Sketch 3

* vector design tool
* entirely focused on user interface design
* fraction of the price of Photoshop
* simple – little or no training required
* ideal for designing for multiple devices
* delivery of assets is easy

Sketch uses…

* a single unit
* styles only relevant to UI design
* built-in iPhone previewing tool (Mirror and Artboards)

Accolades

* Voted App of the Year by NetAwards
* And most-used Wireframing and User Interface Design tool on a survey of 4000 designers
* Small team that listens to feedback
* Vibrant community

Stats

* iOS, Android, and Web Design
* 41 MB of disk space (compared to Photoshop’s 1.6 GB)
* pixels is only unit
* Toolbar, Navigator, Inspector – approachable; simple designs

Artboards

* The Screens of your app
* Each Artboard represents a screen or interaction within a screen
* Efficient workflow
* No need to save a file for each screen (requiring the management of dozens of files)
* Put all screens next to each other; no need to hide lots of layers
* Easily rearrange, duplicate, or export
* Templates include iOS, Android, and Web

Most popular resolution: 1x with the iPhone 6 (375x667)

Each Page represents a platform or a completely different resolution; most projects will have 20+ Artboards for a platform like iOS with another Page for Android, Web, Apple Watch, tvOS, etc. Allows you to have an entire project within a single Sketch file.

Download templates from the Web, such as iOS 9 GUI or Facebook Resources and save them.

Colors – something a lot of people struggle with; important to have a solid starting palette. Store colors globally or for a specific document. Use the Eyedropper tool to pick up any color inside or outside of Sketch. Recommended starting palettes: iOS, Material Design, Flat UI

Color palettes can be shared as a file. Gradients cannot be easily imported, but can be downloaded manually.

Typography – download a few modern fonts. Good, free options:

* San Francisco
* Helvetica Neue
* Avenir Next
* Open Sans
* Roboto
* Proxima Nova
* Museo Sans

Use Text Styles to reuse the same style across multiple layers.

Icons – you will need a nice library of vector icons. (PixelLove and Streamline work well for iOS). Easily import SVG icons and edit them.

Symbols makes it easy to share the same elements across multiple Artboards. As you update one, it’ll synchronize to all the other ones that share the same Symbol.

Create Symbol is not clickable if you’re already inside a Symbol.

Quickly Export to Multiple Resolutions. Use Make Exportable in the bottom right to export to any scale (1x, 2x, 3x) and various file formats (JPG, PNG, SVG, PDF, TIFF, EPS). PDF is particularly useful for iOS assets and SVG is a fantastic format for the Web.

Version Control, Autosave, iCloud – Autosave regularly saves multiple versions of your file allowing you to easily revert to a previous version and protecting your files from being lost, however, it is still recommended that you set up a Time Machine for extra security.

With iCloud, every save not only stores files on your HDD but also on the Apple servers.

Previewing on your iPhone – Sketch Mirror allows you to preview your designs just by connecting via Wi-Fi or IP address. Setting a Personal Hotspot from your phone may give better results if you are frequently on-the-go.

Migrating from Photoshop and Illustrator – migrating your existing libraries of logos and icons to Sketch is easy if you export them to SVG.

PSD Shapes to Sketch

1. You should work in vector
2. Always work from scratch

Essential Plugins – community-made plugins that address issues in user interface design are released on a regular, frequent basis

Fluid helps you adjust the design based on the Artboard size, closing the gap between design and development when working with so many resolutions (iPhone 5, 6, 6 Plus, Android, Web) decreasing the number of edits required

Sketch Content Generator – Reduces hours of populating avatars and background images using Pattern Fill or Mask to minutes.

Resources – download other people’s work and analyze it; SketchAppSources and Sketch Rep are great places to download Sketch files.

Vector Devices and Mockups – free sample from Angle (over 140 mockups for iPhone, iPad, Mac, and Apple Watch devices; all entirely in vector)

Scissors – powerful new tool that lets you quickly cut parts of a vector (cut a circle in half then close its paths to reform a new shape, for example); combined with Border Options, Convert to Outline, and Flatten allows you to create interesting new shapes

Background Blur

* Feature unique to Sketch
* Dynamic sheet placed on top of multiple layers in the background
* Updates in real-time as everything changes
* Create a Shape, set Fill opacity to less than 100%, change the blur to Background Blur
* Customize Blur strength
* Move the Blur layers and layers underneath blur automatically
* Use Soft Light of Overlay to add interesting effects
* In addition to Background Blur, you have the usual Gaussian, Motion, and Zoom blurs
* Background Blur can be an expensive feature in terms of performance, so don’t overuse it; Flatten to Bitmap whenever possible

Working with Vectors – Vector is traditionally difficult to learn because you must master the Bezier Curve and recreate complex shapes from scratch. Sketch makes it easier by combining simple shapes, rounding vector points, and vectorizing the borders. You can replicate 90% of the icons found in iOS by applying these basic techniques.

Straight Point – as easy as drawing a straight line. Use Shift to draw perfectly straight lines.

Mirrored – a symmetric Bezier curve. Change the angle or distance of one side and the other side is automatically updated as well.

Asymmetric – similar to Mirrored, Asymmetric will the same angle, but allows for a different distance.

Disconnected – allows two completely different handles, even deleting one handle and keeping the other; especially useful when you have a sharp turn followed by a curve.

Open/Close Path – when you begin a new Vector, it’ll be open (you can draw as many points as you want before it completes itself). You can close or re-open the path using Close Path and Open Path.

Polygon Points – create a polygon with as many points as you want

Star Points and Radius – use Radius to create the perfect angle for the Points

Combining Shapes

* Union – add shapes together
* Subtract – subtract shapes from the main shape
* Intersect – shows the space where 2 shapes meet
* Difference – shows the space where 2 shapes don’t meet
* None – the computer does the guessing (it is recommended you use one of the other 4 options to allow for greater control later on should you customize more)

Duplicate and Transform – design tool should be able to handle key tasks like duplicate, scale, and transform in only a few steps

Make Grid – makes it easy to duplicate anything, for any amount of copies, in a grid style. Set the spacing between the elements or have them enclosed in boxes before duplicating. Especially useful for handling List (Table View) and Grid (Collection View) interfaces, or simply rearrange layers in an orderly fashion. Also works on Artboards.

Perspective Transform – possibly harder to use than in your typical vector tool such as Illustrator, but works if done correctly. (Not having to swap between two applications is a big plus).

1. Make sure to Convert to Outlines every text layer
2. Ungroup everything since Transform won’t work on groups
3. Finally, select all layers together and do Transform – everything will be kept in vector

Scale Tool – not the same as resizing; actually scales every property: Size, Radius, Border, Shadow, Inner Shadow. (For example, a 1 px border scales at 200% will be 2 px. With resizing it would remain 1 px.) This is indispensable for converting @1x UI Kits to @2x or @3x as it even works with Artboards.

Alignment, Distances, and Guides – you can never have too much precision (and there are many tools in Sketch that help you to design with incredible precision).

Smart Guides – intrinsic to the Sketch experience. When dragging in a layer, red lines appear to indicate if it’s well-aligned or centered properly. Smart Guides appear even before you start drawing (a feature unique to Sketch).

Distances – hold the Alt key to show the distances between the selected layer against other ones in the same Group or Artboard. Also measures the distances to the Artboard itself. Mouse over different elements to see the distances. Distances can work against Rulers as well.

Align and Distribute Objects – instantly (both vertically and horizontally) align news shapes as you create them in the Artboard. When two layers are selected, they can also align with each other.

Rulers – enabled with Ctrl R. Good for setting persistent guides that can be snapped or measured against your layers.

Layout – open Layout Settings to find a way to set up your own Layout Grid system, such as the famous 960grid. Setting up 2, 3, or 4 columns proportionally is as easy as snapping the layers to the grids. Particularly useful for bigger screens that occupy multiple columns and call for clean divisions (like Web, iPad, and tvOS)

Grids – enable Grids to divide your canvas perfectly. Material Design, for instance, encourages a 8 dp grid system in order for shapes, text, and baselines to fall perfectly into those lines. iOS is less strict, mostly encouraging a minimum padding and margin of 8 pt.

Pixels Grid – use Show Pixels to make sure that your design is pixel perfect; requires zoom greater than 100% enabled. At 1000% zoom or more, Pixels Grid is automatically visible.

Preferences – customizable

* Auto-Save – highly recommended, but can be dangerous if there are missing fonts or if teammates open files and make changes. Can also incur a high disk-space cost when working with large projects.
  + Enabling Auto-Save allows you to revert to older versions
* Pixel Fitting – working with vectors, new shapes may not always land on the pixel grid as you create them, causing them to be less sharp than they should be; this option makes sure pixels stay sharp as you align or resize
* Sub-Pixel Anti-Alias Fonts – Sub-Pixel Ant-alias makes your typefaces unnaturally thicker in exchange for increased readability. This was useful when monitors were small and lacked Retina resolution. Today’s screens are bigger and better and this option will only make fonts inaccurate to true rendering, especially for mobile devices. You can disable it in Sketch’s Preferences by going to Canvas.
* Artboards within Artboard – when working with dozens of screens, you can have a great overview of the experience. You can have Artboards within an Artboard allowing quick export of the entire flow.
* Artboard Background – select the title above an Artboard to select it. An Artboard may have a background color, otherwise the resulting screen will show a transparent background instead of what seems to be white.
* Color Picker – switch from RGB to HSB for a more intuitive way to manipulate colors.
* Quick Eyedropper – pick colors from within the document or even outside the bounds of the application
* Frequently-Used Colors
* Color Palettes
* Gradients
* Radial Gradients
* Angular Gradients
* Patterns
* Noise (to duplicate textures)

Layers and Groups – always name your layers and group similar layers together to make documents much easier to manage and organize

Expand and collapse

Copy and Paste

Emoji & Symbols

Open Recent Files

Flatten to Bitmap – increase performance

Designing from Scratch –

Quick Prototyping (Flinto or Principle)

Plugins – hundreds

Perspective Mockups

Working with Adaptive Layouts

Creating a Style Guide with Zeplin

Working with Vectors