Recommended Course Learning Paths

How does this document work?

At the Interaction Design Foundation, we offer more than 25 different courses that cover a wide range of topics related to UX design, from design thinking to psychology. With such a large catalog of courses, it will be greatly helpful if you have a learning path to guide you along the way.

That's why we created this document with recommended learning paths for different roles in an organization. Whether you are (or want to be) a generalist UX designer, marketer, or usability expert, we've got the best tailor-made learning path for you.

Each learning path starts with a "UX Design Foundation" module, which gives you an excellent introduction to thinking like a designer. Depending on your role, you will then have 2-3 tiers of recommended courses, each tier progressively more advanced than the previous one. Based on our experience, we suggest that you take 2 courses concurrently, but you may choose to take more or less depending on your schedule and motivation.

Learning paths are provided for which roles?

You will find learning paths for the following roles:

- **UX Designer:** A jack-of-all-trades type of role, requiring knowledge and expertise from all topics in UX design.

- **Interaction Designer:** In charge of generating interaction concepts that enable seamless, fluid, relevant and engaging user experiences.

- **Visual Designer:** Building visual designs from wireframes and prototypes, adhering to visual perception guidelines and branding requirements.

- **Usability Expert:** Applying usability principles to identify usability problems and evaluating prototypes against requirements.

- **UI Designer:** Designing screens of websites or apps, usually producing high-fidelity, lifelike prototypes.

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Recommended Course Learning Paths

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- **Front-End Developer:** Implementing (and sometimes designing) websites and app screens by using frontend programming languages for the web (e.g. HTML5, CSS, JS) or native applications (e.g. Java, Objective C, C#).

- **Product Manager:** Managing a team (or teams) consisting of developers, designers, and/or marketers, to create and grow a product or service.

- **Marketer:** Creates promotional campaigns, manages customer outreach, and maintains relationships with customers.

Below each learning path, we also provide a short explanation of how the courses chosen will help you in the respective roles.

Each learning path starts with the same two courses which are grouped as **UX Design Foundation**. The courses provide an excellent introduction to the field of UX design, as well as how to think like a designer. Because UX design should be practiced by everyone in an organization, and because design thinking offers a useful framework to solving all types of complex problems, the UX Design Foundation is recommended for all job roles — even non-designers.

UX Designer

UX Design Foundation

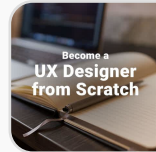User Experience: The Beginner's Guide

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Design Thinking: The Beginner's Guide

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UX Designer: I

Human-Computer Interaction

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Become a UX Designer from Scratch

UI Design Patterns for Successful Software
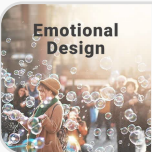
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Interaction Design for Usability

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UX Designer: II

Mobile User Experience (UX) Design

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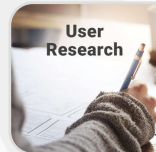
The Psychology of Online Sales

Emotional Design – How to Make Products People Will Love

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User Research – Methods and Best Practices

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UX Designer: III

Affordances: Designing Intuitive User Interfaces

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How to Create Intuitive Products by Imitating Physicality

Psychology of Interaction Design: The Ultimate Guide

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Get Your Product Used: Adoption and Appropriation

Why are these courses chosen for UX designers?

UX designers have a jack-of-all-trades type of role, and as such having a keen sense of usability, psychology, and business is crucial. **UX Designer: I** is the first tier of courses specially chosen for UX designers, and the courses provide a broad introduction to important concepts such as usability as well as the UX design process. "UI Design Patterns for Successful Software" will also teach UX designers how to leverage on design patterns to bootstrap the design process and ensure that the right patterns are used.

UX Designer: II, the second tier of courses, provides a range of intermediate courses that dive deeper into relevant topics for UX designers. This tier will teach designers the special considerations when designing for mobile, as well as how to leverage on human psychology to generate online sales and induce positive emotions in users. User research — which many UX design projects cannot do without — will also be introduced in this tier.

Finally, the advanced tier **UX Designer: III** provides an excellent challenge for UX designers. The courses closely examine a given topic — such as affordances, physicality, and adoption — and offer deep, practical considerations that will set apart a great UX designer from a good one.

Interaction Designer

UX Design Foundation

User Experience: The Beginner's Guide

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Design Thinking: The Beginner's Guide

Interaction Designer: I

Human-Computer Interaction

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Become a UX Designer from Scratch

UI Design Patterns for Successful Software

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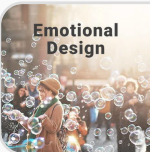Interaction Design for Usability

Interaction Designer: II

Mobile User Experience (UX) Design

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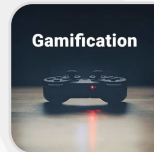Information Visualization

Emotional Design – How to Make Products People Will Love

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Gamification – Creating Addictive User Experiences

Interaction Designer: III

The Ultimate Guide to Visual Perception and Design

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The Brain and Technology: Brain Science in Interface Design

Psychology of Interaction Design: The Ultimate Guide

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Formal Design Methods: Formalism and Design

Why are these courses chosen for interaction designers?

Interaction designers are primarily focused on enabling seamless, fluid, relevant, and engaging user experiences. **Interaction Designer: I** aims to provide a strong foundation by introducing concepts such as usability and UI design patterns like breadcrumbs, pagination, and sitemaps.

In **Interaction Designer: II**, we introduce more challenging courses that enable interaction designers to design better. In particular, "Information Visualization" will teach designers to better use graphics to convey complex information, and our gamification course will provide tips on how to make interactions as addictive and fun as possible.

The advanced tier **Interaction Designer: III** is a great capstone tier that covers high-level topics such as brain science and visual perception. The course on formal design methods also enables interaction designers to exhaustively map their designs — all the better to spot blindspots and missed opportunities in their designs.

Visual Designer

UX Design Foundation

User Experience: The Beginner's Guide

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Design Thinking: The Beginner's Guide

Visual Designer: I

Human-Computer Interaction

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Become a UX Designer from Scratch

UI Design Patterns for Successful Software

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Gestalt Psychology and Web Design: The Ultimate Guide

Visual Designer: II

Information Visualization

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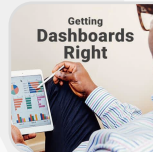Interaction Design for Usability

Mobile User Experience (UX) Design

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Information Visualization: Getting Dashboards Right

Visual Designer: III
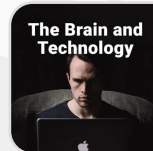
Affordances: Designing Intuitive User Interfaces

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The Ultimate Guide to Visual Perception and Design

Psychology of Interaction Design: The Ultimate Guide

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The Brain and Technology: Brain Science in Interface Design

Why are these courses chosen for visual designers?

As a visual designer, your job is to build visual designs (from wireframes to prototypes) by adhering to visual perception guidelines and branding requirements — and our recommended learning path trains you to do just that. **Visual Designer: I** is our introductory tier of courses, and contains the basics that every visual designer should know, from Gestalt principles to UI design patterns.

Visual Designer: II progresses on to intermediate-level courses. In this tier, we focus on information visualization and mobile UX design, two areas of particular significance to visual designers. These topics are grounded by "Interaction Design for Usability", which teaches key guidelines on creating designs that are easy and pleasurable to use.

Visual Designer: III, the final tier of the learning path, dives deep onto topics that will propel your visual designs into a whole new level. Once you've gained a grasp of how human visual perception should inform your designs, how to use affordances to visually guide users, and many crucial tips, you will find your designs much more compelling than they were before.

Usability Expert

RECOMMENDED IDF COURSE LEARNING PATH

UX Design Foundation

User Experience: The Beginner's Guide

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Design Thinking: The Beginner's Guide

Usability Expert: I

Human-Computer Interaction

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Become a UX Designer from Scratch

The Practical Guide to Usability

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Interaction Design for Usability
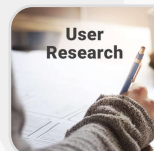
Usability Expert: II

Mobile User Experience (UX) Design

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Web Design for Usability

Conducting Usability Testing

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User Research – Methods and Best Practices

Usability Expert: III

The Brain and Technology: Brain Science in Interface Design

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Dynamic User Experience: Design and Usability

Formal Design Methods: Formalism and Design

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Psychology of Interaction Design: The Ultimate Guide

Why are these courses chosen for usability experts?

The courses in this learning path will train you to become an expert in applying usability principles in your work to identify usability problems and evaluate prototypes. In **Usability Expert: I** we provide an introduction into human-computer interaction and cover fundamental usability principles.

Usability Expert: II builds on the previous tier and goes into intermediate-level courses on the special usability considerations and constraints that mobile devices bring. It also covers how to recruit and perform user research, as well as conduct usability testing.

Finally, in **Usability Expert: III**, we cover advanced knowledge in areas such as brain science and the psychology interaction design — all of which will augment your ability to identify areas of usability problems and turn them into opportunities for improvement.

UI Designer

UX Design Foundation

User Experience: The Beginner's Guide

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Design Thinking: The Beginner's Guide

UI Designer: I

UI Design Patterns for Successful Software

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Become a UX Designer from Scratch

Gestalt Psychology and Web Design: The Ultimate Guide
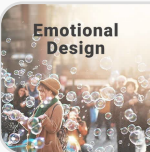
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Information Visualization
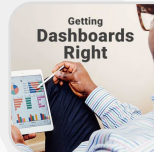
UI Designer: II

Mobile User Experience (UX) Design

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Interaction Design for Usability

Emotional Design – How to Make Products People Will Love

+

Information Visualization: Getting Dashboards Right

UI Designer: III

The Ultimate Guide to Visual Perception and Design

+

Affordances: Designing Intuitive User Interfaces

Dynamic User Experience: Design and Usability

+

The Brain and Technology: Brain Science in Interface Design

Why are these courses chosen for UI designers?

This learning path has been specially put together to allow you to become an expert in designing high-fidelity screens for websites or applications of all types. **UI Designer: I**, the introduction tier, covers the basics of UI design with topics such as design patterns and Gestalt principles.

UI Designer: II goes into courses with higher difficulty, and will equip you with the skills to build complex visualizations and dashboards, as well as invoke the right emotions in your users. You'll also learn about the optimal way to design for mobile interfaces, as well as consider key usability principles in your UI designs.

The final tier **UI Designer: III** dives into more advanced topics to give you an edge over your competitors. By understanding how the human visual perception works, as well as how to ensure great usability in dynamic websites, you will be able to create user interfaces that work effectively.

Front-End Developer

UX Design Foundation

User Experience: The Beginner's Guide

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Design Thinking: The Beginner's Guide

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Front-End Developer: I

Human-Computer Interaction

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The Practical Guide to Usability

Interaction Design for Usability

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UI Design Patterns for Successful Software

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Front-End Developer: II

Mobile User Experience (UX) Design

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Web Design for Usability

Conducting Usability Testing

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Dynamic User Experience: Design and Usability

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Front-End Developer: III

Psychology of Interaction Design: The Ultimate Guide

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The Brain and Technology: Brain Science in Interface Design

Why are these courses chosen for front-end developers?

Front-end developers play important roles in the design process by not only bringing prototypes to live, but also providing feedback on the designs. This is why the learning path has been built to enable front-end developers to apply design and usability principles to their jobs and improve the overall design process. In **Front-End Developer: I** we cover fundamental concepts in human-computer interaction, usability, and design patterns that will allow you to create websites and applications that are usable and effective.

Front-End Developer: II goes into the different usability considerations when developing for different contexts: mobile devices, websites, and dynamic pages. "Conducting Usability Testing" will also equip you with the skills to perform effective tests against designs and live websites to determine areas of weakness.

The advanced tier **Front-End Developer: III** covers two courses that provide the cherry-on-top knowledge that front-end developers will find useful. By understanding the psychology of interaction as well as how to incorporate brain science into interface designs, front-end developers will be able to dig deep into the products to deliver the best experience to users.

Product Manager

UX Design Foundation

User Experience: The Beginner's Guide

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Design Thinking: The Beginner's Guide

Product Manager: I

Human-Computer Interaction

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Quality Web Communication

Gestalt Psychology and Web Design: The Ultimate Guide

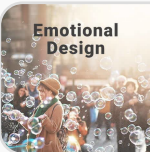+

The Psychology of Online Sales

Product Manager: II

The Practical Guide to Usability

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Conducting Usability Testing

Emotional Design – How to Make Products People Will Love

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Mobile User Experience (UX) Design

Product Manager: III

Get Your Product Used: Adoption and Appropriation

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How to Create Intuitive Products by Imitating Physicality

Why are these courses chosen for product managers?

In **Product Manager: I** we provide a basic introduction to areas pertinent to a product manager's job. This includes how to communicate effectively online, how to use human psychology to optimize online sales, as well as the basics of human-computer interaction.

Product Manager: II is the second tier of courses for product managers, and the courses provide useful tips on how to conduct usability tests to evaluate your team's proposed designs, how to emotionally persuade users, and how to design solutions that work on mobile devices.

The advanced tier **Product Manager: III** covers high-level design courses that product managers will find applicable as well. For instance, knowing how users tend to adopt and appropriate products will give a product manager ideas on how to steer the team towards creating a product or service that *will* get used.

UX Design Foundation

 User Experience: The Beginner's Guide

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 Design Thinking: The Beginner's Guide

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Marketer: I

 The Psychology of Online Sales
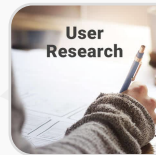
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 Quality Web Communication

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Marketer: II

 The Practical Guide to Usability

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 User Research – Methods and Best Practices

 Emotional Design – How to Make Products People Will Love

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 Get Your Product Used: Adoption and Appropriation

Why are these courses chosen for marketers?

Marketer: I provides courses that will be immediately beneficial to marketers. Namely, it will teach marketers how to best communicate online, as well as use psychology to boost online sales.

Marketer: II, the second and more advanced tier, covers a wide range of topics that are relevant to a marketer. "User Research" offers useful tips on how to conduct user research, which marketers will often find themselves doing. The basics of usability, emotional design, and designing for adoption round up the learning path to provide a range of design-centric but nonetheless applicable knowledge to the sales and marketing of products or services.