

Introduction to Course 3

Use research to inform ideation

Build goal statements

Outline user flows

Create storyboards

- 📺 **Video:** Introduction to storyboarding user flows
4 min
- 📺 **Video:** Understand the two types of storyboards
7 min
- 📖 **Reading:** Learn more about creating storyboards
20 min
- 📖 **Practice Quiz:** Test your knowledge of storyboards
2 questions
- 📖 **Practice Quiz:** Practice Activity: Practice creating storyboards for the Coffeehouse project
1 question
- 📖 **Reading:** Activity Example: Practice creating storyboards for the Coffeehouse project
20 min
- 🗣️ **Discussion Prompt:** Share your storyboards
10 min

Get started with wireframes

Week 1 review

Learn more about creating storyboards

In UX design, a **storyboard** is a series of panels or frames that visually describes and explores a user's experience with a product. Telling a story through visuals is often more effective than using words.

A real product might have many screens, but your storyboard should focus on just the most important parts of a user's experience with a product. As their name suggests, there's a *story* that should be told through the panels of a storyboard. The four key elements of a storyboard are:

- **Character:** States the user in the storyboard.
- **Scene:** Gives designers a way to imagine the user's environment.
- **Plot:** Describes the solution or benefit offered by the design.
- **Narrative:** Describes the problem the user is facing and how the design will solve this problem.

There are two common types of storyboards in UX design, both of which incorporate these four key elements:

- **Big-picture storyboards** focus on what the user needs, their context, and why the product will be useful to the user. Big-picture storyboards are often used early in the design process when designers are trying to get stakeholders to support their ideas.
- **Close-up storyboards** concentrate on the *product* and how it works. They're best used in the middle to the end of the design process.

Let's explore how we can create each of these storyboards with a real example. Imagine this scenario: You're designing an app called Bandmate for musicians to recruit talented band members. A user that might come to your app for help is a guitarist in a rock band. We'll call them Dan. Their band's drummer suddenly quit, so Dan needs to find a new drummer.

Create a big-picture storyboard

1. **Start with a problem statement.** This will help establish character and set the scene for your storyboard.

For this example, the problem statement might be:

PROBLEM STATEMENT		
Dan	is a/an	lead guitarist in a band
user name		user characteristics
who needs	to hire a new drummer	
	user need	
because	they are having issues replacing the previous drummer	
	insight	

Dan is a lead guitarist in a band who needs to hire a new drummer because they are having issues replacing the previous drummer.

2. **Create a goal statement.** Your goal statement helps you determine a *plot* (the benefit or solution of your design) for your storyboard.

A goal statement for this example might be:

GOAL STATEMENT		
Our Bandmate app	will let users	recruit new or substitute musicians
product		perform specific actions
which will affect	users who need new band members	
	describe who the action will affect	
by	letting them easily find qualified musicians to hire	
	describe how the action will positively affect them	
We will measure effectiveness by	reading user reviews and tracking successful hires	
	describe how you will measure the impact	

Our Bandmate app will let users recruit new or substitute musicians which will affect users who need new band members by letting them easily find qualified musicians to hire. We will measure effectiveness by reading user reviews and tracking successful hires.

3. **Set up the storyboard.** You can use the storyboard template shown in the videos about storyboarding, or you can draw a similar outline on a piece of paper.

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

Link to template: [storyboard template](#) ↗

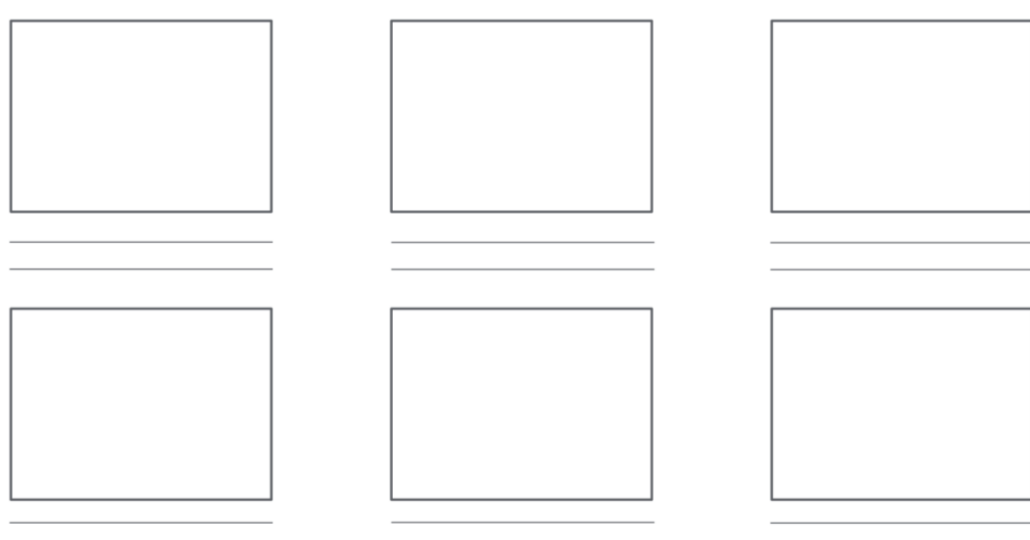
OR

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

📎 **UX Design Certificate - Storyboard (Template)**
PPTX File

UX Design Storyboard

Scenario:



4. **Add the storyboard scenario.** Begin filling out the storyboard template by adding the scenario. At the top of the template, write a sentence that sets the narrative for the storyboard. Thinking back to the problem from the problem statement and the solution from the goal statement, write a short, clear sentence that describes the user and the problem your design solves for them. Consider the end result that will solve the user's problem.

For this example, you want the Bandmate app to help Dan find a new drummer for their band. So the scenario at the top of the storyboard might be:

An app that allows users to recruit qualified, new, or substitute musicians to join their band.

5. **Draw one idea per panel.** The first panel is used to set the scene for the story. Then with each additional panel, think about actions that push the story forward and how the user feels in each panel.

In the first panel, what is the event that triggers Dan to find a new drummer? In this case, Dan's drummer quit, so he needs to find a replacement drummer to join the band.

In the second panel, Dan finds and opens an app that can help him recruit qualified, new, or substitute musicians that are located in his local area. This action should be drawn in its own panel.

In the third panel, Dan finds an experienced drummer who lives nearby while scrolling through the app. He filters for drummers with at least five years of experience in a professional band, who have good reviews, and who live within 30 miles of his current location.

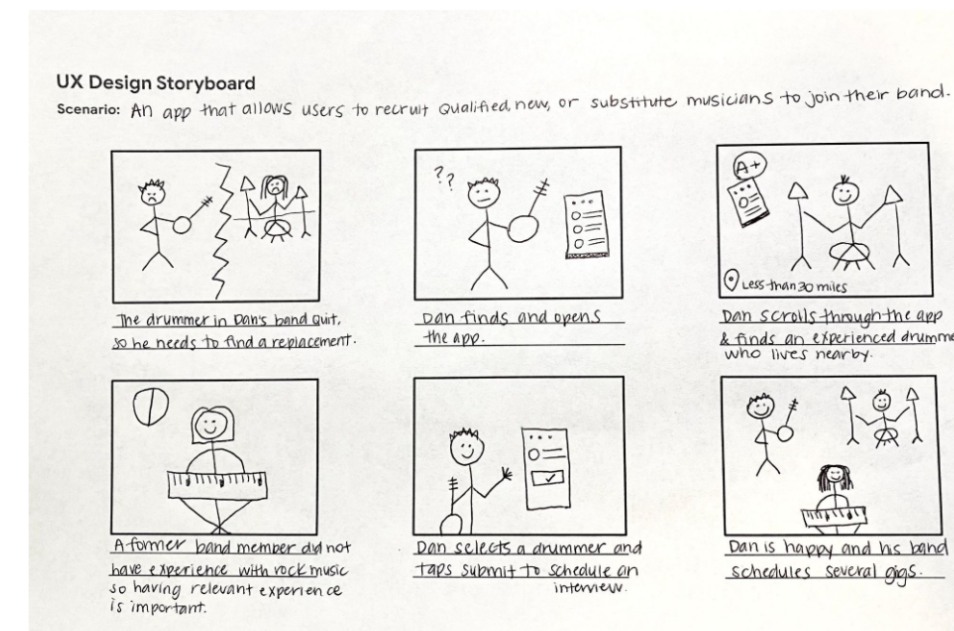
Pro tip: Remember that big-picture storyboards focus on the user experience. The storyboard should show how people use your product and why your product will be helpful to them. Because big-picture storyboards are about the user, it's important to include emotion by using a sad or happy face, for example, at different steps of the journey to make the storyboard feel human and relatable.

6. **Expose pain points for the user along their journey.** Dan had a bad experience in the past when he hired a keyboard player for the band who turned out to be unqualified. While using this new app, Dan needs to be able to identify qualifications from the musician's profile, like how many years they've played in a band or the ratings they've received from other users. Dan might feel a little nervous because of his past bad experiences finding bandmates. This is drawn in the fourth panel.

Then, in the fifth panel, Dan selects a drummer in the app and taps the "schedule" button to set up an interview with the potential replacement drummer.

7. **Include the user goal or conclusion in the final panel.** In this example, the conclusion is that a new drummer joins the band. Dan is very happy, and his band schedules several gigs. Make sure to include an emotion to demonstrate how the user feels at the end of the experience with your product. In this case, Dan feels excited and satisfied.

And that's it! Check out the completed big-picture storyboard for this example:



You brought the user, Dan, on a journey to find a new drummer for his band. You've addressed his pain points and helped him find a qualified drummer. Your user is delighted with the app experience. Big-picture storyboards can really help immerse you in the experience of a user, which leads to better products overall.

Create a close-up storyboard

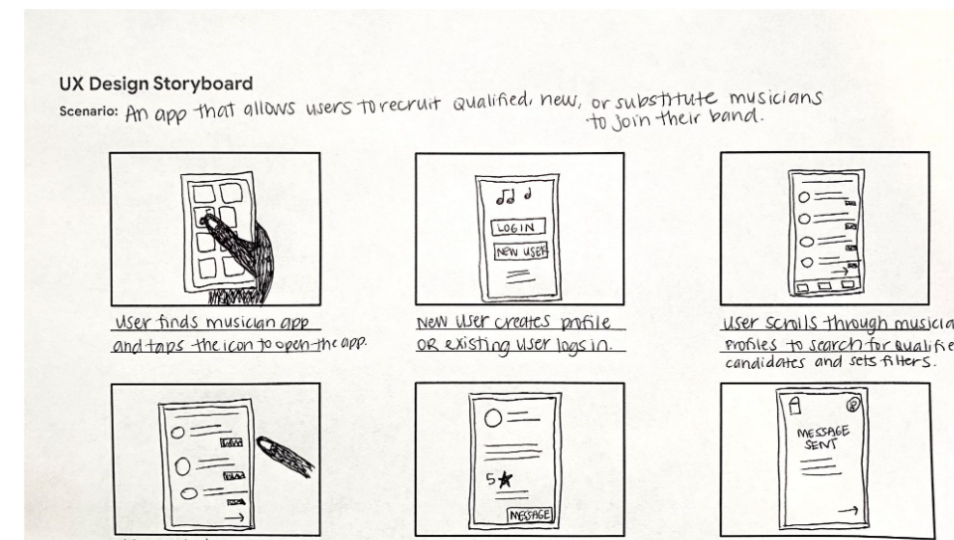
To create a close-up storyboard, steps 1-4 are the same as the big-picture storyboard process:

1. Start with a problem statement.
2. Create a goal statement.
3. Set up the storyboard.
4. Add the storyboard scenario.

5. **Draw one idea per panel.** Big-picture storyboards and close-up storyboards differ in step five, when you draw each panel. Remember, big-picture storyboards focus on the user, while close-up storyboards focus on the *product*. For this close-up storyboard, think about which product details you want to draw attention to on each panel and why. You want to demonstrate the user flow within the product and how each action within the product will lead to the next screen.

- To begin, in the **first panel**, the user will open their phone, swipe through their apps, and tap the icon for the musician app to open it.
- Oftentimes when designing an app, one panel of a close-up storyboard will focus on how a user begins their journey when they first open the app. For this example of the app to find musicians, let's imagine that a new user can create a profile or an existing user can log in. This is shown in the **second panel**.
- In the **third panel**, once the user is logged into the app, they can begin searching for their bandmate. The user scrolls through profiles of musicians and can set filters like level of experience, years played, location, instruments played, and more.
- In the **fourth panel**, the user taps the "view profile" button of one of the musicians to review their experience, qualifications, and location.
- Then, once the user finds a candidate they're interested in contacting, they tap the "submit" button to send a message to that musician. The user can write their own message or send an automated message that asks about availability and to schedule a conversation. There's also an option for the user to provide a sample of their music to the musician. This is shown in the **fifth panel**.
- Finally, in the **sixth panel**, the user receives a confirmation that their message has been sent and a description of the next steps to expect. The text below the confirmation might say something like, "Your message to this musician has been sent." There will also be a button linking back to the user's inbox and one that leads them back to the search page they just came from.

Check out the completed close-up storyboard for this example:



That's it! You now know how to create a big picture and a close-up storyboard. In the next activity, you'll have an opportunity to create your own storyboards. Have fun!

Mark as completed

