Web Pages using NEXT.JS

Outline

- Pages
- Links
- Layouts
- Data Fetching

What is Next.js?

- Next.js = React-based full stack web framework that allows creating component-based **Web pages** and **Web API**
- It provides a large set of features:
  - File system-based routing
  - Different rendering strategies: Server-side rendering, Static site generation, Incremental static generation
  - Automatic image optimization

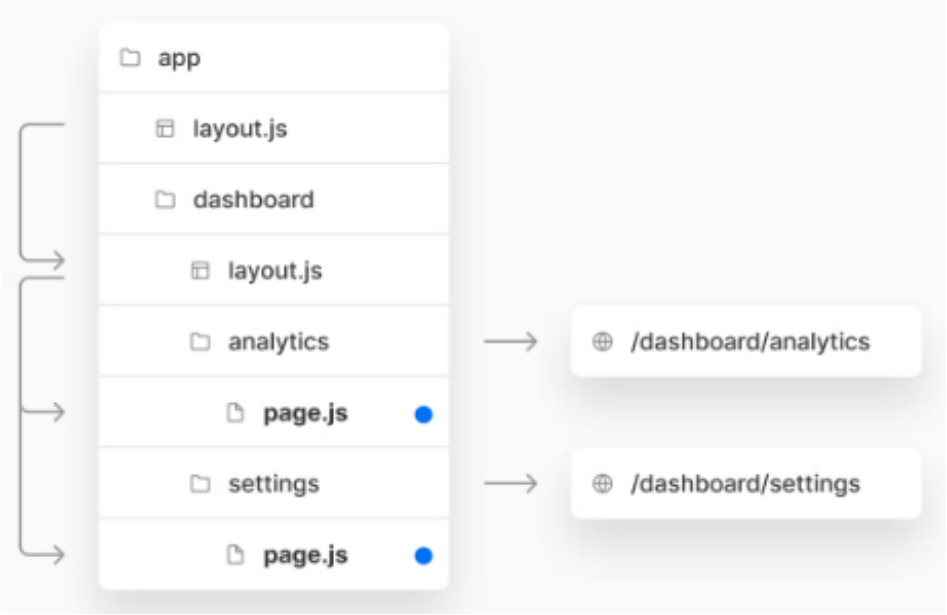
Why Server-side Web Pages?

- Improve Search Engine Optimization (SEO) to enable search engines to discover and index the app pages
- Faster initial app start by reducing client-side JavaScript that the browser has to download, parse and execute to render the result in the browser (which could take up to a few seconds for a large application)
- Access to resources that the client can't access such as direct access to a database
- Hide sensitive data from the client such as passwords and API Keys
- Allow caching the Web pages on the server-side to improve performance and avoid regenerating the page per request

Project Folder Structure

- Next.js uses **`app/`** folder for routing, every subfolder inside it will be a route
    - the app/ directory is a container for the app pages / Web API
- The **`public/`** folder contains all the public and static assets such as images, fonts, etc.
- **`app/`** and **`public/`** are mandatory and reserved directories so make sure not to delete or use them for different purposes

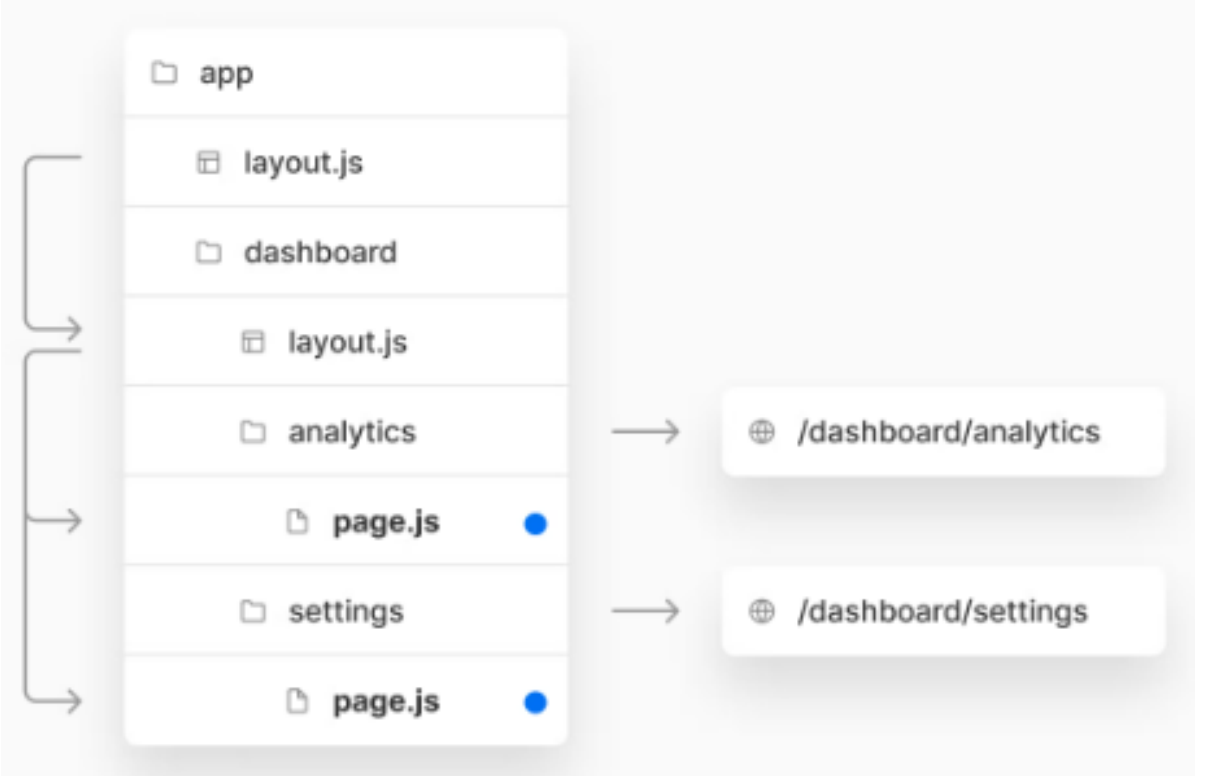
Page


app
layout.js
dashboard
layout.js
analytics
/dashboard/analytics
page.js
settings
/dashboard/settings
page.js

UI Pages

- You can create a page by adding a `page.js` file inside a subfolder under app folder
  - Can colocate your own project files (UI components, styles, images, test files, etc.) inside the app folder & subfolders

When a user visits `/dashboard/settings` Next.js will render the `page.js` file inside the settings folder



React Server Components

- By default, files inside **app** folder and its subfolders will be rendered on the server as **React Server Components**
  - resulting in less client-side JavaScript and better performance
- Making the route accessible requires adding **page.js** file

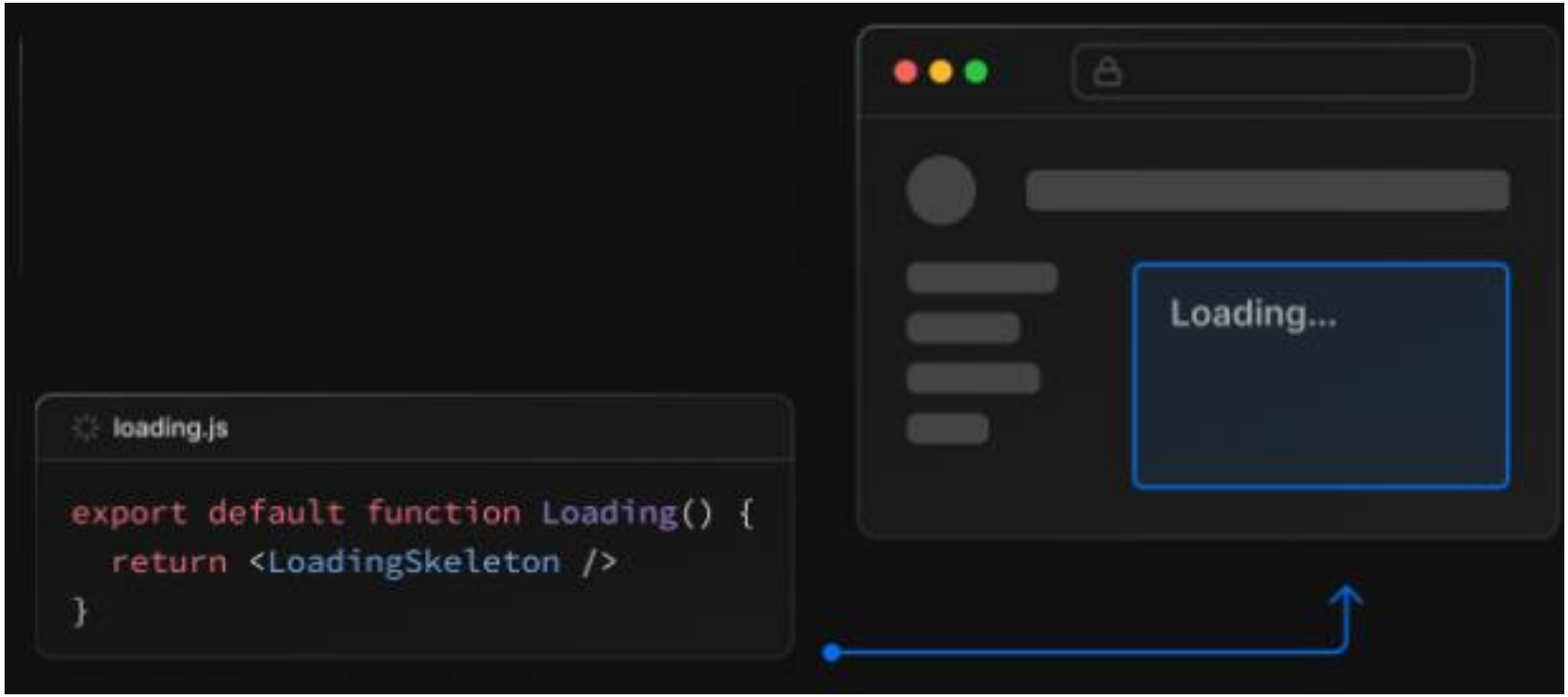
```
// app/page.js
// This file maps to the index route (/)
export default function Page() {
  return <h1>Hello, Next.js!</h1>;
}
```

UI Pages

- You can create a page by adding a **`page.js`** file inside a folder
- File name conventions used to define the app UI:
  - **layout.js**: define UI that is shared across multiple routes
  - **page.js**: define UI unique to a route
  - **loading.js**: show a loading indicator such as a spinner
  - **error.js**: show specific error information
  - **not-found.js**: render UI when the notFound is thrown within a route segment

Loading UI

- **loading.js** return a loading indicator such as a spinner while the content of the route segment loads. The new content is automatically swapped in once rendering on the server is complete
  - This provides a better user experience by indicating that the app is responding



error.js

- `error.js` defines the error boundary for a route segment and the children below it. It can be used to show specific error information, and functionality to attempt to recover from the error
  - Should return a client-side component

```
'use client'
export default function Error({error}) {
  return (
    <>
      <p>❌ Something went wrong! {error.message}</p>
    </>
  );
}
```

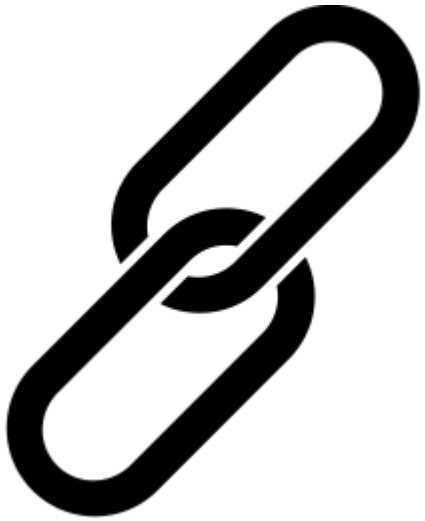
not-found.js

- `not-found.js`: is used to render UI when the notFound function is thrown within a route segment

```
import { notFound } from 'next/navigation';

async function fetchUsers(id) {
  const res = await fetch('https://...');
  return res.json();
}

export default async function Profile({ params }) {
  const user = await fetchUser(params.id);

  if (!user) {
    notFound();
  }

  // ...
}
```

```
export default function NotFound() {
  return "Couldn't find requested resource"
}
```

Links



Linking between pages

- The Next.js router provides a React component called **Link** to do **client-side route** transitions between pages
  - **href** specify the route associated with the link
  - Pages for any <Link /> will be prefetched by default (including the corresponding data) for pages using Static Generation. The corresponding data for server-rendered routes is not prefetched.

```
import Link from 'next/link'
export default function Home() {
return ( <ul>
    <li> <Link href="/"> Home </Link> </li>
    <li> <Link href="/about"> About Us </Link> </li>
   </ul>)
}
```

Linking to dynamic paths

- Links can be created for dynamic paths

E.g., creating links to access posts for a list which have been passed to the component

```
import Link from 'next/link'

function Posts({ posts }) {
  return (
    <ul>
      {posts.map((post) => (
        <li key={post.id}>
          <Link href={`/blogs/${post.id}`}>
              {post.title}
          </Link>
        </li>
      ))}
    </ul>
  )
}
```

useRouter

- **useRouter** hook to access the router object inside any app component
- Router properties include:
  - **query**: returns the query string parsed to an object, including dynamic route parameters
  - **asPath**: returns the path as shown in the browser including the query params

```
import { useRouter } from 'next/router'
const Post = () => {
      const router = useRouter()
      const { pid } = router.query
      return <p>Post: {pid}
        Path: router.asPath </p>
} export default Post
```

For /posts/1

pid will be **1**

Router.asPath will return /posts/1

Router push method

- Router **push** method can be used for programmatic client-side routing
- E.g., navigating to *app/about/page.js*

```
import { useRouter } from 'next/router'

export default function ReadMore() {
  const router = useRouter()

  return (
    <button onClick={() => router.push('/about')}>
      Click here to read more
    </button>
  )
}
```

redirect()

app/team/[id]/page.js

```
import { redirect } from 'next/navigation';

async function fetchTeam(id) {
  const res = await fetch('https://...');
  return res.json();
}

export default async function Profile({ params }) {
  const team = await fetchTeam(params.id);
  if (!team) {
    redirect('https://...');
  }
  // ...
}
```

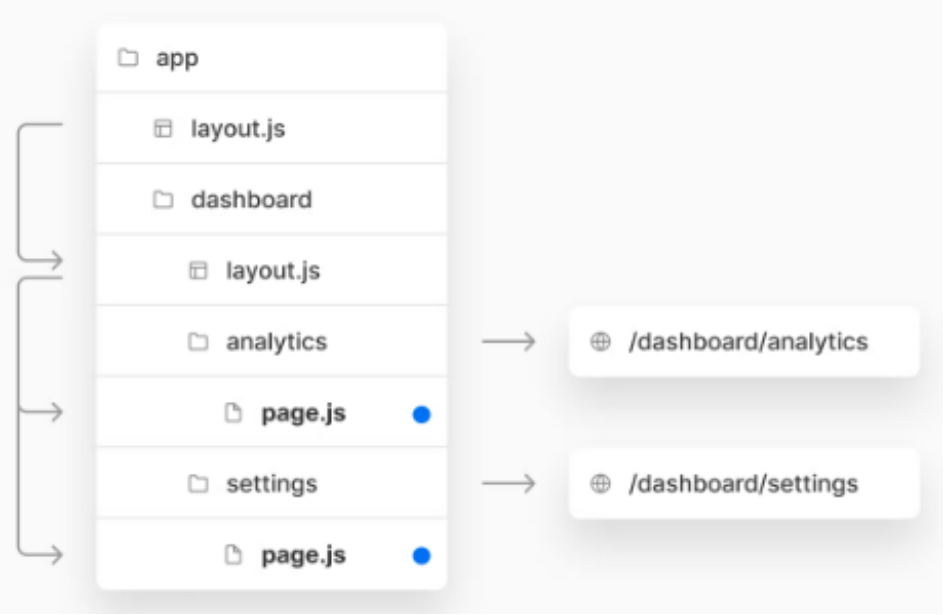
The redirect function allows you to redirect the user to another URL

next/image

- Lazy loading and optimized files for increased performance with less client-side JavaScript

```
import Image from 'next/image';
import avatar from './lee.png';

function Home() {
  // "alt" is now required for improved accessibility
  // optional: image files can be colocated inside the app/ directory
  return <Image alt="leeerob" src={avatar} placeholder="blur" />;
}
```

Layout


app
layout.js
dashboard
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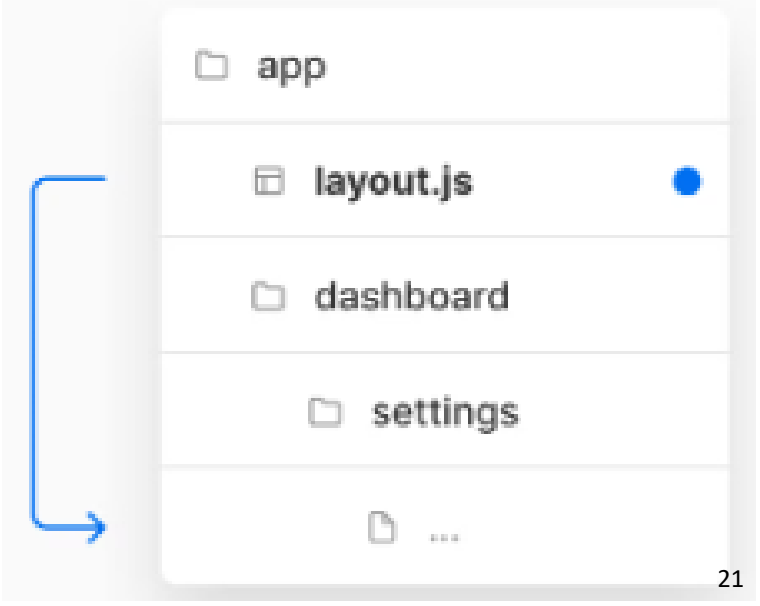
/dashboard/analytics
page.js
settings
/dashboard/settings
page.js

Layouts

- A layout is UI that is shared between route segments
  - Do not re-render (page state is preserved) when a user navigates between sibling segments
  - Navigating between routes only fetches and renders the segments that change
- A layout can be defined by exporting a React component from a `layout.js` file
  - The component should accept a `children` prop which will be populated with the segments the layout is wrapping

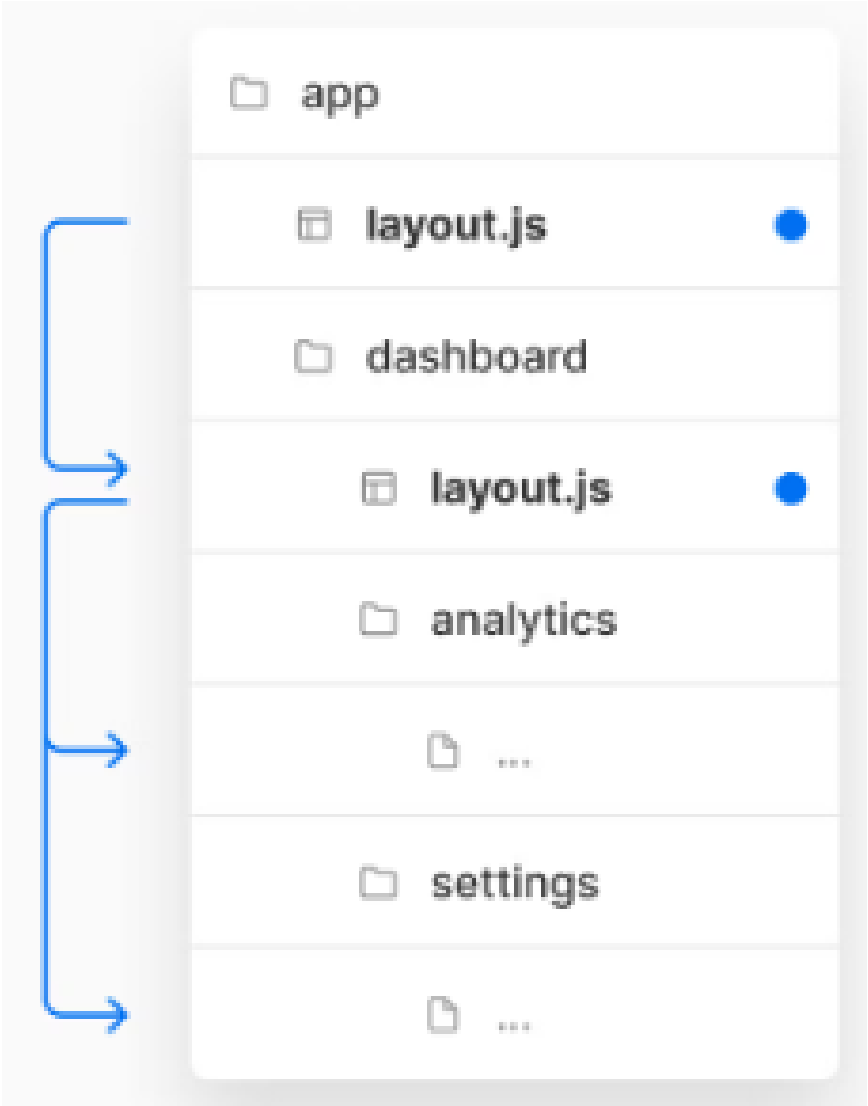
There are 2 types of layouts:

- **Root layout**: in **app** folder and applies to all routes
- **Regular layout**: inside a specific folder and applies to associated route segments

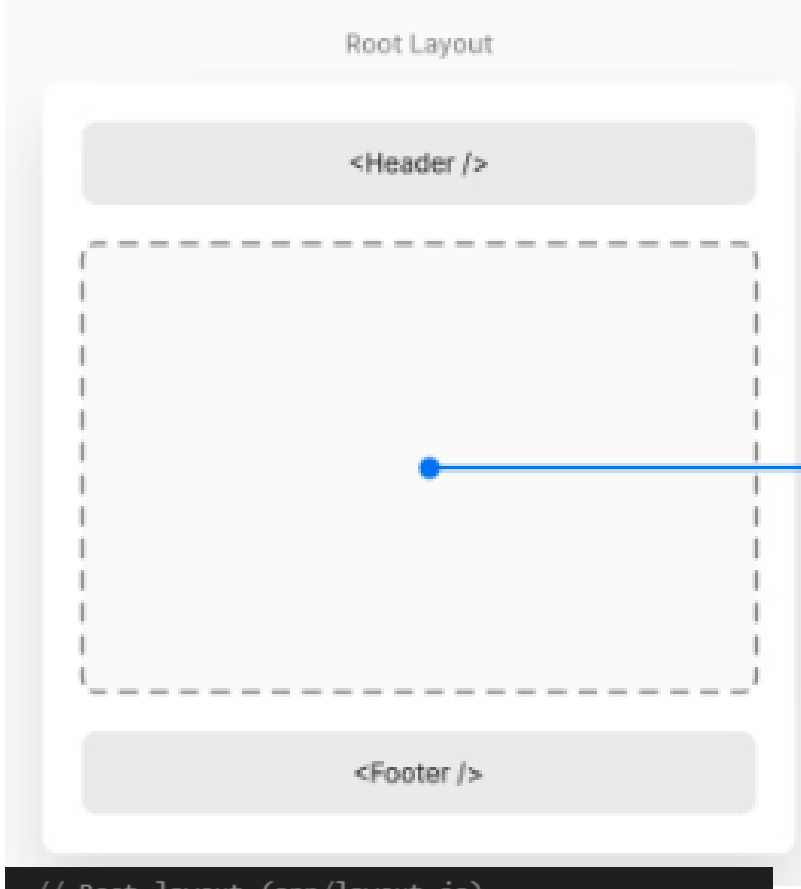


Nesting Layouts

- Layouts that can be nested and shared across routes
- E.g., the root layout (`app/layout.js`) would be applied to the dashboard layout, which would also apply to all route segments inside `dashboard/*`



Nesting Layouts




```tsx
// Page Component (app/dashboard/analytics/page.js)
// - The UI for the `app/dashboard/analytics` segment
export default function AnalyticsPage() {
  return (
    <main>...</main>
  )
}
```

```tsx
// Root layout (app/layout.js)
// - Applies to all routes
export default function RootLayout({ children }) {
  return (
    <html>
      <body>
        <Header />
        {children}
        <Footer />
      </body>
    </html>
  )
}
```

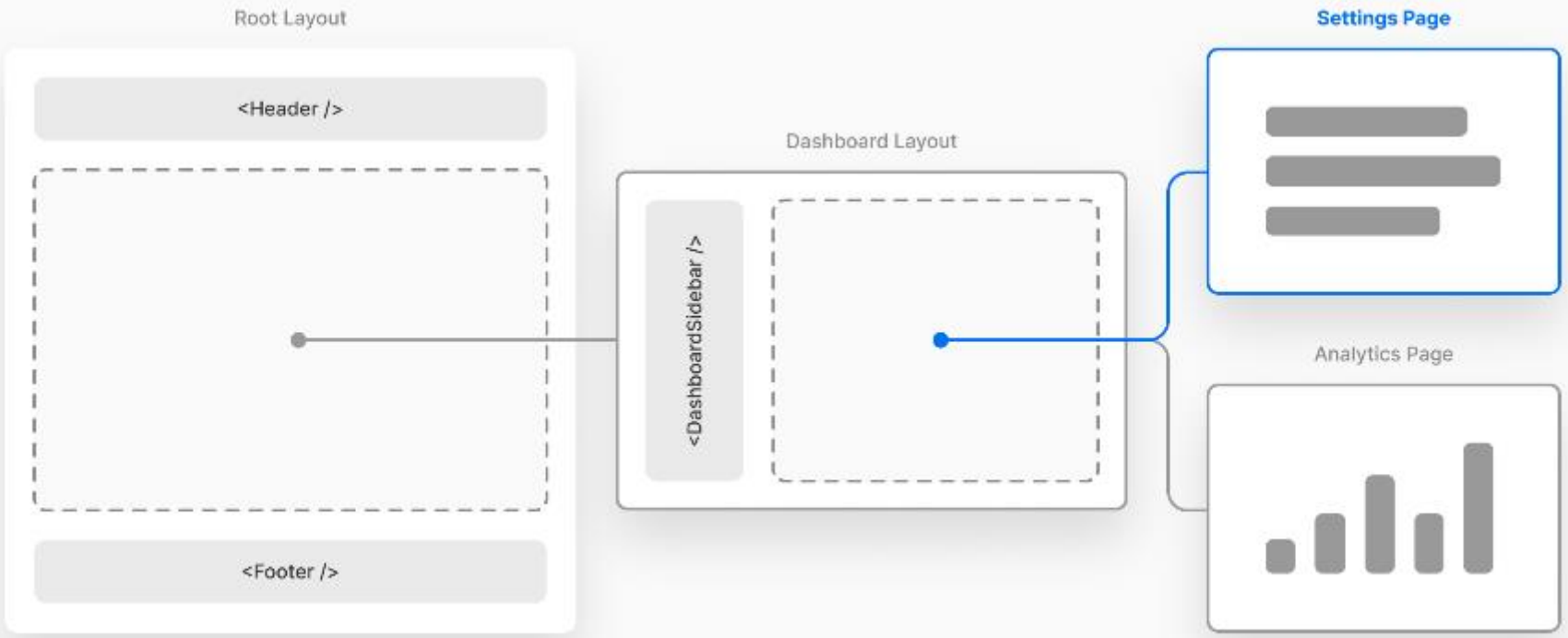
```tsx
// Regular layout (app/dashboard/layout.js)
// - Applies to route segments in app/dashboard/*
export default function DashboardLayout({ children }) {
  return (
    <>
      <DashboardSidebar />
      {children}
    </>
  )
}
```

The above combination of layouts and pages would render the following component hierarchy:

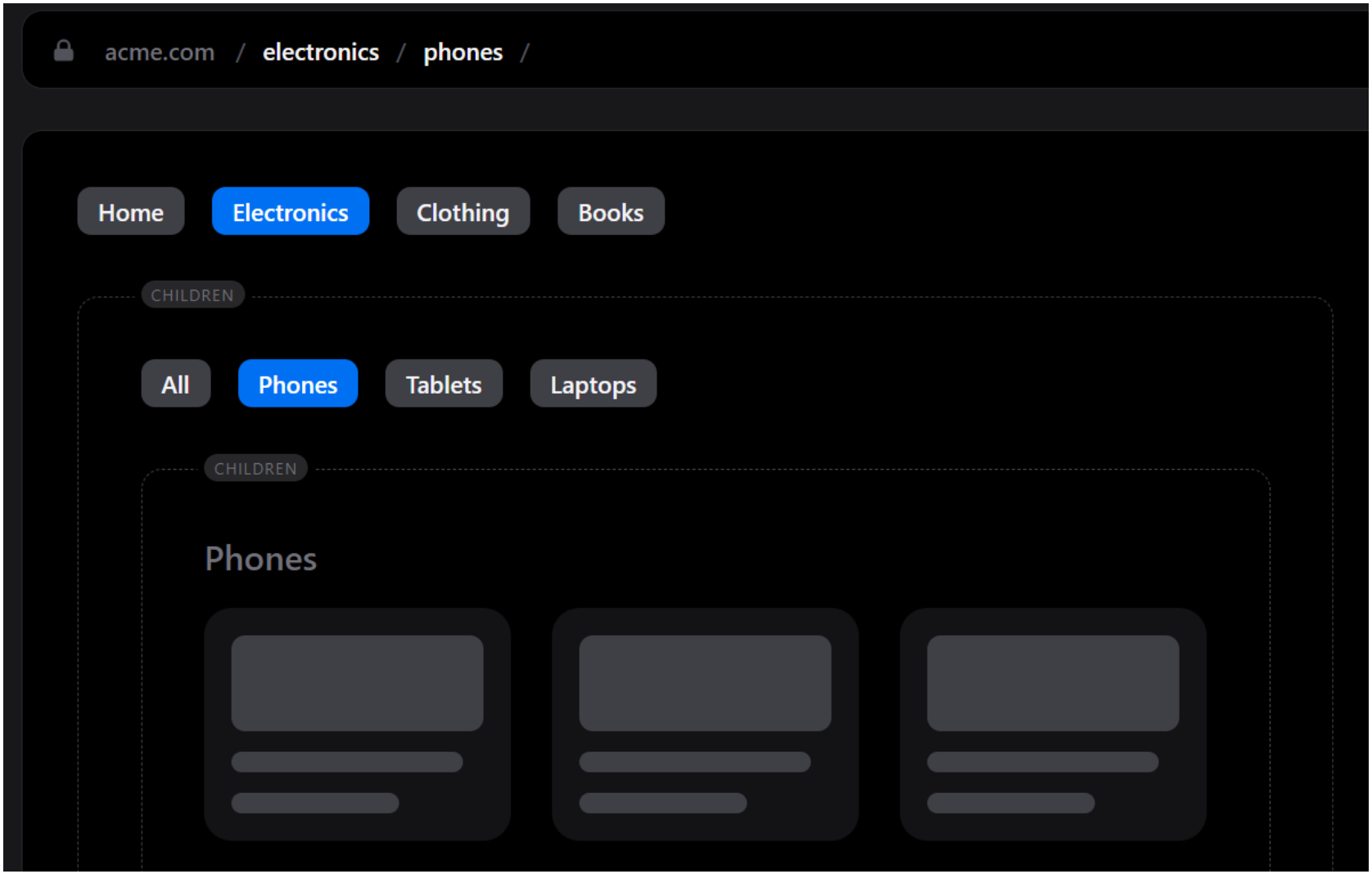
```tsx
<RootLayout>
  <Header />
  <DashboardLayout>
    <DashboardSidebar />
    <AnalyticsPage>
      <main>...</main>
    </AnalyticsPage>
  </DashboardLayout>
  <Footer />
</RootLayout>
```

Pages are Wrapped in Layouts

- When a user visits `/dashboard/settings` Next.js will render the `page.js` file inside the settings folder **wrapped** in any layouts that exist further up the subtree



Nested Layout Example



https://app-dir.vercel.app/layouts/electronics/phones

Data Fetching

Data Fetching Next.js 13

- You can call fetch with async/await directly within Server Components

```
// This request should be cached until manually invalidated.
// Similar to `getStaticProps`.
// `force-cache` is the default and can be omitted.
fetch(URL, { cache: 'force-cache' });

// This request should be refetched on every request.
// Similar to `getServerSideProps`.
fetch(URL, { cache: 'no-store' });

// This request should be cached with a lifetime of 10 seconds.
// Similar to `getStaticProps` with the `revalidate` option.
fetch(URL, { next: { revalidate: 10 } });
```

Data Fetching using fetch

- fetch() is a Web API used to fetch remote resources and returns a promise
- Next.js extends the fetch options object to allow each request to set its own caching and revalidating
- You can fetch data in a component, a page or a layout
  - e.g., a blog layout could fetch categories which can be used to populate a sidebar component

```
async function getData() {
  const res = await fetch('https://api.example.com/...');
  return res.json();
}

export default async function Page() {
  const name = await getData();

  return '...';
}
```

Server-Side Rendering (SSR)

- To refetch data on every fetch() request, use the `cache: 'no-store'` option

```
fetch('https://...', { cache: 'no-store' });
```

Static Site Generation (SSG)

- By default, fetch will automatically fetch static data (cached data)

```
fetch('https://...'); // cache: 'force-cache' is the default
```

```
async function getNavItems() {
  const navItems = await fetch('https://api.example.com/...');
  return navItems.json();
}

export default async function Layout({ children }) {
  const navItems = await getNavItems();

  return (
    <>
      <nav>
        <ul>
          {navItems.map((item) => (
            <li key={item.id}>
              <Link href={item.href}>{item.name}</Link>
            </li>
          ))}
        </ul>
      </nav>
      {children}
    </>
  );
}
```

Static Site Generation Example

Revalidating Data

- To revalidate cached data, you can use the **`next.revalidate`** option in fetch()
  - Used for Incremental Static Regeneration (ISR)

```
fetch('https://...', { next: { revalidate: 10 } });
```

Generate Static Params

- The `generateStaticParams` function can be used in combination with dynamic route segments to define the list of route segment parameters that will be statically generated at build time

```
export default function Page({ params }) {
  const { slug } = params;

  return ...
}

export async function generateStaticParams() {
  const posts = await getPosts();

  return posts.map((post) => ({
    slug: post.slug,
  }));
}
```

Summary

- Next.js = React-based full stack web framework that allows creating component-based Web pages and Web API
- Next.js has a **file-system based router**: when a subfolder is added to the **app** directory, it's automatically available as a route
  - In Next.js you can add brackets to the subfolder name to create a dynamic route
- Different rendering strategies are supported: Server-side rendering, Static site generation, Incremental static generation

Resources

- Learn Next.js

https://beta.nextjs.org/docs

https://nextjs.org/blog

- Next.js Fetch API

https://beta.nextjs.org/docs/api-reference/fetch