

## 70 Open Source Resources for Designers

Linda offers some great deals for designers – open source Web sites and sources that are easy on designers' wallets, because they're free.

### Open Sourcing the Web

Designers know that photographs, artwork, modelling and animation tools and other resources usually cost money. Often, that money is not available for a job that has a deadline tomorrow. No need to freak out, as more sites have come on board to offer open source help.

The following list is not inclusive of all the open source or free sites offered to a designer on the Web...but they're the best sites and the best lists around. The only issue with open source materials is that you often get what you pay for – and finding quality art and photos might become an issue. But, just as often, you might find a solution for that client that cannot pay a hefty price for your services, too.

It's up to you whether or not you use open source art and photos...but to deny yourself some trial runs on resources such as free modelling or animation software is crazy – you might want to give some of the tools listed below a shot.

### 2D Illustration Software

1. [Cenon](#): Built upon a modular graphical core, Cenon offers a wide variety of possibilities and applications for vectors and design functions.
2. [GIMP](#): This a freely distributed piece of software for such tasks as photo retouching, image composition and image authoring.
3. [GIMPshop](#): GIMPshop is a modification of the free/open source GNU Image Manipulation Program (GIMP), intended to replicate the feel of Adobe Photoshop.
4. [Gliffy](#): Gliffy is an online diagramming service that helps users communicate with a combination of shapes, text, and lines.
5. [Inkscape](#): The Open Source old-timer when it comes to vector editing, with capabilities similar to Illustrator, CorelDraw, or Xara X, using the W3C standard Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG) file format.
6. [KoverArtist](#): This is a program for the fast creation of covers for cd/dvd cases and boxes.
7. [KToon](#): This is a design and authoring tool for 2D Animation inspired by animators for animators.
8. [NodeBox](#): This is an open source application for programming 2D animation and graphics in Python.
9. [POV-Ray](#): Otherwise known as the "Persistence of Vision Raytracer," this is a high-quality, totally free tool for creating stunning three-dimensional graphics.
10. [Skencil](#): This is a free software interactive vector drawing application. Known to run on GNU/Linux and other UNIX-compatible systems, it is a flexible and powerful tool for illustrations, diagrams and other purposes.

### 3D Illustration Software

11. [Animata](#): This is an open source real-time animation software, designed to create animations, interactive background projections for concerts, theatre and dance performances.
12. [Art of Illusion](#): This is a free, open source 3D modelling and rendering studio.
13. [Blender](#): Blender is the free open source 3D content creation suite, available for all major operating systems under the GNU General Public License.
14. [Bryce](#): Now up to version 7, you still can download this accessible and professional 3D landscaping and animation tool.

15. [Crystal Space](#): If you're into game development, try this free cross-platform software development kit for realtime 3D graphics.
16. [DAZ Studio 3](#): DAZ Studio is a free, feature rich 3D figure design and 3D animation tool that enables anyone to create stunning digital imagery.
17. [K3DSurf](#): is a program to visualize and manipulate Mathematical models in three, four, five and six dimensions. K3DSurf supports Parametric equations and Isosurfaces.
18. [Moviesandbox](#): Moviesandbox is an open-source realtime animation tool and 3D game engine. It is available for Mac OSX and Windows, and is currently in pre-release.
19. [Processing](#): This open source programming language and environment is for individuals who want to create 2D, 3D or PDF images, animations, and interactions.
20. [White Dune](#): This is a low level VRML97 tool for Unix/Linux/MacOSX and Windows. It can read VRML97 files, display and let the user change the scenegraph/fields.

## Web Design Help

21. [960 Grid System](#): If you want to try building a Web site on grids, try this framework site out.
22. [Blueprint](#): Blueprint is a CSS framework, which aims to cut down on your development time.
23. [NVU](#): This is a complete Web authoring system for Linux Desktop, Microsoft Windows and Macintosh users to rival programs like FrontPage and Dreamweaver.
24. [Open Designs](#): Open Designs is a community oriented site, where users, members and designers can share their free website designs and templates, discuss web design and promote their services.
25. [Open Source Web Design](#): OSWD is a site that offers free Web design template downloads.
26. [Open Web Design](#): Open Web Design is a community of designers and site owners sharing free web design templates, website templates as well as web design information.

## Video Software

27. [Avidemux](#): This is a free video editor designed for simple cutting, filtering and encoding tasks.
28. [AviSynth](#): This is a powerful tool for video post-production. AviSynth works as a frameserver, providing instant editing without the need for temporary files.
29. [CamStudio](#): Record all screen and audio activity on your computer and create industry-standard AVI video files. Using the built-in SWF Producer can turn those AVIs into bandwidth-friendly Streaming Flash videos (SWFs).
30. [Cinefx](#): Cinefx is a suite of open source, cross platform media playback, encoding, visual effects and editing digital content creation tools.
31. [CinePaint](#): Use this option for motion picture frame-by-frame retouching, dirt removal, wire rig removal, render repair, background plates, and painting 3D model textures.
32. [DVDx](#): This tool allows you to convert DVD to VCD2.0 or SCVD1.0 or DivX / Xvid (AVI) or Windows Media (WMV) in one step (including multiplexing, splitting). It produces very good quality movies in AVI / MPEG1 / MPEG2 / WMV format.
33. [JING](#): Take a picture or make a short video of what you see on your computer monitor and share it instantly via web, email, IM, Twitter or your blog.
34. [Kino](#): This is a non-linear DV editor for GNU/Linux that features excellent integration with IEEE-1394 for capture, VTR control, and recording back to the camera. It captures video to disk in Raw DV and AVI format, in both type-1 DV and type-2 DV (separate audio stream) encodings.
35. [LIVES](#): This open source asset mixes realtime video performance and non-linear editing in one professional quality application. It will let you start editing and making video right away, without having to worry about formats, frame sizes, or frame rates.
36. [OpenShot Video Editor](#): OpenShot Video Editor is a free, open-source video editor for Linux licensed under the GPL version 3.0.

## Vector Art

37. [Brands of the World](#): This is the largest library of freely downloadable vector logos.

38. [Cool Vectors](#): The vectors on this site may be used for personal projects. If you require the vectors for commercial use please contact the author.
39. [Dezignus](#): The mission behind this site is to improve designers' professional skills by providing useful freebies: vector, ps brushes and shapes, textures and backgrounds, icons etc.
40. [FreeVectors](#): This is an online gallery of free-to-use vector graphics for personal use, and most can be used commercially.
41. [QVectors](#): Search for free high-quality vector graphics at this site.
42. [Vecteezy](#): All the graphics on this site are free to download and, depending on the license, free to use in your projects.
43. [Vector Portal](#): "Everything vector - everything free" is how this site bills itself. You can find illustrations, borders, logos, icons and more here.
44. [Vector4Free](#): This vector blog publishes new free vector art finds on a regular basis.

## Clip Art and Fine Art

45. [8000 Free Cliparts](#): All clipart located on this site is public domain, so you can use the images for any personal or commercial purpose.
46. [ArsPublik](#): This is a public domain art gallery filled with images for designers.
47. [Art Renewal Center](#): You can find more than 2,600 realist painters, many in the public domain (before 1923).
48. [Open Clip Art](#): This project aims to create an archive of clip art that can be used for free for any use.
49. [Open Directory Public Domain Clip Art](#): This list provides you with a few choices for free clip art.
50. [Public Domain Clip Art](#): 25,000+ images free to use for any purpose.

## Photographs

51. [FreePhotosBank](#): Any photos/pictures posted by the author "freephotosbank" are free to use as long as you are using them for a website, book, magazine, etc. You cannot download our photos to sell as is or modified from any source.
52. [FreeFoto](#): FreeFoto.com provides its images under three available licensing options, including a Creative Commons license for non-commercial, no derivatives and a free-for-all, provided attribution is paid to the image and a link back to the site.
53. [freepixels](#): Any magazine, newspaper or other publication, product, design element or promotional material that uses these images may be sold or distributed in any way for an unlimited number of times.
54. [morguefile](#): The morguefile contains photographs freely contributed by many artists to be used in creative projects by visitors to the site. To acknowledge the artist's accomplishments, they ask that you credit the photographer when possible.
55. [NOAA Photo Library](#): Most NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) photos and slides are in the public domain and CANNOT be copyrighted. There is no fee for downloading any images on the NOAA Photo Library. A few photos in the NOAA Photo Library that are known to have copyright restrictions are so noted in the caption information associated with those images. Credit MUST be given to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration/Department of Commerce. Where a photographer is noted, please credit the photographer and his/her affiliated organization as well.
56. [Open Photo](#): The primary audience here consists of artists, developers, teachers and students.
57. [PD Photo](#): This is a free public domain photo database, filled with thousands of royalty-free pictures.
58. [Public domain stock photos](#): All photos in this site are free to use.
59. [U.S. Government Photos and Images](#): Some of these photos and images are available for use in the public domain, and they may be used and reproduced without permission or fee. However some photos and images may be protected by license.
60. [USDA Image Gallery](#): The Image Gallery is provided as a complimentary source of high quality digital photographs available from the U.S. Agricultural Research Service Information Staff.

## Lists and Freebie Sites

61. [25 \(Free\) 3D Modeling Applications You Should Not Miss](#): Why reinvent the wheel when Hongkiat.com provides an excellent list of tools for the illustrator/designer/ animator.
62. [bittbox](#): This link leads to this site's "Freebies" category, where you can find free software, textures and much more.
63. [CoolArchive](#): Find that clip art, icon, animation, bullet, sound, texture and much more at this "cool archive."
64. [Digital Artist Toolbox](#): You can find free vectors, textures, graphics, wallpapers, stock photographs, tips, tutorials and much more at this site.
65. [GoMediaZine](#): The link, again, leads to a Freebie section that mentions free tools, art and other offerings from around the Web.
66. [Library of Congress](#): As a publicly supported institution, the Library generally does not own rights in its collections. Therefore, it does not charge permission fees for use of such material and generally does not grant or deny permission to publish or otherwise distribute material in its collections. Permission and possible fees may be required from the copyright owner independently of the Library. It is the researcher's obligation to determine and satisfy copyright or other use restrictions when publishing or otherwise distributing materials found in the Library's collections. Transmission or reproduction of protected items beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners.
67. [Public Domain Depot](#): You can find public domain, royalty-free, copyright-free images, photos, music and sounds at this site.
68. [Smashing Magazine](#): Browse through this site's options or conduct a search for specific freebies mentioned here.
69. [Spoon Graphics](#): Browse through the Freebie section in this site, where you can find icons, tools and artwork.
70. [You the Designer](#): This link leads to this Web site's list of freebies, which range from Photoshop tools to fonts and wallpapers.

## Conclusion

Many of the sites above also offer venues for designers to show off their products and skills. If you use a site's photographs or artwork on a regular basis, you might think about contributions from your portfolio as well to help populate a site and get your name out.

You might also browse around and join open source design communities such as [OpenGL.org](#). This is a vendor-independent and organization-independent web site that acts as one-stop hub for developers and consumers for all OpenGL news and development resources.