprint for construction of the block "S." Electronic versions of the block "S" are available at [ur.msu.edu](http://ur.msu.edu). For questions regarding the block "S" files, contact UR at 355-7505.

## Use

The block "S" may be used in either of two versions: a positive, shown here in black, or a reverse, in which the white letterform appears on a continuous dark field or background. The block "S" may not be commingled with other marks. It may not be altered in any way except to be enlarged or reduced proportionally. It may not be contained within other graphic devices. The block "S" may not be used as a replacement letterform in any name or word.



*Official block "S"*

## EXAMPLES OF UNACCEPTABLE BLOCK "S" USE



*Unacceptable: Do not enclose in oval or other shapes.*



*Unacceptable: Do not outline the block "S."*



*Unacceptable: Do not add drop shadow or other embellishments.*



*Unacceptable: Do not commingle with any other graphics.*



*Unacceptable: Do not place type within the block "S."*



*Unacceptable: Do not use "S" as a replacement letterform.*

## Other graphic marks

The logotype and the block “S” are the Michigan State University marks available for use by all units of the university. The official seal of the university, which features College Hall, is reserved for use by the Michigan State University Board of Trustees and university officers.

## University colors

Michigan State University’s colors are green and white. The official green is the dark green color represented by the Pantone Matching System ink color 341 (PMS 341). For a color swatch, call University Relations at 355-7505.

## University publications

The university logotype must appear on all publications representing any part of Michigan State University. It must be the dominant graphic mark, and it may not be commingled with other graphic marks.

Traditionally, the university’s affirmative action statement appears on all printed material and in the footer of university Web sites. The form is:  
*MSU is an affirmative-action,  
equal-opportunity employer.*

# Letterhead

## Description

The logotype takes the primary position in the letterhead grid. Information identifying the particular unit is positioned in the “scholar’s margin” on the left. The proportion of white space in the left margin has two functions:

- Visual cohesion: It leads the eye to the next most important element in the grid—the individual unit.
- Visual separation: It provides enough room for the unit to make its own statement.

Typeface weight and size, line length, location of a graphic mark, and order of materials in the left margin are prescribed to highlight the organization of the university as well as to conform with postal regulations.

## Order of Information

The major administrative unit name should come first, followed by a subdivision name. The order of the address information is prescribed to conform with postal regulations: Michigan State University, room number and building name, East Lansing, MI with ZIP and extension. The telephone, fax, e-mail, and Internet information should be separated from the mailing address.

The type sizes and weights provide a typographic solution to portraying the complex hierarchy of Michigan State University. The typeface is Helvetica Condensed.

## Options

Within the context of the university image, individual units have options with which to create a distinctive look:

- The “scholar’s margin” may contain type only or may include a graphic mark. If used, a graphic mark may be no higher than 1 inch and no wider than 1 inch. It must be aligned on the right. The block “S” may be used by any unit as this graphic mark. The block “S” must be 3/8 inch wide and 1/2 inch high.
- The logotype is to be printed in black on letterhead and envelopes. If the block “S” is used in the “scholar’s margin,” it must be printed in black or the university’s official green (PMS 341). Other colors may be used for unit graphic marks. The information beneath a unit’s graphic mark must always be printed in black.

## Printing

Print & Digital Communications, a unit of University Relations, prints letterhead on the university water-marked recycled paper. For more information, call 355-6610 or visit [stationery.msu.edu](http://stationery.msu.edu).

# Business cards

## Description

Business cards are an important component of the university's graphic identity system but are very small fields for conveying complex information. Therefore, it is recommended that only the logotype be used on business cards, along with necessary personal and address information.

The logotype should appear at the top of the card.

## Order of Information

The bearer's name, title, and address information are to be set in various weights and sizes as specified. The typeface is Helvetica Condensed. If more than eight lines of type are required, a vertical format may be used.

## Options

The logotype must be printed in either black or the university's official green (PMS 341). It may not be altered in any way. If the logotype is printed in green, all other material on the card must be printed in black.

A graphic mark may be printed in the margin of a horizontal card only. This should be the same graphic mark used on unit letterhead. If the block "S" is used, it must measure 5/16 inch by 7/16 inch. If a unit graphic mark is used, it should be no higher than 3/4 inch and no wider than 9/16 inch.

If the logotype at the top of the card is printed in green, the unit graphic mark should be printed in black or a screen of black. The block "S" must be printed in solid black. If the logotype is printed in black, the unit graphic mark may be printed in color to match the unit's letterhead. The block "S" must be printed in black or PMS 341.

## Printing

Print & Digital Communications, a unit of University Relations, prints business cards on card stock. For information, call 355-6610 or visit [stationery.msu.edu](http://stationery.msu.edu).

# Advertising

The university logotype must appear in all advertising that promotes the university. This includes online ads, magazine and newspaper advertising, posters, banners, and billboards.

Generally, when advertising is used for personnel hiring notices, there is a lot of type in a small space. Because of reproduction quality, the positive version of the logotype should be used when the logotype must run smaller than 1.5 inches wide. The logotype must always be the dominant graphic form. Since heavy or ornamental borders will detract from the logotype, framing should be done with a narrow black line.

When advertising is used to promote an event, the logotype must be used prominently, but sizing should reflect the relative roles of the event, the sponsoring unit, and the university. The logotype can be printed in any one color that is compatible with the ad.