

CodeKickoff Responsive Website Design

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Project overview



The product:

CodeKickoff is a website designed to teach new developers and programmers the very basics of coding for the web. The typical user is between 20-50 years old, and most users are early in their career or looking to make a career change. CodeKickoff's goal is to make learning to code simple and approachable for new learners.



Project duration:

June 2023 to July 2023

CodeKickoff

Home Learn Contact

You can code.

We'll help you start from scratch.

Let's get started

What is coding?

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Why are we coding for the web?

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How do we get started?

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First steps

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

Introduction



Read More

HTML



Read More

CSS



Read More

Frequently Asked Questions

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Read More

CodeKickoff



Project overview



The problem:

Learning to code is overwhelming, and most resources are difficult to follow and contain jargon that discourages new learners.



The goal:

Design a website for CodeKickoff to be beginner-friendly and provide an easy-to-follow roadmap for learners.

Project overview



My role:

Lead UX designer



Responsibilities:

Conducting interviews, wireframing, low and high fidelity prototyping, designing for accessibility, and responsive design.

Understanding the user

- User research
- Personas
- Problem statements
- User journey maps

User research: summary



When I conducted user interviews, I talked to new coders over the internet who had recently learned the basics. I discovered that many target users shared the same frustrations of being overwhelmed by all the information available, feeling demotivated by excessive jargon in tutorials, and feeling like they lacked motivation and direction for learning to code.

User research: pain points

1

Overwhelming

There are countless resources for learning to code, and each resource is tailored for a different skill level. It's difficult to find the right resource, or even know if the resource is right for you.

2

Jargon

Sites that are aimed at beginners often have industry standard jargon that can confuse and discourage users from continuing to learn

3

Purpose

Many coding sites aim to teach users how to use a language without first explaining why they want to know it. For example, what careers or projects they can apply this knowledge to.

Persona: **Stacy Harden**

Problem statement:

Stacy Harden is a new college graduate who needs a resource to learn to code because she wants to prepare for a career in tech.



Stacy Harden

Age: 22
Education: Bachelor's Degree
Hometown: Little Rock, AK
Family: Lives alone, but has 2 parents and one brother.
Occupation: Part time office assistant

"I feel like I need to continue preparing for a more technological future"

Goals

- Wants a full-time career to increase her income and standard of living
- To develop a skill-set valued in the market
- To start building her own coding projects

Frustrations

- Has no idea where to begin
- There are too many coding resources, and she doesn't know which are good
- "Basic" tutorials have complicated information and jargon.

Stacy currently works part time as an office assistant after finishing a degree in marketing, but is currently doubting whether or not she wants a career in marketing. Stacy wants to find a career in tech, and knows she has to learn how to code. However, the resources she has found are overwhelming, difficult, or poorly explained.

User journey map

I created a user journey map for Stacy to show how she would navigate a coding site for beginners to expose any pain points in the process, as well as how the CodeKickoff site could improve.

Persona: Stacy

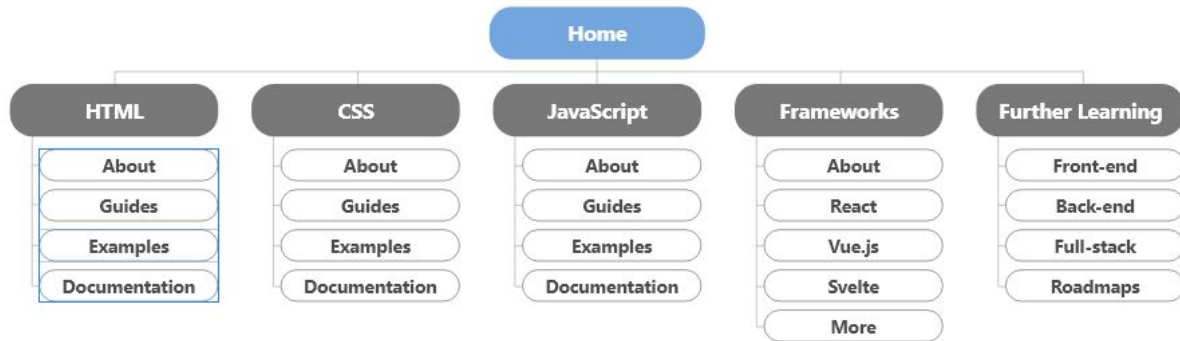
Goal: Find a website for learning to code, and how she should learn

ACTION	Choose online coding website	View homepage for information	Start reading about a desired programming language	Decide if this language helps her meet her goals	Begin watching tutorials
TASK LIST	Tasks A. Search for coding websites B. Choose a website with phrases like "beginner" and "basics"	Tasks A. Browse the homepage B. Try and understand the coding jargon C. Read about which programming languages the site offers	Tasks A. Scroll through headings for large concepts B. Read about the functions of the language	Tasks A. Consider if the features of the language align with a job she would want to do B. Read about other purposes for the language	Tasks A. Watch introductory video B. Decide if it met her expectations
FEELING ADJECTIVE	Excited to see what tutorials are available Anxious about the difficulty of learning something new	Overwhelmed by coding jargon Nervous about choosing the wrong language to learn Hopeful that further info will clarify confusion	Interested in what sorts of problems the programming language can solve Confused by specific terminology, but willing to spend more time learning	Happy that she understand the purpose of the language Still cautious and overwhelmed Hopeful that the tutorials will explain clearly	Thankful that the introduction video was short and simple Optimistic about trying to start learning something new and complicated
IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Feature welcoming language for beginners and those with little/ no coding knowledge	Keep all language on the homepage as simple as possible, and keep text as short as possible.	Minimize technical jargon Promote the specialties of the language or technology, and what its used for.	Include possible career paths and projects that a user can build.	Keep intro videos short and to the point, and gradually ease users into more complicated concepts.

Sitemap

The first iteration of the CodeKickoff sitemap had many more resources, which were pruned down and reorganized in the final version.

The original is displayed here.

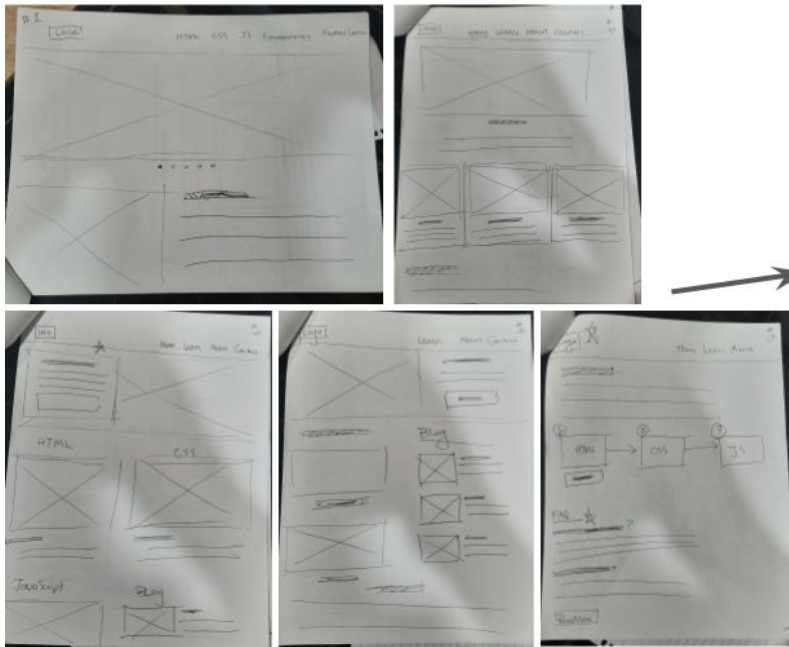


Paper wireframes

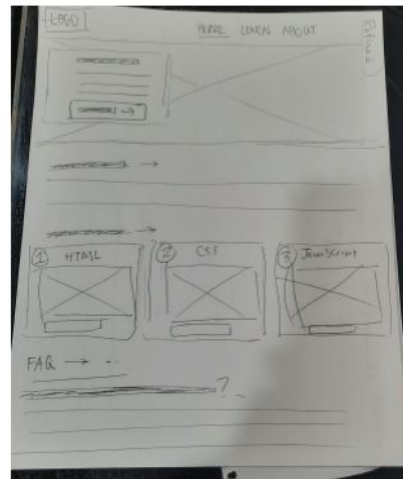
Next, I sketched out some wireframes for the home page while keeping the user's pain points in mind.

I decided that I needed a hero section that quickly brought users into the learning flow, and included simple information and a general roadmap and FAQ below.

Wireframe Sketches



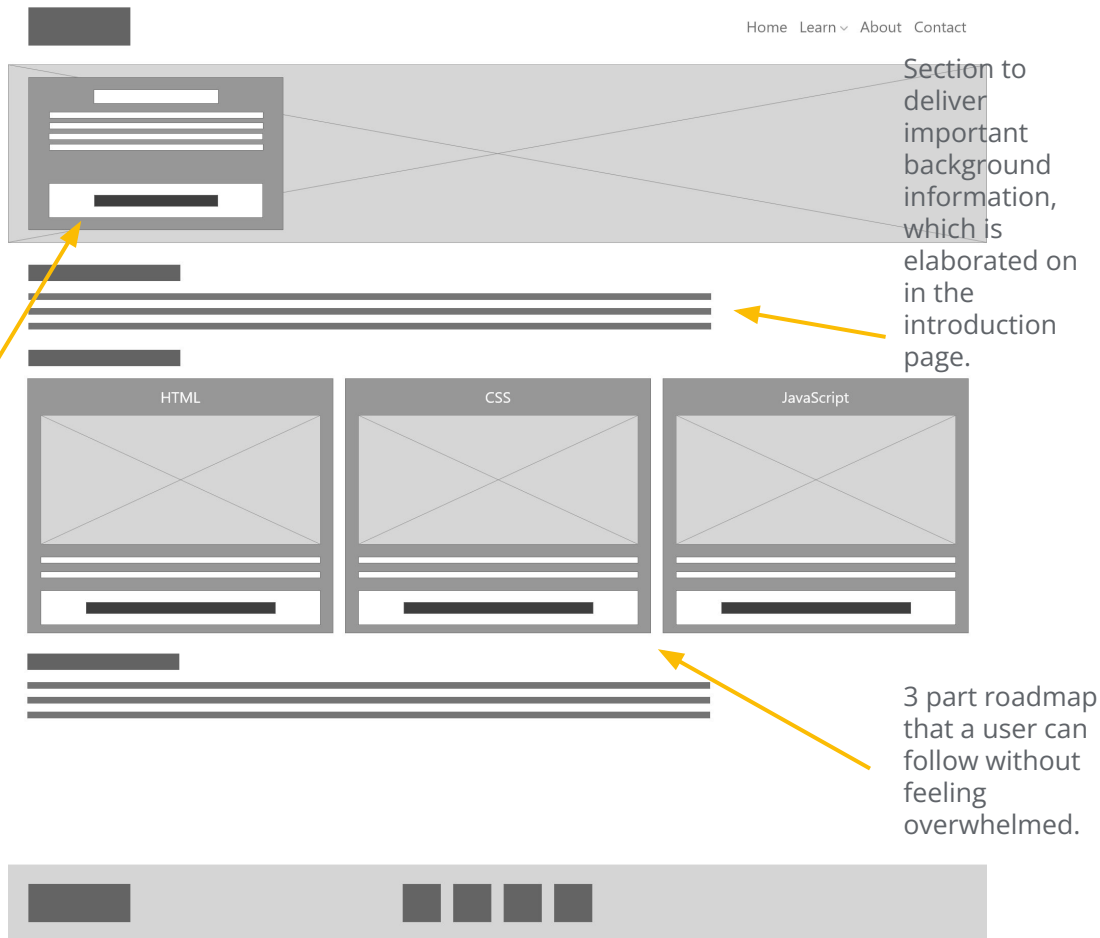
Refined Home Wireframe



Digital wireframes

The home page wireframe design addresses the observed user pain points by bringing users into the learning flow with simple language, as well as elaborating on basic concepts right up front.

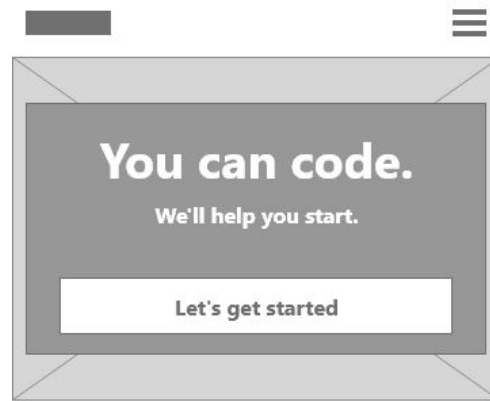
CTA modal right up top to bring new users into the "Introduction" section



Digital wireframe screen size variation(s)

On the mobile wireframe, I included some text that communicates the informal, friendly tone of the website.

As the user scrolls down, they are introduced to more of their learning roadmap and FAQs



What is coding?

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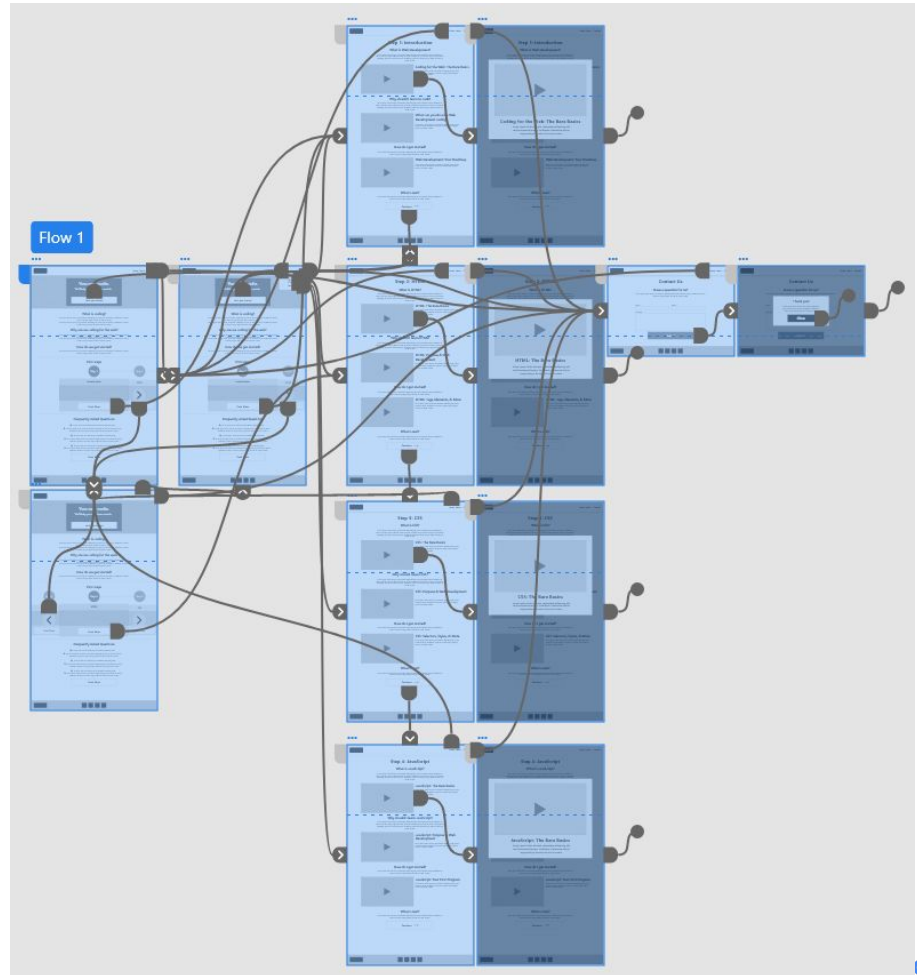
Your first steps



Low-fidelity prototype

The user-flow in this low fidelity prototype allows users to explore the informational pages of the website, and allows them to simulate submitting a contact form. From user feedback, I redesigned elements on the homepage to better illustrate the learning roadmap as an ordered step-by-step process, rather than as a list.

[Lo-fi Prototype](#)



Usability study: parameters



Study type:

Moderated usability study



Location:

United States, Florida



Participants:

5 participants



Length:

15-20 minutes

Usability study: findings

These were the main findings I uncovered:

1

Order

Although users recognized that I had listed what information they needed, they didn't know what order to learn the info in.

2

Relevance

Users did not think that the About Us page on the site was important or relevant to their learning

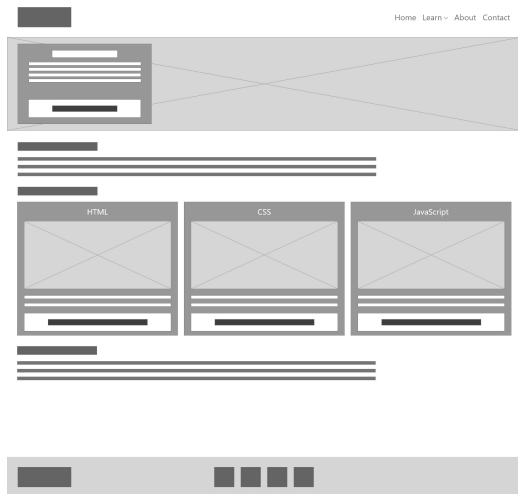
Refining the design

- Mockups
- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility

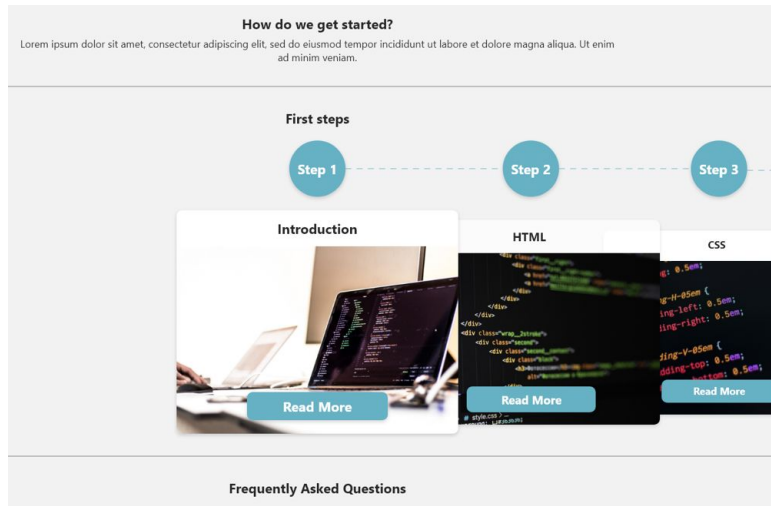
Mockups

Based on the insights from the usability study, I reorganized and added numbered elements to the home page, such as “Step 1” and “Step 2” to better illustrate the learning process that the user should follow.

Before usability study

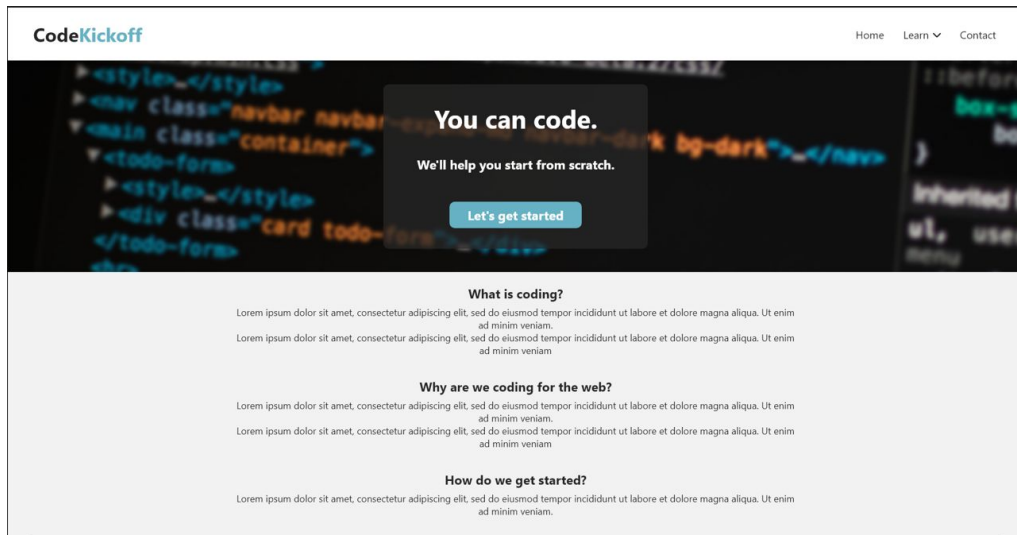


After usability study



Mockups: Screen size variations

Desktop

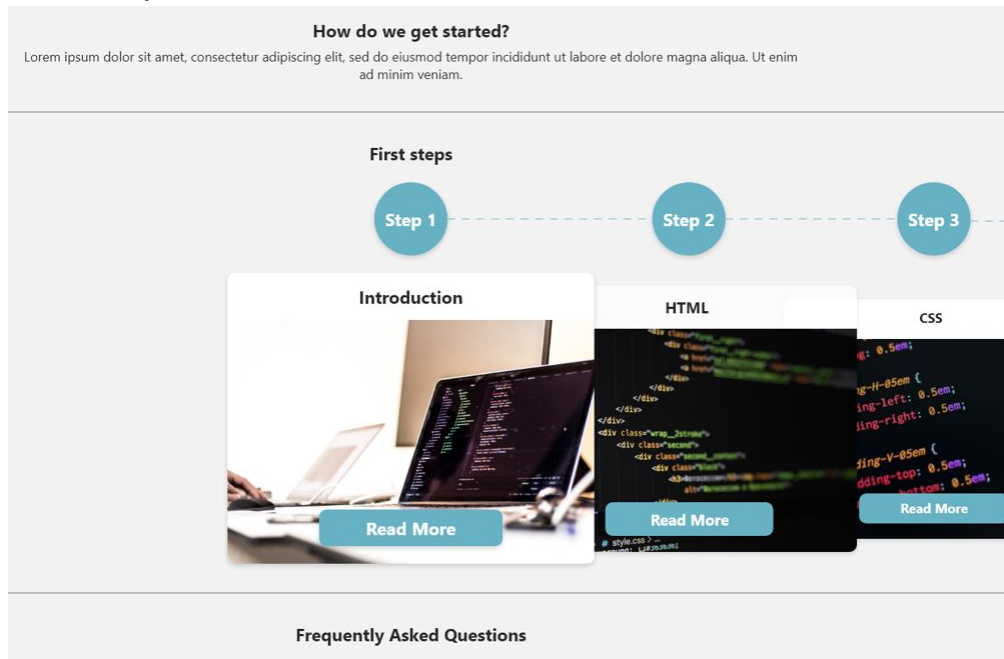


Mobile

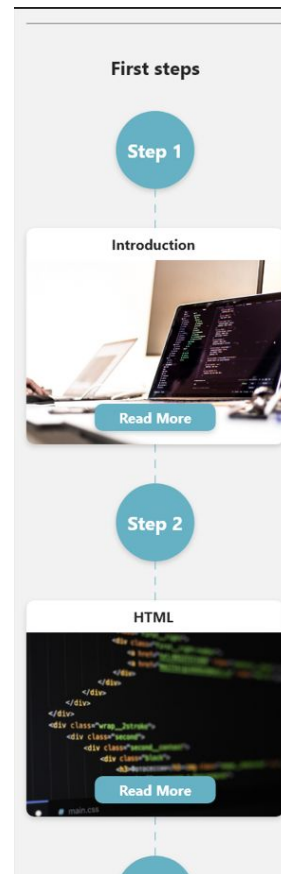


Mockups: Screen size variations

Desktop



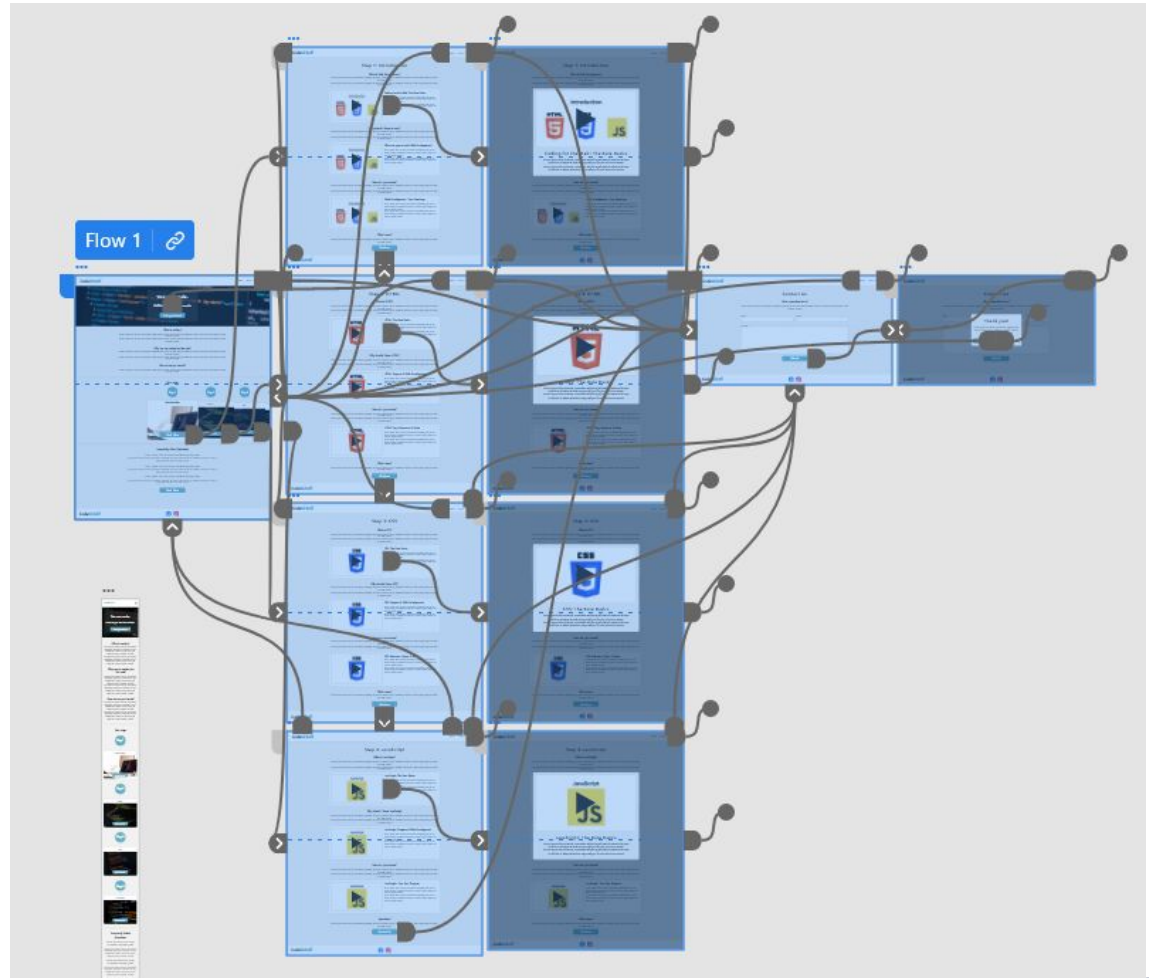
Mobile



High-fidelity prototype

This high fidelity prototype follows the same user flow and general design as the low fidelity prototype, but I've replaced the placeholder colors and assets with those close to the final product.

[Hi-Fi Prototype](#)



Accessibility considerations

1

I've used high-contrast colors on the text and backgrounds so the content is easy to read even for low-sighted people.

2

I used headings and different text sizes to establish clear visual hierarchy in my content.

3

Alt text will be available for all images once the product ships, allowing for those with screen readers to understand what each image portrays.

Going forward

- Takeaways
- Next steps

Takeaways



Impact:

Our target users stated that the design was much easier and more intuitive to navigate and read through once the placeholder content was replaced with images and brand colors.



What I learned:

The most important takeaway for me in this project is that simple changes, such as adding an order for educational content to be learned, can profoundly change the user experience and offer clarity where users were previously confused.

Next steps

1

Test out whether adding links to additional learning materials in each lesson would change how the user feels about the learning experience

2

Iterate on the step-by-step lesson carousel on the homepage to find a simpler design that users enjoy.

3

Test whether a darker blue on the calls to action would offer better contrast for low-sighted users.

Let's connect!



Thank you for taking the time to review my work on the CodeKickoff responsive website.

If you'd like to see more of my projects, please feel free to check out my portfolio website at:

connorwg.com