BRAND GUIDE

Cursiv

Official Cursiv brand and style guidelines

VERSION
0.15.1

CONTENT
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ONLINE
brand.cursiv.no

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Introduction

What this guide is, who it is for, and how to use it

The Cursiv brand guide records the approved foundations, voice, and visual identity of Cursiv in one place, so that everything made in Cursiv's name is consistent and recognisable.

Who it is for

- **The Cursiv team:** anyone writing, designing, or presenting for Cursiv.
- **Partners and freelancers:** external contributors producing Cursiv material.
- **AI agents:** tools that generate copy, websites, or marketing material for Cursiv.

How to use it

Online

Use the navigation to move through the sections in order, or jump directly to the topic you need. Each page lists its headings on the right so you can link to a specific guideline.

As a PDF

The complete guide is available as a single PDF for offline reading and sharing: **download the brand guide ↓**.

As a developer

The guide's design tokens (colours, fonts, and the type scale) are published as files generated from the guide itself, so they always match what is documented here.

- **Tailwind CSS v4:** download **brand.css** and import it after Tailwind. This single import loads the brand fonts and gives you classes such as `text-ink`, `font-sans`, `font-mono`, `text-h1` and `max-w-body`:

```
@import "tailwindcss";
@import "./brand.css";
```

- **Other tools:** **brand.json** contains the same tokens as JSON.
- **Fonts:** brand.css also loads Switzer and IBM Plex Mono, so the single import is all you need on the web. For design tools, get the font files as described in **Fonts**.
- **Logos:** vector SVG files are available under **Logos**.

The version number in each token file matches the guide version, so you can tell whether your copy is up to date.

With AI agents

AI tools should consult the guide before generating Cursiv copy, websites, or marketing material.

MCP server. Connect any MCP-compatible client to the guide's read-only server. With Claude Code:

```
claude mcp add --transport http cursiv-brand https://brand.cursiv.no/mcp
```

The server offers two tools. `brand_overview` lists every published document, and `brand_get` returns one document's exact Markdown. It also exposes every published page as a resource such as `brand://foundations/mission`.

Plain text. `llms.txt` is an index of the guide, and `llms-full.txt` contains every published page in full.

Ownership and versions

The guide is owned and maintained by Cursiv. Only approved guidelines are published. If you need guidance that is not here yet, ask the authority on brand questions named under **History & Governance** rather than inventing a rule.

Every release has a version number, shown at the bottom of every page, on the cover of the PDF, and in the AI-readable files. All formats are published together from the same content, so they never disagree. See the **changelog** for what changed in each version.

Brand Foundations

Mission, vision, values, description, positioning, and personality

The foundations describe why Cursiv exists and what it stands for. Every other part of the guide builds on them.

Mission

Why Cursiv exists

> Give independent authors one seamless experience to write, collaborate, publish and sell globally effortlessly.

Using the mission

- Quote the mission exactly as written above. Do not shorten, paraphrase, or reorder it.

Vision

The world Cursiv wants to build

> Publishing should be as easy as telling a story.

Values

The values that guide Cursiv

Three values guide how Cursiv works, what it builds, and how it speaks.

People first

Authors are the reason Cursiv exists. We design around the people who write, collaborate on, and read books, not around processes or technology. When something is easier for us but harder for an author, we choose the author.

In practice:

- Start from the author’s goal, not from what the product happens to do.
- Make complex things feel simple, so authors can focus on their story.
- Treat every author’s work with the same care, whatever its size or genre.

Be brave and open

Publishing has worked the same way for a long time. We are willing to question that and try new approaches when they serve authors better. We are open about what we are doing and why, with authors, partners, and each other.

In practice:

- Challenge “the way it’s always been done” when there is a better way.
- Share our thinking honestly, including what we don’t know yet.
- Welcome feedback and act on it.

Humble and bold

We have big ambitions for what independent publishing can become, and we pursue them with conviction. We stay humble about how we get there: we listen, learn from authors, and admit when we get things wrong.

In practice:

- Set ambitious goals and commit to them.
- Let authors' experience guide our decisions.
- Speak with confidence, never arrogance.

Description

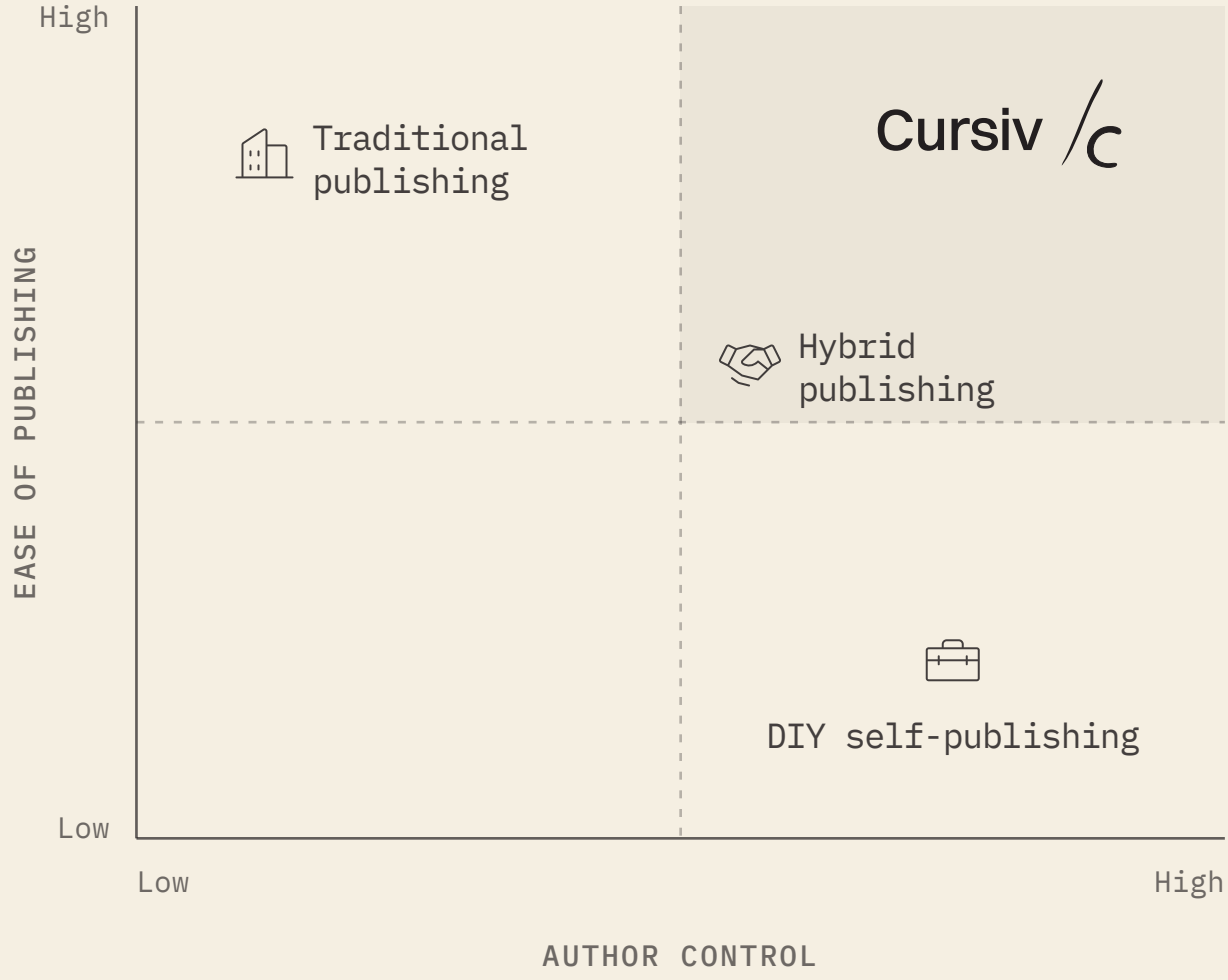
Cursiv in a few sentences

> Our company, Cursiv, is developing a platform that helps independent authors write, publish, and sell their books by bringing the entire publishing journey into one seamless experience.

Positioning & Differentiation

How Cursiv is positioned and what sets it apart

Authors should not have to sacrifice control to simplify publishing.



Model	Author control	Ease of publishing
Traditional publishing	Low	High
Hybrid publishing	Medium	Medium
DIY self-publishing	High	Low
Cursiv	**High**	**High**

Cursiv can differentiate itself by providing the benefits of a traditional publisher without the constraints.

Brand Personality

The character of the Cursiv brand

We are	We are not
Independent	Rebellious
Knowledgeable	Pretentious
Refined	Elitist
Approachable	Overly familiar
Empowering	Prescriptive
Contemporary	Trend-driven
Understated	Boring

History

The story of Cursiv

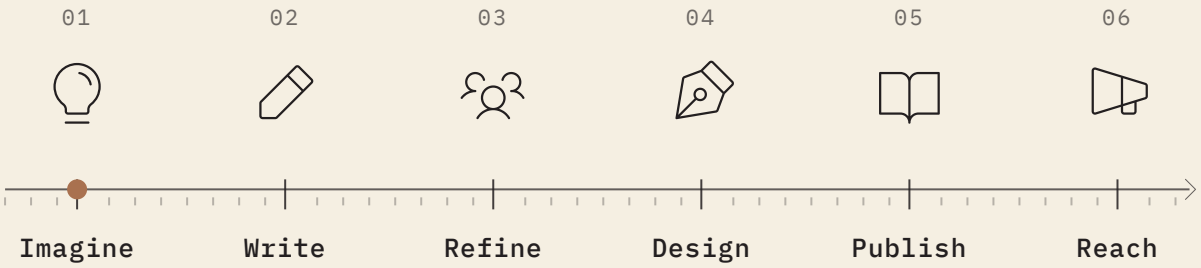
The story of Cursiv is being written and will be published on this page.

The Writing Process

The journey of a book, from idea to reader

The journey of a book

With Cursiv, every book moves through six stages, from the first spark of an idea to the hands of its readers.



1. **Imagine** — Explore ideas, develop concepts, and establish direction.
2. **Write** — Turn ideas into a manuscript.
3. **Refine** — Collaborate, edit, revise, and strengthen the manuscript.
4. **Design** — Shape the visual identity, typography, cover, and layout.
5. **Publish** — Prepare, distribute, and bring the book to market.
6. **Reach** — Connect with readers, promote the book, and grow its audience.

Use these stage names consistently, in this order, whenever the journey is shown or described.

Voice & Tone

Who Cursiv is in writing, and how that adapts to the moment

Cursiv's **voice** stays the same everywhere: it is the **Brand Personality** in words. Its **tone** changes with the moment, the way a person sounds different when they welcome you, help you fix a problem, or celebrate with you, while staying recognisably themselves.

For the mission, vision, and description, always use the approved wording in **Brand Foundations**.

Voice

The voice never changes. Each trait has a limit it should not cross.

We are	Write	Not
Independent, not rebellious	Keep control of your book, from the first idea to the first reader.	Down with the publishing gatekeepers.
Knowledgeable, not pretentious	Check your cover at thumbnail size: that’s how most readers will first see it.	Leverage best-in-class, omnichannel distribution synergies.
Refined, not elitist	A well-set page makes a book easier to read.	Only serious authors need apply.
Approachable, not overly familiar	Your manuscript is saved. Pick up where you left off.	Woohoo, you’re crushing it, bestie.
Empowering, not prescriptive	Here are three ways to price your book. Choose the one that suits your readers.	You must price your ebook at 4.99.
Contemporary, not trend-driven	Write, collaborate, and publish in one place.	The AI-powered, next-gen future of books is here.
Understated, not boring	A quiet place to write, and everything you need to publish.	The most revolutionary publishing platform ever created.

Understated is not the same as dull. Avoid flat, corporate copy too, such as “Cursiv is a software solution for managing publishing workflows.”

Tone

The tone adapts to what the author is doing and how they are likely to feel.

Moment	Tone	Write	Not
Guiding	Calm and clear: one step at a time	No chapters yet. Add your first one to get started.	Nothing here.
Acting	Direct and specific	Publish book	Submit
Celebrating	Warm and brief: let the moment speak	Your book is published. Congratulations.	Success!
When something goes wrong	Reassuring and practical: what happened and what to do	We couldn’t save your changes. Check your connection and try again.	Error 500: operation failed.
Waiting	Quiet and informative	Preparing your preview	Please wait…
Explaining the journey	Precise: use the stage names and approved descriptions	03 · Refine — Collaborate, edit, revise, and strengthen the manuscript.	Step 3: Editing & Polishing Phase
Reaching out	Inviting, never pushy	New this month: share chapters with your beta readers.	BIG NEWS inside!!!
Sharing expertise	Generous and useful	A good cover is read in a second. Here’s what makes one work.	10 cover hacks every author NEEDS to know

Checklist

Before you publish any Cursiv copy, check that it:

- sounds like Cursiv: plain words, speaking to the author as “you”;
- suits the moment: the right tone for what the author is doing;

- states what is true, without hype, superlatives, or exclamation marks;
- leaves the choice with the author;
- follows the **Editorial Conventions**.

Editorial Conventions

The house style for writing as Cursiv

These conventions keep Cursiv's writing consistent, wherever it appears. They follow the **Brand Personality** and the way this guide is written.

Voice and language

Write the way Cursiv is: independent, knowledgeable, refined, approachable, empowering, contemporary, and understated.

- **Plain words.** Say it simply. Knowledgeable, never pretentious: explain rather than impress, and avoid jargon.
- **Speak to the author.** Address readers as "you" and Cursiv as "we".
- **Quiet confidence.** State what Cursiv does without hype, superlatives, or exclamation marks. Understated, never boring.
- **Empower, don't prescribe.** Show authors what is possible and leave the choice with them.
- **Warm, not familiar.** Contractions such as "don't" and "it's" are welcome; slang and forced jokes are not.
- **Short and clear.** One idea per sentence. Cut words that add nothing.

Names and fixed wording

- **Cursiv** is always written with a capital C and no “e”: never “cursiv”, “CURSIV”, or “Cursive”. The possessive is “Cursiv’s”.
- Quote the **mission**, **vision**, and **description** exactly. Do not shorten, paraphrase, or reorder them.
- Use the six journey stages — Imagine, Write, Refine, Design, Publish, and Reach — with these names, in this order. See **The Writing Process**.
- Brand colours are names and start with a capital letter: Ink, Paper, Copper, Gold.

Capitalisation and headings

- Section and page titles use title case: “Brand Foundations”, “Social Media”.
- Headings within a page use sentence case: “How to use it”, “Type on images”.
- Keep “and” lowercase in title case, and use ”&” only in section titles such as “Voice & Tone”.
- Labels and eyebrows may be set in capitals by the design; write them in normal case.

Spelling and punctuation

- Use British English spelling: colour, recognise, organisation, centre. Keep the original spelling of proper names, such as “SIL Open Font License”, and of code.
- Use the serial comma in lists of three or more: “write, publish, and sell”. The only exception is approved wording that is quoted exactly, such as the mission.
- Use a spaced em dash (—) to set off an aside or to introduce a definition.
- Use typographic quotes and apostrophes: “ ” and ’.

- Avoid exclamation marks.

Numbers and formats

- Number steps and index entries with two digits: 01, 02, 03.
- Write colour values in capitals: ■ `#231F20`.
- Write email addresses and web addresses in lowercase: **jorunn@cursiv.no**, brand.cursiv.no.

Visual Identity

Colours, typography, logo, iconography, imagery, layout, and motion

---

Visual identity covers how Cursiv looks: its colours, typography, logo, iconography, imagery, layout, and motion.

Colours

Official brand colours and usage guidelines

Cursiv has four brand colours: Ink and Paper, the ink and page of a book, with Copper and Gold as accents. Cursiv favours warm neutrals over cool or clinical whites.

Photography and film use a wider range of warm, muted tones. These tones, sampled from the graded brand film, describe its character. They are reference tones for grading and choosing images, not brand colours.

Tone	HEX
Ink black	#121010
Espresso	#2B201A
Dark walnut	#473B32
Warm umber	#665347
Mushroom	#897D6C
Parchment taupe	#9A8D77
Soft stone	#A9A495
Warm paper	#DBDDD3
Muted ochre (approximate)	#B08A45
Olive accent (approximate)	#7A7B45

For how to use them in photography and film, see **Imagery**.

Ink

Ink is Cursiv’s black: a warm, printer’s-ink black used instead of pure black, so text reads like ink on paper. It is the same black as the Cursiv logo.

Format	Value
HEX	#231F20
RGB	35, 31, 32
CMYK	0, 0, 0, 100

- Use Ink for text, headings, and thin rules.

- For secondary text, use Ink at a reduced opacity rather than a grey. Keep small text at 65% opacity or more so it stays legible.
- In photography and film, blacks soften further to warm charcoal and espresso. See **Imagery**.

Paper

Paper is Cursiv's background: a warm cream, like uncoated book paper, used instead of pure white.

Format	Value
HEX	#F5EFE2
RGB	245, 239, 226
CMYK	0, 2, 8, 4

- Use Paper for page backgrounds, on screen and in print.
- Ink on Paper reaches a contrast of 14.2:1, so text in Ink is legible at every size.

Copper

Copper is Cursiv's accent: a warm, earthy brown that marks the one thing that matters, such as the current step in a journey.

Format	Value
HEX	#A9714F
RGB	169, 113, 79
CMYK	0, 33, 53, 34

- Use Copper sparingly, as an accent for markers, highlights, and graphics. In photography and film, ochre, olive, and muted red play the same occasional role.
- On Paper, Copper reaches a contrast of 3.5:1. That is enough for graphics and large text, but not for small text: never set body text, labels, or captions in Copper.

Gold

Gold is the colour of the gold logo: a soft, warm gold for moments that deserve a little ceremony.

Format	Value
HEX	#C4A46B
RGB	196, 164, 107
CMYK	0, 16, 45, 23

- Use Gold sparingly: for the **gold logo**, special editions, and print finishes such as foil.
- On Ink, Gold reaches a contrast of 6.8:1 and works for text. On Paper it reaches only 2.0:1, so use it there only for large graphics, never for text.

Dark backgrounds

On dark backgrounds, Ink and Paper swap places. Copper and Gold stay the same.

- **Background:** Ink, never pure black.
- **Text:** Paper, never pure white. For secondary text, use Paper at a reduced opacity, and keep small text at 65% or more (6.7:1).
- **Rules:** Paper at 15% opacity.

- **Layers:** for raised surfaces such as menus, lay Paper at a low opacity (around 5%) over Ink rather than adding new greys.
- **Accents:** Copper marks the current item, as on Paper. Gold reads well on Ink and suits highlights and special moments.
- **Logo:** use the white logo.

Using the colours

Paper and Ink do most of the work. Copper and Gold are accents: a little goes a long way.

Role	Light	Dark
Background	Paper	Ink
Text	Ink	Paper
Secondary text	Ink at 65% or more	Paper at 65% or more
Rules	Ink at 15%	Paper at 15%
Accent: markers and the current item	Copper	Copper
Accent: special editions and highlights	Gold, large graphics only	Gold

Do not use Copper or Gold as a page background.

Approved combinations

Contrast follows WCAG 2.2: body text needs 4.5:1, while large text (24 px, or about 18.7 px bold) and graphics need 3:1.

Foreground	Background	Contrast	Approved for
Ink	Paper	14.2:1	All text and graphics
Ink at 65%	Paper	4.8:1	Secondary and small text
Copper	Paper	3.5:1	Large text and graphics only
Gold	Paper	2.0:1	Large graphics only, such as the gold logo; never text
Paper	Ink	14.2:1	All text and graphics
Paper at 65%	Ink	6.7:1	Secondary and small text
Gold	Ink	6.8:1	All text and graphics
Copper	Ink	4.0:1	Large text and graphics only
Ink	Gold	6.8:1	All text and graphics, such as on a gold cover

Tokens

```
:root {
  --color-ink: #231F20;
  --color-paper: #F5EFE2;
  --color-copper: #A9714F;
  --color-gold: #C4A46B;
}
```

In Tailwind CSS, **brand.css** turns these into classes such as `text-ink`, `border-ink/15`, `bg-paper`, `bg-copper`, and `text-gold`.

Typography

Typefaces, type scale, and design tokens

Font pairing

Cursiv pairs **Switzer** with **IBM Plex Mono**. Switzer provides hierarchy. IBM Plex Mono provides character.

Publishing should be as easy as telling a story.

SWITZER · HEADINGS · SWITZER, SANS-SERIF · 56PX · WEIGHT 500

Give independent authors one seamless experience to write, collaborate, publish and sell globally effortlessly.

IBM PLEX MONO · BODY · IBM PLEX MONO, MONOSPACE · 14PX · WEIGHT 400

Expressive, modern Switzer headings set against technical, editorial IBM Plex Mono body text create a strong contrast. Use restrained font weights (400–500), generous whitespace, and tight heading tracking to achieve an editorial aesthetic.

Example pairings

CURSIV

Publishing should be as easy as telling a story.

Give independent authors one seamless experience to write, collaborate, publish and sell globally effortlessly.

Get started

BRAND FOUNDATIONS · VALUES

People first

Be brave and open

Humble and bold

Cursiv brand guide

Write · Collaborate · Publish · Sell

One seamless experience

Our company, Cursiv, is developing a platform that helps independent authors write, publish, and sell their books by bringing the entire publishing journey into one seamless experience.

Description

Type scale

Element	Font	Weight	Size	Line height	Letter spacing
Display / Hero	Switzer	500	72px	1.05	-0.04em
H1	Switzer	500	56px	1.1	-0.035em
H2	Switzer	500	40px	1.15	-0.025em
H3	Switzer	500	28px	1.2	-0.02em
H4	Switzer	500	22px	1.3	-0.01em
Body	IBM Plex Mono	400	14px	1.7	-0.01em
Navigation	IBM Plex Mono	400	12px	1.4	0.02em
Labels / Eyebrows	IBM Plex Mono	500	11px	1.4	0.06em
Buttons	IBM Plex Mono	500	12px	1.2	0.02em
Captions	IBM Plex Mono	400	12px	1.5	0

Body text has a maximum width of 65ch.

CSS design tokens

```css
:root {
  --font-sans: "Switzer", sans-serif;
  --font-mono: "IBM Plex Mono", monospace;

  --text-display: 4.5rem;
  --text-h1: 3.5rem;
  --text-h2: 2.5rem;
  --text-h3: 1.75rem;
  --text-h4: 1.375rem;
  --text-body: 0.875rem;
  --text-body--line-height: 1.7;
  --text-body--letter-spacing: -0.01em;
  --text-small: 0.75rem;
  --text-label: 0.6875rem;

  --container-body: 65ch;
}
```

Loading the fonts

```
/* Switzer: served by Fontshare under the ITF Free Font License */
@font-face {
  font-family: "Switzer";
  src: url("https://cdn.fontshare.com/wf/BLNB4FAQFNK56DWWNF7PMGTCOTZHOEII/ST3WKSSDMBK2MIQQO3MA
       url("https://cdn.fontshare.com/wf/BLNB4FAQFNK56DWWNF7PMGTCOTZHOEII/ST3WKSSDMBK2MIQQO3MA
  font-weight: 400;
  font-style: normal;
  font-display: swap;
}

@font-face {
  font-family: "Switzer";
  src: url("https://cdn.fontshare.com/wf/OYB4CXKJQXKTNSLJMTDQOIVUL2V5EL7S/WYO2P7DQVV5RNXGMCUO2
       url("https://cdn.fontshare.com/wf/OYB4CXKJQXKTNSLJMTDQOIVUL2V5EL7S/WYO2P7DQVV5RNXGMCUO2
  font-weight: 500;
  font-style: normal;
  font-display: swap;
}

/* IBM Plex Mono: served from brand.cursiv.no under the SIL Open Font License */
@font-face {
  font-family: "IBM Plex Mono";
  src: url("https://brand.cursiv.no/fonts/ibm-plex-mono/IBMPlexMono-Regular.woff2") format("wo
  font-weight: 400;
  font-style: normal;
  font-display: swap;
}

@font-face {
  font-family: "IBM Plex Mono";
  src: url("https://brand.cursiv.no/fonts/ibm-plex-mono/IBMPlexMono-Medium.woff2") format("woi
  font-weight: 500;
  font-style: normal;
  font-display: swap;
}
```

Using the tokens and fonts

The tokens and font rules above are published as files generated from this page:

- **brand.css**: a single import for Tailwind CSS v4 with the `@font-face` rules for both typefaces and the tokens as a `@theme`. Add `@import "./brand.css";` after `@import "tailwindcss";` to load the fonts and get classes such as `font-sans`, `font-mono`, `text-body` (with its line height and letter spacing) and `max-w-body`.
- **brand.json**: the same tokens and font rules as JSON.

Getting the fonts

Both typefaces are free to use.

- **Switzer** by Indian Type Foundry: **download from Fontshare**. On the web, brand.css loads it from Fontshare. Each person or supplier who needs the font files must download their own copy; the licence does not allow passing them on.
- **IBM Plex Mono** by IBM: **download from GitHub**, licensed under the SIL Open Font License.

Logo

The Cursiv logo, its colour versions, and how to use them

The Cursiv logo is available in three colour versions. Each file is a vector SVG.

Black

The black logo uses **Ink**, ■ `#231F20`: the same black as Cursiv's type, not pure black.



Download black logo (SVG) ↓

White



Download white logo (SVG) ↓

Gold



Logo colour: **Gold**, #C4A46B

Download gold logo (SVG) ↓

Icon

The Cursiv icon is the “/c” from the logo: the slash and the C on their own. Use it where the full logo would be too small, such as the favicon, app icons, and social media avatars.



Download the icon (SVG): **black ↓**, **white ↓**, or **gold ↓**.

Clear space

Keep a clear space around the logo and the icon equal to the height of the C in the logo. Keep text, images, other logos, and the edge of the page or screen out of it. More space is always welcome.

Minimum size

The logo’s fine, hand-drawn strokes need room to stay legible.

	Screen	**Print**
Logo	80 px wide	25 mm wide
Icon	16 px wide	5 mm wide

Below the logo’s minimum size, use the icon instead.

Backgrounds

- Use the **black** logo on Paper and other light backgrounds.
- Use the **white** logo on Ink, on other dark backgrounds, and on dark photography. Darken the image where the logo sits, as for **type on images**.
- Use the **gold** logo sparingly, for special editions and print finishes such as foil. On Ink it reaches a contrast of 6.8:1; on Paper only 2.0:1, so use it there only at large sizes.
- Place the logo on a calm, even area. Avoid busy patterns and the subject of a photo.

Misuse

Use the logo files as they are. Do not:

- stretch, squash, rotate, or skew the logo;
- recolour it, or use colours other than black, white, and gold;
- add shadows, outlines, gradients, glows, or textures;
- redraw it, retype it in a font, or change the space between its parts;
- separate the slash from the lettering, except as the Cursiv icon;
- place it on a background that makes it hard to read;
- put it in a box or shape, except on an app icon tile.

App icons

App icons place the Cursiv icon on a square tile: Ink on Paper, or white on Ink for dark settings. The icon sits in the centre with enough space around it for the rounded corners and circles that phones apply.



Version	Files
Light	SVG ↓, 1024 px ↓, 512 px ↓, 192 px ↓, 180 px ↓
Light, maskable (Android)	512 px ↓
Dark	SVG ↓, 1024 px ↓

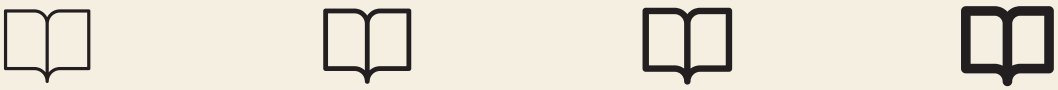
Iconography

Icon set, weight, size, and colour

Cursiv uses **Phosphor Icons**: a large, consistent icon set, free to use under the MIT licence.

Weight

Use the **Thin** weight. Its hairline strokes match the thin rules and IBM Plex Mono text of the Cursiv style. Do not mix weights.



Thin Light Regular Bold

Size and colour

- Use icons at 16, 20, 24, or 32 px, matched to the text beside them.
- Icons take the colour of the text they sit with: Ink on Paper, light on dark.
- Use **Copper** only to mark the active or current item.

- Pair an icon with a text label wherever possible. An icon on its own needs an accessible name.

Examples

Icons for the six stages of **the journey of a book**:



Using Phosphor

- **Browse and download:** phosphoricons.com.
- **Web:** the `@phosphor-icons/web` package, for example `<i class="ph-thin ph-book-open"></i>`.
- **React:** the `@phosphor-icons/react` package, for example `<BookOpen weight="thin" />`.
- **Design tools:** the Phosphor plugin for Figma.

Imagery

Photography, film, and how type sits on them

Photography

Cursiv's photography and film show the craft of writing up close: hands, pencils, paper, and the materials of making a book. The colour is warm, muted, and materially rich, drawn from paper, aged

books, dark wood, and soft daylight. On film, movement is just as quiet: a still or gently drifting camera, natural gestures, and clean cuts. See **Motion**.

- **Warm and dark.** Natural, low light with warm, muted tones. Keep saturation low to moderate and contrast gentle, with rich shadows and softly rolled-off highlights.
- **Soft blacks, creamy whites.** Use deep brown-black, warm charcoal, and espresso instead of hard digital black, and keep shadow detail visible. Let daylight and paper stay creamy and slightly diffused rather than pure white.
- **Natural skin.** Keep skin tones warm and true.
- **Few accents.** Ochre, olive, muted yellow, dusty red, and desaturated green may appear in books and furnishings. Keep them occasional so the neutrals lead.
- **Close up.** Crop in on the work itself, with a shallow depth of field so the background falls away.
- **Quiet.** One subject, no clutter, and no staged smiles.
- **Avoid** bright primary colours, cool blue casts, stark white backgrounds, and saturated digital gradients.

For reference tones sampled from the brand film, see **Colours**.

Type on images

- Set type in light colours over a dark image.
- Darken the image where type sits so text stays legible.
- Keep type and markers to one side of the subject, leaving the work in view.

Layout & Spacing

Grids, margins, and spacing

Cursiv's layouts are calm, open, and editorial, like a well-set book page. Space and thin rules organise the content, not boxes and decoration.

Principles

- **Generous space.** Let content breathe. When in doubt, add space rather than a divider.
- **One measure.** Set running text in a single column of about 65 characters per line.
- **Left aligned.** Align text to the left with a ragged right edge. Do not justify it.
- **Rules, not boxes.** Separate sections with thin rules: 1 px of Ink at 15% opacity. Avoid cards, shadows, and rounded corners.
- **Flat surfaces.** Use flat colour. Avoid gradients and drop shadows.

Spacing scale

Spacing follows a 4 px base unit. Use these steps for margins, padding, and gaps:

Step	Size	Use it for
1	4 px	Fine adjustments, such as an icon beside a label
2	8 px	Space within a group: a label and its value
4	16 px	Space between related items; small screen margins
6	24 px	Space between groups; tablet margins
8	32 px	Desktop margins; space before a figure
10	40 px	Space around a figure, specimen, or rule
14	56 px	Space above a section heading
16	64 px	Space around a large panel, such as a logo preview

Larger gaps between sections should use multiples of 8 px.

Web grid

- **Page width:** up to 1440 px, centred.
- **Margins:** 16 px on phones, 24 px on tablets, and 32 px on desktops.
- **Columns:** on wide screens, a 256 px navigation column, a content column of up to 768 px, and a 224 px column for page contents. On smaller screens the content takes the full width and the navigation moves into a menu.
- **Header:** 64 px tall, with the logo on the left.

Print

- **Page size:** A4.
- **Margins:** 22 mm at the top, 20 mm at the sides, and 24 mm at the bottom.
- **Text:** 10.5 pt body text on the same single measure as the web.

- **Covers:** let the cover run to the edge of the page, without margins.

Motion

How Cursiv moves on film: camera, editing, and transitions

Cursiv’s motion is quiet, editorial, and observational: calm, assured, and human, never promotional. It shows the craft of making a book with considered care, so people, objects, and places feel authentic rather than staged.

- **Natural movement.** Let movement come from the work itself — turning on a record player, handling books, drawing, writing, and typing — and from faces and hands, not from the camera.
- **A restrained camera.** Lock shots off or let them drift gently, with an occasional slow push, lateral move, or soft foreground parallax. Camera motion should be almost imperceptible.
- **Shallow focus.** Use a shallow depth of field to separate the subject from its surroundings, and let objects pass slowly in and out of focus.
- **Portraits and details.** Alternate composed interview portraits with tactile close-ups of the creative process. B-roll extends the conversation, showing materials, tools, books, and digital work in use.
- **Measured pacing.** Open with short sequences of detail shots that set the scene and a tactile rhythm, then give way to long, unhurried interview holds. Vary wide, medium, and close framings without breaking the speaker’s presence, and leave space for gestures and expressions.
- **Invisible transitions.** Use clean, direct cuts, with an occasional soft dissolve. Avoid energetic wipes, exaggerated zooms, rapid speed changes, and decorative animation.
- **Minimal graphics.** Bring graphic elements in with a short dissolve, a restrained fade, or subtle linear movement.

- **A composed ending.** Close on a still, composed hold of the Cursiv logo or end card.

For the colour of footage, see **Imagery**.

Brand in Use

Applying the brand across channels

Brand in Use shows how the Cursiv brand comes together in practice: on the website, in interface components, presentations, social media, and documents.

Website

The brand on the web

Guidelines for the Cursiv website are being prepared and will be published on this page.

Components

Interface components and how to use them

Cursiv's interface is built from **shadcn-svelte** components, adapted to the brand. The examples on this page are the real components: try them.

They follow the rest of this guide:

- **Ink on Paper.** Primary actions are Ink, with Paper text. See **Colours**.
- **Square and flat.** No rounded corners and no shadows, as **Layout & Spacing** asks. Only radio buttons and switches stay round: they are circles, not rounded boxes.

- **Rules, not boxes.** Cards and messages are separated by thin rules.
- **IBM Plex Mono for the interface.** Buttons, labels, and fields use the body typeface; titles use Switzer. See Typography.
- **Copper marks the current item,** such as the selected tab. Never for errors.
- **Quiet motion.** Menus and dialogs fade in. Nothing zooms or slides. See Motion.
- **Phosphor Thin icons.** See Iconography.

Buttons

Publish book Preview Cancel View guidelines

Publishing…

- Use one primary button per view, for the main action.
- Use **outline** for secondary actions, **ghost** for quiet ones such as Cancel, and **link** for navigation inside text.
- Label buttons with a verb that says what happens: “Publish book”, not “Submit”.

Text fields

Book title

The Long Way Home

ISBN

978-3-16-148410

An ISBN has 13 digits. Check the number and try again.

Back-cover text

A few sentences that make a reader pick up the book.

- Put the label above the field, and keep it short.
- Use the placeholder for an example, never instead of a label.
- When something is wrong, say what happened and what to do, below the field. Cursiv has no warning red: errors use Ink and clear wording, as in **Voice & Tone**.

Choices

- [x] Send me a copy of the proof
- [ ] Show the book on my author page

- (•) Paperback
- ( ) Hardback
- ( ) Ebook

Format

Paperback ⌄

Paperback ✓
Hardback
Ebook

- Use a **checkbox** for an option that takes effect when the form is sent, and a **switch** for a setting that takes effect at once.
- Use **radio buttons** for up to five options, and a **select** for more.

Tabs

Imagine Write **Refine** Design Publish Reach

The Refine stage of your book.

- Use tabs to switch between views of the same thing, such as the stages of a book.
- A Copper rule marks the current tab.

Status and messages

PUBLISHED DRAFT IN REVIEW

> **Your manuscript is saved**
> Pick up where you left off.

> **We couldn't save your changes**
> Check your connection and try again.

- Badges show a status in a word or two.

- Messages sit behind an Ink rule. Keep them calm and practical: what happened, and what to do.

Cards

The Long Way Home

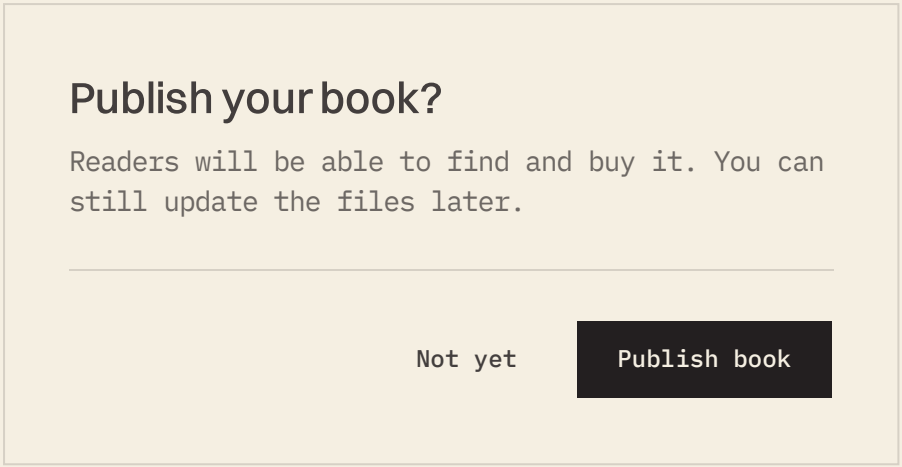
Paperback · 312 pages · Refine

Three chapters are waiting for your editor's notes.

Open manuscript Share

- A card groups one thing, such as a book, between rules above and below. Avoid boxes and shadows.

Dialogs and tooltips



What is an ISBN?

A 13-digit number that identifies your book.

- Use a dialog to confirm an action that matters, such as publishing. Name the action on its button.
- Use a tooltip for a short explanation, never for information people need to continue.

Using the components

The components need Svelte 5 and Tailwind CSS v4.

1. Set up **shadcn-svelte** in your project.
2. Download **brand.css** and **shadcn.css** next to your CSS file, and import them after Tailwind:

```
@import "tailwindcss";
@import "tw-animate-css";
@import "./brand.css";
@import "./shadcn.css";
```

brand.css holds the fonts and design tokens. **shadcn.css** maps them onto shadcn-svelte's colour roles, with square corners and no shadows. Both are generated from this guide whenever it is published, so they always match it.

3. Add components with `npx shadcn-svelte@latest add`, then follow the guidance on this page.

Presentations

Slides and presentations

Guidelines for presentations are being prepared and will be published on this page.

Social Media

The brand on social channels

Guidelines for social media are being prepared and will be published on this page.

Documents

Letters, reports, and other documents

Guidelines for letters, reports, and other documents are being prepared and will be published on this page.

Assets

Downloadable brand assets

Approved Cursiv files to download and use.

Logos

Logo, icon, and app icon files to download

The Cursiv logo and icon as vector SVG files, and app icons as SVG and PNG. See **Logo** for previews of each version.

Version	File
Logo, black	cursiv-logo-black.svg ↓
Logo, white	cursiv-logo-white.svg ↓
Logo, gold	cursiv-logo-gold.svg ↓
Icon, black	cursiv-icon-black.svg ↓
Icon, white	cursiv-icon-white.svg ↓
Icon, gold	cursiv-icon-gold.svg ↓
App icon, light	cursiv-app-icon.svg ↓, 1024 px PNG ↓
App icon, dark	cursiv-app-icon-dark.svg ↓, 1024 px PNG ↓

Fonts

Where to get the Cursiv typefaces

Cursiv uses Switzer and IBM Plex Mono. See **Typography** for how to use them.

Typeface	Get it	License
Switzer	Fontshare	ITF Free Font License
IBM Plex Mono	GitHub	SIL Open Font License

The Switzer licence does not allow passing the font files on: everyone who needs Switzer, including external designers and suppliers, must download their own copy from Fontshare.

History & Governance

How the guide is kept, and who decides

The Cursiv brand guide grows with the brand. This section records how it changes and who looks after it.

Brand questions

Jorunn has the final word on the Cursiv brand. If something isn't covered here, isn't clear, or calls for an exception, write to Jorunn at **jorunn@cursiv.no**.

Changelog

Changes to the Cursiv brand guide

0.15.1

- The PDF now includes the component examples from Components. Menus, dialogs, and tooltips are shown open, since a printed page can't be clicked.

0.15.0

- Published Components: Cursiv's interface components, built on shadcn-svelte and adapted to the brand — square and flat, Ink on Paper, IBM Plex Mono, Phosphor Thin icons, and Copper for the current item. The examples on the page are live.

- New download: **shadcn.css**, a shadcn-svelte theme generated from the brand's colour tokens whenever the guide is published.

0.14.0

- The guide no longer has a dark mode: it always shows Ink on Paper. Colours keeps its guidance for dark backgrounds, such as the white logo on Ink, and drops the dark-mode code example.

0.13.0

- Colours now covers dark backgrounds and dark mode: Ink and Paper swap places, and Copper and Gold stay the same.
- Colours now has usage rules: which colour to use for backgrounds, text, rules, and accents, and a table of approved combinations with their contrast ratios.
- Contrast figures are now rounded down, so Gold reads 6.8:1 on Ink and 2.0:1 on Paper.
- The black logo, the black icon, and the light app icons now use Ink throughout. The lettering used a slightly different, near-pure black; now it matches the slash and Cursiv's type. Download the files again to get the update.

0.12.0

- Paper (`#F5EFE2`) and Gold ( `#C4A46B`) are now brand colours, alongside Ink and Copper. Colours describes each one, with its values and contrast.
- Copper's value,  `#A9714F`, is confirmed.
- All four brand colours are published as design tokens in **brand.css** and **brand.json**.

0.11.0

- Logo now has usage rules for the logo and the icon: clear space, minimum sizes, backgrounds, and misuse.
- Published Layout & Spacing: principles, a 4 px spacing scale, the web grid, and print margins.
- In the navigation, a section with a single page is now a plain link instead of a dropdown.

0.10.0

- Reviewed and approved the Voice & Tone examples, with three replaced:
  - Understated now has its own example instead of repeating Independent’s.
  - Celebrating adds a brief “Congratulations” to make it warm as well as brief.
  - Reaching out now shows an inviting message rather than a status update.
- Two examples use contractions (“that’s”, “here’s”), which suits the warm voice.

0.9.0

- Iconography now uses Phosphor Icons in the Thin weight instead of Light. The guide’s own interface and diagrams use Thin too.
- The reference tones from the brand film moved from Imagery to Colours.

0.8.0

- Published Motion: how Cursiv moves on film, from a restrained camera and shallow focus to measured pacing, clean cuts, and minimal graphics.

- Imagery now covers film as well as photography, with the warm, muted colour grade, reference tones sampled from the brand film, and a short note on motion.
- Colours points to Imagery for the softer blacks and occasional accents used in photography and film.

0.7.1

- The guide now has a subtle paper grain, like uncoated book paper, on its pages, header and contents menu. Images, illustrations, buttons and form controls stay clean, and the grain is left out when printing and for people who ask for more contrast.

0.7.0

- Published Iconography: Cursiv uses Phosphor Icons in the Light weight. The guide’s own interface now uses them too.
- The Writing Process shows the journey of a book as a timeline with icons.
- The positioning matrix now uses icons: the Cursiv icon for Cursiv, and Phosphor icons for traditional publishing, hybrid publishing, and DIY self-publishing.
- Voice & Tone now explains Cursiv’s voice and how its tone adapts, with examples, on its overview page.
- Added a History placeholder to Brand Foundations.
- Aligned the guide with the Editorial Conventions: British spelling, including the Colours page, the serial comma, and title case for page titles.
- Versions are renumbered to start at 0: the guide stays at 0.x until its first official release, 1.0.0.

0.6.0

- New logo (version 2), plus the Cursiv icon: the “/c” from the logo, used as the favicon and as app icons for light and dark settings. All are available to download.
- Added Copper as the accent colour, published Imagery, and added an Iconography page, which is being prepared.
- The Writing Process now describes the journey of a book in six stages: Imagine, Write, Refine, Design, Publish and Reach.
- Published the Editorial conventions for Voice & Tone, covering voice and language, names, capitalisation, spelling, punctuation and formats.
- brand.css is now a single import that loads the Cursiv fonts as well as the design tokens.
- History & Governance now names Jorunn as the authority on brand questions.
- The explanations of the Values are approved.

0.5.0

- Published Positioning & Differentiation: a positioning matrix comparing Cursiv with traditional publishing, hybrid publishing and DIY self-publishing on author control and ease of publishing, and how Cursiv differentiates itself.
- Published Brand Personality: what Cursiv is, and what it is not.

0.4.1

- The PDF now follows the guide: the Cursiv logo on the cover, cream paper on every page, Ink text, the Switzer and IBM Plex Mono type scale, a numbered contents page and an IBM Plex Mono footer. Pages are exactly A4.
- The PDF link opens the guide in a new tab.
- Simplified the “Page not found” page.

0.4.0

- Added a Todo page to History & Governance listing what still needs to be written, approved or decided.
- Added a Motion page to Visual Identity, which is being prepared.
- Positioning & Differentiation will compare Cursiv with self-publishing and with a publisher deal.
- Simplified Voice & Tone: the overview covers voice and tone, followed by Voice and language, Capitalization and headings, Spelling and punctuation, and Copy examples.
- Sections in the side navigation now expand and collapse, with a short animation.

0.3.0

- Restructured the guide: Introduction, Brand Foundations, The Writing Process, Voice & Tone, Visual Identity, Brand in Use, Assets, and History & Governance.
- Brand Foundations now includes Description (previously the pitch), plus Positioning & Differentiation and Brand Personality, which are being finalised. The Messaging section has been removed.
- Added The Writing Process and Voice & Tone sections. Voice & Tone covers voice and tone, editorial conventions and copy examples, which are being prepared.
- Added Brand in Use, with pages for the website, components, presentations, social media and documents, which are being prepared.
- Added Assets, with logo downloads and where to get the Cursiv fonts.
- Added Ink (■ `#231F20`) as Cursiv's first brand colour, also available as a design token. The guide's text now uses Ink.
- Added "As a developer" to the Introduction, and a link to the MCP server in the header.

0.2.1

- Redesigned the guide as an editorial publication: section pages now open with a numbered index separated by thin rules, and cards, pills and containers have been replaced with typography, rules and whitespace.

0.2.0

- Published the Typography page: Switzer for headings, IBM Plex Mono for body text and details, the type scale, example pairings and CSS design tokens.
- Design tokens are now available as a Tailwind CSS file (`/brand.css`) and as JSON (`/brand.json`), generated from the guide.
- Added a Colors page; the palette is being finalised.
- Combined the overview and “How to Use This Guide” pages into a single Introduction, where the guide now opens.
- Expanded the Values with explanations and examples of each value in practice.
- Moved the elevator pitch to Brand Foundations and renamed it “Pitch”.
- Renamed the Logos page to “Logo” and updated the Vision description.
- The guide now uses the Cursiv logo, the Cursiv typefaces and a cream background.

0.1.0

- Added the Cursiv logo in black, white and gold, with downloads, on the new Logos page.
- Renamed “About This Guide” to “Cursiv Overview”; the guide now opens on this page.

0.0.0

- First release of the Cursiv brand guide.
- Published the approved Cursiv mission, vision and values.
- Published the approved elevator pitch.
- The guide is available as a website, a PDF, an MCP server for AI agents, and AI-readable text files.

Todo

What still needs to be written, approved, or decided

The brand guide is a work in progress. This page lists what still needs to be written, approved, or decided. Items are removed when the work is published.

Brand Foundations

- [ ] Write **History**: how Cursiv began and how the brand took shape.

Brand in Use

- [ ] Write **Website**.
- [ ] Write **Presentations**.
- [ ] Write **Social Media**.
- [ ] Write **Documents**.

Assets

- [ ] Add presentation and document templates, and publish the Templates page.