

UX/UI Design Strategist Roadmap

Phase 1: UX Foundations & Research (Weeks 1-5)

Week	Focus Area	Key Concepts	Recommended Resources (Free/Low-Cost)	Project / Practice Goal
1	Intro to UX & Design Thinking	Definition of UI vs. UX, User-Centered Design (UCD) , The 5 stages of Design Thinking, Role of a Product Designer.	Nielsen Norman Group (NN/g) articles, Google UX Design Certificate (Intro), "The Design of Everyday Things" (Don Norman).	Define and diagram the UX process for a familiar digital product.
2	User Research Methods	Qualitative vs. Quantitative Research, User Interviews, Surveys, Competitive Analysis, User Personas creation.	NN/g (User Research), Templates for User Interview Scripts.	Conduct 5 user interviews and create 3 detailed User Personas for a chosen app idea.
3	Information Architecture (IA)	User Flows (Task Analysis), Sitemaps , Card Sorting (conceptual), Navigation design principles.	Articles on IA and Navigation Design, Tools like Miro/FigJam for flow diagrams.	Create a comprehensive Sitemap and User Flow for your app idea.
4	Empathy & Journey Mapping	Empathy Maps , User Journey Maps (Current vs. Future State), Jobs To Be Done (JTBD) framework.	Templates for Empathy Maps and Journey Mapping.	Create an Empathy Map and User Journey for one of your personas.

5	Interaction Design (IxD)	Heuristic Evaluation (Jakob Nielsen's 10), Fitts' Law, Hicks' Law, Gestalt Principles, Microinteractions (conceptual).	Laws of UX website, Articles on Microinteractions.	Perform a Heuristic Evaluation on a chosen, poorly designed website/app.
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Phase 2: UI & Prototyping Mastery (Weeks 6-10)

Week	Focus Area	Key Concepts	Recommended Resources (Free/Low-Cost)	Project / Practice Goal
6	Wireframing & Fidelity	Low-Fidelity (Sketching), Mid-Fidelity (Figma usage basics), Annotations, Designing for different screen sizes (Responsive basics).	Figma Tutorials (Official & YouTube), Wireframe templates.	Create Low and Mid-Fidelity Wireframes (in Figma) for 5 core screens of your app.
7	Visual Design Fundamentals	Color Theory (Color Palettes, Accessibility), Typography (Hierarchy, Font Pairing), Visual Hierarchy.	WebAIM Contrast Checker (for accessibility), Google Fonts, Articles on Typographic Scale.	Create a Typography Scale and Color Palette (with accessibility checks) for your app.

8	UI Components & Layout	Atomic Design principles, Component creation (Buttons, Cards, Forms), Auto Layout in Figma, Layout Grid systems.	Figma Component/Auto Layout tutorials, Material Design/Apple HIG documentation.	Build a reusable Button Component system in Figma using Variants and Auto Layout.
9	Prototyping & Motion	High-Fidelity Mockups, Creating a Clickable Prototype in Figma, Basic animation and motion design principles (conceptual).	Figma Prototyping Tutorials , Tutorials on animating microinteractions.	Create a High-Fidelity Mockup and a Clickable Prototype for your main user flow.
10	Design Systems & Scalability	Introduction to Design Systems (Style Guides, Component Libraries), Documentation, Designer-Developer handoff process.	Official documentation of major design systems (e.g., Atlassian, Polaris).	Document your Style Guide and Component Library for your Capstone Project.

Phase 3: Testing & Career Launch (Weeks 11-14)

Week	Focus Area	Key Concepts	Recommended Resources (Free/Low-Cost)	Project / Practice Goal

11	Usability Testing	Planning and conducting usability tests, Moderated vs. Unmoderated testing, Synthesizing Feedback and making design iterations.	Maze or UsabilityHub (Free tiers), Templates for Usability Test Plans.	Conduct a small Usability Test on your Figma prototype and document 5 critical findings.
12	Accessibility & Inclusive Design	WCAG Guidelines (Basics), Designing for screen readers, Color contrast and visual impairments, Design for edge cases.	WebAIM Guidelines , Articles on Inclusive Design.	Audit your prototype against WCAG AA standards and implement necessary changes.
13	Portfolio & Case Study Design	Structuring a compelling Case Study (Problem, Process, Solution, Impact), Visual storytelling of the design journey.	Top designer portfolios (Behance, Dribbble), Case Study templates.	Draft the written content and organize the visual assets for your Capstone Project Case Study.
14	Career Launch & Capstone	Final Portfolio Review , Design-focused interview prep (Portfolio Walkthrough, Whiteboard Challenge practice), Final presentation skills.	UpStride Cohort 8 Materials (Resume/Branding), Mentor feedback on portfolio presentation.	Final Project Presentation: Present your full design process from research to high-fidelity prototype.

What's Next? Your Path After 14 Weeks

Career Action	Specific Goal / Outcome	Tools & Resources
Deepen Portfolio	Complete 3-5 Diverse Case Studies (e.g., Mobile App, Responsive Web, Dashboard) to showcase versatility.	Sharpen.design (for challenge prompts), Mentor review of portfolio presentation flow.
Specialized Skills	Master a niche: Motion Design (Principle/Figma), UX Writing/Content Strategy , or Code Fluency (HTML/CSS basics for better dev handoff).	Figma Animation Tutorials , Courses on UX Writing, freeCodeCamp (HTML/CSS basics).
Launch Job Search	Focus intensely on design-specific interview practice (Whiteboard Challenges) and securing a Junior/Associate Design role.	UpStride Job Search & Branding Architect Cohort (Networking & Negotiation), Mock Interview practice (Whiteboard focus).