



Understand design sprints


Plan design sprints


Participate in design sprints


Reflect on design sprints

 **Video:** Design sprint retrospectives
2 min

 **Reading:** Common retrospective questions
15 min

 **Practice Quiz:** Self-Reflection: Think through a retrospective for a previous project
1 question

 **Discussion Prompt:** Group work experience
10 min

 **Practice Quiz:** Test your knowledge on design sprint retrospectives
3 questions

Week 3 review

Common retrospective questions

Every design sprint is an opportunity for your team to learn something new. This is especially useful for entry-level UX designers joining a design sprint for the first time.

During a design sprint, the focus is on:

- Understanding the design challenge
- Ideating solutions
- Deciding which solutions to build
- Prototyping a few solutions
- Testing those prototypes

Immediately following the design sprint, your team should hold a retrospective. A **retrospective** is a collaborative critique of the design sprint. The goal of a retrospective is to make sure everyone who took part in the sprint has the chance to give feedback and think about opportunities for improvement.

The key questions to ask during a retrospective are:

1. What went well?
2. What can be improved?

Answering these questions will help you work better as a team and as an individual. Make sure everyone feels empowered to share their experiences, and that personal identifiers, like race or gender, don't prevent members from being honest. Before the retrospective begins, tell the group that any feedback provided will be used to reflect on the experience and improve the process for the next sprint.



What went well?

Start the retrospective by discussing the parts of the design sprint that were successful and areas where the team did well. Maybe a new process was created that could be applied to future sprints. Or maybe the addition of a new digital tool enhanced the team's productivity. Analyze your team's wins, and think about how they could be applied to future sprints.

Questions you might ask during this part of the retrospective include:

- Which tools saved you the most time and effort?
- When did you feel the most satisfaction?
- What helped you make your best contribution to the team during this sprint?

This is also a good time to acknowledge a team member's strong performance. Celebrating successes builds relationships and increases cohesion and harmony within the team!



What can be improved?

After highlighting everything that went well, it's time to shift gears and think about areas for improvement. Your team will want to know what went wrong, so that you all can do better next time.

Encourage everyone to participate in sharing areas for improvement. You might even take turns going around a circle and adding challenges to a shared list. If anyone is nervous about speaking up, invite each person to write their thoughts anonymously on individual sticky notes. Then, all of the improvements can be reviewed together. This eliminates concerns about causing offense and reduces the chance of groupthink. **Groupthink** can occur in a group discussion when one person shares an opinion and everyone immediately agrees with the opinion, instead of sharing their own feelings about a topic. Groupthink prevents each person from having an equal say, and it might mean certain areas for improvement are overlooked.

Consider each phase of the design sprint to structure the feedback: understand, ideate, decide, prototype, and test. At what point were there missteps? What caused those challenges? Share your perspective if a phase or two didn't go according to plan.

Questions you might ask during this part of the retrospective include:

- What went wrong that caught you off guard?
- Which problems came up the most often?
- When do you think we experienced the biggest challenge as a team?

Then, examine the sprint's outcome or final product, and ask questions like:

- Did the team overestimate or underestimate the work required to complete the design?
- Did an external factor derail your productivity?
- And most importantly, does the final design actually solve the user problem?

Identify ways that the team could have ended up with a better solution.

Keep in mind, retrospectives are about empowering, not shaming. This is not the time to call out an individual for poor performance. If you have issues with a team member's work, it's best to address it with that person privately, not during a team-wide retrospective.



Lessons learned

By the end of the retrospective meeting, your team will have a better understanding of what went well and what could be improved. Naturally, you'll want to take lessons learned into your next design sprint.

Before your next sprint, review the conclusions you reached at the end of the last retrospective. Your conclusions should inform how you conduct the next sprint. Perhaps you need to include a more diverse team, allow more time for ideating, or test with additional users before moving forward with a design.

Questions you might ask include:

- What did you discover during the sprint that you're still wondering about?
- How could the current process be holding the team back from creating better solutions?

Takeaways

Remember: Speak up and share your suggestions for how the next design sprint could be better. Don't be afraid to suggest anything you think will improve the project or next sprint. The only bad suggestion is the one not shared!

Mark as completed

