1.

Activity introduction

This activity will help you conduct a usability study for your portfolio project. As a reminder, a usability study is a research method that assesses how easy it is for participants to complete basic tasks in a product. Usability studies allow researchers to observe how people use a product, then use those insights to design a better product.
In the activity, you'll conduct a usability study for your portfolio project by completing a series of steps. If you've completed the Course 4 activities, you should already be familiar with conducting a usability study. If you haven't, you might find it useful to go back and get a detailed overview of each step.
After completing this activity, you'll be able to compare your work to a completed exemplar to check your work. The exemplar will be provided in the following course activity.

Step-by-step instructions

To conduct a usability study for your portfolio project, follow the instructions below:

Step 1: Access the note-taking spreadsheet

To use the template for this course item, click the link below and select "Use Template."

Link to template: note-taking spreadsheet template

OR

If you don't have a Google account, you can download the template directly from the attachment below.

Google UX Design Certificate - Usability study note-taking spreadsheet [template]
XLSX File

Step 2: Review your research plan
In the activity plan a research study, you created a research plan for your portfolio project. In the activity, you indicated how you would recruit participants and then briefly outlined a sample script for your test session. You were instructed to save your sample research plan for later access. You'll use this to develop prompts to guide users through your study.
Step 3: Prepare your spreadsheet template for note-taking
Set up your spreadsheet by making sure you have the same number of tabs at the bottom of the spreadsheet as you do participants in the study. Then, make sure you:
Add the list of tasks from your script to Column A for each participant's tab on the spreadsheet.

Leave additional rows at the bottom for unanticipated observations and suggestions from your test participants.

Step 4: Interview at least five participants
Choose five friends or family members who agree to test your low-fidelity prototype. They'll be your study participants. Make sure your sample includes a diverse group people to get a wide range of perspectives and feedback (e.g. users of different backgrounds, genders, users with accessibility needs, etc.)
Provide your test users with access to the prototype you created during the create a low-fidelity prototype activity when you converted digital wireframes into a lo-fi prototype.
Step 5: Record your observations
Now you're ready to take some notes! This is where you'll have an opportunity to observe users as they interact with your design. Observe their behaviors, their questions, and their feedback. As you begin, remind the participants to think out loud as they go through each task.
Complete the note-taking spreadsheet from Step 1 using the following criteria:

The click path, or sequence of actions, a participant follows for each task. Record this in Column B.

Observations about participant behaviors, feelings, and sticking points for each task. Record this in Column C.
Direct quotes from the participant that highlight parts of their experience for each task. Record this in Column D.
How easy or difficult you thought it was for the participant to complete each task. Record this in Column E.

Fill out each column of the note-taking spreadsheet accordingly for each participant.

Step 6: Reflect on the completion of this activity
Be sure you've addressed the following questions in your completed deliverable. Did you:

Interview at least 5 distinct people to make sure your design is inclusive and representative of a range of users?
Ask open-ended interview questions and didn't lead the user towards answering in any particular way?

Take notes using the note-taking template?

Identify test participant behaviors, opinions, feelings, and quotes?