

Adobe XD - Starter Kit

As designers, we're fortunate to have a wealth of prototyping tools at our disposal. Tools like [Adobe XD](#), in particular, enable us to build immersive clickable prototypes at a relatively low cost. Adobe XD can be reached through [Adobe Creative Cloud](#).

Adobe Creative Cloud is a set of applications and services from Adobe Inc. that gives subscribers access to a collection of software used for graphic design, video editing, web development, photography, along with a set of mobile applications and also some optional cloud services.

These tools allow us to undertake a great deal of our testing before we get to the expensive part of the process - building fully working products in the medium they will be delivered in. Let's start!

This starter kit and video series cover the basic skills required to create smooth and usable wireframes and prototypes in Adobe XD.

Why Adobe XD?

Adobe XD is one of the most popular UX, UI, and prototyping design tools in the UX/UI design industry. As compared to other tools like Sketch, it can be used on both macOS and Windows platforms. Its starter version is free (you can buy a student version too) and it gives you pretty much everything you need at your early design learning and development stage. Remember, tools are important but the core fundamental design concepts are equally important as well. Research indicates that skills learned in one tool can be quickly applied to another tool.

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Online help resources

You can always contact me at najia@ualberta.ca please allow 24 hours for a response. You can also reach out to your fellow students through eClass or join the global community and ask your questions in the [Adobe XD Forum](#).

I have prepared this document using material from [Adobe XD User Guide](#). Do read this guide. This guide is especially helpful when new features and updates are introduced.

This tutorial will introduce the basic topics to learn and develop proficient skills in Adobe XD. I would highly recommend you to check other resources mentioned in the **recommended resource** section and explore, learn, and practice XD with a variety of perspectives.

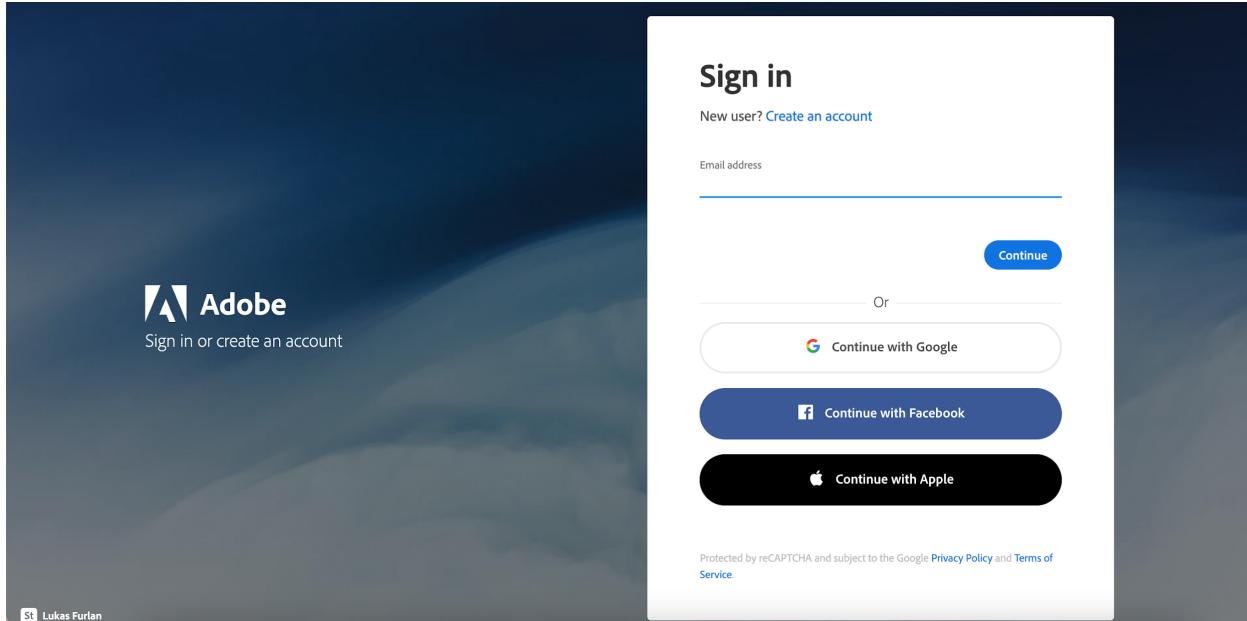
For this course, Adobe XD - free version is sufficient. If you are interested in buying a product, I would recommend buying the student version, contact me if you need assistance. To find help on topics related to downloading, installing, and getting started with your software, please visit:

- [Download and install Creative Cloud apps](#)
- [Use the Creative Cloud desktop app to manage your apps and services](#)

For product help and support, visit the [Adobe XD Help](#).

How to download your Creative Cloud apps:

Sign in to creativecloud.adobe.com/apps, then click either Download or Install for the app you want to install.



Looking for the Creative Cloud desktop app? It installs automatically with your first app. If you prefer, you can [download it directly](#).

Adobe XD system requirements:

Your computer must meet the minimum technical specifications outlined below to run and use Adobe XD.

Minimum system requirements for Adobe XD on desktop

The latest version of Adobe XD is tested with public releases of macOS and Windows. However, unexpected behaviours may occur on beta versions of macOS and Windows 10.

macOS

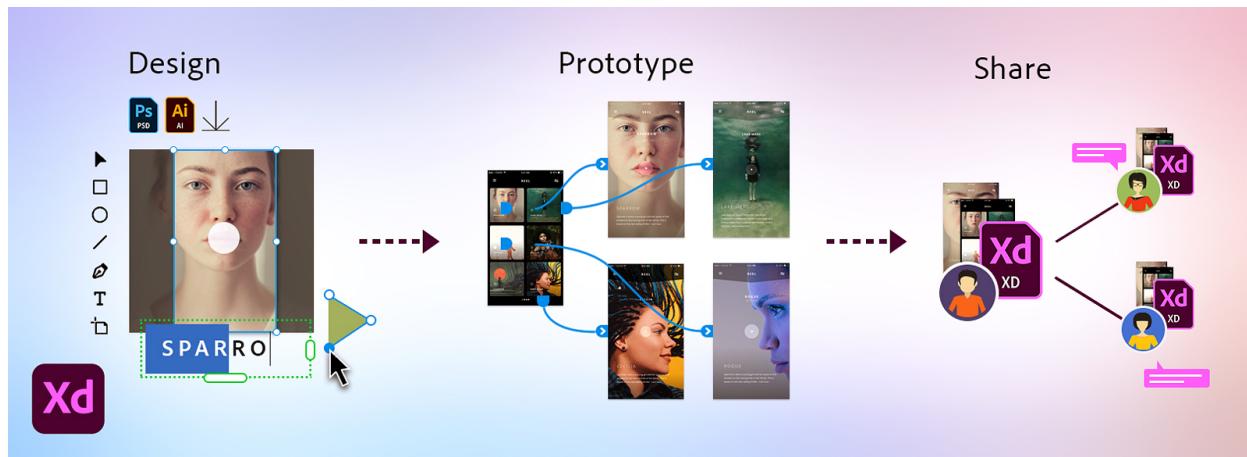
| | Minimum requirement |
|------------------|---|
| Operating system | macOS X v10.14 or later |
| Display | 13 inches or larger display, 1400x900 resolution, Retina recommended. |
| Internet | An Internet connection and registration are necessary for required software activation, validation of subscriptions, and access to online services. Voice capabilities require users to be connected to the Internet to preview their prototypes. |
| RAM | 4 GB of RAM |
| Storage | We recommend using cloud documents (stored in Creative Cloud), but also support documents stored on local storage. We do not recommend using synced cloud storage (example CC Files, Dropbox, Google Drive, etc) or network drives to store XD documents. |

Windows

| | Minimum requirement |
|------------------|---|
| Operating system | Windows 10 (64-bit) - Version 1803 (build 10.0.17134) or later. |
| Display | 13 inches or larger display, 1280x800 resolution. |

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Internet | An Internet connection and registration are necessary for required software activation, validation of subscriptions, and access to online services. Voice capabilities require users to be connected to the Internet to preview their prototypes. |
| RAM | 4 GB of RAM |
| Graphics | Minimum Direct 3D DDI Feature Set: 10. For Intel GPU, drivers released in 2014 or later are necessary. To find this information, launch “dxdiag” from the Run menu and select the “Display” tab. |
| Pen and touch input | XD on Windows 10 supports Windows' native pen and touch features. For more information on working with pen and touch in XD, refer Common questions . |
| Storage | We recommend using cloud documents (stored in Creative Cloud), but also support documents stored on local storage. We do not recommend using synced cloud storage (example CC Files, Dropbox, Google Drive, etc) or network drives to store XD documents. |

Design, prototype, and share with Adobe XD



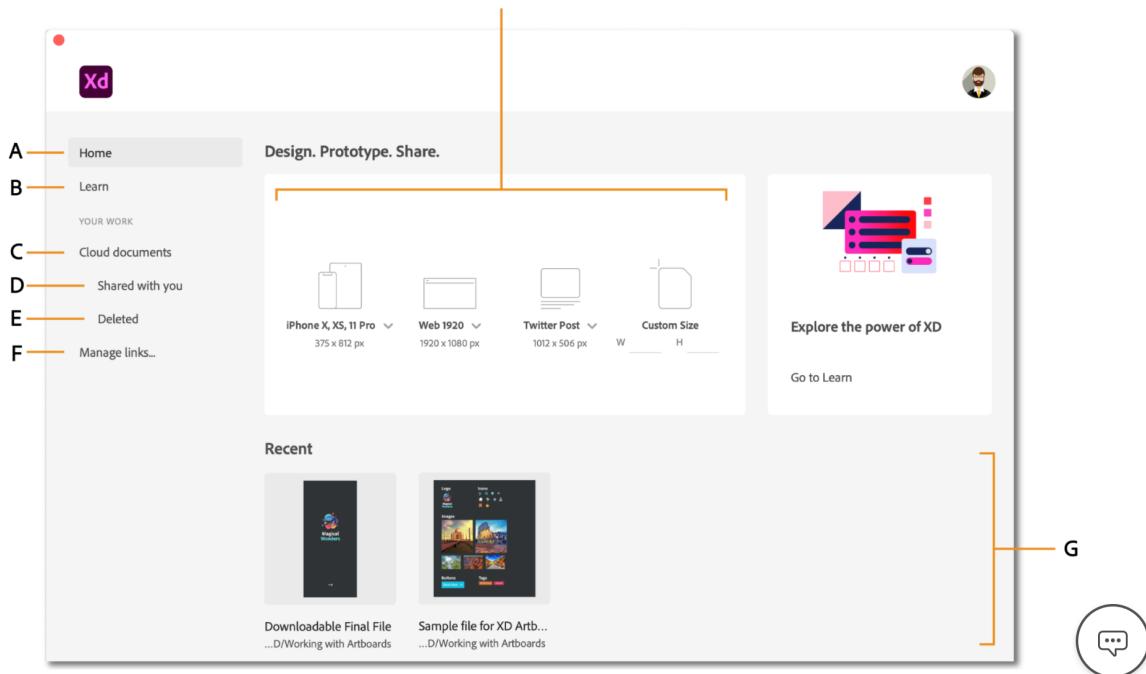
Adobe XD enables UX designers to design interactive user experiences for web and mobile apps using a single app. You can design quick and simple designs on artboards in XD. Then wire the artboards together to create an interactive prototype that you can share and iterate with stakeholders. You can also use plugins to automate repeat operations or parts of designer workflows that are tedious, complex, or repetitive.

Workspace basics

In Adobe XD, you create and manipulate your designs and prototypes using various elements, such as toolbars, panels, and Property Inspector. These elements form the workspace of Adobe XD.

Home screen

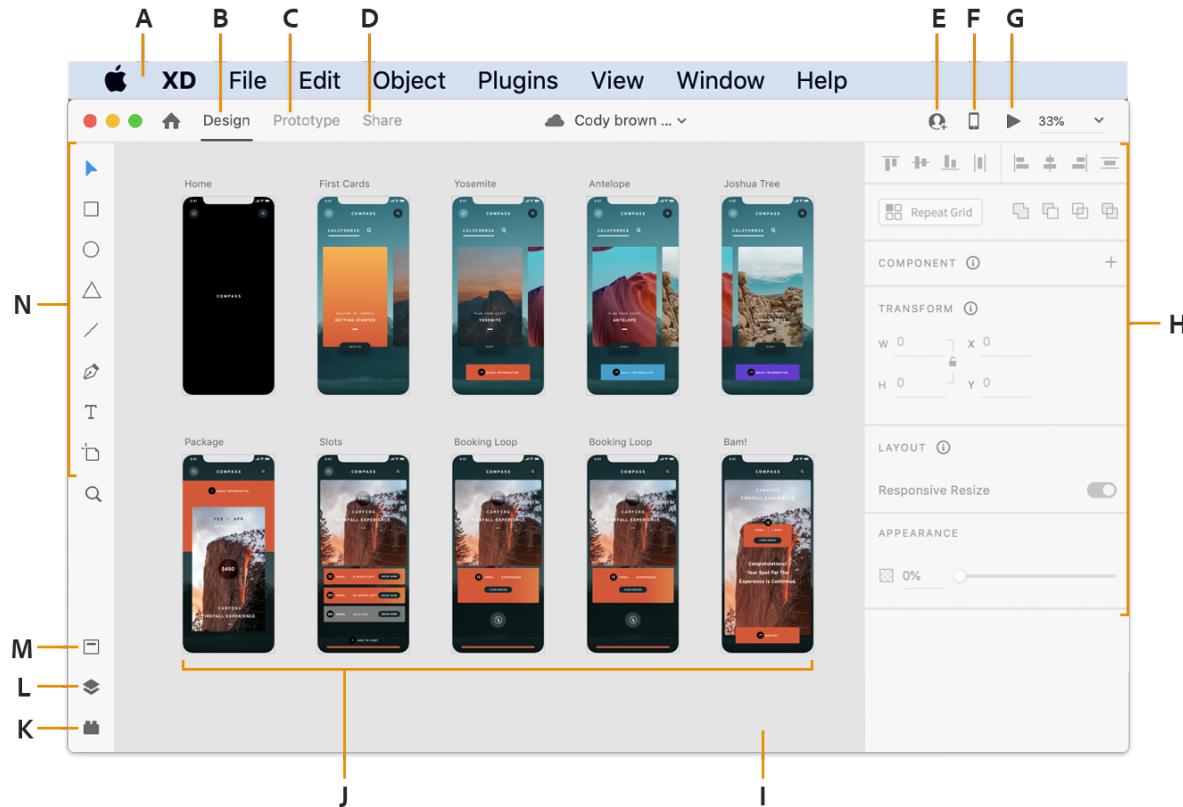
The Home screen gives you quick access to learn tab, cloud documents, cloud documents shared with you and deleted, manage links, artboard presets, and recent files.



A. Home B. Learn C. Cloud documents D. Shared with you E. Deleted F. Manage links G. Recent files H. Artboard presets

Workspace overview

macOS



Adobe XD workspace on Mac

- A. Main menu B. Design mode C. Prototype mode D. Share mode E. Invite to document F. Preview on device G. Preview H. Property inspector I. Pasteboard J. Artboard K. Plugins L. Layers M. Libraries N. Toolbar

The workspace in macOS includes the following options:

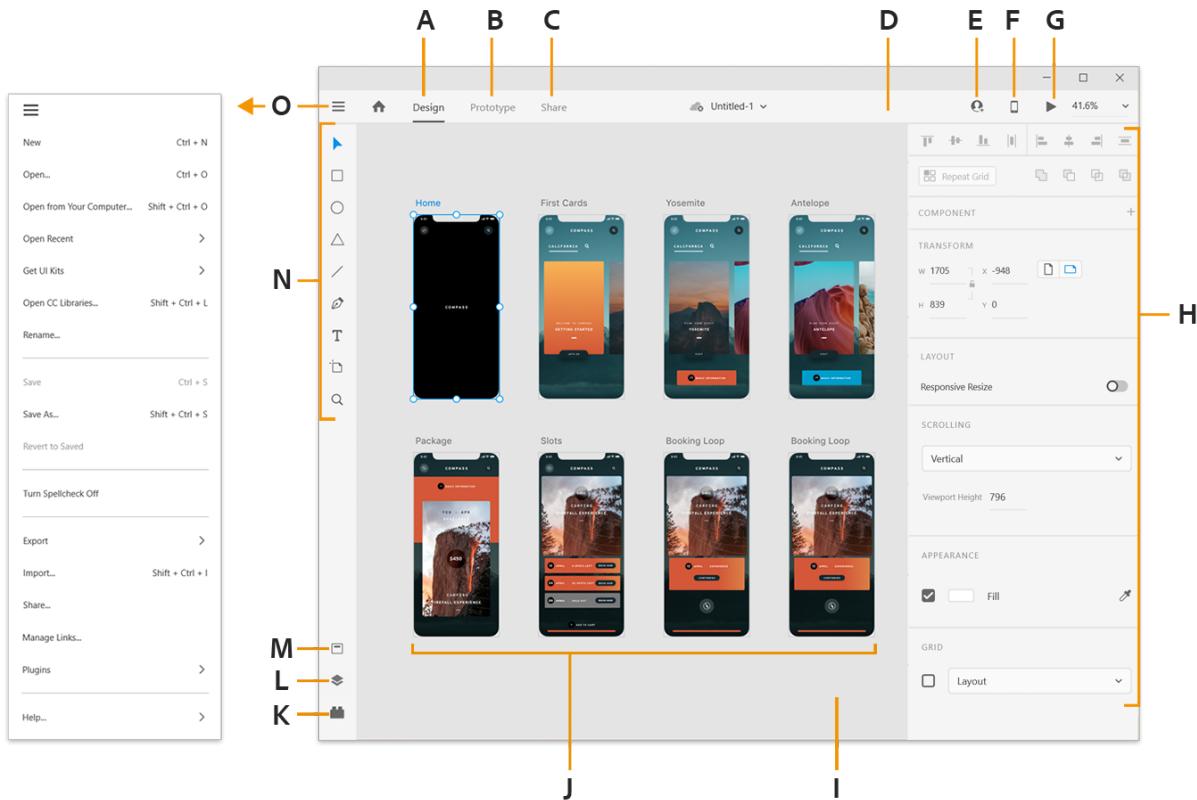
| Option | Description |
|--------------------|---|
| Main menu | Access File, Edit, Object, View, Window, and Help menus and the submenus within them |
| Design mode | Create and design the artboards that make up your project. You can choose to import assets created using other tools or from the web, or create graphics in XD. |
| Prototype mode | Link artboards together, create video demos of the design (currently only on macOS), prototype your design in a browser or a device, and share them with stakeholders for review. |
| Invite to document | Enable Coediting and invite your fellow designers to simultaneously access and edit your XD document. |
| Share mode | Create and share links for design reviews, development, presentations, and user testing. |
| Preview on device | Connect multiple devices through USB to your desktop machine, set them up to transfer data, and view them live. |
| Preview | Test your prototype within Adobe XD using the desktop preview or the Adobe XD app on your iOS or Android device. |
| Property Inspector | Define various properties of objects and manipulate them using different options in the Property Inspector. For example, you can specify backgrounds, fills, borders, shadows, alignments, and dimensions of objects. You can also combine objects together to make entirely new objects. To lay out repeating elements, use the Repeat Grid option in the Property Inspector. Use the Fixed Position option to fix the position of multiple elements on the scroll. You can also use the math calculation to create |

| | |
|--|--|
| | designs with greater precision or move objects to a new location or modify their width and height. |
| Toolbar (Plugins, Layers, Assets, and tools) | Access the selection tool, drawing tools, text tool, artboard tool, the Assets, and Layers panel. |
| Application toolbar | Access the Design mode, Prototype mode, zoom levels of the canvas, preview, and sharing options. |
| Work area | Contains the canvas or artboards with the assets that you create. |

Windows

The XD interface on Windows 10 is similar to the interface of macOS except for some minor differences:

- On Windows, there are no top-level and Object menus. Simply right-click an object and use the context menu instead.
- XD on Windows has a Hamburger menu on the upper-left corner that allows you to create or open files, save, and export assets.



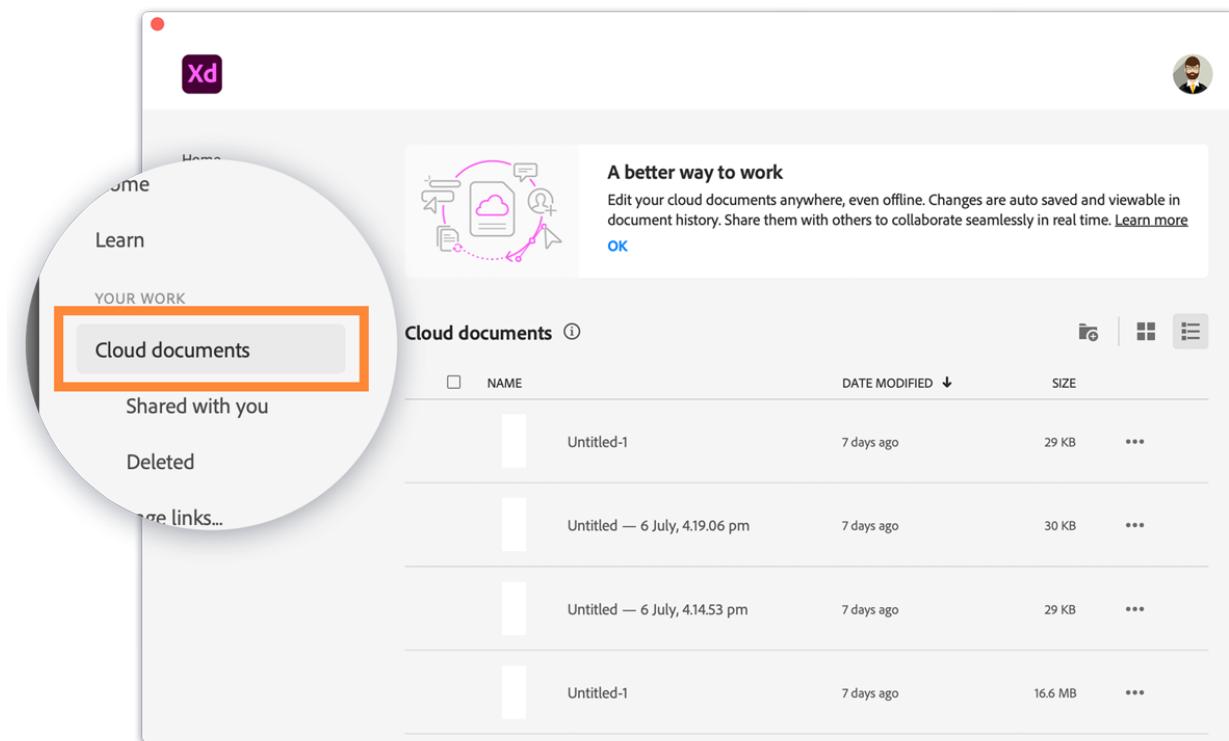
Adobe XD workspace on Windows

A. Design mode B. Prototype mode C. Share mode D. Menu bar E. Invite to document F. Preview on device G. Property Inspector H. Pasteboard I. Artboards J. Plugins K. Libraries L. Layers M. Libraries N. Toolbar O. Pop-up menu

Cloud documents in Adobe XD

In this section, you will learn how to get started with cloud documents in Adobe XD.

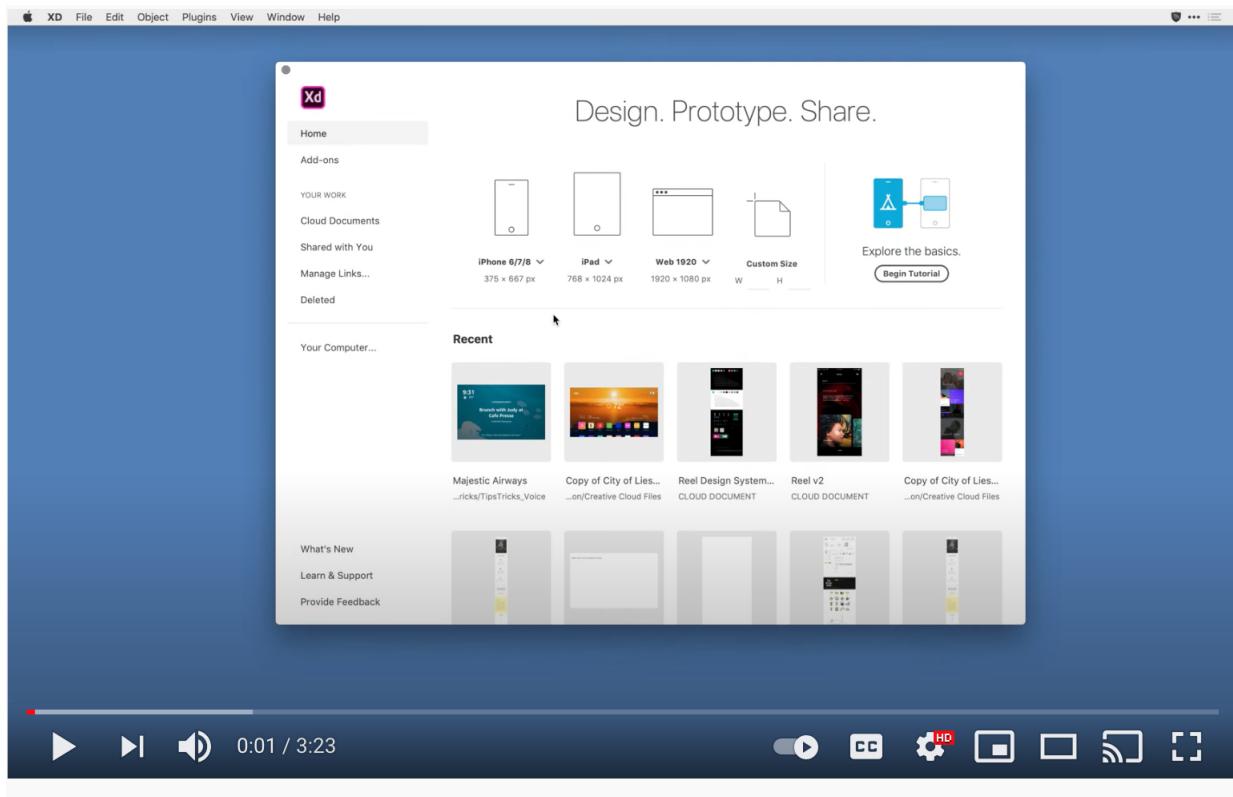
Saving your work as cloud documents helps you share, collaborate, and access your work from multiple devices.



Access cloud documents from the XD Home screen. Cloud documents ensure that your work is always updated, across every device, wherever you are, with full fidelity.

You can access cloud documents from the XD Home screen or the Cloud Document Organizer or from the [Creative Cloud website](#).

Watch this video tutorial to learn how cloud documents impact file management workflows in mobile devices.



Adobe XD December 2018 Release: Cloud Documents for XD Mobile

1,140 views • Dec 19, 2018

13 0 SHARE SAVE ...

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VOam6VTvG4&feature=emb_logo)

Access UI design kits

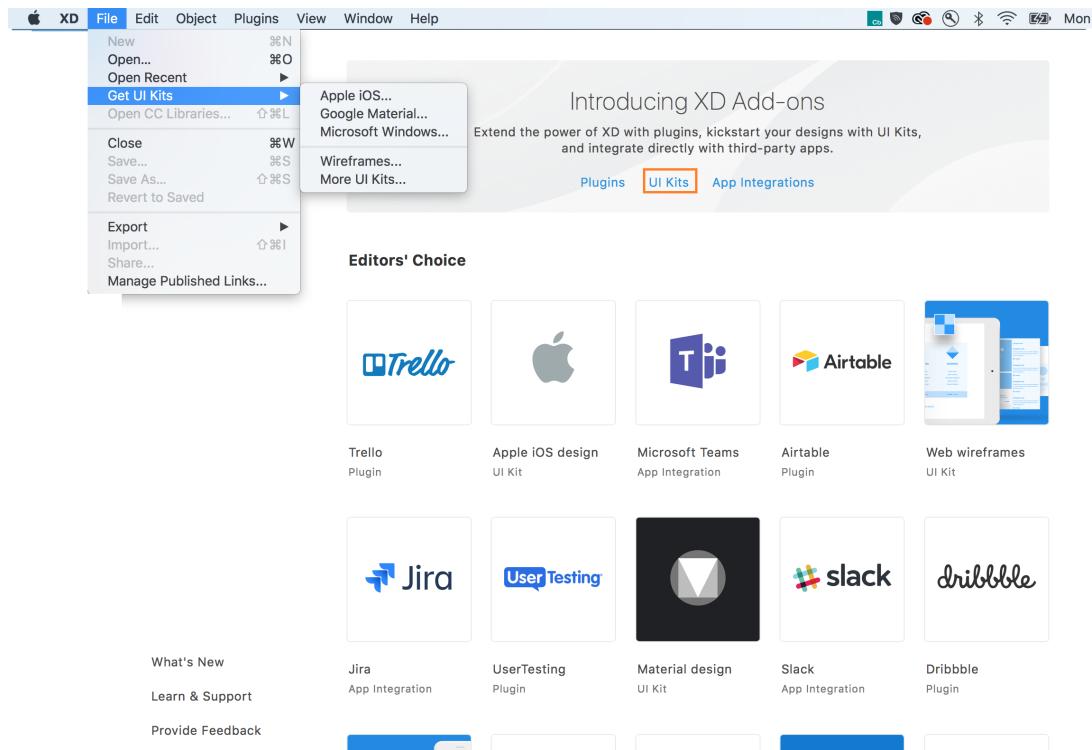
Find some inspirational kits at [Adobe Design Kit](#), [Designer Marketplace](#) or [Dashboard UI kits](#).

Feel free to download them and use them in your Assignments and Projects.

UI Kits can be used to transform a paper prototype into a lo-fi, clickable prototype relatively quickly and they're a huge time saver.

You can access the UI kits in any of the following ways:

- On the home screen, select Add-ons > Plugins.
- On Mac: Select File > Get UI Kits> Apple iOS
- On Windows: Click the Hamburger menu, and click Get UI Kits.

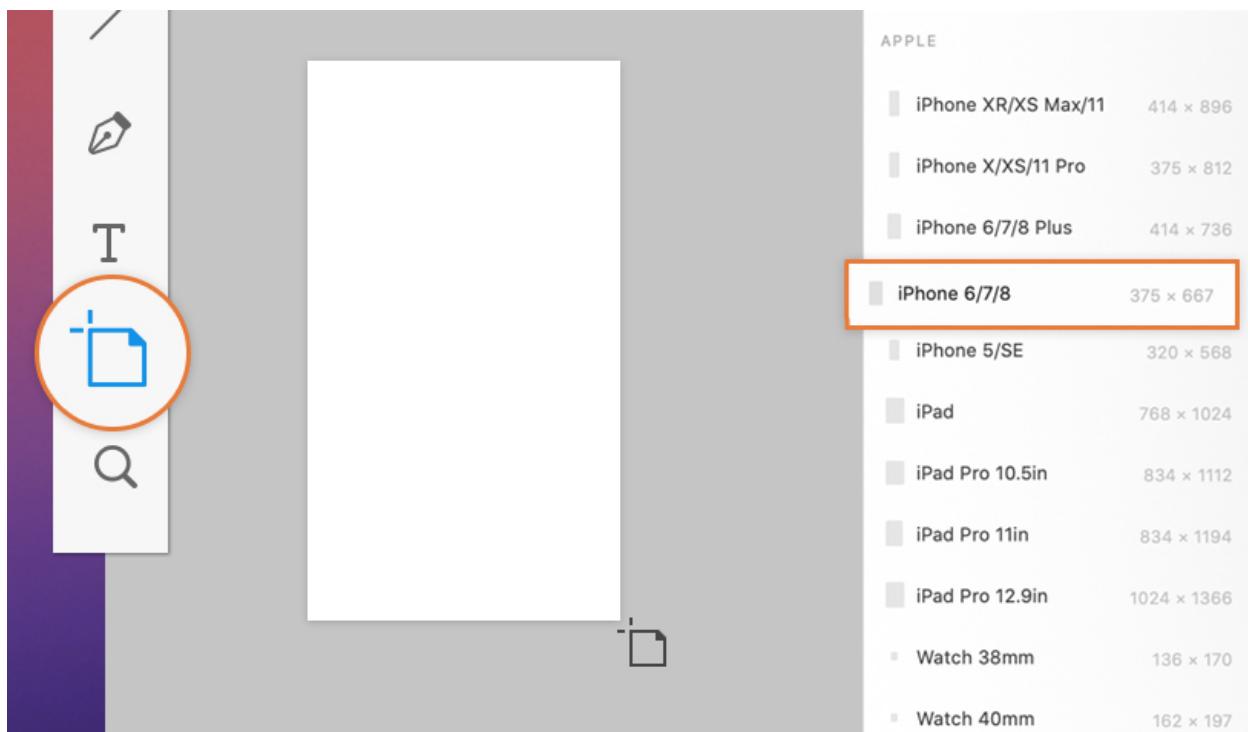


Artboard

What is an artboard? Artboards represent the screens in your application or pages on your website. It streamlines the design processes and creates interactive designs for multiple screen sizes in a single document. Use artboards to create your XD project.

Adobe XD provides you with artboards for popular screen sizes such as those for different versions of iPhones, iPads, and Web. You can create a custom artboard if the choices do not meet your requirements.

You can always visit [Create an Artboard](#) to get a step by step textual and visual support guide of creating an Artboard from Adobe XD User Guide.

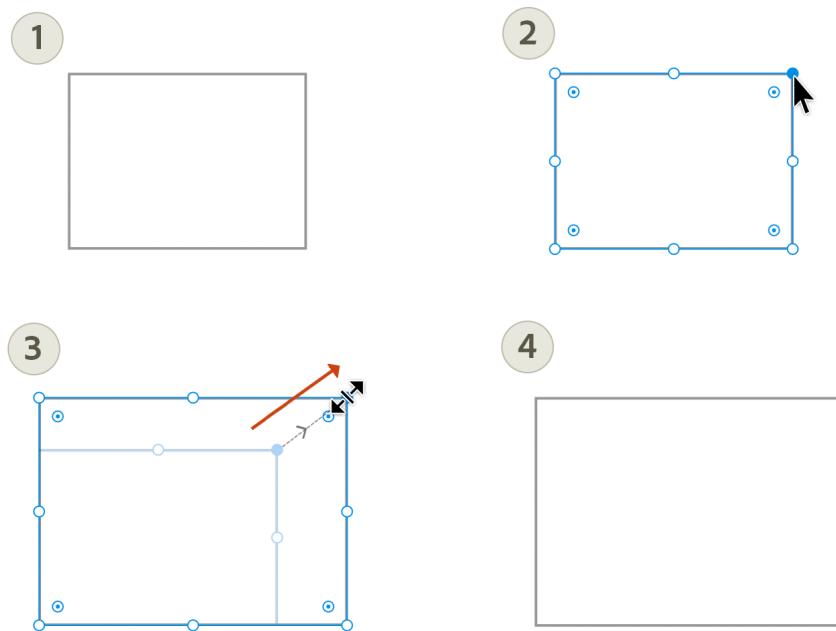


Objects

You can create objects in Adobe XD such as Rectangles, Ellipse, Polygons and Lines. Watch Object&Text-05 video to learn how to create, select, resize, and rotate objects in Adobe XD. You can always visit the [Objects Section](#) to get step by step textual and visual support to create different objects from Adobe XD User Guide.

Resize objects

Select the object or the object group, and drag the circular handles. In object groups, you see the circular handles around the bounding box of the group. Drag these handles to resize the object or the object group.

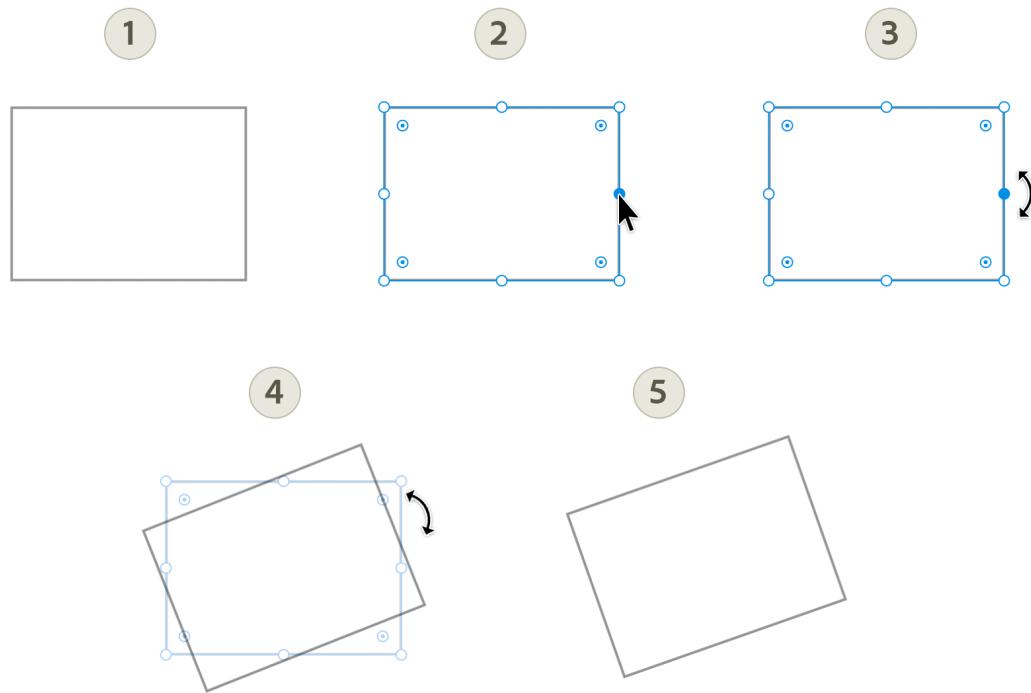


Rotate objects

Select the object or the object group.

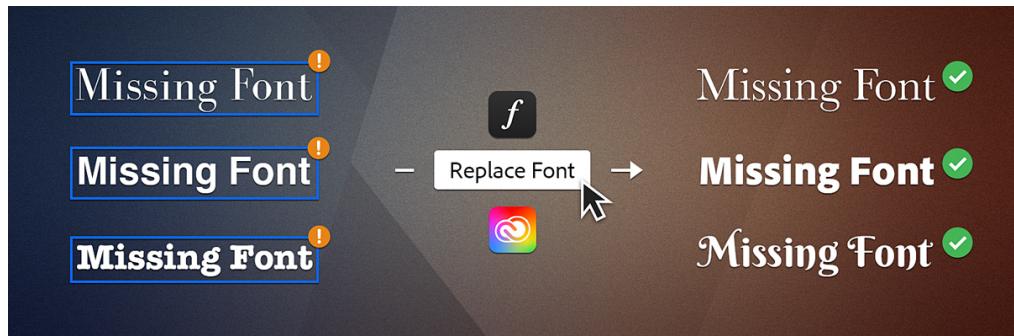
Hover over the circular handles and move the cursor slightly to the outside of the handle to see the rotation cursor (icon).

When you see the rotation cursor, drag the handle in the desired direction to rotate.



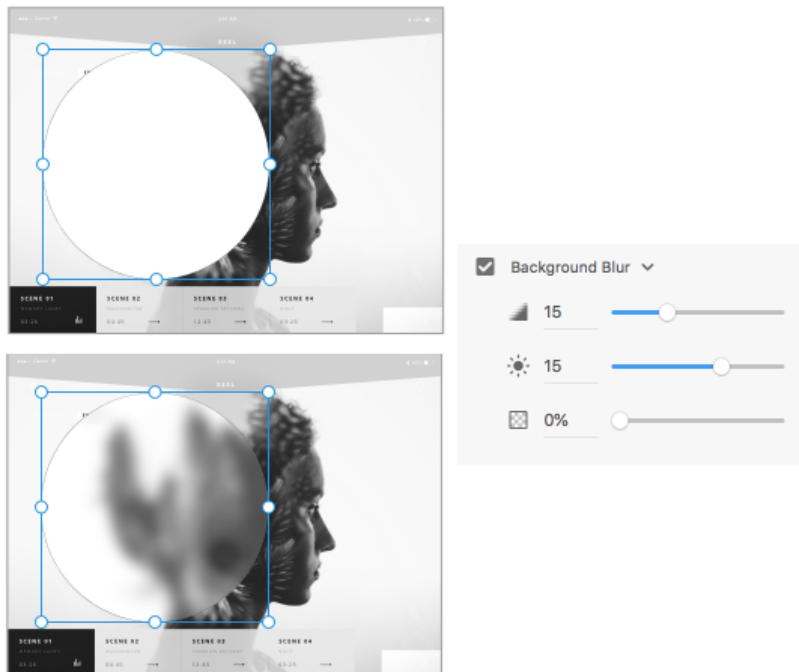
Drawing and Text tools

Learn how to create, resize, and rotate drawings and text in Adobe XD. You can add text and apply fonts and font settings to your text in adobe. Watch Object&Text-05 video to learn to use text in your artboards. Visit the [Text Section](#) to get step by step textual and visual support to use text from Adobe XD User Guide.



Effects

You can add effects to your drawings and text in Adobe XD. Effects include blur, mask and, use of gradients etc.



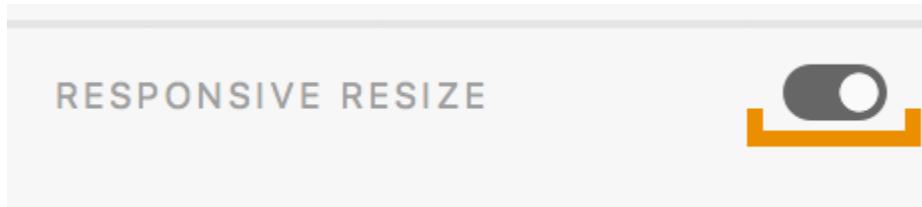
Layouts and components

Add layouts and components in Adobe XD and apply responsive resize and constraints for multiple screen sizes and layouts from the [Components Section](#).

By default, responsive resize is turned off for artboards, but you can turn it on to initiate responsive resize on artboards. The Responsive Web Design topic is covered in the Fundamentals of UI Design course.

To switch on responsive resize:

- Select the artboard in design mode.
- In the Property Inspector, select the toggle button to switch on responsive resize.



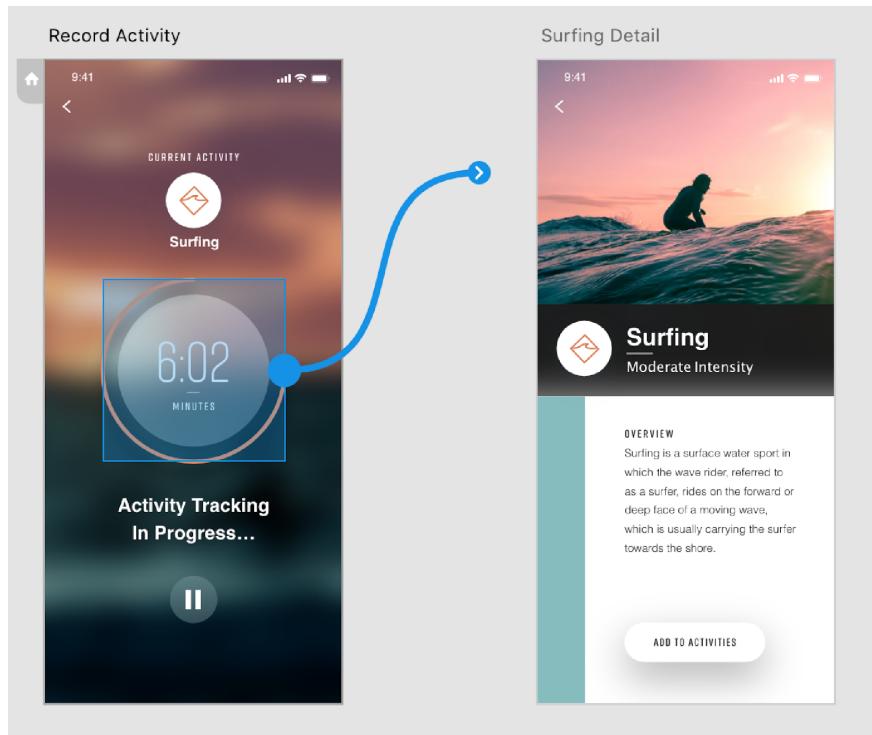
Switch on or off responsive resize

Create interactive prototypes | Overview

Learn how to create interactive prototypes others can use to test, optimize and perfect the user experience by watching Prototyping-10 video on eClass.

The Home screen is the first screen of your app or website. Your users begin to navigate the app or the website from the Home screen. Also, when you preview your prototype and nothing is selected, the preview begins with the Home screen. That is, by default, your Home screen is set to the first artboard you add a wire to.

- Switch to Prototype mode.
- Click the artboard that you want to set as the Home screen. A gray home icon appears in the upper left corner.
- Click the Home icon. It turns into blue indicating that the artboard is now successfully set as the Home screen.
- Now, click the object or the artboard that you want to link. A connecting handle with an arrow appears from the object or the artboard. When you hover your mouse over the handle, the cursor changes to a connector.
- Click and start dragging your mouse and release it on the destination artboard.
- When you wire up the first element, the artboard of that element is set as the home artboard.



Share designs and prototypes

The Share mode in XD consolidates different sharing capabilities into a centralized location and makes sharing your designs and collaborating with stakeholders and designers a breeze!

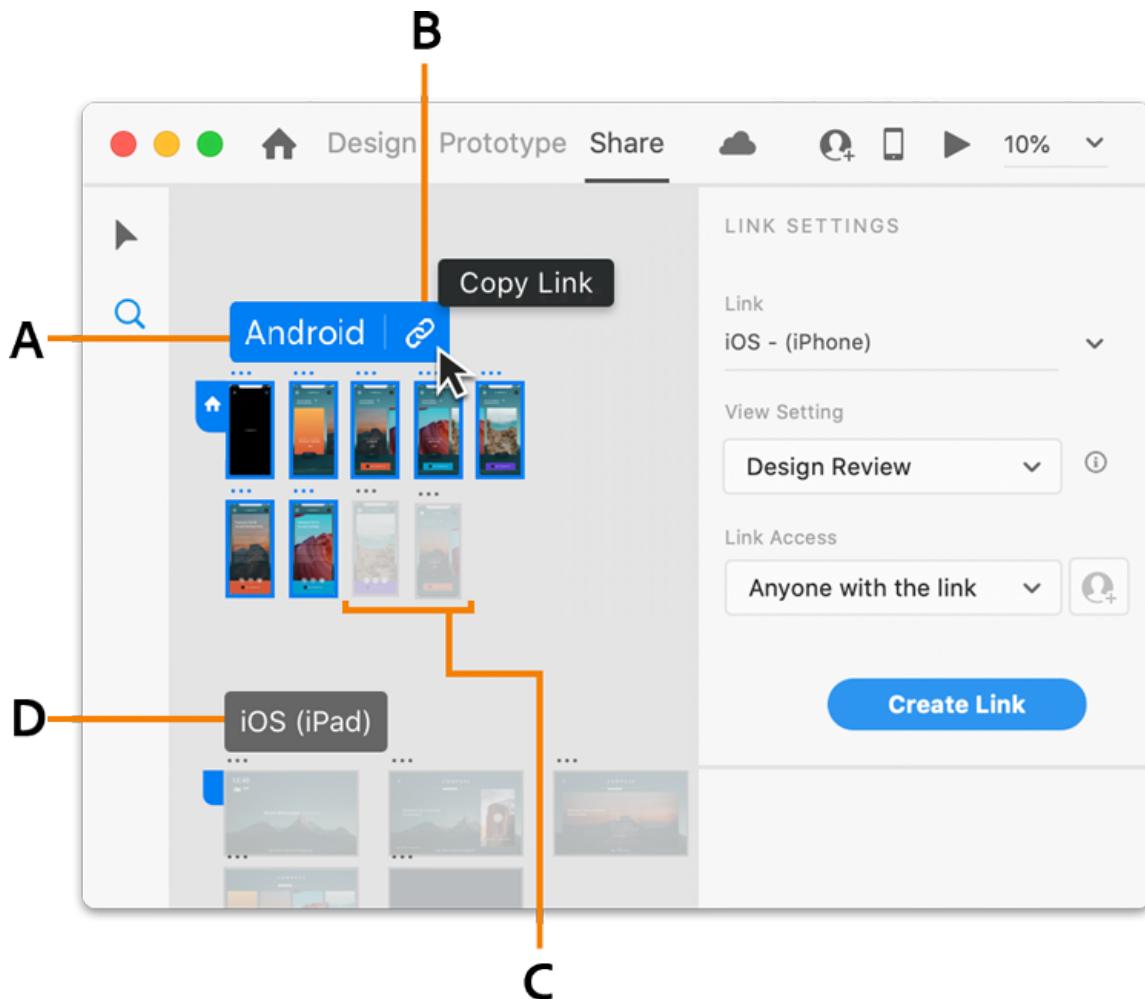
You can use the built-in presets, such as Design Review, Development, Presentation, User Testing, and Custom to share your documents and manage your shared links.

Once your flows are defined and wired together in the design document, go ahead and share them using shareable links across various target surfaces.

Follow these steps to share Multiple Flows with your stakeholders:

1. Switch to Share mode.
2. All the flows defined in the document would appear in Share mode.
3. Select any of the defined flows in Share mode and set the required access settings before publishing them as shareable links.
4. Visualize the different flows that you have created on the canvas. When you select a flow, XD automatically highlights all of the artboards in that flow.
5. Click Create Link to generate a shareable link for your flow. For a given selected flow, Share mode automatically displays details of the last published link such as the last modified date and time.

For flows that are published, a  icon appears on the design canvas. This helps you visually identify the last published link and quickly paste the associated link onto your clipboard.



A Home artboard for iOS (iPhone) flow **B**. Icon to copy published flows **C**. Non-wired artboards in iPhone **D**. Flow name for iPad

Quick Tips and tricks

Design and create prototypes faster in Adobe XD using these tips and tricks.

Here are a few tricks to help you while using Adobe XD.

General tips and tricks

- Rather than copy and pasting groups of items in your design, consider using the Repeat Grid tool (available in the Property Inspector).
- You can duplicate a shape by selecting it, holding the Option key (on Mac), or Alt key (on Windows) and dragging a new copy of it.
- Elements can be locked with Object > Lock (or Cmd + L) on Mac. This actually toggles lock, so use the same command to unlock the elements. On Windows, right-click an object and select Lock from the context menu.
- Enable direct selection by holding the Cmd or Ctrl key. This allows you to select nested objects.
- Quickly mask by dropping an image onto a shape: the shape's fill becomes the image.
- Create an editable mask by importing an image, and then draw a shape over it. Select both and then choose Object > Mask with Shape (on Mac), or right-click the objects and choose Mask with Shape from the context menu. You can edit the mask or the image later by double-clicking on the masked group.

Drawing and Text

- You can turn the snap guides off by holding down the Cmd / Ctrl key.
- Double-click any anchor point to toggle between a curve and an angle.
- Press Opt/Alt while dragging a curve handle to make the curve handle independent. (To make them dependent again, double click to return to an angle, then double click again).
- You can select anchor points when you draw using the pen tool.
- Double click to enter a group's edit context (you can add elements in this context), or simply Cmd /Ctrl-click an object inside a group to select it.
- Select a text item, then create a new one to apply all the styles from the first item to the second.

- Path combinations (Add/Subtract/Intersect/Exclude Overlap) are nondestructive. You can toggle them on and off.

Importing content

- To bring in content from Illustrator, select the vector shape in Illustrator, copy and then paste into Adobe XD.
- To bring in bitmap content from Photoshop, select all (Cmd+A or Ctrl + A) in a bitmap or text layer (or first convert a vector layer or group to a Smart Object), copy, and then paste it in Adobe XD. The pasted layer will be a bitmap. You can also copy content from Photoshop by making a selection using the marquee tool. Then, from the menus, choose Edit >Copy (to get the selection on the current layer), or Edit > Copy Merged (to get the selection on all the layers within your selection).
- To bring in content from Sketch, select one or more layers or groups, and click Make Exportable. Choose SVG as the format, and drag and drop the layer from Sketch into Adobe XD. This gives you editable vector content in Adobe XD.
- To import assets (PNG, JPG, TIFF, GIF, SVGs), on Mac, you can use File > Import, or drag and drop, or copy and paste images into Adobe XD from Finder. On Windows, click the Hamburger menu and click Import, or drag and drop, or copy and paste images from File Explorer.
You can also copy and paste from the browser to Adobe XD.

Keyboard controls

- When adjusting the corner radius you can hold down the OPTION key to restrict the adjustment to a single corner.
- To temporarily disable snapping when moving or resizing elements, hold down the Cmd or Ctrl key.
- Hold the SHIFT key while resizing an element to maintain the aspect ratio of the element.
- Hold ALT while drawing a shape to draw from the center rather than the default (which is in the top left corner).
- To quickly change the opacity of a selected item, hit the following number keys. Here, 1 = 10%, 2 = 20%, and so on; 0 = 100%.

- When nudging a shape or control point using the arrow keys, hold down the SHIFT key to nudge by 10 px.
- Hold down the SPACEBAR to engage the hand mode. You can click and drag to span through the canvas.

Artboards

- To select an artboard, click the artboard title, Cmd / Ctrl + Click on its background, or double click on its background.
- To select an empty artboard, click on the background of the artboard.
- To duplicate an artboard (and its contents), select the artboard, and press Cmd (on Mac) or Alt (on Windows) while dragging to make a copy.
- To rename an artboard, double click on its title.

Repeat Grid

- To adjust padding between repeating items in a Repeat Grid, select the repeat grid, then mouseover space between elements, and drag. If you are editing an item within the repeat grid, you need to press ESCAPE to exit the editing mode.

Prototyping and Preview

- Select any object on an artboard (or the whole artboard) and drag a wire to trigger an interaction between artboards.
- Drag a wire off of a destination to unwire an interaction that you have set.
- Use the Dissolve transition when designing for the web.
- You can see all the connections between your artboards (except those that are triggered directly from artboards) by pressing Cmd + A (on Mac) or Ctrl + A (on Windows) in the Prototype mode.
- The Preview window displays the artboard that has the current selection. If there is no selection, the Preview window opens with the Home artboard first.
- You can record a video from the Preview window of your interactive prototype. Click on the record icon on the title bar to begin a video.
- Clicking on the record button again OR press ESC to stop a video recording.

Sharing

- To share, you must be logged in with an Adobe account to either the Adobe Creative Cloud desktop app or any other Adobe application (such as Photoshop, Illustrator, and so on).
Adobe IDs, Enterprise IDs, and Federated IDs are all supported.
- If you share your design file without first adding interactions, all your artboards are uploaded and users will be able to navigate using the keyboard arrow keys. The order of your artboards will be from the top left and move to the right.
- If your design includes interactions, only those artboards connected to the Home artboard will be uploaded and shared.
- The artboard defined as your Home artboard is the first artboard users see when they view your shared design.
- You can change the Home artboard by selecting the Home artboard icon next to the artboard, in the prototype mode. This Home artboard icon shows up only for artboards that are selected (or the destination of a selected target).
- When viewing a prototype in a mobile web browser, you can save a shortcut to it on the device's home screen. This makes the prototype feel more like a native application when presenting it.

Recommended Sources

I would highly recommend you to read the [Adobe user guide](#), practice different topics and get yourself familiar with Adobe XD platform.

Here are some communities/people to follow to broaden your skillset:

- [XD Masterclass - Episodes](#), Youtube Adobe Creative Cloud Learning Channel
- [Howard Pinsky](#) is a Senior XD Evangelist at Adobe, focusing on Adobe XD and Photoshop.
- [Dansky](#), creative education for everyone, everywhere
- [Adobe Creative Cloud](#), youtube community, [Adobe Creative Cloud Support Community](#)
- [Adobe Ideas](#) for inspirational ideas, working methods, best practices and design tips and tricks to help you do your best work
- [Design guidance and code](#), for design and development resources
- For more tutorials and guidance visit [Adobe Tutorial](#)

Acknowledgments:

The data and information in this publication are from the following sources:

<https://www.adobe.com/ca/>

<https://blog.adobe.com/>

<https://helpx.adobe.com/ca/xd/user-guide.html/ca/xd/help/keys-gamepad-triggers.ug.html>

<https://helpx.adobe.com/ca/xd/tutorials.html>

