

## *Getting Around: Navigation, Signposts, and Wayfinding*

- The patterns in this chapter deal with the problem of navigation.
  - How do users know where they are now, where to go next, and how to get there from here?
  - Navigation is a “problem” because navigating around a website or application is like commuting. You have to do it to get where you need to go, but it’s dull, it’s sometimes infuriating, and the time and energy you spend on it just seems wasted.
  - The best kind of commuting is none at all. Having everything you need right at your fingertips without having to travel somewhere is pretty convenient. Likewise, keeping most tools “within reach” on an interface is handy, especially for intermediate-to-expert users (i.e., people who have already learned where everything is).
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## *Staying Found*

- Let's say you've built a large website or application that you've had to break up into sections, subsections, specialized tools, pages, windows, wizards, and so forth. How do you help users navigate?
  - *Signposts* are features that help users figure out their immediate surroundings. Common signposts include page and window titles, web page logos and other branding devices, tabs, and selection indicators.
  - *Wayfinding* is what people do as they find their way toward their goal. The term is pretty self-explanatory. But how people actually do it is quite a research subject—specialists from cognitive science, environmental design, and website design have studied it.
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## *Staying Found*

- These common-sense features help users with wayfinding:

### *Good signage*

- Clear, unambiguous labels anticipate what you're looking for and tell you where to go; signs are where you expect them to be, and you're never left standing at a decision point without guidance.
  - You can check this by walking through the artifact you're designing and following the paths of all the major use cases.
  - Make sure that each point where a user must decide where to go next is signed or labeled appropriately. Use strong “calls to action” on the first pages that a user sees.
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## *Staying Found*

### *Environmental clues*

- You'd look for restrooms in the back of a restaurant, for instance, or a gate where a walkway intersects a fence.
  - Likewise, you would look for an “X” close button at the top right of a modal dialog and logos in the upper-left corner of a web page.
  - Keep in mind that these clues are often culturally determined, and someone new to the culture (e.g., someone who's never used a given operating system before) will not be aware of them.
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## *Staying Found*

### *Maps*

- Sometimes people go from sign to sign or link to link without ever really knowing where they're going in a larger frame of reference. (If you've ever found your way through a strange airport, that's probably what you did.)
  - But some people might prefer to have a mental picture of the whole space, especially if they're there often. Also, in badly signed or densely built spaces, such as urban neighborhoods, maps may be the only navigational aids people have.
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## *The Cost of Navigation*

- When you walk into an unfamiliar room, you look around. In a fraction of a second, you take in the shape of the room, the furnishings, the light, the ways out, and other clues; very quickly, you make some assumptions about what this room is and how it relates to why you walked in.
  - Then you need to do what you came in to do. Where? How? You might be able to answer immediately—or not. Or maybe you're just distracted by other interesting things in the room.
  - Similarly, bringing up a web page or opening a window incurs a cognitive cost. Again, you need to figure out this new space: you take in its shape, its layout, its contents, its exits, and how to do what you came to do. All of this takes energy and time. The “context switch” forces you to refocus your attention and adjust to your new surroundings.
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## *The Cost of Navigation*

- Even if you're already familiar with the window (or room) you just went into, it still incurs a cost. Not a large cost, but it adds up—especially when you figure in the actual time it takes to display a window or load a page. This is true whether you're dealing with web pages, application windows, dialog boxes, or device screens.
  - The decisions that users make about where to go are similar—labels still need to be read or icons decoded, and the users will still make leaps of faith by clicking on links or buttons they're not sure about.
  - Furthermore, loading time affects people's decisions. If a user clicks through to a page that takes too long to load—or fails to load altogether—he may be discouraged, and may just close the page before he finds what he came for. (So, how many viewers is that sidebar video player costing you?) Also, if a site's pages take a chronically long time to load, users will be less likely to explore that site.
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## *Keep Distances Short*

- Knowing that there's a cost associated with jumping from page to page, you can understand now why it's important to keep the number of those jumps down. When a common task requires many page jumps, try to reduce it to one or two.
  - But the real efficiency gains come from the structure of the application. One of the nastiest things a designer can do is force a user to go into multiple levels of subpages, dialogs, and so forth every time he needs to accomplish a simple and everyday task. (Worse is to lead him there, tell him he can't accomplish it because of some missing precondition, and send him back to square one.).
  - Can you design your application so that the most common 80% of use cases can be done in one page, without any context switches? (Or perhaps only one?)
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## ***Navigational Models***

What is the navigational model for your site or app? In other words, how do the different screens (or pages, or spaces) link to each other, and how do users move between them?

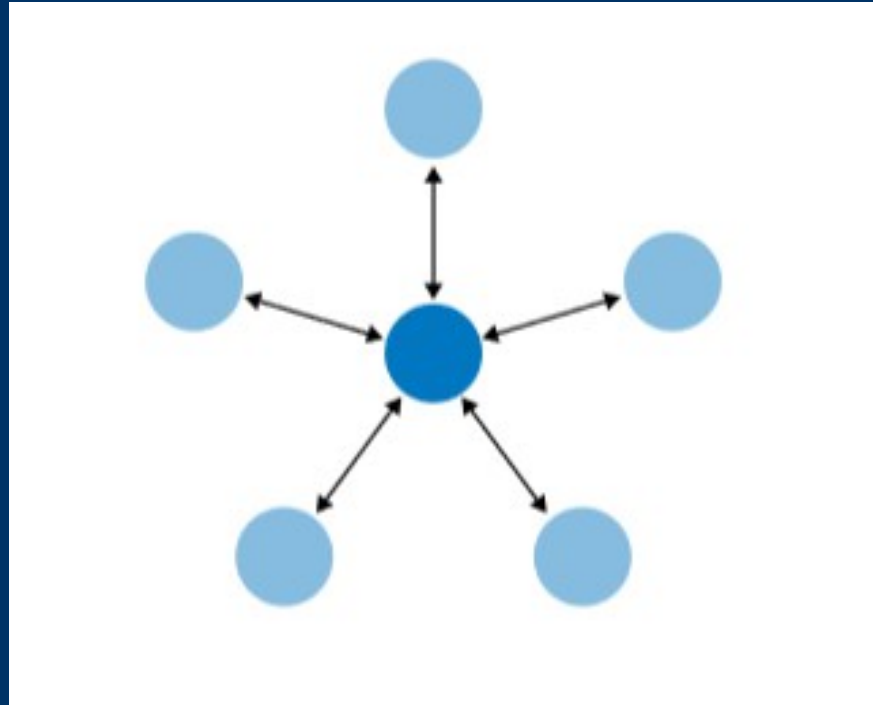
- ***Global navigation*** is what's found on every main screen. It usually takes the form of menus, tabs, and/or sidebars, and this is how users move around the formal navigational structure of the site.
  - ***Utility navigation***, also found on every main screen, contains links and tools related to noncontent aspects of the site or application: sign-in, help, print, Settings Editors, language tools, and so on.
  - ***Associative*** and inline navigation embed links in or near the actual content. As the user reads or interacts with the site, these links present options that might be immediately relevant to the user. They tie content together thematically.
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## *Navigational Models*

### *Hub and spoke*

- Most often found on mobile devices, this architecture (Figure 3-1) lists all the major parts of the site or app on the home screen, or “hub.” The user clicks or taps through to them, does what she needs to do, and comes back to the hub to go somewhere else.
- The “spoke” screens focus tightly on their jobs, making careful use of space—they may not have room to list all the other major screens. The iPhone home screen is a good example; the Menu Page pattern found on some websites is another.

## *Hub and spoke*

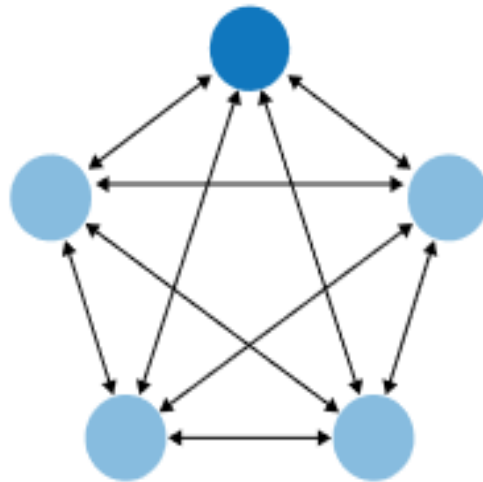


## *Navigational Models*

### *Fully connected*

- Many websites follow this model. There's a home page or screen, but it and every other page link to all the others—they each have a global navigation feature, such as a top menu. The global navigation may be a single level (with only five pages), or it might be deep and complex, with multiple levels and deeply buried content.
  - As long as the user can reach any page from any other with a single jump, it's fully connected.
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*Fully connected*

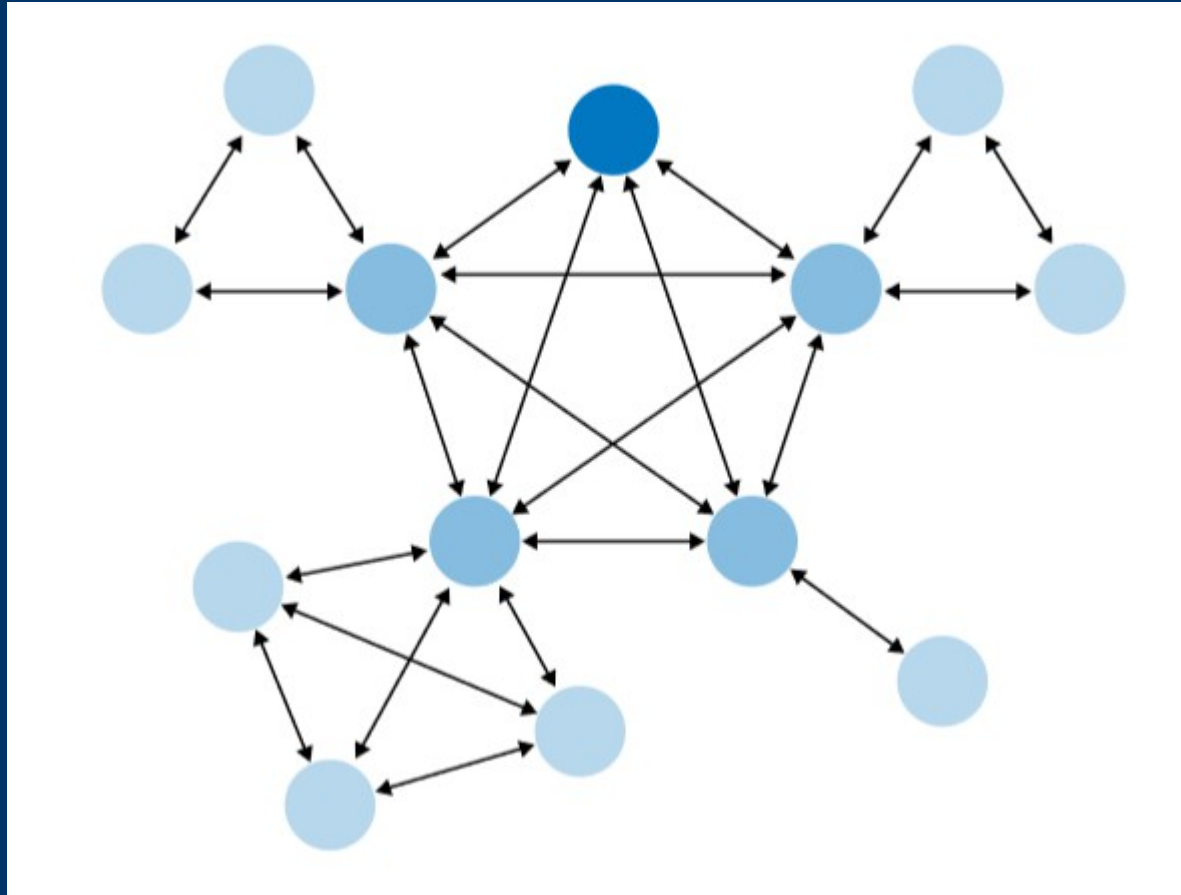


## *Navigational Models*

### *Multi-level*

- This is also common among websites. The main pages are fully connected with each other, but the subpages are only connected among themselves (and usually to the other main pages, via global navigation).
  - You've seen this on sites that have subpages listed only in sidebars or subtabs—users see these on menus that only show up after they've clicked the link for the main page or category. It takes two or more jumps to get from one arbitrary subpage to another.
  - Using drop-down menus, the Fat Menus pattern, or the Sitemap Footer pattern with a multi-level site converts it to a fully connected one, which is preferable.
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## *Multi-level*

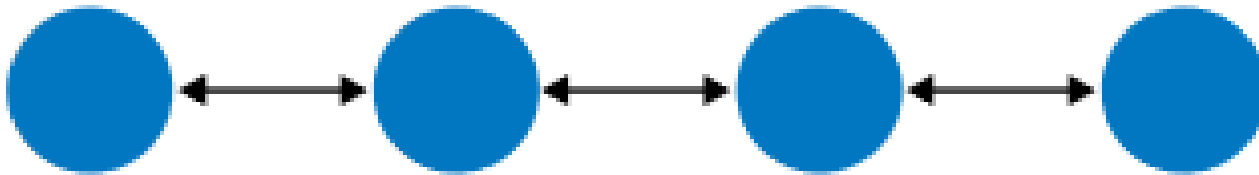




## *Navigational Models*

### *Stepwise*

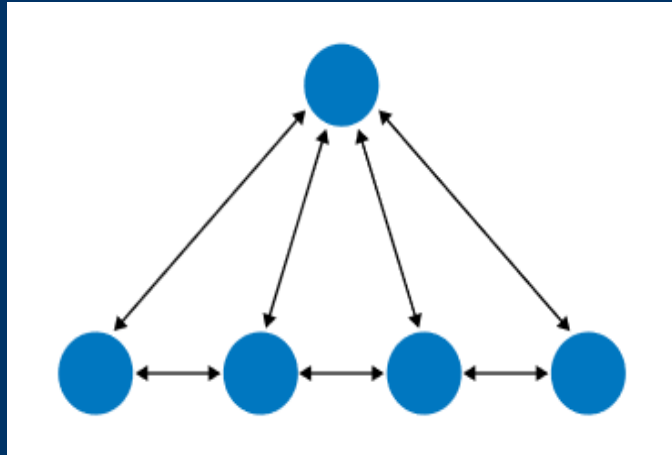
- Slideshows, process flows, and Wizards (see Chapter 2) lead the user step by step through the screens in a prescribed sequence. Back/Next links are prominent on the page.



## *Navigational Models*

### *Pyramid*

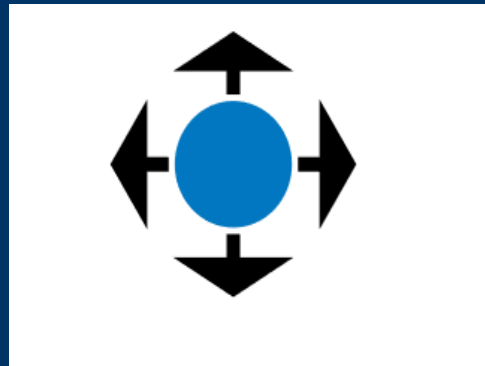
- A variant on the stepwise model, a pyramid uses a hub page or menu page to list an entire sequence of items or subpages in one place. The user picks out any item, jumps to it, and then has the option to use Back/Next links to step through other items in order. He can go back to the hub page anytime.



## *Navigational Models*

### *Pan-and-zoom*

- Some artifacts are best represented as single large spaces, not many small ones. Maps, large images, large text documents, information graphics, and representations of timebased media (such as sound and video) fall into this category.
- Panning and zooming are still navigation—so offer controls for panning (moving horizontally or vertically), zooming in and out, and resetting to a known position and state.



## *Navigational Models*

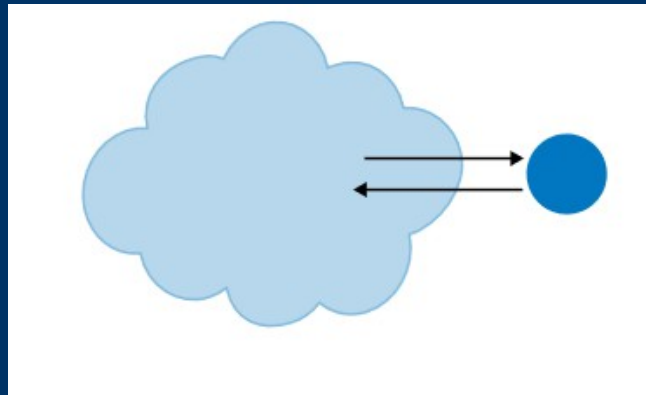
### *Flat navigation*

- Some types of applications need little or no navigation at all.
  - Consider Canvas Plus Palette applications such as Photoshop, or other complex apps such as Excel—these offer tons of tools and functions that are easily reached via menus, toolbars, and palettes.
  - Tools that don't act immediately upon the work may be accessible via Modal Panels or step-by-step progressions.
  - These types of applications seem to be qualitatively different from the other navigation styles listed here: the user always knows where he is, but he may not easily find the tools he needs because of the sheer number of features available at one time.
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## *Navigational Models*

### *Modal panel*

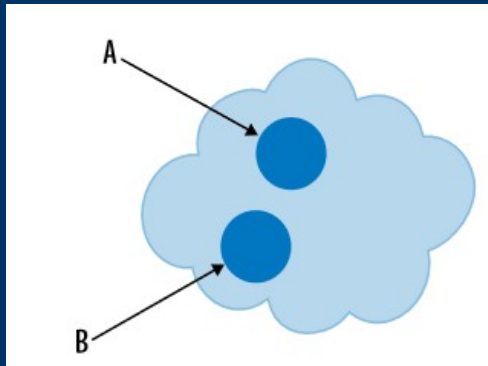
- This brings a user to a screen with no navigation options other than acknowledging its message, completing its form, or clicking the panel away.
- Modal panels often show up layered on top of a full screen or page, and are used for small, focused tasks that require the user's full attention. See the Modal Panel pattern for more discussion.



## *Navigational Models*

### *Clear entry points*

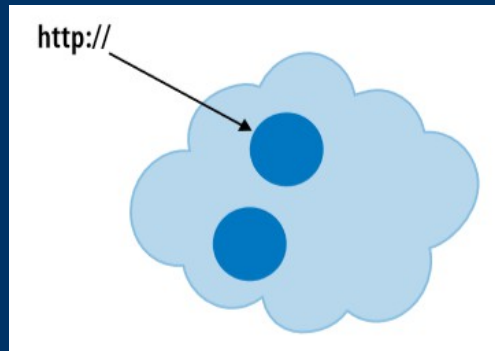
- How does a user know where to start in a complex site or app?
- The Clear Entry Points pattern shows him where to go first.
- For first-time and infrequent users, it removes some of the burden of learning the site.



## *Navigational Models*

### *Bookmarks*

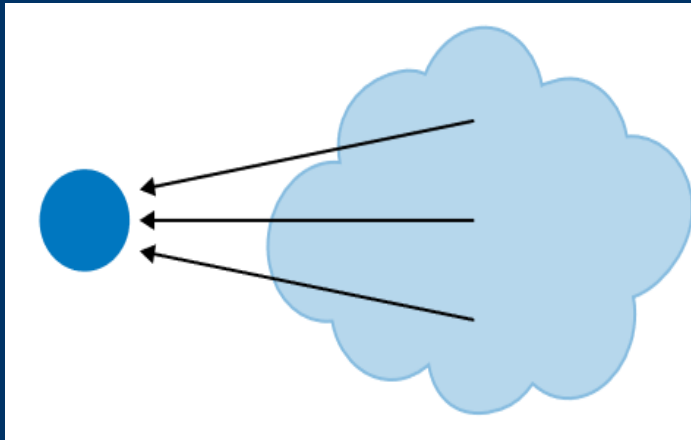
- Bookmarks, permalinks, deep links, and Deep-linked State are all ways for a user to conveniently navigate to a point of his choice, anytime he wants, even if it's deep inside a navigational structure.
- These give him a way to avoid traversing many links to get to a desired page or state.



## *Navigational Models*

### *Escape hatch*

- When a user is hopelessly entangled in an app, reaches an error state, or gets deeplinked into a page that he has no context for understanding, he needs an escape hatch, a well-labeled link to get back to a known place. See the Escape Hatch pattern.





## *Navigational Models*

There are three things to notice about these navigational models.

- The first is that they're mix-and-match—an app or site might combine several of these, especially Modal Panel, Clear Entry Points, bookmarks, and Escape Hatch, which are very local and don't affect the site-wide navigation strategy.
  - The second thing is that some of these mechanisms actually restrict a user's navigation options.
    - Most of the time, open access and short jumps are good things. But when a user is in the middle of a full-screen slideshow, she doesn't want to see a complicated global navigation menu! She would rather just focus on the slideshow itself, so Back/Next controls and an Escape Hatch are all that's necessary.
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## *Navigational Models*

- Third, all these mechanisms and patterns can be rendered on-screen in different ways.
    - A complex site or app might use tabs, or menus, or a sidebar tree view to show the global navigation on each page—that's something you don't need to decide until you start laying out the page.
    - Likewise, a modal panel might be done with a lightbox or an actual modal dialog—but you can postpone that until you know what needs to be modal and what doesn't.
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## *The Patterns*

1. Clear Entry Points
  2. Menu Page
  3. Pyramid
  4. Modal Panel
  5. Deep-linked State
  6. Escape Hatch
  7. Fat Menus
  8. Sitemap Footer
  9. Sign-in Tools
  10. Sequence Map
  11. Breadcrumbs
  12. Annotated Scrollbar
  13. Animated Transition
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## *Clear Entry Points*

- What:  
Present only a few main entry points into the interface; make them task-oriented and descriptive. Use clear calls to action.
  - Use when:  
You're designing a site or app that has a lot of first-time or infrequent users. Most of these users would be best served by reading a certain piece of introductory text, doing an initial task, or choosing from a very small number of frequently used options.
- However, if the purpose is clear to basically everyone who starts it, and if most users might be irritated by one more navigation step than is necessary (like applications designed for intermediate-to-expert users), this may not be the best design choice.
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## *Clear Entry Points*

- Whay:

Some applications and websites, when opened, present the user with what looks like a morass of information and structure: lots of tiled panels, unfamiliar terms and phrases, irrelevant ads, or toolbars that just sit there disabled. They don't give the hesitant user any clear guidance on what to do first. "OK, here I am. Now what?"

For the sake of these users, list a few options for getting started. If those options match a user's expectations, he can confidently choose one and begin working—this contributes to immediate gratification. If not, at least he knows now what the site or app actually does, because you've defined the important tasks or categories up front. You've made the application more self-explanatory.

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## *Clear Entry Points*

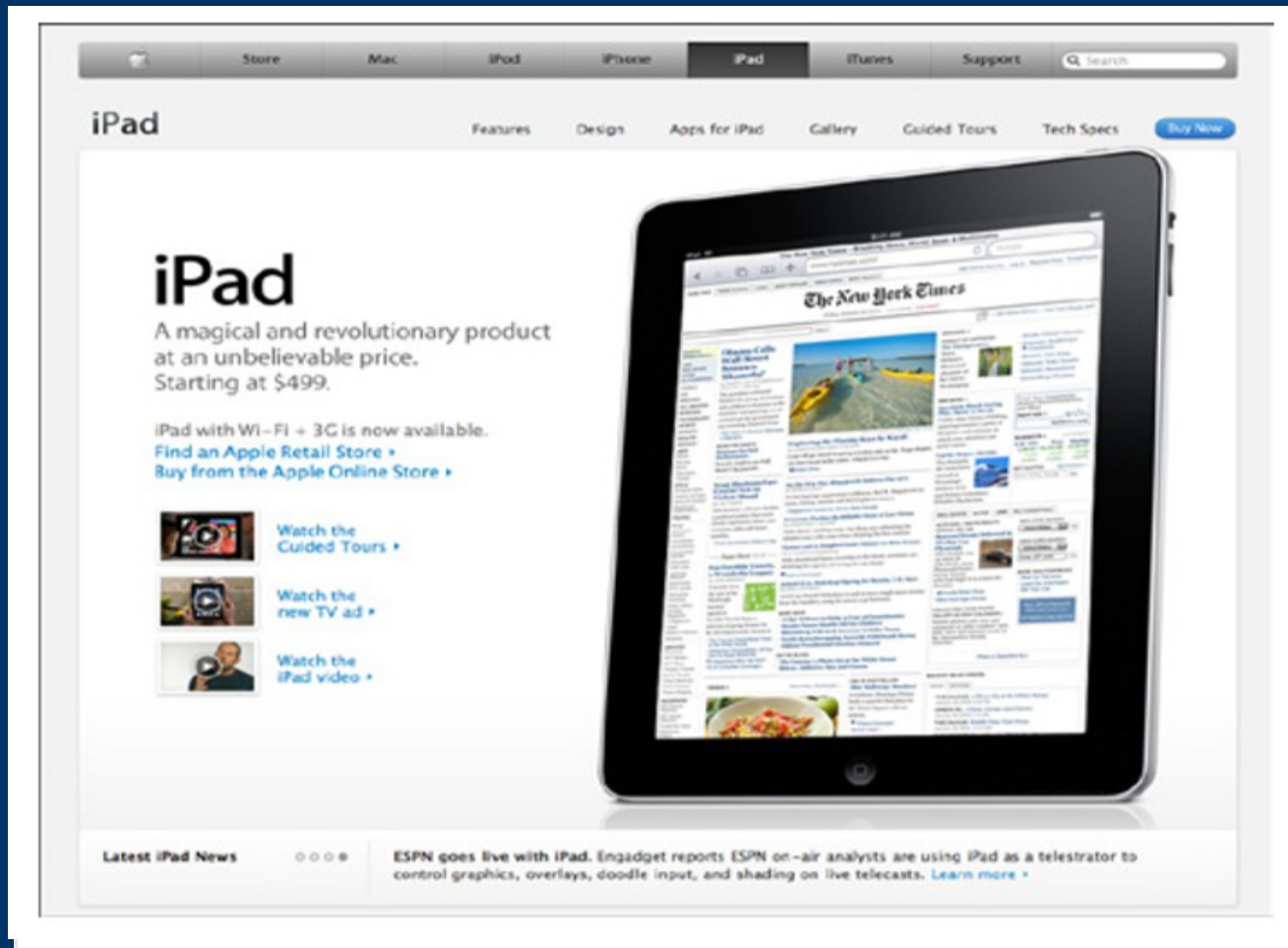
When the site is visited or the application started, present these entry points as “doors” into the main content. From these starting points, guide the user gently and unambiguously into the application until he has enough of a context to continue by himself.

Collectively, these entry points should cover most of the reasons most users would be there. There might only be one or two entry points, or many; it depends on what fits your design. But you should phrase them with language first-time users can understand—this is not the place for application-specific tool names.

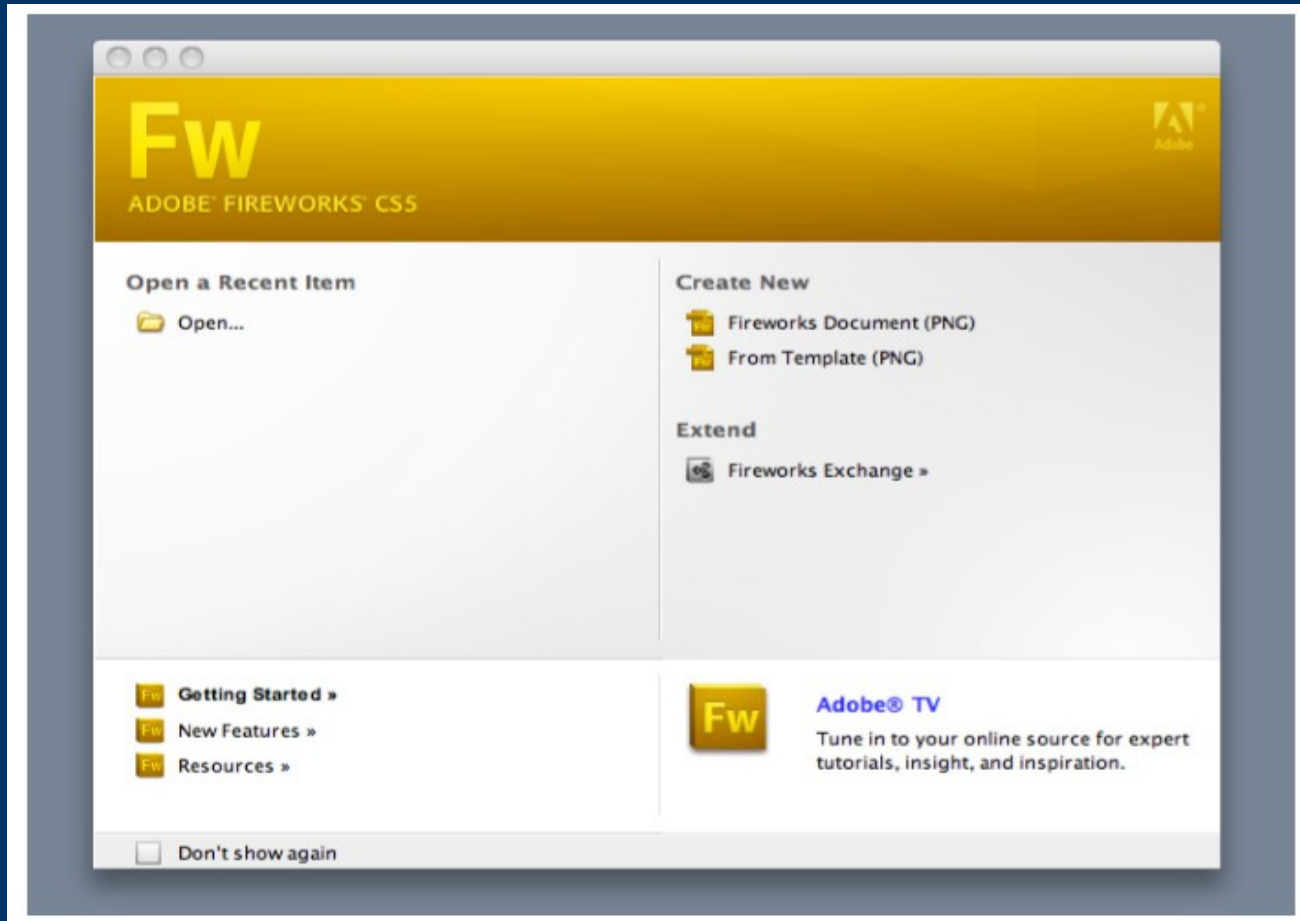
Visually, you should show these entry points with emphasis proportional to their importance.

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## Clear Entry Points - example



## *Clear Entry Points - example*





## *Menu Page*

- What:

Fill the page with a list of links to content-rich pages in your site or app. Show enough information about each link to enable the user to choose well. Show no other significant content on the page.

- Use when

You're designing a home page, starting screen, or any other screen whose purpose is to be just a “table of contents”—to show where users can go from here. You may not have room for featured content (such as an article, video, or promotion), or you may simply want to let the user pick a link with no distractions.

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## *Menu Page*

Mobile apps and sites especially need Menu Pages to make the best use of their small screens.

If your (full-size) site needs to “hook” visitors into staying on the page, it may be better to use some of the page space for promotional items or other interesting content, and a Menu Page wouldn’t be the right design choice.

It takes some audacity to design a Menu Page, because you must be very confident that:

- Visitors know what the site or app is about.
  - They know what they came for and how to find it.
  - They wouldn’t be interested in news, updates, or features.
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## *Menu Page*

- Why:

With no distractions, users can focus all their attention on the available navigation options. You get the entire screen (or most of it, anyway) to organize, explain, and illustrate those links, and can thus direct users to the most appropriate destination page for their needs.

### Advice:

**First**, label the links well, and provide just enough contextual information for users to decide where to go.


**Second**, consider the visual organization of the list of links. Do they come in categories, or perhaps a two- or three-level hierarchy? Is it ordered by date? Express that organizational scheme in the list.

**Third**, don't forget a search box.

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# Menu Page - example



about MITadmissionseducationresearchcommunitylife@MITinitiativesImpact

MIT GooglePeopleOffices

Search

## education

Spanning five schools — architecture and planning; engineering; humanities, arts, and social sciences; management; and science — and more than 30 departments and programs, an education at MIT covers more than just science and technology.

Arts, business, foreign languages, health and more complete an education at MIT, and the Institute makes freely available its class lecture notes, exams and videos through MIT's [OpenCourseWare](#)

### schools

- School of Architecture and Planning
- School of Engineering
- School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences
- Sloan School of Management
- School of Science
- Whitaker College of Health Sciences and Technology

## departments and programs

- 16 Aeronautics and Astronautics
- 21A Anthropology
- 4 Architecture
- 20 Biological Engineering
- 7 Biology
- 9 Brain and Cognitive Sciences
- 15 Business
- 10 Chemical Engineering
- 5 Chemistry
- 1 Civil and Environmental Engineering
- CMS Comparative Media Studies
- CSB Computational and Systems Biology
- CDO Computation for Design and Optimization
- 12 Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences
- 14 Economics
- 6 Electrical Engineering and Computer Science
- ESD Engineering Systems Division
- 21F Foreign Languages and Literatures
- HST Health Sciences and Technology
- 21H History
- 24 Linguistics and Philosophy
- 21L Literature
- 15 Management
- 3 Materials Science and Engineering
- 18 Mathematics
- 2 Mechanical Engineering
- MAS Media Arts and Sciences (Media Lab)
- 21M Music and Theater Arts
- 22 Nuclear Science and Engineering
- 8 Physics
- 17 Political Science
- STS Science, Technology, and Society
- 11 Urban Studies and Planning
- 21W Writing and Humanistic Studies

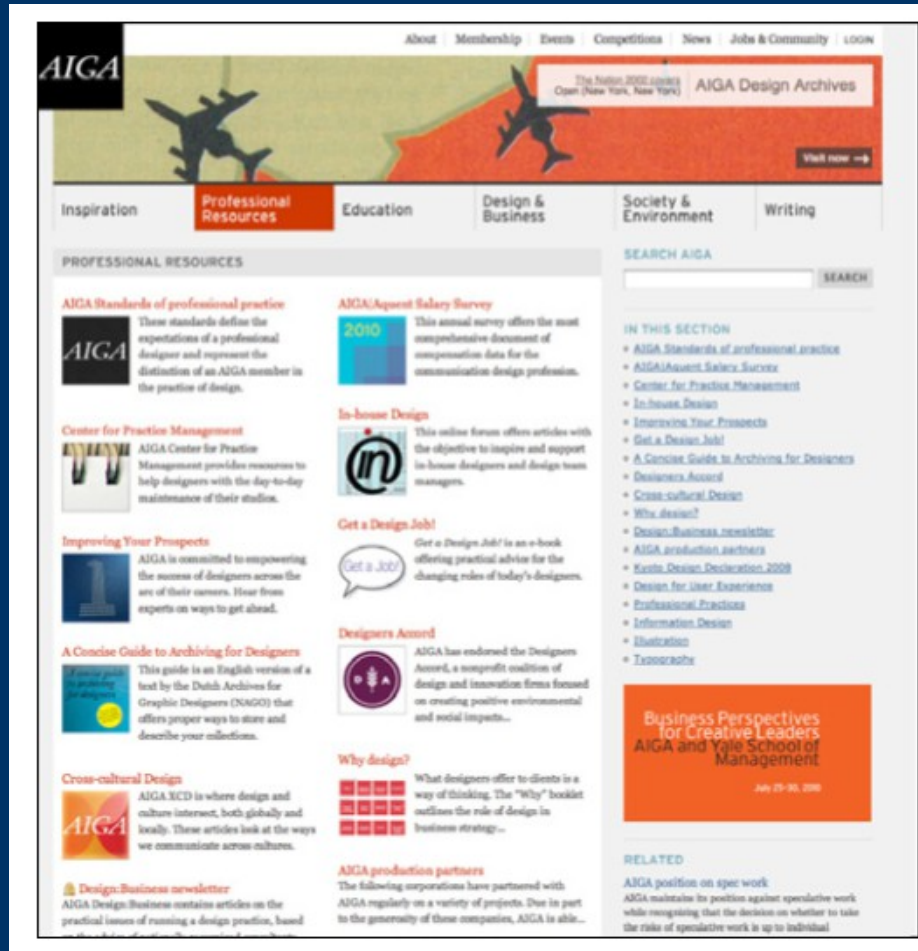
## reference/resources

- Academic calendar
- Career development
- Commencement
- Course catalogue
- Independent Activities Period (IAP)
- Libraries
- MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI)
- OpenCourseWare (OCW)
- Resources for first-year students
- Registrar's office
- Stellar Course Management System
- Subject listing and schedule
- Student Information System (WebSIS)
- Undergraduate Research Opportunities (UROP)
- Undergraduate Practice Opportunities (UPOP)

## more information for

- Prospective students
- Current students
- Undergraduates
- Graduate students
- International students
- Postdoctoral scholars
- Faculty
- Parents
- Professionals
- High school students
- K-12 students and teachers

# Menu Page - example



## *Pyramid*

- What

Link together a sequence of pages with Back/Next links. Create a parent page that links to all of the pages in this sequence, and let the user view them either in sequence or out of order.

- Use when

The site or application contains a sequence of items that a user would normally view one after another, such as a slideshow, a wizard, chapters in a book, or a set of products.

Some users would rather view them one at a time and out of order, however, and they need to be able to pick from a full list of the items.

Almost all Picture Managers use a Pyramid navigational model. Sometimes people need to look at pictures individually; sometimes they would rather browse by walking through the whole sequence. Pyramids support both use cases.

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## *Pyramid*

- Why

This pattern reduces the number of clicks it takes to get around. It improves navigation efficiency, and it expresses a sequential relationship among the pages.

Back/Next (or Previous/Next) links or buttons are all well and good. People know what to do with them.

But a user doesn't necessarily want to be locked into a page sequence that he can't easily get out of: having gone seven pages in, will he need to click the Back button seven times to get back where he started? Not fun!

By putting a link back to the parent page on each sequence page, you increase the user's options.

You've now got three main navigation options instead of two—Back, Next, and Up.

You haven't made it much more complex, but a casually browsing user will need far fewer clicks to go where he wants to go.

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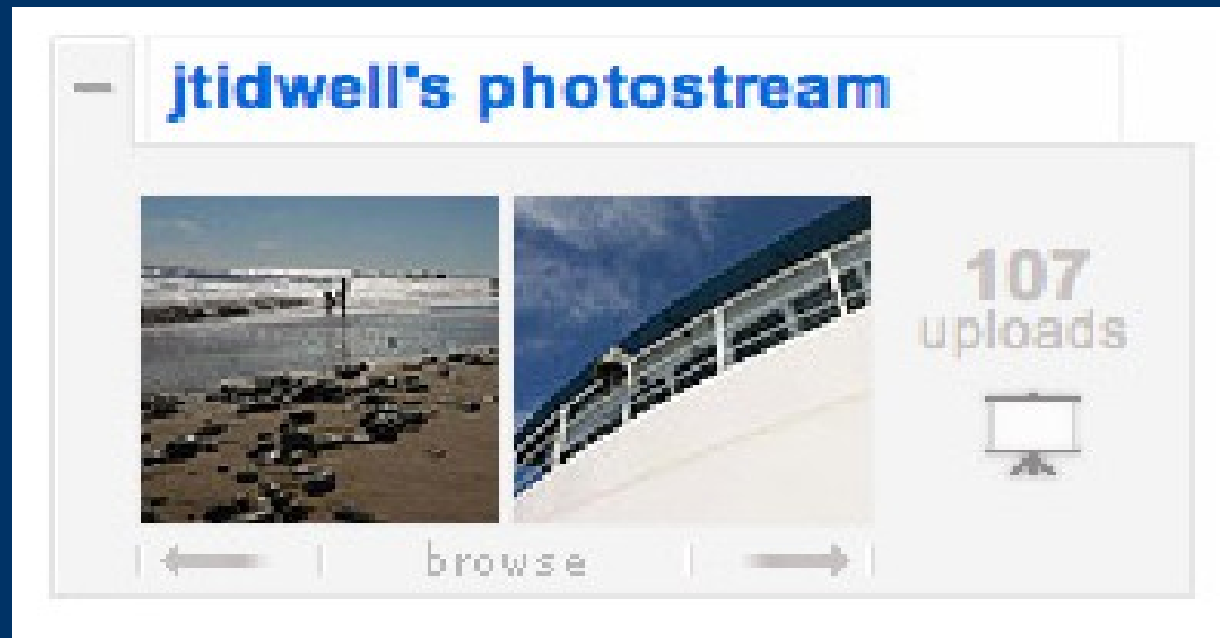
## *Pyramid*

### Advice:

- List all the items or pages, in order, on the parent page. Render the list in a way that suits the types of items you're dealing with, such as a Thumbnail Grid for photos, or a rich text list for articles.
  - A click on an item or link brings the user to that item's page. On each item page, put Back/Next links. Many sites show a small preview of the next item, such as its title or a thumbnail.
  - In addition, put in an Up link to bring the user back to the parent page, and label it with “Back to <Page Title Here>” or something similar.
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## *Pyramid - example*



## Pyramid - example

Published: May 11, 2010

### Strange Signs From Abroad

A recent slide show, "A Sampling of Chinglish," which accompanied a story by Andrew Jacobs, showed signs in Chinese paired with unusual and often funny English translations. We asked readers to share photos of amusingly translated or otherwise quirky signs that they've found during their travels. Click an image to enlarge it, and scroll to browse through the collection.



## Pyramid - example

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121 of 176



CLOSE X

#### Paris, France

Intersection of the Boulevard du Montparnasse and the Boulevard Saint-Michel.

Taken by Daniel Gallagher



## *Modal Panel*

- What

Show only one page, with no other navigation options, until the user finishes the immediate task.

- Use when

The app or site has gotten into a state from which it shouldn't or can't proceed without input from the user. In a document-centric application, for instance, a “save” action might need the user to supply a filename if one wasn't already given. In other contexts, the user may need to sign in before proceeding, or acknowledge an important message.

If the user simply initiates a minor action that may need further input, try to find a way to ask for that input without a modal panel.

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## *Modal Panel*

- Why

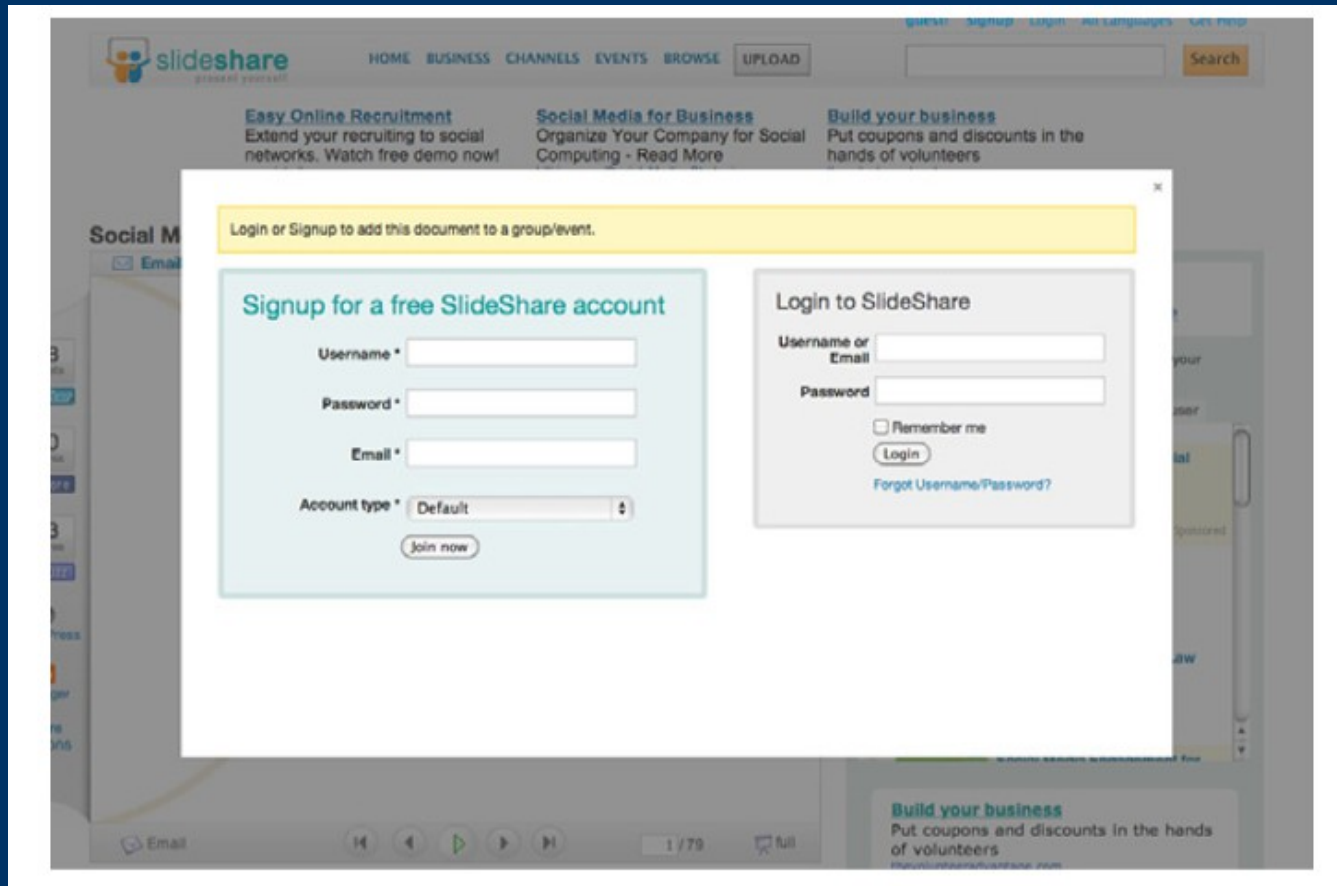
A modal panel cuts off all other navigation options from the user. He can't ignore it and go somewhere else in the app or site: he must deal with it here and now. When that's done, he gets sent back to where he was before. It's an easy model to understand—and to program—though it was overused in applications of past years.

A modal panel is disruptive. If the user isn't prepared to answer whatever the modal panel asks, it interrupts his workflow, possibly forcing him to make a decision about something he just doesn't care about. But when used appropriately, a modal panel channels the user's attention into the next decision that he needs to make. There are no other navigation possibilities to distract him.

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## Modal Panel - example



## Modal Panel - example

The image shows a screenshot of the Kayak website interface. A modal panel titled "Modify or start search over" is open, allowing users to adjust their flight search criteria. The modal includes options for trip type (Round-trip, One-way, Multi-city, Weekend), origin (BOS), destination (MSY), departure date (08/02/2010), and return date (08/09/2010). It also features filters for "Include nearby airports", "Travelers" (1), "Prefer Nonstop", and "Economy" class. A "Compare sites" section lists Priceline, Travelocity, Expedia, and Hotwire. A "Search" button is prominently displayed. The background shows the Kayak logo and various search filters like "Stops", "Flight Times", and "Airlines".

**KAYAK**

[Modify or start search over](#)  
[Get a fare alert](#)  
[Show fare charts](#)  
[Share results - LIVE](#)

**Stops**

- ☐ nonstop
- ☒ 1 stop \$321
- ☒ 2+ stops \$447

**Flight Times**

- ☒ Take-off
- ☐ Landing

Take-off (Depart Flight) [show all](#)

Mon 3:00p - 8:00p

Take-off (Return Flight) [show all](#)

Mon 5:00a - 6:30p

**Airlines**

[select all](#) [close](#)

**Modify or start search over** [close](#)

☒ Round-trip ☐ One-way [Multi-city](#) [Weekend](#)

**From** BOS **To** MSY

☐ Include nearby airports ☐ Include nearby airports

**Depart** 08/02/2010 **Time** Anytime **Return** 08/09/2010 **Time** Anytime

Monday, Aug 2 2010 Monday, Aug 9 2010

Travelers ☐ Prefer Nonstop

**Compare sites** in new windows

- ☐ Priceline ☐ Travelocity
- ☐ Expedia ☐ Hotwire

[Compare all](#)

**Search**

**Select**

2 sites [details](#) [save](#) [close](#) [close](#)

**\$324** BOS 6:30p MSY 10:30p 1 (5h 09m)

[Virgin America](#)  
Hot low fares fr  
WiFi, movies, m  
[www.virginamer](#)

[Honda Indy Tor](#)  
Enjoy 2-Nt Sum  
2 three-day 20  
[SeeTorontoNow](#)

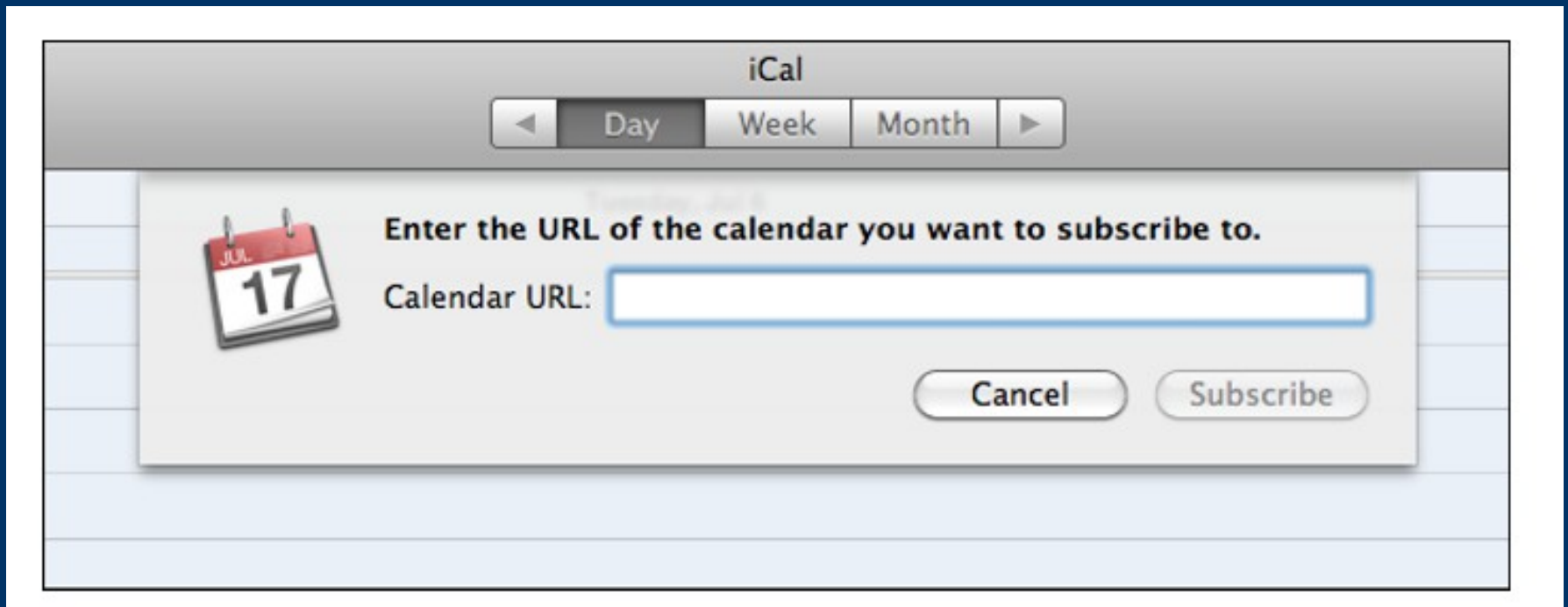
[Cheap New Oris](#)  
Compare Rates  
Sites - Fast & E  
[www.SmarterTra](#)

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[Find New Orlea](#)  
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## *Modal Panel - example*





## *Deep-linked State*

- What

Capture the state of a site or app in a URL that can be saved or sent to other people. When loaded, it restores the state of the app to what the user was seeing.

- Use when

The site or app's content is something large and interactive, such as a map, book, video, or information graphic. A specific desired point or state might be hard to find, or it may take many steps to get there from a typical starting point. The app may have many user-settable parameters or states, such as viewing modes, scales, data layers, and so on—these may add to the complexity of finding a particular point and seeing it in the “right” way.

---

## *Deep-linked State*

- Why

Deep-linked State gives the user a way to jump directly to a desired point and application state, thus saving time and work. It behaves like a “deep link” directly into a piece of content on a conventional site—or a permalink to a blog entry—in the sense that you end up with a URL pointing directly to the desired content.

But it can be more complex than a permalink, because it can capture both application state and content position.

This pattern is useful for saving a state that the user might want to re-create later, especially if he can “bookmark” it using well-known mechanisms (like browser bookmarks, sites such as Delicious, etc.). It’s also handy for sharing with other people, and that’s where it really shines.

A URL representing a Deep-linked State can be emailed, tweeted, posted to a social network, discussed in a forum, published in a blog entry, and talked about in any number of ways. It might make a statement, or go viral, or become a “socially mediated object.”

---

## *Deep-linked State*

- Advice:
  - Track the user's position in the content, and put that into a URL. Track supporting data there as well—comments, data layers, markers, highlighting, and so on—so that reloading the URL will bring it all back.
  - Consider what other parameters or interface states you might want users to save: zoom levels, magnification, viewing modes, search results, and so on.
  - URLs are the best format for saving Deep-linked States: they are universally understood, portable, short, and supported by a vast variety of tools, such as bookmarking services.
  - As a user moves through the content and changes various parameters, immediately put the updated URL in the browser's URL field so that it can be easily seen and captured. Not everyone will think to find it there, so you might also design a “Link” feature whose existence tells the user, “Here's how you create a link to this screen.”
- 
-

## Deep-linked State - example

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Google Books page for "The origin of species" by Charles Darwin. The URL in the address bar is <http://books.google.com/books?id=TCwLAAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=darwin+origin+of+species&hl=en&ei=VgkoTO72>. The page title is "The origin of species By Charles Darwin". The left sidebar shows the book's cover, a 4.5-star rating, 8 reviews, and links to "Write review" and "About this book". Below this is a search bar with "Tree of Life" entered and a "Go" button. Further down are links to "Add to My Library", "Get this book" (with links to AbeBooks, Alibris, Amazon, Google Product Search, Find in a library, and All sellers), and "Related books" (with book covers and a link to "All related books"). The main content area shows the page number "144" and the title "ORIGIN OF SPECIES". The text on the page begins with "its summit, so we occasionally see an an..." and continues with "rhynchus or Lepidosiren, which in some..." and "nects by its affinities two large branches of life, and which has apparently been saved from fatal competition by having inhabited a protected station. As buds give rise by growth to fresh buds, and these, if vigorous, branch out and overtop on all sides many a feebler branch, so by generation I believe it has been with the great Tree of Life, which fills with its dead and broken branches the crust of the earth, and covers the surface with its ever-branching and beautiful ramifications."

A context menu is open over the text, showing options: "Paste link in email or IM" (with a link to <http://books.google.com/books?id=TCwLAAAAIAAJ&dq=darwin>), "Embed" (with an iframe code), and "Download".

## Deep-linked State - example

Skyrock

V Kontakte

Wretch

Zing

Map data © 2007 ESRI

Data file: Social Networks in the world (June 2009)

Data source: Alexa, Google



This data set has not yet been rated

full image

share this

Comment

currently showing 2 comments



Live Visualization

to embed this visualization on your site, simply copy & paste:

Small

width: 425 px

height: 350 px

Big

width: 100%

height: 500 px

Static image

to embed an image of this visualization on your site, simply copy & paste:

<a href="http://manyeyes.alphaworks.ibm.com/manyeyes/visualizations/world-map-of-social-networks-june-2009" data-bbox="255 730 695 745">

Email link to visualization

http://www.audience.gemius.lv/

Posted Sunday June 07 2009, 04:00 PM

see view for this comment

This visualization has 3 positive and 0 negative ratings.

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Iceman65

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kswade

Learn more:

About World Map

## Deep-linked State - example

### CUT TO THE CHASE

1

PUT YOUR YOUTUBE URL HERE:

2

CHOOSE A START TIME  
 :

3

GET LINK

PREVIEW

COPY YOUR NEW URL FROM HERE:

#### SO WHAT DOES THIS DO?

It creates a link to a YouTube video where you set the start time.

#### WAIT... CAN'T I DO THIS MYSELF BY ADDING THAT BIT AT THE END?

Yup.

#### THEN WHY IS THIS HERE?

A) Not everyone knows about it yet, B) even if they do, they forget how to do it, and C) laziness.

This website is not in any way affiliated with YouTube. Please don't think that it is. Thinking that it is will make us sad. If you have made us sad, you can send your apologies to [linkstotime@gmail.com](mailto:linkstotime@gmail.com).

## *Escape Hatch*

- What

On each screen that has limited navigation options, place a button or link that clearly gets the user out of that screen and back to a known place.

- Use when

You've got pages that constitute some sort of serial process, such as a wizard, or any pages that lock the user into a limited navigation situation, such as a Modal Panel. These might be pages that users can reach out of context, as they could do via search results.

(Escape Hatches sometimes aren't necessary when you have Sequence Maps or Breadcrumbs on a page. Users who understand them can use those to get back to some known place.).

---

---

## *Escape Hatch*

- Why

Limited navigation is one thing, but having no way out is quite another! If you give the user a simple, obvious way to escape from a page, no strings attached, he's less likely to feel trapped there.

This is the kind of feature that helps people feel like they can safely explore an app or site. It's sort of like an undo feature—it encourages people to go down paths without feeling like they're committing to them.

Now, if these are pages that users can reach via search results, it's doubly important that Escape Hatches be put on each page. Visitors can click these to get to a “normal” page that tells them more about where they actually are.

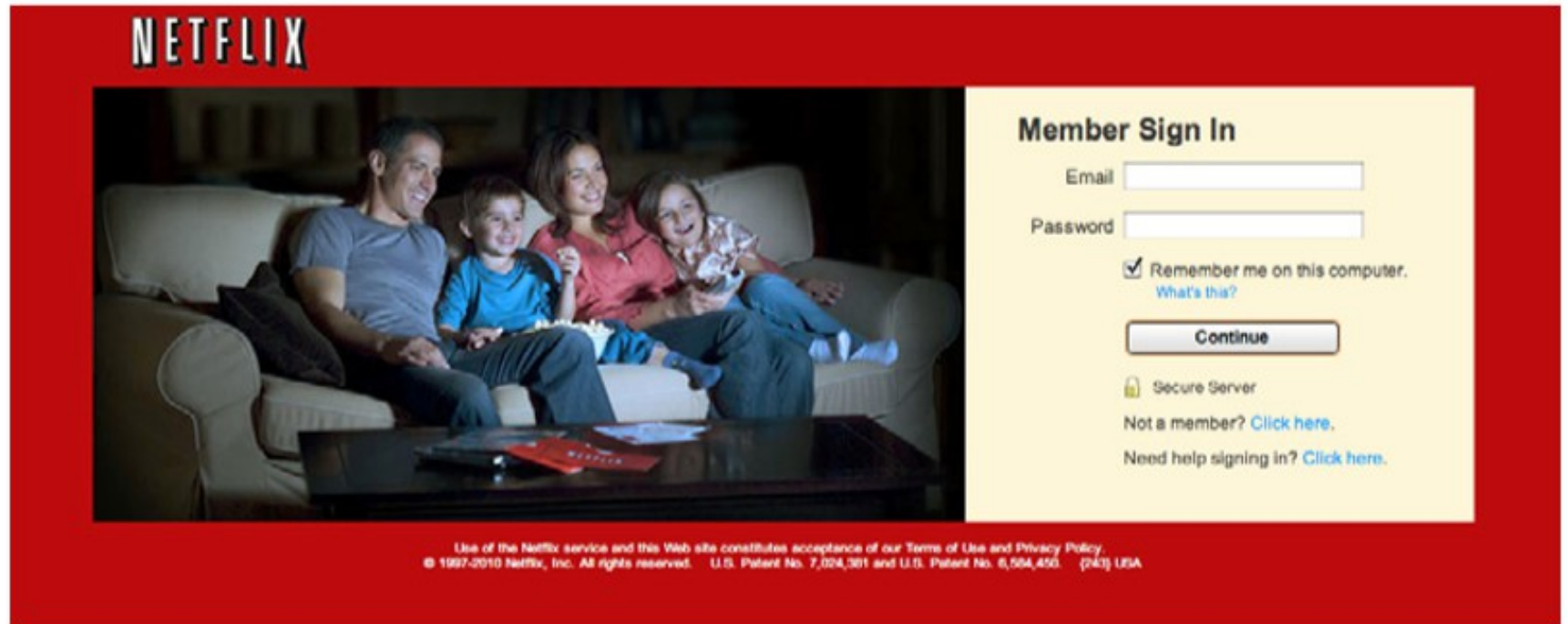
Advice: Put a button or link on the page that brings the user back to a “safe place.” This might be a home page, a hub page in a hub-and-spoke design, or any page with full navigation and something self-explanatory on it. Exactly what it links to will depend upon the application's design.

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## *Escape Hatch - example*



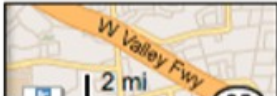
*Netflix sign-in page, with the logo as an Escape Hatch*

## Escape Hatch - example

Google Maps Labs

Google Maps Labs is a testing ground for experimental features that aren't quite ready for primetime. They may **change**, **break** or **disappear** at any time.

If such a feature breaks, and you're having trouble loading Maps, use this escape hatch:  
<http://maps.google.com/maps?ftr=0>.



**Distance Measurement Tool**

Adam S, Andrey S, James M, Seth L

Measure the distance of a path on the Earth

☐ Enable

☒ Disable

## *Fat Menus*

- What

Display a long list of navigation options in drop-down or fly-out menus. Use these to show all the subpages in site sections. Organize them with care, using well-chosen categories or a natural sorting order, and spread them out horizontally.

- Use when

The site or app has many pages in many categories, possibly in a hierarchy with three or more levels. You want to expose most of these pages to people casually exploring the site, so they can see what's available. Your users are comfortable with drop-down menus (click to see them) or fly-outs (roll over them with the pointer).

---

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## *Fat Menus*

- Why

Fat Menus make a complex site more discoverable. They expose many more navigation options to visitors than they might otherwise find.

By showing so many links on every page, you make it possible for a user to jump directly from any subpage to any other subpage (for most subpages, anyhow). You thus turn a multi-level site—where subpages aren't linked to the subpages in other site sections—into a fully connected site.

Fat Menus are a form of progressive disclosure, an important concept in user interface design. Complexity is hidden until the user asks to see it. A visitor to a site that uses these can look over the menu headings to get a high-level idea of what's there, and when he's ready to dive in, he can open up a Fat Menu with a gesture.

If you're already using menus in your global navigation, you might consider expanding them to Fat Menus if surfacing more links makes the content more attractive to casual browsers.

---

## *Fat Menus*

- Advice:

On each menu, present a well-organized list of links. Arrange them into Titled Sections if they fit into subcategories; if not, use a sorting order that suits the nature of the content, such as an alphabetical or time-based list.

Use headers, dividers, generous whitespace, modest graphic elements, and whatever else you need to visually organize those links. And take advantage of horizontal space—you can spread the menu across the entire page if you wish.

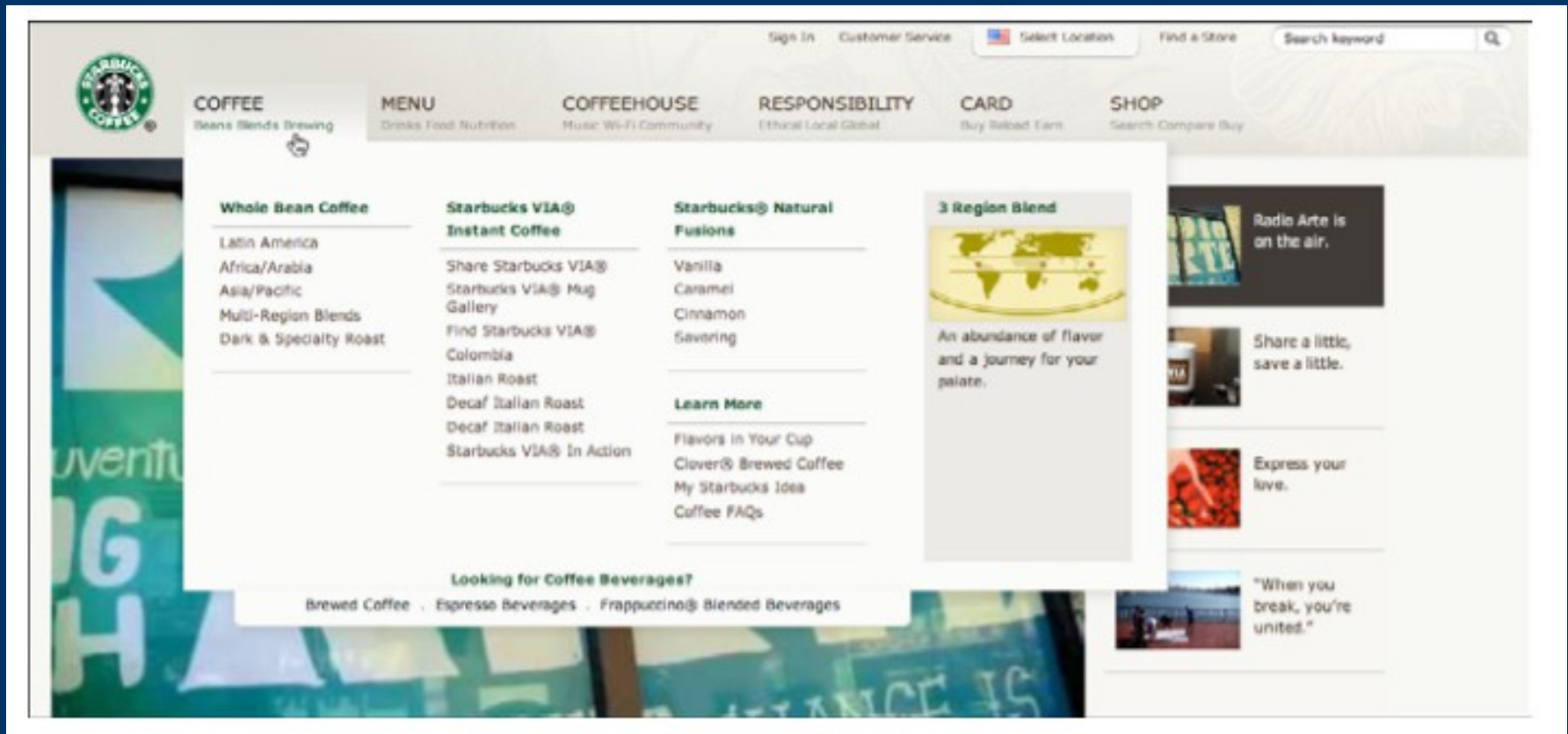
The best sites have Fat Menus that work stylistically with the rest of the site. Design them to fit well into the color scheme, grid, and so on of the page.

Some menu implementations don't work well with accessibility technology such as screen readers. Ensure that your Fat Menus can work with these. If they can't, consider switching to a more static strategy, such as a Sitemap Footer.

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## Fat Menus - example



## Fat Menus - example

The screenshot displays the Slate website homepage, characterized by a 'Fat Menu' layout with multiple columns of content. The top navigation bar includes links for BRIEFING, NEWS & POLITICS, ARTS, LIFE, BUSINESS & TECH, SCIENCE, PODCASTS & VIDEO, and BLOGS. A search bar and the 'Slate • bing' logo are also present.

**Main Content Columns:**

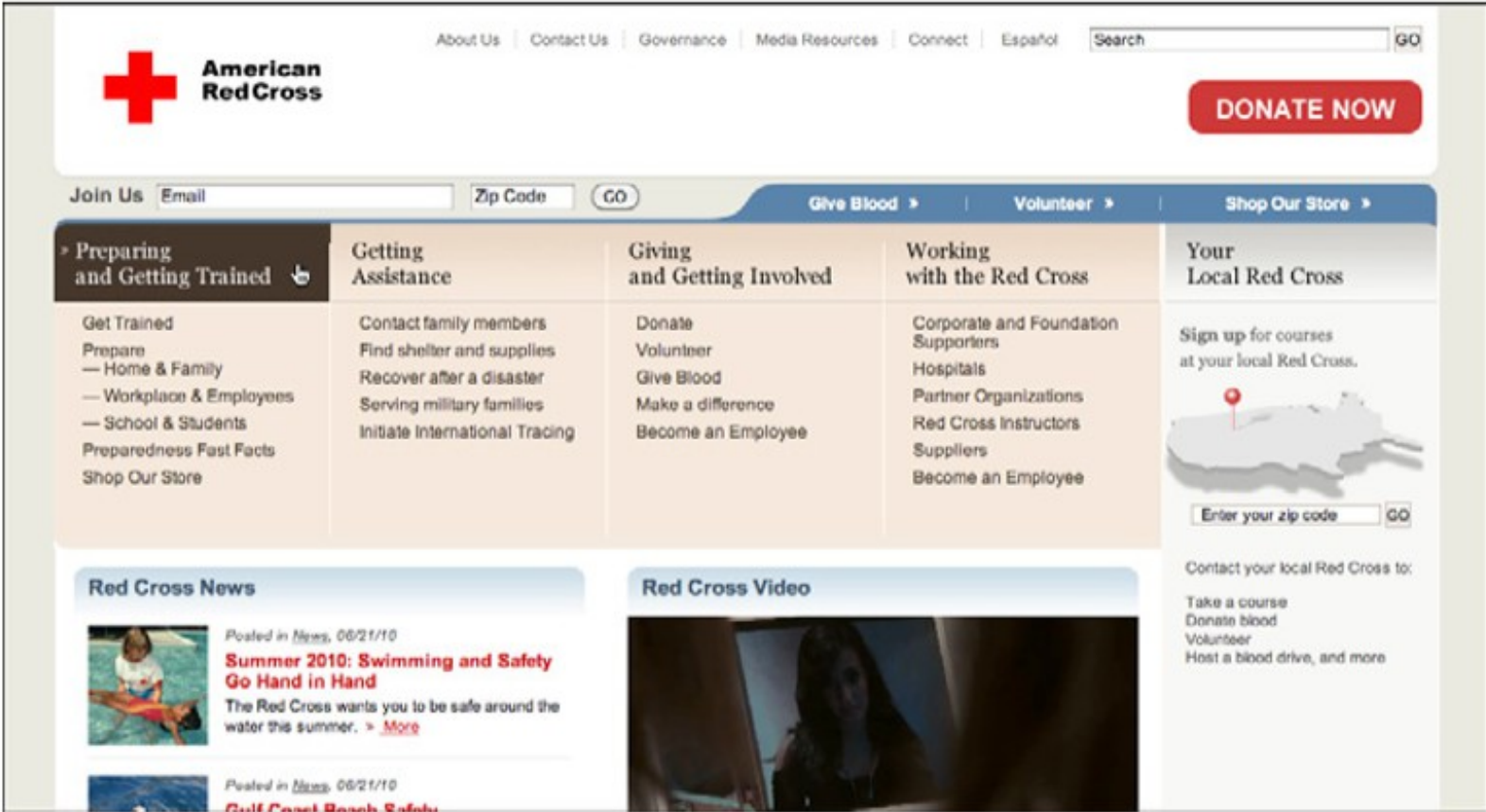
- Left Column:** Features a large image of a satellite dish. Below it, a section titled 'Why Do Brazil Companies Keep American Ones?' is visible.
- Second Column:** Contains several article snippets:
  - FIGHTING WORDS** | Christopher Hitchens: Why are we so focused on the problems Afghanistan's vast mineral deposits could bring?
  - JURISPRUDENCE** | Dahlia Lithwick: What happens to our democratic institutions when everyone's too scared to show up?
  - PALINISMS** | Jacob Weisberg: Palinisms: Did she really say that?
  - JURISPRUDENCE** | Eleanor Brown: U.S. visa holders should be required to disclose what they know about potential threats.
  - DISPATCHES** | Josh Levin: Bobby Jindal, Billy Nungesser, and Louisiana's politics of indignation.
  - POLITICS** | Michael Newman: What we learned from Tony Hayward and Joe Barton at the BP hearings.
  - POLITICS** | John Dickenson: Democrats hope to make Joe Barton really sorry for his blunder.
  - PRESS BOX** | Jack Shafer: A Wall Street Journal headline makes a big promise its story about Obama's speech doesn't deliver on.
  - PALINISMS** | Jacob Weisberg: Palinisms: Did she really say that?
  - JURISPRUDENCE** | Dahlia Lithwick: Ignoring Maher Arar won't make his torture claims go away.
- Third Column:** Features a section titled 'The Slatest' with a list of four items:
  1. Chinese Currency Strengthens
  2. Obama to Meet With Netanyahu in July
  3. Turkish Commandos Deploy Along Iraq Border
  4. Internal Document Shows Spill Could Be Double Worst Estimate
- Right Column:** Includes a section titled 'Soccer fans.' with a photo of a crowd. Below it, a Siemens advertisement for high-speed rail is displayed, with the text: 'Answers for moving America. The next generation of high-speed could be built by Americans, for Americans.'

**Bottom Section:**

- BRIEFINGS:** Includes links for 'Explainer', 'The Slatest', and 'Today's Business Press'.
- SPONSORED CONTENT:** Features a section titled 'BiaBox | Small Business Blog' with the headline 'Congress Listens to Small Business Retirement Plan Sponsors - For Now'.
- Footer:** Contains the text 'Good intentions ruined the health of millions in Bangladesh; New Orleans police are enforcing an 8 p.m. curfew on Bourbon Streets sidewalk musicians; the Christmas season has begun.' and 'THE SLATEST | Monday, 12:15 PM ET'.



## Fat Menus - example



The screenshot displays the American Red Cross website with a 'Fat Menu' design. The header includes the American Red Cross logo, navigation links (About Us, Contact Us, Governance, Media Resources, Connect, Español), a search bar, and a 'DONATE NOW' button. Below the header, there are input fields for 'Join Us' (Email, Zip Code) and a 'GO' button. The main navigation bar features five categories: 'Preparing and Getting Trained' (active), 'Getting Assistance', 'Giving and Getting Involved', 'Working with the Red Cross', and 'Your Local Red Cross'. Each category has a list of sub-links. The 'Preparing and Getting Trained' menu includes 'Get Trained', 'Prepare' (with sub-links for Home & Family, Workplace & Employees, School & Students), 'Preparedness Fast Facts', and 'Shop Our Store'. The 'Getting Assistance' menu includes 'Contact family members', 'Find shelter and supplies', 'Recover after a disaster', 'Serving military families', and 'Initiate International Tracing'. The 'Giving and Getting Involved' menu includes 'Donate', 'Volunteer', 'Give Blood', 'Make a difference', and 'Become an Employee'. The 'Working with the Red Cross' menu includes 'Corporate and Foundation Supporters', 'Hospitals', 'Partner Organizations', 'Red Cross Instructors', 'Suppliers', and 'Become an Employee'. The 'Your Local Red Cross' section includes a sign-up for courses, a map, a zip code input field, and a list of local services (Take a course, Donate blood, Volunteer, Host a blood drive, and more). Below the main navigation, there are sections for 'Red Cross News' and 'Red Cross Video'. The 'Red Cross News' section features two articles: 'Summer 2010: Swimming and Safety Go Hand in Hand' and 'Gulf Coast Beach Safety'. The 'Red Cross Video' section features a video thumbnail.

**American Red Cross**

About Us | Contact Us | Governance | Media Resources | Connect | Español | Search | GO

**DONATE NOW**

Join Us | Email | Zip Code | GO

**Give Blood** | **Volunteer** | **Shop Our Store**

**Preparing and Getting Trained**

- Get Trained
- Prepare
  - Home & Family
  - Workplace & Employees
  - School & Students
- Preparedness Fast Facts
- Shop Our Store

**Getting Assistance**

- Contact family members
- Find shelter and supplies
- Recover after a disaster
- Serving military families
- Initiate International Tracing

**Giving and Getting Involved**

- Donate
- Volunteer
- Give Blood
- Make a difference
- Become an Employee

**Working with the Red Cross**

- Corporate and Foundation Supporters
- Hospitals
- Partner Organizations
- Red Cross Instructors
- Suppliers
- Become an Employee

**Your Local Red Cross**

Sign up for courses at your local Red Cross.

Enter your zip code | GO

Contact your local Red Cross to:

- Take a course
- Donate blood
- Volunteer
- Host a blood drive, and more

**Red Cross News**

Posted in News, 06/21/10

**Summer 2010: Swimming and Safety Go Hand in Hand**

The Red Cross wants you to be safe around the water this summer. > [More](#)

Posted in News, 06/21/10

**Gulf Coast Beach Safety**

**Red Cross Video**



## *Sitemap Footer*

- What

Place a site map into the footer of every page in a site. Treat it as part of the global navigation, complementary to the header. Abridge the site map if you need to make it fit into a compact space.

- Use when

The site you're designing uses a generous amount of space on each page, and you don't have severe constraints on page size or download time. You don't want to take up too much header or sidebar space with navigation.



## *Sitemap Footer*

- Use when

The site has more than a handful of pages, but not an outrageously large number of categories and “important” pages (things that users will look for). You can fit a reasonably complete site map—at least for pages that aren’t in the header—into a strip no taller than about half of a browser window.

There may be a global navigation menu in the page header, but it doesn’t show all levels in the site hierarchy—maybe it only shows the top-level categories. You prefer a simple, well-laid-out footer instead of Fat Menus, perhaps because of implementation ease or accessibility issues.

---

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## *Sitemap Footer*

- Why

Sitemap Footers make a complex site more discoverable. They expose many more navigation options to visitors than they might otherwise have.

By showing so many links on every page, you make it possible for a user to jump directly from any subpage to any other subpage (or major page, anyhow).

You thus turn a multilevel site—where subpages aren't linked to the subpages in other site sections—into a fully connected site.

The footer is where the user's attention lands when she reads to the end of a page. By placing interesting links there, you entice the user to stay on the site and read more.

---

---


## Sitemap Footer - example

STORES	CAREERS	PRODUCTS	BLOGS & PODCASTS	VALUES	COMPANY INFO
<a href="#">Find a Store</a>	<a href="#">Search for Jobs</a>	<a href="#">Quality Standards</a>	<a href="#">Whole Story Blog</a>	<a href="#">Our Core Values</a>	<a href="#">History</a>
<a href="#">Shopping Lists</a>	<a href="#">Why Work Here?</a>	<a href="#">The Whole Deal</a>	<a href="#">CEO John Mackey's blog</a>	<a href="#">Locally Grown</a>	<a href="#">Board of Directors</a>
<a href="#">Cooking Classes</a>	<a href="#">Benefits</a>	<a href="#">Whole Trade</a>	<a href="#">Videos</a>	<a href="#">Green Mission</a>	<a href="#">Investor Relations</a>
<a href="#">Catering</a>	<a href="#">Careers FAQ</a>	<a href="#">Food Safety</a>	<a href="#">Whole Body Podcasts</a>	<a href="#">Whole Planet Foundation</a>	<a href="#">Press Room</a>
<a href="#">Gift Cards</a>		<a href="#">Locally Grown</a>		<a href="#">Local Producer Loan Program</a>	<a href="#">Customer Service</a>


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## Sitemap Footer - example




FREE SHIPPING for REI Members on orders of \$75 or more


 Shopping Cart | [Log In or Register](#)

[Gift Registry](#) | [1-800-426-4840](#) | [Email Sign-Up](#) | [Store Locator](#)

[SHOP REI](#) | [SHOP REI-OUTLET](#) | [TRAVEL WITH REI](#) | [LEARN](#) | [SHARE](#) | [MEMBERSHIP](#) | [STEWARDSHIP](#)

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[Outdoor Videos](#)  
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**Gift Registry**

**Help**  
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[Order Tracking](#)  
[Returns and Exchanges](#)  
[Shipping Info](#)  
[1-800-426-4840](#)  
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# Sitemap Footer - example

[Sign In](#) [f](#) [G](#) [v](#) [t](#)

[Subscribe](#) [Place An Ad](#) [LAT Store](#) [Jobs](#) [Cars](#) [Real Estate](#) [Rentals](#) [More Classifieds](#)

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*A Tribune Newspaper website*

## *Sign-in Tools*

- What

Place utility navigation related to a signed-in user's site experience in the upper-right corner. Show tools such as shopping carts, profile and account settings, help, and sign-out buttons.

- Use when

Sign-in Tools are useful for any site or service where users often sign in.

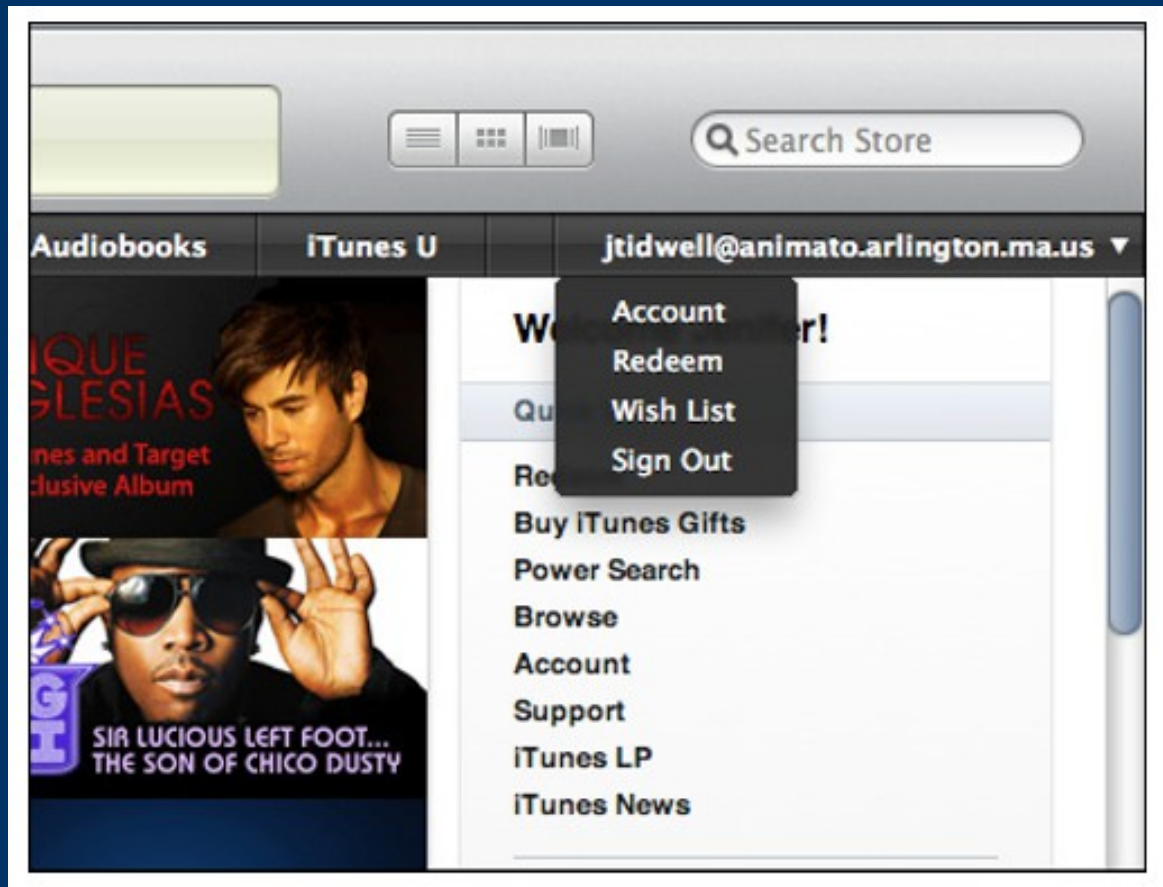
- Why

This pattern is purely convention; the upper-right corner is where many people expect such tools to be, so they will often look there. Give users a successful experience by putting these tools where they expect them to be.

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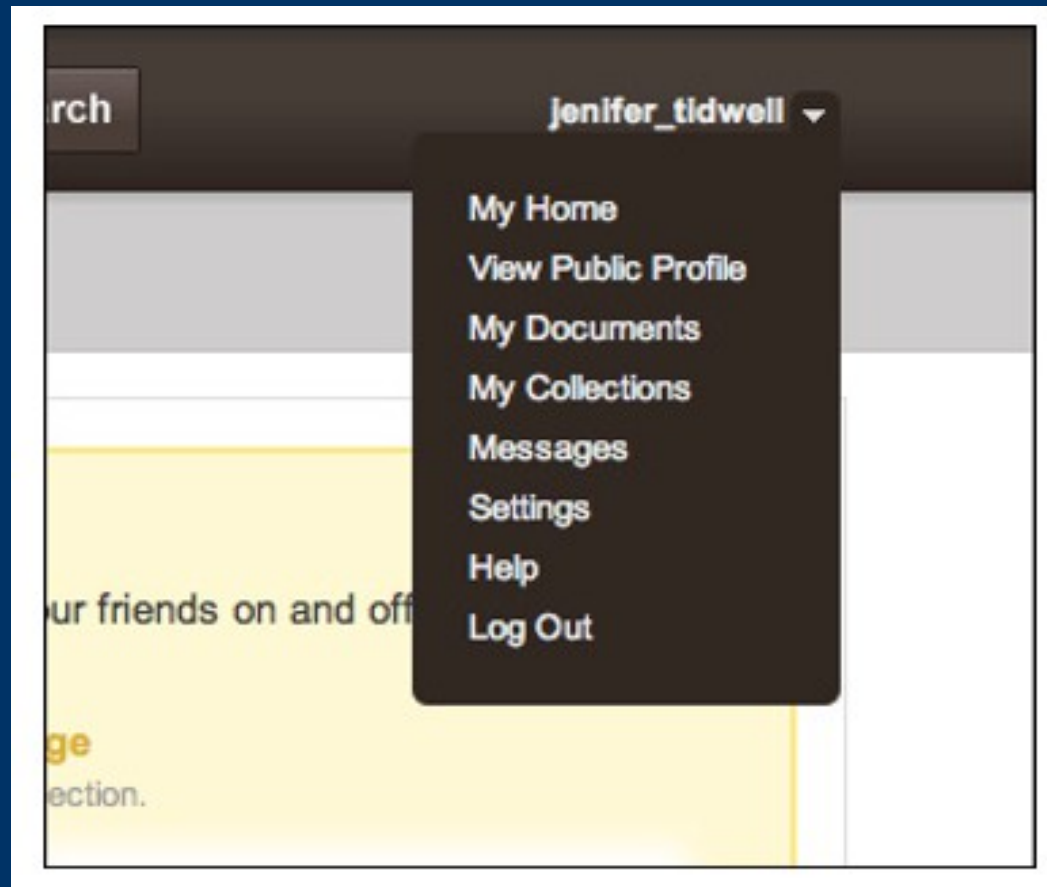
---

## Sign-in Tools - example





## *Sign-in Tools - example*



## *Sequence Map*

- What

On each page in a sequence, show a map of all the pages in order, including a “You are here” indicator.

- Use when

You design a written narrative, a process flow, a Wizard, or anything else through which a user progresses page by page. The user’s path is mainly linear.

If the navigation topology is large and hierarchical (as opposed to linear) you may want to consider using Breadcrumbs instead. If you have a large number of steps or items and their order doesn’t matter much, this morphs into a Two-Panel Selector or Overview Plus Detail.

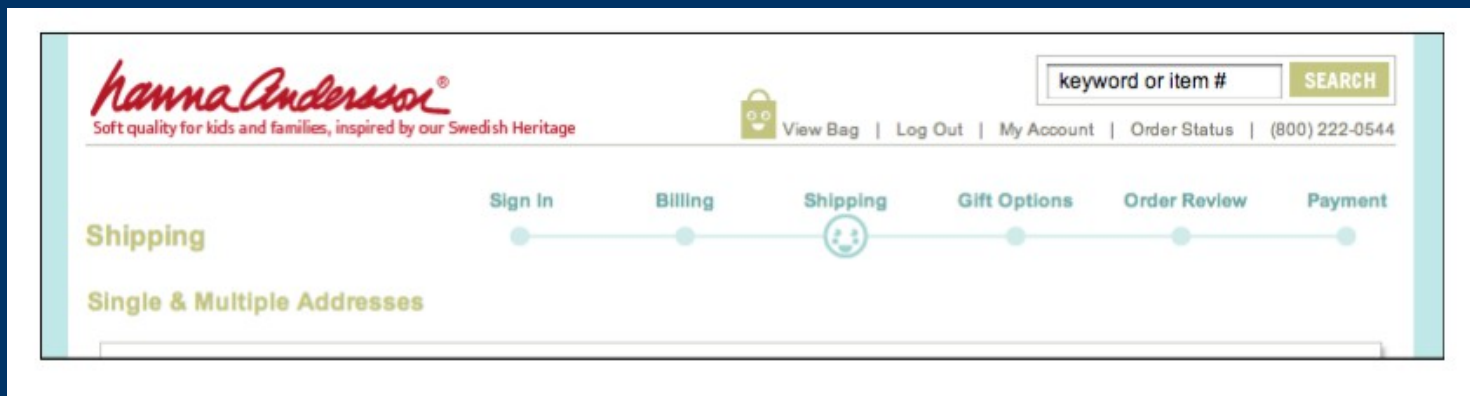
---

## Sequence Map

- Why



Sequence Maps tell a user how far he's come through a series of steps—and, more importantly, how far he has yet to go before he's finished. Knowing this helps him decide whether to continue, estimate how long it will take, and stay oriented.

Sequence Maps also serve as navigational devices. If someone wants to go back to a previously completed step, he can do so by clicking that step in the map.




## Sequence Map - example

MINI CONFIGURATOR

STEP 1 2 3 4 5 6 > NEXT VIEW:   > FULL FEATURES LIST & MODEL COMPARISON

> CLOSE WINDOW

2010 MINI COOPER  
Base MSRP: \$18,800

Click the  to remove an option

Destination & Handling \$700

PAINT IT

British Racing Green \$500  
White Roof/Mirrors \$0

PACKAGES

☒ Cold Weather Package \$500  
☒ Convenience Package \$1250

PERFORMANCE


Dynamic Stability Control STD  
6-Speed Getrag Manual STD  
15" 5-Star Spooler (perf.) STD  
Auto Dimming Rear View PKG  
Auto Wipers/Headlamps PKG  
Powerfold Heated Mirrors PKG

MSRP as Configured:<sup>4</sup> \$21,750  
Total Accessories:<sup>1\*</sup> \$0  
Total Combined: \$21,750




> ESTIMATE YOUR PAYMENT  
> SEND TO A DEALER  
> SEND TO A FRIEND  
> SAVE YOUR CREATION  
> DOWNLOAD/PRINT YOUR CREATION

GENUINE MOTORING ACCESSORIES

> EXTERIOR STYLING  
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> INTERIOR ITEMS  
> FLOOR MATS  
> PROTECTION  
> WHEELS  
> PLATES



Roll over an item for more information. Click the image of the item to add it to your selection list.

 Chrome Exhaust Tip (\$107)  
 Chrome Exterior Mirrors (\$232)  
 Checkered Flag Mirror Caps (\$204)

MORE OPTIONS >

MINI FINANCE

Cooper Works

5<sup>th</sup> LOUNGE

## *Breadcrumbs*

- What

On each page in a deep navigational hierarchy, show a list of all the parent pages, up to the main or home page.

- Use when

Your application or site has a hierarchical structure with two or more levels. Users move around via direct navigation, browsing, filtering, searching within the site, or deep-linking into it from elsewhere.

Global navigation alone isn't sufficient to show a "You are here" signpost, because the hierarchy is too deep or large.

Alternatively, your site or app may have a set of browsing and filtering tools for a large data set, such as products being sold online.

The products are categorized in a hierarchy, but that categorization doesn't necessarily match the way people will look for those products.

---

## *Breadcrumbs*

- Why

Breadcrumbs show each level of hierarchy leading to the current page, from the top of the application all the way down. In a sense, they show a single linear “slice” of the overall map of the site or app.

So, like a Sequence Map, Breadcrumbs help a user figure out where he is.

Unlike a Sequence Map, though, Breadcrumbs don’t tell the user where he’s headed next. They deal only with the present.

Instead, Breadcrumbs are best for telling you where you are relative to the rest of the app or site—it’s about context, not just history.

Finally, Breadcrumbs are usually clickable links or buttons. This turns them into a navigational device in their own right.

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## *Breadcrumbs*

- Advice:

Near the top of the page, put a line of text or icons indicating the current level of hierarchy.

Start with the top level; to its right, put the next level and so on down to the current page. Between the levels, put a graphic or text character to indicate the parent/child relationship between them. This is usually a right-pointing arrow, triangle, greater-than sign (>), slash (/), or right angle quotes (»).

The labels for each page should be the page titles.

The labels should be links to those pages.

Some Breadcrumbs show the current page as the last item in the chain; some don't. If yours do, make them visually different from the rest of the items, since they're not links.

---

## Breadcrumbs - example

Target : Kitchen : Kitchen Appliances : Stand Mixers : KitchenAid Artisan 5-qt. Stand Mixer - Cobalt Blue (KSM150)

[← Previous Page](#)

### Similar Categories

[KitchenAid Appliances](#)  
[Mixers](#)  
[Appliances](#)  
[Cooking Appliances](#)

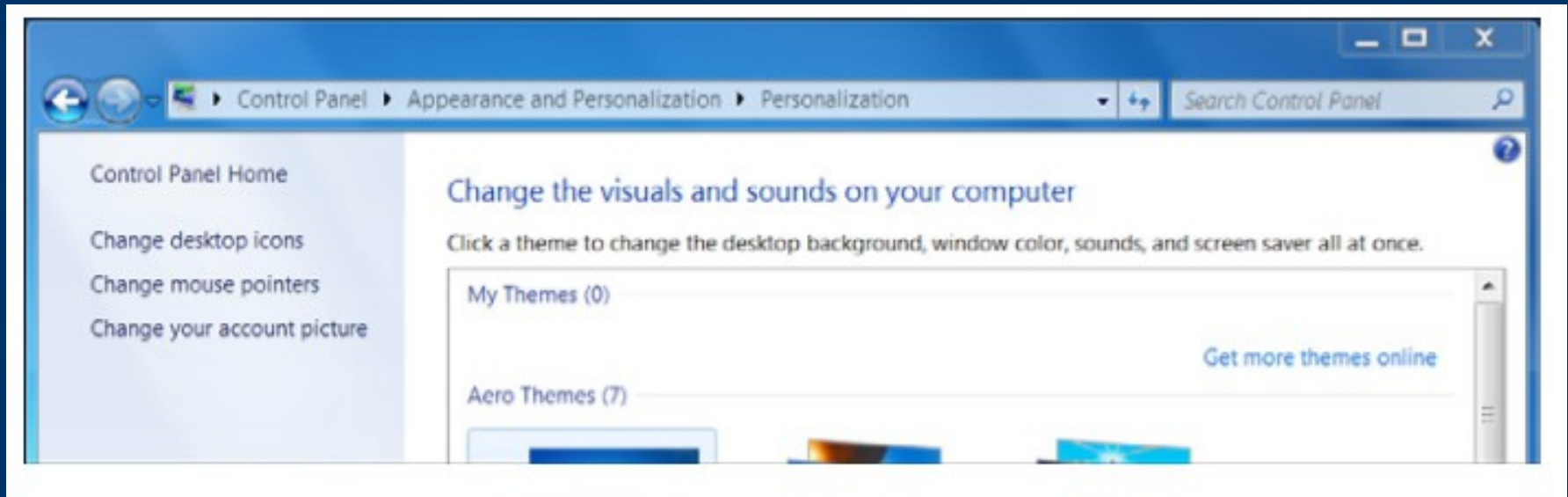


### KitchenAid Artisan Stand Mixer - (KSM150)

★★★★★ (61 reviews)



## *Breadcrumbs - example*



## Breadcrumbs - example

 [MotheringDotCommunity Forums](#) > [Parenting](#) > [Ages and Stages](#) > [The Childhood Years](#)  
 **Birthday Party Food Ideas--Four Year Olds**



## *Annotated Scrollbar*

- What

Make the scrollbar serve double-duty as a map of the content, or as a “You are here” indicator.

- Use when

You’re designing either a document-centric application or a pan-and-zoom interface, such as a map or large visualization. Users will scan this document or graphic for items of note, such as specific page numbers or landmarks. They might have trouble keeping track of where they are and where to go next as they scroll.

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## *Annotated Scrollbar*

- Why

Even though the user remains within one navigational space as she scrolls through the content, signposts are still useful.

When scrolling quickly, it's really hard to read the text flying by (or impossible, if the screen can't refresh quickly enough), so some other indicator of position is necessary.

Even if she stops briefly, the part of the document she can see may not contain anything she can orient herself by, like headers.

Why a scrollbar? Because that's where the user's attention is focused. If you put signposts there, the user will see them and use them as she scrolls, rather than trying to look at two different screen areas at once.

You can put signposts close to the scrollbar and still get the same effect; the closer, the better.

---

## *Annotated Scrollbar*

- Advice:

Put a position indicator on or near the scrollbar. Either static or dynamic indicators might work.

Static indicators are those that don't change from second to second, such as blocks of color in the scrollbar track. Make sure their purpose is clear, though; such things can baffle users that aren't used to seeing graphics in the scrollbar track!

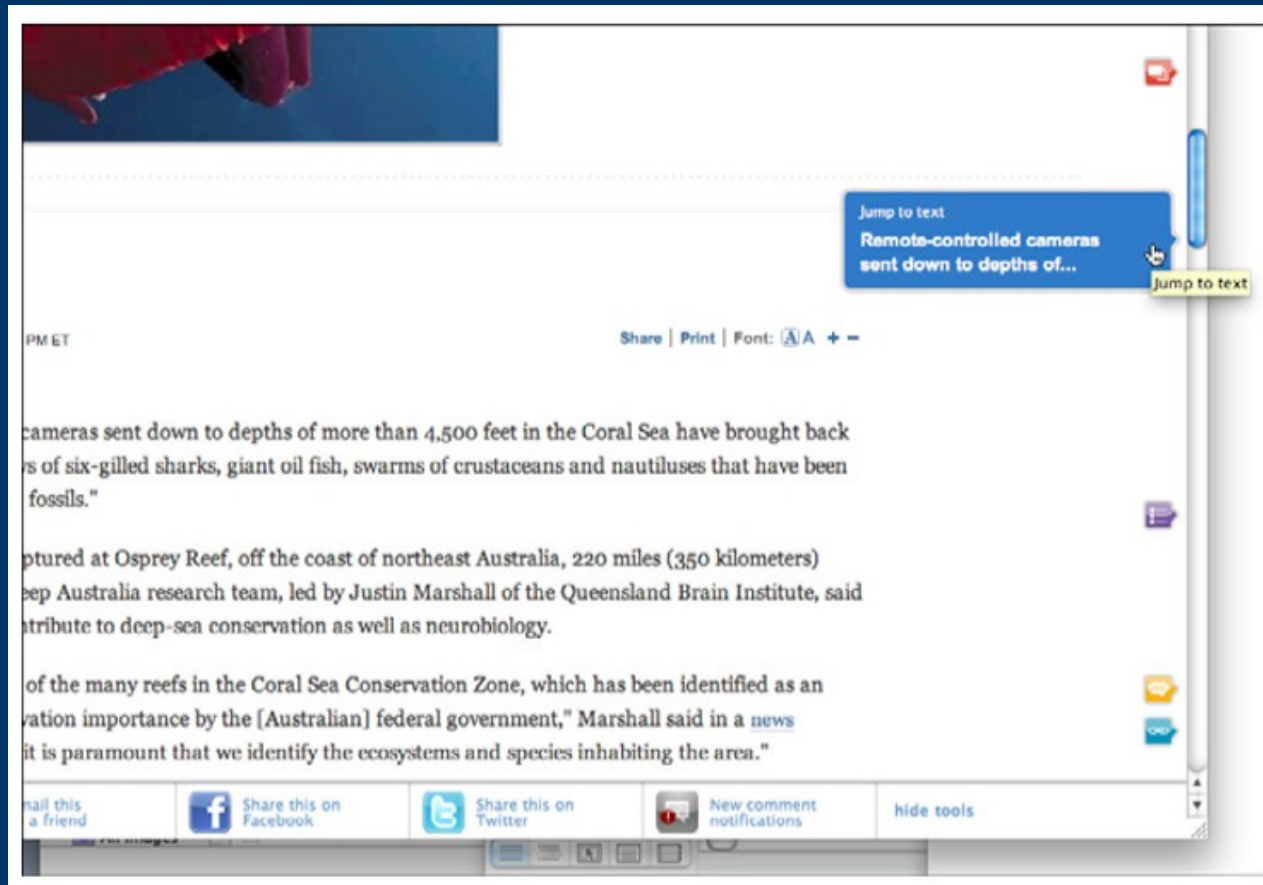
Dynamic indicators change as the user scrolls, and they are often implemented as tool tips. As the scroll position changes, the tool tip shown next to the scroll thumb changes to show information about the content there. This will vary with the nature of the application.

In either case, you'll need to figure out what a user will most likely be looking for, and thus what you need to put into the annotations.

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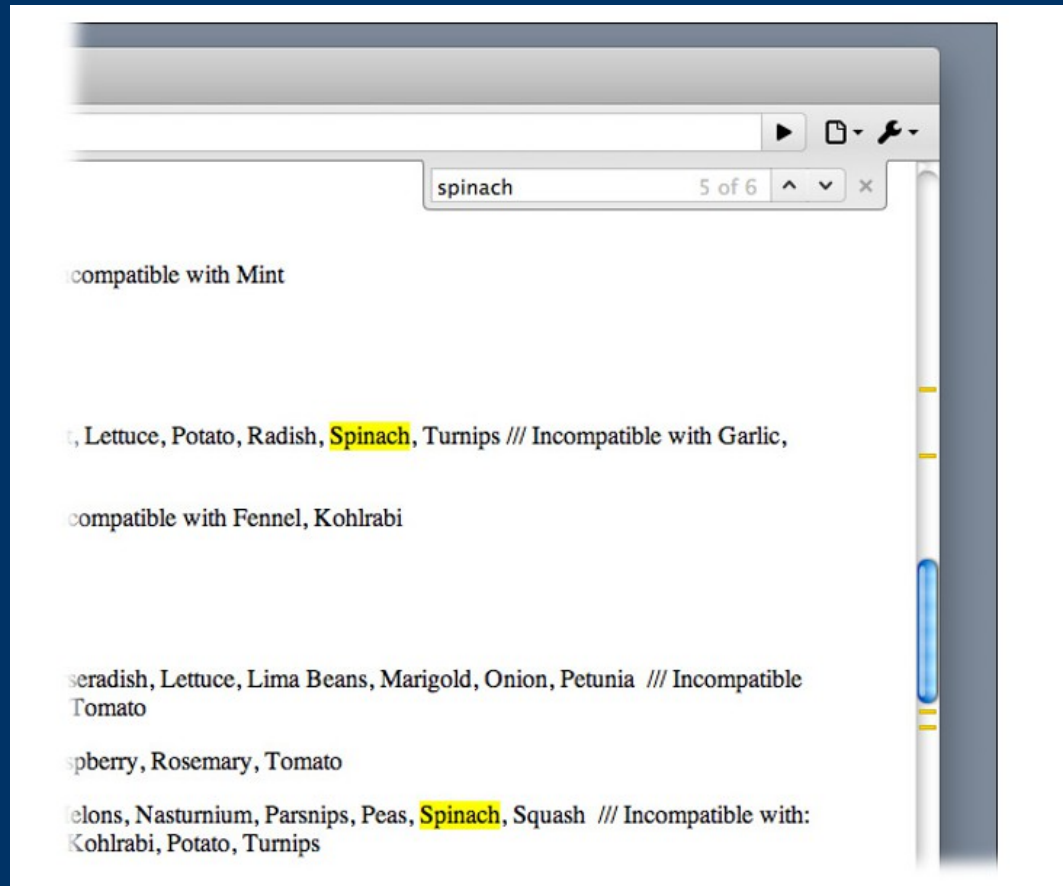
## Annotated Scrollbar - example



## Annotated Scrollbar - example

```
.size() > 1) &&  
.get(1) instanceof BrowserSeparator)) {  
    // if it was at the top and had a separator after it, remove that too:  
    fProxies.removeElementAt (1);  
    fProxies.removeElementAt (0);  
    fTableRowsDeleted (0, 1);  
  
    fProxies.removeElementAt (index);  
    fTableRowsDeleted (index, index);  
  
} else if ((index == 0) &&  
           (fProxies.size() > 1) &&  
           (fProxies.get(1) instanceof BrowserS  
           // if it was at the top and had a separato  
           fProxies.removeElementAt (1);  
           fProxies.removeElementAt (0);  
           fireTableRowsDeleted (0, 1);  
  
           } else {  
               fProxies.removeElementAt (index);  
               fireTableRowsDeleted (index, index);  
           }  
}  
  
+ public void removeContiguousElements (int st  
+   if ((startIndex < 0) || (startIndex >= fProxies  
+     (endIndex < 0) || (endIndex >= fProxies  
+     (startIndex > endIndex))  
+   return;
```

## Annotated Scrollbar - example





## *Animated Transition*

- What

Smooth out a startling or dislocating transition with an animation that makes it feel natural.

- Use when

Users move through a large virtual space, such as an image, spreadsheet, graph, or text document. They might be able to zoom in to varying degrees, pan or scroll, or rotate the whole thing. This is especially useful for information graphics, such as maps and plots.

Alternatively, the interface might have sections that can be closed and opened again, either by the system or by the user—such as trees with closable parent nodes, standalone windows that open and close, or an interface built with Collapsible Panels.

Animated Transition might also be used when users jump from one separate page to another.

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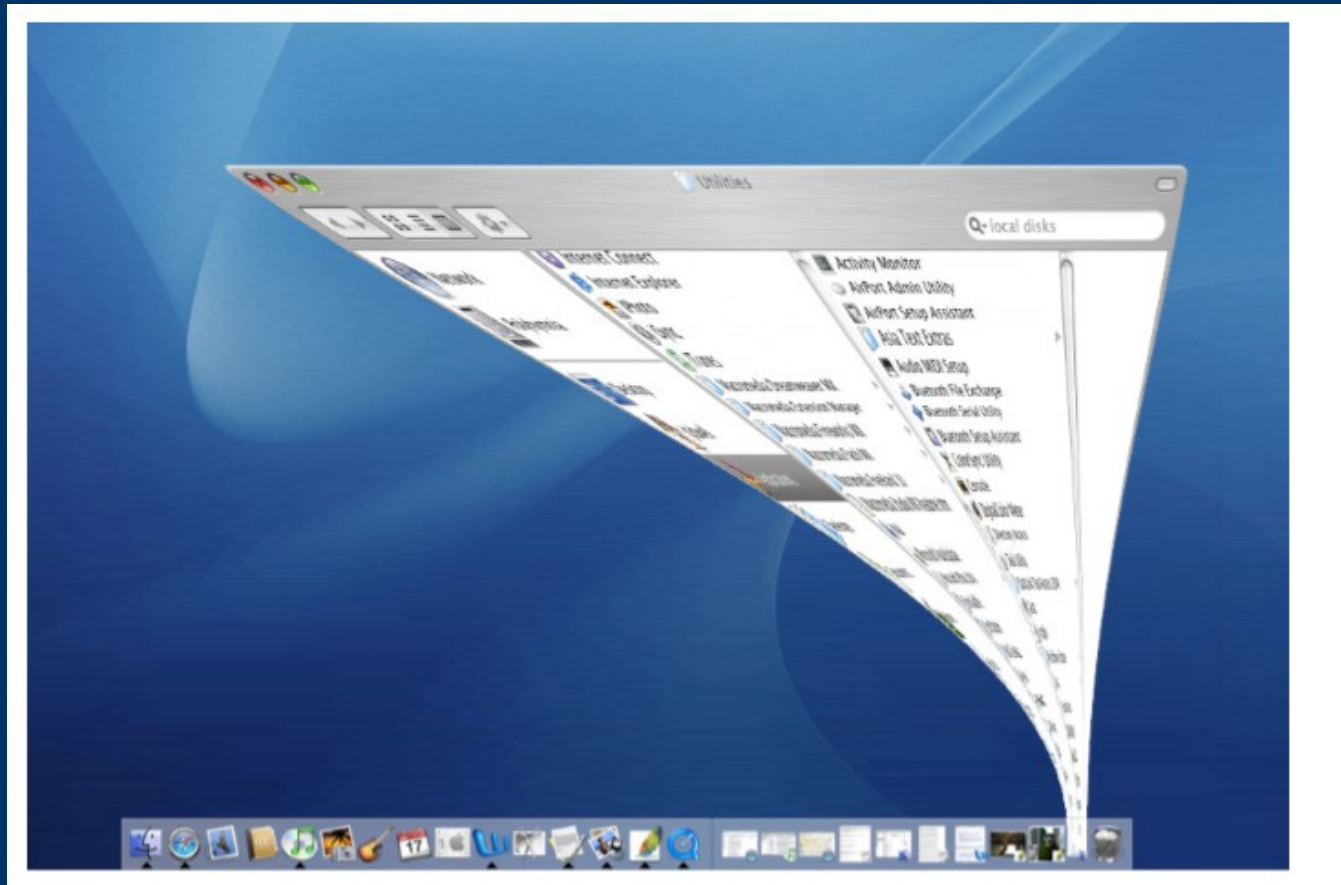
## *Animated Transition*

- Advice:

Some of the types of transitions listed by the Yahoo! pattern library (<http://developer.yahoo.com/ypatterns/richinteraction/transition/>) and Designing Web Interfaces are as follows:

- Brighten and dim;
  - Expand and collapse;
  - Fade in, fade out, and cross-fade;
  - Self-healing;
  - Slide;
  - Spotlight.
- 
-

## Animated Transition - example



*Thank You for yours attention.*

