Expedia Heuristics Perspective

Week 5 Assignment- Hritika Kucheriya

Introduction

This report evaluates the usability of Expedia.com based on Jakob Nielsen's 10 Usability Heuristics. The assessment is based on my experience planning an imaginary vacation, including booking a flight, hotel, and other travel arrangements.

Each heuristic is analyzed with screenshots and critiques, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement.

Visibility of System Status

I LIKE

Expedia provides real-time loading indicators when searching for flights and hotels.

Price updates and availability changes are clearly displayed.

Progress indicators during checkout help track the booking process.
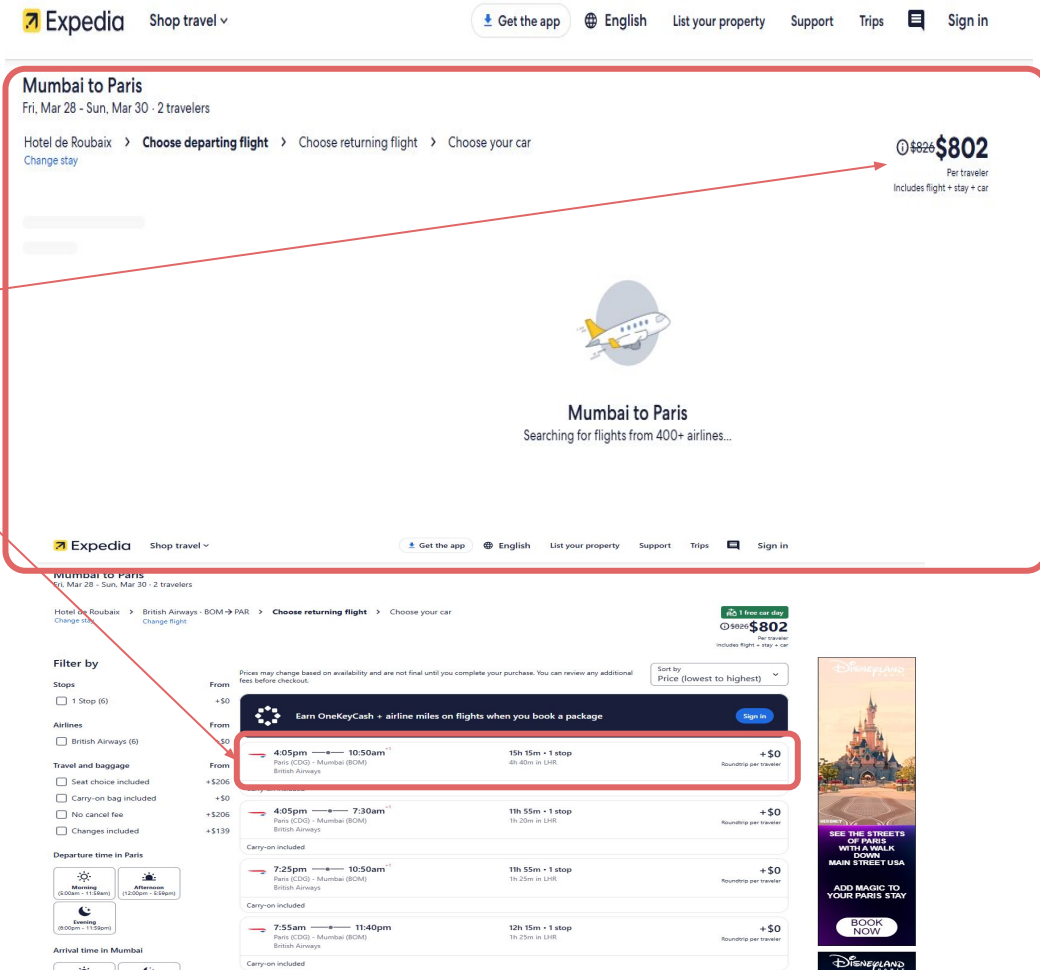
I WISH

Some search results take too long to load without feedback, leading to uncertainty.

The price breakdown during checkout could be clearer, especially with additional fees.

WHAT IF

Add loading spinners or progress bars for better feedback.

Improve price transparency before checkout.

Match Between System and the Real World

I LIKE

Uses real-world terminology (e.g., "Check-in," "Round-trip," "Traveler Reviews").

Displays hotel images, flight times, and location maps similar to real-world expectations.
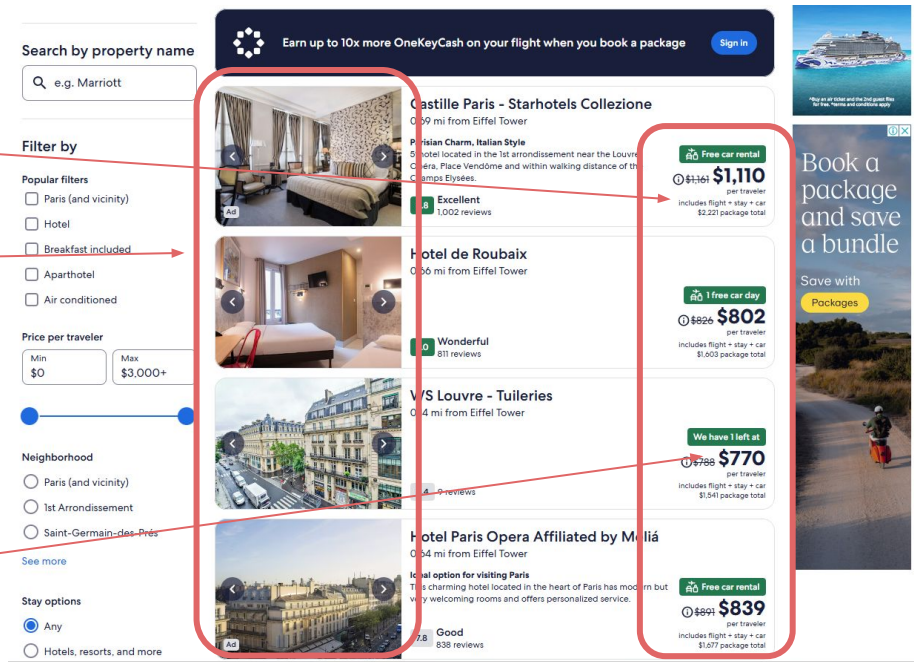
I WISH

Some icons are unclear, making it difficult to interpret their functions.

Currency conversion is not always automatic, causing confusion for international travelers.

WHAT IF

Improve icon labels and tooltips for better understanding.

Enable automatic currency conversion based on user location.

User Control and Freedom

I LIKE

Users can modify bookings, change flights, and cancel reservations easily.

"Back" button and filters allow flexibility in modifying searches.

I WISH

Some hotel bookings have strict no-refund policies, which users might not notice.

There is no quick way to reset all filters on search results.

WHAT IF

Improve refund policy visibility during booking.

Add a "Clear Filters" button to reset search criteria.

Consistency and Standards

I LIKE

Design elements like buttons, fonts, and navigation menus are consistent.

Uses common e-commerce patterns (shopping cart, checkout process).

I WISH

Some hotel and flight booking pages look different based on third-party integrations.

The "Save for Later" feature is inconsistent across different bookings.

WHAT IF

Improve refund policy visibility during booking.

Add a "Clear Filters" button to reset search criteria.

Error Prevention

I LIKE

Forms prevent users from entering invalid dates, incorrect payment details, or missing fields.

The "Are you sure?" prompt before finalizing a booking reduces mistakes.

I WISH

Some multi-city flight bookings fail without clear explanations.

Cancellation policies are not always visible upfront, leading to errors.

WHAT IF

Provide clearer error messages when bookings fail.

Display cancellation policies prominently before booking.

Recognition Rather Than Recall

I LIKE

Saved trips and past bookings help users continue from where they left off.

Icons and labels (e.g., "Free Cancellation") reduce the need to remember details.

I WISH

Users must re-enter search details when switching between flights and hotels.

The website doesn't always remember previous preferences, like seat selection.

WHAT IF

Allow search preferences to persist across sessions.

Save seat and meal preferences for frequent flyers.
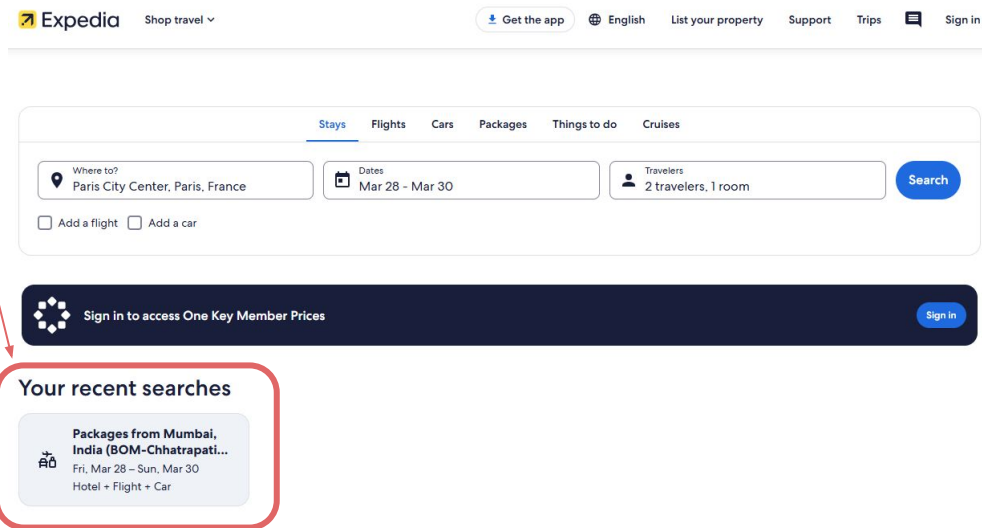
Flexibility and Efficiency of Use

I LIKE

Filters and sorting options help narrow down choices quickly.

Power users can use Expedia rewards and promotions efficiently.

I WISH

Multi-city booking requires too many manual inputs, making it time-consuming.

No quick "Compare" feature to evaluate multiple hotels side by side.

WHAT IF

Improve multi-city booking UX by allowing saved preferences.

Add a "Compare Hotels" button for easier decision-making.
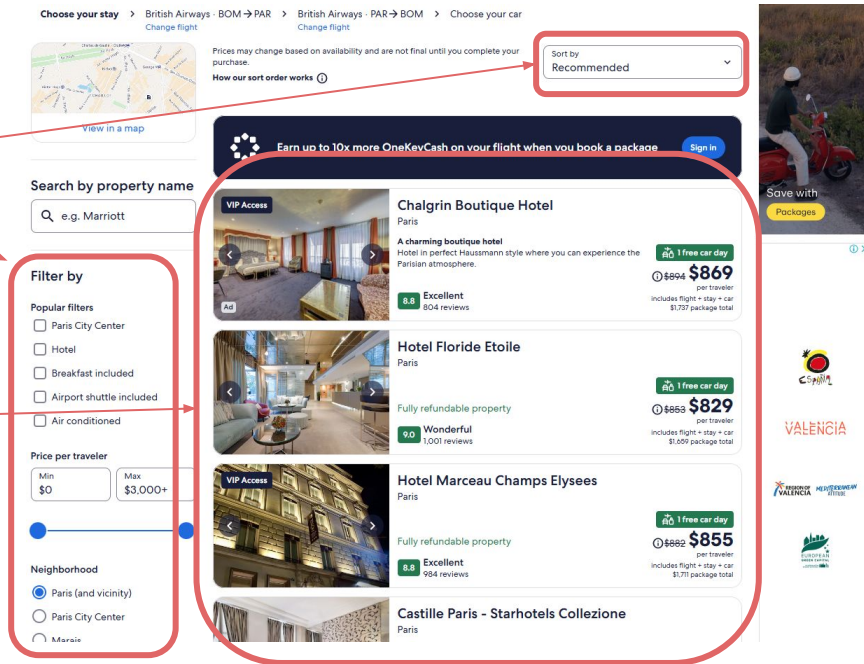
Aesthetic and Minimalist Design

I LIKE

Clean, professional layout with high-quality images and icons.

Well-structured pricing and important details highlighted in bold.

I WISH

Some areas feel cluttered, especially with ads and cross-promotions.

The checkout page could be more streamlined with fewer distractions.

WHAT IF

Reduce promotional clutter, especially during booking.

Make the checkout page simpler and more focused on payment details.

Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors

I LIKE

Error messages are generally clear, especially for missing information.

Refund policies are explained in case of booking mistakes.

I WISH

Some error messages lack actionable steps (e.g., when payment fails).

No auto-suggestions for fixing common errors.

WHAT IF

Provide step-by-step solutions when errors occur.

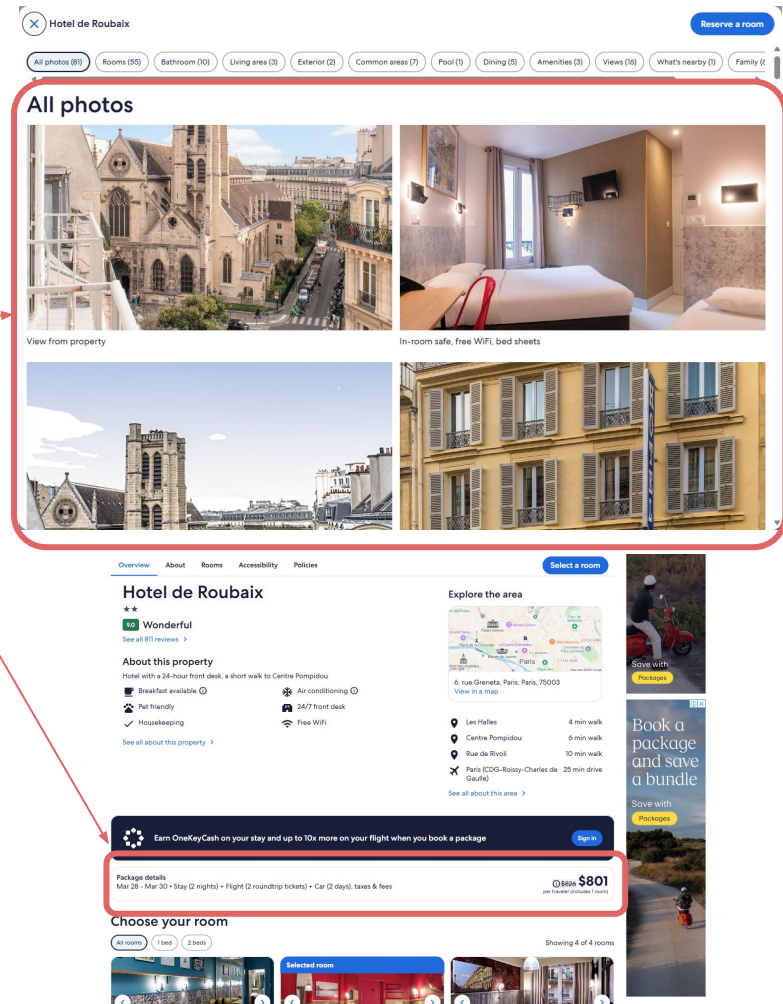Add auto-suggestions for input mistakes (e.g., incorrect airport codes).

Who's flying?

Traveler names must match your government-issued photo ID exactly.

Mumbai (BOM) to Paris (CDG) Fri, Mar 28 - Sun, Mar 30

Traveler 1: Adult, primary contact

First name*   Middle name   Last name*

Please enter a first name using letters only.

Email address*

a

Please enter a valid email address.

Country/Territory Code

United States of America +1

Phone number*

Please enter a valid phone number.

Help and Documentation

I LIKE

Expedia offers a detailed Help Center and customer support chat.

FAQs cover common issues like refunds, itinerary changes, and baggage policies.
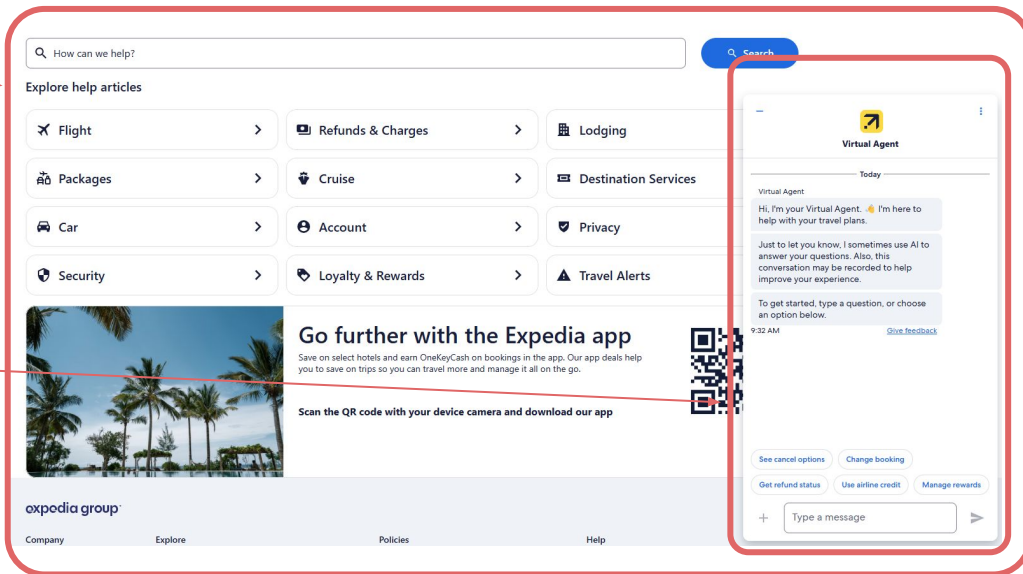
I WISH

The chatbot struggles with complex queries, often redirecting users.

Some help pages are buried under multiple clicks.

WHAT IF

Improve chatbot AI to handle complex support questions.

Make the Help section easier to access from the main menu.

Summary & Recommendations

I LIKE:

Clear system status updates and real-world terminology enhance usability.

Consistent design and strong error prevention create a smooth experience.

Helpful filters, saved trips, and user-friendly navigation improve efficiency.

I WISH:

Better feedback during errors and failed searches is needed.

More flexibility in search persistence across different sections.

Reducing clutter and making help documentation easier to access.

FINAL RECOMMENDATION:

Expedia offers a well-designed and mostly intuitive booking experience. However, improving error messaging, consistency across all booking pages, and reducing unnecessary clutter would greatly enhance usability and efficiency.