Name: Mai

Background:

Mai is an 18 year old engineering student who works part time as a motorcycle mechanic to put themself through school. They take classes at night, and work during the day. They manage their schedule relatively well, but living costs are expensive. Mai has a couple hours between work and school a few days a week. This changes depending on the week because their work hours change week to week. When they have time, Mai likes to browse online for clothes because new clothes make them feel empowered. Mai lives with their parents to offset the cost of living.

*Can you describe your experience when you shop for clothes online?*  
I like to shop when I don’t feel like doing homework. It’s a good way to distract myself and do something I enjoy. Since I usually work in cafes, I’ll order a coffee and a snack or a small dinner. Then I’ll open up a new window so I can’t see my work, and go to one of my two favorite clothing sites. I’ll browse for shoes, hats, pants, coats, you name it. I really enjoy fashion and like to look good. Even if I don’t buy something, the shopping experience is exciting and I have a long wishlist saved on my favorite site. I usually keep items in my cart for days or even weeks at a time. It takes me a long time to commit to buying something, and I really have to think it through first.

*What challenges do you face regarding your online shopping experience?*

A lot of buttons on mobile websites are hard for me to push because there are a lot of them, or they’re too small. A lot of online shopping pages feel too busy, and that can be confusing too. Sometimes I try to click something and it doesn’t work, or I click the wrong thing. That makes me really upset and I start to feel down. I just want things to work easily. I spend all day working hard, I want my time off to be stress free.

Also, I feel frustrated when sizing is too general, or things that arrive don’t fit me. Too many websites advertise clothes that aren’t the size they actually are, or don’t have inclusive enough sizing in what they offer.

*Is there any way in which you feel these challenges could be resolved?*

I want big buttons, simple icons, and minimal design so I’m not clicking on the wrong thing or getting misled by a lot of clutter on the screen. Also, I would really like more inclusive and descriptive sizing options.

Name: Bolade

Background:

Bolade is a 24 year old geology student working towards their master’s degree. They work 30 hours per week at the school’s laboratory as a research assistant to pay the bills and put themself through school. Their job has flexible hours, which is nice, but balancing school and work is still a challenge. Sometimes, they have to work nights to get everything done. Bolade has two hour breaks between work and school four days a week, which they use to exercise and work on homework. When they get home, they shop for clothes online to relieve the stress of managing work and school. Bolade has two more semesters until graduation, but it feels far away. Bolade recently moved back in with their parents to keep up with the cost of living.

*Can you describe your experience when you shop for clothes online?*  
Online shopping is my escape from my responsibilities. I do it to put myself in a good state of mind and help myself forget about homework for a little while. Since I usually work outside my house to reduce distractions, I’ll go to a diner and order a coffee. I open my computer and close all of my work related stuff. Then I open a browser window and type certain items of clothes I’ve been wanting into the search bar. I do the same thing from my phone during breaks at work. I browse whatever website carries what I’m looking for, I don’t really have favorites. I’ll compare items from different sites side by side to evaluate price, quality, sizes, and more. I usually favorite things, but don’t add them to my cart unless I’m sure I’ll buy them. I often buy things impulsively if I really like them, though.

*What challenges do you face regarding your online shopping experience?*

It’s disappointing when I get clothing in the mail that fits completely wrong. Sometimes it stops me from buying clothes altogether.

I struggle with the size and placement of buttons, especially on mobile sites. I’m also frustrated that a lot of clothing websites have so many options, offerings, and content. It gets confusing when there are so many options to click. Shopping should be straightforward and easy instead of adding more work to my day.

*Is there any way in which you feel these challenges could be resolved?*

I want more reliable sizing that is inclusive and easy to understand. I also want less buttons and icons, and I want them to be bigger. I want navigation to be very obvious and easy to understand when I get to a site. I should know exactly where to go without having to spend lots of time studying the page.