Mobile UI Guidelines

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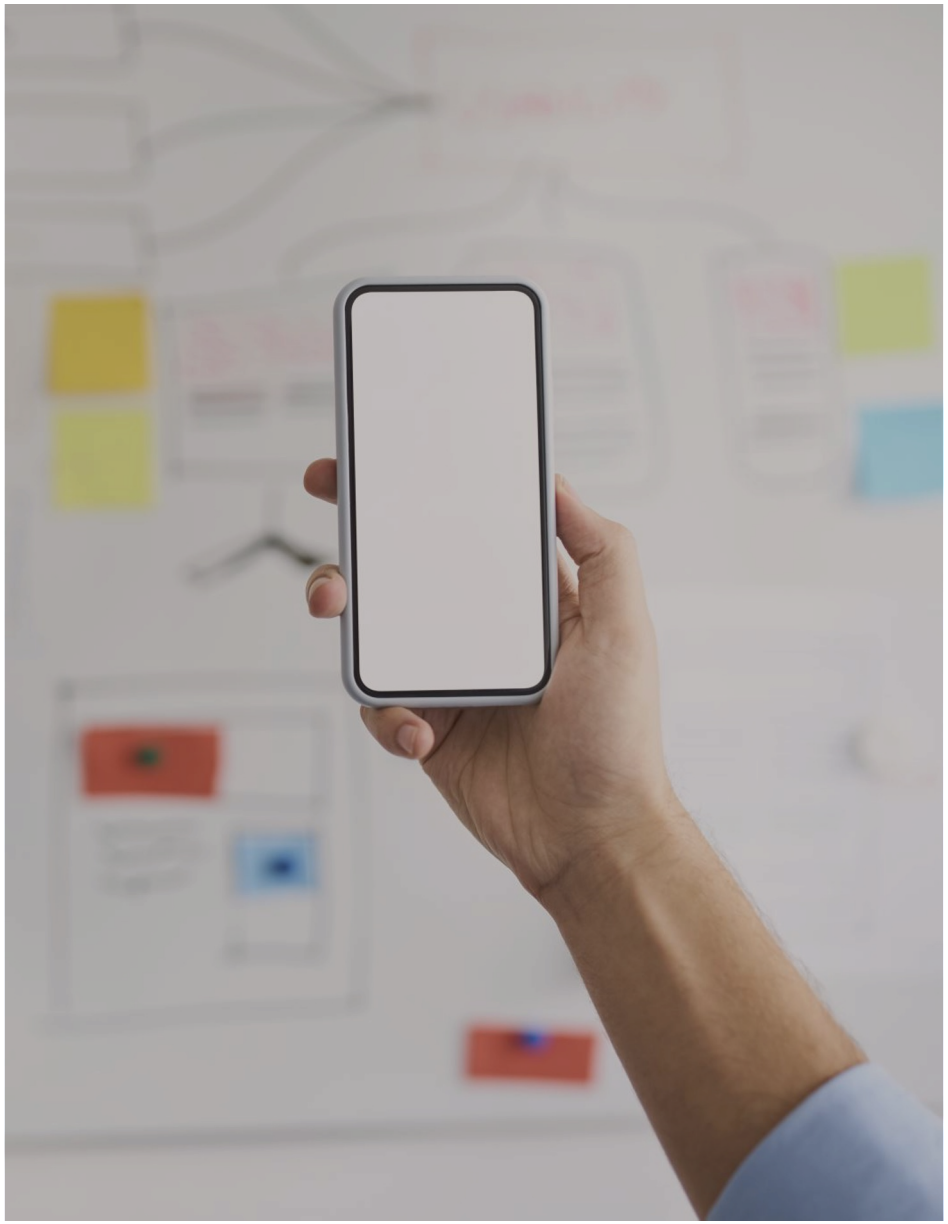

«People expect a lot from mobile apps today, and the expectations are just getting higher.

You need to work hard to meet these expectations and make your app useful, relevant, and valuable for your users. Improving the user experience isn’t a one-time task, it’s an ongoing experience.»

Xd Idea

10 Do's of Mobile App Design

https://xd.adobe.com/ideas/principles/app-design/10-dos-donts-mobile-app-design/

10 Do's of Mobile App Design

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1. Research before design

When you start a new project, it's always tempting to jump straight to a drawing board and start designing mockups. But it's better to avoid that temptation because you need to avoid the false-consensus effect (you are not your user). ***Do research first. Proper research will help you understand who your users are and what they really need***. The goal is to create an experience that truly resonates with your target audience.

Practical recommendations:

- **Conduct a competitive analysis**. Find apps that are similar to the one you're designing. Pay attention to which parts of the apps you like and which parts you don't like, and why.
- **Identify your users**. Build user personas to understand better how users will interact with your app (which activities they perform and what content they expect).

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2. Prioritize features

To make an app more attractive to users, many product designers try to add as many features as possible. Unfortunately, this rarely results in better user experience. Nothing is more confusing for first-time users than an app that has too much going on. ***The most successful apps available on the market are highly focused and present a limited set of features***. Thus, limit your app's feature set by prioritizing what's important and trimming nice-to-have features.

Practical recommendation:

- **Focus on refining the experience around your core objectives**. Know what the core purpose of your app is analyze which features of your app are used the most and put the most effort into making that experience intuitive.

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3. Cut out the clutter

Cluttering a user interface overloads your user with too much information – every added button, image, and line of text makes the screen more complicated. Clutter is terrible on a desktop, but it's way worse on mobile devices where users have limited screen space. Is essential to get rid of anything in a mobile design that isn't absolutely necessary because reducing clutter will improve comprehension.

Practical recommendations:

- **Strive for minimalism**. Focus on the content that is valuable for your users and remove unnecessary elements that do not support user tasks. Minimal use of decorative elements such as gradients and drop shadows will help you keep the interface light and airy.
- **Prioritize one primary action per screen**. *Try to design each screen for one thing and one thing only, with no more than one call-to-action.* A few clear screens are preferable to a single cluttered screen.

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10 Do's of Mobile App Design

4. Make navigation self-evident (I)

Helping users navigate should be a top priority for every mobile app. After all, even well-crafted features or the most compelling content is useless if people can't find it.

Practical recommendations:

Make sure that navigation feels familiar to users. People are happy when an app meets their expectations. To make this happen, use navigation patterns that are familiar to your target audience so that the navigation doesn't require any explanation.

Design good information architecture. Information architecture is about organization of information in a clear and logical way. Organize your information in a way that requires a minimum number of actions to reach the destination.

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10 Do's of Mobile App Design

4. Make navigation self-evident (II)

Practical recommendations:

Navigation shouldn't draw focus away from the content. It should be implemented in a way that supports the structure of an app without calling attention to itself.

Communicate current location. People should always know where they are in your app so they can navigate successfully.

Strive for consistency. Don't move navigation controls to a new location or hide them on different pages. This will confuse and disorient your users.

Provide a clear path. Users should be guided to the content they're looking for, quickly. The path through content should be logical (from the user point of view).

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5. Design finger-friendly tap-targets

Smaller touch targets are a common source of problems for mobile users – mistaken taps often happen because of small touch controls. When you're designing mobile interfaces, it's best to make your targets big enough so they're easy for users to tap.

Practical recommendations:

Provide ample touch targets for interactive elements. Create controls that measure at least **7–10 mm** so they can be accurately tapped with a finger.

10 Do's of Mobile App Design

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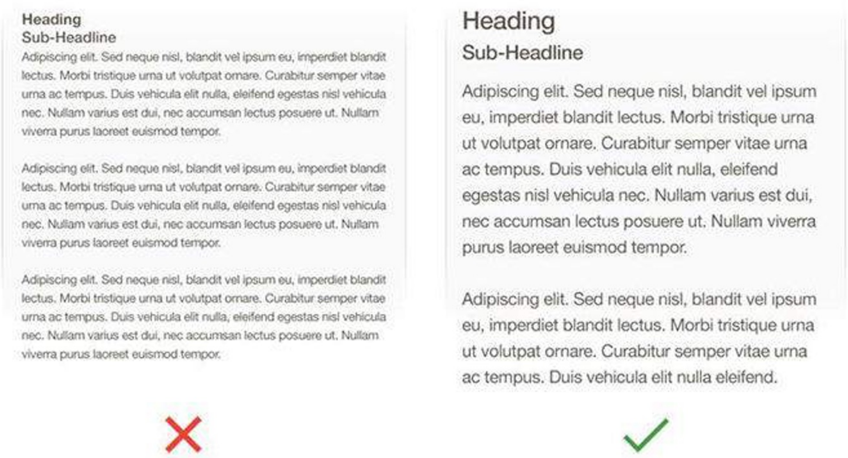
6. Make text legible (I)

Content is the reason why people use your app and language – housed in typography (font) and shown as text on your screen, it is a big part of content. Making text legible is a mandatory requirement for each mobile interface.

Practical recommendations:

Choose a typeface that works well in multiple sizes and weights to maintain readability and usability in every size. A safe bet is to rely on the platform's default font. Apple uses the **San Francisco** family of typefaces to provide consistent reading experiences across all platforms. **Roboto** and Noto are the standard typefaces on Google Android.

Use legible font size. Text should be at least 11 points so users can read it at a typical viewing distance without zooming



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6. Make text legible (II)

Practical recommendations:

Use sufficient color contrast for text. Insufficient contrast makes text blend in with the background. Strive for a minimum ***contrast ratio of 4.5:1*** for body text and image text.

https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20-TECHS/G18.html

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10 Do's of Mobile App Design

7. Provide feedback on interactions (I)

Each human-computer interaction is based on two fundamental elements **– user input and computer reaction to it.** To make the interaction predictable, it's essential to provide some sort of feedback in response to every user action:

- Feedback acknowledges actions and helps users understand the results of operations.

  For example, when users tap on a button, lack of feedback can cause them to question whether an app has processed the action.

  An app that provides visual feedback eliminates this guesswork for the user.

- ***Feedback helps people know what an app is doing now.*** For example, when content is loading, a blank or static screen can make it seem like your app is frozen, resulting in confusion and frustration. A simple loading indicator such as infinite spinner can communicate the status of an operation.

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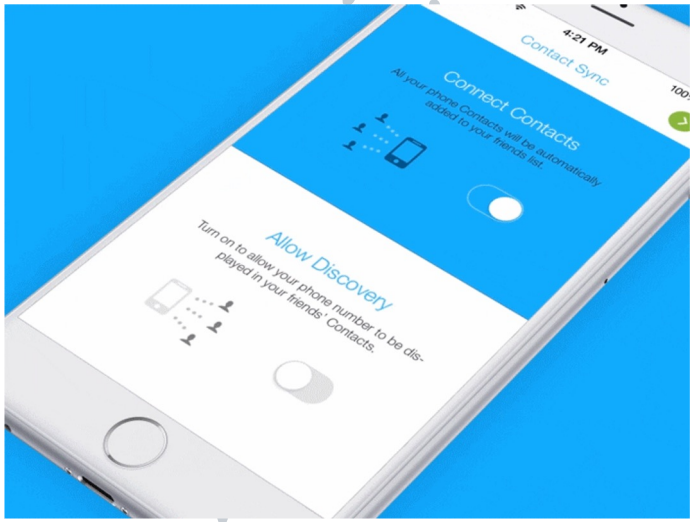

10 Do's of Mobile App Design

7. Provide feedback on interactions (II)

Practical recommendations:

Based on the type of UI element or current state of the app, designers can use different forms of feedback. For example,

- **interactive elements can be highlighted briefly when tapped**,
- progress indicators can be used to communicate the status of long-running operations,
- animated effects can help clarify the results of operations.

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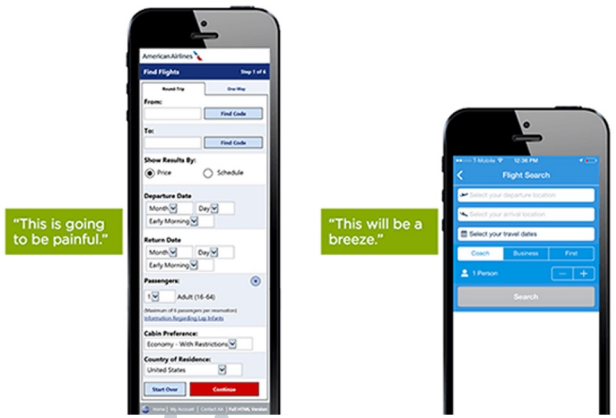

8. Minimize the need for typing

Typing on a mobile device is a slow and error-prone process.

It's, therefore, always best to try to minimize the amount of typing required on a small device.

Practical recommendations:

Ask only what you really need to know. Keep forms as short and simple as possible by removing any unnecessary fields.

Make data entry as efficient as possible. When possible, present choices instead of input fields because it's easier to choose from a list of predefined options than to type a response. Try to prefill fields with the most likely default values (providing good defaults minimizes decision making and speeds up the process).

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10 Do's of Mobile App Design

9. Create a seamless experience

It's wrong to consider mobile apps as stand-alone experiences. A typical user has several devices such as a desktop, mobile phone, and tablet and expects to have a seamless experience across all those devices when using your product.

Practical recommendation:

Synchronize a user's current progress. For example, when users browse items in an e-commerce app on mobile they might want to switch to the desktop version to complete a purchase. Users expect to continue the journey from where they stopped on mobile.

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10 Do's of Mobile App Design

10. Always test your design

Even the most well-crafted UI and well-thought out UX will ultimately contain some unseen flaws when put into the real world. All too often a design that looks great on a designer's large desktop screen doesn't look nearly half as good when taken for a test on a real mobile device. That's why it's so important to test your app with real users on a variety of mobile devices to make sure it both looks and works great.

Practical recommendations:

Ask real users to complete regular tasks in your app. Based on results of testing you'll be able to see how well the design really performs.

Constantly measure your app. Treat your app as a continuously evolving entity, using data from analytics and user feedback to improve the experience.

10 Dont's of Mobile App Design

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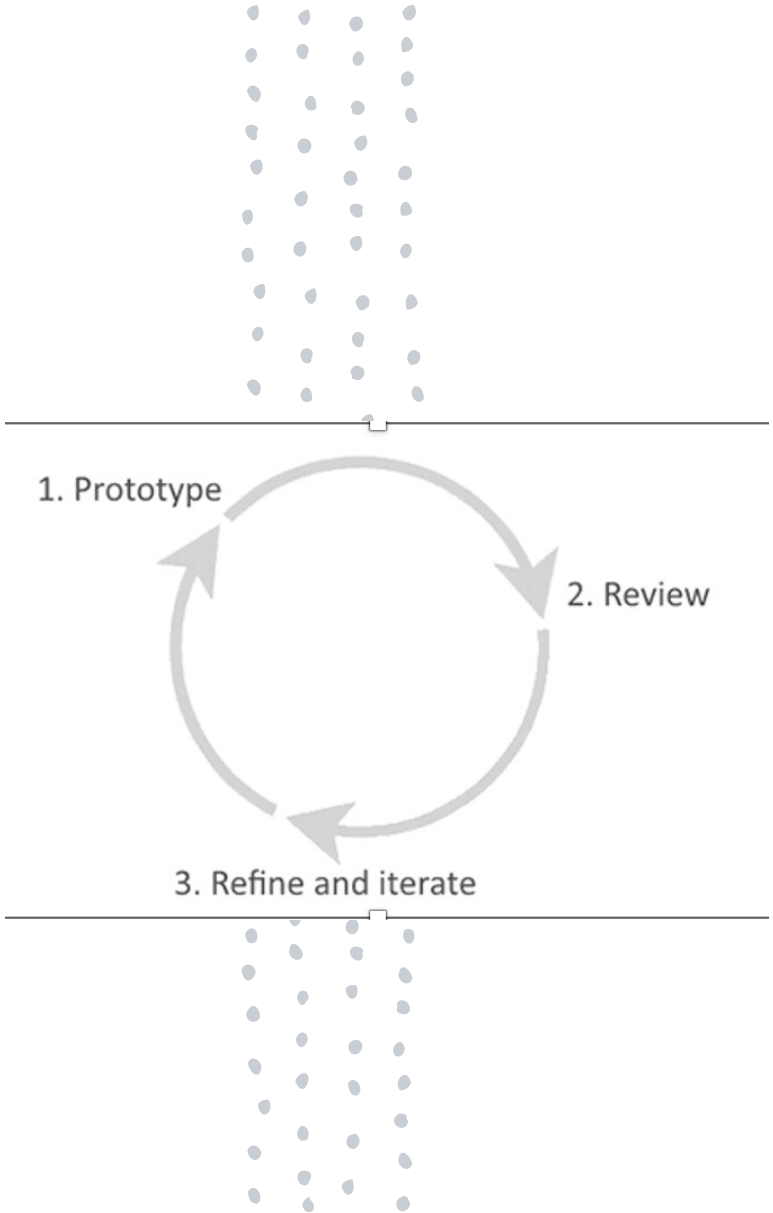
10 Dont's of Mobile App Design

1. Don't try to design the perfect experience from the first attempt

When you design a mobile app, it's almost impossible to create a perfect design right from the first attempt. Even if your design satisfies the initial requirements, you might find a new set of requirements after user testing. Thus, it's always better to follow an iterative design approach and test as early as possible.

Practical recommendations:

- **Focus on prototyping and testing**. Powerful prototyping techniques such as rapid prototyping can help designers to iterate fast. Based on insights gathered from testing sessions it's possible to design better experiences for the users in each new iteration.



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10 Dont's of Mobile App Design

2. Don't design in isolation

When you have a great idea about an app, it's relatively easy to get caught up in it, and the more time you have invested in the idea, the more likely you are to develop confirmation bias. It's not too rare to find a product team that has spent a lot of time (three to five years) building a product they think their customers want, only to discover they don't want it at all. **This happens because teams don't take customer needs and wants into account.** The absence of an actual feedback loop makes the outcome of the design process completely unpredictable.

Practical recommendations:

Start by validating your hypothesis based on the user's needs. Use the Design Sprints technique to help you move from idea to learning in just a few days, instead of it taking months or years.

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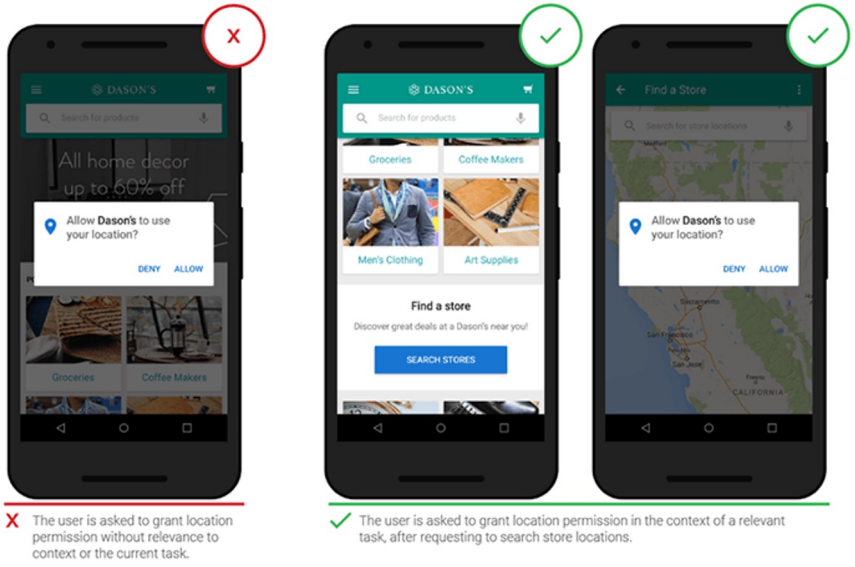
10 Dont's of Mobile App Design

3. Don't ask for permissions right at the start (II)

Practical recommendations:

- **Ask only what your app clearly needs**. Don't ask for all possible types of permissions. It would be suspicious if an app requests permissions with no obvious need for them (e.g. an alarm clock app asking permissions for access to your list of contacts).



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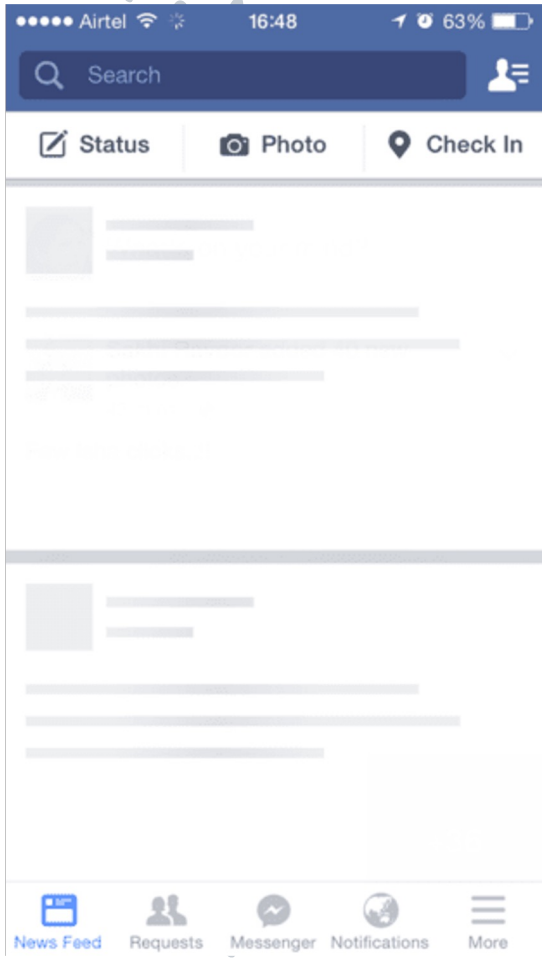
10 Dont's of Mobile App Design

4. Don't make users wait for content

A blank screen, shown when content is loading, can make it seem like your app is frozen, resulting in confusion and frustration. You should always strive to give the impression that your app is fast and responsive.

Practical recommendation:

Use **skeletons** (aka temporary containers) to create a feeling of fast loading. Show the screen immediately and use placeholders to identify where content isn't available yet. Replace these placeholders with actual content as soon as it loads.



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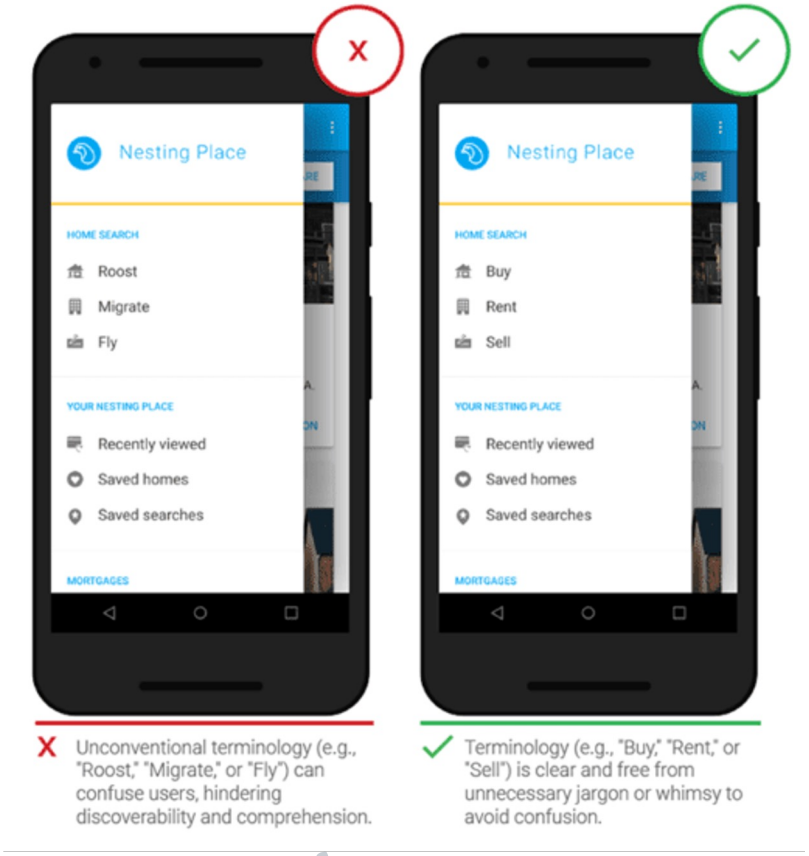
10 Dont's of Mobile App Design

5. Don't use jargon in the user interface

Every word in your app is part of a conversation with your users. Make this conversation comfortable for them by speaking the same language as your users. Use familiar, understandable words and phrases if you want your app to appeal to everyone.

- **Practical** recommendation:
- **Avoid acronyms, brand-specific terms, cultural-specific axioms, and technical terminology that people might not understand.** In general, it's better to use simple and direct language to maximize clarity.



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10 Dont's of Mobile App Design

6. Don't use custom gestures as a primary way of interacting with an app

It's absolutely normal to use gestures as a supporting mechanism for existing navigation (e.g. navigation shortcuts), but it's better to avoid using gestures as a primary method of interaction with your app (e.g. as a replacement for main navigation). Unless your app is a game, people rarely appreciate being forced to learn different ways to do basic things.

Practical recommendation:

- **Use standard gestures for shortcuts**. People are familiar with the standard gestures, so no extra effort is needed to discover or remember them.
- **Avoid using standard gestures to perform non-standard actions**. Unless your app is a game, redefining the meaning of standard gestures leads to confusion and complexity.

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10 Dont's of Mobile App Design

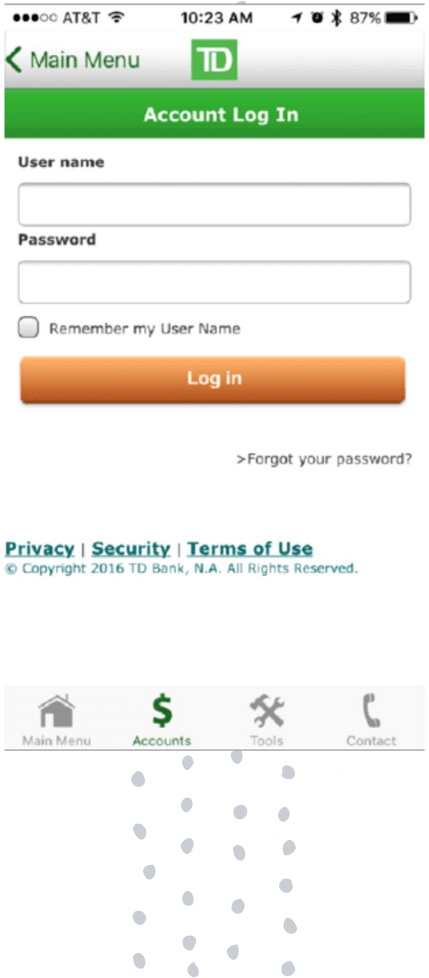
7. Don't replicate the web experience on apps

Users expect certain interaction patterns and interface elements in mobile apps. Mobile apps designed as web experiences feel awkward and unnecessary — not because they have issues with usability, but because it's simply different from what users expect to see.

Practical recommendation:

- **Avoid using underlined links in mobile apps**. Underlined links are a natural part of the browser-page model, but they can't be applied to mobile experiences because apps use buttons, not links.

> *"Links should never be used to change the state of an application. This means that clicking on a link should not add, change, or delete any data on the screen" – shared Anthony from UX Movement*



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10 Dont's of Mobile App Design

8. Don't create dead end pages

Designing a UX is designing for flow, and flow is, in most cases, about moving forward to accomplish a goal. You should avoid creating dead-end pages in your apps because they act as blockers for user flow — they create confusion and lead to additional (and often unnecessary) actions.

Practical recommendation:

Nothing in your app should be a dead-end.Error states and empty states should provide instructions and actions to move forward.

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10 Dont's of Mobile App Design

9. Don't take users to a browser

Users can be easily frustrated when an app takes them to the mobile web for more content or to complete a task. This increases abandonment and reduces conversion because users might simply not return to the app.

Practical recommendation:

Use an in-app browser. If your app lacks a specific feature or piece of content, try to use an in-app browser. Do not invoke the smartphone browser.

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10 Dont's of Mobile App Design

10. Don't ask a user to rate your app during their first experience (I)

- **Most app developers know ratings and reviews are important for success in mobile stores**. Ratings and reviews help users make informed decisions when considering whether to try out an app. An app that has more positive ratings and reviews has a better chance of being downloaded.
- In an attempt to collect valuable feedback many app developers make a common mistake**: they force users to rate their app**. Asking for a rating too soon or too frequently is annoying and decreases the amount of useful feedback you receive. Users don't want to be interrupted for something useless while they're in the middle of something important.
- There's nothing wrong with asking for a review, but it's critical to give your users a great experience first. Thus, **never ask for a rating on the first launch**, during **onboarding**, or if users have only used the **app a few times**. To encourage well-considered feedback, give people time to form an opinion about your app before asking for a rating.

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10 Dont's of Mobile App Design

10. Don't ask a user to rate your app during their first experience (II)

Practical recommendation:

Don't ask a user to rate an app when they perform a task. Don't interrupt the user, especially when they're performing a time-sensitive or stressful task. Look for logical pauses when a rating request makes the most sense.

Allow ample time to form an opinion.Wait until users prove to be repeat users, and they'll be more likely to rate your app and provide better informed feedback. You can trigger the rating request after a specific number of app openings or goals have been completed. Choose the perfect moment (e.g. after a positive interaction with an app, like after the completion of a significant task).

How to Design and Integrate Buttons Into Your UI

https://xd.adobe.com/ideas/process/ui-design/button-design-integration-ui/

What is a button?

Buttons give users options – they can choose to take an action or make a choice based on what they're engaging with on a website or mobile app. In essence buttons are the means through which designers communicate what actions are possible to take.

According to Material Design there are three key principles designers should keep in mind when including buttons in an interface:

- **Make it identifiable** – Buttons should indicate that they can trigger a specific action.
- **Make it findable** – Buttons should be easy to find among other elements, including other buttons.
- **Make it clear** – A button's action and state should be clear.

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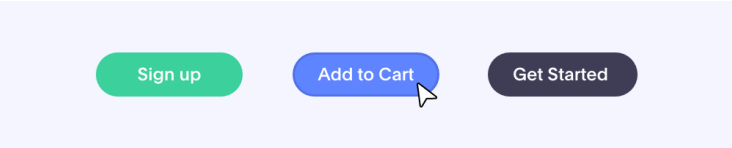
Types of buttons?

Call to action

The Call To Action (CTA) button is one of the most important to master as they're usually closely linked to the business' goals.

CTAs usually prompt users to take a significant action such as "sign up", "register" or "add to cart".



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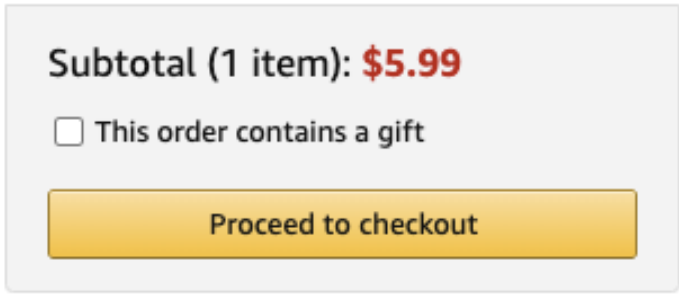
Types of buttons?

Primary buttons

- Primary buttons indicate what the interface would want you to do.
- Not to be confused with “CTA,” primary buttons are a strong visual indicator to help the **user complete their journey**.
- Primary buttons, for instance, can be used in situations where the user may want to go “**next**” or in the case of the example from Amazon below, “Proceed to checkout.”



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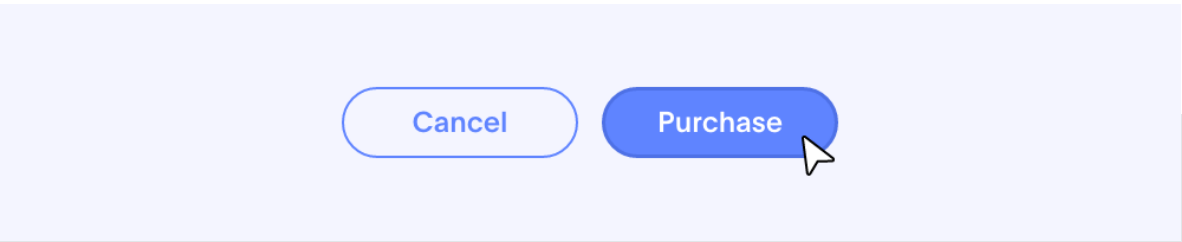
Types of buttons?

Secondary buttons

- Secondary buttons, on the other hand, offer an alternative path to the primary action such as “Go Back” or “Cancel”. Secondary buttons are often found next to primary buttons (or CTA buttons) where there are multiple avenues a user can take.
- Another example of this is in login screens, where ‘Sign up’ may be a primary action, and ‘Sign In’ is a secondary action.



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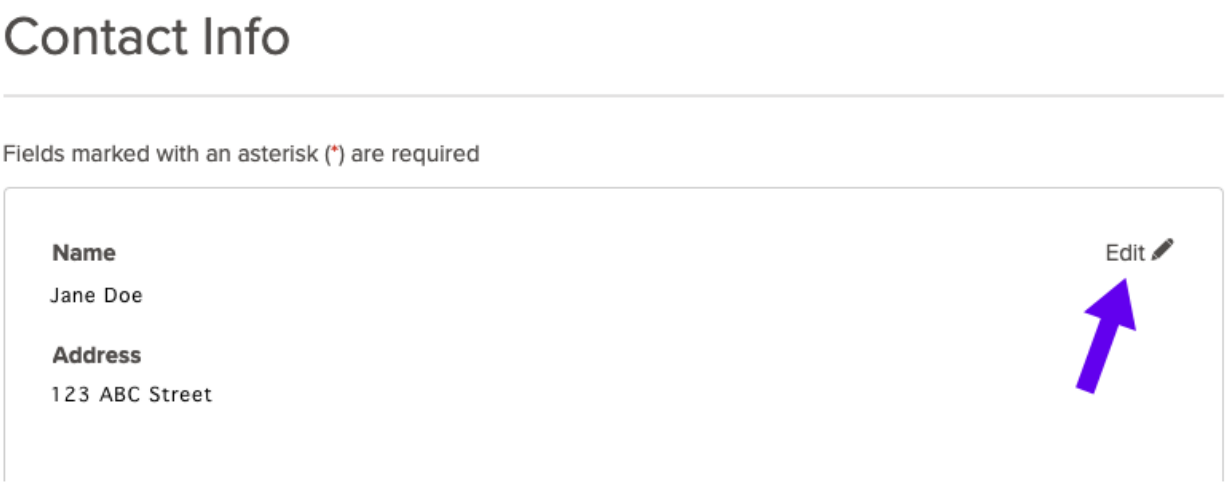
Types of buttons?

Tertiary buttons

Tertiary buttons, as the name implies, are meant for **lesser actions.** These are usually miscellaneous actions that are important but not the most common objective in the experience. These could be actions like **“Edit”, “Add New” or “Upload Photo”.**

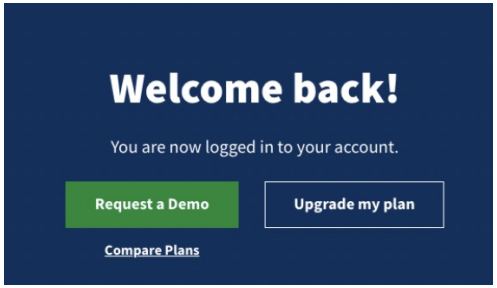


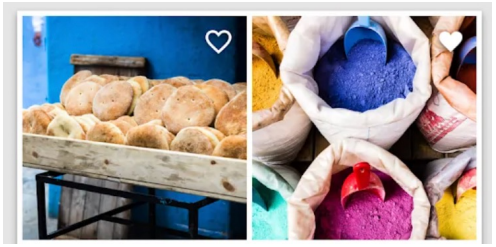
Button design

- **Keep the number of words to a minimum**. This reduces the effort needed by the user to understand and take action.
- **Use action verbs**. Phrases like “Add to Cart” or “Publish Photo” can help build a clear and compelling directive to users.
- **Use Title Case or Sentence case**. This is not a hard and fast rule, but I’ve found that it’s the most inviting copy styling while still remaining professional.
- **Stay consistent**. The biggest faux-pas when it comes to microcopy is seeing it change depending on the interface. For example, if you put “Add Friend” on one button, don’t change it to “Add Buddy” on another.
- **Using color to stand out**

Button design

- **Ghost buttons** or Outlined buttons are buttons without fill, meaning they consist only of an outline and leave the surrounding color as the fill.
- **Toggle buttons** allow a user to change a setting between two states (typically). This is most commonly used when the user has the option to turn on and off an element like the ‘Favorite’ button example below:

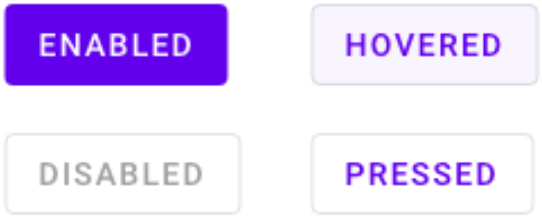




Button design

- **Size and placing:** As a general rule of thumb – optimal button spacing ranges from 12 to 48 pixels. But to be a bit more specific, a study found that 44% of the subjects preferred a spacing of 6.35 mm or 24 pixels between adjacent buttons**.**
- **Rounded vs. square button design**. The general rule of thumb I use is that 'rounded is more friendly, sharp is more serious'. You'll see this exemplified below with Lyft VS Bank of America.
- **When to use the icon.** Consider the audience you're designing for carefully, as some demographics may have trouble discerning the meaning and get frustrated with the experience.

Button design



- **Button States and Feedback**

Designers use button states to make it easier for users to understand the impact of their action. States indicate to the user things like – whether they can click or have already clicked a button. Some of the most common button states are:

- **Active & disabled state:** The active state is when a button is 'clickable' or 'tappable,' the disabled is when it is not. The most common use of this is disabling a button when a user hasn't completed necessary steps.
- **Hover & hover off**: This is when a button's design changes when a user hovers over it in order to show that it's clickable. It often encourages users to click on them.
- **Pressed**: You can also add a 'pressed' state to a button in order to indicate that it has been successfully selected.

Link

- https://www.nngroup.com/articles/mobile-navigation-patterns/
- https://xd.adobe.com/ideas/principles/app-design/essential-patterns-mobile-navigation/
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- https://uxplanet.org/designing-more-efficient-forms-structure-inputs-labels-and-actions-e3a47007114f
- https://www.smashingmagazine.com/2017/12/underlined-text-improve-ux/