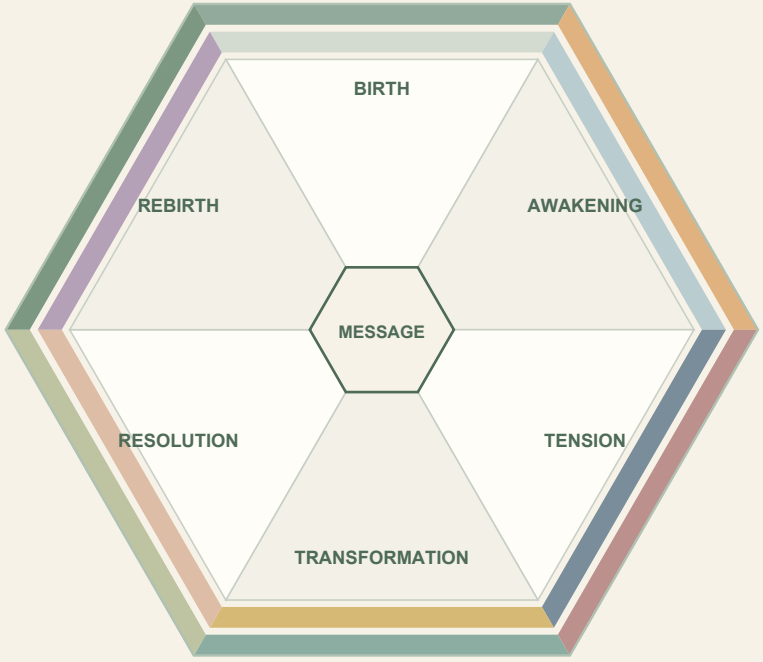
The Hexagonal Design Method

A visual workbook for developing an idea into something you can test.

Gather starting points. Tell a story in words and pictures.
Try it in materials. Choose what to develop.



A REUSABLE WORKBOOK FOR ARTISTS AND DESIGNERS

A4 LANDSCAPE

Before You Start

START WITH CURIOSITY

You do not need a finished idea. Collect things that catch your attention, then circle one detail or connection.

FOLLOW THE IDEA

Give your starting point a story. Use the action prompts to imagine or make a small change.

KEEP IT FLEXIBLE

Skip or repeat working pages. If the story feels forced, try a material first and return to the slices.

WHAT YOU WILL LEAVE WITH

A clearer idea, a possible message and one practical experiment. Use what you learn from making to decide what deserves more attention.

03 Gather starting points
Collect freely. Circle one thing to explore.

04-05 Read the six slices
See how one part follows another.

06-08 Follow the mug example
Move from words and pictures into materials.

09-14 Try your own idea
Use a hexagon pair, then make a small test.

15-16 Compare and choose
Try another direction if a comparison would help.

17-19 Develop and tell the story
Give the idea room. Choose your next action.

ONE IDEA: use pages 9-10 and 13, then page 16. Leave NOT NOW blank if unnecessary.
TO COMPARE: use B for another idea, or label two tests of one idea A and B on pages 13-15.

Gather Starting Points

COLLECT WHAT CATCHES

Add photographs, drawings, fabric scraps, colours, objects or a few words.

NOTICE A CONNECTION

You do not need to know why they interest you yet. Before moving on, circle one detail or connection to explore.

KEEP IT LOOSE

This does not need to look like a finished mood board.

COLLECT ANYTHING THAT CATCHES YOUR ATTENTION

Put things beside each other and see what you notice.

I WANT TO EXPLORE...

Read the Slices

BEGIN WITH ONE IDEA

Explore the story your work could suggest. It can be real, imagined or symbolic.

WORDS AND PICTURES

Move between words and pictures. Read clockwise to see how the parts connect. Change them when you need to.

TRY AN ACTION

Use an action to explore your story. A torn edge might suggest loss; a visible join might suggest care. Choose what fits.

LEAVE GAPS

If you are unsure, try a drawing or sample and return to the slice.

01 BIRTH

Where does it begin?

WHAT IT MEANS

Introduce the starting subject or situation. Give the next slice something to follow.

DESIGN PROMPT

Show your starting point: an object, shape, detail or material.

MUG EXAMPLE / WORDS

An everyday mug

IN PICTURES

Show a simple mug on a table.

02 AWAKENING

What happens next?

WHAT IT MEANS

Something happens or is discovered that sets the story in motion.

DESIGN PROMPT

Show what brings it to life: an action, connection or discovery.

MUG EXAMPLE / WORDS

A shared morning ritual

IN PICTURES

Show two mugs in a morning ritual.

03 TENSION

What puts it at risk?

WHAT IT MEANS

A change, difficulty or opposing force interrupts or complicates what came before.

DESIGN PROMPT

Introduce a disruption: a break, contrast or unexpected change.

MUG EXAMPLE / WORDS

The rim chips

IN PICTURES

Show a missing piece at the rim.

THE CENTRE / WHAT IS THIS STORY SAYING?

Read the six slices together, then name the message: care makes things precious.

Read the Slices

IMAGINE A DIRECTION

Resolution is a possible result in the story. It does not mean the artwork is finished.

WORDS AND PICTURES

Move between words and pictures. Read clockwise to see how the parts connect. Change them when you need to.

TRY AN ACTION

Use an action to explore your story. A torn edge might suggest loss; a visible join might suggest care. Choose what fits.

LEAVE GAPS

If you are unsure, try a drawing or sample and return to the slice.

04 TRANSFORMATION

How does it respond?

WHAT IT MEANS

Something changes in response to the difficulty. Show the turning point.

DESIGN PROMPT

Show a response. Try joining, layering, reshaping or rearranging.

MUG EXAMPLE / WORDS

Careful repair

IN PICTURES

Show care and repair at the damage.

05 RESOLUTION

What changes now?

WHAT IT MEANS

Show the result of that response. It can be hopeful, uneasy or unresolved.

DESIGN PROMPT

Show the result: what changes in appearance, use or feeling?

MUG EXAMPLE / WORDS

The ritual continues

IN PICTURES

Show the mug back in the daily ritual.

06 REBIRTH

What does it mean now?

WHAT IT MEANS

The journey gives the starting point a new meaning or a new beginning.

DESIGN PROMPT

Return to the starting point. Show what makes it different or meaningful now.

MUG EXAMPLE / WORDS

An ordinary treasure

IN PICTURES

Show the same mug now treasured.

THE CENTRE / WHAT IS THIS STORY SAYING?

Read the six slices together, then name the message: care makes things precious.

Story in Words

WORDS + COLOUR

Tell one story in six connected steps. Write freely, then shorten to a few words in each slice.

KEEP THE LINK

Let each part follow from the last. Begin with words or pictures. Leave gaps and return after making.

TRY TWO COLOURS

Try a pair in each slice's two bands. Colours can repeat or change.

THE CENTRE

Name the message when you are ready. The words can change.

IMAGINED EXAMPLE / THE CHIPPED MUG

Example colour pairs

