

About this Project: Brandy Melville is one of my favorite clothing brands, and I noticed that they did not have a mobile application that people could use to place an order. Thus, for this project, I decided to design a mobile application that would provide users with a seamless experience browsing their products and placing an order. I wanted to incorporate some of the aspects that I enjoy about their website, such as their color palette and minimalist vibe, but add a modern touch to enhance the usability of the app.

Project Type: Self-Initiated Project Designing an E-Commerce Mobile Application | Fall 2019

Skills: Wireframing, Prototyping, User-Centered Design

Tools: Figma, InVision

Overview

Research Brand & User — Define User's Needs — Design Ideation & Wireframe — Prototype

1. Research Brand & User

Brandy Melville is an Italian clothing brand whose target customer is teenage girls and young women (1). The brand relies heavily on Instagram and word-of-mouth rather than advertising to draw in customers (1). To establish their brand, Brandy Melville's Instagram features "young, carefree girls running on the beach or at a café, socializing with friends and drinking coffee in their photogenic Brandy Melville outfits" (2). The clothing style has been described as relevant and trend-setting (1).

After understanding Brandy Melville's target customer and branding more, I decided that the mobile app would emphasize an aesthetic experience and minimize information overload. I wanted to incorporate the minimalist, vintage theme with the pink and grey color palette from Brandy Melville's website but also change a couple elements to make the app more usable.

2. Define User's needs

Currently, Brandy Melville does not have an app on the market, so I decided to design an app that would provide users with a positive experience shopping their brand. The app should minimize number of taps that the user needs to undergo to find a product that they are looking for and have efficient checkout processes so that users can get on the app and place their orders as fast and convenient as possible.

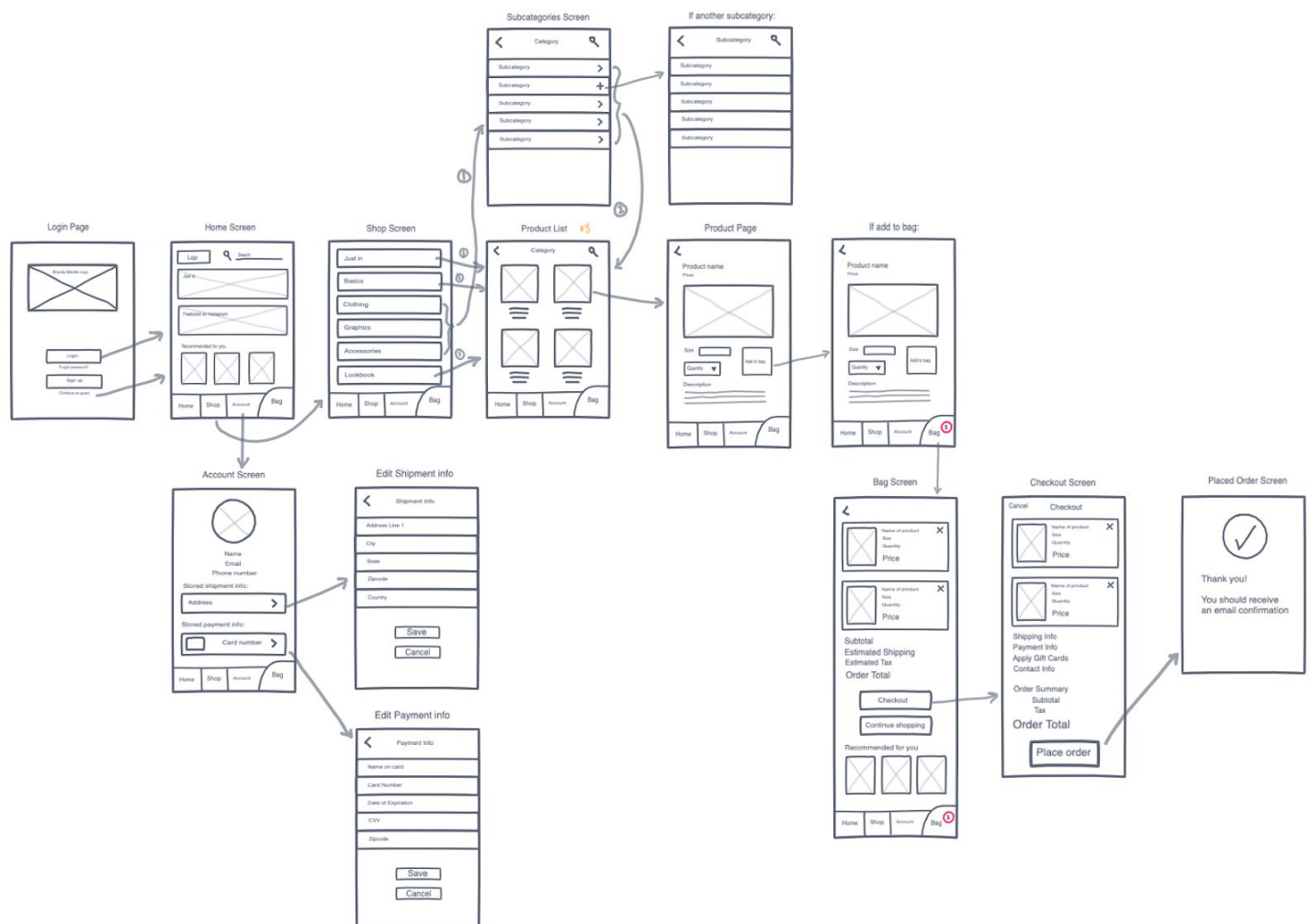
3. Design Ideation & Wireframe

In the wireframing process, I first looked at some current e-commerce mobile applications on the market for some inspiration and then started jotting ideas for which screens I needed.

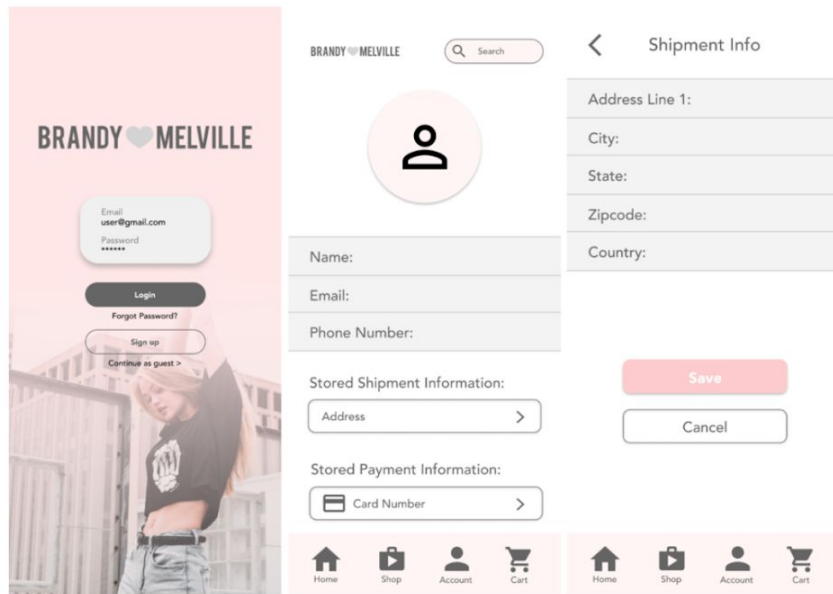
For each screen, some of the questions that I kept in mind included:

- What's the goal of this screen? (i.e. get a user to add an item to their shopping cart)
- Keeping in mind information hierarchy, how should the content be organized to help the user reach the goal?
- What buttons should I include to help the user complete certain actions?
- Keeping in mind usability conventions, how can design screens to meet what the user would expect to see on the page?
- What are the calls-to-action that I should include?
- What images should be displayed and what size?

Overall, I wanted to emphasize - clarity (make sure it's clear what the page is depicting and what the user can do there/ can user complete action without too much thought), user confidence (build trust in ur brand for good design - are sure product interface is predictable and comfortable), simplicity (avoid information overlo



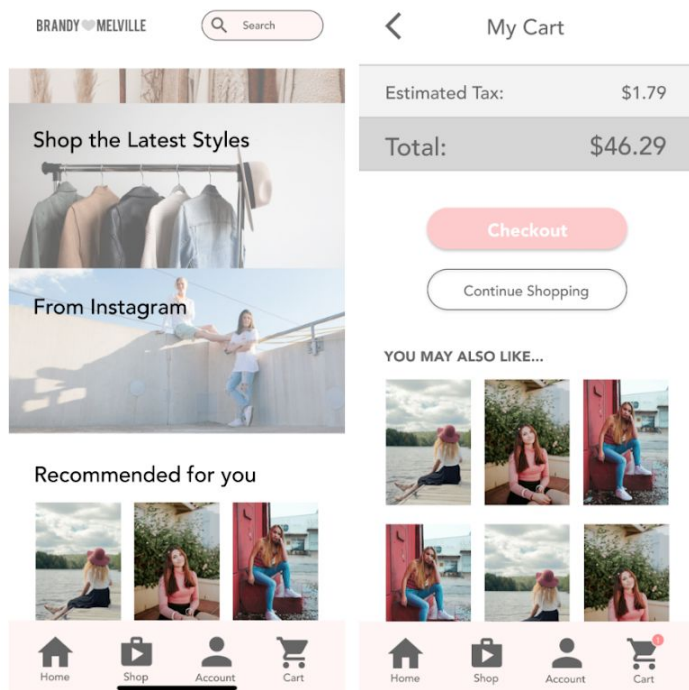
4. Prototype



Account Page

To speed up the shopping and checkout process, the app should encourage the user to create an account to save their information for shipment, payment, and what items they normally shop to provide a tailored experience. Thus, the first screen that the user will see when accessing this app is the leftmost screen asking them to login, sign up for an account, or continue as guest. The only two buttons are login and sign up to highlight the importance of creating an account.

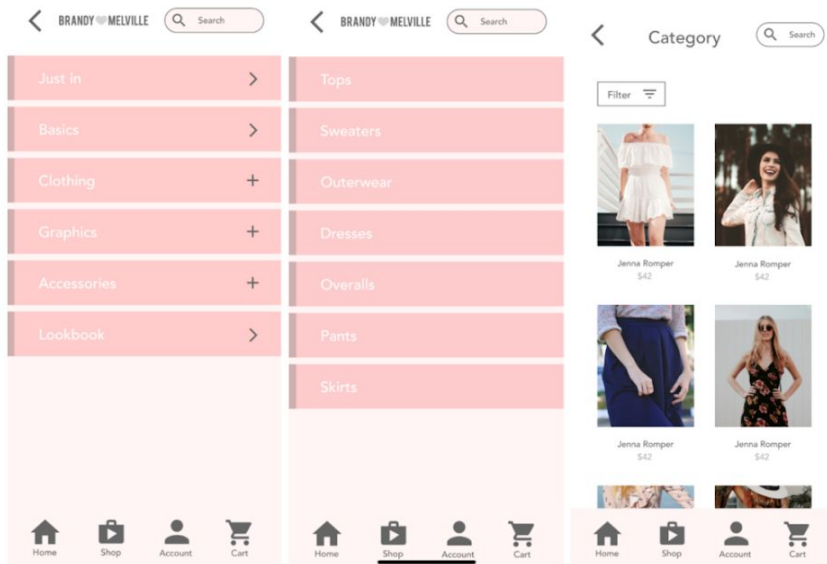
The account screen only features the essential fields about the user and has buttons bringing users to separate screens to input shipment and payment information to prevent a cluttered feel to the account page.



Homepage & Recommendations

Knowing that Brandy Melville's target audience is teenage girls and that their branding was built on Instagram, I wanted the homepage to feature a direct link from Instagram featuring the most recent items that were posted on their Instagram account, so that customers coming from that platform could easily find and order products that they saw and are interested in.

Also, over time, the app will track the items that the user purchases so that it can recommend similar products that the user would most likely be interested in to make their shopping experience more personal and convenient.



Product Pages

One change I made when translating the feel of Brandy Melville's website into a mobile app was the number of clicks required to find a product. I reduced the number of subcategorization options and added a filter option. The categories related to style that were listed on their webpage (i.e. for clothing, subcategories included stripes, florals, plaid) would be moved to the filter option on the product list page to keep the subcategories consistent as types of articles of clothing not styles or prints.

The product list screen mirrors the simplicity of their website by only displaying images, product name, and price, with no excess information.

Main Takeaways

- **Empathize with the user.** Researching and understanding the user helps with the design process because it helps to answer questions on what user needs are and how the design of the application can help to meet their needs. In this project, I was included in the targeted customer group, which made the design process easier because I incorporated design elements that I appreciate. In the future when designing for a group of users that I am not included in, I would heavily emphasize the research portion of the design process before jumping straight into sketching out ideas.
- **Information hierarchy.** It is important to know what information should be the most prominently conveyed to the user to draw conclusions on how to design the page (i.e. placement, color, and size of buttons and text and which elements should be frozen on the page so that they are always readily available while the user is scrolling through a page). While there is a lot of information available on each page, there needs to be certain elements that need to quickly draw the user's attention so that they can quickly find them.
- **Design process is iterative.** Several times throughout the design process, I changed the layout of the screen or which elements should be emphasized based on feedback from people around me. Even still, there is a lot in the design of this app that could be improved. In future projects, even more user testing interviews would be conducted in the early stages of prototyping to understand what elements could be modified to make the user experience more enjoyable.