Critiquing: The WRONG Way

▸ **Lack of Clarity**   "I don't like it," or "I really love it!"

▸ **Personal Opinion**   "I don't like purple."

▸ **Showing Off**   "I did something just like that 2 years ago. Client LOVED it."

▸ **Irrelevant**   "Really need to have good passwords for security."

▸ **Apathy**   "It looks fine."

▸ **Contradictions**   "This needs to appeal to Baby Boomers but the users will probably be in their early 20s."

▸ **Indecisiveness**   "I'm not sure what I think. What do you think?"

The Hamburger Method of Constructive Criticism

▸ Begin with a **constructive compliment** on something the person does well (the fluffy bun part).

▸ Then get to the **meat of the matter**, which of course is the constructive criticism part.

▸ End with another **constructive compliment** (i.e. the other half of the fluffy bun).
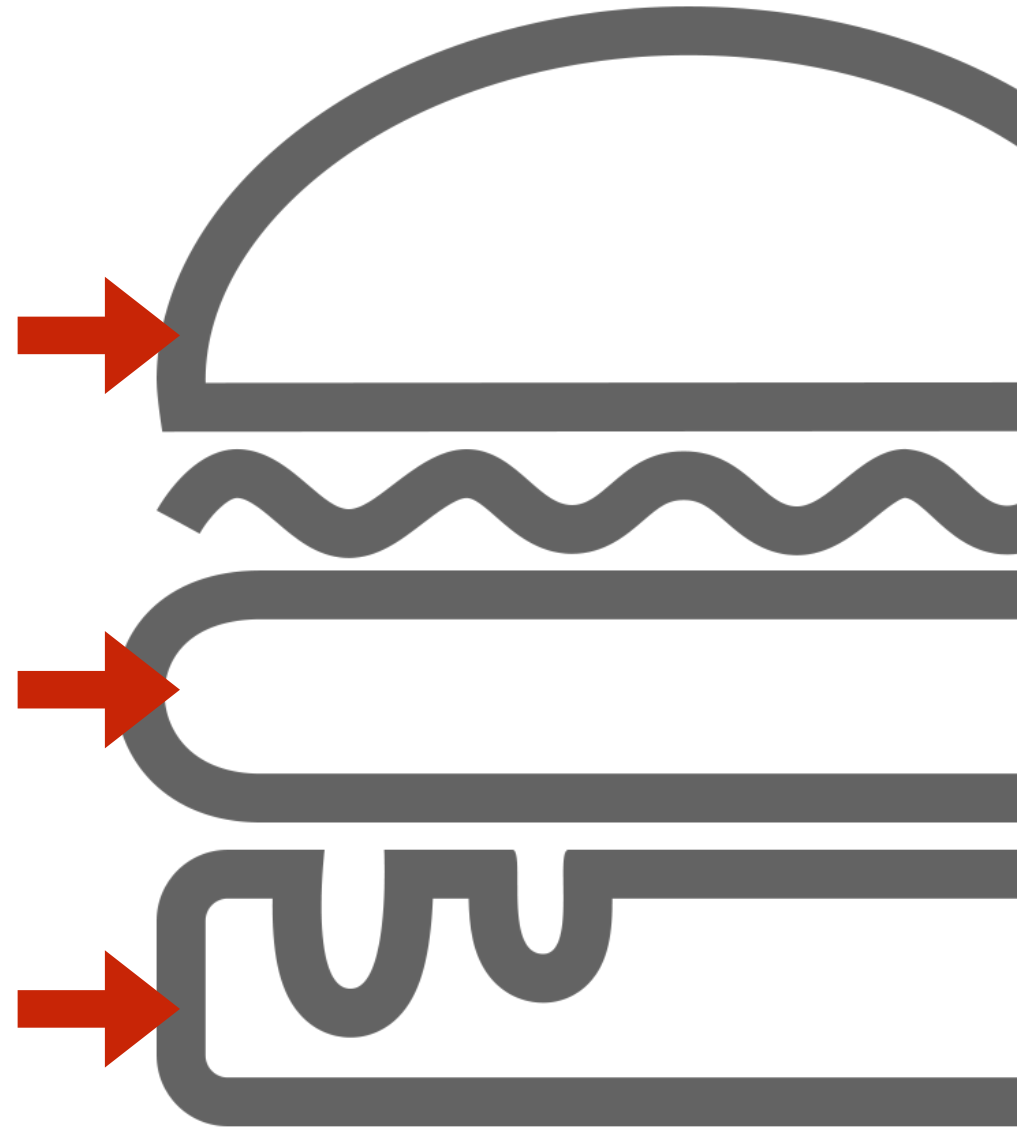
Before Critiquing

1. **Why am I offering this criticism in the first place?**
   Is it because I'm trying to be helpful or just because I want to say something?

2. **Is the criticism necessary and appropriate?**
   Does it have a great impact on the "grander scheme of things", or am I just being nitpicky. Will focusing on this issue be worth the time and effort in the long run?

3. **Is the criticism truly constructive?**
   Positive, helpful, productive, useful, beneficial, and practical. Antonym: Destructive.

4. **Do I have the right, or better yet - have I earned the right to offer criticism?**
   The difference between "management" and "leadership" has a lot to do with the relationship you have with your team. "Managers" tend to focus on control, whereas real leaders take people to the next level.

5. **Finally, have I noticed at least two things to compliment before commencing with the criticism?**

10 Usability Heuristics for User Interface Design

1. Visibility of system status

2. Match between system and the real world

3. User control and freedom

4. Consistency and standards

5. Error prevention

6. Recognition rather than recall

7. Flexibility and efficiency of use

8. Aesthetic and minimalist design

9. Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors

10. Help and documentation

1. Visibility of system status

The system should always keep users informed about what is going on, through appropriate feedback within reasonable time.
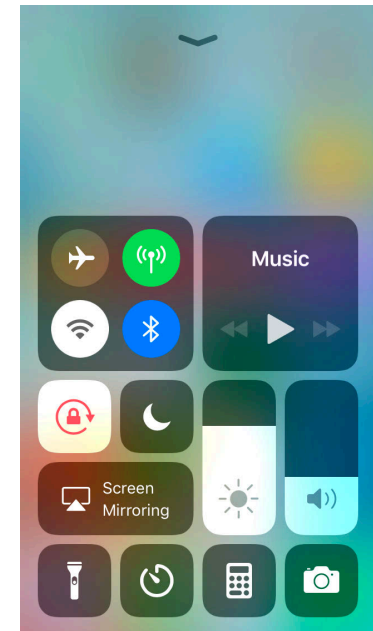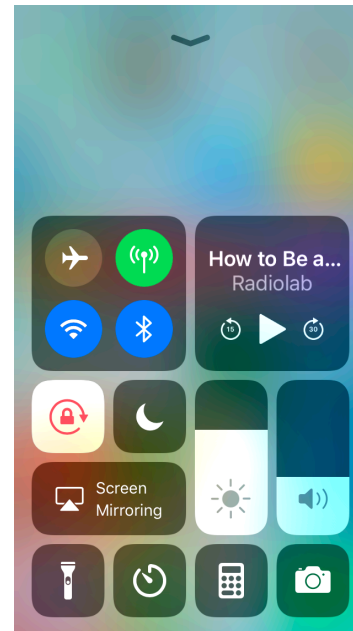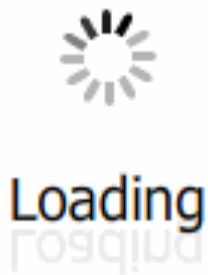
2. Match between system and the real world

The system should speak the users' language, with words, phrases and concepts familiar to the user, rather than system-oriented terms. Follow real-world conventions, making information appear in a natural and logical order.

3. User control and freedom

Users often choose system functions by mistake and will need a clearly marked "emergency exit" to leave the unwanted state without having to go through an extended dialogue.
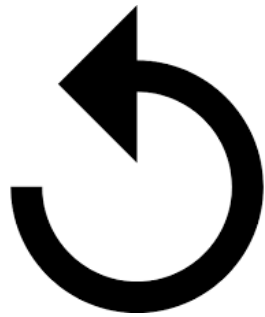
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4. Consistency and standards

Users should not have to wonder whether different words, situations, or actions mean the same thing. Follow platform conventions.

Type

Title 1 · 44/56

Title 2 · 32/36

Title 3 · 24/28

Large · 19/24

Regular · 17/22

Small · 14/18

MICRO 1 · 8/8

A11y Color

Rausch
#FF5A5F
3.05:1

A11y Babu
#00A699
3.03:1

A11y Arches
#FC642D
3.0:1

A11y Hof
#484848
9.14:1

A11y Foggy
#767676
4.54:1

Spacing

8 · tiny

16 · small

24 · base

48 · large

64 · x-large

5. Error prevention

Even better than good error messages is a careful design which prevents a problem from occurring in the first place. Either eliminate error-prone conditions or check for them and present users with a confirmation option before they commit to the action.

webkeyz ✓

webkeyz@ ✗ Please enter a valid email.

••••• ✓

6. Recognition rather than recall

Minimize the user's memory load by making objects, actions, and options visible. The user should not have to remember information from one part of the dialogue to another. Instructions for use of the system should be visible or easily retrievable whenever appropriate.

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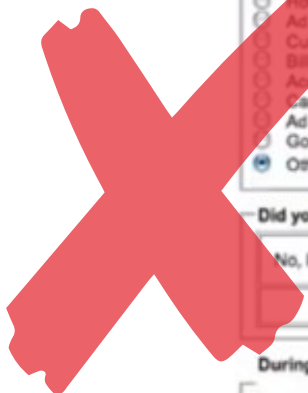
7. Flexibility and efficiency of use

Accelerators — unseen by the novice user — may often speed up the interaction for the expert user such that the system can cater to both inexperienced and experienced users. Allow users to tailor frequent actions.
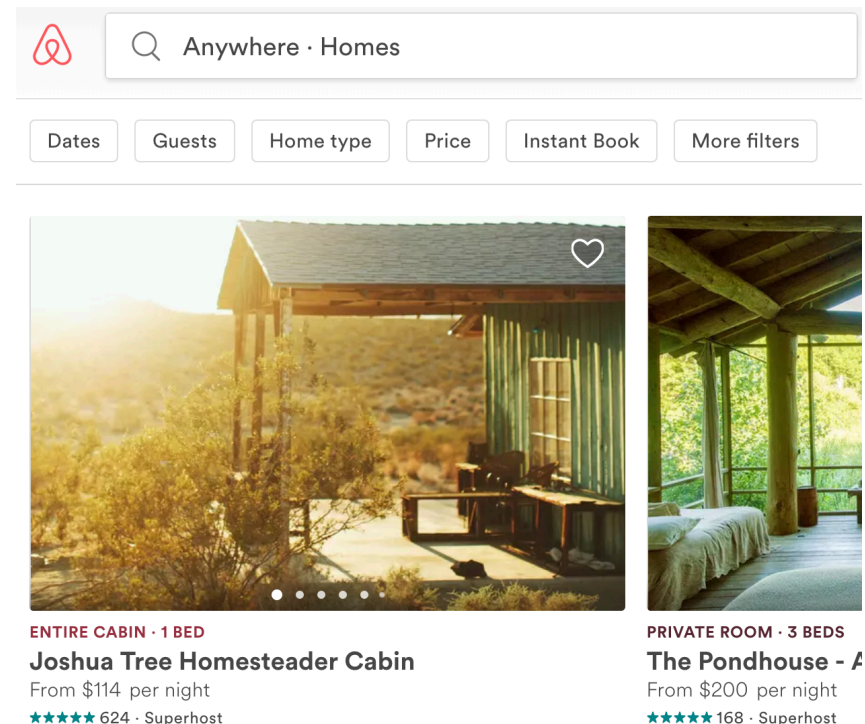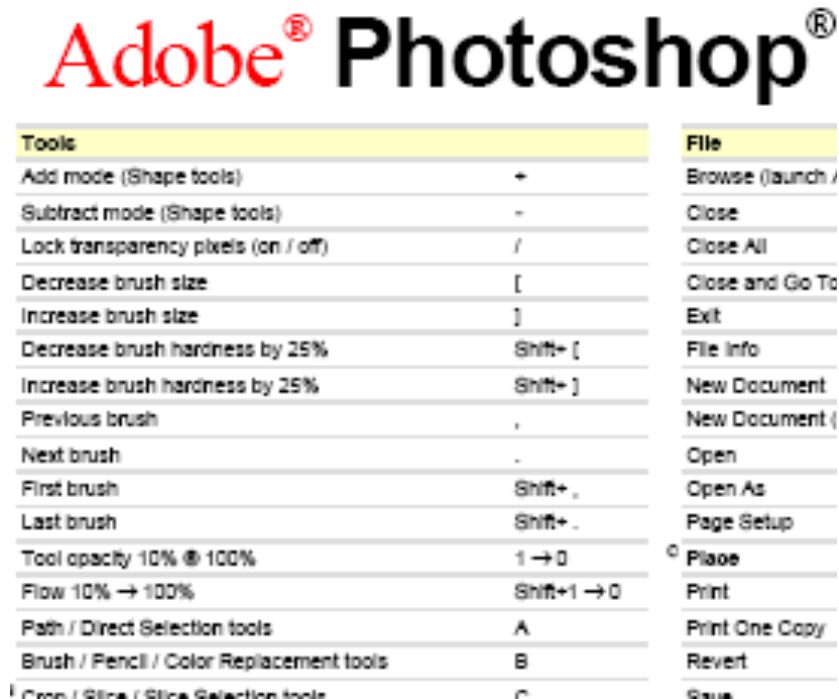
8. Aesthetic and minimalist design

Dialogues should not contain information which is irrelevant or rarely needed. Every extra unit of information in a dialogue competes with the relevant units of information and diminishes their relative visibility.

9. Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors

Error messages should be expressed in plain language (no codes), precisely indicate the problem, and constructively suggest a solution.

Be great at what you do

Get started - it's free.

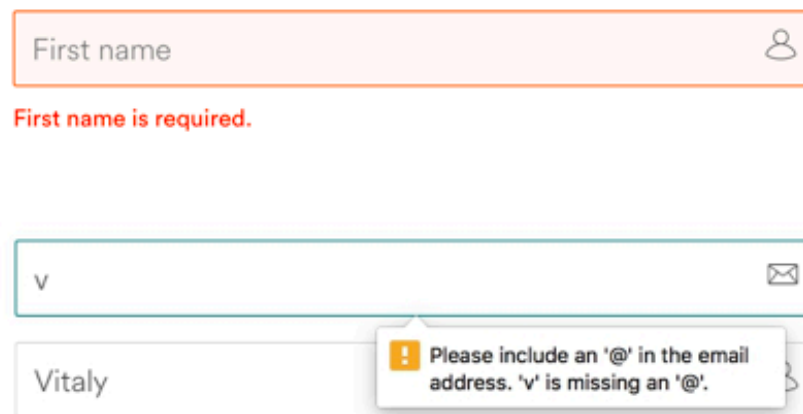⊗ Please enter your last name

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Vitaly

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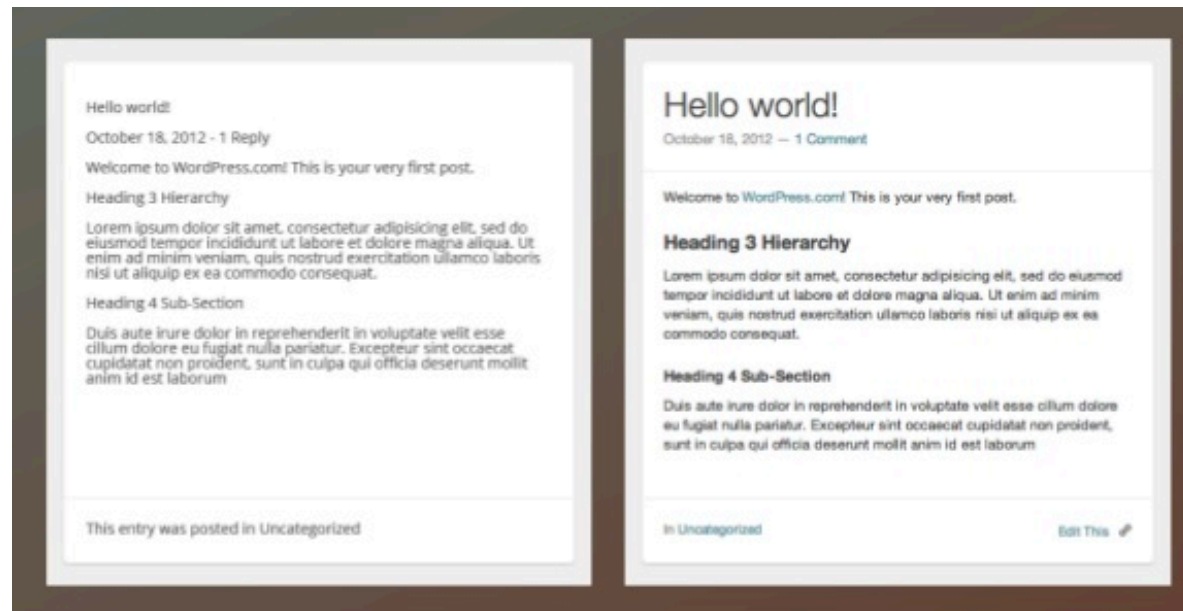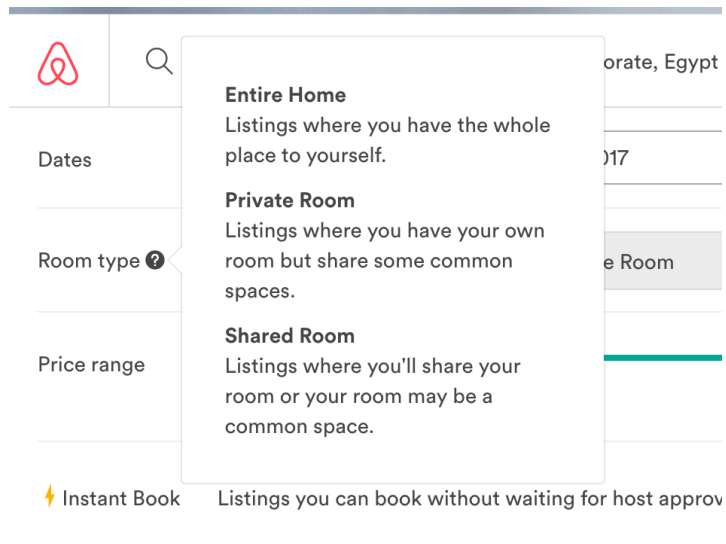
First name

First name is required.

v

Vitaly

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10. Help and documentation

Even though it is better if the system can be used without documentation, it may be necessary to provide help and documentation. Any such information should be easy to search, focused on the user's task, list concrete steps to be carried out, and not be too large.

Type Hierarchy