Optional - Get started with Figma

For this course of the Google UX Design Certificate, learners are designing a responsive website in Adobe XD. If your computer is not compatible with Adobe XD, don't worry! You can still design a responsive website and follow along with this course using Figma instead. You can access the web version of Figma from any computer, including Chromebooks.

Ongoing learners

If you completed earlier courses of the Google UX Design Certificate, then you've already used Figma to design a mobile app, so you're very familiar with the tool. Throughout this course, we'll provide support to help you design a responsive website in Figma in readings that are titled as "Optional" and list "Figma" in the title. To get started on this project, simply create a new Canvas in Figma.

New learners

If this is your first course of the Google UX Design Certificate and you cannot access Adobe XD on your computer, this part of the reading is for you!

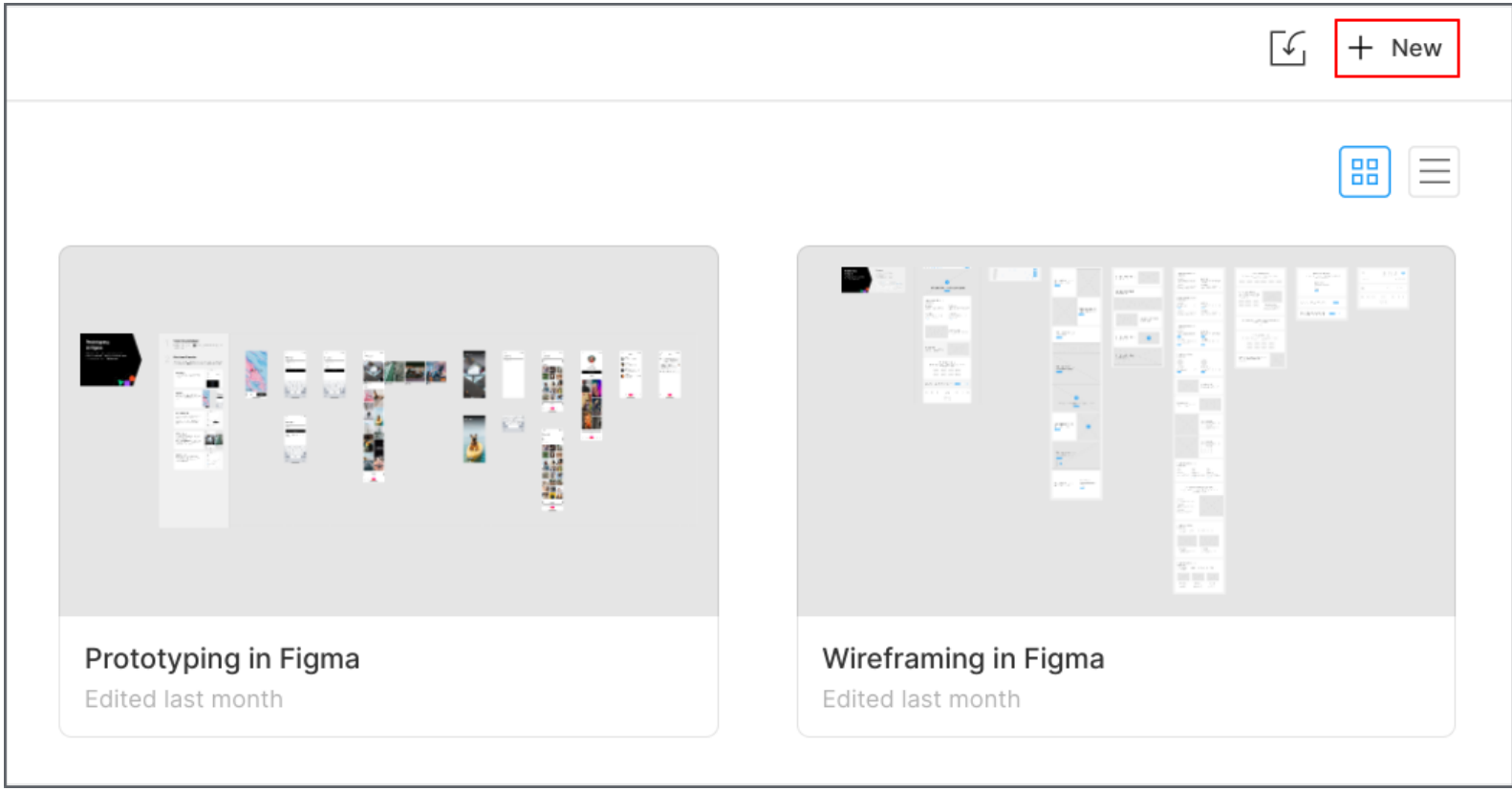To get started, follow the steps to set up a free account on Figma ⧉.

As a student in this certificate program, you have access to a Figma Education account ⧉, which provides access to all the functionality of a Professional plan, free of charge. If your account is denied for any reason, please follow the instructions in the email, and send an email to support@figma.com, or use the **help** (?) menu in the bottom right corner of Figma.

To get an overview of the tool, watch the video What's Figma? ⧉ on YouTube.

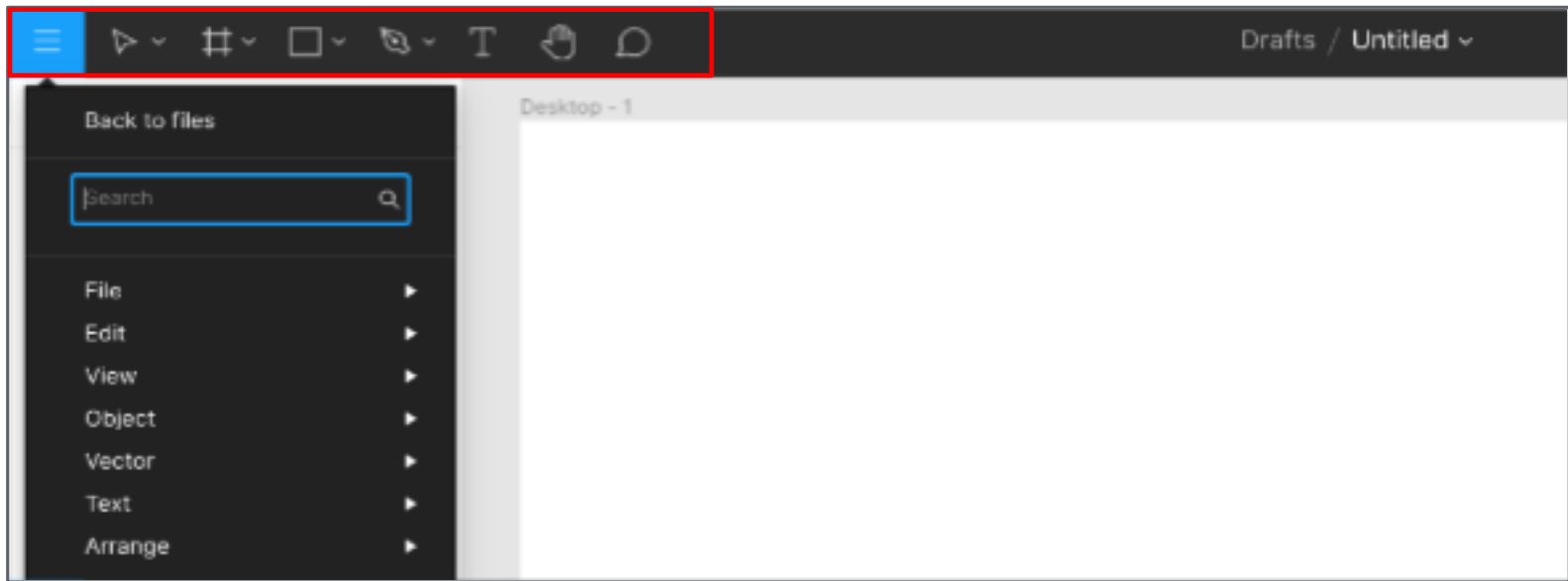## Explore basic features in Figma

You can use Figma to create wireframes, mockups, and prototypes. If this is your first time using Figma, or if you want a quick refresher, take a moment to review the tool's basic features.

In the upper right corner of Figma, there are two icons, as shown in the image below. First, the **arrow inside the box** icon allows you to import a design file that you've already created. Second, and more importantly for your project in this course, the **plus** (+) icon is used to create a new design, which is circled in red in the image below.

In Figma, the gray background is called the **Canvas**, and all the pages you create can be found there.

To zoom in or zoom out, click on the scroll-down menu in the upper right corner, as outlined in red in the image below. There are also keyboard shortcuts you can use to zoom. For example, click the + key on your keyboard to zoom in, and the - key to zoom out. Or, hold down the Z key and click to zoom.
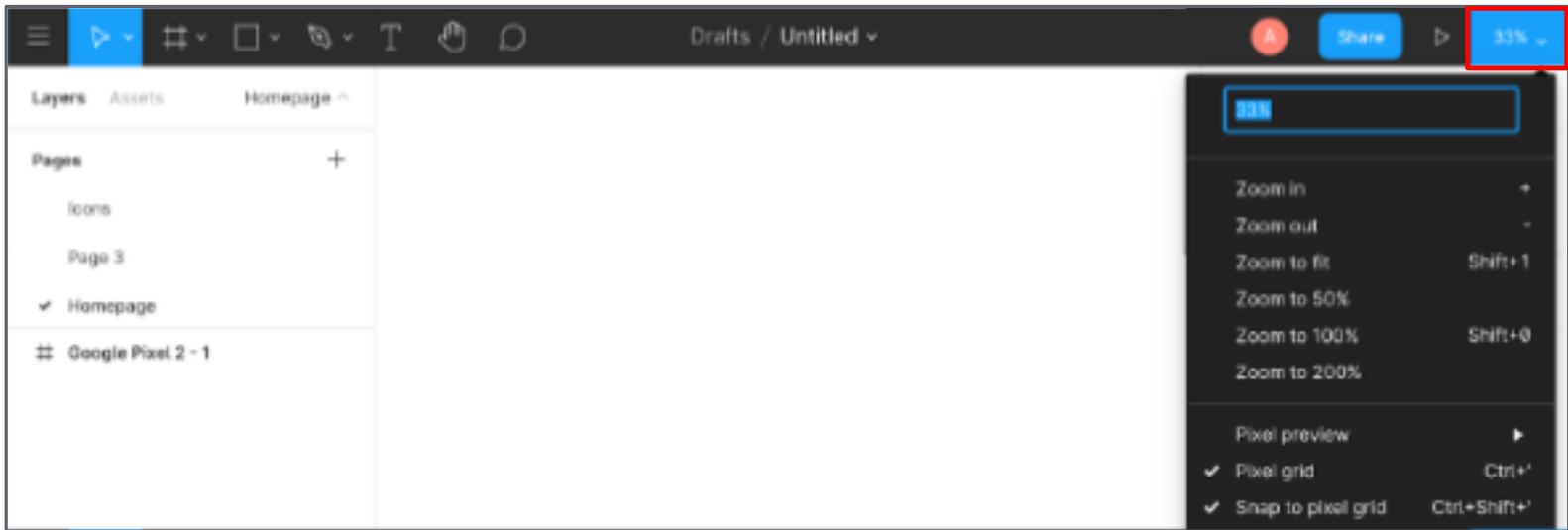

Above the panel on the right side of the screen, there are three tabs: Design, Prototype, and Inspect.

- The **Design** tab is for creating wireframes and mockups. This is the tab you'll use when you begin to design a responsive website.

- The **Prototype** tab is for creating low-fidelity prototypes of your wireframes and high-fidelity prototypes of your mockups. When you use this tab, you'll be able to connect the pages and elements in your designs to make them interactive.

- The **Inspect** tab lets you and your collaborators view and copy the existing code and values for designs. For example, if you click the Inspect tab and then select a page, all of the code for each of the elements, like the color and typography, is presented. You won't use this tab during the certificate program.

Last but not least, explore the toolbar in the top left of the screen. The Figma toolbar contains eight buttons:

1. **Search tool.** Locate files or find specific elements that are part of your design.

2. **Move and Scale tool.** Move elements and components on a page or Canvas. This tool is kind of like your standard computer mouse cursor.

3. **Frame and Slice tool.** Create new frames on a Canvas. After a frame is selected, the Layout Grid panel on the right provides the option to choose the pixel number. This step will help you to understand spacing as you add design elements later.

4. **Shape tool.** Create basic shapes, like rectangles, stars, lines, arrows, and ellipses.

5. **Pen and Pencil tool.** Draw custom and freehand shapes.

6. **Text tool.** Add copy to a design.

7. **Hand tool.** Navigate across designs on the Canvas.

8. **Comments tool.** Share or receive comments about designs with team members.

The eight tools in this toolbar are shown in the image below, in the order that they were described. Check out this information from Figma to learn more about the toolbar ⧉.

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