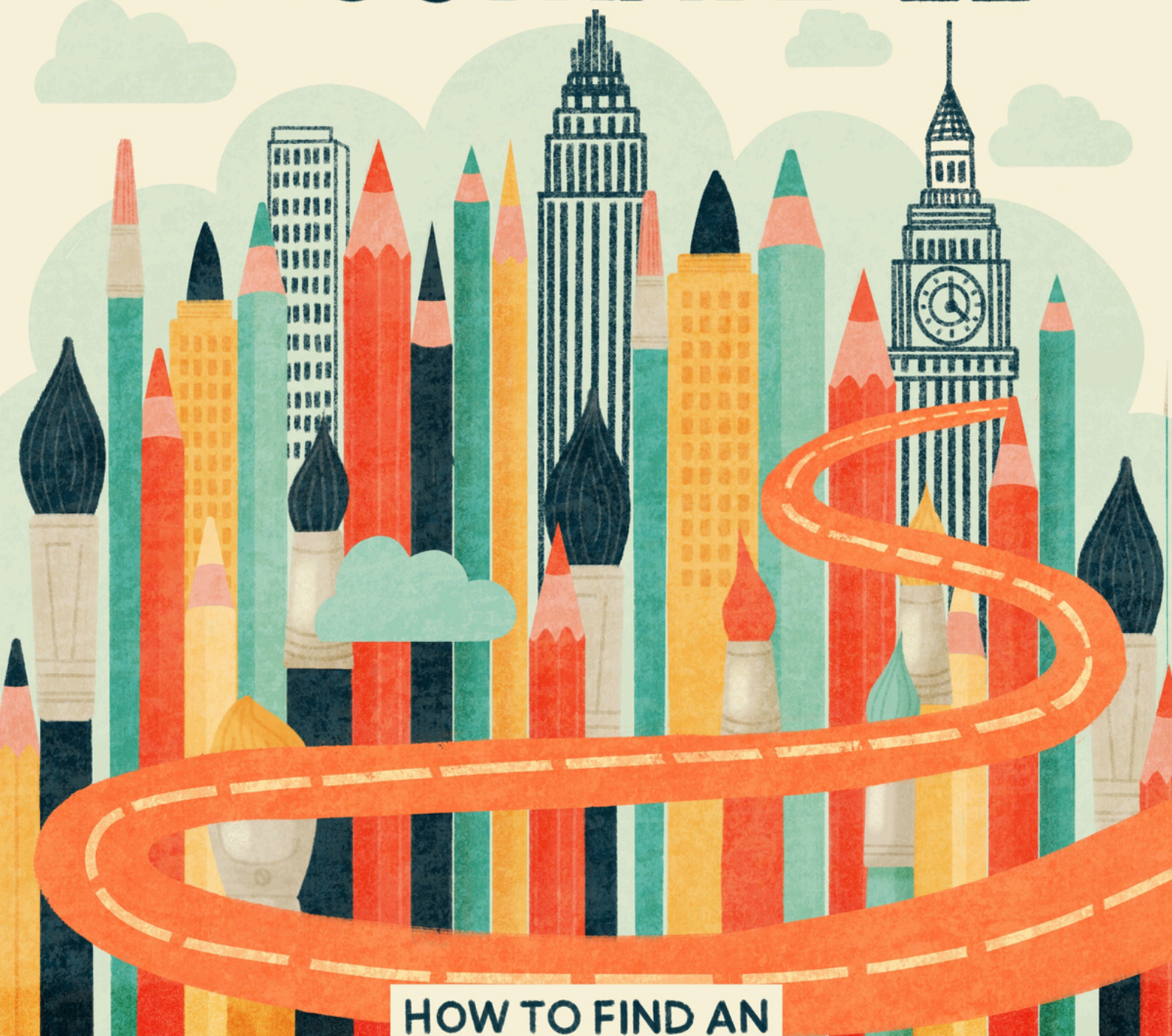


# ILLUSTRATE IT



HOW TO FIND AN

# AGENT

## Why Get an Agent?

If you're an artist or illustrator, you've probably asked yourself: Do I really need an agent? The short answer? It depends on your goals.

Having an agent can be a game-changer for your career, allowing you to focus on what you do best - creating art - while they handle the business side of things. A great agent is not only your advocate but also your matchmaker, connecting you with opportunities you may never have found on your own.

An agency provides more than just work opportunities; it offers a sense of community. Navigating the creative industry can feel overwhelming at times, but with the right agency, you gain a support system that understands the ins and outs of the industry, helps you grow, and cheers you on.

It's also worth considering the type of work you want to do. If you're interested in illustrating children's books, for example, keep in mind that many publishers only work with artists who have an agent. Having representation can open doors that might otherwise be closed.

But not all agents are created equal. Since this is a professional partnership, much like any long-term collaboration, you want to find an agency that aligns with your values, understands your artistic style, and has a strong track record of securing exciting projects for their artists.

## What Does an Agent Do?

In short, an agent's job is to get you work and make sure you're paid fairly for it. They handle negotiations, contracts, rights management, billing, and marketing so that you can focus on creating.

A good agent doesn't just react to opportunities; they actively seek out new projects, promote your work, and help position you in the best possible way to attract clients. Agencies often have established relationships with major brands, publishers, and companies, giving you access to a steady stream of work that might be difficult to land on your own.

Here are some of the key things an agent will do for you:

- Find and secure work—whether it's licensing deals, book projects, editorial work, or brand collaborations
- Negotiate contracts to ensure you're being paid fairly and retain the appropriate rights to your work
- Handle billing and invoices so you don't have to chase payments
- Market your portfolio to a broad range of clients, increasing your visibility in the industry
- Offer guidance to help you refine your portfolio and develop a commercial art practice that aligns with industry trends

When you have the right agent, they become a valuable partner in your career—someone who understands your artistic vision and helps bring it to life in a way that's both creatively fulfilling and financially rewarding.

## How Do Agents Select Artists?

Every agency has its own approach to discovering and signing new talent. Here at **Illustrate it**, we look for artists whose work has a distinctive voice, a strong commercial appeal, and the potential to thrive in multiple markets.

While no artist needs to check every single box, here are some of the things we consider when reviewing portfolios:

- Do they have a unique, recognizable style? Branding matters in illustration, and a signature style can help an artist stand out.
- Are they on-trend (or ahead of the curve)? We look for work that feels fresh, relevant, and adaptable to the needs of modern clients.
- Are they technically strong? Great design, color theory, and drawing skills are key factors in evaluating an artist's work.
- Do they have a strong sense of taste and marketability? Understanding the commercial landscape is essential for creating art that clients want to license or commission.
- Do they have a diverse, well-developed portfolio? While quality is more important than quantity, a solid body of work demonstrates professionalism and readiness for client work.
- Can we see their work fitting into multiple markets? The more versatile an artist's work is, the greater the opportunities.

When we find an artist who aligns with our agency's vision and client base, we take a deeper look at how we can help them grow, ensuring that both the artist and the agency are a great match.

## What Should You Include in Your Portfolio?

Your portfolio is your most important tool when approaching an agency. It should showcase your best work, highlight your unique style, and demonstrate that you're ready for professional opportunities. Here are some of the most in-demand types of artwork:

- Illustrations of people doing things (e.g., reading, cooking, biking, traveling, shopping, or engaging in everyday activities)
- Children's book illustrations (characters, spreads, and storytelling elements)
- Maps and travel imagery
- Editorial illustrations (conceptual pieces that could fit in magazines, books, or online media)
- Food illustration (from recipe spot art to elaborate food spreads)
- Hand-lettering (playful typography and illustrated quotes)
- Florals and botanicals (versatile for multiple industries, from fabric to home décor)
- Holiday artwork (especially winter holidays, as they drive a huge portion of the market)
- Animals and nature themes
- Decorative patterns and prints (for stationery, textiles, or product design)
- Icons and small spot illustrations (for branding, packaging, and digital media)
- Mystical and esoteric imagery (tarot, astrology, and symbolism)
- Illustrated toy and game concepts

Having a variety of these in your portfolio will increase your chances of getting hired.

## How to Find the Right Agent for You

Not every agency is the right fit for every artist. Before reaching out, take some time to research different agencies and consider the following:

- ✓ Does the agency represent artists whose work aligns with yours?
- ✓ Do you admire the types of clients they work with?
- ✓ Does their website and brand feel like a good match for your style?
- ✓ Do they have a reputation for treating their artists well?

If the answer is yes, then it's worth reaching out! When contacting an agency, keep your email short, professional, and friendly. Introduce yourself, express why you're interested in their agency, and include links to your portfolio and Instagram.

## Is an Agent Right for You?

An agent can be a fantastic partner, but they're not for everyone. If you love managing your own business, negotiating contracts, and handling promotions yourself, you might not need one!

However, if you're looking for someone to help grow your career, connect you with exciting opportunities, and take the stress out of the business side of things, then finding the right agent could be the best decision you make.

**Illustrate It** Agency is always on the lookout for fresh talent, and we regularly host a 'Talent Tap' workshop - our exclusive global talent search.

The workshop runs over 6 weeks - during this time, you'll receive weekly creative briefs specifically designed to help you to create a portfolio of 6 new artworks, **(of exactly what we're looking for!)**

This is more than just a competition - it's a guided opportunity to develop your portfolio in a more marketable direction. We aim to select between 1-5 new artists from each workshop to offer representation to. If selected, you'll have the chance to join our agency and get your work in front of top clients in the industry.

If you're an unrepresented illustrator looking for your big break, this is your chance. Are you ready to turn on the tap to new opportunities? [Apply now!](#)

You are also most welcome to send us a direct [submission here](#) - Please note that the artists taking part in our 'Talent Tap' workshops have our full attention, and their submissions are prioritised.