Frontend Development for Designers Project Brief: Your Portfolio Site

Objective

To build a responsive website that will showcase a well-curated design portfolio to one's own professional network as well as potential employers using HTML, CSS, and JavaScript

Context

For a professional UX/UI designer, it's become essential that you have a place to present your own work. Having a dedicated portfolio website allows you to present the work you've done while showcasing your hands-on technical skills. Since chances are high that you'll be judged by the quality of the website itself (not just by the projects you're presenting), it's especially important for it to be of high quality.

This means that the portfolio website should have a distinct design that showcases your unique style of work, as well as clean and well-written code. Since responsive design has become a basic requirement for most projects, and since many people access websites via their phones, it's all the more important that your website be responsive and work across all devices.

The goal of this project is to create a working responsive website with a few subpages that feature key information about you as a designer, relevant work examples, a way to contact you, and project pages. In the following sections, you'll find more information about design criteria and requirements.

The 5 W's

1. **Who**—Your professional network as well as potential employers. The website is for anyone interested in your professional work and who might want to contact you about it.

2. **What**—A portfolio website built with HTML, CSS, and JavaScript.

3. **When**—The website might be visited when a potential employer is checking out your previous experience, or, after you've met a professional contact and they want to see what you're up to.

4. **Where**—Potential employers might look at the website from their offices, while networking contacts might access it from their mobile phones (e.g., after meeting you).

5. **Why**—For your potential employers or clients to learn more about your professional experience, designs, all relevant skills, as well as how to contact you.

Design Criteria

User Goals

You'll prepare a set of user goals in the course.

Key Features

- A **homepage** with a short introduction and work examples
- An **about page** with some key information about you as a person, your skills, and the tools you use
- A **detailed (portfolio) page** for each project on your portfolio site, telling the story of the project
- A **contact section on each page** with your contact information

Technical Requirements

- The website *must* consist of at least 3 interconnected HTML pages.
- The website *must* use one external CSS-file in which all styles are defined.
- The website *must* use one external JavaScript-file in which all scripts are defined.
- You *shall not* include any external CSS or JavaScript libraries that you didn't write yourself (unless you do so as part of the "Task Directions" in an Exercise or "Optional Tasks" at the bottom of this brief).
- The website *must* use JavaScript somewhere to enhance the user experience.
  - For example, you could use JavaScript to make the work examples somewhat interactive.
- The website's code *must* be hosted in a Git repository on GitHub.
- The website *might* be deployed on a server.
- All your code *must* be valid.
  - Your HTML files *must* pass https://validator.w3.org/.
  - Your JS files *must* execute without errors or warnings.
- The website *must* work in the latest Chrome, Firefox, Safari, Edge, and Opera versions, as well as in IE11.
- The website *must* work on all screen sizes (including mobile and tablet) 320px width and up.
- The website *must* work with keyboard, mouse, and touch inputs.

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Wireframes

In the following, you'll find links to wireframes for your portfolio site. We've included mobile, tablet and desktop versions of the pages so you can see the responsiveness. Although it might appear to be challenging, you'll discover during the course that it's structured logically so you can focus on writing clean, readable code. Once you've mastered the foundational aspects of code, we encourage you to add further unique flair to your website.

Mobile

Home
Home (with animation)
About
Projects

Tablet

Home
Home (with animation)
About
Projects

Desktop

Home
Home (with animation)
About
Projects

Your Project Deliverables

Throughout this course, you'll be working from Exercise to Exercise to complete your project. For each Task, you'll submit a deliverable that directly contributes to the final product—in this case, a website to showcase your design portfolio.

Since much of your portfolio content should already be complete and ready for further curation, your main focus here will be to build a simple yet fully functional portfolio website using your growing knowledge of HTML, CSS, and JavaScript.

To get a headstart, we encourage you to give your existing portfolio or any previous projects that you want to feature on your website another thorough review as you get ready to start the coding part of the course. Here are some tips from a UX/UI recruiter at Google regarding what they look for in a promising portfolio. Keep them in mind as you review and curate your work:

1. We want to see how you think and what your design process is.
2. We appreciate samples of lo-fi work, such as conceptual models, sketches, storyboards, scenarios, etc.
3. Avoid only showing single screenshots of products or websites when possible.
4. Do show us navigation flows, explaining how features are connected.
5. Annotate each project and tell us what you contributed. What was your role? Your responsibilities? What did you design? What was the motivation for the design?
6. Make sure your images are resized to keep the file size reasonable.
7. Add links to live websites whenever possible.
8. Don't include any confidential material.

Below is a breakdown of your course project deliverables by Achievement:

Achievement 1: Getting Started with HTML & CSS
- A curated list of content/projects you want to include in your website
- Copy for "about," "home," and "project" pages, as well as copy for the contact section and introduction
- Home, about, and project pages set up in HTML
- An external CSS style sheet
- Layout for website complete
- An iteration of your site with responsive CSS as well as animation and transitions

Achievement 2: JavaScript & Your Portfolio Site
- A new iteration of your site with responsive improvements in JavaScript
- 3 forked CodePens with your code
- Implementation of jQuery for interactivity
- A usability report
- A requirements list for future iterations
- Cross-browser testing results
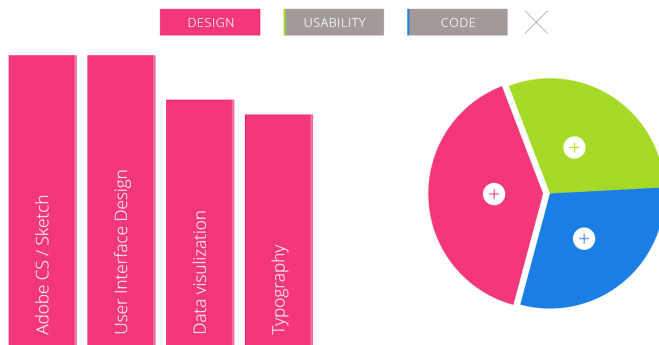- A case study and (optional) site demo

Optional: Advanced Deliverables

Optionally, you can add as many further, advanced features to your portfolio website as you want. The following two tasks can help make your portfolio stand out to potential users:

1. Add a chart outlining your skills on your about page

Data visualization is a huge topic. Knowing how to showcase data in a user-friendly manner is a much-sought-after skill. To practice this, add a simple chart to your "about.html" page to indicate your skill set. This could be any type of chart: a bar chart, a pie chart, a bubble chart—whatever suits you best! While it's certainly possible to create such charts manually, there are various JavaScript libraries out there that do the bulk of the work for you.

1. Search for a JS chart library that suits your needs. To start, you could take a look at one of these (though feel free to choose any that you like):
    a. Chartist
    b. D3
    c. Highcharts
    d. Google Charts

2. Add a data visualization to your "about.html" page to replace the skills and tools listings you created previously. You might need to change the layout of the page a bit depending on the option you choose. Look at the following two examples for what that might look like:

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Here's a mockup of what the visualization might look like in the context of your portfolio website:

2. Add a lightbox to show larger images for your projects

On your home page, you'll give brief introductions of your projects; however, as you're a designer, wouldn't it be nice to give your users the possibility to view larger images of your projects? You can use a "lightbox" to do exactly this! There are various JavaScript libraries that allow you to easily add a lightbox to your project.

1. Select a lightbox library that you like. You can choose one of the following (or any other, as there are hundreds of libraries out there for this purpose):
   a. [fancybox](#)
   b. [Featherlight](#)
   c. [Lightbox](#)
   d. [Fresco](#)

2. On your homepage, add a way to view larger images of your projects. Make sure the lightbox doesn't collide with the interactivity you already implemented. For example, if you allow your users to expand some information about your projects, you could include a link in these details. Alternatively, you could add a separate section below your projects with explorable lightbox images, perhaps entitled "Gallery."

This is how a lightbox might look on your homepage. On the left, you can see a project with its details, while on the right, you can see bigger images appear in a lightbox once the user has clicked on one of them.