

Drawing WORDS & WRITING Pictures

Host a Comics Jam at Your Store

Invite customers to spend an hour at your store
to create comics collaboratively

Comics Jam: an improvised collaborative comics event where one person draws a single panel and passes it on to the next person, who draws the next panel and then passes it on, etc. It's a great way to build community centered at your store, and fun for everyone involved.

And it's pretty easy to host a comics jam. You'll need a flat surface – table, drawing boards, or hard-backed notebooks for all the comics jam participants, drawing implements – pens, pencils, markers, crayons, and copies of the nine-panel grid we've provided. Your participants will only need imagination, a sense of humor, and creativity.

Experienced “jammers” tell us that it helps to provide some structure to the session. One way to do that is to give each jam comic a specific set of rules – for example, each panel must contain circle, square and triangle shapes.

Directions: Write each of the rules below on the top of one of your nine-panel grid sheets. Each nine-panel sheet will make one complete comic. Explain the jam instructions, and pass each sheet to a different participant, who will draw the first panel (give each five minutes or less) and pass it on. Then let the wild rumpus begin!

1. **Impromptu** Add a panel, pass it on.
2. **Backward** Start with the last panel. In the previous panel, show what happened before.
3. **Pay It Forward** Illustrate the first panel, then add a caption to the next panel (the last contributor must add caption to first panel).
4. **Carryovers** Every new panel must contain an image from the previous.
5. **Zoom Out** Add a panel which incorporates the previous panel in miniature.
6. **Pantomime** Add a panel without words that still continues the story.
7. **Panorama** The backgrounds on the entire page must make up a continuous landscape
8. **Alphabetical** Panels or elements within the panels are arranged in alphabetic order.
9. **Monosyllables** Write using only one-syllable words.
10. **Monotext** Use only one word in every panel.
11. **Monotext/Monosyllable** Every panel can include only one one-syllable word.
12. **Icons** Word/thought balloons can only contain images or icons, no words.
13. **Allusions** Make a comic which alludes to other comics or cultural works.
14. **Restricted Picture** Tell a story including one common visual element in each panel.
15. **Snowball** Each new panel has one more object or character than the previous one. Can be cumulative or new stuff each time. You can apply this to text as well.
16. **Melting Snowball** Each new panel has one less object or character than the previous one.
17. **Imageless** You can use words, sound effects, etc. but no pictures



