

Brand Manual

Michigan State Athletics

June 2026

Brand Manual

Michigan State Athletics

Fonts

Colors

Logos

Video Guide

Social Guide

Facility & Apparel Guide



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Introduction

Our brand identity is a carefully crafted system of custom assets encompassing colors, trademarks, logos, patterns, and typography housed under the Michigan State University umbrella. These elements are more than just design components; they serve as the visual language through which we tell the compelling story of Michigan State Athletics. Our brand guidelines dictate the consistent use of these elements, shaping how people globally perceive and connect with more than 160 years of rich tradition and history.

Inspired by the ethos of the Spartans – a legacy of strength, discipline, and simplicity – our brand philosophy echoes their unwavering commitment to excellence. We embrace the Spartan spirit by embodying traits of **resilience**, **focus**, and **determination** in all aspects of our identity.

Rooted in the Michigan State University student-athlete experience, our unified, athletic-specific branding system is designed to resonate with our audience. While subtle accents and effects may enhance visual appeal, simplicity remains paramount. Our goal is to maintain a clean and cohesive brand presence across all platforms, ensuring that every interaction reinforces the authenticity and integrity of Michigan State Athletics.

This identity guide serves as the blueprint for consistency, enabling us to uphold the trust of our existing fans while authentically engaging with new audiences. By adhering to these principles, we honor our heritage and pave the way for a prosperous and enduring brand legacy. Without consistency, Michigan State Athletics cannot operate at a higher level.

For approvals, questions about this guide, or where assets can be found, email:
brand@ath.msu.edu

For licensing information, visit:
licensing.msu.edu or email licensing@msu.edu

Brand Architecture



PRIMARY - THE STATEMENT

A consistent PRIMARY Mark (logo, icon, or emblem) to represent the university clarifies the school's identity. The Primary Mark is strong, timeless, and historically significant. Reinforcement of the Primary Mark will continue to build worldwide brand equity.



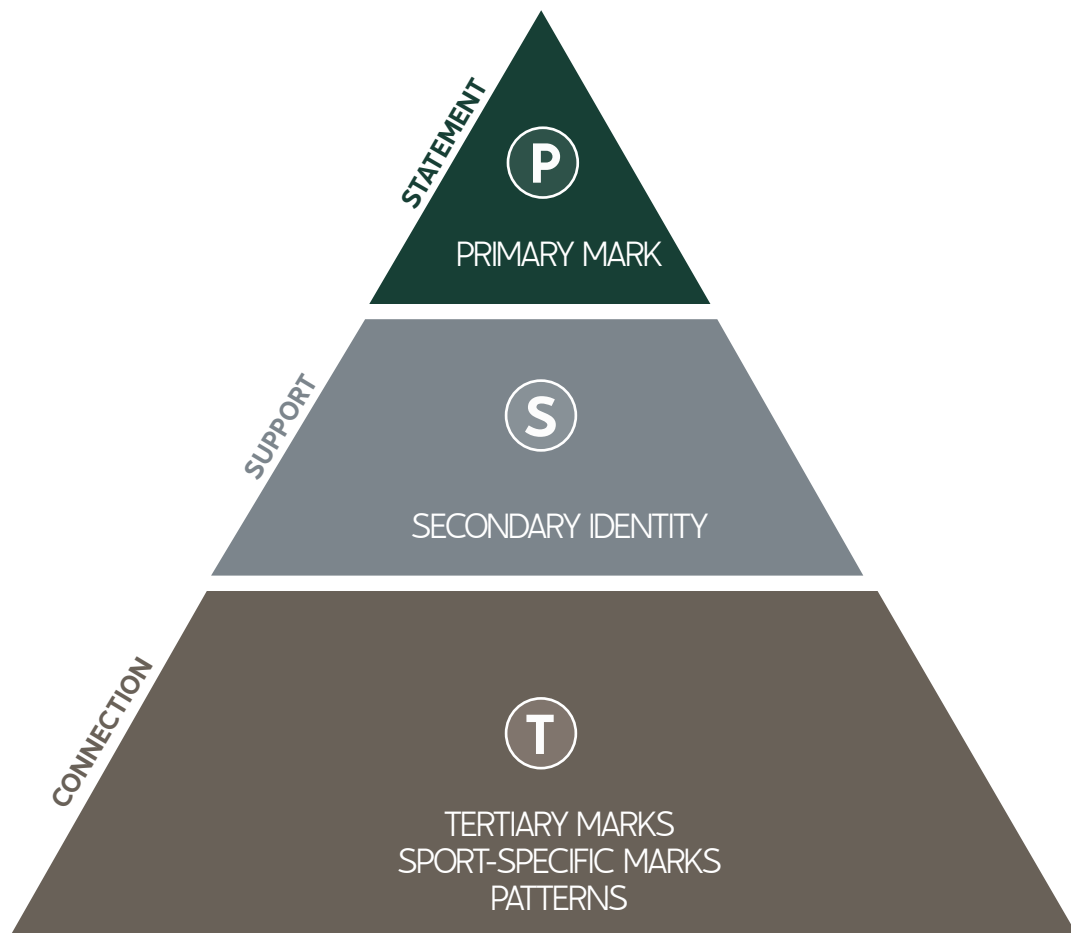
SECONDARY - THE SUPPORT

The SECONDARY identities work closely in support of the Primary Mark to represent the university. These marks give the identity flexibility while staying consistent with the Primary Mark's look and feel.



TERTIARY - THE CONNECTION

The TERTIARY elements supply freshness to retail and on-field products and help unify the university's specific sports programs.



Primary Color System

Our primary color system is made up of two colors: “MSU Athletics Green” and White. MSU Athletics Green is the cornerstone of our identity, representing strength, resilience, and vitality. This shade of green embodies our commitment to excellence and unwavering determination to push forward. It serves as the primary color in our brand palette, evoking a sense of energy and growth while ensuring consistency and recognition across all brand touchpoints.

MSU ATHLETICS GREEN

Evokes hope and growth. Symbolizes land and agricultural roots.

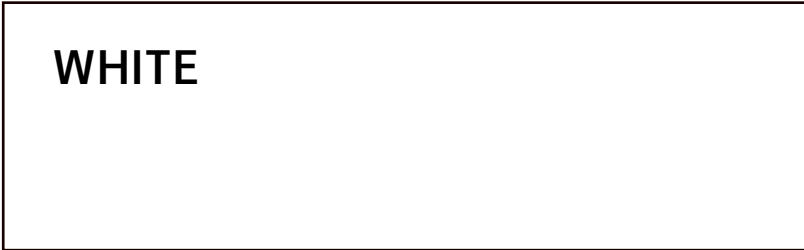
RGB 23, 63, 53
CMYK 88, 33, 69, 72
HEX 173F35
PANTONE 567 C
MADEIRA 1390
ROBINSON- ANTON 2734



WHITE

Represents integrity, hope, confidence, and faith.

RGB 255, 255, 255
CMYK 0, 0, 0, 0
HEX FFFFFFFF
PANTONE No Ink
MADEIRA 1002
ROBINSON- ANTON 2297



Secondary Color System

Our secondary color system complements our primary color, MSU Athletics Green, with a sophisticated palette that adds depth and versatility to our brand identity.

Silver conveys elegance and modernity, reflecting our commitment to innovation and forward-thinking. It symbolically represents intelligence, dignity, quality, and industrial sleekness.

Bronze brings warmth and distinction, symbolizing our dedication to excellence and achievement. It symbolically represents strength and integrity and was used as a material in Spartan armor.

Black provides a timeless and classic element, offering a strong foundation for highlighting key brand elements and creating visual contrast.

Together, these secondary colors enhance our brand's visual impact and create a cohesive and memorable brand experience across various platforms.

SILVER

124, 135, 142
33, 18, 13, 40
7C878E
430C
1118
5517



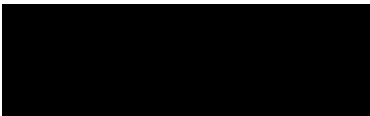
BRONZE

105, 97, 88
26, 31, 35, 72
696158
405C



BLACK

0, 0, 0
0, 0, 0, 100
000000
6C



Primary Logo

SPARTAN HELMET

Consistent use of the Primary Mark clarifies the university's identity. The Spartan Helmet logo is timeless, unique, and strong. Reinforcement of the primary identity will continue to build worldwide brand equity.

The Spartan Helmet is shared between Michigan State University and Athletics, making it the universal logo of the campus.

NOTE

The protected area around the logo ensures that no other graphic elements interfere with its clarity and integrity. The depth of the protected area is equivalent to the height of the "X". It is very important that designers or desktop publishers do not attempt to construct the logo themselves.

The registered trademarks ® and ™ are required for licensed material and clothing. These marks are optional for digital design.



Spartan Helmet: One-Color

The logo can be used in the color variations shown below.



Spartan Helmet: Two-Color

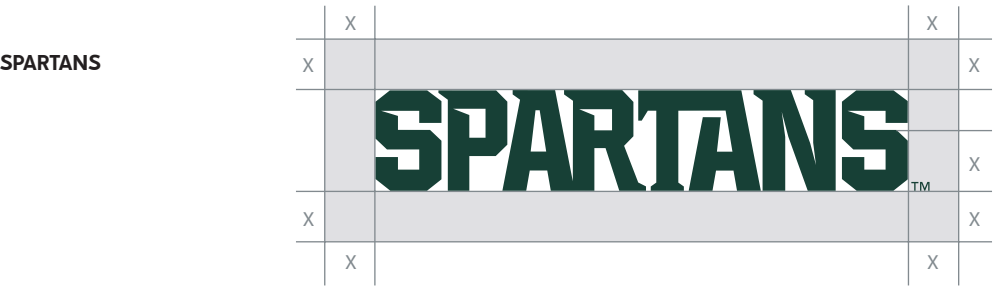
The logo can be used in the color variations shown below.



Secondary Logos: Wordmarks

The Secondary Marks work closely in support of the primary identity to represent the university. These marks are exclusive to Michigan State Athletics.

The custom, distinctive nature of the typeface is inspired by Greek architecture – strong, simple lines as well as traditional collegiate lettering. The combination of these elements creates a powerful, unique look that distinguishes the university's wordmarks from all other schools.



NOTE
The protected area around the logo ensures that no other graphic elements interfere with its clarity and integrity. The depth of the protected area is equivalent to the height of the "X". It is very important that designers or desktop publishers do not attempt to construct the logo themselves.

The registered trademarks ® and ™ are required for licensed material and clothing. These marks are optional for digital design.

NOTE
Use good judgment to ensure legibility. A mark that is too small doesn't serve any communicative function. The recommended minimum size for printing wordmarks on all materials is .25" in cap height. The cap height is the distance from the top of the capital letter to its bottom. Larger minimum sizes may be necessary for other media, such as video and film, or products that require specialized manufacturing. There may be situations where Michigan State Athletics marks will need to appear smaller than the minimum shown (e.g., lapel pins, pens, pencils, and CD spine labels). Contact Michigan State Licensing Programs for guidance.

Wordmarks: One-Color (Preferred)

The wordmarks can be used in the color variations shown below.



Wordmarks: Two-Color

The wordmarks can be used in the color variations shown below.



Primary Logo Sport Lock-Up

Sport-specific wordmarks supply freshness and uniqueness to products when needed and represent specific university athletics programs. They unify athletics and promote consistency across the brand by sharing a common visual language and hierarchy.

Each sport benefits from identification as part of Michigan State Athletics and assists in building the core brand while communicating the diversity of the athletics program.

The sport-specific logos exist for teams that appear under the 'sports' tab on msuspartans.com. For more information, email brand@ath.msu.edu.

SPORT LOCK-UP (PREFERRED)



NOTE:
The protected area around the logo ensures that no other graphic elements interfere with its clarity and integrity. The depth of the protected area is equivalent to the height of the "X". It is very important that designers or desktop publishers do not attempt to construct the logo themselves.

These marks and all Michigan State Athletic-specific marks may **ONLY** be printed on Nike apparel. For more information, contact brand@ath.msu.edu.

PRIMARY LOGO / SPORT LOCK-UP (STACKED)



PRIMARY LOGO / SPORT LOCK-UP (LINEAR)



Tertiary Mark

The tertiary identities reflect Greek history and connect to specific university sport programs. These marks can supply freshness to products when needed and represent specific aspects of the school.

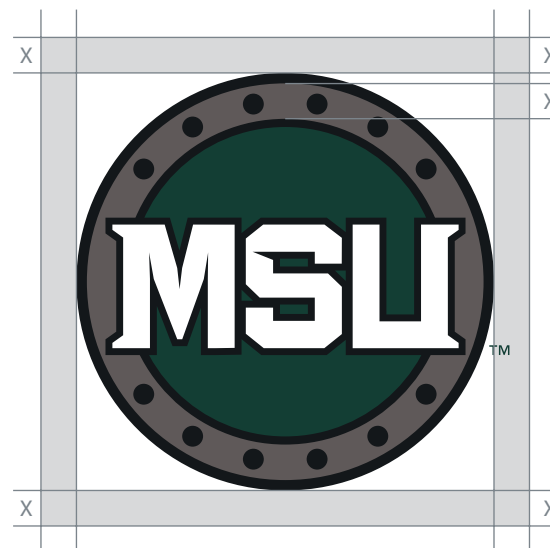
MSU SHIELD

The MSU Shield logo is inspired by Spartan battle weapons, and uses the university acronym as the base identifier. The mark's shape and color reflect Spartan shields, which were typically made of a woodcore and faced with bronze for strength.

NOTE

The protected area around the logo ensures that no other graphic elements interfere with its clarity and integrity. The depth of the protected area is equivalent to the height of the "X". It is very important that designers or desktop publishers do not attempt to construct the logo themselves.

The registered trademarks ® and ™ are required for licensed material and clothing. These marks are optional for digital design.



Alternate Color Variations

The logo can be used in the color variations shown below.

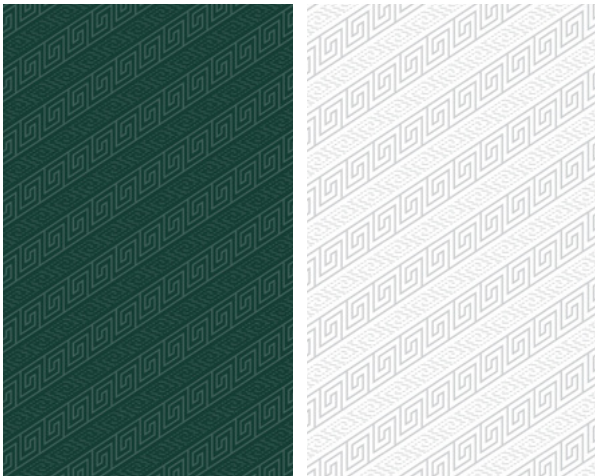


Patterns

The Spartan Pattern was designed to strengthen the connection to the school's Greek history and nickname, as well as to supply freshness to on-field and licensed products.

The pattern was inspired by a traditional Greek key pattern. Some suggested meanings for Greek patterns are symbolic of friendship and devotion, creative energy, the four seasons, and the eternal flow of life.

SPARTAN PATTERN CLASSIC (SPC)¹



SPARTAN PATTERN MODERN (SPM)²

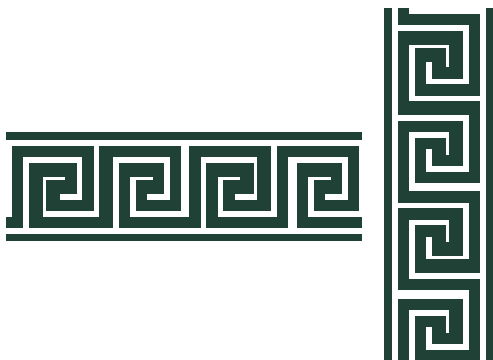


NOTE

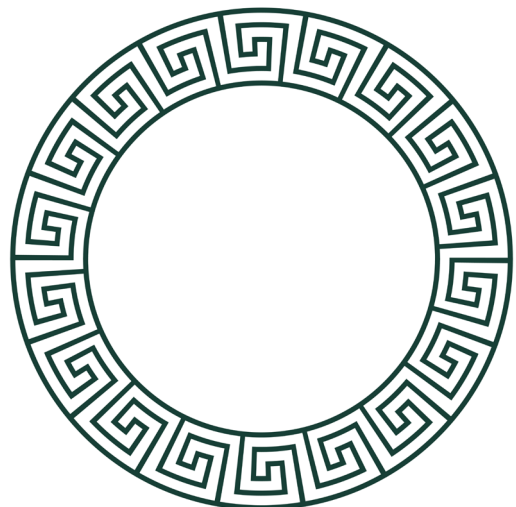
All variations of the repeated pattern must flow at a 45 degree angle from lower left to upper right. The intention is to show progress.

Both patterns are restricted for use by Michigan State Athletics. Other departments and colleges at the university are **not permitted** to use the Spartan Pattern for internal or external publications. Broadcast partners are not permitted to use either pattern. Corporate partners are limited to access the Classic Pattern only. The Classic Pattern has restrictions on apparel usage, contact brand@ath.msu.edu for more information.

SPARTAN STRIPE¹



SPARTAN STRIPE - CIRCLE²

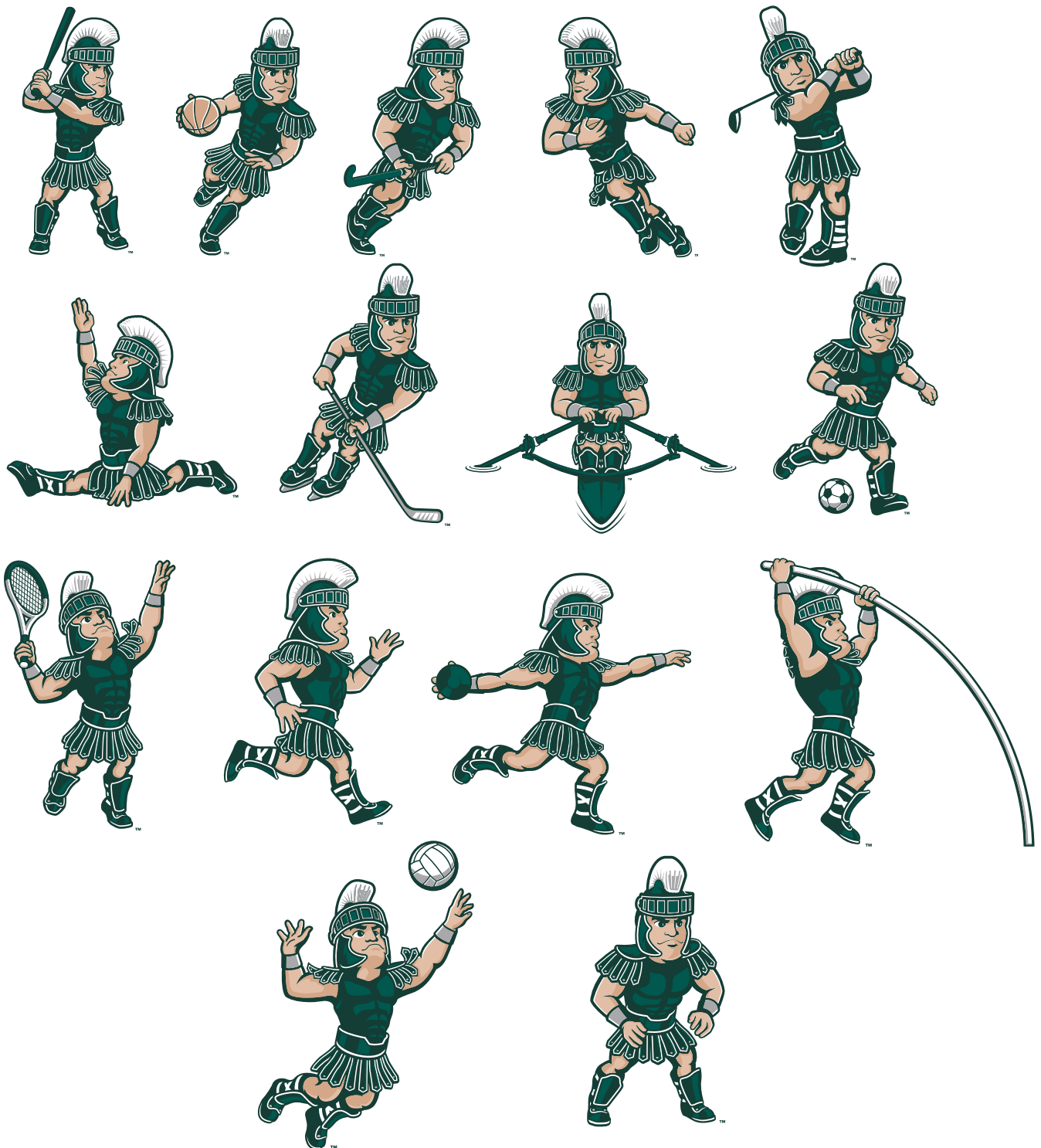


NOTE

The Spartan Stripe¹ can only be used in horizontal and vertical orientations. When using the Spartan Stripe the inside pattern should be going clockwise. On the Spartan Circle², the inside Greek pattern is correct as shown here. Both patterns are limited for use and require permission to appear on apparel.

Mascot Marks

Our mascot marks embody the spirit of our brand through dynamic representations of Spartans engaged in various athletic pursuits. While these marks capture the passion, determination, and competitive drive that defines Michigan State Athletics, they are secondary elements and not exclusive brand identifiers. Their use should be limited and carefully controlled, serving only as supporting brand assets in approved applications. They may NEVER replace our primary logo (Spartan Helmet) or be used as the primary representation of our brand.



NOTE

These marks are not exclusive to Athletics and other campus partners may use them pending Licensing approval. All usage of these marks must be approved by MSU Licensing Programs (licensing@msu.edu).

Restricted Use Marks

NOTE

It is very important that designers or desktop publishers do not attempt to construct the logo themselves.

The registered trademarks ® and ™ are required for licensed material and clothing. These marks are optional for digital design.

The logos located on this page need approval before being used. Please contact brand@ath.msu.edu for permission or explanation.

Logos 1, 3, and 4 are sport-specific marks. Mark 1 is exclusive to Baseball. Mark 3 may only be used by Baseball and Softball. Mark 4 is exclusive to Hockey.



Bowls and Tournaments

The use of any bowl or tournament logo on apparel or items requires permission from the Licensing Programs Office (licensing@msu.edu) and must adhere to that specific bowl or tournament's guidelines.

College Vault Marks (Restricted Marks)

The marks listed below are part of the College Vault program through CLC (Collegiate Licensing Company). They MAY NOT BE USED to replace any primary mark on any piece of property, apparel, literature, digital assets, or within facilities. They are only to be used by Michigan State Athletics with a written release from the Licensing Programs Office - there are no exceptions.



Verbiage

Licensing verbiage ensures that our brand's unique phrases, slogans, and expressions are protected and used appropriately, maintaining the integrity and exclusivity of our brand identity. By licensing specific verbiage, MSU Licensing Programs can control how our brand message is communicated, safeguarding against misuse or misrepresentation that could dilute Michigan State University's value and reputation.

Additionally, understanding the distinction between Circle R (Registered Trademark) and TM (Trademark) symbols is crucial for maintaining legal protection for our brand assets. The Circle R symbol signifies that a word, phrase, or symbol has been officially registered with the appropriate trademark authority, such as the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). This registration provides additional legal protection and establishes a presumption of ownership and validity of the trademark.

On the other hand, the TM symbol indicates that a word, phrase, or symbol is being used as a trademark to identify and distinguish our goods or services from others in the marketplace. It signifies our claim to exclusive rights with that trademark, even if it has not been officially registered with the relevant authority. Therefore, it is important to use the appropriate symbol based on the status of our trademarks to ensure proper legal protection and enforcement of our brand assets.

For more information, contact licensing@msu.edu.

LICENSED WORDS AND PHRASES

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY®
MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS®
MICHIGAN STATE®
MSU™
SPARTANS™
SPARTY®
GO GREEN GO WHITE®
GO GREEN™
STATE™
IZZONE™
SPARTANS WILL.®
VICTORY FOR MSU™
SPARTAN DAWGS™
IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY FOR FOOTBALL™

Facilities

To maintain brand consistency, the look and feel of our facilities should parallel our creative direction.

Michigan State's stadiums and arenas are the colosseums in which the Spartans go to battle. A cohesive look across our facilities shows our fans, recruits, and teams that all of our units are a part of the story.

The guidelines in this book will help you apply our story to facilities. A senior administrator must provide written approval before releasing any facility design to commence. Without the additional release from MSU Licensing Programs, the use of restricted logos (see pages 12 and 13) is prohibited.

Do not use bright, neon colors such as Action Green or similar as they conflict with current brand guidelines.



Apparel & Uniforms



The MSU Athletics brand is known globally not only for the number of championships we've won, but also for our MSU Athletics Green and Spartan Helmet logo. Prior to the 2010 brand refresh with Nike, Michigan State Athletics was losing credibility in terms of consistent recognition and consumer identifiability. The goal of maintaining brand standards and outlining the expectations of our teams and staff is in the best interest of the visibility and viability of every team in the Michigan State Athletics umbrella.

Approvals

Prior to designing any team uniform, the Deputy Athletic Director for External Resources must provide written approval for a design to commence. The use of any restricted logo (see pages 12 and 13) is prohibited without the additional release from MSU Licensing Programs.

All team uniforms that DO NOT have the standard Michigan State or Spartans Wordmark or the Spartan Helmet logo must be approved by a sport administrator at least 90 days prior to the team wearing them.

All team and unit projects must have approval from brand@ath.msu.edu and may require additional approvals from Licensing Programs and the BIG Conference and/or NCAA.

Travel

Teams, units, and staff that are traveling on behalf of Michigan State Athletics are expected to wear current Michigan State Athletic marks and avoid wearing restricted logos and alternate color patterns. This includes recruiting visits and appearances. Bags, luggage tags, etc. should also only carry current marks and logos. No team or unit carries permission to use alternate fonts or restricted logos on travel apparel.

Bench Attire

Coaching staffs and benches that are not wearing dress attire MUST wear matching sideline apparel based on what the team is wearing. E.g., a sideline may only wear apparel with restricted logos WHEN the team is wearing restricted logo uniforms in an approved match/game. Benches and teams must match.

Team Photos

Teams are prohibited from wearing any uniforms that include restricted or alternate logos in team and portrait photography.

Media Day

To maintain consistency, all student-athletes must wear the same uniform on team media days.

Media Events

Coaches and staff that are not wearing dress attire are advised to wear current Michigan State marks and logos (pages 6-8) on Nike apparel. It is not appropriate to wear competitor apparel or clothing with restricted marks while appearing before a national or regional audience.

Nike Apparel

The team-specific word marks are only allowed on Nike apparel.

Vintage Apparel

The use and wearing of vintage apparel requires permission from administration. When vintage logos are worn during competitions, team benches must also be wearing the same logo on items that they are wearing.



Photography

Every game, match, or meet is a battle for a win. Together, the big AND the small moments tell the whole story.

Photographs allow us to capture and preserve these moments and to document our history. It is important that our brand's visuals remain cohesive and consistent.

Framing

Tight shots and close-ups allow fans to connect with our teams on a more intimate level. Images that capture emotions touch their hearts.

Colors/White Balances

Avoid the use of cool/blue white balances. We look for warm tones that signify the strength of the Spartans. Warm colors create a sense of intimacy and make an area feel closer. They are energizing, evoking feelings of excitement and movement.



Restricted Use Typeface

Spartan Bold

A custom display face (Spartan Bold) has been designed to enhance the overall identity system by taking inspiration from Greek architecture and the Spartan ethos of simplicity and strength.

Spartan Bold is the basis for the Michigan State and Spartans wordmarks and thus requires special protections (see note at bottom of this page).

SPARTAN BOLD TYPE

ABCDEFGHIJ K K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Y Z

SPARTAN BOLD NUMERALS

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

SPARTAN BOLD NUMERALS - ALTERNATE COLORS



NOTE:

The Spartan Bold display face may only be used, with permission, in wordmarks, significant titles, and for uniform player names and numbers. To request permission, email brand@ath.msu.edu.

Outlines are not recommended on Spartan Bold letters. Outlines are acceptable on numbers.

Primary Font

Duty

Duty was selected to complement the Spartan Bold typeface. Duty is part of a family that offers a range of weights, providing great versatility and legibility in print and electronic applications. Duty can be used as headline and body copy for athletic department marketing materials and supporting verbiage (i.e., specific sport marks, event tickets, brochures, etc.).

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890?!*+(.,)

Light

Light Oblique

Regular

Oblique

Bold

Bold Oblique

Heavy

Heavy Oblique

Design Fonts

The typefaces and styles located on this page are allowed for specific use on in-venue LED displays, social media, digital productions, and print content. The Duty typeface should be used on official Michigan State Athletic documents, business cards, headers, mailings and is the only typeface that should be used with Spartan Bold (ex: sport lock-up). Contact brand@ath.msu.edu with any questions.

Owners

Owners is a bold sans serif typeface inspired by hand-painted signs. With a wide range of widths and weights, the font offers flexibility while maintaining a strong, structured appearance.

Owners works best in headlines, logos, and other large-scale uses where impact is key. Kerning should be reviewed carefully to ensure even spacing between letters.

a b c d e f g h i j k l m
n o p q r s t u v w x y z
A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 ? ! * + (. ,)

Light
Regular
Bold
Black

Narrow Light
Narrow Regular
Narrow Bold
Narrow Black

Wide Light
Wide Regular
Wide Bold
Wide Black

URW Latino

URW Latino is a strong serif typeface with a traditional feel. The font includes multiple weights, making it flexible for different types of designs.

URW Latino works well in headlines and formal communications where a classic look is needed. It can be used in limited body text, but is best suited for display use.

a b c d e f g h i j k l m
n o p q r s t u v w x y z
A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 ? ! * + (. ,)

Regular
Medium
Bold
Black

Factoria

Factoria is a slab serif typeface with a clean, geometric design. It has a square, structured look that gives it a bold, industrial feel. The font includes multiple weights, making it flexible for a range of design uses.

Factoria works well where a solid, confident look is needed. It can be used in limited body text, but is best suited for large-scale applications.

a b c d e f g h i j k l m
n o p q r s t u v w x y z
A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 ? ! * + [. ,]

Thin
Light
Book
Medium

Demi
Bold
Black
Ultra

Shameless

Shameless is a script typeface inspired by hand lettering. It has a loose, flowing style with lots of swashes. The font is dynamic and expressive, reflecting the energy of the Spartans.

Shameless is a display font and should not be used in paragraph text.

a b c d e f g h i j k l m
n o p q r s t u v w x y z
A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 ? ! * + [. ,]

Resources

EMAIL SIGNATURE

Every email that comes from an Athletic Department email address reflects upon the department and the university. Using one simple, branded email signature across the department helps strengthen our visual identity.

Email signatures can be tricky. There are a multitude of email clients, all of which render HTML slightly differently and some of which don't render HTML at all. Also, using various fonts and images in your signature can cause display issues when your messages are delivered.

Your own email signature can be requested by filling out the information [here](#). The two approved email signature formats are sampled below.

Option 1 (with logo)



First Name Last Name

Title

Unit

Michigan State Athletics

Address | City,ST ZIP

Office: 517.555.5555 | **Cell:** 517.555.5555

Pronouns:

Option 2 (without logo)

First Name Last Name

Title

Unit

Michigan State Athletics

Address | City,ST ZIP

Office: 517.555.5555 | **Cell:** 517.555.5555

Pronouns:

NOTE:

- Do not resize the logo image.
- Do not add anything to the signature file, such as inspirational quotes or additional graphics.
- Do not use Comic Sans or any serif fonts in your emails or documents.
- Do not replace the Spartan Helmet with any other logo.

SOCIAL MEDIA AVATARS & BANNERS

Teams have avatars and banners already made. They are located in the assets folder on the Brand Guidelines SharePoint. It is expected that teams participating under Michigan State Athletics will use the avatars and banners made for them per the brand and social media plan for the department. For more on social media, see page 26.

To request an avatar or banner OR for revisions, contact social@ath.msu.edu.



GRAPHICS TEMPLATES

Each team has its own identity within the brand. Graphics created for each team throughout the season have the same look and feel. Teams are provided with a package of graphics templates at the beginning of each season that reflects their identity.

Teams may not mimic the designs of another team or use templates that are not their own. This is to preserve the integrity of their brand and the overall brand of the Athletic Department.

OTHER RESOURCES

Letterhead, memos, and presentations are available for download at go.msu.edu/ath-portal.

Prohibited Design Applications



At no time should anything (other logos, type, etc.) be placed over identity elements.



Identity elements should not be used as a repeat in closed patterns.



Identity elements should not be modified, stretched, or distorted in any way.



Identity elements should not be used in any color combinations other than those specifically called out in this manual.



Identity elements should not appear against any distracting textures or repeated patterns.



Identity elements should not be outlined in any way other than those specifically called out in this identity manual.



Identity elements should not be used as an outline.



Effects should not be added to the identity elements (bevel, glow, posterize, etc.).



Do not crop the identity elements in any way.



At no time should the proportions of the sport lock-ups be changed.



At no time should the positions of the identity elements in the sport lock-ups be modified.



Identity elements should not be tilted, rotated, or skewed.



The Primary Mark should always face right and should not be used flipped in the opposite direction (left).

*Exceptions are when the Primary Mark is used on a helmet (pant, sleeve, etc.) where the mark faces forward on both sides.

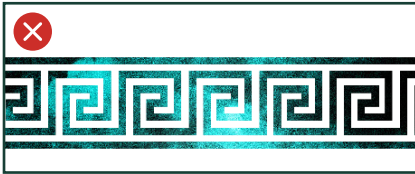


LIMIT USE OF SPARTAN BOLD. The Spartan Bold display face may only be used in wordmarks, significant titles, and for uniform player names and numbers.

Outlines are not recommended to Spartan Bold letters. Outlines are acceptable on numbers.



The Tertiary Mark should not be placed in direct proximity to the Primary Mark, or be combined with the Primary Mark or official school wordmarks.



At no time should additional graphics be added to the identity elements.



Do not use "STATE" wordmark without prior written approval.



Pattern should not be positioned with horizontal or vertical lines.



At no time should College Vault logos be combined with other text.



At no time should the Spartan Pattern be skewed.



All wordmarks or support type must be positioned below the Primary Mark and should adhere to the outlined proportions.



SPARTANS and MICHIGAN STATE wordmarks are logos and should not be considered text to type alongside.



Do not manipulate the spacing on the SPARTANS and MICHIGAN STATE wordmarks or attempt to recreate them in any way.



The SPARTANS and MICHIGAN STATE wordmarks should not appear stacked or horizontal to spell Michigan State Spartans.



The Spartan Bold font is restricted and should not be used on vehicles, facilities, or apparel without written permission.

B1G Standards

The Big Ten logo can only be used in a few, specific color variations. In general, the logo should never be broken, stretched, squashed, or skewed. The logo may be tailored to MSU Athletic's color palette. In addition to MSU Athletics Green and White, a black version of the logo is also acceptable.

Approval is required to put the Big Ten logo on team apparel. For approval, email licensing@msu.edu.

For more information and for a copy of the B1G guide, email brand@ath.msu.edu.



B1G Colors



MSU Colors



NOTE

Use of the NCAA logo requires a release. Contact MSU Licensing Programs (licensing@msu.edu) for assistance.

Social Media

Broadly defined, social media encompasses websites and applications that empower users to create and share content and information.

For Michigan State Athletics, social media allows us to establish a connection with fans, students, donors, and alumni. It's an integral part of how we tell the story of our teams, department, and promote our brand. Our accounts should engage, entertain, and inform our audience.

Account Basics

Account Names - To maintain clarity for our fans and stakeholders, all team accounts must adhere to consistent naming standards. Across all social media platforms, team accounts should be named as follows: "Michigan State [Team Name]," as exemplified below.

Michigan State Women's Soccer
Michigan State Wrestling
Michigan State Men's Tennis

Profile Pictures and Headers - Each team is provided with designated avatars and headers for their social media account by Spartan Vision. These visual elements, combined with the consistent naming standards, play a crucial role in denoting accounts as official and preserving the integrity of our brand (see page 22).

Voice and Tone

When posting from an MSU Athletics team or unit account, the focus should be on portraying our programs in a positive light.

When posting to a specific team or unit account, refer to who or what you're representing as 'we,' reinforcing a sense of unity and shared identity within our athletic community.

Generally, keep the tone of official team and unit accounts professional and positive. If or when the opportunity to have fun or be witty arises, use it. Social media can be less formal than other forms of communication.

Community Engagement and Monitoring

Engaging with followers and other accounts on social media is important to build trust, boost brand visibility, and create a sense of community.

Accounts should be checked daily. While accounts are encouraged to actively engage with others on campus, in the community, and beyond, it's important to exercise discretion and consider the reputation of the accounts you interact with before sharing or amplifying their content.

Stay away from engagement with Barstool and similar entities. This includes parody fan accounts, meme accounts, and recruiting-focused accounts.

Post Format

When posting to social platforms "Less is More." Including too many details or information in a post can cause it to look overwhelming and harder for people to read. Less text allows for the content to speak for itself and increase engagement.

Less is more also applies to posting during an event. If the Spartans are doing poorly, then the number of posts should be reduced.

Hashtags

#GoGreen is the primary hashtag used across MSU Athletics. Use hashtags at the end of the caption.

Avoid using: #GoWhite, #GoGreenGoWhite, #SpartanNation, #SpartanStrong, #Smartan, #SpartanLegend, #SpartanFamily, and other unrelated/random hashtags.

If your team or unit has a mantra they would like to use as a hashtag, discuss it with the Director of Social.

If an event has an established hashtag, i.e., a university or NCAA sanctioned event, then those can be included when it makes sense. Do not create hashtags before discussion with Director of Social.

Accessibility

Because Michigan State is a public university, our content must comply with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Acts. Therefore, our posts and content must be accessible and readable for everyone, including individuals with disabilities.

Open-Captioning

Captions should be included on all videos, as part of the video itself, known as “burned in” text.

Our department employs the Duty Bold font for captioning. Any alternative font selections must be approved by the Director of Social Media

Moderate Emoji Use

Use emojis sparingly, put them at the end of the text, and don't use them to replace words.

Alt Text

When sharing graphics or photos, make best efforts to add Alt Text. Alt Text provides a brief description of the photo or video, allowing users who rely on assistive devices to understand the content we're sharing.

Limit Alternative Fonts

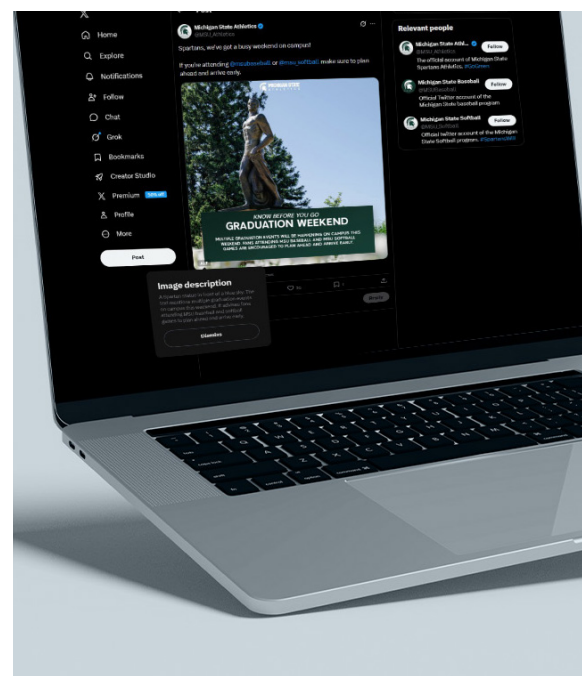
While *alternative fonts* may appear visually appealing, they present issues that outweigh their aesthetic benefits. Do not use alternative fonts or third-party websites that alter your text to bold, cursive, or other styles.

University Community Guidelines

Unfortunately, some content posted by team accounts can attract hateful and rude replies or comments. MSU Athletics defers to the University's community guidelines to determine whether to delete/hide a comment.

The University's community guidelines state that university-affiliated accounts may delete/hide any comments or replies that use explicit language, hate speech, slurs, contain threats, and obvious bot replies (i.e., betting bots, sexually explicit bots, and so on).

The full university community guidelines can be accessed [here](#).



Video

Video is an incredible tool that helps tell the stories of Michigan State Athletics. Whether a video is used on or during network broadcasts, there are certain things to keep in mind. One of the most important things to know about video, as opposed to photos and graphics, is that the university, as a member of the Big Ten Conference and not owning sporting event broadcasts, does not own the rights to ancillary video content created. Since 2007 and the signing of the ancillary media rights agreement, Big Ten Network owns these rights.

As a result of this agreement, our Athletics department, like every other department in the conference, does not have the right to sell additional sponsorships on videos (unless permission is granted), make deals with other networks for TV shows (unless permission is granted), and is compelled to follow distribution requirements on social and broadcast set forth by Big Ten Network. Creative assets, rules, and more can be discussed with Branding. Send an email to brand@ath.msu.edu to set up a time.

Student-Athlete Footage

As of 2024, student-athletes have limited rights to use BIG Conference-owned footage on their social media channels so long as the footage is not used for commercial purposes.

For questions, please contact brand@ath.msu.edu.

Filming on Campus

Any filming or videography for commercial purposes requires a location agreement obtained through University Communications (for more information, visit comms.msu.edu).

Music

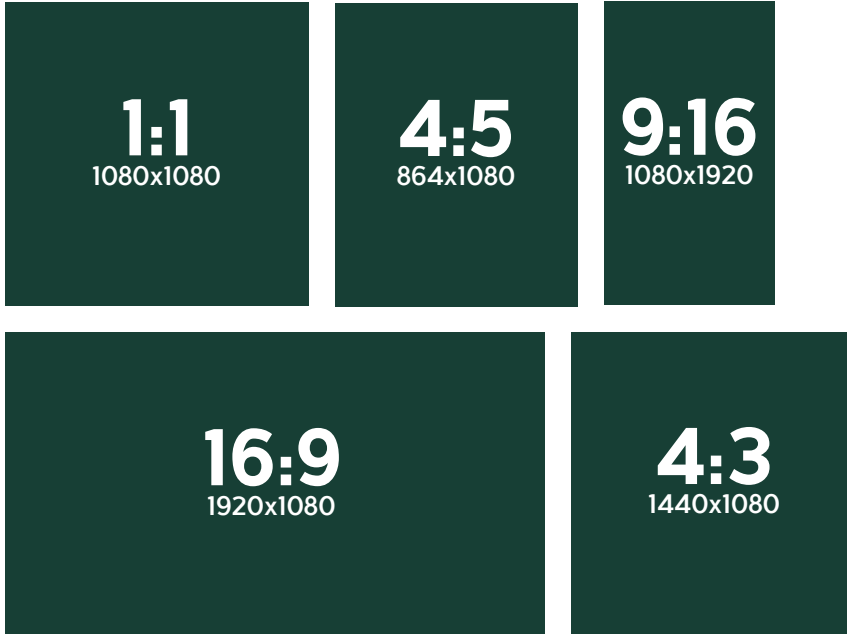
1. Music should align with the values of Michigan State Athletics and Michigan State University.
2. Music containing hate speech, derogatory remarks, and other items that denigrate the value of a human should be not be used.
3. Music in videos **MUST** be licensed. When in doubt if something is licensed and legal, contact social@ath.msu.edu.
 - This may be through royalty-free purchased music or pre-approved copyrighted music. This includes cross platform publishing (ex: TikTok to Twitter).
 - Just because you buy a song on iTunes does not mean you have the rights to stick it on a video.
 - Fair-use is not applicable in any video content as video is owned by BTN.
 - If music is approved on one platform, that doesn't mean it's approved on all platforms.
 - The Conference will not provide support for any legal battles regarding DMCA (copyright content) violations and social media accounts being suspended.
 - Consequences of violating the DMCA (Digital Millennium Copyright Act) may consist of account suspension or removal, in addition to legal action by a music artist.
 - University attorneys may not be able to support a team/department if they violate DMCA in a video production.
 - Staff/creators may be held responsible for violations of DMCA.
 - For questions regarding DMCA and the university's position, contact Michigan State University General Counsel or Michigan State University Human Resources.
4. Clean (non-cursing) versions of music should be used.
5. When working with record labels, ensure that the correct social accounts get white-listed.
6. The Conference has provided access to a royalty-free music library for schools to use.

For credentials to this library, please email brand@ath.msu.edu.

Branding

Videos posted from a Michigan State Athletics affiliated account must include a watermark in the upper left corner and outro at the end. The two should not appear on the screen at the same time (i.e., within the same frame). These assets are available upon request (email social@ath.msu.edu).

Sizing



4x5 and 9x16 are the primary social video ratios.

If all the pieces of content are the same size, then they can go into a carousel. Graphics are made to be 4x5 or 1x1 aspect ratio. If video is going in a carousel, do not have the outro included.

As a general rule of thumb, centralize key elements within the middle 80% of the screen to prevent them from being cropped.

Safe Zone

The “safe zone” is the area within your video that is guaranteed to be fully visible to viewers across different devices and platforms. Captions and other on-screen elements should be placed in this area.

Contact

Branding

brand@ath.msu.edu

Licensing

licensing@msu.edu

Social

social@ath.msu.edu

Video

brand@ath.msu.edu

Rights

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