

Introduction to Course 5

Begin to create a mockup

Use typography in mockups

Use color in mockups

Use iconography in mockups

Understand page layouts - grids and containment

Understand page layouts - negative space

📺 **Video:** Use negative (white) space in layouts  
3 min

📖 **Reading:** Use negative space in mockups  
20 min

🔧 **Ungraded Plugin:** Test your knowledge on containment and negative space in design  
30 min

📝 **Practice Quiz:** Activity: Revise your portfolio project mockups by adding negative space  
1 question

📖 **Reading:** Activity Exemplar: Revise your portfolio project mockups by adding negative space  
10 min

📖 **Reading:** Common design patterns in apps  
20 min

📝 **Practice Quiz:** Self-Reflection: Share what you've learned about page layouts  
1 question

Week 1 review

# Use negative space in mockups

Taking advantage of space, in addition to color, lines, and text, is an important way to make your designs visually appealing and easy to read. **Negative space** is the area that surrounds an object within an image. In other words, negative space is the gaps between elements in a design or the space that's not being occupied.

Negative space is also often called white space or empty space. Many UX designers prefer the term negative space because backgrounds of designs aren't always white, and the space that's empty in the design will reflect the background color.

Check out how the Google Search homepage uses negative space in the image below. The biggest elements on the page are the Google Doodle that features the Google logo and the search bar. There are a few small links across the top of the page, but most of the page is negative space. This clean design makes the page visually appealing and draws their attention to the part of the page that they need to interact with to meet their needs, which is the search bar.

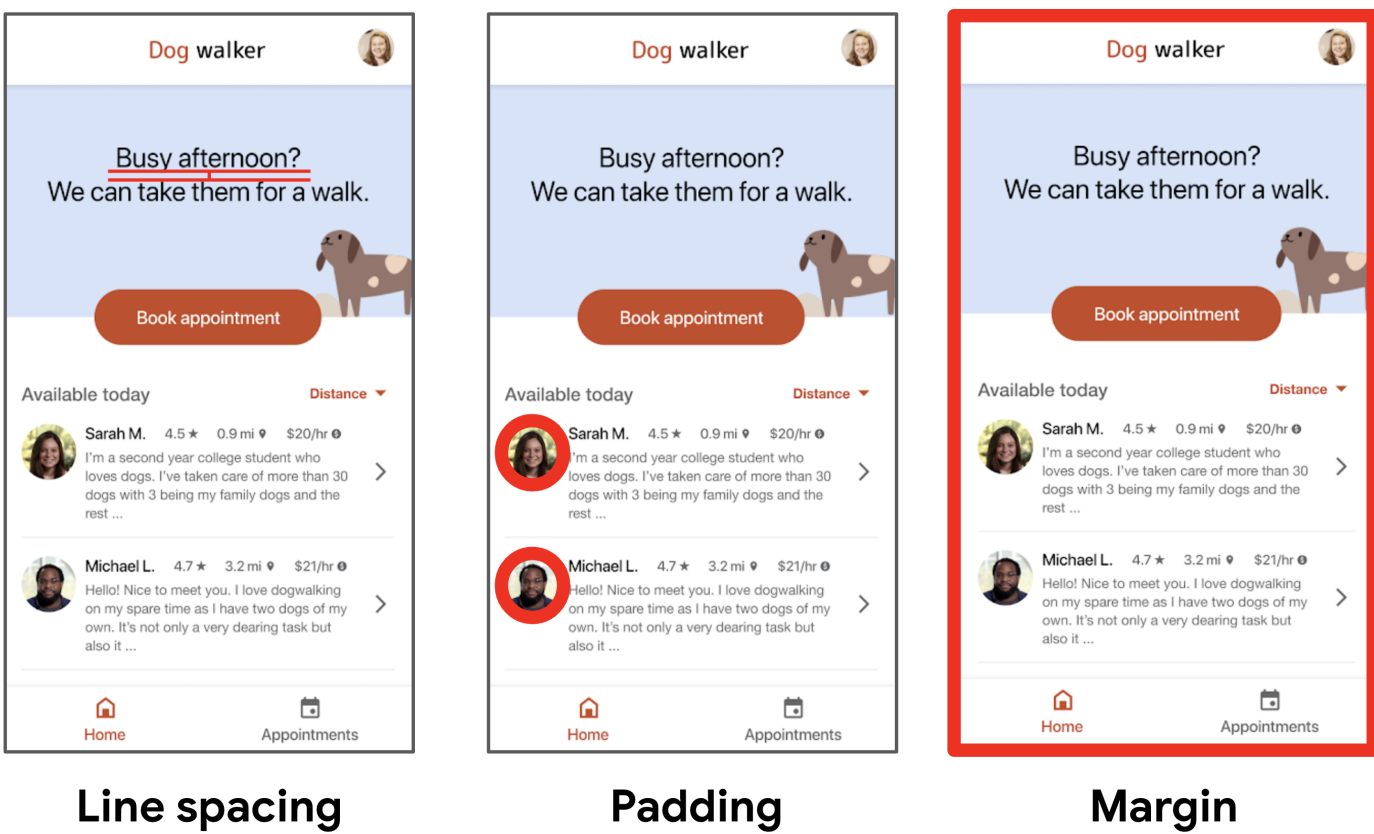


## The importance of negative space

Why is it so important to consider negative space when you create mockups? Check out these four reasons.

1. **Use negative space to indicate if elements are related.** If two objects are positioned closely together on a page without negative space between them, they will be perceived as being related. This concept is based on the Gestalt Principle of proximity, which you explored earlier in this program. Remember that **proximity** means that elements that are close together appear to be more related than elements that are spaced far apart. In your mockups, use negative space thoughtfully in order to indicate which elements of your designs are related or not.
2. **Negative space draws attention to important elements.** Users generally have short attention spans! If the information on a page or screen isn't easily scannable, you'll lose user attention quickly. Using negative space is one way to help users focus on the reason that they opened the page or app. For example, using negative space around a button in your mobile app design will help users focus on the most important action, clicking the button.
3. **Negative space gives users a visual break.** Negative space helps prevent users from becoming overwhelmed or distracted. The negative or white space in your designs can provide users with a visual break as they scan the content.
4. **Negative spacing increases readability.** You've probably encountered online sales that advertise an entire page full of items. The page is usually really colorful, with a lot of information to sift through, including prices and descriptions. Ads like these tend not to include much negative space, which can make the information appear overwhelming and difficult to read. Instead, you can use negative space in your mockups to make text easy to read at a glance.

## Use negative space in your designs



You can create negative space in your mockups in many ways. Line spacing, padding, and margins are common methods of using white space effectively, so let's check out each one.

- **Line spacing** is the vertical space between two pieces of text. Think of reading a book: the negative space between sentences in a paragraph keeps letters from overlapping and makes content easy to read. The same goes for your designs!
- **Padding** is the negative space surrounding content, or between the border and the design elements. Padding gives objects space to exist before the user moves to look at another element of the design. In the image above, padding in the dog walker app provides symmetry to the design and keeps elements from being crowded together.
- **Margins** are the space outside the border of the design. You can think of margins as a way to keep you coloring between the lines of your design. In the image above, you'll notice the edges of the design surrounded by the margin.

## Apply your learnings

Using negative space between design elements will help to create a better user experience and can result in a clean, elegant design that holds users' attention. If you're curious to learn more about using negative space, watch this video of a real designer showing you [how to use negative space to increase readability](#). 📺 of objects.

### Mark as completed

