

UI Design Checklist



UI design is all about symbols, colors, spacing, grouping, visual hierarchy and components and how we use them to represent information that we want our users to see and interact with.

This checklist of UI design guidelines and best practices is based on principles that have been well established to enhance the experience of a user's interaction with a digital software interface.

Keep in mind that these are not hard and fast rules, but generally a good place to start and help you keep track of the many elements you will need to consider when designing.

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Visual Design



Visual design refers to the aesthetic look, style and visual hierarchy of a design.

Typography:



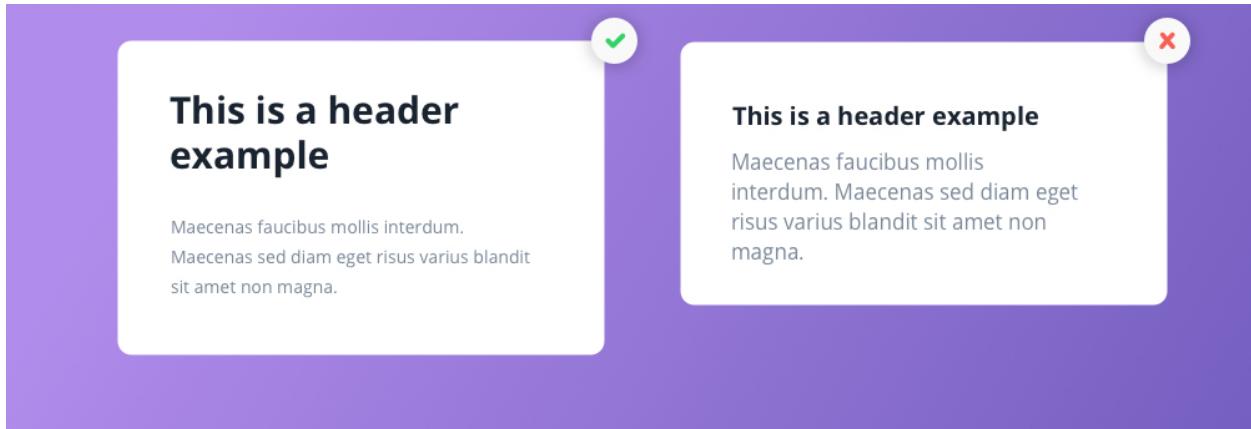
Typography is the art of arranging letters and text in a way that serves the function and beauty of product's a user interface.

Font Family	Variant	Status
Open Sans	bold	✓
	semibold	
	regular	
	<i>italic</i>	
	light	
Other Fonts	Open Sans bold	✗
	Futura bold	✗
	Optima regular	✗
	Oswald regular	✗
	<i>Palatina Italic</i>	✗

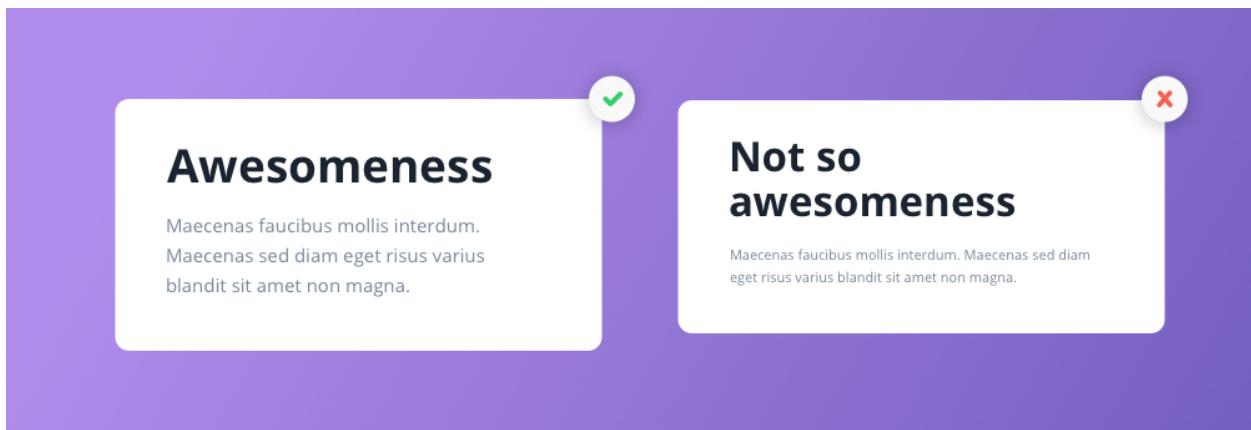
- Choose one font with multiple weights rather than multiple fonts.

Header Example	Status
This is a header example	✓
This is a header example	✗

- Don't combine more than 2 different fonts

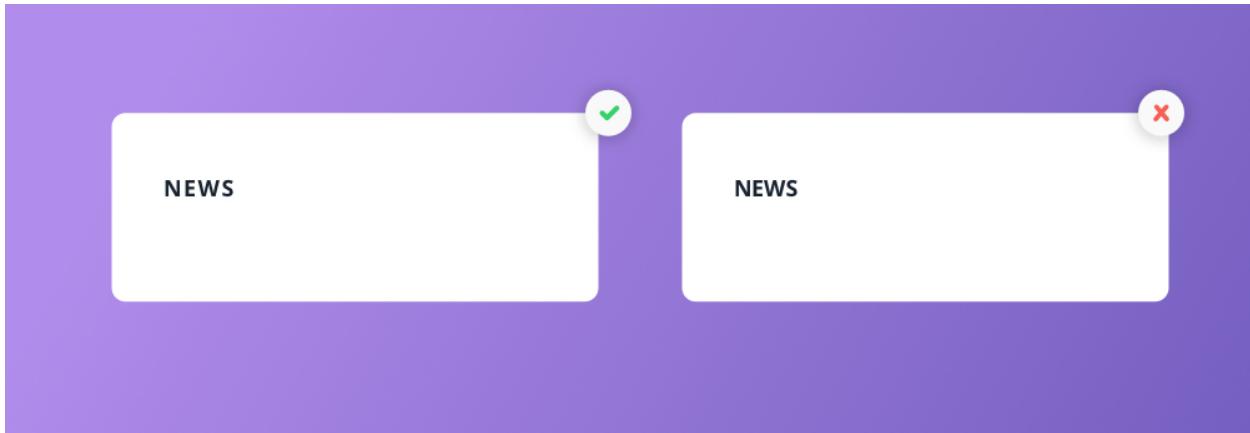


- Increase the weight of your important text (like headers)
- Decrease the weight of your less important text (like subheaders and body text)

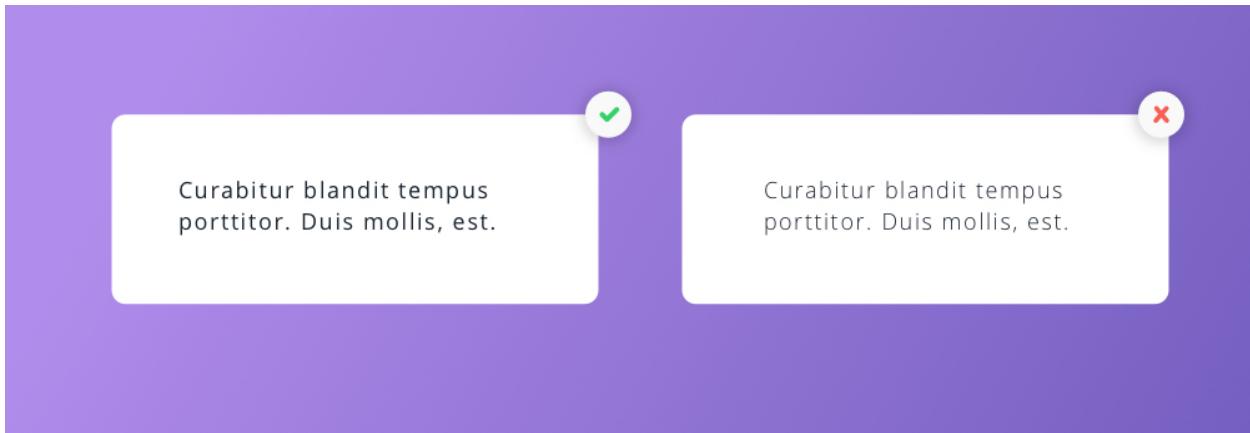


- Decrease the size of less important text proportionally in relation to the important text
- Heading line height - Keep the line height the same size as the font or add about 5px-10px
- Paragraph line height - add between 8px and 15px to the size of the font (Font size: 22 = Line height: 36)

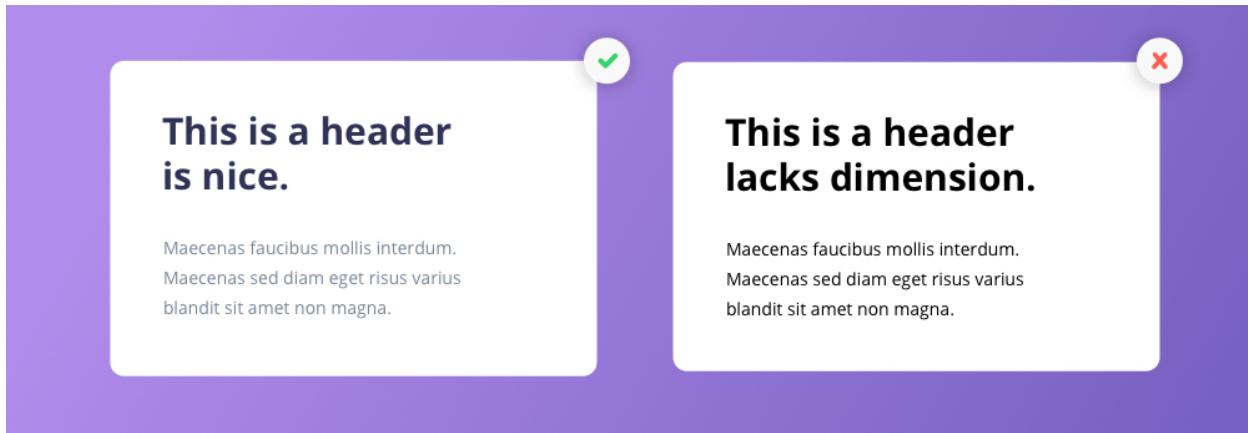
- Line Length - Stick to 50–60 characters per line on desktop and 30-40 on mobile



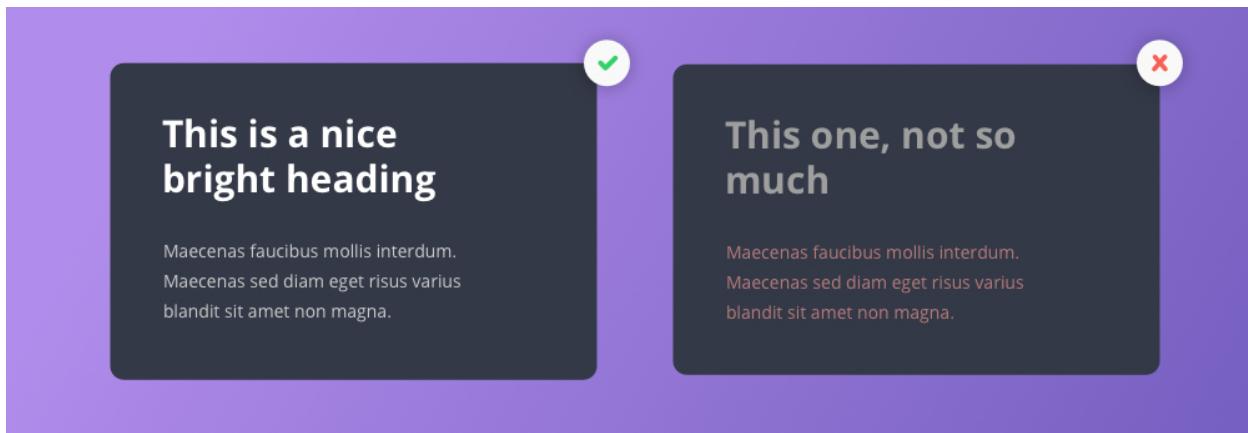
- Increase tracking (space between letters) when using small uppercase words to increase readability.



- Beware of Light and Thin font styles - they can be hard to read.



- Choose very dark gray text instead of pure black for header text / Tint your dark gray with a bit of your primary brand color, for a more polished, branded look.
- Choose a lighter gray for your subtitles and paragraph text



- If your text is on a colored background, use white to emphasize important text. Do not use gray, use a more visible tint of your background color in order to increase contrast.
- If you use colored text on a colored background make sure the color is high contrast enough to be visible. Especially on low lit screens.
- Make sure your text passes contrast accessibility standards.
- Check your designs in dark mode and make sure your text is legible in that context too.

Color:



Typography is the art of arranging letters and text in a way that serves the function and beauty of product's a user interface.

Choose a font family for your color palettes and balance them using HSB instead of trying to match them visually.

Components

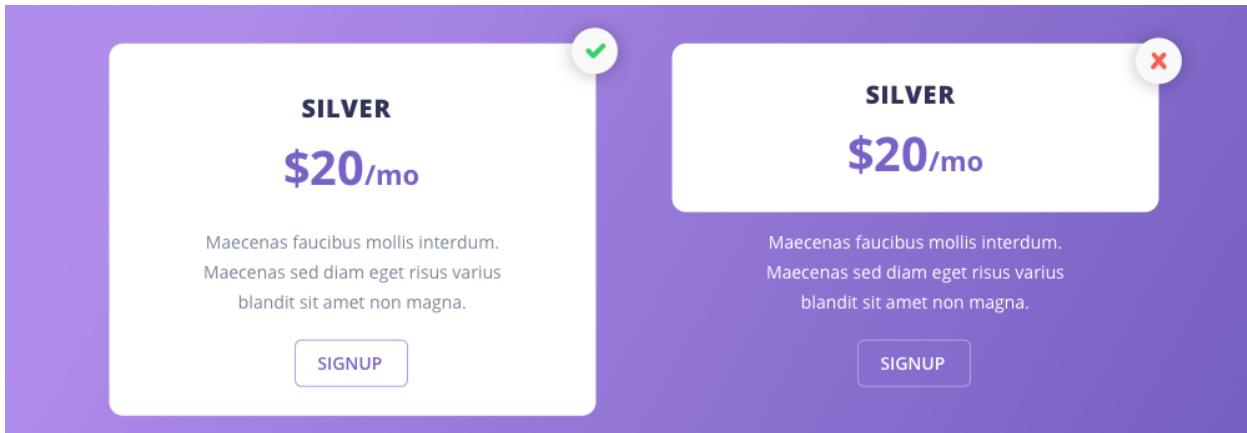


Components are the interactive building blocks of a User Interface in digital software. The following are some commonly used components and guidelines for how to use them.

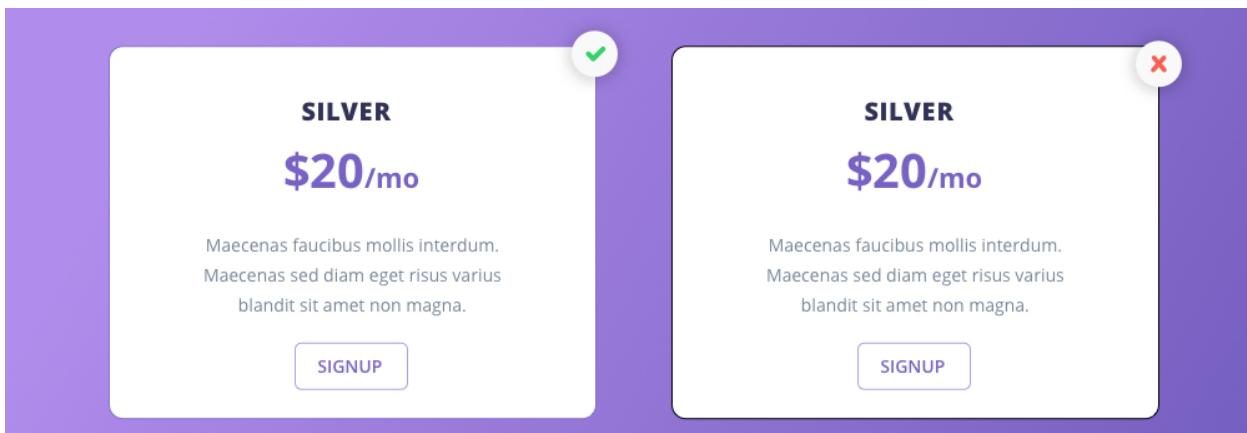
Boxes and Cards



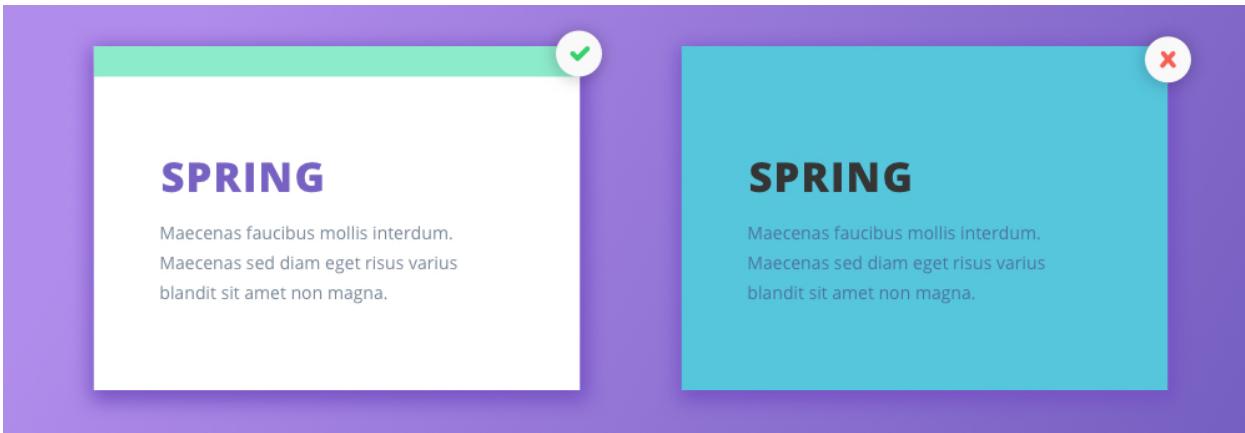
Boxes and Cards are ways of containing content and actions related to a single object.



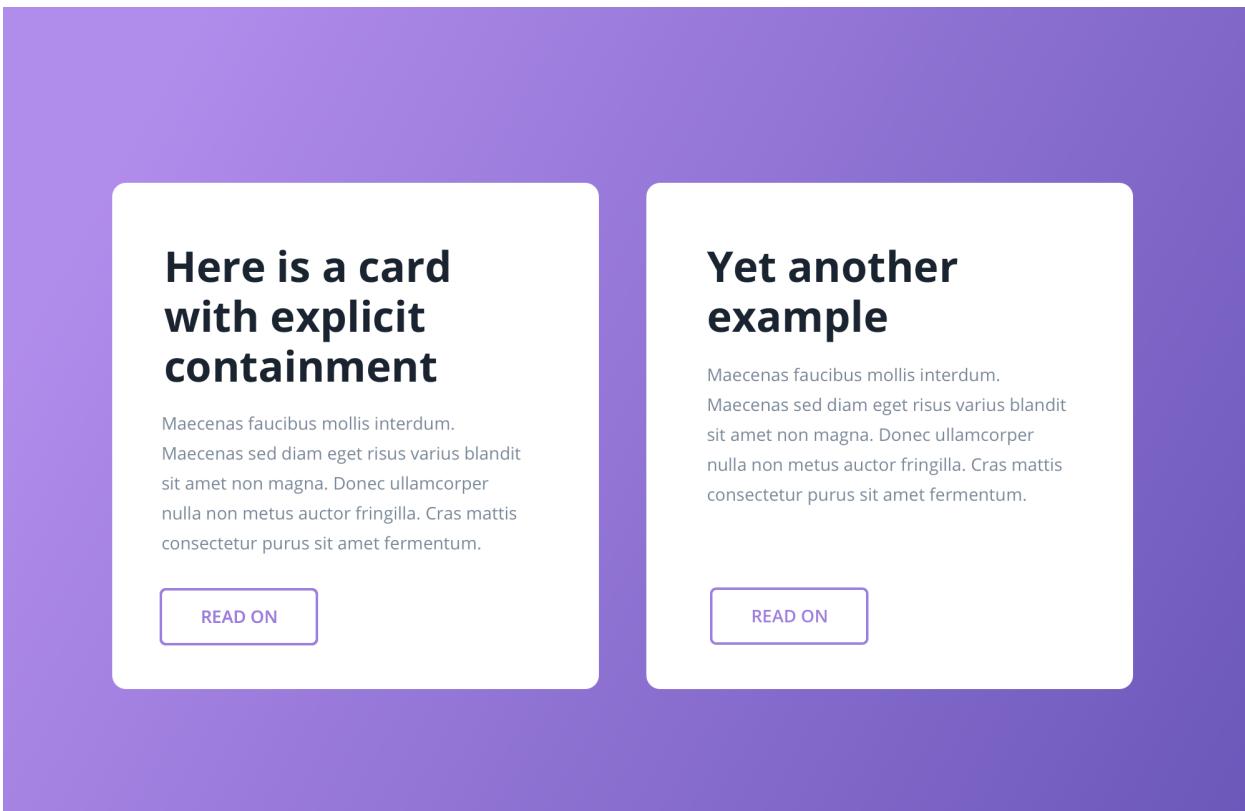
- Create boxes around content that you would likely grouped together using the principles of Gestalt.



- Avoid using dark outlines and instead choose a border color that is just slightly dark than the background color of your container.

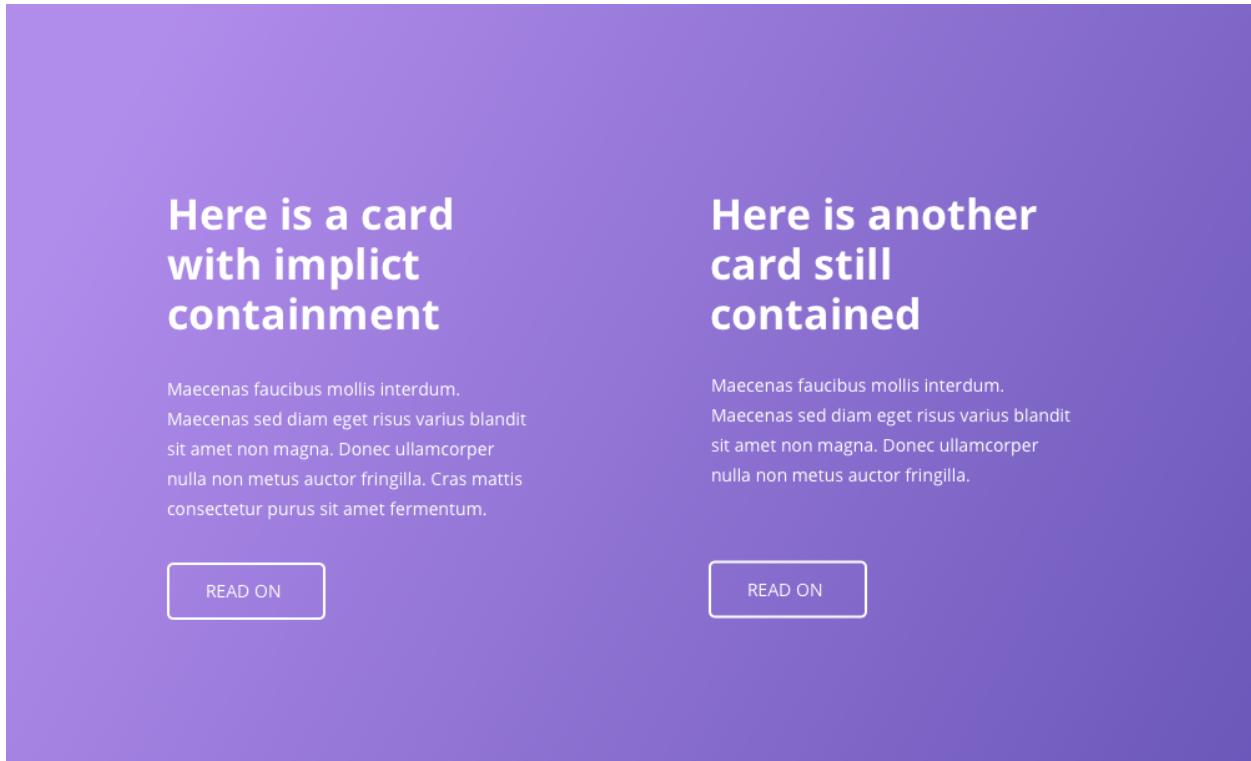


- If you are adding, opt for a splash instead of a full color.



- If you want to keep your cards the same height. Keep the baseline of the lowest content (i.e. buttons) the same and maintain the same space between Title and Description.
- Maintain consistent spacing between elements

- Truncate any text that increases the height of the overall container

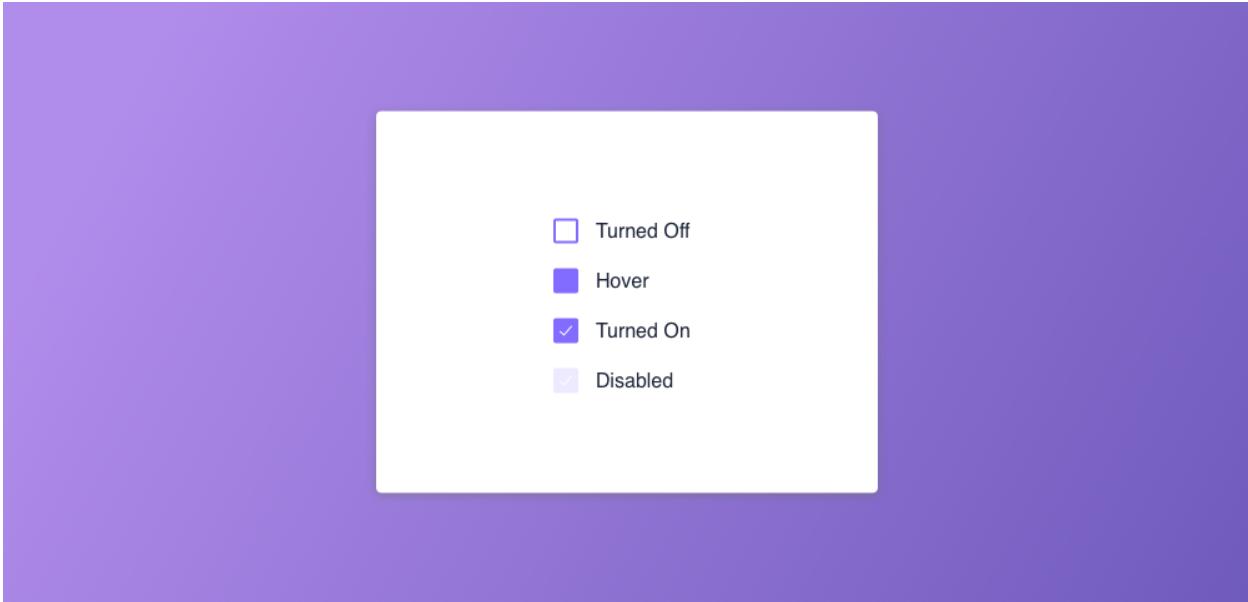


- Use proximity to show implicit containment and don't forget to use consistent spacing between elements within a box

Checkboxes



Checkboxes allow users to select one or more items from a set or turn an option on or off.

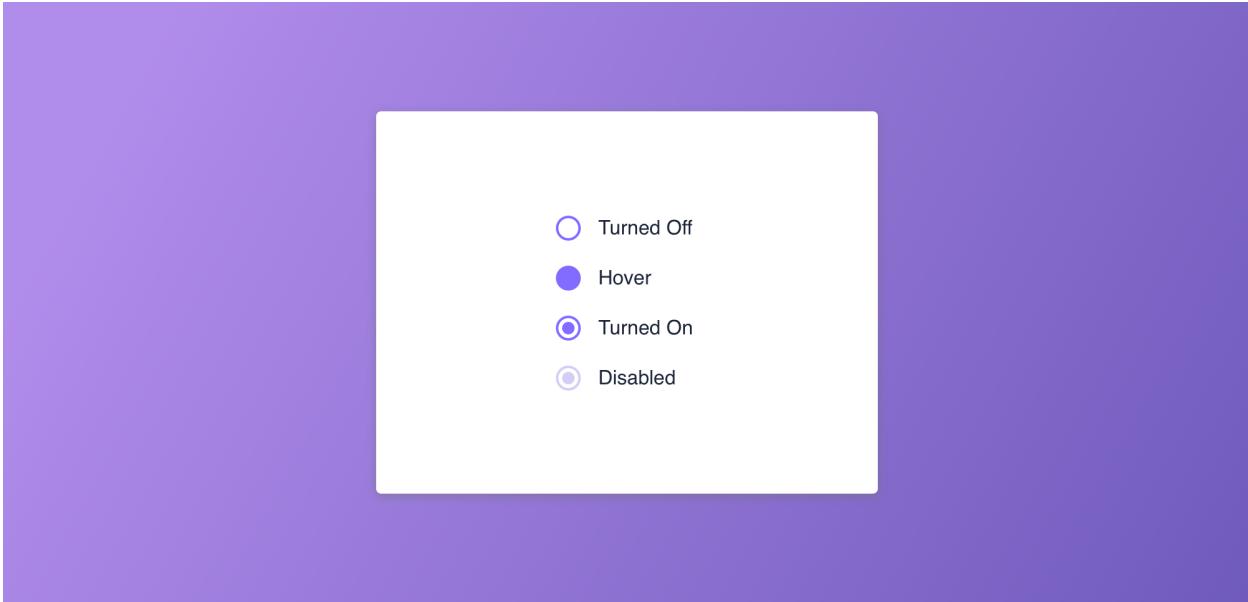


- Use if multiple items can be selected
- Use instead of toggles if there are multiple options to be turned on or off
- May be used with sub-lists of items
- May be used to add or remove items
- Don't forget to design each state of the checkbox's interaction

Radio Buttons



Radio buttons allow users to select only one option from a set

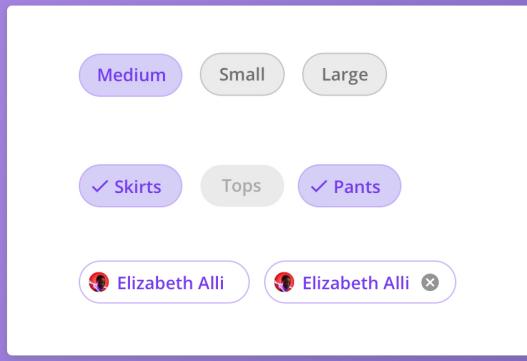


- Allows the selection of a single option
 - Show all available options so users can decide which one is correct
 - Don't forget to design each state of the button's interaction
-

Chips



Chips allow users to enter information, make selections, filter content and trigger actions

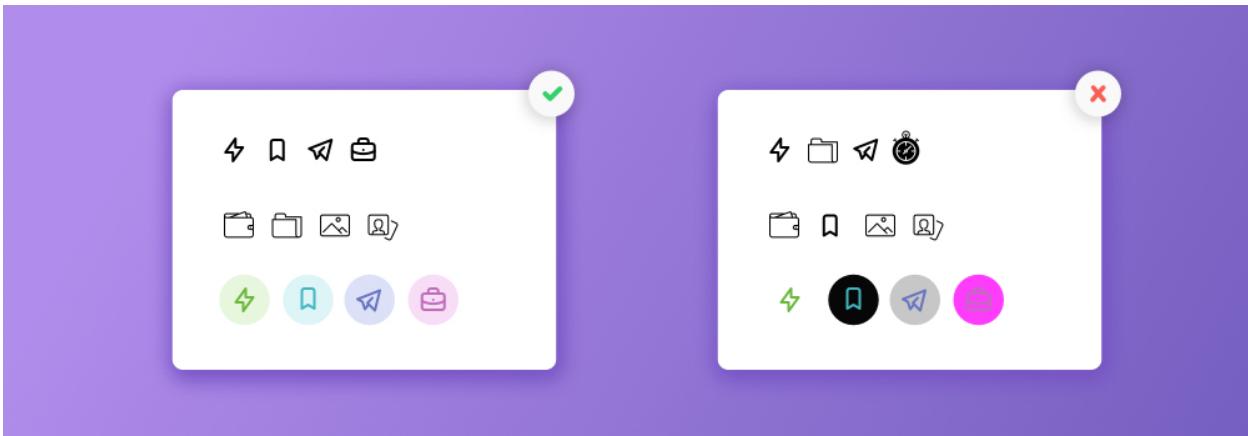


- Make them compact
- Input chips are shortcuts to information and represents a collection or group of things that can be viewed.
- Choice chips allow users to choose only a single option out of a set of possible options
- Filter chips allow users to include or exclude things they are viewing
- Action chips are like buttons that can one or multiple actions
- Chips can be informational, editable and or movable
- Placement can be inline, staked or horizontal and scrollable
- Don't forget to design all of the states for your chips

Icons



Icons are graphical representations of a functionality, concept or entity found in real-life.

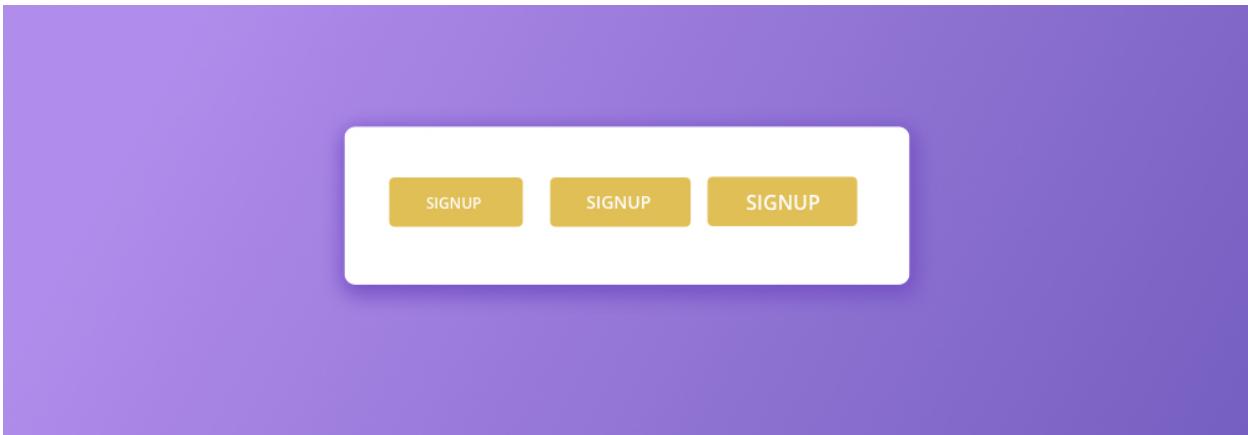


- Make sure the all of the icons have the same line thickness
- Make sure all the corners have the same or similar roundness
- Try enclosing your icons in a shaded shape
- Use little pops of color in the icons design itself to create interest

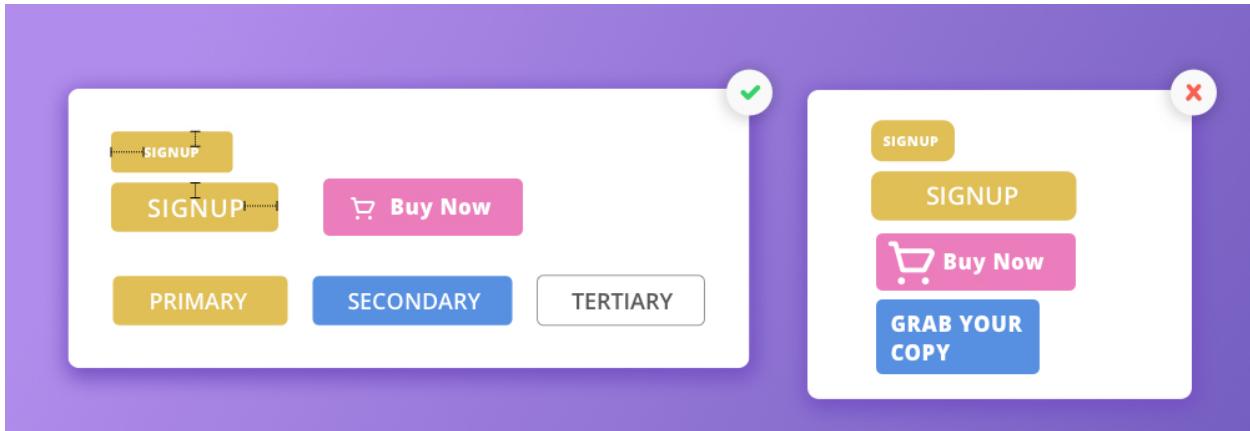
Buttons



Buttons are the most common interactive element that allows user to take actions and make choices.

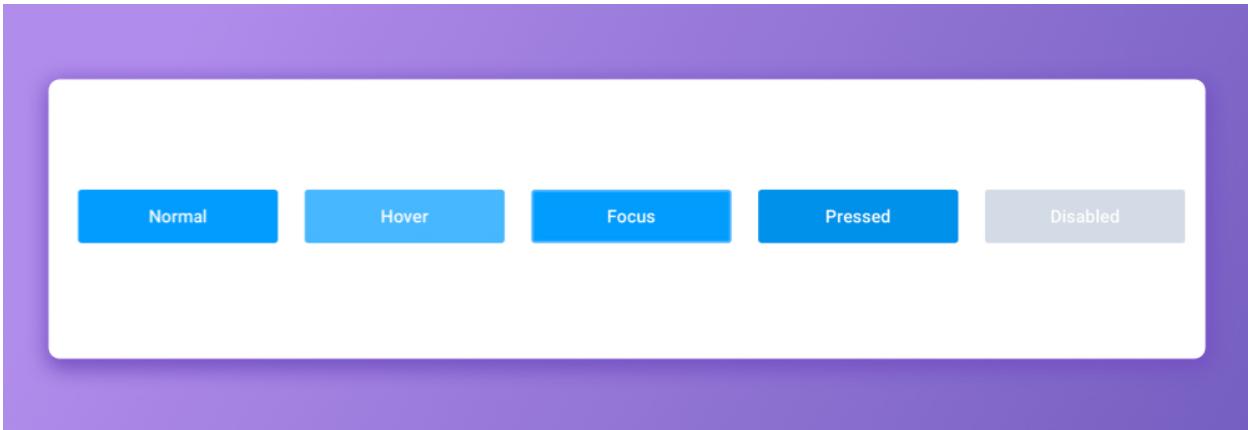


- It's common to design buttons in a small (12px text), medium (14px text) and large (18px text) size
- The size of your button should align to your grid or use fixed padding



- If using fixed padding there should be more padding on the left and right side of the button text than there is on the top and bottom
- Good rule of the thumb for button L/R padding is 26px-36px on each side of your text
- Good rule of thumb for button T/B padding is 12-14px px above and below your text
- When using rounded corner buttons keep the corner radius between 4-6 px for a refined look
- Choose Primary Secondary and Tertiary color for your buttons
- Check the contrast of your button text again the background color of the button
- Make sure your text is perfectly center aligned in within the background of the button
- When adding an icon, make sure the icon is the same height as the text
- Always keep button text on one line, never wrap it
- Make sure that it does not wrap on other device sizes (responsive design)
- Considering using an outline instead of solid background color for secondary or tertiary buttons

- Consider using an inferred button by placing link text next to another button



- Remember to design your states: Default, Active, Hover, Disabled, Clicked, Focused
- Use shadows or color to indicate change in state

Text Fields and Forms



Text fields allows users to enter text into a UI in within forms and dialogs.

- Be careful with placeholder text and its contrast. It shouldn't look like filled in content. It should still pass WGAC color guidelines so it can easily be read
- Label text shouldn't take up multiple lines and shouldn't truncate (be cut off). If you need to
- Confirm form submission visually and let them know what to do if there is a problem.
- Instead of clearing form fields when information is entered incorrectly leave them in-place and give them the option to reveal what is wrong

Layout and Style

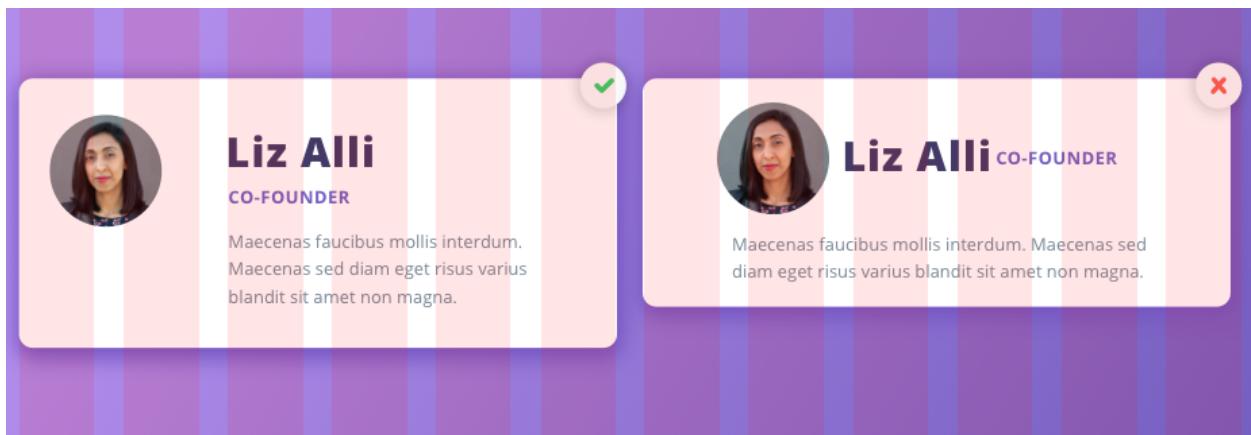


Layout is the underlying structure of a UI design and style refers to the them and aesthetic design choices that are made to display the content.

White Space, Margin and Padding



The use of negative or empty space in and around elements and objects

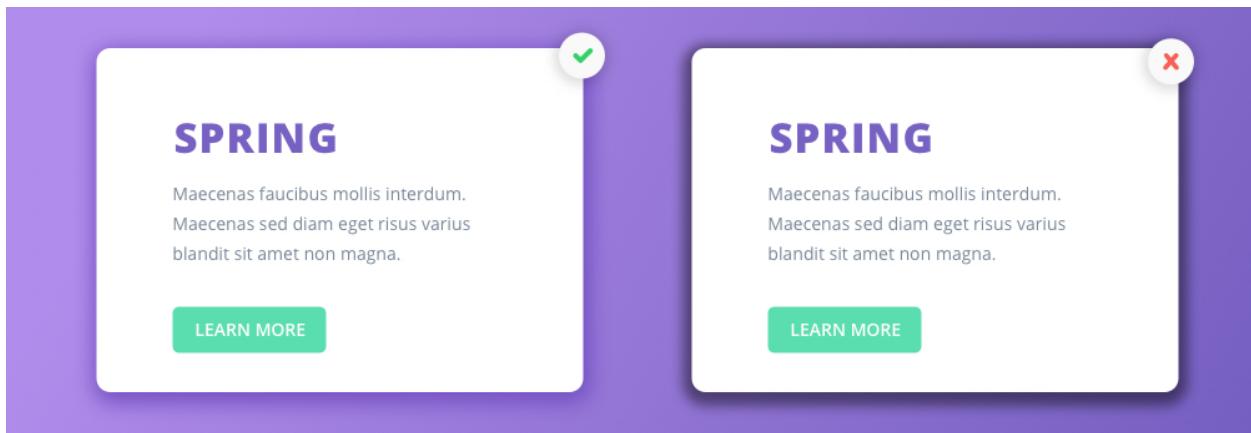


- Setup your main grid
- Think of each element of your content as if it were contained in its own box - make sure there is padding space around every element and then margin in-between each element
- Use actual boxes and containers as guides and remove them once things are grouped and spaced properly
- White space - when you think there is enough margin around things - add a little bit more
- The top and bottom of your boxes and cards should have more padding space than the left and right sides

Drop Shadows



A visual effect that mimic the look of light hitting an object and casting a shadow behind it.

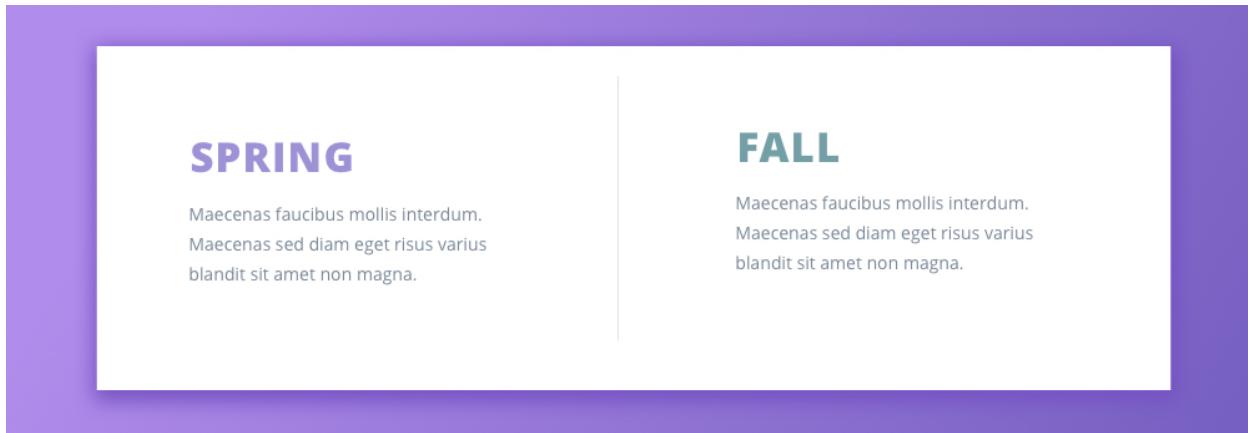


- Add an outer drop shadow to give your boxes dimensions
- Think about the direction of the light, the shadow should be on the opposite side of the object
- The color of your shadow should be between 10-30% opacity (do not use pure black)
- The blur of your shadow should be 16-40 wide
- Instead of adding your shadow to the object layer, try creating a separate layer for your shadow so that you can manipulate the size.
- Instead of gray, try a lightened shade of your primary brand color

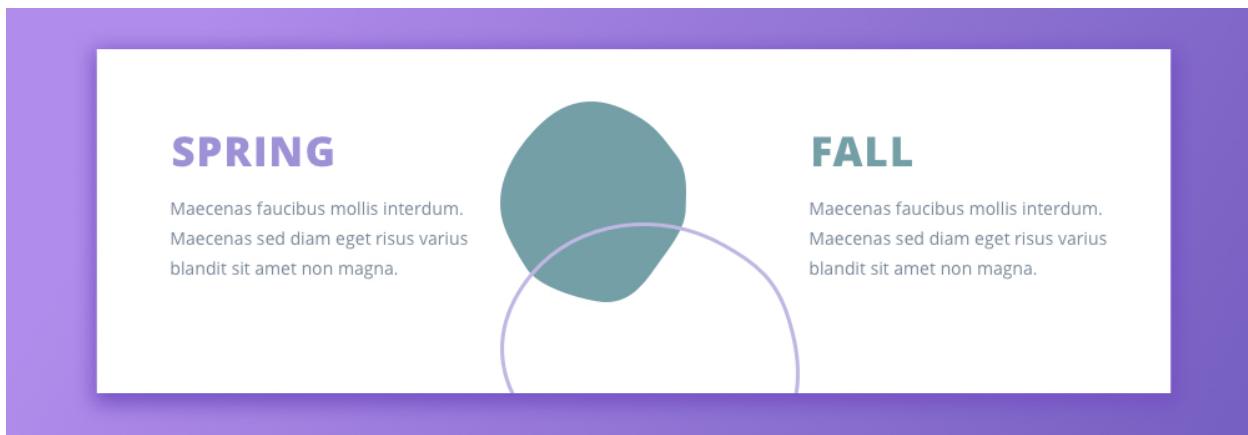
Dividers



A layout element that separates pieces of content to clear groups, sections or options



- When using lines to separate content or table items do not use black or dark grays - instead use color that are only slightly darker than your background

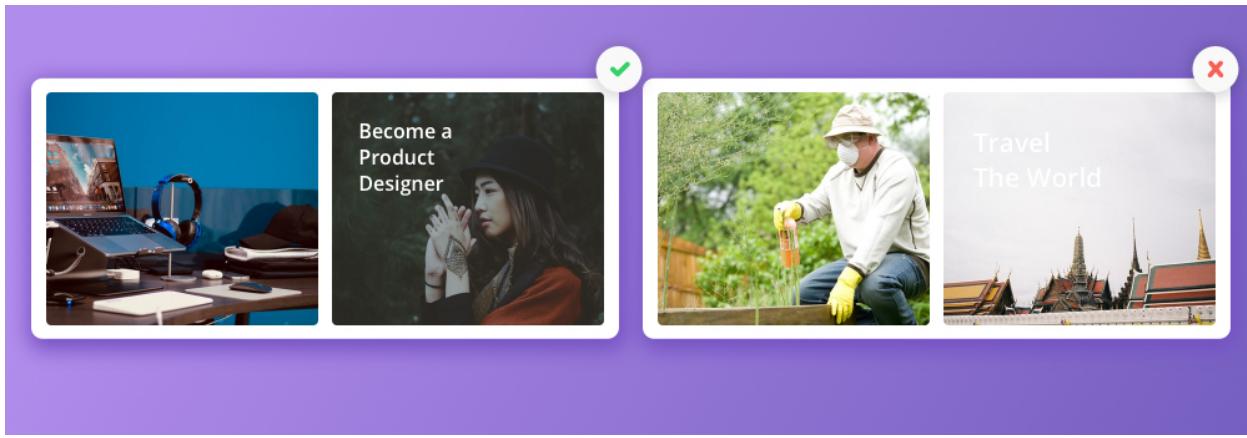


- Try using shapes as dividers instead of lines

Image Treatment



Different ways to add imagery and text to your user interfaces.



- Add image scrims or darkened overlays to your images to make the text on top of them more legible
- Add image overlays with gradients or your brand colors to make the look more custom
- Choose high resolution, high contrast images with good composition
- Consider using more inclusive and diverse stock photos
- Look for images that contain colors similar to your brand's colors

6 Principles of Interface Design



Interface principles are golden rules that help make the visual representation of your interface more clear and understandable.

1. **Visibility** - The more visible something is, the more likely the user is to know about it and get to understand how to use it.
2. **Feedback** - The user should receive feedback to acknowledge the action they have taken and/or to confirm that the action is complete.
3. **Constraints** - The range of interaction options available to the user should be restricted based on what next steps they need to take.

4. **Mapping** - The controls for a function should have a clear intuitive relationship to the function itself.
 5. **Consistency** - Commands that perform similar functions should look similar (in the case of visual interfaces), or be triggered in the same way (in the case of keyboard shortcuts).
 6. **Affordance** - The appearance of objects should give some intrinsic indication of how to use them.
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Free Visual Design Resources

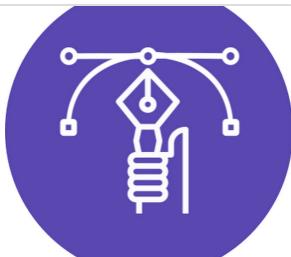


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