

# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF...

## A USER EXPERIENCE DESIGNER



### What is User Experience (UX) design?

UX designers are responsible for designing an app or a system with the users in mind. The goal is to design a solution that is easy to use, efficient and - last but not least - attractive.



As a junior member of the team, you will do a lot of hands on design work. You are likely to work together with other people: Sometimes you might do User Experience research yourself, other times (usually in bigger companies) there are dedicated researchers for that. The research is important to understand the context of the product you're designing and what the users really want and need. You also work with app or software developers, who will turn your design into a functioning product.



As a junior UX designer, your entry level salary is likely to start at £19 - 25,000 a year, and rise to £30 - 50,000 after 3-5 years in the job. These figures vary depending on your location and industry.

### What are some of the key skills that you'd develop in this job?



#### Creativity

UX design gives you lots of opportunities to be creative and think out of the box to find new solutions



#### Listening

Listen closely to your users and researchers to ensure you're solving the right problem



#### Prototyping & wireframing

Being able to create early drafts of the product. It's worth trying out some free tools to gain some practice



#### Communication

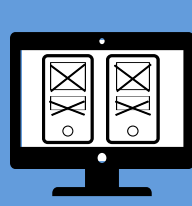
You will communicate a lot with your users and clients to ensure everybody is happy with the product



#### Adaptability

New technologies could change the game, or projects could change direction after user feedback

### What are the tools of the trade?



#### Wireframing tools

You need to create a lot of sketches and wireframes - visual guides to how an app will look like.

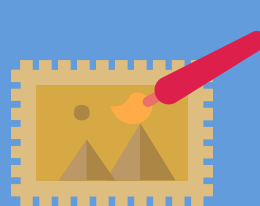
Wireframing programmes allow you to do that quickly.



#### Design prototyping tools

A prototype is an early, often interactive sample of a product.

You can show it to your users so that they can imagine the experience of using the finished product before developing it.



#### Image editing software

You will probably want to include images in your designs.

Learning to work with image editing software means you can easily edit your designs.



#### Post-its and flipchart paper

A lot of the underlying user research and the testing of the prototypes is done in workshops with the users.

Paper-based brainstorming is still key in these workshops.

## A typical day

### 9am

Your day begins with a quick meeting (sometimes also referred to as a "stand-up") with the rest of the team - researchers, designers, developers and project leads.

It's a time for you to talk about what you did yesterday, the focus of today and any support you need with work during the day.

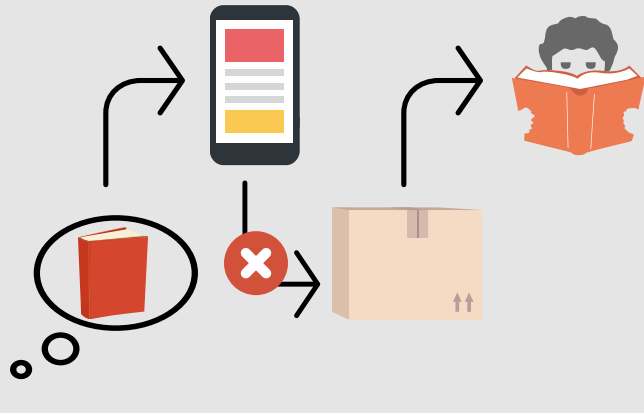
Your work is quite fast-paced, so it's important to keep up to speed with the newest developments and insights from the team.



### 9:30am

You recently got started on a new project - you're re-designing an online shopping app. The first thing you do is creating "user journeys" that show how a user is navigating through the app, and where the pain points and problems currently are.

You're finishing up that research and preparing a summary of your findings for your manager. As part of the research, you've looked at the points at which most people stop interacting with the app, conducted a range of user interviews, and researched best practices within the industry.

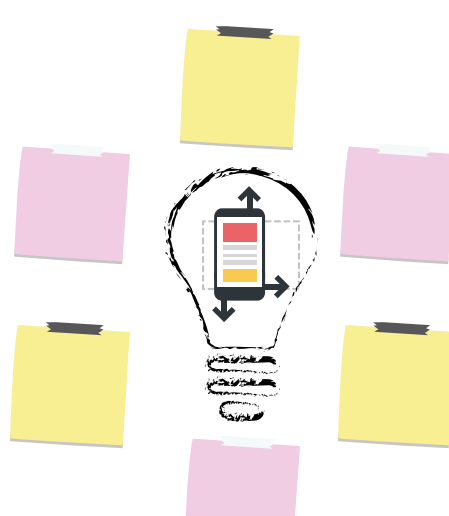


### 11am

You're meeting with your manager to present your user journey to them and discuss your findings, especially the areas that need improvement.

Together, you brainstorm some ideas of how you could address the problems.

You agree that you'll create some wireframes and prototype options and will arrange a session with the users later the same week to run them through it and get their feedback.



### 12pm

It's lunchtime!

If you're not out and about with your colleagues, you could instead use the time to catch up on a design related podcast or some industry news.

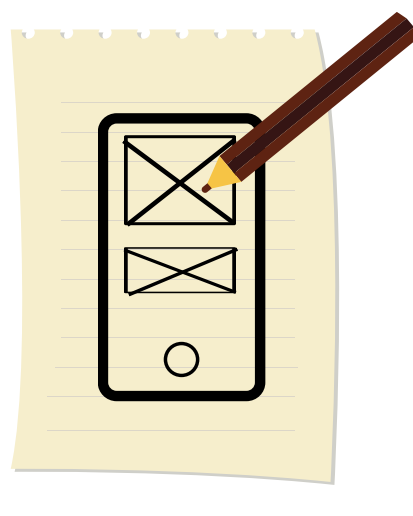


### 1pm

It's time to start creating wireframes and rough interactive prototypes of the new version of the app.

You sketch out all the screens in simple lines and boxes, and map how a user will click through the different screens to place an order.

As a next step, you use your prototyping tools to produce a clickable version that shows the screens in more detail and that you can test with your users.



### 3pm

You're meeting with the app developers to talk through the technical side of the app. You share your research around the customer journey and the pain points, and introduce your ideas to check whether they're technically possible.

You don't have to have a deep technical understanding yourself, but as the developers will be programming the app, it's important that you're working quite closely together throughout the project.



### 4pm

You've been invited to attend a workshop in which one of your team mates is testing their latest prototype with users.

In the workshop, the users are shown the prototype of the app, and asked to interact with it. Sometimes they might be asked to do a specific thing (for example: go to their shopping basket).

The researchers will observe how people interact with the app and if their designs make sense.



### 5pm

You meet with your mentor in the team to discuss your progress, get feedback, and answer any questions that have come up.

It's good to have somebody in the team to talk through what you want to achieve, get advice on what to focus on next and which skills to develop further.



### 5:30pm

Today after work, you're attending an industry event. UX design is a very vibrant industry with lots of interesting people!

You're going to a talk by a successful UX designer from a well-known design agency - with some time after to give you a chance to network with other people in the industry.



### Don't get put off by the jargon!

#### Beta Testing

The second phase of software testing, sometimes referred to as user acceptance testing (UAT) or end user testing. The application is subjected to real world testing by the intended users in order to increase the feedback. The developers use these experiences to make final changes before releasing the software commercially.

#### Front end

The front-end of a device or program is directly accessible and viewable by the users. For example, the front-end of a smartphone is what the user sees when they select and interact with their apps and with the other features of their phone.

#### Prototype

A prototype is an early sample, model, or release of a product. It's built to test whether a product will work if it is developed further, and how it can be improved

#### Wireframe

A visual guide to simply show what an app or web page will look like. It suggests the structure of a page, without including all the details about how the final design will look or function. A wireframe is made up of simple lines and boxes and can map the interactions on a page and where each section links to.