

Recognition, written in ink.

A style guide for Sumi-e app iconography.
Form, material and Apple system behaviour.



Familiar signs carry meaning. The hand gives each form its living character.

Working edition 0.4.1

13 September 2026 / iOS / iPadOS / watchOS / macOS

Design principles, native teaching studies and project-specific revision examples. Copyright holder: gekko.

A working standard

This edition records the agreed direction and makes the next design decisions reviewable.

Purpose

Create a recognisable family across fifteen projects while preserving the signs people already understand. Default artwork uses black ink and restrained grey washes on white paper.

Scope

App icons for launchers, the Dock and distribution, plus project logos where no native app target exists. Interface symbols and Watch complications remain outside this edition.

Status

Working design standard with native teaching exports and a handwriting audit of fourteen marks across twelve projects. Numeric ranges remain review starting points. Production approval, integration and device validation are separate.

Reading the rules

B = binding brief constraint. W = working design parameter. A = Apple platform guidance, checked on 11 September 2026. R-numbers remain stable between editions.

Principles, anchors, ink and tone	03-09
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R12 / B: No watermarks, signatures, seals, emojis or self-referential marks in icon artwork. Avoid app names and decorative lettering; meaningful symbols such as Sigma or clock digits are permitted.

Recognition sets the limit

The amount of abstraction is decided by the meaning that must survive.

Keep the semantic anchor.
Let the hand carry the form.

First: recognition

Choose whether recognition is carried by an emblem, a familiar object or a behaviour. Record essential relationships, openings and action before brush exploration. Recognition need not depend on equal sides or mirrored strokes.

Second: application identity

An ecosystem emblem establishes affiliation. The application must also express its own purpose through composition or a substantial shape relationship. A brush texture alone does not create an independent identity.

Third: family resemblance

Use related pressure, density, spacing and optical weight. Each motif keeps its own silhouette and personal brush course. The hand must remain visible in the broad shape even when fine grain disappears.

Ron Cobb

Function and plausible visual logic.

Paul Rand

A concise, memorable central idea.

Otl Aicher

Consistent visual relationships; no obligation to ruler-perfect contours.

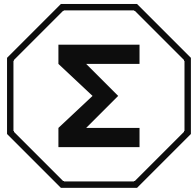
Susan Kare

Clarity under severe size constraints.

R01-R03, R18-R19 / B. Recognition may reside in an emblem, an object or a behaviour. The four influences are project interpretations, not quotations or reproductions of their work.

Three kinds of visual anchor

Establish what the audience recognises before selecting the degree of freedom.



Emblem

Retain the identifying relationship when an established sign is quoted. An Ergo association may use the Sigma and eight-sided geometry; a project identity must also communicate its own role.

Object

Retain only the object features needed for recognition. Dogfight needs direction and a wing-axis cue. Cockpits, weapon details and specific aircraft anatomy exceed the required information.

Behaviour

Make the defining interaction visible. GravityDigits needs particles meeting and changing direction at numeral boundaries. Irregular spacing suggests disorder; contact and deflection show the mechanism.

Anchor brief

- 01 Name the anchor: emblem, object or behaviour.
- 02 List the minimum features that carry its meaning.
- 03 Identify the application-specific operation or relationship.
- 04 Record the nearest likely confusion and the small-size test.

R01, R18-R19 / B. Left: schematic ecosystem emblem, not an official master. Centre and right: R2 project studies DF-02 and GD-05 (F14), awaiting selection. See page 25 for the full comparison.

05

A stroke has structure

Pressure, direction and lifting shape the whole stroke, from its dark body to its drying edge.



F01 / Unassigned ink-material study. Read clockwise from the upper left: body, curve, interval, wash.

01 / Body

Loading, contact and lift make the body itself swell and narrow. Its readable core should survive when fine dry fibres disappear.

02 / Curve

A change of direction and pressure creates the curve. Keep a continuous dark core; do not draw a rigid contour and add distress as a separate effect.

03 / Wash

A compact mark holds the meaning. The adjacent grey wash contributes atmosphere and may disappear without changing identity.

04 / Interval

Two gestures are separated by active white space. Their relationship must survive scaling and system treatment.

R04 / W: Begin with two to four dominant gestures; an emblem may require more. R07 / B: Fine texture is secondary. The visible grain in this study is a material reference, not a mandatory icon background.

Give the white space a job

Openings, margins and intervals are designed with the same care as the ink.



F02 / Construction diagram. The square is an unmasked source canvas; the circle tests Watch clipping. Neither outline is exported. See page 10 for actual native Apple masks.

A proportional study grid

Use a 100-unit square to discuss placement. Begin with about 12 units of inset, then adjust optical scale for each motif and platform mask. The grid positions the sign; it does not dictate the brush path. This is a studio starting point, not an Apple safe-area specification.

Critical openings

As an initial test at 32 pixels, allow roughly 2 pixels for a critical gap or stroke body: 6.25 units on a 100-unit grid. Inspect the raster result; this calculation does not guarantee legibility at 16 pixels.

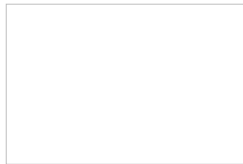
Optical balance

A diagonal gesture can extend farther than a compact block to appear equally large. Balance perceived mass and the location of the centre of gravity. Avoid equating bounding-box size with visual weight.

R05 / W. Keep generous negative space. A placement grid must not straighten the hand or force unequal gestures into mechanical symmetry.

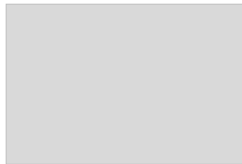
One family of tones

Use contrast to establish hierarchy. Default icons remain monochrome.

**Paper**

Screen #FFFFFF

Print: paper white

**Wash**

Screen #D9D9D9

Proof starting point: K15

**Middle**

Screen #A6A6A6

Proof starting point: K35

**Deep wash**

Screen #404040

Proof starting point: K75

**Ink**

Screen #111111

Proof starting point:
K100

Default appearance

Black ink occupies the principal figure. Grey contributes depth or emphasis without becoming a second indispensable symbol. White paper stays quiet and visually continuous.

Dark appearance

A charcoal ground and light ink may replace the default polarity. Retain the same identifying relationships and brush course while balancing tone. Treat this as an intentional adaptation, not an unchecked automatic inversion.

System tint

User-selected tint may colour the system rendering. The underlying tone structure must continue to distinguish figure, supporting wash and background.

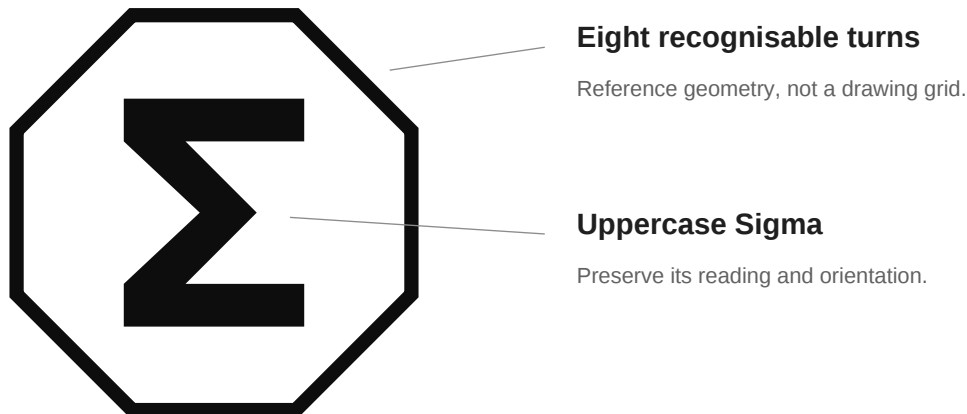
Print interpretation

Screen values and K-only proof values are separate starting points, not colourimetric equivalents. Paper and printer response change pale washes. Review a physical proof before setting a production press profile.

R06 / B: White paper, black ink and grey washes in the default design. Accent colours per app are outside this edition. Typography and diagram labels belong to the guide, not to icon artwork.

An emblem is a starting point

Ecosystem recognition and application identity must both be present.



F03 / Schematic anatomy of the brief's recognition anchor. The diagram isolates eight turns and an uppercase Sigma; its exact geometry is not a drawing grid or an official master.

Preserve

Keep an eight-sided enclosure and a readable uppercase Sigma. The sides may differ slightly in length, angle and pressure. Preserve the compact enclosing relationship and the Sigma's reading, not mechanical regularity.

Develop

Write three short register strokes beside the Sigma, wholly inside the octagon. Vary their starts, lengths and lifted ends. Their repetition suggests processed values; their open intervals keep the interior calm.

Contain the process

The R2 input-core-output layout became too wide to work as a signet. External inputs and result blocks must not extend the silhouette. Computation belongs inside the enclosure.

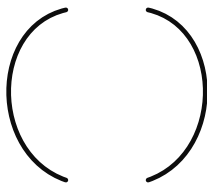
Keep one idea

The register rhythm and Sigma form the complete computational cue. Omit circuit traces, extra nodes, hashes and chip pins. Subsequent optical correction must preserve the hand's pressure and direction.

R01-R02, R20-R22 / B. EM-04 continues the compact EM-03 composition with a more personal brush hand. The geometric diagram teaches recognition; the revised drawing on page 27 teaches execution.

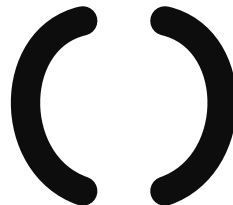
Keep the identifying structure

Three schematic treatments show where simplification begins to lose meaning.



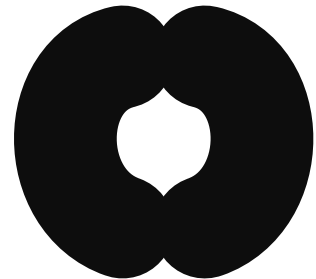
Too fragile

Thin stroke bodies become unstable as the image shrinks.



Readable structure

The body and opening remain distinct without texture.



Too congested

Heavy mass joins the strokes and closes their separating intervals.

F04 / Comparison of an unassigned open form. These geometric teaching examples are not finished Sumi-e illustrations.

A useful reduction

Remove incidental detail while retaining the identifying parts and the gesture that formed them. Recheck the silhouette. Simplification should preserve pressure changes and open intervals as well as meaning.

A useful limit

If a viewer can only recognise the motif from the application name or a large preview, its abstraction has gone too far. Recover a familiar contour or a decisive internal gap.

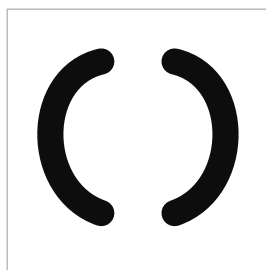
Material and structure

These diagrams isolate structural failure. They are schematic teaching aids, not templates for finished contours. Pages 05 and 27 show how brush movement generates the form; page 14 tests a brush import through the native renderer.

R03 / B. R04-R05 / W. A successful large illustration does not establish a successful small app icon.

The canvas is not the icon shape

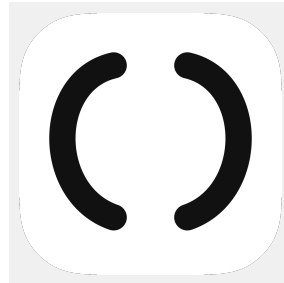
The operating system supplies the enclosure. The artwork supplies the sign.



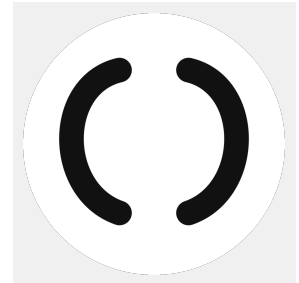
Raw square canvas



iOS / iPadOS



macOS



watchOS

F07 / One unassigned sign, three native platform exports. iOS and macOS use a rounded square; watchOS uses a circle. The raw square at left is a construction source, not a displayed app icon.

Source canvas → system mask

Prepare full square artwork: 1024 × 1024 for iOS/iPadOS/macOS; 1088 × 1088 for watchOS. Apple applies the rounded or circular mask. Avoid a second, hand-drawn outer enclosure that duplicates that system boundary. [S1]

A circle inside a rounded square

A circular motif or the Ergo octagon remains part of the foreground. It does not change the iOS or macOS outer mask. Preserve adequate white space between the emblem and the platform enclosure.

Optical fit

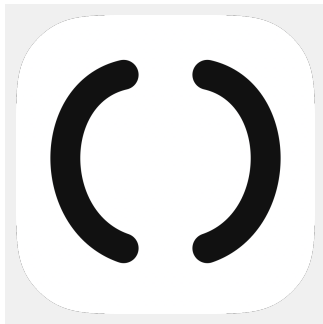
Use Apple's current template and the actual rendered boundary. "Squircle" is useful shorthand, not a licence to replace the platform curve with an arbitrary corner radius. Check circular clipping at diagonal tips and equal perceived weight between platforms.

R13 / A. The native exports establish mask behaviour; the house grid on page 06 establishes a starting composition. Neither fixes one universal inset for every motif.

11

One identity, six appearances

Use the same geometry while giving each system appearance a readable tonal hierarchy.

**Default****Dark****Clear / Light****Clear / Dark****Tinted / Light****Tinted / Dark**

F05 / Native iOS exports from Icon Composer 1.6 (99.1). Dark and Mono tones were explicitly set; cyan is a chosen system-tint preview, not a new brand colour. Clear exports use the renderer's preview environment.

Author the tonal basis

Icon Composer exposes Default, Dark and Mono settings. Mono informs clear and tinted treatments; these are not six unrelated drawings. Here the ink body stays identical while the renderer changes tone and surface. [S1, S2]

Respect the platform matrix

iOS, iPadOS and macOS support the appearance family illustrated here. Watch uses its circular default/light presentation; do not promise this six-mode matrix on watchOS. [S1, S6]

R08 / B. These are native renderer exports, not Home Screen captures. Clear and tinted behaviour must still be checked against real wallpapers and the supported OS version.

Automatic is a starting point

A dark preview can preserve every contour and still lose the sign.



Automatic / weak contrast



Tuned / readable polarity

F08 / Native comparison. Left: the imported black mark with default glass behaviour. Right: an explicit light Dark fill with matte foreground. Both colour and material were changed; this is a corrective example, not an isolated material test.

Observed failure

The left sign becomes a faint outline against a dark ground. A large preview still shows the geometry, but search and recognition become dependent on highlights.

Deliberate correction

Keep the same silhouette. Set a light foreground for Dark and a useful Mono basis; reduce effects that compete with the mark. The right study uses a light grey figure, a system dark background and no foreground glass.

Review the actual result

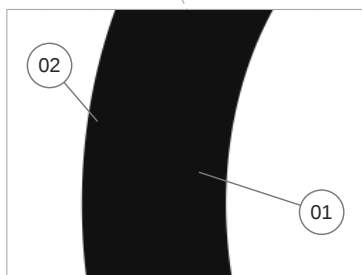
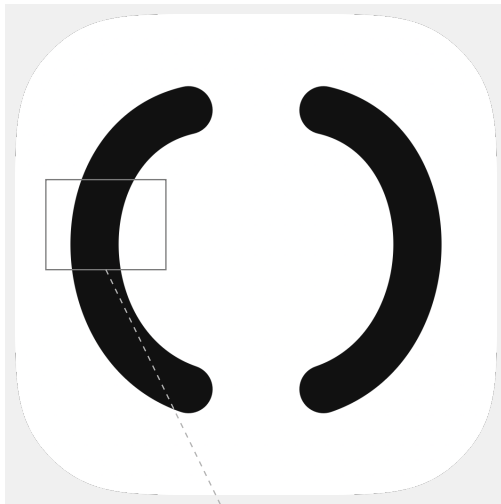
Check dark and tinted modes at small sizes and in context. Avoid pure black Watch backgrounds that merge with the launcher; Apple recommends an identifiable boundary there. [S1]

R08 / B. Tone changes are permitted by the brief. This correction is a teaching example, not a chosen dark design for any application.

Liquid Glass is a material decision

Compare the ink body and its edge at the same scale, then inspect the same detail.

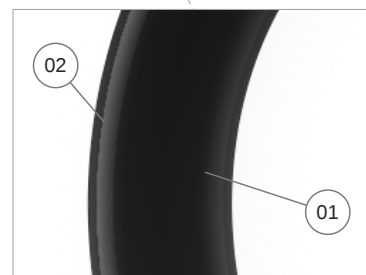
Matte ink



3× detail

01 Uniform ink body
02 Clean, unlit boundary

Native Liquid Glass



3× detail

01 Tonal surface modelling
02 Specular highlight along the rim

F09 / Native exports from the same outlined source. Matched 3× details isolate body (01) and edge (02). Exposure, contrast and image pixels are unchanged; only the view is enlarged. These are renderer exports, not device captures.

Layer and group

Layers hold the figure and wash. Groups control shared depth and effects. Here the same sign receives either a matte or glass foreground treatment. [S2, S3]

Read the surface

Specular highlights describe light on a surface; shadow separates depth. Translucency passes part of the background; refraction distorts it. Judge which effects actually remain visible. [S2]

House starting point

Begin with matte ink. Add restrained native glass only when it supports recognition.

R14 / W. Current documentation includes version-27 controls: refraction changes have no visible effect before 27, and separate inside/outside specular options behave as On before 27. Verify 26.6 behaviour in its actual toolchain. [S2]

Texture needs room to breathe

A persuasive brush stroke can still fail when the system applies its mask.



Matte / oversized



Glass / oversized



Watch / clipped

F10 / Deliberately retained failure: an oversized transparent brush study rendered by Icon Composer. Its endpoints are clipped. The 1254 × 1254 PNG is a material sample; none of these placements is an acceptable app composition.

The mask exposes the error

The native import fills too much of the canvas. Both enclosures cut the ends; the circle removes more of the diagonal gesture. Reduce the placed layer scale and rebalance it in the native preview until the complete identifying contour has room.

What can fail

Soft fringes and low-alpha particles can become weak or artificially embossed under glass. Here the glass treatment also changes the texture's apparent weight. Inspect edges on light and dark grounds; Apple recommends clearly defined foreground edges. **[S1]**

From study to controlled artwork

Use the image as a material reference. Construct the semantic silhouette deliberately, retain only useful grain, and check placement and small-size output again after every correction. The recognition anchor must survive even when the texture disappears.

R07 / B. R13 / A. R14 / W. This plate documents clipping and material response. The corrected placement belongs to a later controlled composition; no application-specific design is proposed.

Points describe size. Pixels carry it.

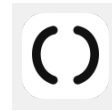
A 32-point image can require 32, 64 or 96 pixels without changing its logical size.



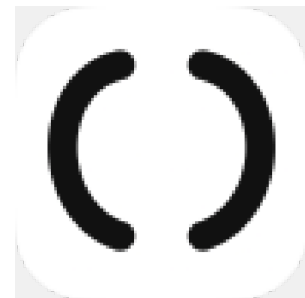
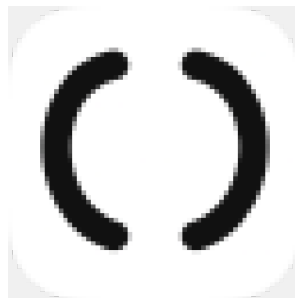
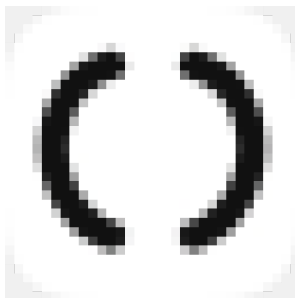
32 pt × 1 = 32 px



32 pt × 2 = 64 px



32 pt × 3 = 96 px



F11 / Three native exports requested at 32 logical units with scale 1, 2 and 3. Files measure 32, 64 and 96 pixels. The upper row is placed at equal print size; the enlarged row reveals the different pixel grids.

The conversion

pixel width = logical width in points × scale factor. The scale label belongs to a slot or display context. A 32-pixel file is not automatically a 32-point icon on every device.

Platform density

Apple's general bitmap guidance uses @2x/@3x for iOS, @2x for iPadOS and watchOS, and @1x/@2x for macOS. This is density guidance, not a mandatory list of every app-icon export. [S7]

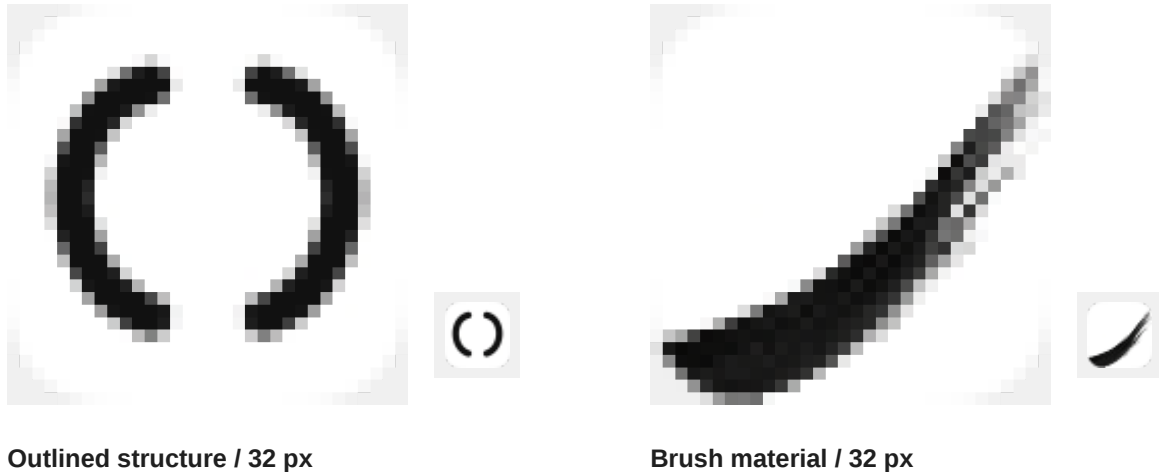
Resolution is not print DPI

Pixels specify the image grid; ppi describes how densely those pixels are placed on paper. Writing “300 dpi” into an image does not create missing screen detail or satisfy a target slot.

R15 / A. Dimensions here are a controlled density demonstration, not Home Screen slot specifications. Resolve actual icon roles through the project, catalog and Xcode build.

Inspect the raster, not just the master

Vector curves describe geometry. A bitmap resolves that geometry onto a finite grid.



F12 / Native 32-pixel raster outputs, enlarged with nearest-neighbour sampling to expose individual pixels. The brush study loses detail earlier than the structural sign. The retained originals are also shown at a defined small print scale.

Antialiasing

Intermediate edge pixels smooth a curve. They are not unnecessary grey noise. Aggressive thresholding, repeated resizing and sharpening can destroy a gap or create a halo.

Working correction

Inspect at 1:1 as well as enlarged. If a critical opening collapses, widen it or simplify the contour in the controlled source, then render again. A 2-pixel opening at 32 pixels is a starting test, not a guarantee.

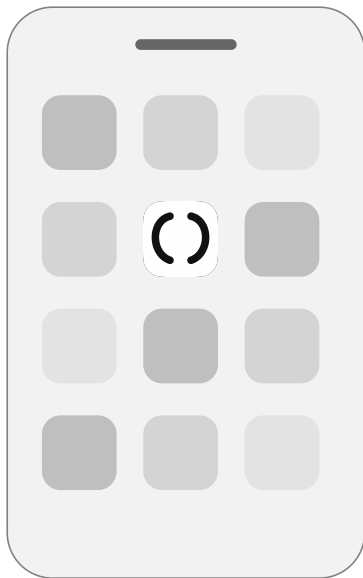
Pixel delivery

Keep alpha for foreground layers and lossless PNG for raster proofs. Use one intentional final rasterisation per output. Do not enlarge a tiny finished icon to make the 1024-pixel master; do not use JPEG compression for these edges.

R16 / W. A rendered preview may be transparent outside the system mask. This does not permit a transparent background layer in the original full-bleed icon artwork. [S1, S2]

A sign lives among other signs

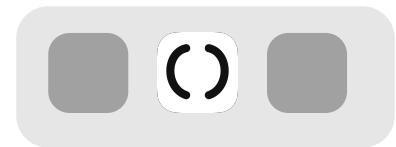
Recognition depends on its surroundings, visible size and neighbours.



Phone / grid



Watch / launcher



Mac / Dock

F13 / Context diagrams containing native proof PNGs: a phone grid, a circular Watch launcher and a Dock row. The surrounding layouts and neutral neighbours are schematic; these are not Apple UI screenshots or exact layout templates.

Home Screen

Compare visual weight, negative space and dark/light polarity beside other rounded icons. Test the available icon sizes and clear/tinted modes against real light, dark and busy wallpapers.

Watch launcher

Read the sign in a dense field of circles. Keep essential features away from clipped corners; check the actual device and launcher scale. A circular motif alone does not distinguish the application.

macOS Dock and search

Inspect small Dock sizes, magnification and search/Settings placements. Avoid relying on grain, hairline borders or micro-badges. Record the context, OS and visible size with each issue.

R11 / B. Native export evidence and schematic context are separate. App-specific simulator and physical-device captures belong to the later platform-proof stage.

From master to target output

Choose the source route per target, then verify what the build actually delivers.

Platform	Source canvas	Masking
iOS / iPadOS / macOS	1024 x 1024	Square artwork; system-applied rounded masking.
watchOS	1088 x 1088	Square artwork; system-applied circular masking.

1 / Prepare the master

Keep an opaque, full-bleed background separate from transparent ink and optional wash. Preserve the approved raster original and alpha. Use editable vector contours only when they retain the gesture. Do not pre-round the source or paint glass reflections into it. [S1, S2]

2 / Configure native material

Import the layers into Icon Composer. Tune Default, Dark and Mono, group depth, shadow and Liquid Glass. Inspect the actual imported silhouette: a stroked SVG can render differently from an explicitly outlined path.

3 / Build the chosen route

The .icon route lets Xcode render target sizes and supported older appearances. It replaces the app-icon asset catalog. If an older OS must retain a different design, evaluate the catalog route for that target. Keep the deployment minimum unchanged. [S2, S8]

4 / Verify the delivery

Match the build result to a per-target resolution ledger: platform, role, points, scale, pixel dimensions, mode, source revision and output. Confirm the archived application uses the reviewed icon. Native preview PNGs alone are not an integration check.

R09 / A. 1024 and 1088 describe current source canvases. They do not require manually drawing every rendition. Legacy catalog slots and their 1024-pixel Watch marketing image are a separate output contract.

Make every output accountable

A target ledger turns “all resolutions” into a checkable delivery contract.

Project / role	Logical size or source	Scale	Pixels
Pivot / macOS	16, 32, 128, 256, 512 pt	@1x and @2x	16-1024 px
ErgoWallet / iOS	Universal catalog source	1024 px source	Build-resolved
GravityMaze / Watch	Notification 24 / 27.5 pt	@2x	48 / 55 px
GravityMaze / Watch	Launcher 40 / 44 / 46 / 50 / 51 / 54 pt	@2x	80 / 88 / 92 / 100 / 102 / 108 px
GravityMaze / Watch	Quick Look 86 / 98 / 108 pt	@2x	172 / 196 / 216 px
GravityMaze / companion	Settings 29 pt	@2x / @3x	58 / 87 px
GravityMaze / marketing	Legacy Watch catalog	@1x	1024 px

Read the table correctly

These are checked-in catalog examples from the named projects, not a universal or guaranteed-current Apple size list. The Watch companion Settings @3x slot belongs to the iPhone context. The current .icon source uses a 1088-pixel Watch canvas. [S1, S5]

Record and validate

The source package includes the exact catalog rows, a resolution-ledger template and native exports from 16 to 1088 pixels. At integration, derive the full required list for each active target, compare file dimensions and appearances, and record build/device evidence.

R17 / B. A slot declaration proves an expected size, not that an existing PNG is correct or the current build uses that catalog. No app build or deployment target was changed for this edition.

Fifteen projects, distinct identities

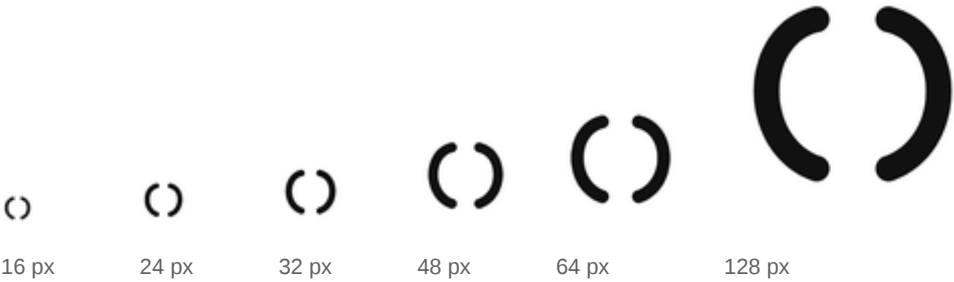
This map records recognition questions and candidate anchors, not selected designs.

Project	Current surface	Recognition brief
ergometal	macOS CLI	Compact octagon with Sigma and internal register rhythm; computation stays inside.
gravitymaze	Watch	A ball and traversable maze; keep distinct from a racing road.
MorseRelay	iPhone + Watch	Readable dit / dah rhythm and transfer; preserve meaningful timing cues.
blackboard	Web library	A writing gesture and chalk context; avoid resemblance to a maze.
ergowallet	iPhone	Recognisable custody / wallet cue; resolve Ergo relationship and three states.
gravitieswarm	Watch	A leading body and followers; collective motion should remain visible.
watchwinder	iPhone + Watch	Winding motion and recorded movement; distinguish simple timekeeping.
lacon	Python tool	A legal citation relationship; establish a shared Lacon anchor.
pivot	iPhone / iPad / Mac	Movement between positions around a stable reference.
whisper	iPhone + Watch	Local speech-to-text; distinguish it from a generic audio recorder.
clockify	Python CLI	Time entries and summaries; identify this tool rather than imply the provider app.
lacon-app	iPhone / iPad / Mac	Legal-reference graph; related to Lacon with clear application identity.
dogfight	Watch	Two reduced flight gestures and opposing movement; retain a wing-axis cue.
gravitydigits	Watch	Readable numeral obstacle, irregular particles and visible boundary deflection.
tiltracer	Watch	Road bend, direction and steering; distinguish GravityMaze.

Repository inventory checked on 11 September 2026. Eleven projects contain Icon Composer packages; four have separate project graphics. Repo names are used here for traceability. Product names and motifs remain subject to the individual brief.

Judge it at the size of use

A small, flat-black check exposes weaknesses that a large textured image can hide.



F06 / Exact-pixel structural samples, retained from edition 0.1.0. Print scale: 1 px = 1/96 inch. Native masked raster proofs and pixel-density examples appear on pages 15-16; inspect PNGs at 1:1 for a screen test.

Recognition	The chosen emblem, object or behaviour remains legible; essential gaps stay open.
Differentiation	Each app expresses its own role and remains distinct from ecosystem marks and sibling apps.
Material	Pressure and direction remain visible in the broad shape after fine grain disappears. Essential meaning and behavioural cues survive reduction.
Framing	Key content survives the rounded square on iOS/iPadOS/macOS and the circular watchOS mask.
Appearance	The identity holds across the supported appearance modes and wallpapers.
Context	Review Home Screen, Watch launcher, Dock and relevant Settings / search placements.

Record evidence

For every candidate, record file version, device or simulator, OS, appearance, display size and observed issue. Treat simulator checks and physical-device checks as separate evidence.

R11, R18-R19, R21-R22 / B. Native exports support review; they do not establish audience recognition, every target size or physical-device behaviour. Record limits rather than assuming a pass.

From study to application

Each stage has an explicit output and a defined review question.

01

Anchor brief

Choose emblem, object or behaviour. Record its minimum features, app purpose and nearest confusion.

What must remain recognisable?

02

Controlled studies

Explore meaning and brush course together. Test pressure, lifted ends and deliberate asymmetry against the minimum recognition features.

How much change can the anchor support?

03

Family comparison

Compare silhouette, mass, gaps and app-level differences across the complete set.

Does the family stay coherent and distinct?

04

Master artwork

Preserve the selected raster original, layers and placement. Vector reconstruction is optional and must retain the hand. Record every optical correction.

Can the approved result be reproduced?

05

Platform proof

Build target outputs and inspect supported modes, masks and small sizes.

Does it work in the actual system?

06

Integration

Replace the named assets after design acceptance; build and record the changed targets.

Does the application ship the reviewed artwork?

R10 / B. Retain selected pixels, prompts, rights-holder metadata and decisions. Design approval precedes replacement of named repository assets. A prompt cannot reproduce identical pixels.

An edition that can evolve

Keep decisions, examples and implementation evidence traceable across revisions.

Version policy

0.x denotes a working standard; 1.0.0 marks acceptance. Major revisions change the visual contract; minor revisions extend guidance. At the owner's requested version number, 0.4.1 clarifies the original Sumi-e intent: the gesture shapes the form itself.

Stable references

Keep R01-R22 and F01-F17 stable. Earlier teaching figures retain their IDs. F15-F17 add handwriting, family and wallet-state comparisons. Artwork and target manifests keep separate versions.

Editable source

editorial.json, rules.json and edition.json define the edition. Retained PNGs, .icon teaching packages, prompts, export arguments and hashes preserve the evidence. The PDF rebuild reads frozen images; optional native regeneration requires the recorded macOS tool.

Print setup

A4 portrait, 210 x 297 mm; 30 pages. Print at 100%, with long-edge duplex if desired. Main text has 20 mm side margins; no bleed. Fonts are embedded. Small raster samples are intentionally enlarged for analysis.

Proof boundary

Use grayscale for the monochrome proof and a colour proof for the tinted examples. Screen hex values and K-only ink proofs are separate starting points. This is a general print PDF, not a certified PDF/X separation. Device pixels and print ppi answer different questions.

Revision 0.4.1 / 13 September 2026. Clarifies brush handwriting throughout the standard and records a selective family revision. Earlier editions remain preserved.

Sources and decision record

Platform facts are sourced. Design rules are identified as project decisions.

S1 Apple / App icons

Platform masks, canvas sizes, edge guidance and appearance consistency.
developer.apple.com/design/human-interface-guidelines/app-icons

S2 Apple / Creating your app icon using Icon Composer

Layer preparation, material controls, generated sizes and older-system behaviour.
developer.apple.com/documentation/xcode/creating-your-app-icon-using-icon-composer

S3 Apple / Create icons with Icon Composer

Additional workflow reference.
developer.apple.com/videos/play/wwdc2025/361/

S4 Project brief and clarification

Sumi-e, familiar anchors, Apple appearances, English A4, application purpose, behavioural recognition, gekko copyright and the accepted handwriting clarification.
 Project brief / 11-13 September 2026

S5 Local project inventory

README files, target settings, current .icon packages and vector artwork. Inventory date: 11 September 2026.
 Fifteen named repositories under ~/Developer

S6 Apple / Say hello to the new look of app icons

Appearance family and Apple Watch presentation.
developer.apple.com/videos/play/wwdc2025/220/

S7 Apple / Images

Logical size, bitmap resolution and scale factors.
developer.apple.com/design/human-interface-guidelines/images

S8 Apple / Configuring your app icon

Catalog-based app-icon configuration.
developer.apple.com/documentation/xcode/configuring-your-app-icon

S9 Native rendering record

Icon Composer 1.6 (99.1), Xcode 26.6 (17F113); frozen export arguments, file dimensions and hashes. No device captures.
 Source package / native-render-log.json

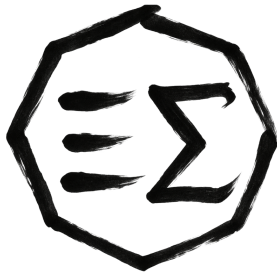
D01-D04 Recognition anchors; monochrome default with adaptive tones; provisional parameters; educational scope.

D05 Show native platform masks and surface behaviour. Keep source, renderer proof and device validation distinct.

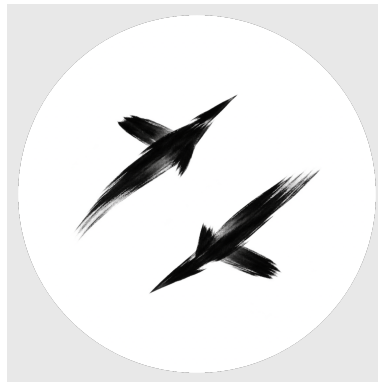
Apple sources checked 11 September 2026; design decisions extended 13 September. The Sigma/octagon diagram is not an official master. Additional museum references and the handwriting interpretation appear on page 27.

Choose what carries recognition

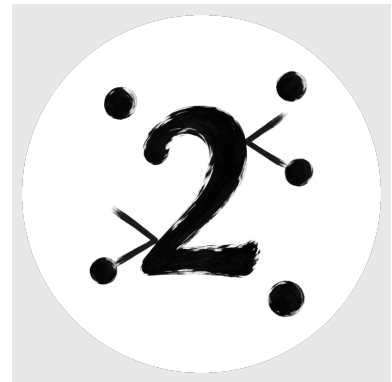
Three corrected directions apply the same ink language to different kinds of meaning.



EM-04 / computation



DF-02 / encounter



GD-05 / collision

F14 / Current studies EM-04, DF-02 and GD-05. Review candidates, not production approvals. Watch studies use native circular masks; ErgoMetal is a compact project signet.

Computation inside the signet

ErgoMetal R2 extended the process horizontally. EM-04 keeps three register strokes and Sigma within one octagon, continuing EM-03 with a personal brush hand. The compact whole and open gaps take priority over a literal process diagram.

Object reduced to action

Dogfight R1 was too illustrative. Two angular flight gestures, a minimal wing-axis cue and opposing headings carry the encounter. The negative space between them expresses the turn.

Behaviour made visible

GravityDigits R1 arranged points like punctuation. The revision uses irregular placement and visible directional changes at a numeral boundary. The interaction must be readable without a caption.

R18-R20 / B. Review meaning first, then the mask and raster. The computational cue must fit inside the signet without competing with the Sigma or the octagonal contour.

Copyright and decision record

The edition names its rights holder and keeps design decisions separate from production approval.

Copyright holder

gekko
© 2026 gekko

Notice placement

Carry the copyright notice in the edition colophon, metadata and source-package documentation. Keep icon artwork free from copyright text, signatures, watermarks and decorative labels.

Reference attribution

Ecosystem marks, museum references, Apple documentation and the bundled typefaces retain their separate source credits. The gekko notice does not replace those attributions.

D06 / Recognition levels

Choose an emblem, object or behaviour as the primary anchor. App identity must add its own meaning; changing material alone is insufficient.

D07 / Three revision briefs

ErgoMetal: show computation and mining context. Dogfight: reduce aircraft anatomy to flight gestures. GravityDigits: show irregular motion and deflection at numeral boundaries.

D08 / Copyright record

The user identified gekko as copyright holder on 12 September 2026. This edition records that name exactly; no expanded legal entity name is inferred.

D09 / Compact computation

ErgoMetal must remain a compact signet. Its computational cue belongs inside the octagon; three register strokes and the Sigma replace the externally extended R2 process.

D10 / The hand carries the form

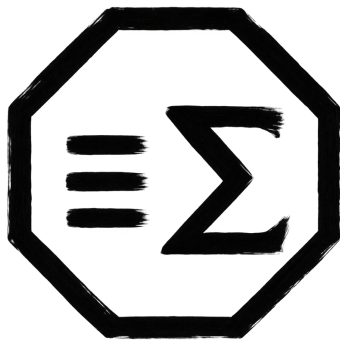
The accepted clarification makes pressure, direction and lifting structural. Slightly unequal sides and individual starts and ends are part of the design, not faults to remove.

Review boundary

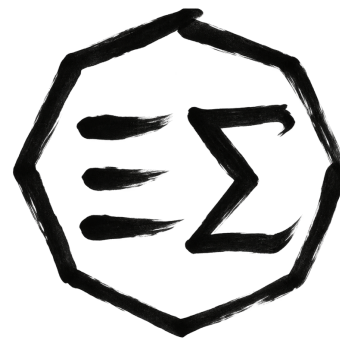
Current studies await selection. Optical preparation, target outputs and device evidence belong to integration. Preserve the selected brush character. Existing application artwork remains unchanged until approval.

The hand carries the form

A recognisable sign can be written freely. Accuracy of meaning does not require geometrical exactitude.



EM-03 / regular construction



EM-04 / pressure and lift

F15 / The same compact composition, written differently. Eight turns, an uppercase Sigma and three internal registers remain. Unequal pressure and lifted ends now shape the whole mark.

Gesture

Let contact, loading, direction, overlap and lift generate the contour. A perfect vector with a distressed edge cannot supply that structural movement.

Recognition

Keep identifying relationships: enclosure, orientation, separation and the app's operation. Allow unequal sides and strokes where those relationships remain clear.

Interpretation

The brief invokes Matisse's "exactitude is not truth". Here it supports expressive fidelity. This is a project interpretation, not a claim that Matisse founded or defined Sumi-e. [S10, S11]

S10 / The Met / Brush Writing in the Arts of Japan

Pressure, speed and rhythm give brush writing its individual character. Accessed 13 September 2026.
www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2013/brush-writing

S11 / Hammer / Exactitude is Not Truth: Matisse Breaks Through

Museum programme, 11 January 2026; context for the brief's Matisse principle. Accessed 13 September 2026.
hammer.ucla.edu/programs-events/2026/exactitude-not-truth-matisse-breaks-through

R21-R22 / B. Personal handwriting describes the treatment of the sign; it does not permit a signature, seal or extra lettering.

One hand, different signs

Shared pressure and generous intervals connect the family. Each application keeps its own meaning and silhouette.



ErgoMetal / EM-04

Redraw



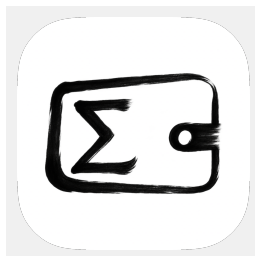
GravityMaze / GM-02

Redraw



MorseRelay / MR-02

Redraw



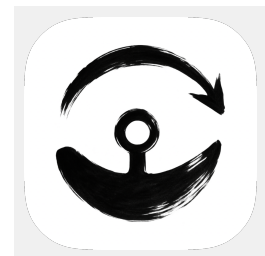
ErgoWallet / EW-M02

Redraw



GravitySwarm / GS-02

Retain



WatchWinder / WW-02

Redraw



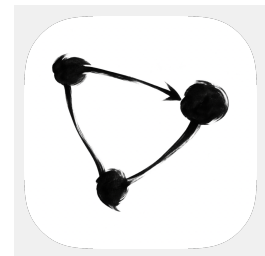
Lacon / linker / LC-02

Redraw



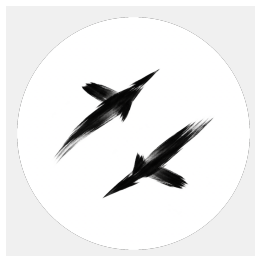
Pivot / PV-02

Retain



Lacon / graph / LA-02

Redraw



Dogfight / DF-02

Retain



GravityDigits / GD-05

Retain



TiltRacer / TR-02

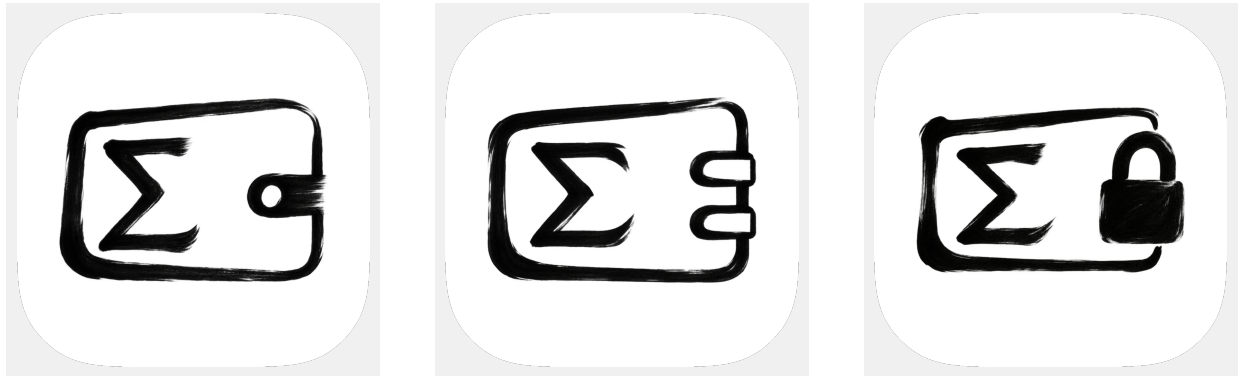
Redraw

F16 / Twelve current project proposals. Ten marks were redrawn across eight projects, counting all three wallet states. Four existing drawings are retained. Native Default proofs use the recorded renderer; the two command-line tools use transparent signets.

This is a family comparison, not a release approval. Platform masks are native previews; Home Screen, launcher and Dock behaviour still require integration evidence.

Meanings survive the variants

ErgoWallet keeps one brush family and three visible state cues. Meaning cannot depend on colour alone.



Mainnet / one fastening

Testnet / two fastenings

Cold / closed padlock

F17 / Wallet-state proposals in the native iOS Default mask. The frame, handwritten Sigma and fastening share an ink treatment. The cues label target identity, not a live security or network status.

Shared hand

Vary pressure within each frame and Sigma. Corresponding parts need related weight and spacing; they need not be mechanically identical.

Distinct cues

One fastening identifies Mainnet, two identify Testnet, and the closed padlock identifies Cold. Keep the two fastenings separate and the padlock opening visible.

Size and appearance

Compare 32- and 64-pixel exports, then the actual target sizes. Preserve cue separation in Dark, Clear and Tinted previews. A small icon must not replace explicit target labels in the app.

Approval boundary

These are visual identity studies. They do not change Mainnet gates, security behaviour or software configuration. Review their shape cues before replacing any target artwork.

R01-R03, R08, R21-R22 / B. Frozen raster originals, generation prompts, native wrappers and review outputs are retained in the companion family source package.

Record every decision

Fourteen marks were reviewed individually. Redrawing is justified by a weakness in the form, not by a demand for uniform novelty.

Project / state	Previous → current	Action	Reason
ErgoMetal	EM-03 → EM-04	Redraw	Pressure-led enclosure and registers
GravityMaze	GM-01 → GM-02	Redraw	Nested walls with a written turn
MorseRelay	MR-01 → MR-02	Redraw	Separate dabs and a transfer gesture
ErgoWallet	EW-M01 → EW-M02	Redraw	Handwritten frame, Sigma and clasp
GravitySwarm	GS-02	Retain	Loaded bodies and taper already work
WatchWinder	WW-01 → WW-02	Redraw	Unequal rotor and winding gesture
Lacon / linker	LC-01 → LC-02	Redraw	Independent bracket and link strokes
Pivot	PV-02	Retain	Existing paths already carry pressure
Lacon / graph	LA-01 → LA-02	Redraw	Uneven nodes and connection rhythm
Dogfight	DF-02	Retain	Existing flight gestures already work
GravityDigits	GD-05	Retain	Preserve numeral and collision contacts
TiltRacer	TR-01 → TR-02	Redraw	Replace the precise miniature car
ErgoWallet Testnet	EW-T01 → EW-T02	Redraw	Carry the hand into two fastenings
ErgoWallet Cold	EW-C01 → EW-C02	Redraw	Carry the hand into the closed lock

D11 / Selective revision

Ten redrawn marks and four retained originals. The retained master files remain byte-identical. Earlier editions and candidates are preserved; no application repository artwork is replaced by this edition.

Audit date: 13 September 2026. Candidate identifiers track drawings, not shipped app versions. The source package records selected pixels, rejected attempts, prompts, dimensions and hashes.