Starting Out Your UIUX Career

Module 15
UI Audit

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1. Design Auditing
2. Typography Auditing
3. Color and Gradients Auditing
4. Layout and Grid Auditing
5. Objects Auditing
6. Accessibility Test

How To Analyze The UI

When we look into redesigning an existing product, it's best to start with auditing the UI.

The goal here is to check consistency, readability, colors, accessibility, and general style.

Each audit should end with a short document outlining the most critical areas to improve.

AUDIT COMPONENTS

The **first step** of the audit should be **documenting all** the screens and interactions our product has.

That includes **states of the screen** (like error messages or invalid form inputs).

The **next part** is **counting and analyzing all of the interface elements**.

The Goal of Auditing Components (The goal is to answer questions like below)

How many **typefaces and font** sizes, weights, and styles our project uses? How many different ones are on each of the screens?

Count the **colors and gradients** in your product. Try to define the purpose of each one.

Check the **grid and layout** of the project. What are the margins, paddings, and safe spaces?

The Goal of Auditing Components (The goal is to answer questions like below)

What kinds of **shadows, borders, and border radii** does the product use?

Do all the **essential elements** (both interactive and informational) adhere to the WCAG accessibility guidelines? Or do you have a **special interface version for people with impaired vision**?

DOCUMENT EVERYTHING

While documenting, make sure you can do it in a tool to which most of your team members have access

Having many sets of eyes do the audit allows for a broader perspective

Nearly all digital products get more chaotic with time.

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TYPOGRAPHY

Try not to exceed 3-4 styles per screen, as more than that causes processing delays and makes your design harder to understand.

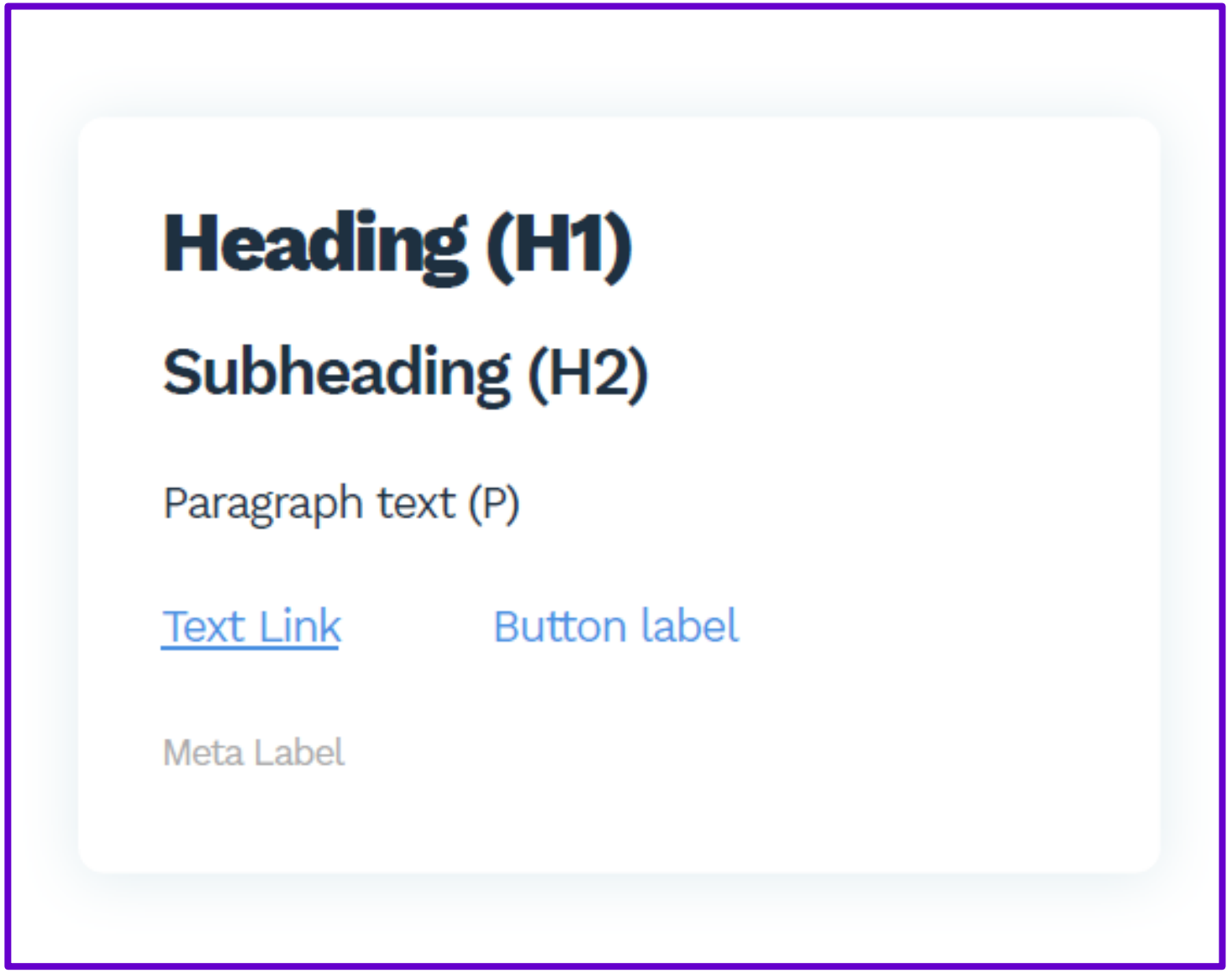
Get Rid of the Rare Font-cases

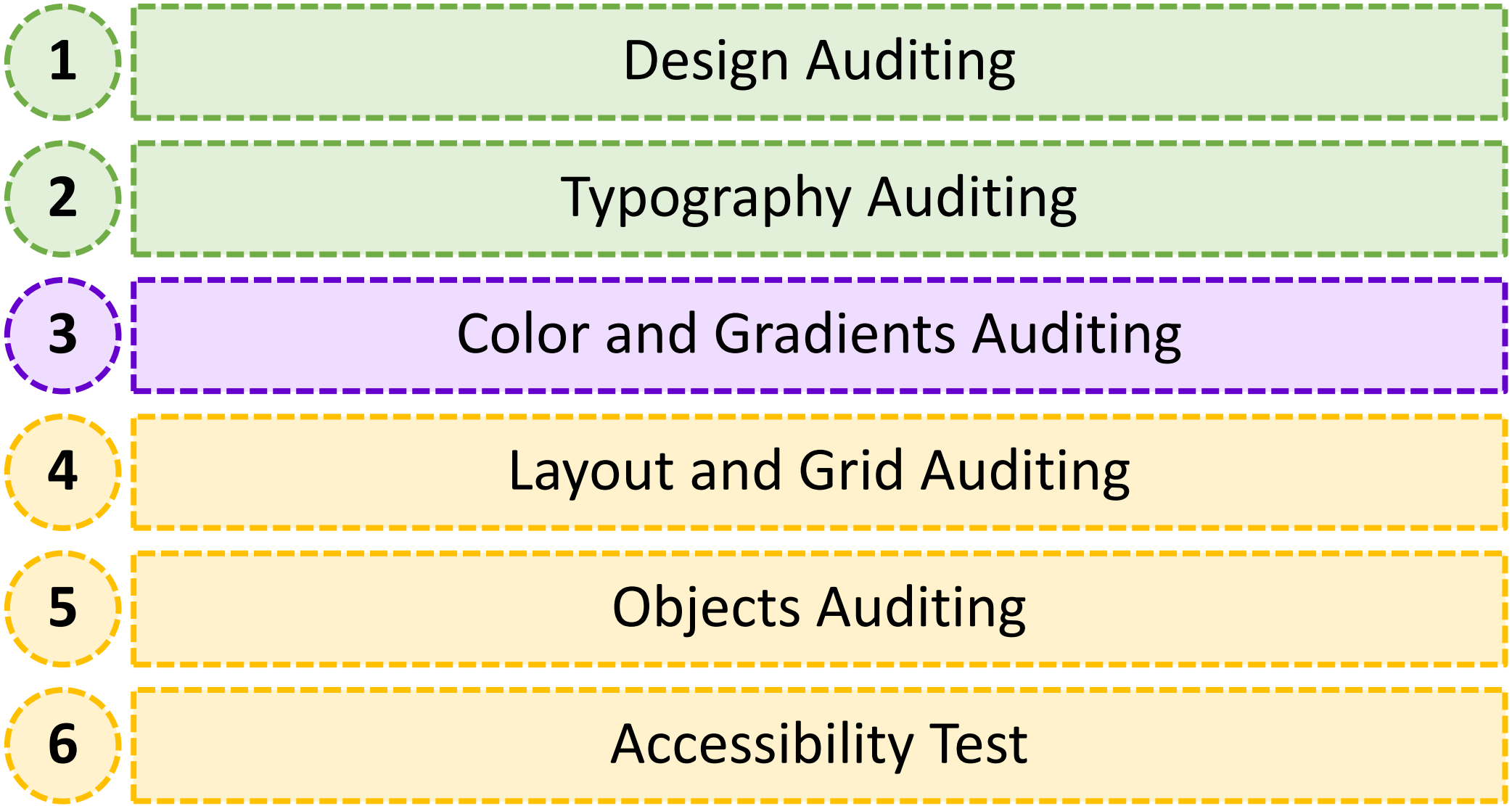
You can put the table into a spreadsheet, with font styles in the rows and their usage counts in the column

Open Sans	Screens using it
11pt, Bold	17
17pt, Medium	1
14pt, Regular	15
14pt, Bold, Underline	2
19pt, ExtraBold	11

Consistency is the Key.

Try to re-use as many styles as possible - in case of typography, less is more.

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COLORS

Go through every screen and grab the colors and gradient values with a color picker tool.

Colors defined on project start

Additional, random colors found in the audit

COLOR VARIANTS

You can use variants of your base colors if you need more shades, but prefer to keep the interface consistent.

GRADIENTS

The gradient audit works the same way. The main difference here is that we also have to write down the angle and the type of our gradient (linear, radial or angular)

Gradients defined initially

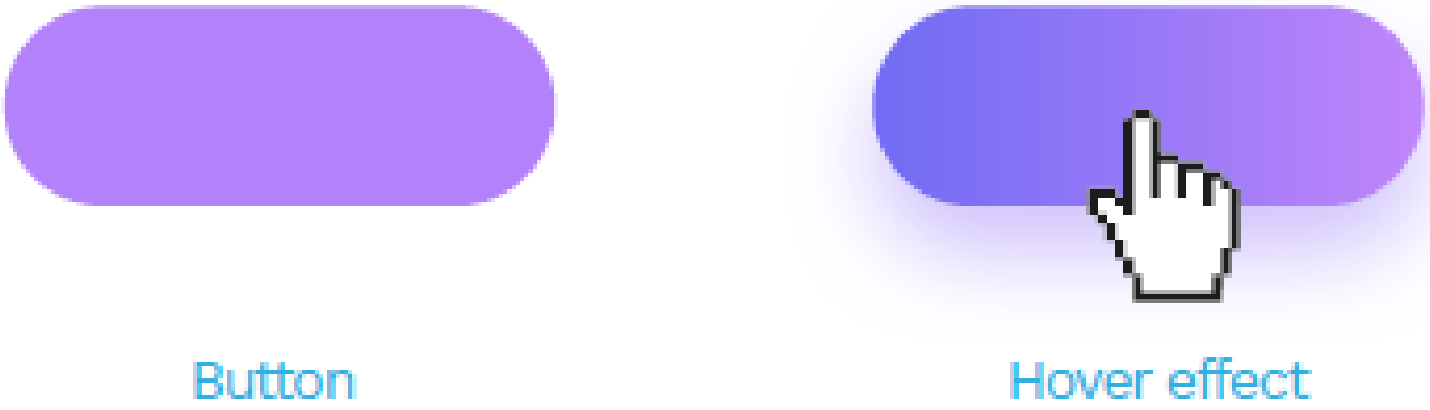
Inconsistent gradients found

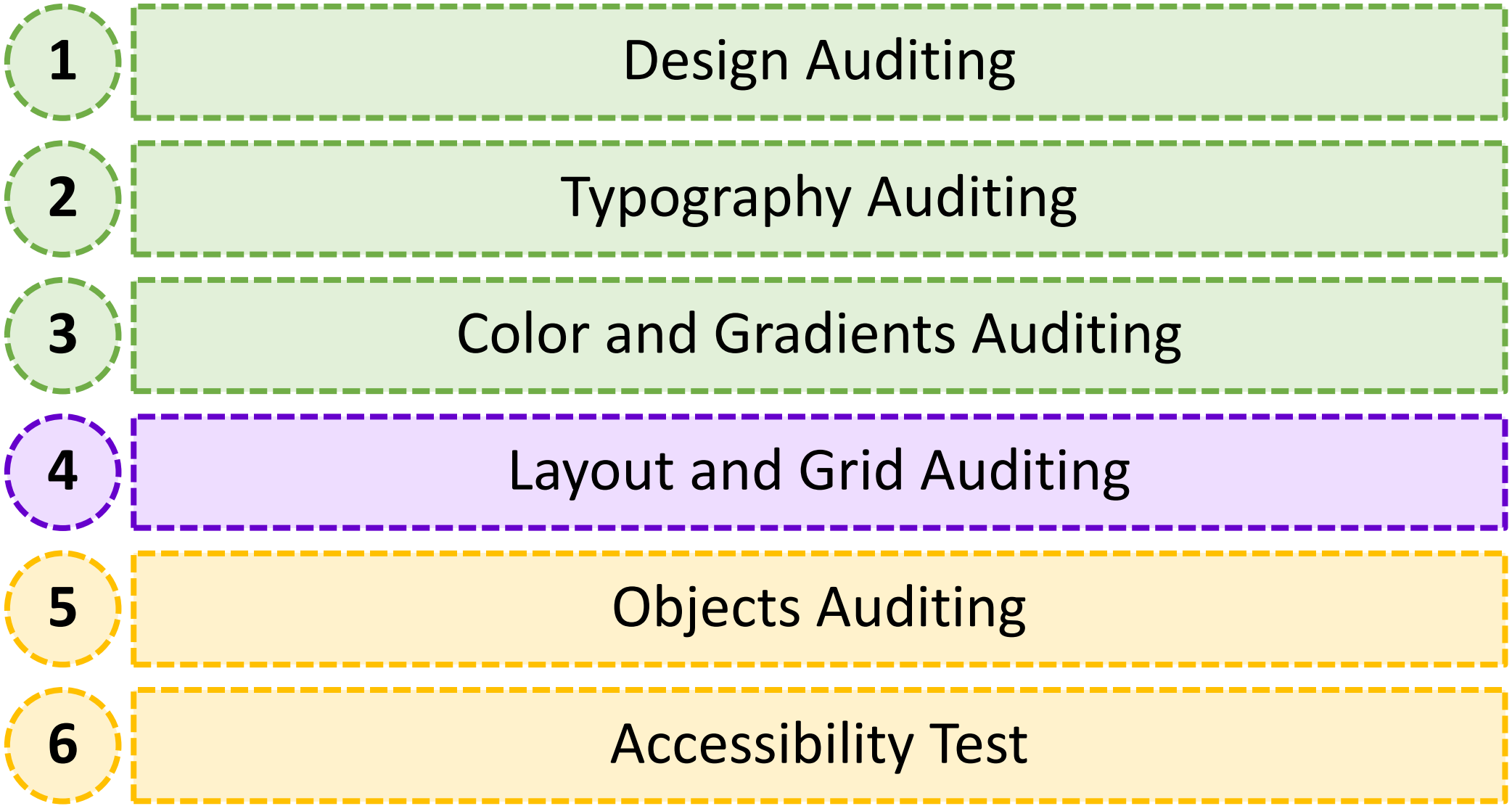
GRADIENTS

Each instance of inconsistency should be documented and outlined.

GRADIENTS

Don't forget to test the hover effects of your items (both cards and buttons are an excellent place to start).

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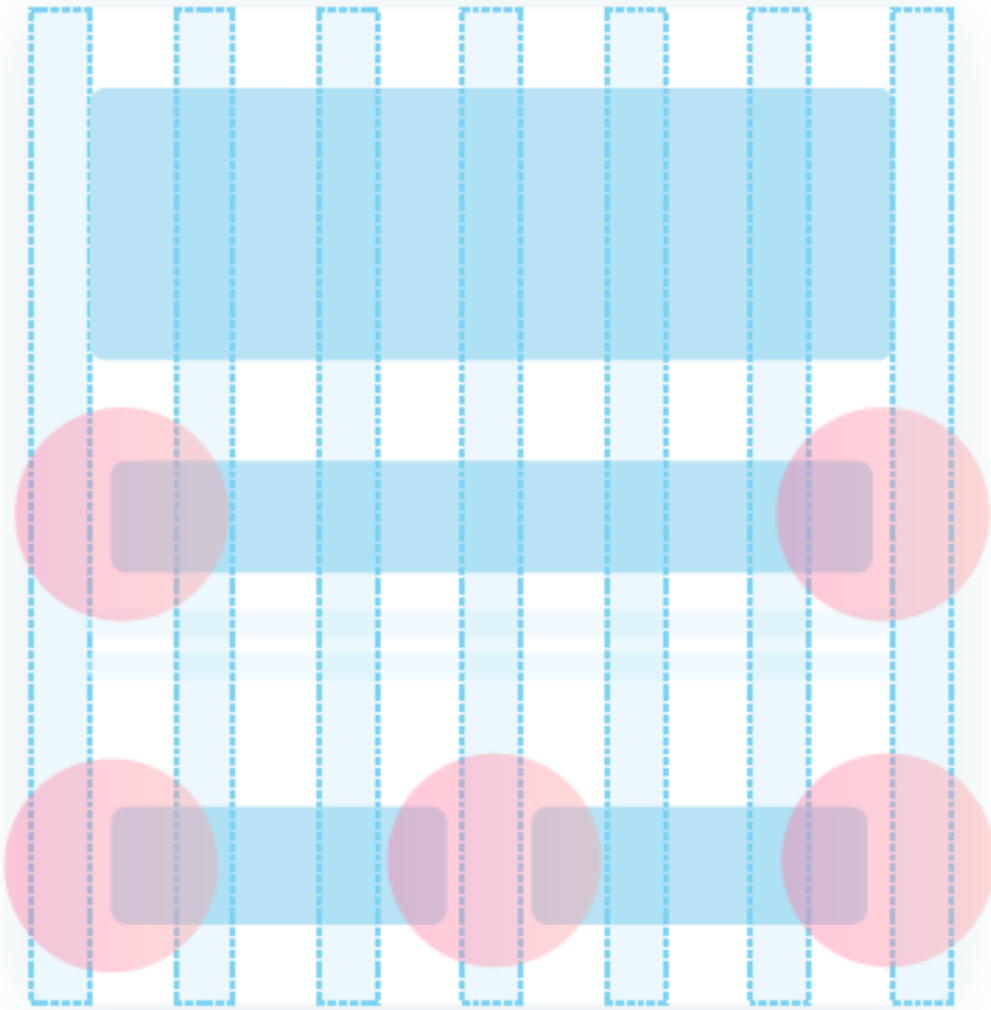
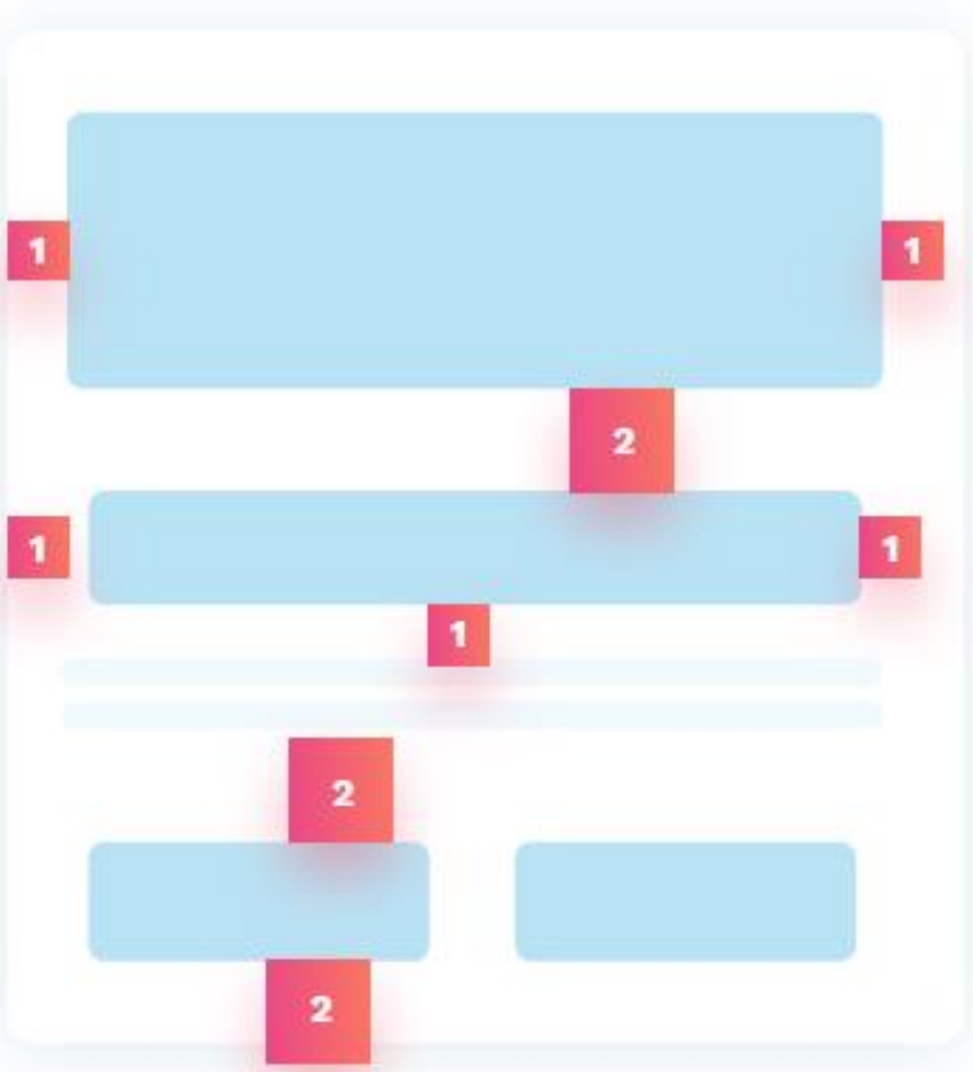
LAYOUT AND GRID

If you have a consistent, defined grid (let's say 12 columns with 32p gutters), the first step is to apply it again to every screen. Then find all the places in which our layout doesn't match the grid layout.



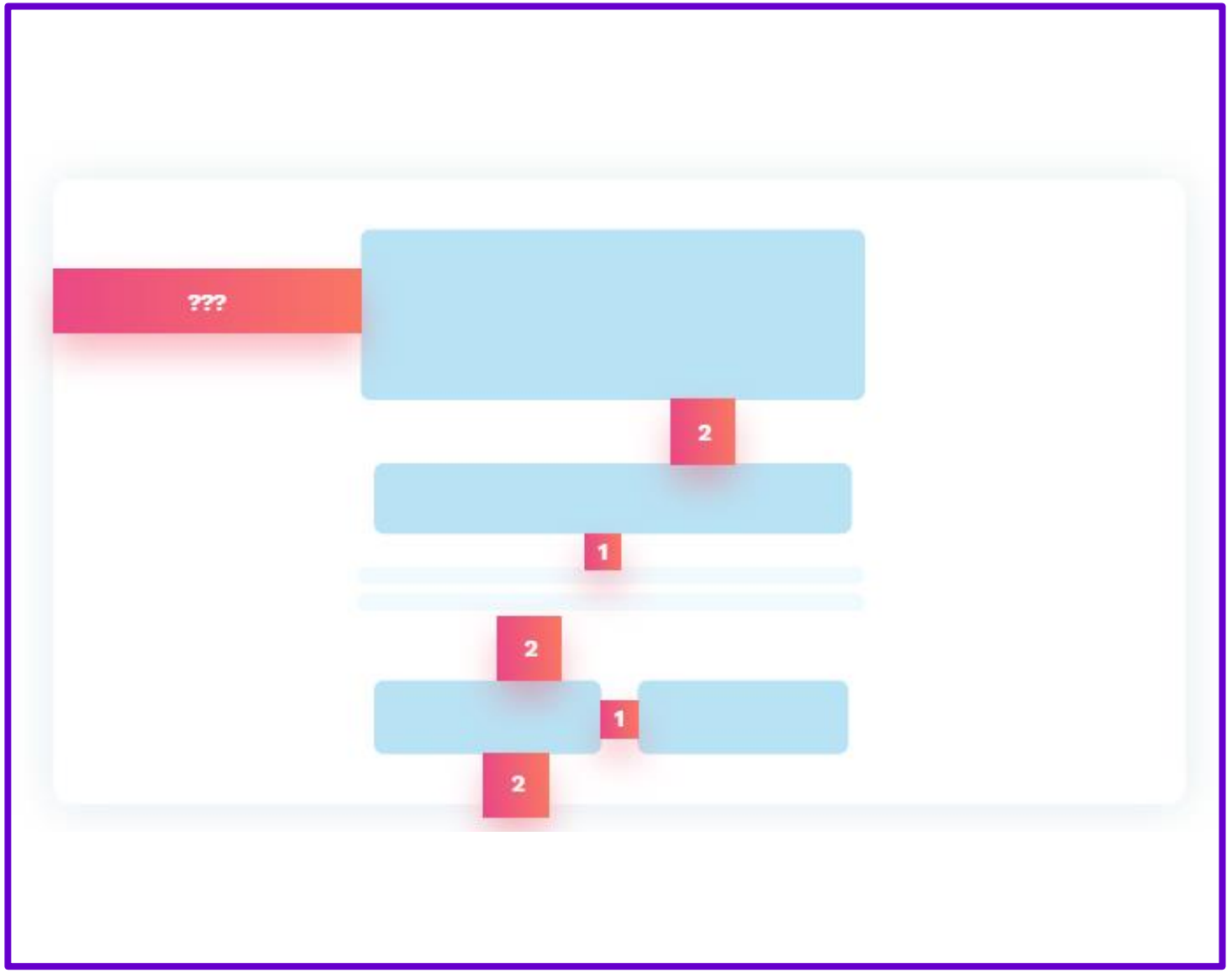
CUSTOM, SOFT GRID

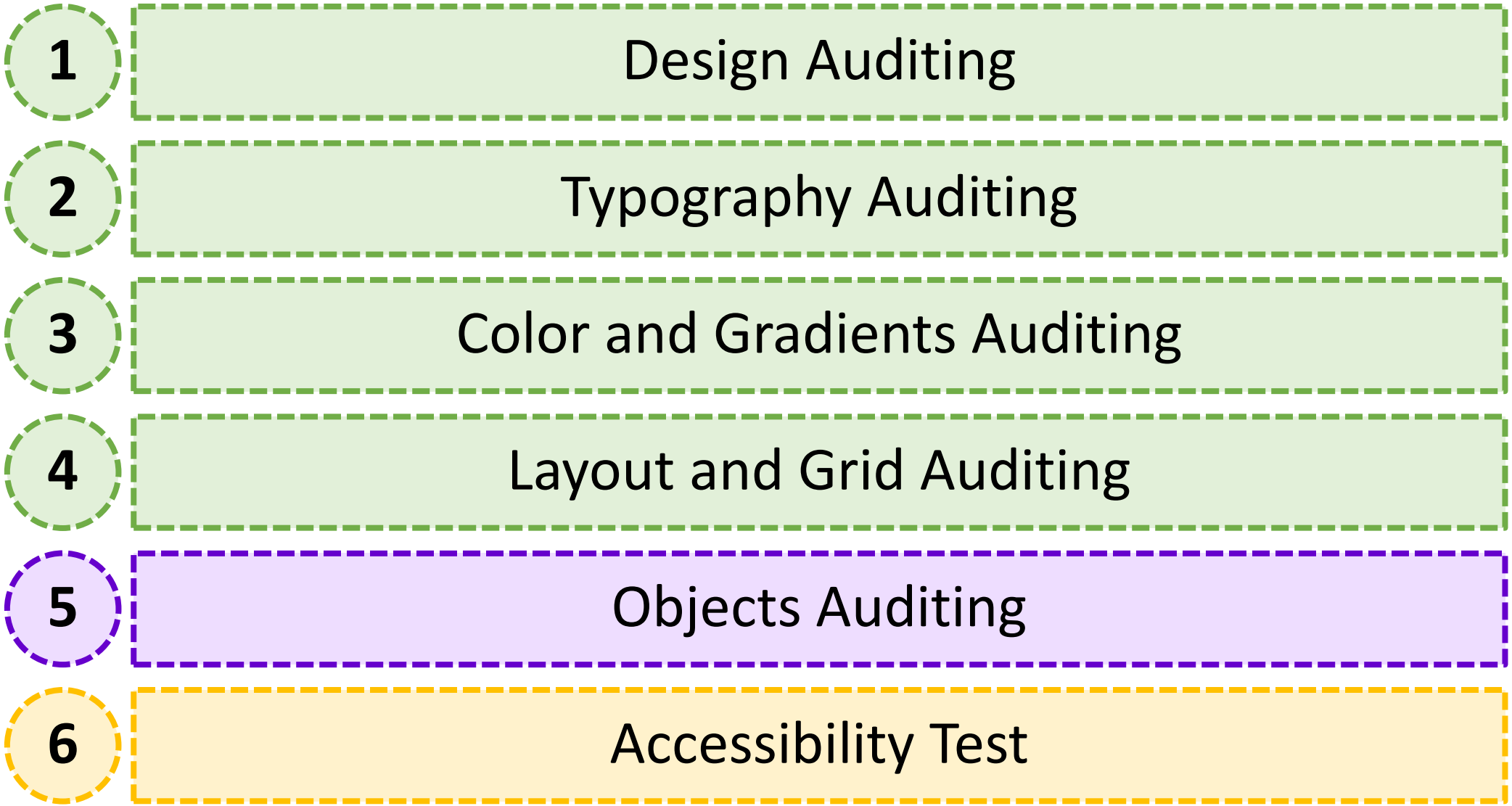
When you don't have a defined grid and it's not easy to find a structure, we can define a soft grid instead.



SOFT GRID ON LARGER SCREENS

In the case larger screens (like desktops and TVs), try to find the soft grid by the spacing between the elements.

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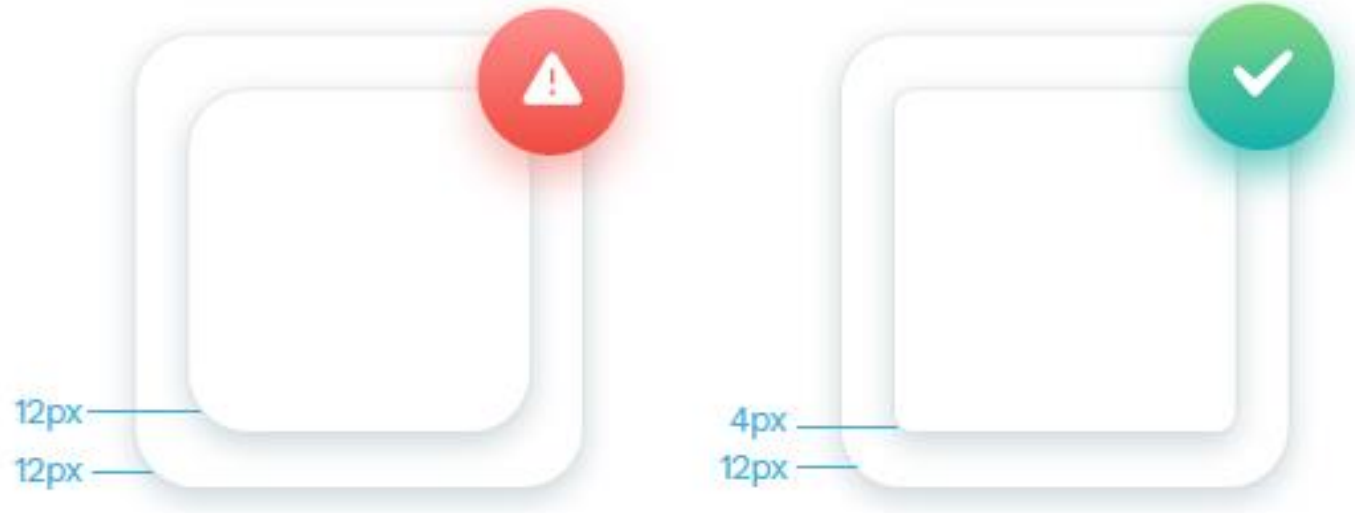
OBJECTS

Each object you design has a couple of characteristics that define how it looks

These rectangles all share the same background and border. They differ, however, with border radii (4, 0, and 6) and shadow values (different Y value and different blur).

OBJECTS

Try adjusting the border-radius for the shapes to match more evenly.



OBJECTS

Border thickness is especially vital while designing forms. All elements of equal importance should have the same border weights.

OBJECTS

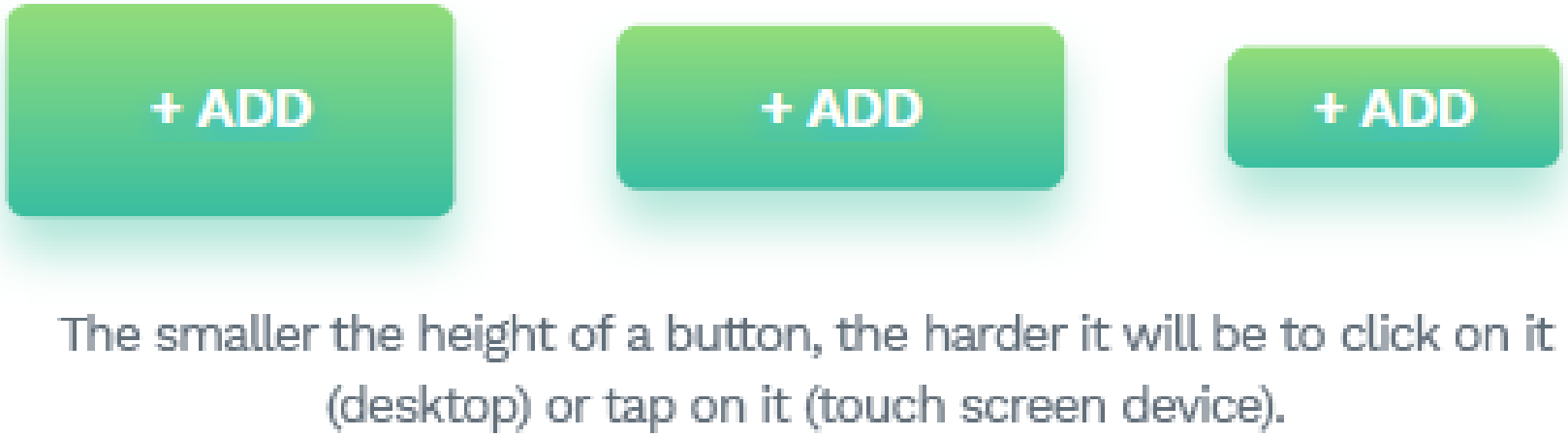
If you're using outline icons, you should also check their border thickness against your form fields.

OBJECTS

A rounded text field should always accompany rounded icons.

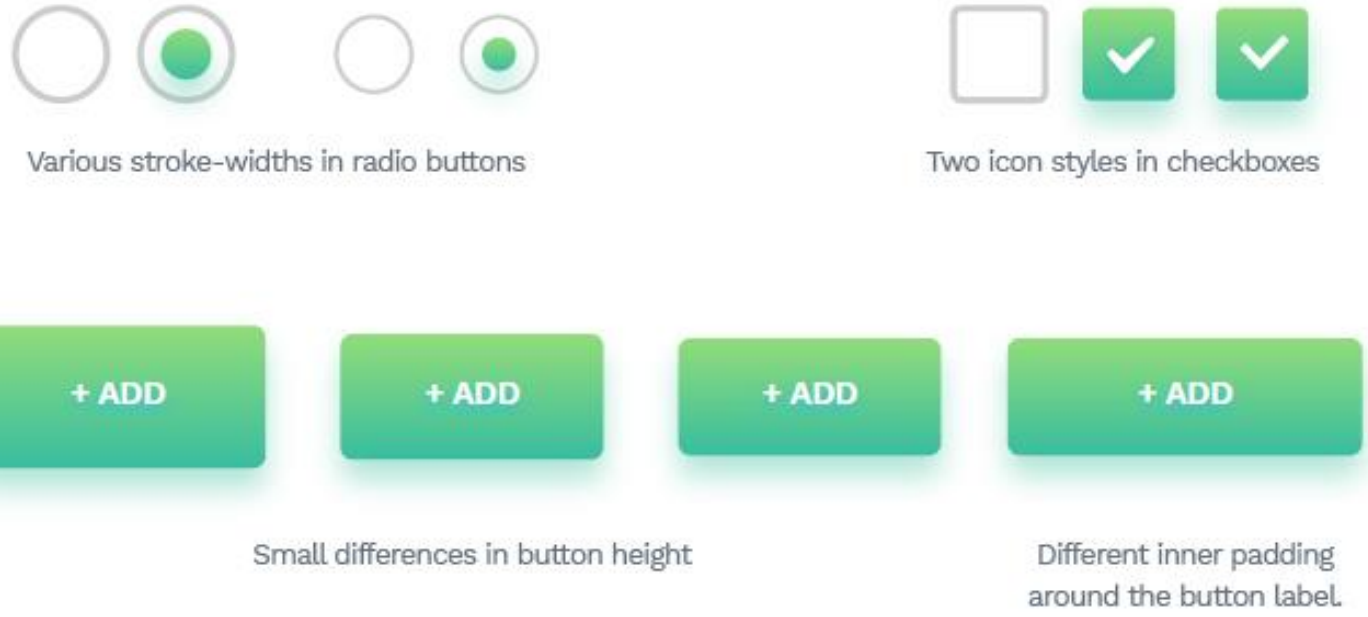
INTERACTIVE ELEMENTS SIZES

The size test in the audit is a two-part process - finding elements that are too small (or too big) and finding items being inconsistent between one another.



INTERACTIVE ELEMENTS SIZES

Our project can have similar size buttons, with subtle differences between them or differ only with internal padding around the button label.



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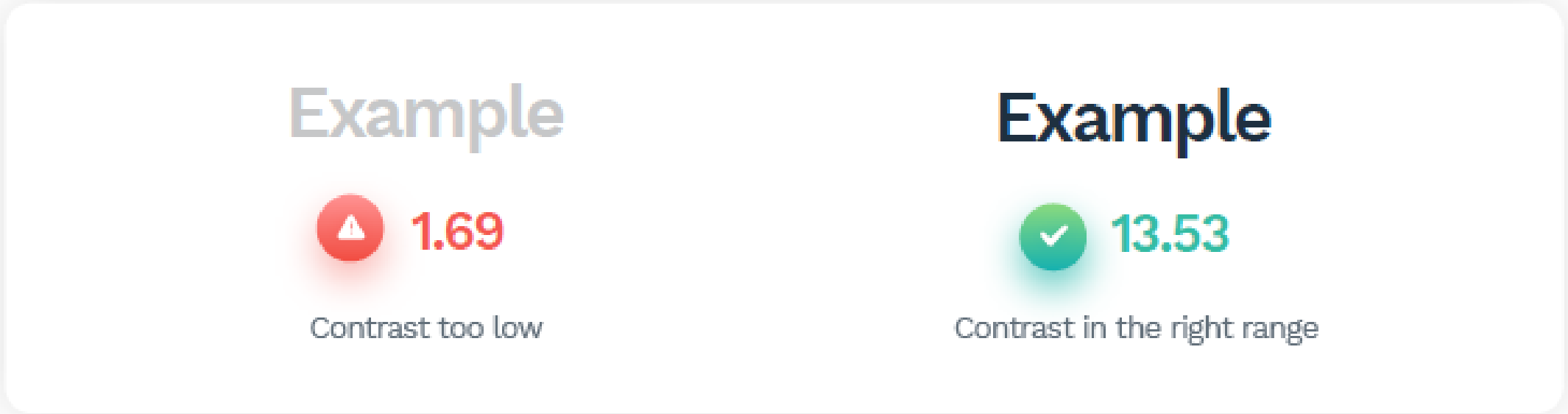
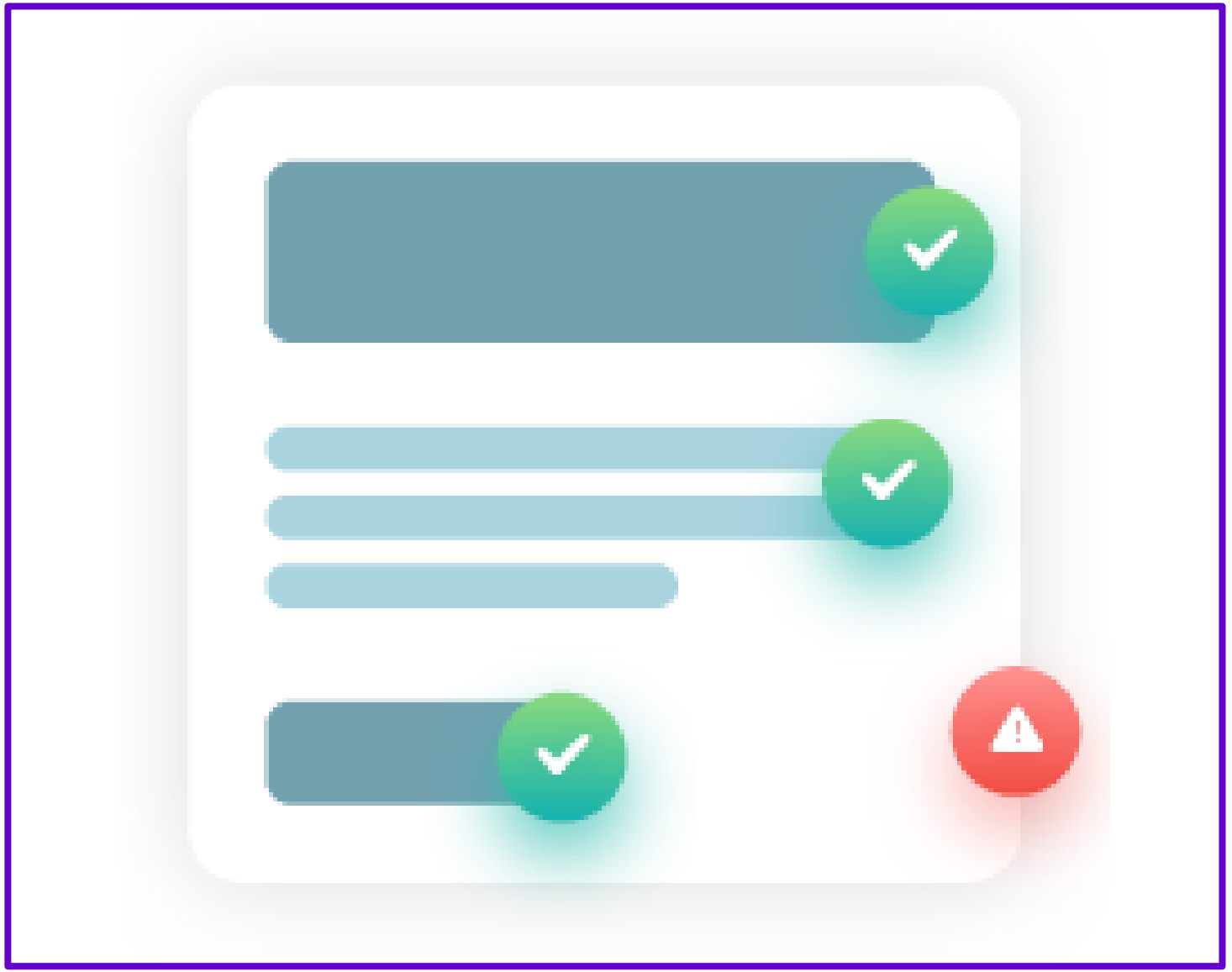
ACCESSIBILITY TEST

Every place in which your test elements don't meet the WCAG rules should be pointed out in the audit.



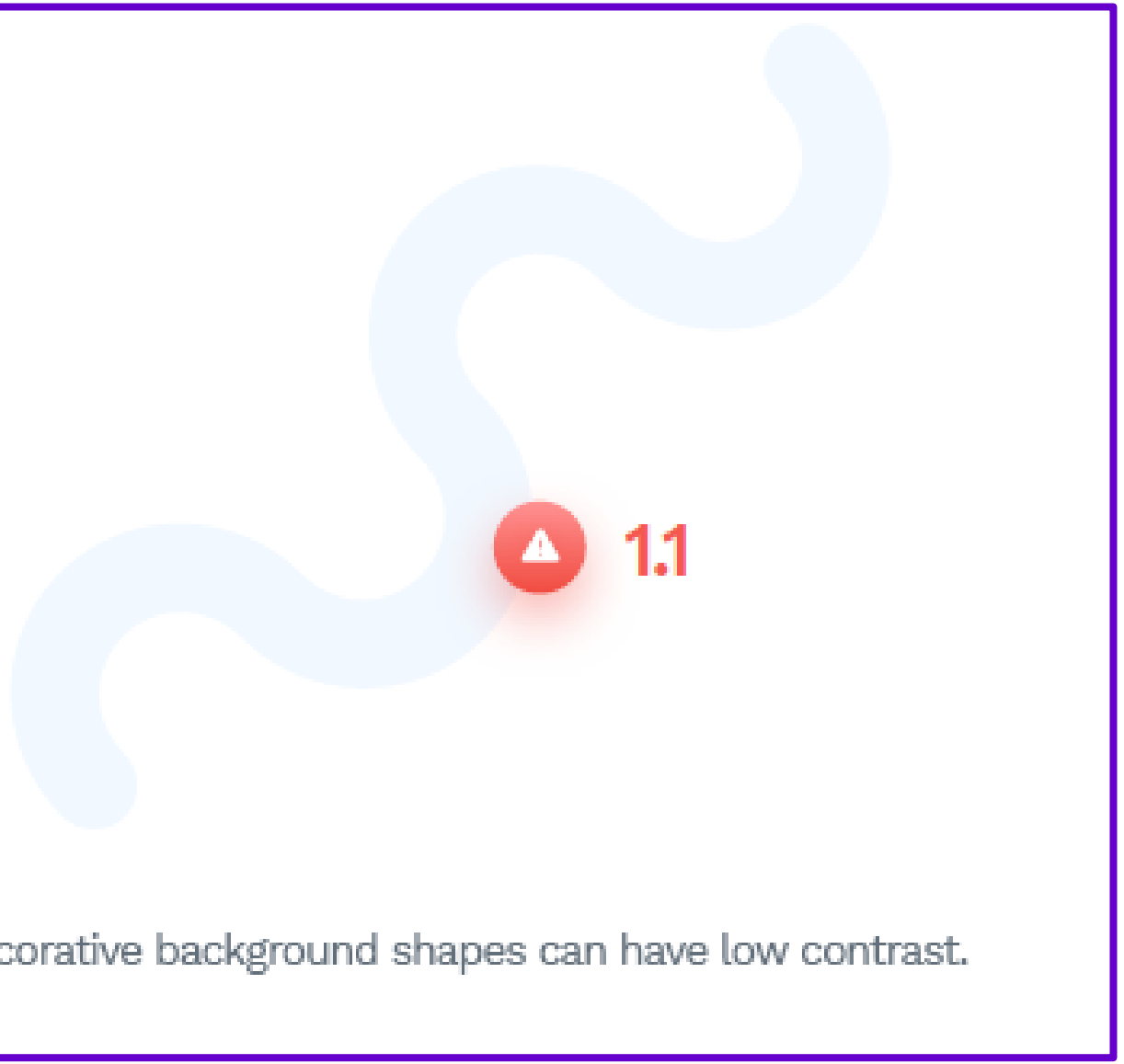
NON-ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

If your design hierarchy is easy to understand it defines the relation between the elements. In that case decorative, non-essential objects can sometimes fail the contrast test



ACCESSIBILITY TEST

Purely aesthetic objects (like low-opacity decorations in the background) can be skipped during accessibility analysis.



DIY

Auditing yourself will help with creating good habits for future designs.

Aside from the apparent quality improvements, a UI Audit also helps junior designers to find week spots in their projects.

UI Audit Checklist

Typography

- [ ] Consistent, defined typography.
- [ ] Too many styles, fonts and sizes:
  - [ ] fonts
  - [ ] sizes
  - [ ] styles

UI Audit Checklist

Interactive elements

- [ ] Consistent sizes, borders, shadows etc.
- [ ] Inconsistencies in objects definitions:
  - [ ] sizes
  - [ ] border radii
  - [ ] line weight
  - [ ] shadow styles

UI Audit Checklist

Grid / Layout

- [ ] All the screens are aligned to the grid.
- [ ] Alignment problems:
  - [ ] Desktop inconsistencies
  - [ ] Mobile inconsistencies

UI Audit Checklist

Colors and gradients

- [ ] The design uses only previously defined colors, gradients and gradient types.
- [ ] There are too many colors and gradients:
  - [ ] all project colors
  - [ ] base (defined) colors
  - [ ] gradients
  - [ ] gradient angles and styles

Course References

- ***Designing User Interfaces***, Michal Malewicz & Diana Malewice, 2020
- ***UI Design Styles: Trends and Design Patterns***, Michal Malewicz & Diana Malewice, 2020
- ***What UX Is Really About :Introducing a Mindset for Great Experiences,*** Celia Hodent, CRC Press, 2022
- ***Lean UX: Designing Great Products with Agile Teams 3rd Edition***, Jeff Gothelf & Josh Seiden, O'Reilly, 2021
- ***Laws of UX: Using Psychology to Design Better Products & Services,*** Jon Yablonski, O'Reilly, 2020
- ***Designing and Prototyping Interfaces with Figma***, Fabio Staiano, Packet Publishing, 2022

Accessing Course Resource

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