# Cheatsheet: Psychology *of* Design

## List of Cognitive Biases & Principles That Affect Your UX

| | Name | One-Liner | Category |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | 👀 **Hick's Law** | More options leads to harder decisions | Information |
| 2. | 💼 **Confirmation Bias** | People look for evidence that confirms what they think | Information |
| 3. | 👁 **Priming** | Previous stimuli influence users' decision | Information |
| 4. | 🚚 **Cognitive Load** | Total amount of mental effort that is required to complete a task | Information |
| 5. | ⚓ **Anchoring Bias** | Users rely heavily on the first piece of information they see | Information |
| 6. | 👉 **Nudge** | Subtle hints can affect users' decisions | Information |
| 7. | 🍰 **Progressive Disclosure** | Users are less overwhelmed if they're exposed to complex features later | Information |
| 8. | 🎯 **Fitt's Law** | It's easier to aim the bigger the target is. | Information |
| 9. | 🐠 **Attentional bias** | Users' thoughts filter what they pay attention to | Information |
| 10. | 💔 **Empathy Gap** | People underestimate how much emotions influence user behaviors | Information |
| 11. | ⛵ **Visual Anchors** | Elements used to guide users' eyes | Information |
| 12. | 🌶 **Von Restorff Effect** | People remember more items that stand out | Information |
| 13. | 🎖 **Visual Hierarchy** | The order in which people perceive what they see | Information |
| 14. | 📡 **Selective Attention** | People filter out things from their environment when in focus | Information |
| 15. | ✈ **Survivorship Bias** | People neglect things that don't make it past a selection process | Information |
| 16. | 🕶 **Sensory Adaptation** | Users tune out the stuff they get repeatedly exposed to | Information |
| 17. | 🍒 **Juxtaposition** | Elements that are close and similar are perceived as a single unit | Information |
| 18. | 🚦 **Signifiers** | Elements that communicate what it will do | Information |
| 19. | 🎭 **Contrast** | Users' attention is drawn to higher visual weights | Information |
| 20. | 🚨 **External Trigger** | When the information on what to do next is within the prompt itself | Information |
| 21. | 🤹 **Decoy Effect** | Create a new option that's easy to discard | Information |
| 22. | 🎪 **Centre-Stage Effect** | People tend to choose the middle option in a set of items | Information |
| 23. | 🖼 **Framing** | The way information is presented affects how users make decisions | Information |

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| 24. |  **Law of Proximity** | Elements close to each other are usually considered related | Information |
| 25. |  **Tesler's Law** | If you simplify too much, you'll transfer some complexity to the users | Information |
| 26. |  **Spark Effect** | Users are more likely to take action when the effort is small | Information |
| 27. |  **Feedback Loop** | When users take action, feedback communicates what happened | Information |
| 28. |  **Expectations Bias** | People tend to be influenced by their own expectations | Information |
| 29. |  **Aesthetic-Usability Effect** | People perceive designs with great aesthetics as easier to use | Information |
| 30. |  **Social Proof** | Users adapt their behaviors based on what others do | Meaning |
| 31. |  **Scarcity** | People value things more when they're in limited supply | Meaning |
| 32. |  **Curiosity Gap** | Users have a desire to seek out missing information | Meaning |
| 33. |  **Mental Model** | Users have a preconceived opinion of how things work | Meaning |
| 34. |  **Familiarity Bias** | People prefer familiar experiences | Meaning |
| 35. |  **Halo Effect** | People judge things (or people) based on their feelings towards one trait | Meaning |
| 36. |  **Miller's Law** | Users can only keep 5±2 items in their working memory | Meaning |
| 37. |  **Unit Bias** | One unit of something feels like the optimal amount | Meaning |
| 38. |  **Flow State** | Being fully immersed and focused on a task | Meaning |
| 39. |  **Skeuomorphism** | Users adapt more easily to things that look like real-world objects | Meaning |
| 40. |  **Reciprocity** | People feel the need to reciprocate when they receive something | Meaning |
| 41. |  **Authority Bias** | Users attribute more importance to the opinion of an authority figure | Meaning |
| 42. |  **Pseudo-Set Framing** | Tasks that are part of a group are more tempting to complete | Meaning |
| 43. |  **Variable Reward** | People enjoy rewards, especially unexpected ones | Meaning |
| 44. |  **Cheerleader Effect** | Individual items seem more attractive when presented in a group | Meaning |
| 45. |  **Curse of Knowledge** | Not realizing that people don't have the same level of knowledge | Meaning |
| 46. |  **Aha! moment** | When new users first realize the value of your product | Meaning |
| 47. |  **Self-Initiated Triggers** | Users are more likely to interact with prompts they setup for themselves | Meaning |
| 48. |  **Survey Bias** | Users tend to skew survey answers towards what's socially acceptable | Meaning |
| 49. |  **Cognitive Dissonance** | It's painful to hold to opposing ideas in our mind | Meaning |
| 50. |  **Goal Gradient Effect** | Motivation increases as users get closer to their goal | Meaning |
| 51. |  **Feedforward** | When users know what to expect before they take action | Meaning |
| 52. |  **Occam's Razor** | Simple solutions are often better than the more complex ones | Meaning |

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| 53. | **Noble Edge Effect** | Users tend to prefer socially responsible companies | Meaning |
| 54. | **Hindsight Bias** | People overestimate their ability to predict outcomes after the fact | Meaning |
| 55. | **Law of Similarity** | Users perceive a relationship between elements that look similar | Meaning |
| 56. | **Law of Prägnanz** | Users interpret ambiguous images in a simpler and more complete form | Meaning |
| 57. | **Spotlight Effect** | People tend to believe they are being noticed more than they really are | Meaning |
| 58. | **Fresh Start Effect** | Users are more likely to take action if there's a feeling of new beginnings | Meaning |
| 59. | **Labor Illusion** | People value things more when they see the work behind them | Time |
| 60. | **Default Bias** | Users tend not to change an established behavior | Time |
| 61. | **Investment Loops** | When users invest themselves, they're more likely to come back | Time |
| 62. | **Loss Aversion** | People prefer to avoid losses more than earning equivalent gains | Time |
| 63. | **Commitment & Consistency** | Users tend to be consistent with their previous actions | Time |
| 64. | **Sunk Cost Effect** | Users are reluctant to pull out of something they're invested in. | Time |
| 65. | **Decision Fatigue** | Making a lot of decisions lowers users' ability to make rational ones | Time |
| 66. | **Reactance** | Users are less likely to adopt a behavior when they feel threatened | Time |
| 67. | **Observer-Expectancy Effect** | When researchers' biases influence the participants of an experiment | Time |
| 68. | **Weber's Law** | Users adapt better to small incremental changes | Time |
| 69. | **Law of the Instrument** | If all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail | Time |
| 70. | **Temptation Coupling** | Hard tasks are less scary when coupled with something users desire | Time |
| 71. | **Parkinson's Law** | The time required to complete a task will take as much time as allowed | Time |
| 72. | **Dunning-Kruger Effect** | People tend to overestimate their skills when they don't know much | Time |
| 73. | **Affect Heuristic** | People's current emotions cloud and influence their judgment | Time |
| 74. | **Hyperbolic Discounting** | People tend to prioritize immediate benefits over bigger future gains | Time |
| 75. | **Cashless Effect** | People spend more when they can't actually see the money | Time |
| 76. | **Self-serving bias** | People take credits for positive events and blame others if negative | Time |
| 77. | **Pareto Principle** | Roughly 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes | Time |
| 78. | **Discoverability** | The ease with which users can discover your features | Time |
| 79. | **Backfire Effect** | When people's convictions are challenged, their beliefs get stronger | Time |
| 80. | **False Consensus Effect** | People overestimate how much other people agree with them | Time |
| 81. | **Barnum-Forer Effect** | Some people believe in astrology and fortune telling. | Time |

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| 82. | 🛋️ **IKEA Effect** | When user partially create something, they value it way more | Time |
| 83. | 🧚 **Planning Fallacy** | People tend to underestimate how much time a task will take | Time |
| 84. | 🏕️ **Provide Exit Points** | Invite users to leave your app at the right moment | Memory |
| 85. | 🎢 **Peak-End Rule** | People judge an experience by its peak and how it ends. | Memory |
| 86. | 👅 **Sensory Appeal** | Users engage more with things appealing to multiple senses | Memory |
| 87. | 🧩 **Zeigarnik Effect** | People remember incomplete tasks better than completed ones | Memory |
| 88. | 🧤 **Endowment Effect** | Users value something more if they feel it's theirs | Memory |
| 89. | 🛍️ **Chunking** | People remember grouped information better | Memory |
| 90. | 📸 **Picture Superiority Effect** | People remember pictures better than words | Memory |
| 91. | 📌 **Method of Loci** | People remember things more when they're associated with a location | Memory |
| 92. | 🕹️ **Shaping** | Incrementally reinforcing actions to get closer to a target behavior | Memory |
| 93. | 💚 **Delighters** | People remember more unexpected and playful pleasures | Memory |
| 94. | 💛 **Internal Trigger** | When users are prompted to take action based on a memory | Memory |
| 95. | 💾 **Recognition Over Recall** | It's easier to recognize things than recall them from memory | Memory |
| 96. | 🏰 **Storytelling Effect** | People remember stories better than facts alone | Memory |
| 97. | 😈 **Negativity Bias** | Users recall negative events more than positive ones | Memory |
| 98. | ⏰ **Availability Heuristic** | Users favor recent and available information over past information | Memory |
| 99. | 🌌 **Spacing Effect** | People learn more effectively when study sessions are spaced out | Memory |
| 100. | 🏁 **Serial Position Effect** | It's easier for users to recall the first and last items of a list | Memory |

## Don't miss the new ones!

We update the list every few weeks here:
https://growth.design/psychology/

Don't hesitate to share the link with your friends & colleagues who might enjoy it.

—Dan Benoni & Louis-Xavier Lavallée