

For my design system, I wanted everything to feel calm, clean, and grounded. I chose a palette with near-black (#0D0A0B), soft off-white (#F3EFF5), two greens (#72B01D and #3F7D20), and charcoal gray (#454955) to support the neutrals. The greens are important to me because they reflect my identity and the environment I live in, like Colorado, outdoor culture, and brands that care about sustainability. Green also naturally suggests growth and energy, which aligns with how I want my designs to feel... simple, focused, yet lively. The off-white background keeps things quiet and easy to read, while the darker text colors make everything look sharp.

For typography, I picked Inter for titles and Source Sans 3 for body text. Inter looks modern and structured, which fits the idea of a system and makes the hierarchy clear. Source Sans 3 is easier on the eyes for longer reading, so the page doesn't feel too harsh. This combination feels right to me because it matches my style: clean, minimal, and organized, with personality coming from color instead of decoration.

Accessibility shaped a lot of my choices, especially when it came to contrast. I used dark text on a light background because it meets contrast standards and is easy to read. I also made sure that interactive elements have clear focus indicators, so keyboard navigation is obvious. The hardest part was balancing my love for subtle design with the need for clear states. For example, hover and focus styles, as well as visited link styles, have to stand out, even though I usually prefer them to be more subtle.

I was surprised by how important consistency is. Once I set the colors, spacing, and typography, everything else got easier because I could reuse the same choices instead of starting from scratch each time. I plan to use this system in my portfolio by keeping the same type scale, spacing, and component styles on every page so the site feels unified.

In the future, I want to add more component states, like disabled buttons and error or success messages, and use a wider range for spacing and typography. The spacing system is the most flexible part because it works well with different layouts. The palette is the least flexible since it's very specific, so if I ever need a more lively look, I'd add one accent color but keep the neutrals the same.