

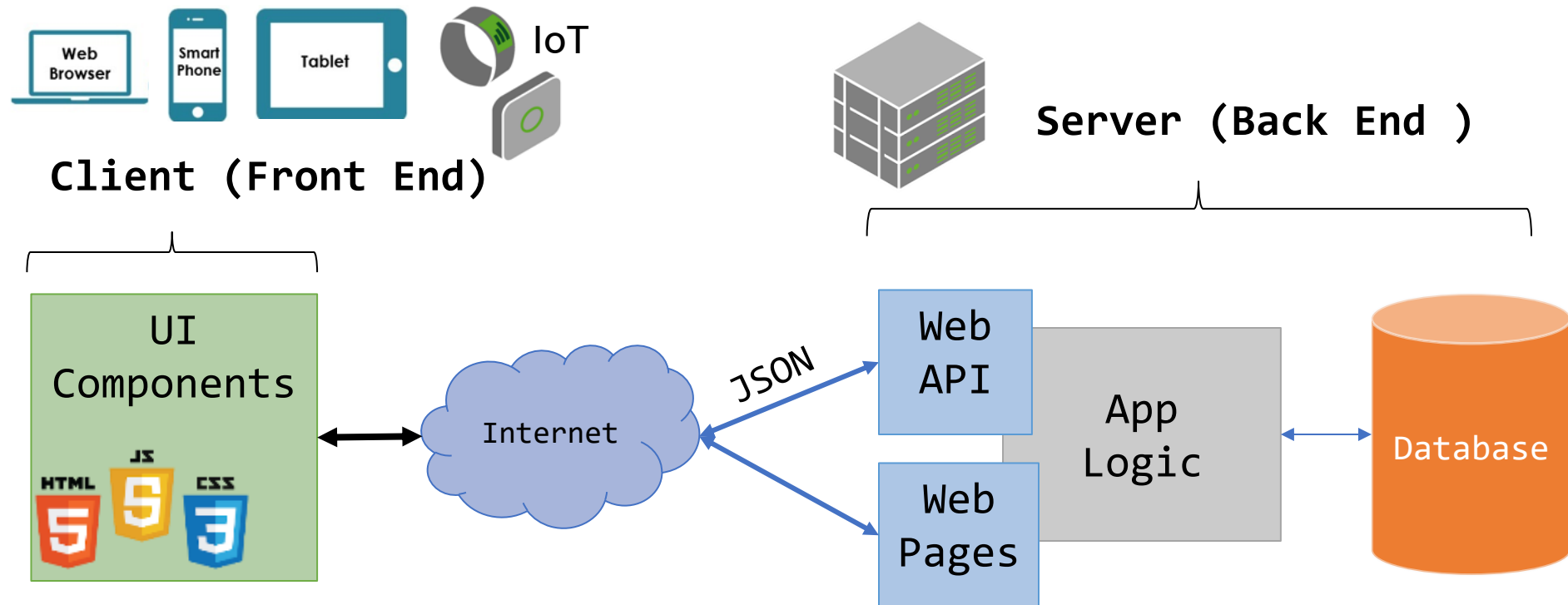
Web Pages
using ~~NEXT~~.JS

Outline

1. UI Components using React
2. Next.js routing
3. Data fetching
4. Server actions

Web App Architecture using Next.js

- Front-end made-up of **multiple UI components loaded** in response to user actions
- Back-end Web API and Web pages



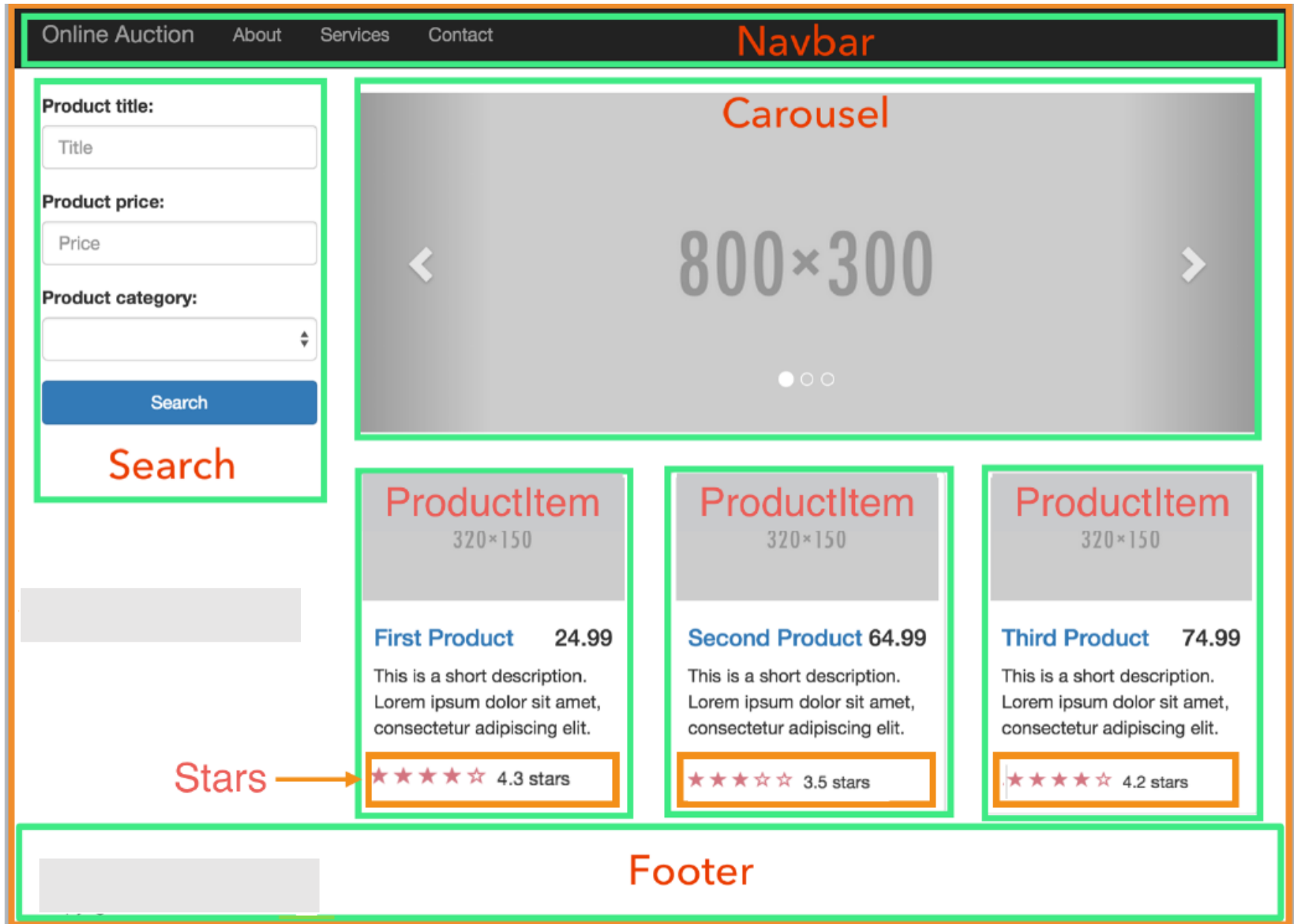
UI Components using React



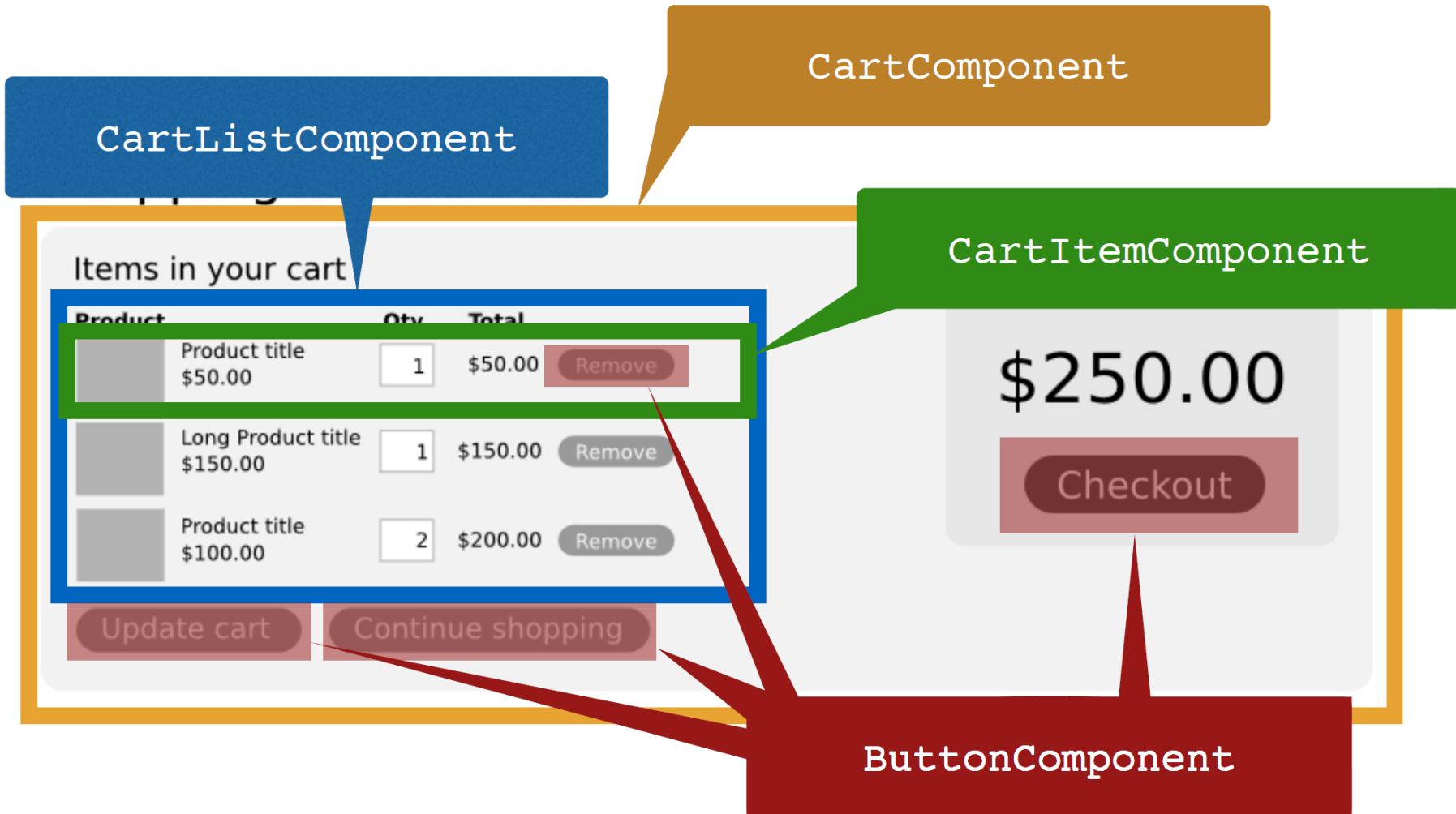
Used by Facebook, Instagram, Netflix, Dropbox, Outlook, Yahoo, Khan Academy,

<https://intellisoft.io/15-popular-sites-built-with-react-js/>

A page = a composition of components



A component = a tree of components



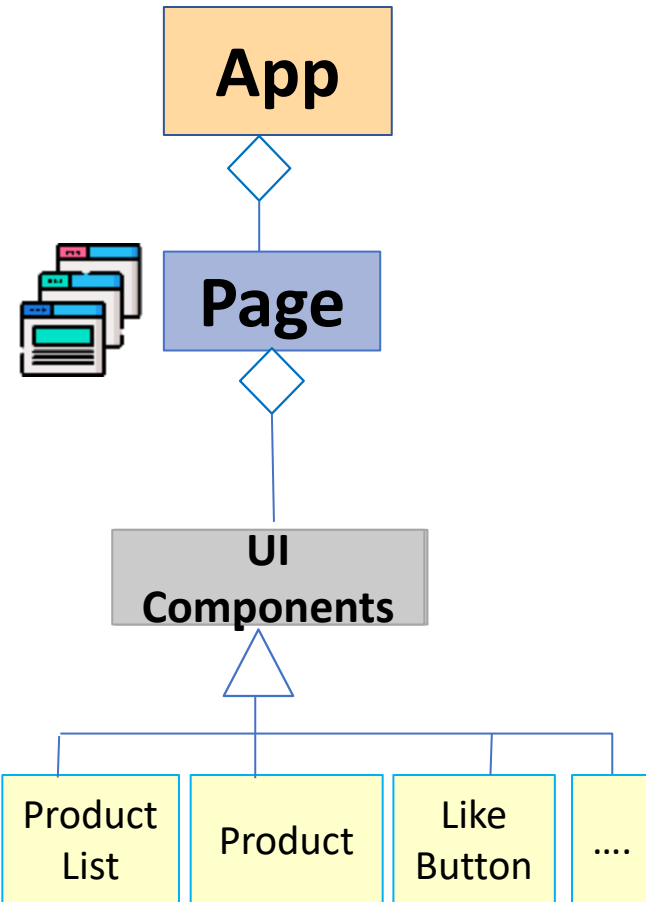
UI Components using React



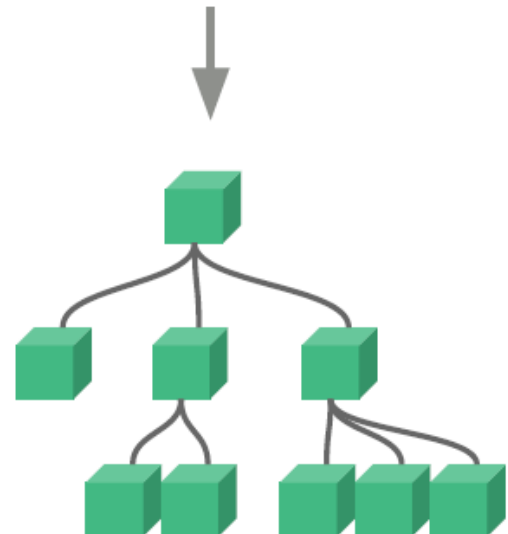
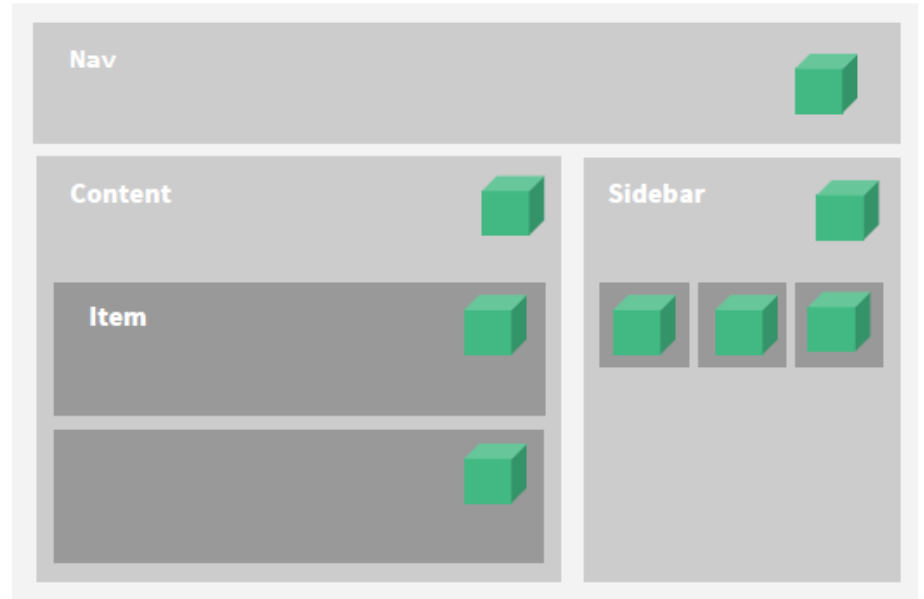
- React can be used to creation of dynamic and reusable UI components
- React is an open-source JavaScript library for building **modular, components-based user interfaces (UI)**
 - UI is **composed** of small reusable **components**
 - A UI Component encapsulates **UI elements** and their associated **behavior** (i.e., UI logic)
- React enables reusability, and ease of maintenance
- Open-sourced by Facebook mid-2013 - <https://react.dev/>
- Competing with Angular <https://angular.dev/> and Vue.js <https://vuejs.org/>

UI Programming Model using Next.js

- An app consists of one or multiple **pages**, each representing a distinct route within the app
- A **page** is UI Component composed of multiple smaller UI Components, following a hierarchical structure that promotes modularity, reusability, and maintainability
- A **UI Component** encapsulates UI elements and their associated behavior (i.e., UI logic)
- UI Components could be either **Server Components** (rendered on the server with optional caching) or **Client Components** (execute in the browser and handle client-side events)
- Client Components manage interactivity through:
 - (1) State variables, which store and update UI data dynamically, enabling reactive interfaces
 - (2) **Event Handlers**, which define responses to user interactions, such as button clicks or form submissions
- Pages can be wrapped in a **Layout component**, which acts as a shared container providing consistent UI elements across multiple pages, such as a header, footer, navigation bar, and sidebars.



React Components



Getting started

- Install latest **Node.js** <https://nodejs.org/en/>
- Download **VS Code** <https://code.visualstudio.com/>
- Create an empty folder (with no space in the name use **dash** - instead)
- Create a react app
npx create-next-app .
- Run the app in dev mode: **npm run dev**
- Build the app: **npm run build**
- Run the optimized build: **npm run start**

React Component

- React App = composition of **components**
- A ***component***:
 - Return **HTML elements** to provide the UI
 - Encapsulate **state** (internal component data) and **functions** to ***handle events*** raised from the UI elements
- Component = UI + display logic
- Components allows creating new '**HTML tags**'

React = A declarative component-based programming model

- UI is built using JavaScript functions
 - Each function define a piece the app's UI programmatically
 - As **state** changes the UI automatically updates (Reactive UI)
 - without imperatively mutating DOM
- Declarative = you define the UI content and structure, combined with different states (e.g., "is a modal open or closed?")
 - Then you leave it up to React to figure out the appropriate DOM instructions



How to define a piece of UI?

UI is **composed** of small reusable **components**

UI Component = a **function**:

- Takes some inputs and emits a piece of UI
- Function that converts the state (i.e., app data) into UI



- **UI = f(state) : UI is a visual representation of state**
(e.g., display a tweet and associated comments)
- **State changes trigger automatic update of the UI**



Component Example

- Create a **Welcome** component
 - Returns **JSX** : an HTML-like syntax to define the component UI
 - Can accept a parameter called **props**
 - to configure the component with different content / attributes - just like how HTML works (makes the component reusable)
 - **props** are read-only
 - Component name must start with a capital letter

```
function Welcome(props) {  
  return (<h1>Welcome to {props.appName}</h1>);  
}  
export default Welcome;
```

You can embed JavaScript expressions in JSX

- Use the **Welcome** component

```
<Welcome appName='React Demo App' />
```

What is JSX?

- React uses JSX (JavaScript XML) HTML-like markup to describe the component's UI
- Embraces the fact that rendering logic is inherently coupled with other UI logic
- JSX allows us to write HTML like syntax which gets transformed to JavaScript objects

JSX

```
const element = (  
  <h1 className="greeting">  
    Hello, world!  
  </h1>  
);
```

JavaScript


```
const element = React.createElement(  
  'h1',  
  {className: 'greeting'},  
  'Hello, world!'  
);
```

It's just JavaScript!!

Props destructuring

- In a **react** component you can destructure **props into variables**

```
function UserInfo(props) {  
  return (  
    <div>  
      First Name: {props.firstName}  
      Last Name: {props.lastName}  
    </div>  
  );  
}
```



```
function UserInfo({ firstName, lastName }) {  
  return (  
    <div>  
      First Name: {firstName}  
      Last Name: {lastName}  
    </div>  
  );  
}
```


Special "children" Prop

- The children property holds the content you might have provided between the component's opening and closing tags
 - A special children property auto-added by react

```
<Welcome name="Ali Faleh">  
  <h2>Welcome to QU</h2>  
</Welcome>
```

```
function Welcome({name, children}) {  
  return (  
    <>  
      <h1>Welcome {name}</h1>  
      {children}  
    </>  
  );  
}
```

Rendering a List of items (with .map())

Lists are handled using **.map** array function

```
function FriendsList({friends}) {  
  return <ul>  
    {friends.map( (friend, i) =>  
      <li key={i}>{friend}</li>  
    )}  
  </ul>  
}
```

- Fatima
- Mouza
- Sarah

```
<FriendsList>  
  <ul>  
    <li key="0">Fatima</li>  
    <li key="1">Mouza</li>  
    <li key="2">Sarah</li>  
  </ul>  
</FriendsList>
```

Key helps identify which items have changed, added or removed

- Use the **FriendsList** component

```
<FriendsList friends={['Fatima', 'Mouza', 'Sarah']}/>
```

List of item keys

Keys are very important in lists for the following reasons:

- A key is a unique identifier used to identify which list items have changed, are added, or are deleted from the list
- It also helps to determine which components need to be re-rendered instead of re-rendering all the components every time.
 - Therefore, it increases performance, as only the updated components are re-rendered

Next.js vs React

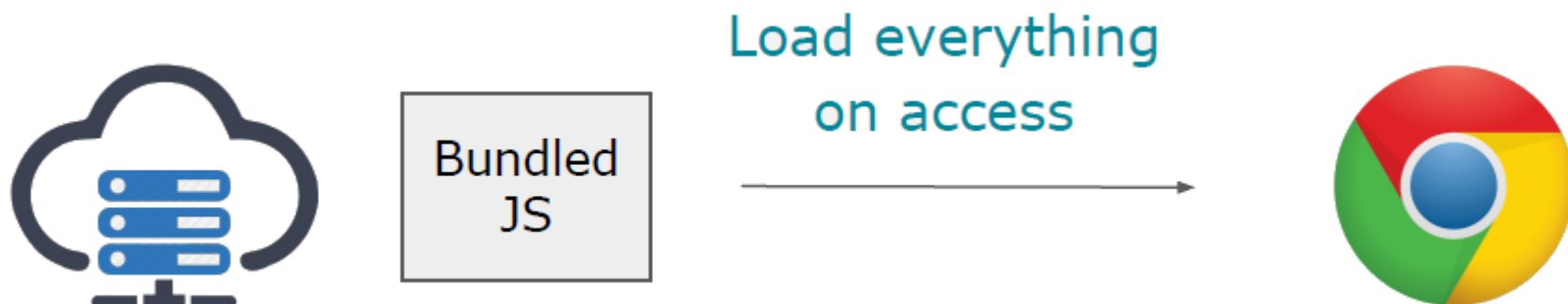
- React is just a **client-side JavaScript** library, Next.js is a framework for building rich and complete Web App **both on the client and server sides**
- React runs on the client side
 - Could negatively affect Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and
 - Slow initial load performance: To display the complete web app, the browser had to download the entire application bundle, parse its content, then execute it and render the result in the browser
 - which could take up to a few seconds for a large application

What is Next.js?

- Next.js = React-based full stack web framework that allows creating user interfaces, static pages, server-side rendered pages, and Web API
- It provides a large set of features out of the box, such as:
 - Automatic code-splitting
 - File system-based routing systems
 - Route prefetching
 - Web API Routes
 - Automatic image optimization
 - Different rendering strategies: Server-side rendering, Static site generation, Incremental static generation
 - Fast refresh on the development environment

Code splitting

- In Single Page Architecture (SPA), a large bundled file will be loaded as default



- With Next.js , code will be split on per page base as default



Project Folder Structure

- Next.js relies heavily on **convention** over configuration
 - Specific folder names (app/, public/) trigger core framework features
- Next.js uses **app/** folder for file-based routing
 - Folders = URL Segments (e.g., app/dashboard/ -> /dashboard)
 - **page.jsx** = **Route UI** defines the UI for that specific route segment
- **public/** serve static assets (e.g., images, font) from the app root (/)
 - E.g., public/my-image.png -> /my-image.png

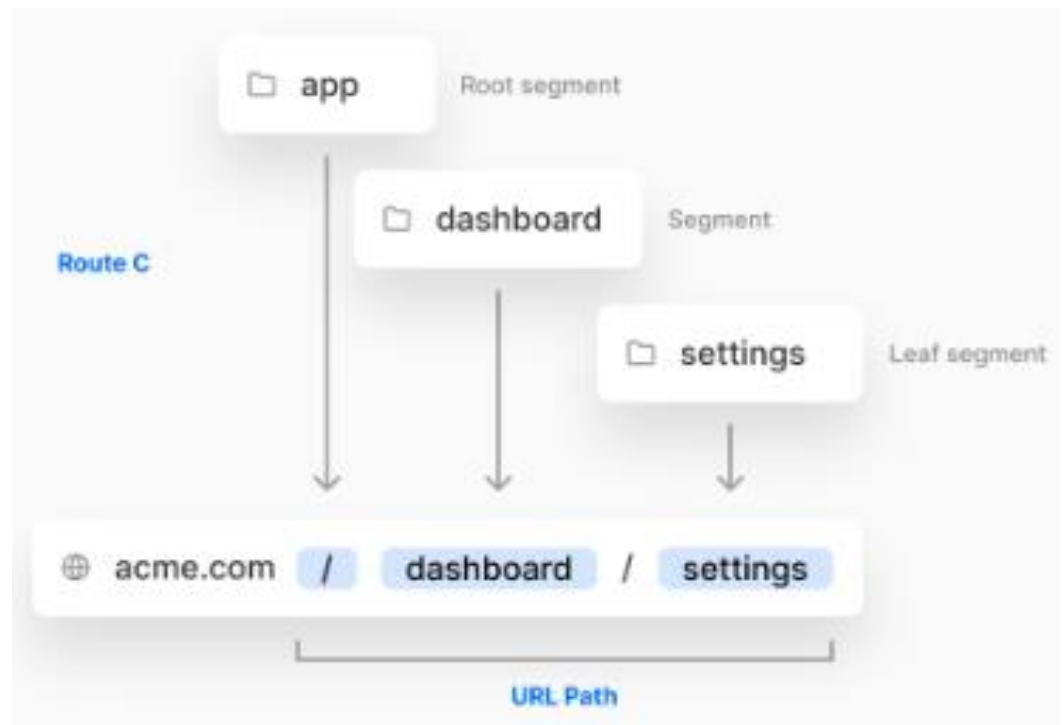
Routing

Routing

- Use folder hierarchy inside the **app** folder to define routes, and files to define UI
 - A route is a single path of nested folders, from the root folder down to a leaf folder
 - Use a special **page.js** file to define the route UI

- Each folder in the subtree represents a route segment in a URL path

- E.g., create `/dashboard/settings` route by nesting two subfolders in the app directory

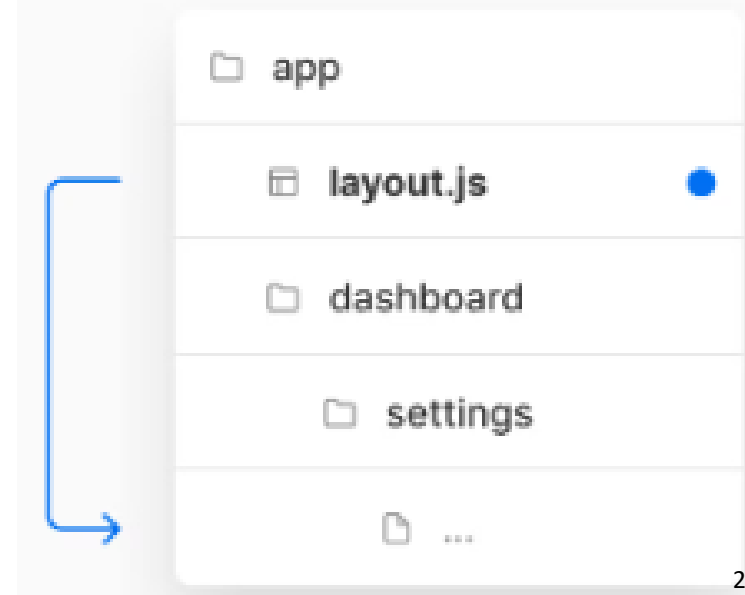


Layouts

- A layout is UI that is shared between route segments
 - Do not re-render (UI 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

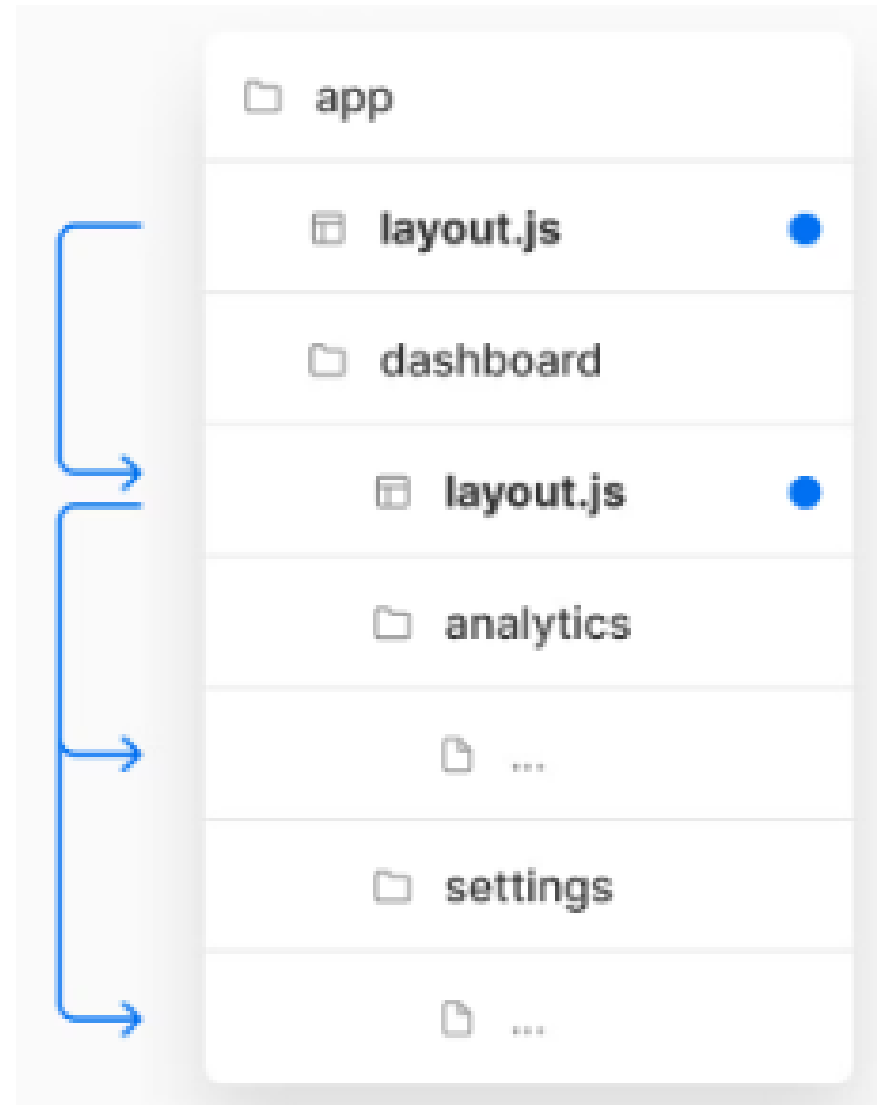
There are 2 types of layouts:

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



Nesting Layouts

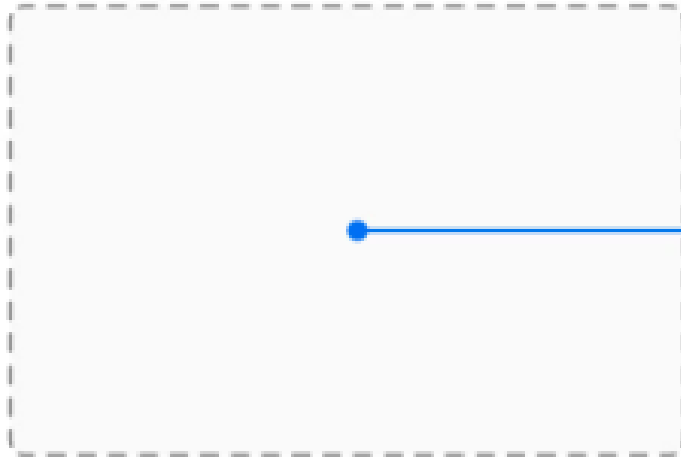
- Layouts that can be nested and shared across routes
- E.g., the root layout (**app/layout.js**) would be applied to the dashboard layout, which would also apply to all route segments inside **dashboard/***



Nesting Layouts

Root Layout

<Header />



<Footer />

Dashboard Layout

<DashboardSidebar />

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

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

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

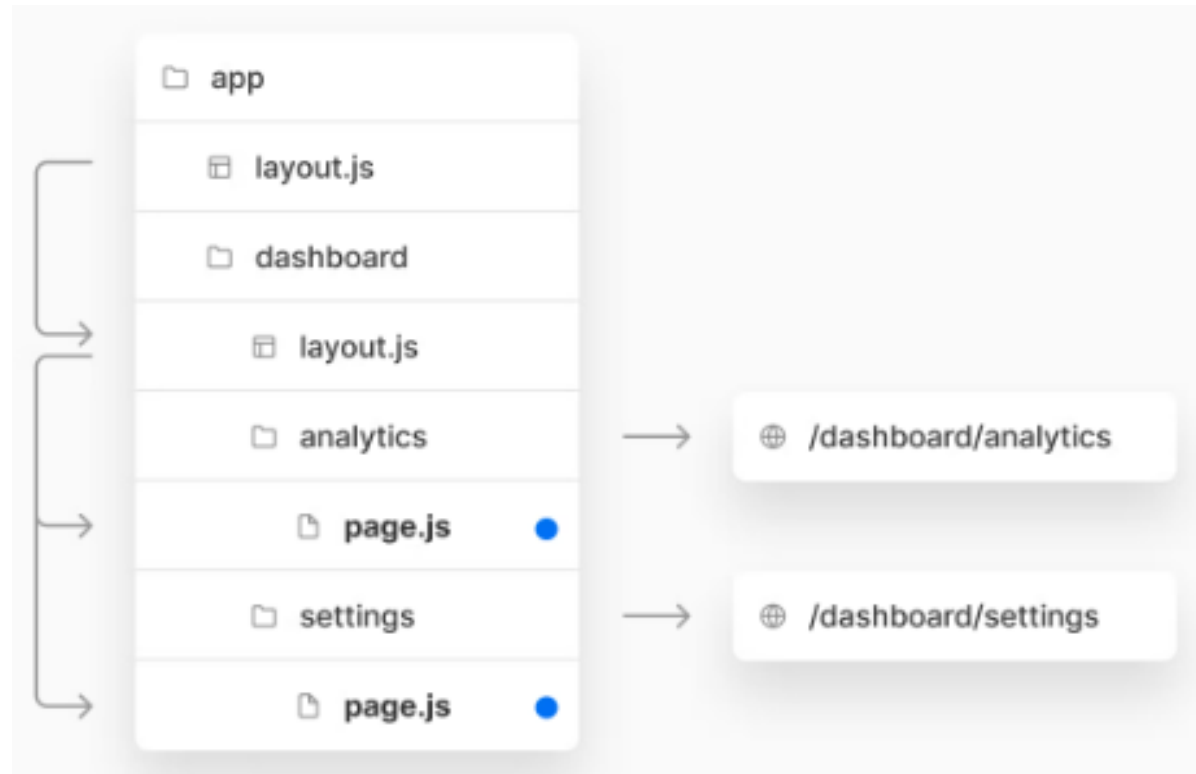
The above combination of layouts and pages would render the following component hierarchy:

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

UI Pages

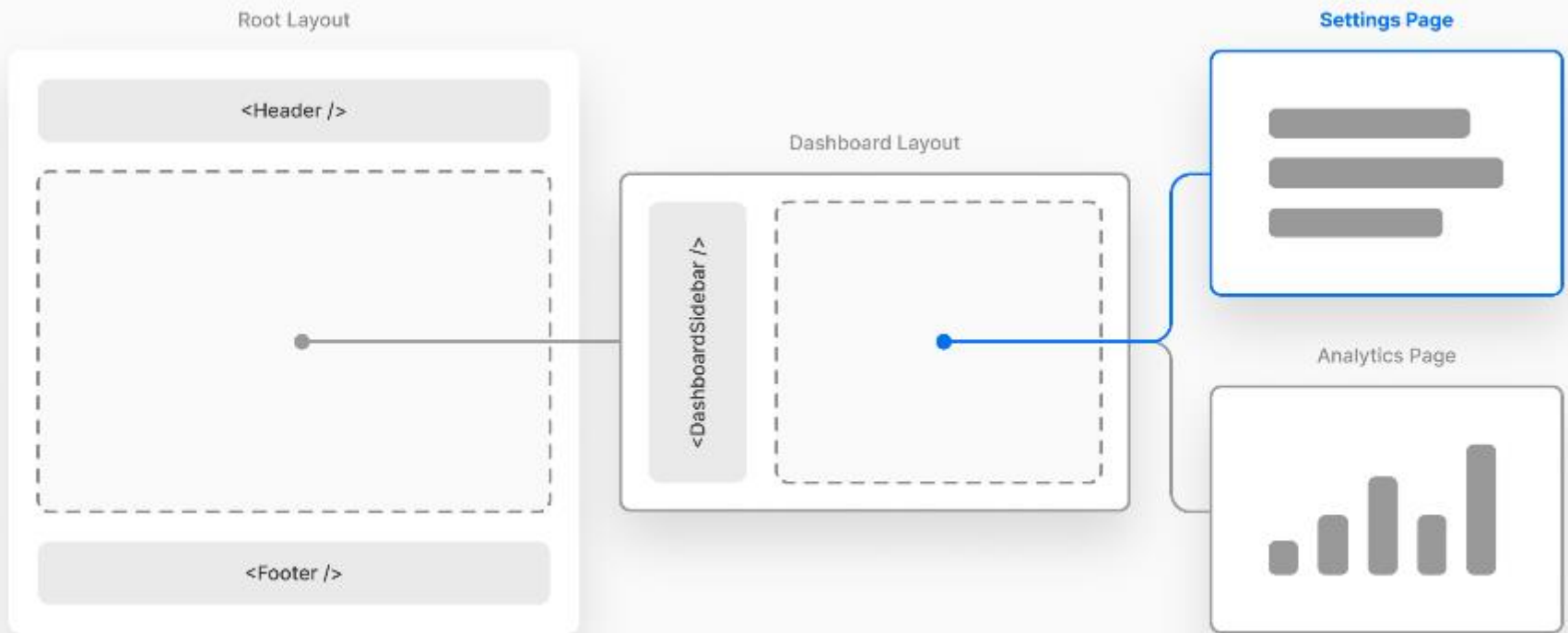
- You can create a page by adding a **page.js** file inside a folder
 - Can colocate your own project files (UI components, styles, images, test files, etc.) inside the app folder & subfolders

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



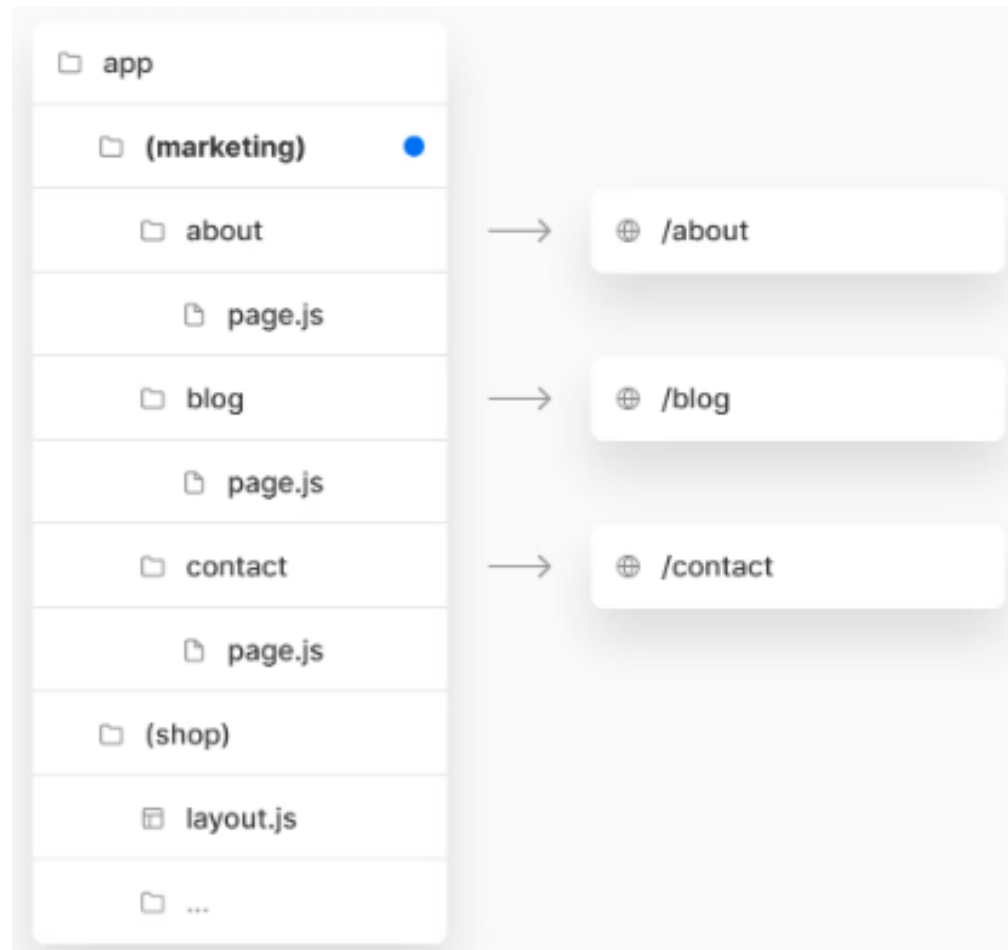
Pages are Wrapped in Layouts

- 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

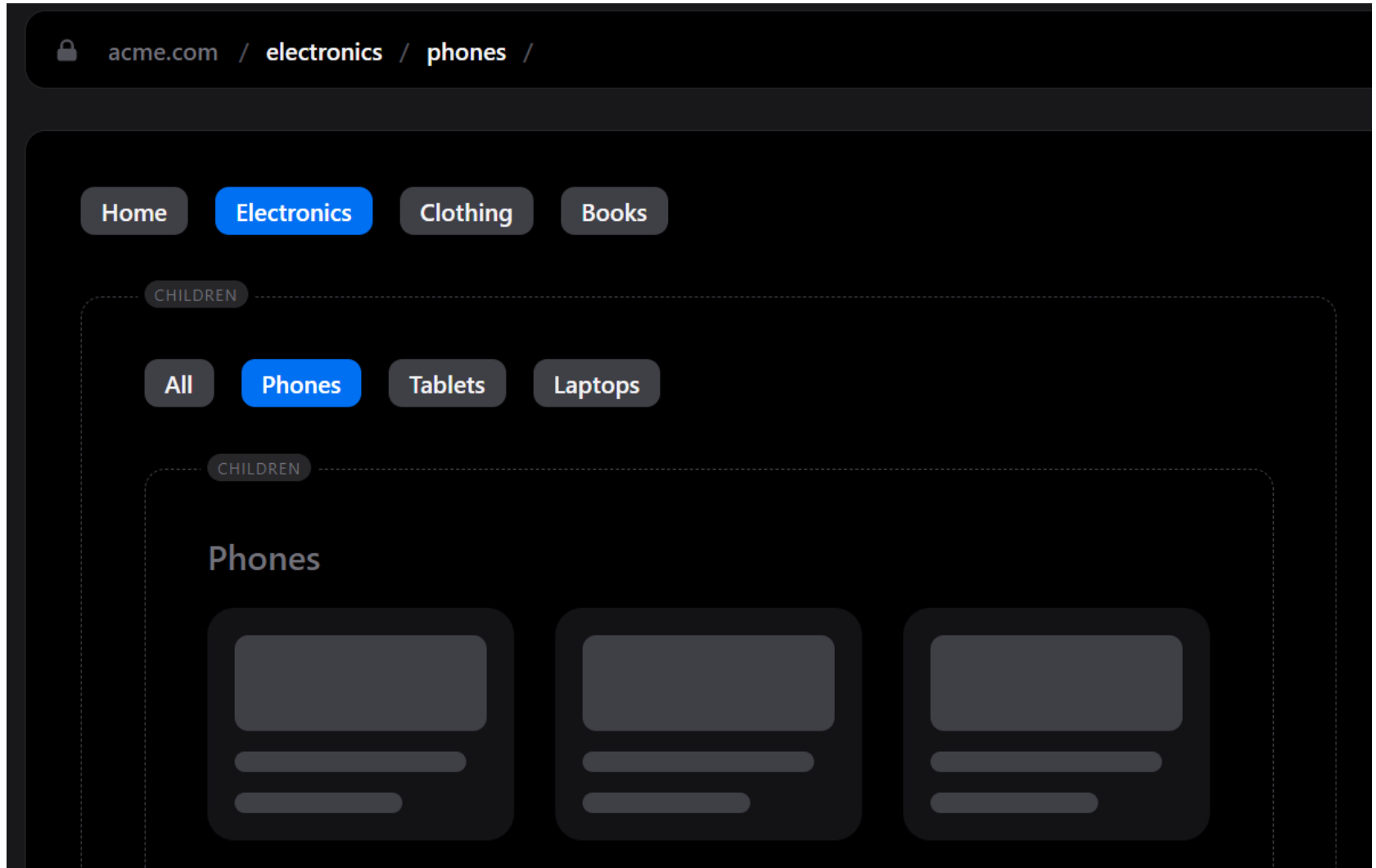


Organizing routes without affecting the URL path

- To organize routes, create a group to keep related routes together. The folders in parenthesis will be omitted from the URL (e.g. (marketing) or (shop))



Nested Layout Example



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

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

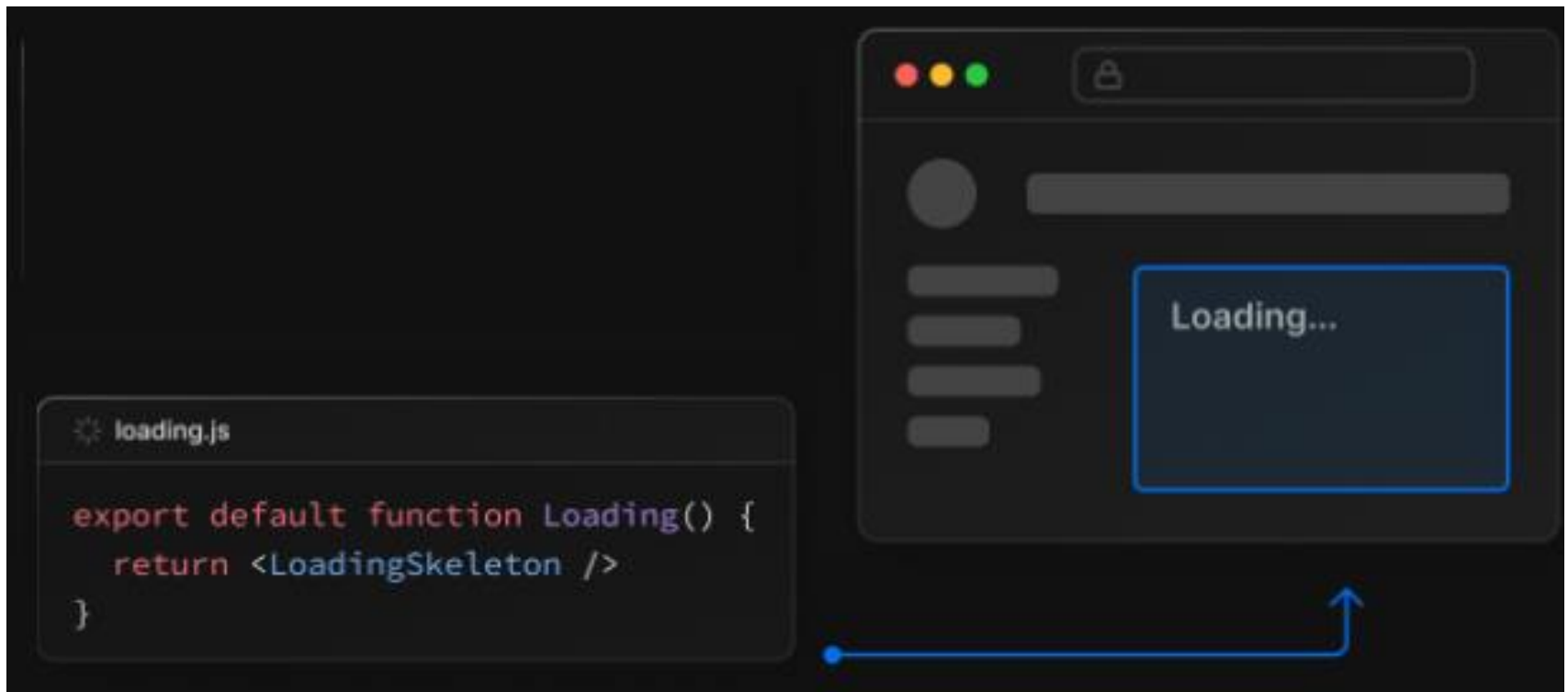
```
// app/page.js
// This file maps to the index route (/)
export default function Page() {
  return <h1>Hello, Next.js!</h1>;
}
```

Special Files (Beyond page.js)

- app/ directory uses several other Special File Conventions to build complex UI:
 - **layout.jsx**: Shared **UI shell** that wraps child layouts or pages. Crucial for persisting state and avoiding re-renders during navigation
 - Every route segment can have a layout. The root layout (app/layout.jsx) is mandatory.
 - **error.jsx**: Defines error UI for a specific segment
 - **not-found.jsx**: Defines the UI shown when the `notFound()` function is thrown or a route doesn't match
 - **loading.jsx**: Defines loading UI (such as a spinner) shown immediately while the content for a route segment loads

Loading UI

- **loading.jsx** 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.jsx

- **error.jsx** 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.jsx

- **not-found.jsx**:
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"
}
```

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

Linking between pages

- The Next.js router **Link** component to do **client-side** navigation between different routes
 - Prevents full page reloads for a faster, SPA-like experience
 - It does **partial page refresh** to display the UI of the target route in the href
 - Unlike a standard HTML `<a>` tag which causes a full page reload
- Prefetching (default): Pages for any `<Link />` in the viewport (visible to the user) are prefetched (including static data), making subsequent navigation feel instantaneous
 - 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 as a prop

```
import Link from 'next/link'

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


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="leerob" src={avatar} placeholder="blur" />;
}
```

Server Actions

Server Actions

- Server Actions are asynchronous functions that run only **on the server** to perform server-side logic
 - E.g., Handling form submissions, data mutations (creating, updating, deleting)
 - E.g., User fills and submits a form, a server action could be used to create a new blog post, updates their profile, or adds an item to a wish list
 - They can be called directly from React components (both Server and Client Components) without manually creating separate Web API endpoints
 - '**use server**' Directive: to mark a function or an entire file as containing Server Actions
 - Security: Execute securely on the server, never exposing sensitive logic or credentials to the client

Server Action - Example

```
export default function Page() {  
  // Server Action  
  async function create() {  
    'use server'  
    // Mutate data  
  }  
  
  return '...'  
}
```

Example Usage 1 - Handle Form Submission (CRUD Operations)

- Scenario: User fills out a contact form, creates a new blog post, updates their profile, or adds an item to a wish list
- Instead of creating a separate API route (/api/contact, /api/posts) to handle the POST request, you define a Server Action directly
 - It simplifies the code, keeps mutation logic closer to where it's triggered, and handles data submission securely on the server
 - Works seamlessly with html <form>

Example Usage 2 - Adding an Item to Card

- A list of products is displayed on a Server Component
 - Each product has an "Add to Cart" button that should add the item directly using `addToCart` Server Action
- The `addToCart` function is defined within or imported into the Server Component
 - It's marked with `'use server'`
 - The `<form>` uses the `action` prop to directly call this Server Action
 - When submitted, the form data is sent securely to the server, the action executes, interacts with the DB, and then revalidates the `/cart` path

Example Usage 3 - Quick Actions & Toggles (e.g., Likes, Bookmarks)

- Scenario: A user clicks a "Like" button on a post, toggles a "Mark as Read" status, or adds/removes an item from favorites without navigating away
- For simple state changes that need persistence, Server Actions are perfect
 - You can trigger them from a simple button click (often within a minimal `<form>`)
 - They avoid the need for full API routes for very small, specific mutations

Key Considerations

- Mutations Focus: Server Actions excel at changing data (POST, PUT, PATCH, DELETE semantics)
 - For purely fetching data (GET), use `async/await` in Server Components or Route Handlers
- Client-Side Feedback: When triggering from Client Components, use `useFormState` and `useFormStatus` for loading states, error handling, and success messages
- Data Revalidation: Remember to use `revalidatePath` or `revalidateTag` within your Server Action to ensure the UI reflects the data changes
- Security: Always validate input data within the Server Action, even if you have client-side validation. Never trust client input

Data Fetching

Data Fetching

- `fetch()` is a Web API used to fetch remote resources and returns a promise
- 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 '...';  
}
```

- Next.js extends the fetch options object to allow each request to set the desired caching and revalidating configuration

Data Fetching – Caching Config

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

- **auto no cache** (default): Next.js fetches the resource from the remote server on every request in development, but will fetch once during next build.
 - If [Dynamic APIs](#) such as cookies, headers, or the searchParams are used on the route, Next.js will fetch the resource dynamically at request time to ensure the data is fresh
- **no-store**: Next.js fetches the resource from the remote server on every request, even if Dynamic APIs are not used on the route
- **force-cache**: Next.js looks for a matching request in its Data Cache
 - If there is a match and it is fresh, it will be returned from the cache
 - If there is no match or a stale match, Next.js will fetch the resource from the remote server and update the cache with the downloaded resource

Data Fetching – Revalidate

```
fetch(`https://...`, { next: { revalidate: false | 0 | number } })
```

Set the cache lifetime of a resource (in seconds)

- **false** - Caches the data indefinitely (behaves like cache: 'force-cache')
 - The data is fetched once (at build time or first request) and stored indefinitely in the Data Cache until manually invalidated (e.g., using `revalidateTag` or `revalidatePath`)
- **0** - Prevents caching for this fetch request
 - Data is fetched fresh on every request
 - Functionally similar to `cache: fetch(URL, { cache: 'no-store' })`
- **number** - Specify the cache lifetime in seconds
 - The data is cached for the specified number of seconds (e.g., 60)
 - Enables Incremental Static Regeneration (ISR) for this fetch
 - After the time expires, the next request gets the stale cached data immediately, while Next.js triggers a background revalidation. If successful, the cache updates for subsequent requests
 - Used for data that needs periodic refreshing without blocking the user

Data Fetching – revalidateTag

```
fetch(`https://...`, { next: { tags:
['posts'] } })
```

- Set the cache tags of a resource
- Data can then be revalidated on-demand using [revalidateTag](#)

```
'use server'
import { revalidateTag } from 'next/cache'
export default async function submit() {
  await addPost()
  revalidateTag('posts')
}
```

Summary

- Next.js = React-based full stack web framework that allows creating user interfaces, static pages, server-side rendered pages, and Web API
- Next.js has a **file-system based router**: when a file is added to the **app** directory, it's automatically available as a route
 - In Next.js you can add brackets to the file name of a page to create a dynamic route
- To create Web API Route simply add handler functions to a route.js file under **app** folder

Resources

- Learn Next.js

<http://nextjs.org/learn>

- Next.js App Templates

<https://vercel.com/templates>

- Useful list of resources

<https://github.com/unicodeveloper/awesome-nextjs>