1.

Activity introduction

This activity will help you understand how to draw wireframes on paper. In this activity, you will translate the ideas of one of your favorite mobile apps to a paper wireframe. Wireframes reduce the app down to its basic structure to highlight each element's intended function. To create the paper wireframes, you'll work backwards from an already designed app. This activity will help you understand how to design the structure of a page to test out different options before spending a lot of time designing. This practice will also prepare you for later course activities when you'll be asked to draw paper wireframes for your portfolio projects.

After completing this activity, you'll have the opportunity to compare your work to a completed exemplar in the following course item.

Step-by-step instructions

Step 1: Select a mobile app to wireframe

Think of a mobile app you enjoy using, and navigate to the app's home screen. If the home screen has common UI components, such as menus and buttons, it's a good selection for practicing your wireframe drawing skills.

Step 2: Write a list of key home screen info

Before you start drawing, write a short list of the key information that is on the app's home screen. Your list might include a navigation menu, a search bar, images, text, and other elements that are important to using the app. This will help you plan which elements need to be drawn in your paper wireframe and how they should be drawn.

Step 3: Draw the home screen's frame

Using a piece of paper and a pen or pencil, draw a rectangle to represent the frame of the app's home screen. The dimensions don't need to be exact. It's only important that the home screen's key elements can fit in the rectangle and be placed similar to how they appear on the screen.

Step 4: Draw the screen's key elements

Draw the key elements of the app's home screen from Step 2 as lines and simple shapes—like circles, squares, and rectangles—within the frame. Follow the industry standards explained in the course video for representing certain elements:

Body text is represented by horizontal lines. (Short labels and headings can be written out.)

Images, photos, illustrations, and icons are represented by squares with large Xs drawn on top of them. (Simple shapes, like menu icons, can be drawn as they appear.)

Calls to action—like "submit" or "compose" buttons—are represented by rectangles or circles, whichever fits the basic shape the element has on the screen.

Industry standards help you make sure your wireframes are simple and understandable, especially for any collaborators.

Step 5: Reflect on the completion of this activity

Does your paper wireframe:

Fit all of the key elements of the home page in the home screen frame?

Reflect all of the key elements of your chosen app's home page?

Follow industry standards for representing various elements?