Modern Design

# Visual Design

(n.) the aesthetic appeal or look-and-feel aspect of a tech product, or

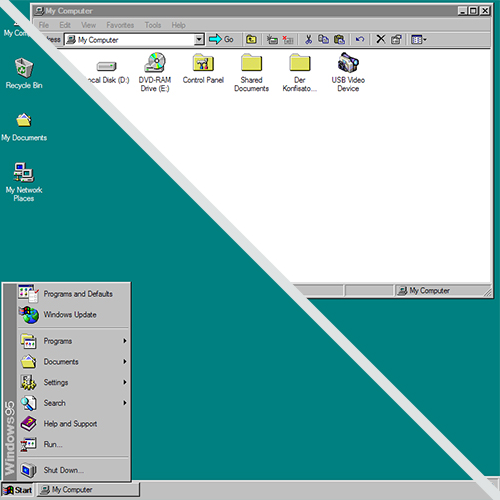
(n.) the process of improving user experiences while interacting with a tech product through the use of pictograms, colors, shapes, and typography

To have a clearer insight of what modern visual design is, let’s take a look how Microsoft Windows’ User Interface evolved through 25 years, from 1995 to 2020, and see how you come to your own definition of modern visual design.

## Overall Style

The overall style of the system is responsible for giving the user the very first impressions as well as influencing the vibe of the whole system. Wallpaper aside, the elements that are taken into consideration are the taskbar, the start menu, the title bar, and the menu buttons.

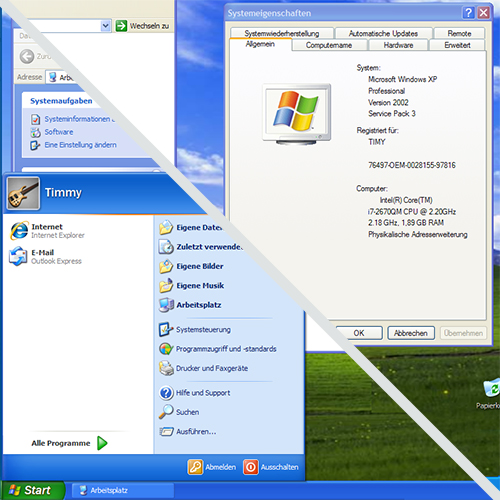
### Windows 95 (1995)



Windows 95 was the first operating system from Microsoft to feature the Start button on the bottom left corner of the screen to call out the Start menu. The overall look-and-feel is clean-cut and very similar to the other operating systems introduced in the same decade. It featured edgy and angular elements with clean and sharp embossment to create the illusion of depth, which led to the very high contrast between active and inactive elements.

* Edgy and angular shapes
* Clean and sharp embossment
* Illusion of depth
* High to Very high contrast

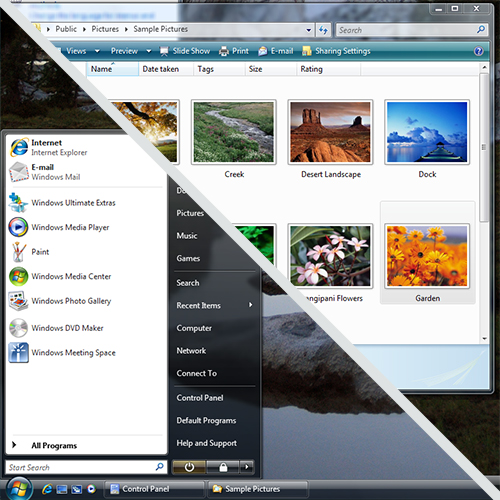
### Windows XP (2001)



Windows XP (stands for eXPerience) was the most widely used operating system until August 2012 ([source](https://web.archive.org/web/20120909203552/http:/marketshare.hitslink.com:80/operating-system-market-share.aspx?qprid=11&qpcustomb=0)), featuring a more polished visual style that set it apart from every other operating system at the same time. The user interface introduced an increased use of soft gradients and shadows, which helped to render softer embossment and a more subtle and natural illusion of depth. The corners were moderately rounded, and the colors were more vivid and dynamic compared to those of its ascendants.

* Moderately rounded shapes
* Softer and more natural embossment
* More subtle and natural illusion of depth
* Increased use of soft gradients and shadows
* Reasonable contrast

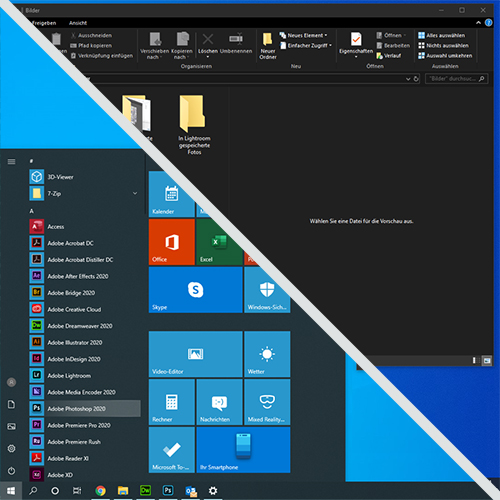
### Windows Vista (2006)



Windows Vista was a complete redesign from its ascendant, Windows XP, which introduced a new design system called “Aero” with a glossier visual appearance and classier built-in animation/transitions. This design system featured:

* Rounded shapes
* Glossy embossment
* Increased use of shadows and translucent effects
* Subtle illusion of depth between windows
* Moderate contrast
* Animations and transitions

### Windows 10 (2015)



Windows 10 is the most recent operating system version from Microsoft which aims at fusing the touch-based and traditional interactions. To adapt to such hybrid interactive purposes, the user interface, therefore, introduces a more spacey layout and bigger clickable (or touchable) areas. The visual design is simplified and minimalized to optimize user’s concentration on their intention.

* Edgy and angular shapes
* No embossment, flatter design
* Moderate to limited amount of shadows and translucent effects
* Subtle illusion of depth between windows
* Moderate contrast
* Subtle animations and transitions
* More spacey layout, more negative space
* Dark mode

## Logo & Color Scheme

### Windows 95 (1995)



### Windows XP (2001)

### Windows Vista (2006)

### Windows 10 (2015)

## Icon & Typography

### Windows 95 (1995)

### Windows XP (2001)

### Windows Vista (2006)

### Windows 10 (2015)

# Interaction Design

## The Raise of Mobile Devices

### Desktop-First Design

### Adaptive/Responsive Design

### Mobile-First Design

## User-Centered Design