

ILLUSTRATE IT

**CREATIVE
BRIEF**
≡ Week 2 ≡



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WEEK 2 - Cottagecore

Welcome to the Talent Tap workshop!

This workshop is based on a series of weekly themes, and for each of the themes, you will create a **mini collection**. There are 6 themes in total, (spread over 6 weeks), so you will end up with 6 pages of amazing, new work for your portfolio. These briefs are encouraging you to create artwork that we are actually looking for - so even if you don't get selected for representation with our agency, you will still have a body of relevant work to submit to other agencies.

Before we introduce the theme for this week, let's have a quick look at how to design in **mini collections**.

Creating a mini collection is a strategic way to showcase your artistic style while making your work more marketable for licensing and surface design. A well-structured mini collection typically consists of **3–5 key pieces** that work together cohesively but also stand strong individually.

A successful collection includes a mix of:

- Main Hero Piece(s): The focal illustration(s) that defines the collection.
- Supporting Designs: Complementary patterns, icons, borders, or lettering elements that enhance the main piece(s).
- Color Variations: Consistent yet varied colorways to add versatility.

Key Considerations:

- Cohesion: All pieces should share a unified color palette, line quality, and style.
- Variety: Ensure a mix of simple and complex elements so the collection has depth.
- Commercial Viability: Think about how your designs could be applied to different products.

Presenting Your Mini Collection:

Your final presentation should be polished and easy to understand for potential clients or buyers. Your presentation will be carefully arranged on a single sheet of A4 paper, (or U.S. letter size). If you have not done this before, there will be an example presentation sheet at the end of this brief.

Final Tips for Successful Mini collections:

- Keep it manageable. Start small—3 to 5 strong, well-thought-out pieces are more effective than an overwhelming set.
- Think like a buyer. Would this work on multiple product types? Could different elements be licensed separately?
- Refine and polish. Presentation matters! A well-designed portfolio page can elevate your work significantly.

Now for the exciting part - let's move on to the brief.

Week 2 Creative Brief: Cottagecore

Theme: Cottagecore – Step into a world of rustic charm, nostalgia, and pastoral beauty with Cottagecore. This theme is inspired by the simple, romanticized countryside lifestyle—think cozy cottages, wildflower meadows, homegrown produce, and vintage-inspired decor. Cottagecore celebrates slow living, handmade crafts, and a deep connection with nature, evoking warmth, comfort, and timeless tranquility.



Inspiration & Direction

1. Mood & Atmosphere

Cottagecore is all about warmth, nostalgia, and the charm of rural life. Imagine a sunlit meadow filled with wildflowers, a weathered wooden table set for afternoon tea, or an open window with soft linen curtains billowing in the breeze. Your designs should evoke a sense of coziness and enchantment, blending nature, vintage aesthetics, and delicate hand-drawn details.

2. Visual Motifs & Elements

Explore these themes to bring Cottagecore to life:

- Wildflowers & Botanical Elements – Daisies, lavender, chamomile, clover, and trailing vines in delicate, scattered arrangements.
- Vintage Cottage Scenes – Quaint cottages with thatched roofs, garden gates, and rustic farmhouses nestled in lush landscapes.
- Handmade & Natural Textures – Woven baskets, crochet lace, wooden spoons, pressed flowers, and embroidered linens.
- Homegrown & Handmade – Jars of jam, homemade bread, fresh eggs in a wicker basket, vintage teapots, and hand-poured candles.
- Pastoral Animals & Wildlife – Rabbits, songbirds, butterflies, bees, and foxes in soft, storybook-like illustrations.
- Soft, Handwritten Typography – Elegant cursive or calligraphy-inspired text that feels handwritten and nostalgic.



Application Ideas & Markets

This theme lends itself beautifully to multiple product categories - **firstly, you will need to choose which product(s) your mini collection will be designed for from this list:**

1. Stationery & Paper Goods

- Notebooks, planners, and journals with soft florals, hand-drawn cottage scenes, or rustic lace textures.
- Greeting cards & postcards featuring nostalgic countryside illustrations, floral wreaths, or cozy still-life compositions.
- Wrapping paper with ditsy florals, illustrated gingham patterns, or delicate botanical motifs.
- Stickers and washi tapes with vintage cottage aesthetics, pressed flowers, and handwritten script.

2. Home & Lifestyle Products

- Textile designs for cushions, aprons, and tea towels featuring soft florals, cottage garden motifs, or embroidered-inspired patterns.
- Wall art with illustrated countryside landscapes, hand-lettered inspirational quotes, or charming botanical sketches.
- Packaging featuring natural linen textures, dried flowers, and soft vintage illustrations.

3. Fashion & Accessories

- Tote bags or apparel prints with delicate floral arrangements, gingham accents, or vintage pastoral illustrations.



Extended Color Palette

A soft, natural palette inspired by wildflowers, sunlit meadows, and rustic cottage interiors:

Soft Florals & Natural Hues

- Wildflower White – #FAF6F0
- Blush Rose – #F2C6D1
- Peach Blossom – #F4B29E
- Cornflower Blue – #B0C4DE
- Lavender Haze – #C6A8D9
- Meadow Green – #B5D3A8

Warm Earthy Tones

- Golden Honey – #E5B85B
- Terracotta Clay – #D08A65
- Toasted Almond – #C8A58D
- Mossy Olive – #8B9E77
- Chestnut Brown – #6D4F3B

Soft Neutrals & Vintage Accents

- Buttercream Ivory – #F9E5C8
- Dusty Blue-Grey – #A0A8B8
- Muted Plum – #9E6A84
- Delicate Apricot – #F3C4A3



Moodboard:

You will find our Pinterest Cottagecore [moodboard here](#)
Inspiration only - please do not copy.

Final Thoughts & Creative Challenge

This brief is your opportunity to capture the cozy charm of Cottagecore through illustration, pattern design, and surface design.

- How can you evoke a sense of warmth, nostalgia, and countryside beauty in your designs?
- How can you incorporate handmade textures and vintage aesthetics while keeping your work fresh and modern?
- How can you balance soft florals, rustic textures, and cozy details to create a timeless yet whimsical collection?

The goal is to create a collection that feels dreamy, comforting, and full of rustic charm—perfect for licensing, stationery, home decor, and lifestyle products.

Week 1 Submissions:

- All work submitted to us on this workshop is carefully considered for artist representation.
- This submission must be new, human-made work in response to this brief - No reusing old pieces or drawing inspiration from others. **Definitely no AI images.**
- There will not be a public gallery and the weekly submissions will be kept private - **if we choose to represent you, this work needs to be exclusive** (in order for us to pitch it for you). If you want to show this work on your socials, it will need to be sneak peeks or work in progress shots, **(not the completed presentation page)***



Submission Deadline:
Sunday 23rd March

Please ensure your presentation page/submission is emailed to us as a low-res image, max 300dpi (200dpi is best), in RGB (for on-screen viewing) at: **talent@illustrate-it.co.uk** by **9pm (GMT/UK time)** on the deadline day - this is a special, priority mailbox set up for this workshop.

Don't forget to put your name/logo on your presentation page!

We Can't Wait to See Your Creation!

Best of luck, and remember to make it your own. Let your imagination run wild while staying true to the Cottagecore vibe! You can also tag us on your social posts so we can see your beautiful creations - **@illustrateit_agency** and/or use **#IllustrateItCottagecore**

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out on the email provided above,

Mel

Illustrate It Agency

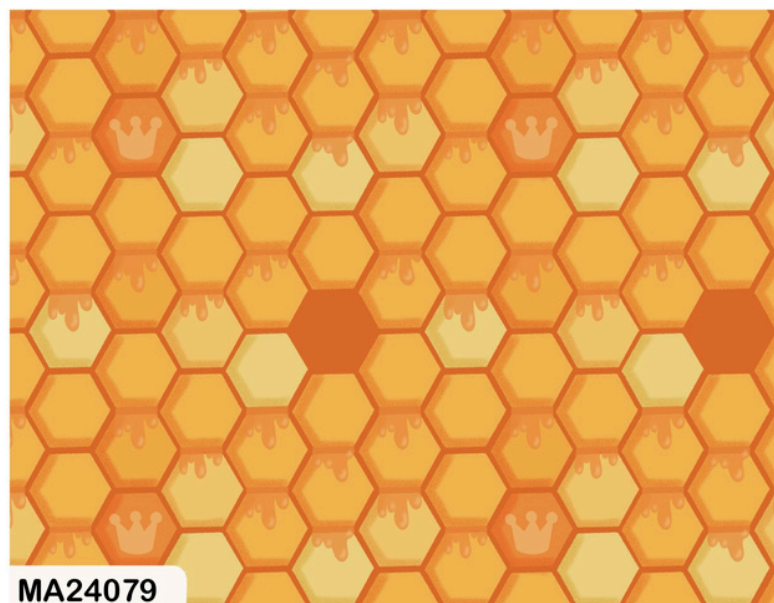
***If we do not offer you representation at the end of this workshop, you can of course share the full presentation page of this work after the workshop has fully ended. We are simply asking that we are the first to see it please.**

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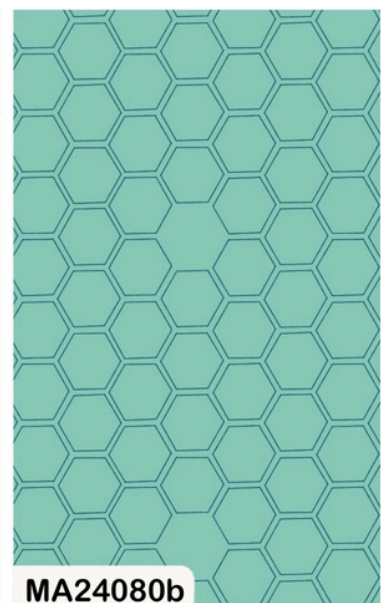
MA24078



MA24079



MA24080a



MA24080b

QUEEN BEE

SKU: MA24078-MA24080

Repeats 12x12"

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