What are best practices for designing modal dialogs?

What is a modal? It's the type of pop-up that a website might show you on top of their content.

The content behind a modal is usually dimmed. This helps the user visually focus on the area you want them to interact with – in this case, the modal.

It's always a good idea to allow the user to click outside of the modal to close it.

You'll often see very prominent buttons on modals. These are called CTAs, or call-to-action. You want these to be easily identifiable since the purpose of interrupting the user's flow with a modal is to prompt them to take a specific action.

Modals should also have a close button. While you may really want the user to click on your CTAs, it's important to give them an option to back out of the modal and resume whatever they were previously doing.

There are, of course, accessibility concerns with modals, such as correctly managing focus on elements. However, if you use these general practices as your starting point, you'll have a solid foundation to build on.