

Visual Design and Fluid Navigation

Human Computer Interaction

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Visual Design

Aesthetics for helping users in understanding and navigating the UI

Visual Design

- Guiding: conveying structure, relative importance, relationships
- Pacing: drawing people into your app, orienting them, and showing where to go, providing hooks to dive deeper
- Messaging: expressing meaning and style, breathing life into your content
- Both at the conscious and sub-conscious levels

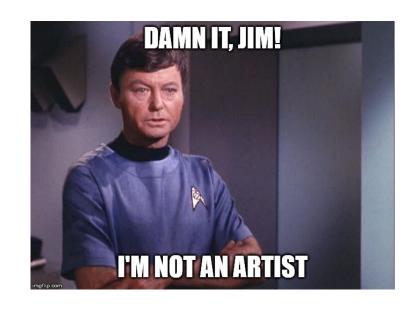
- And also...
 - Making everything look aesthetically beautiful (but this is not the goal)

Visual Design vs. Art and Artistic Skills

A.k.a. «Help, I'm not an artist!»

- Artistic skills help a bit but are neither necessary nor sufficient
- Art does not need to <u>be practical</u>; design does

- Real design skills take years to master
- Widely-accepted heuristics are a good and easy start



Basic visual design involves text, layout, and colors. First let's start with text. Gracefully using whitespace helps separate out logical chunks of content. Next, font size and style differences convey hierarchy. Finally, alignment is crucial for helping readers scan quickly.

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Basic visual design involves ...

Text

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Layout

Colors

BASIC VISUAL DESIGN

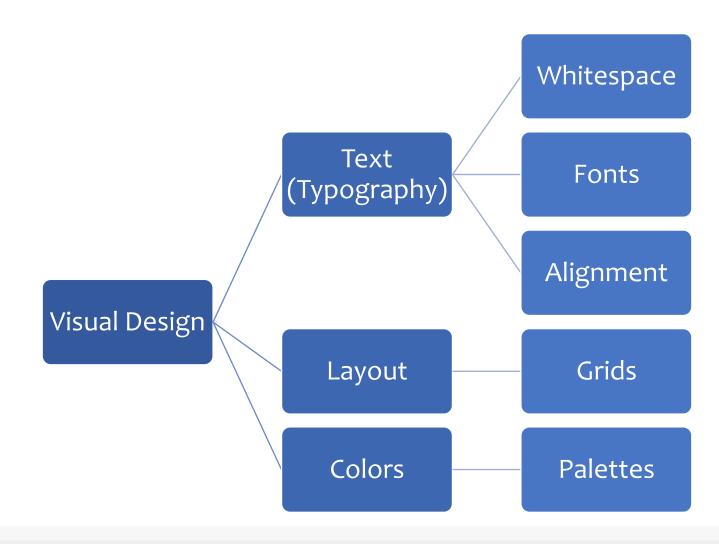
Text

- Whitespace: helps separate out logical chunks of content
- **Font**: size and style differences convey hierarchy
- Alignment: crucial for helping readers scan quickly

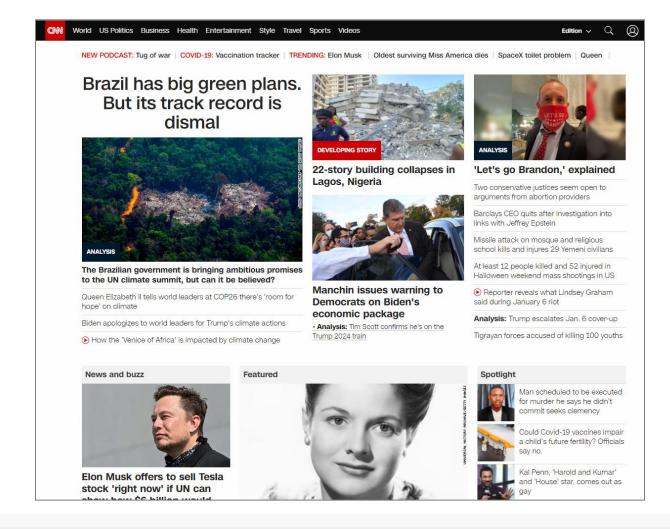
Layout

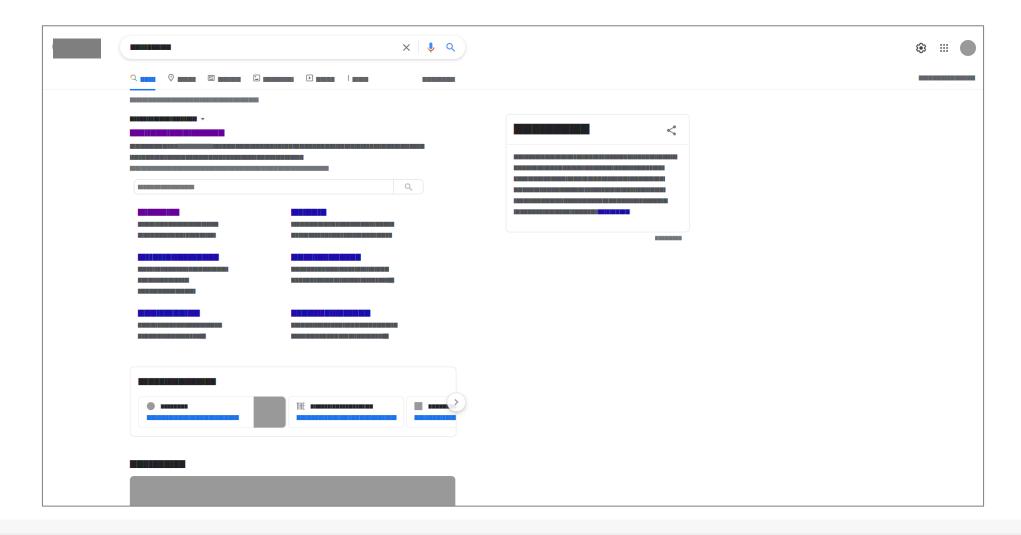
Colors

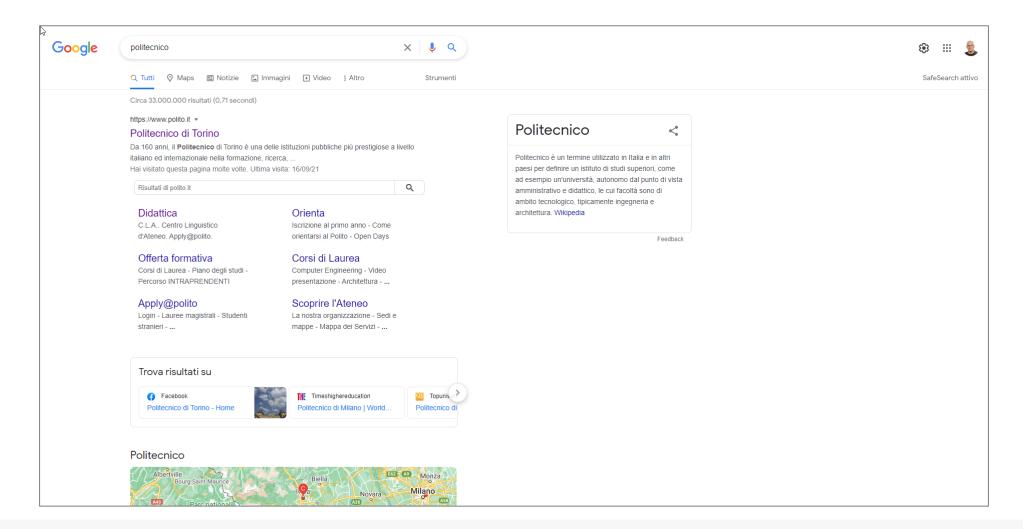
Key ingredients

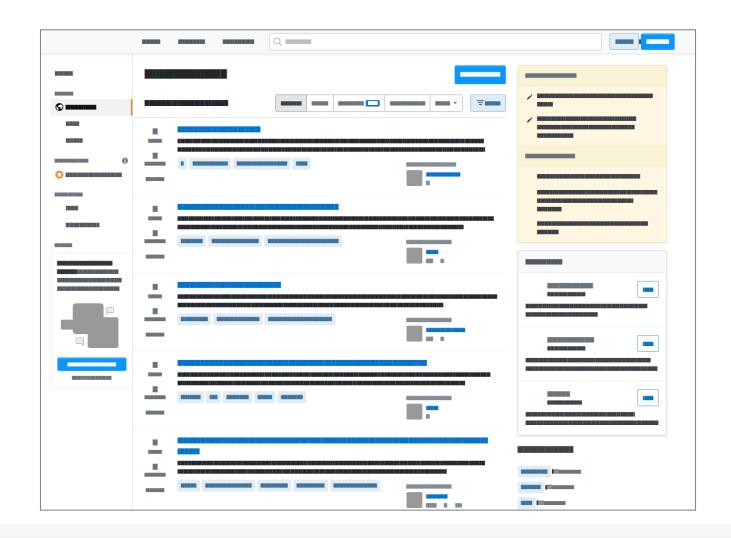


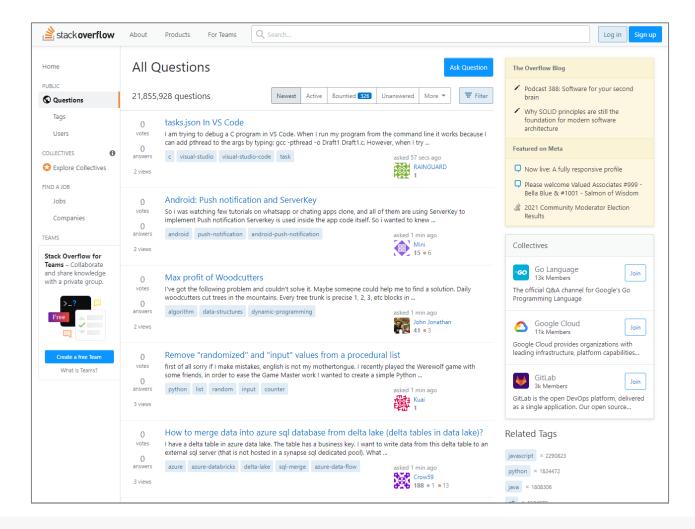




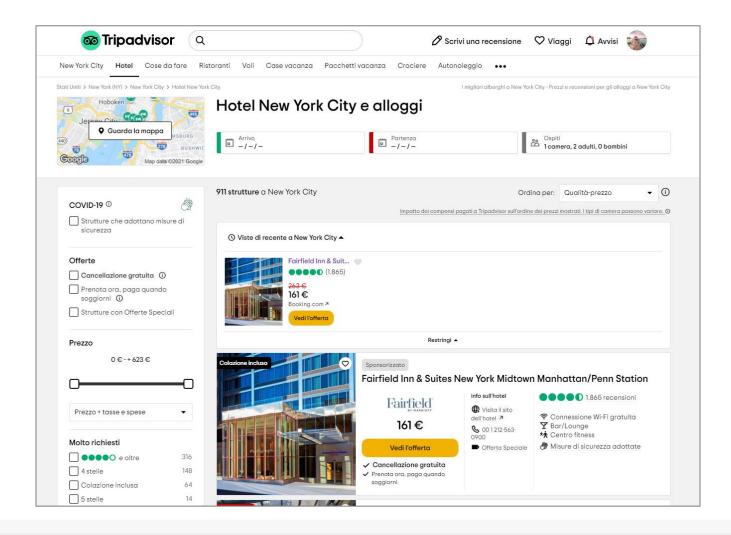














Uses Conventions = Recognizable Structure



'Gestalt' principles

Hints from the psychology of Shapes and of Representation

Gestalt principles

- Laws from 1920s' psychology: how humans typically see objects by grouping similar elements, recognizing patterns and simplifying complex images
- Designers use these to engage users via powerful -yet natural- "tricks" of perspective and best practice design standards
- "The whole is other than the sum of the parts" Kurt Koffka



Some Gestalt principles

- **Figure/Ground:** Disliking uncertainty, we look for solid, stable items. Foreground catches the eye first
- Closure: Preferring complete shapes, we automatically fill in gaps to perceive a complete image; we see the whole first
- Common Region: We group elements that are in the same closed region
- Element Connectedness: We group elements linked by other elements
- Continuation: We follow and "flow with" lines
- Proximity (Emergence): We group closer-together elements, separating them from those farther apart.
- Good Form: We differentiate elements that are similar in color, form, pattern, etc. and cluster them together

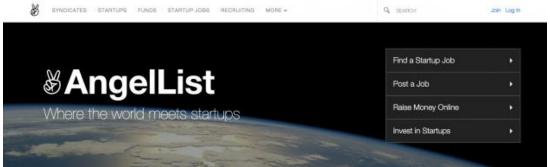
- Meaningfulness (Familiarity): We group elements if they form a meaningful or personally relevant image.
- Prägnanz: We perceive complex images as simple ones.
- Convexity: We perceive convex shapes ahead of concave ones
- Regularity: Sorting items, we tend to group some into larger shapes, and connect elements that form a pattern.
- Similarity (Invariance): We seek differences and similarities in an image and link similar elements.
- Symmetry: We seek balance and order in designs, struggling to do so if they aren't readily apparent.
- Common Fate: We group elements that move in the same direction
- **Synchrony:** We group static visual elements that appear at the same time.

Examples: figure-ground



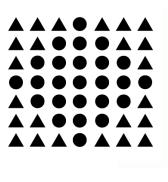


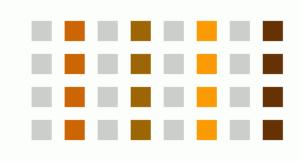




Examples: similarity



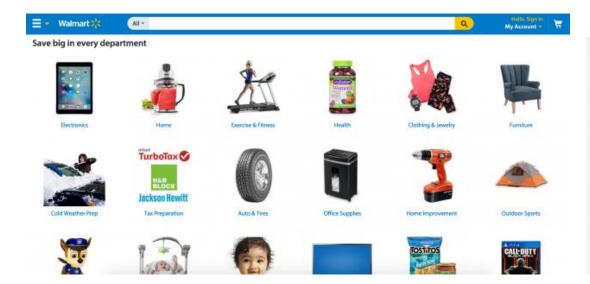


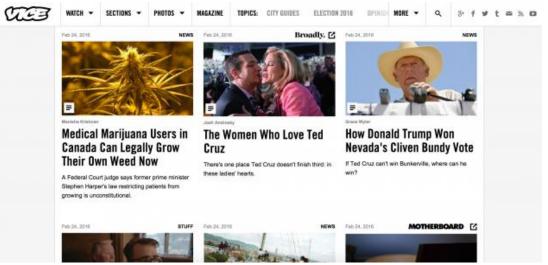




Examples: proximity



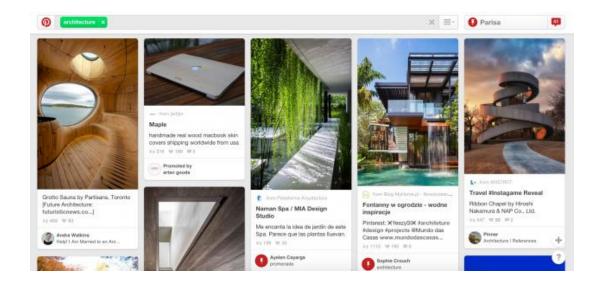


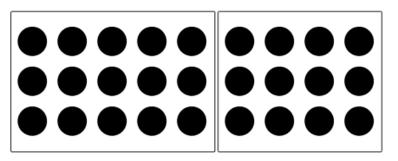


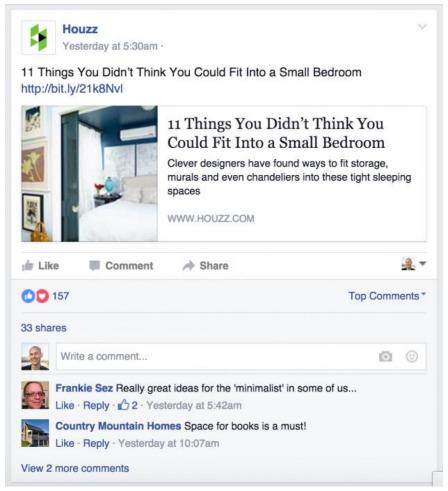


https://www.usertesting.com/blog/g estalt-principles/

Examples: common region







Examples: continuity



Customers Who Bought This Item Also Bought



Crossing the Chasm, 3rd Edition: Marketing and Selling Disruptive Products > Geoffrey A. Moore 南南南南南 72 Paperback \$12.35 Prime



The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to 食食食食 1,062 \$16.66 -/Prime



The Innovator's Diemma: The Revolutionary Book That Will Change the Way Clayton M. Christensen **全 中 中 中 209** #1 Bast Seller (in Industrial Management.... Paperback

\$10.06 \Prime



The Innovator's Solution: Creating and Sustaining Clayton M. Christensen **会会会会** 22 Hardcover \$18.33 Prime



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Page 1 of 20



Step 1 Choose your meals, drinks and treats from our daily rotating menu.



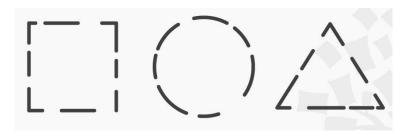
Step 2 Our friendly servers organize your food for delivery - hot and ready to eat!

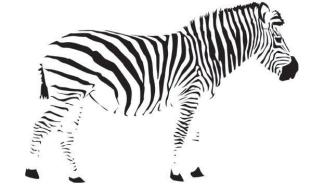


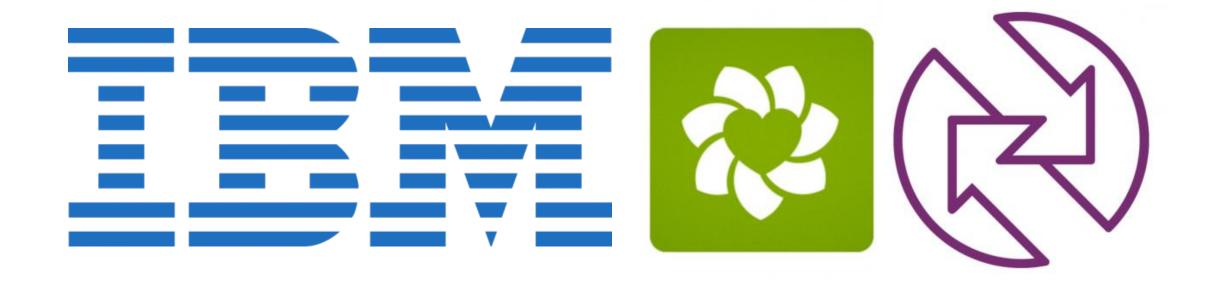
Your meal arrives in around 20 minutes - like a home-cooked meal without the effort!

Step 3

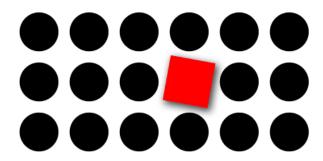
Examples: closure







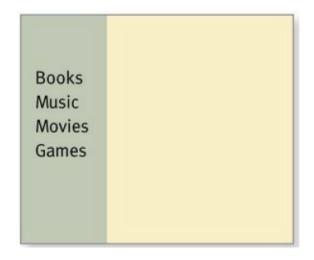
Examples: focal point

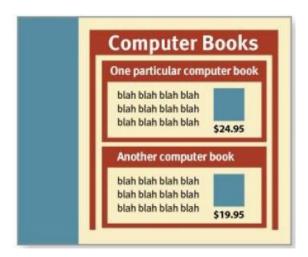






Examples (applying Gestalt)



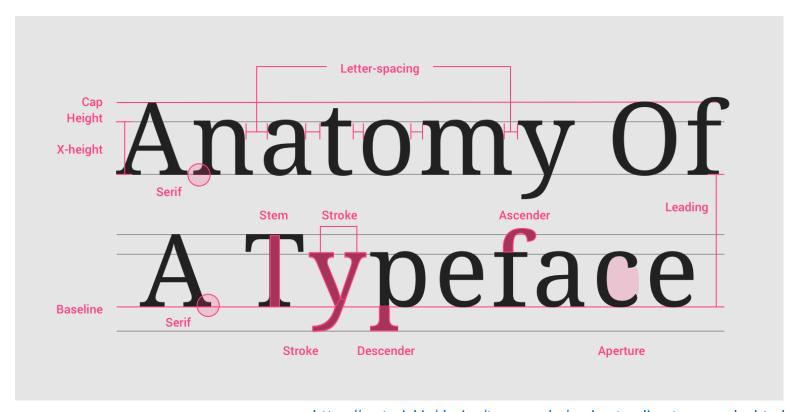


Typography

Property of text

Characteristics of text

- Point Size
- Leading
- Cap Height, x-height
- Ascenders, Descenders
- Weight
- Serifs



https://material.io/design/typography/understanding-typography.html

Example: Material Design type scale

A combination of 13 styles that are supported by the type system

Reusable categories of text, each with an intended application and meaning

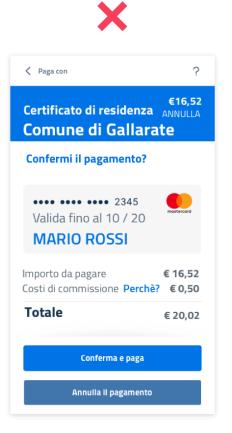
Scale Category	Typeface	Font	Size	Case	Letter spacing
H1	Roboto	Light	96	Sentence	-1.5
H2	Roboto	Light	60	Sentence	-0.5
Н3	Roboto	Regular	48	Sentence	0
H4	Roboto	Regular	34	Sentence	0.25
H5	Roboto	Regular	24	Sentence	0
H6	Roboto	Medium	20	Sentence	0.15
Subtitle 1	Roboto	Regular	16	Sentence	0.15
Subtitle 2	Roboto	Medium	14	Sentence	0.1
Body 1	Roboto	Regular	16	Sentence	0.5
Body 2	Roboto	Regular	14	Sentence	0.25
BUTTON	Roboto	Medium	14	All caps	1.25
Caption	Roboto	Regular	12	Sentence	0.4
OVERLINE	Roboto	Regular	10	All caps	1.5

https://material.io/design/typography/the-type-system.html#type-scale

Example: Text conveys hierarchy

Font size, color and spacing define a hierarchy of visibility and attention

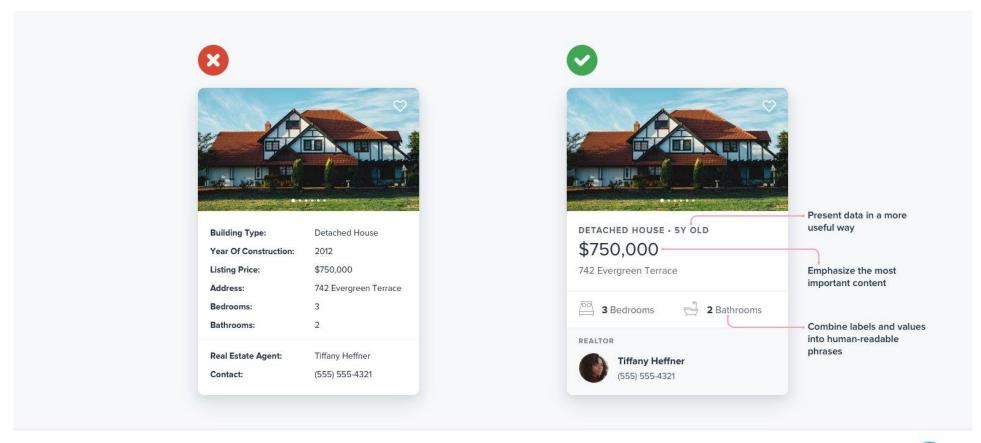
The visual hierarchy should match the relative importance of the information content





https://docs.italia.it/italia/designers-italia/design-linee-guida-docs/it/stabile/doc/user-interface/il-disegno-di-un-interfaccia-e-lo-ui-kit.html

Example: Text and Layout convey meaning



www.refactoringui.com



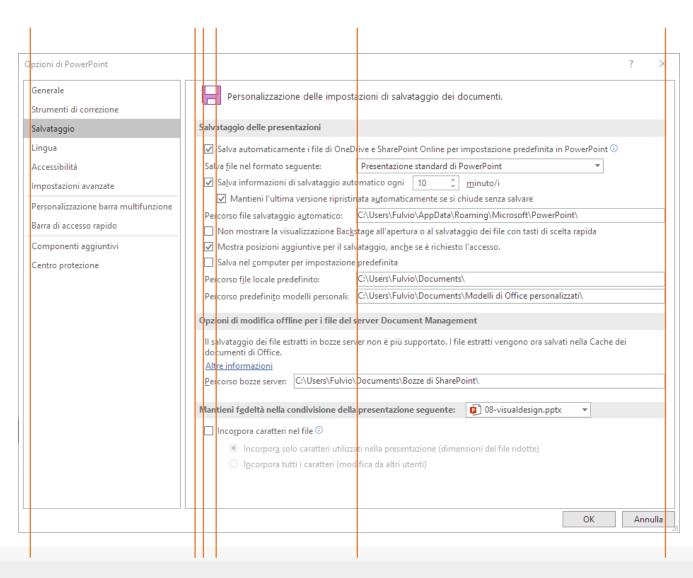
Grids and Alignment

Exploiting grouping and alignment to convey content, at different levels

Alignment

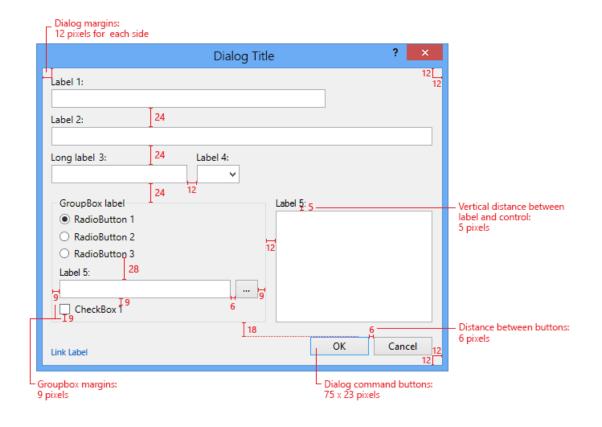
- Invisible lines that run through the interface and "attract" the left- or rightedge of a widget control
 - Vertical
 - Horizontal

Example



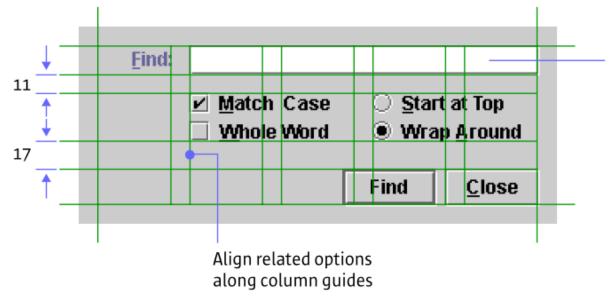
Examples



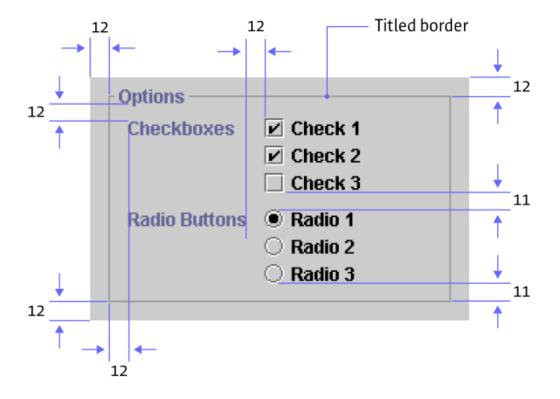


https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/visualstudio/extensibility/ux-guidelines/layout-for-visual-studio?view=vs-2019

Examples



Place most important option near the top

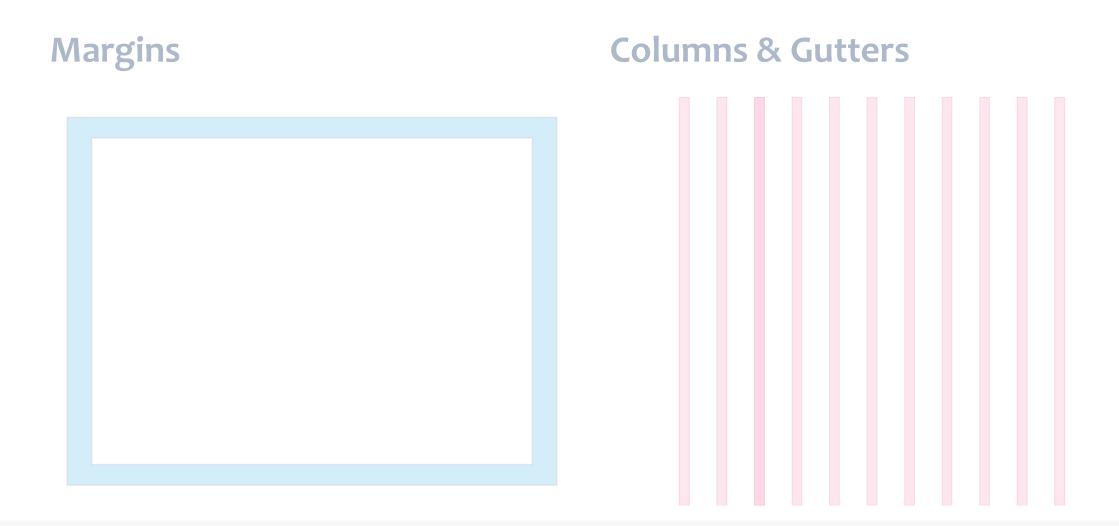


Java Look and Feel Design Guidelines, Sun Microsystems, 1999

Grid Layout Ingredients

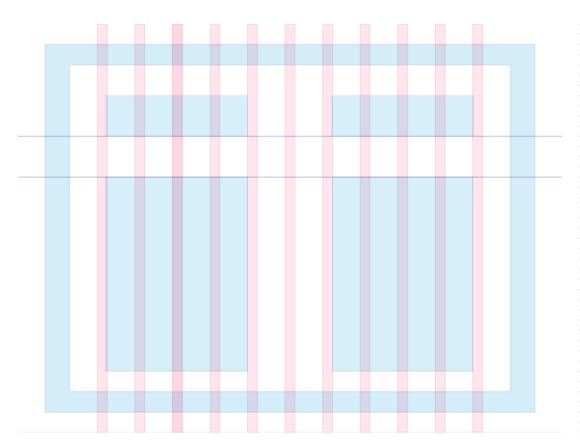
- **Guides:** The edge which you choose to align content with
- Column: A vertical division of content
- Row: A horizontal division of content
- Margins: The area surrounding your content
- **Gutters**: The margins between columns
- Hang-line: A horizontal guide to align content to hang off of
- Baseline: The horizontal guide for an element to sit on top of
- **Rhythm**: Proportion systems that can help define the sizing frequency and spacing of each of the above elements.

Grid Layout Ingredients



Grid Layout Ingredients

Hanglines and Baselines

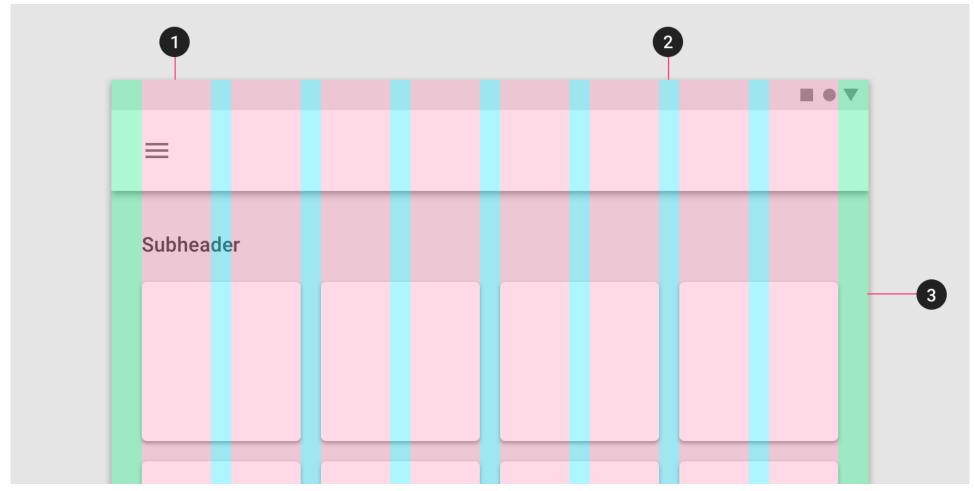


Baseline Grids



Example Grid-based layout

- 1. Columns
- 2. Gutters
- 3. Margins



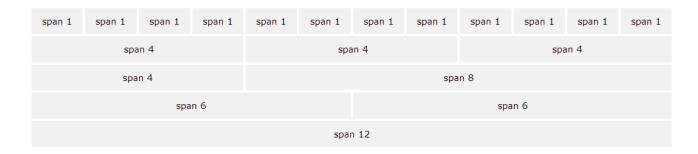
Example: Bootstrap grid

Always 12 columns in total

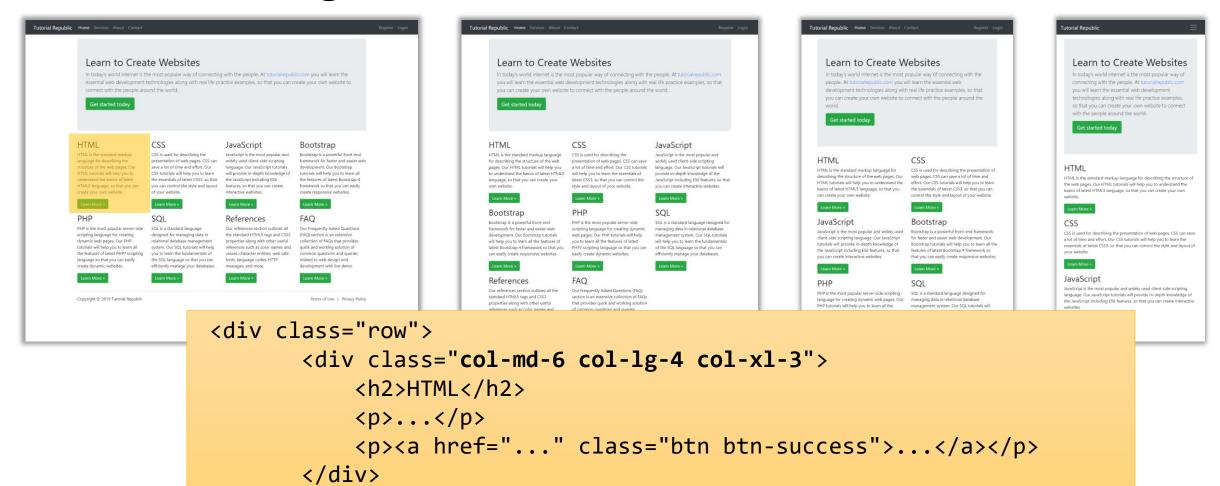
May choose to span a group of columns

Each column is tagged according to the screen size:

- xs (phones <768px)
- sm (tablets >=768px)
- md (small laptops >=992px)
- Ig (laptops and desktops >1200px)



Responsive grid layout



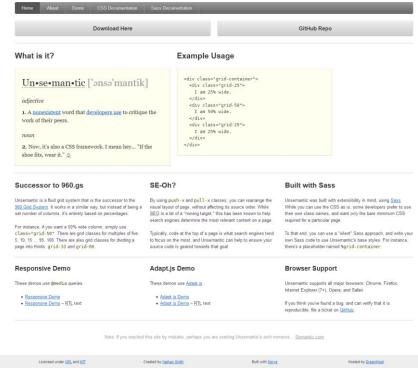
Other grid systems

960 grid (fixed width, 12 or 16 col)



Unsemantic (responsive, based on %)





https://960.gs/

https://unsemantic.com/

Grid structure

Main body: Mix of 2x and 3x columns

Alternating row types



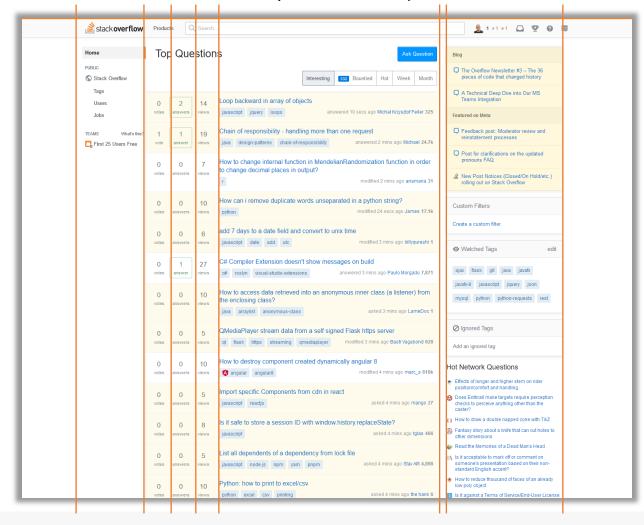
Title area outside the grid

Right column for other types of articles

Grid structure

Main content (center, wide)

Navigation (left, smaller)



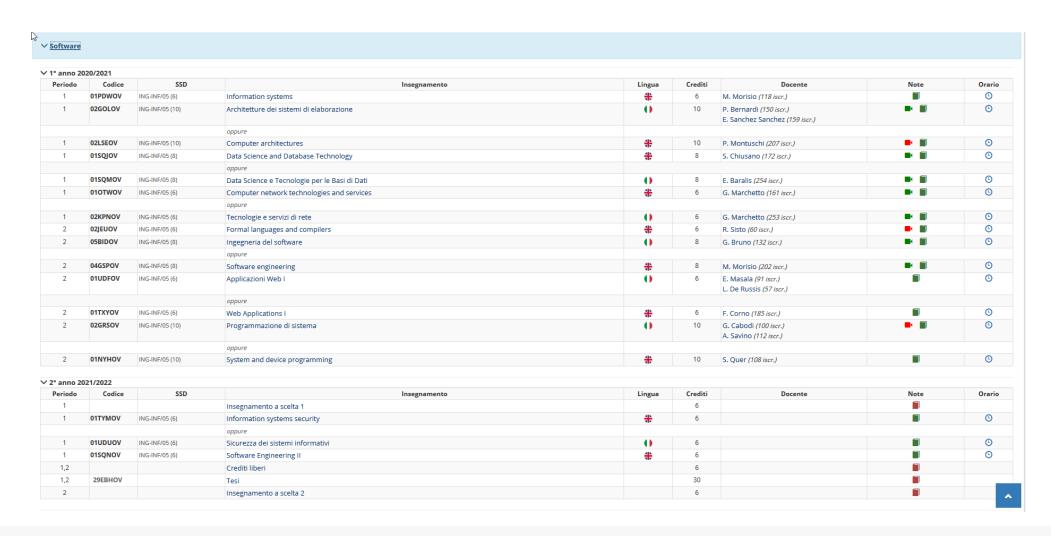
Related content (right, smaller)

Example (2019)

= Software

1° anno Periodo	Codice	Lingua	Insegnamento	Crediti	Docente	Note	Vincoli
1	01PDWOV	SIN SIN	Information systems	6	M. Morisio	⊗	***************************************
1	02GOLOV	п	ING-INF/05 (6) <u>Architetture dei sistemi di elaborazione</u> ■ ING-INF/05 (10)	10	P. Bernardi E. Sanchez Sanchez	\odot	
1	02LSEOV	200	Oppure <u>Computer architectures</u> ■	10	P. Montuschi	\odot	
1	015QJOV		ING-INF/05 (10) Data Science and Database Technology IM ING-INF/05 (8) Oppure	8	S. Chiusano	\odot	
1	01SQMOV	•	Oppure Data Science e Tecnologie per le Basi di Dati ■ ING-INF/05 (8)	8	E. Baralis	\odot	
1	010TWOV	50 (P) 50 (R)	Computer network technologies and services ING-INF/05 (6) Oppure	6	M. Baldi	\odot	
1	02KPNOV	•	Oppure Tecnologie e servizi di rete ■ ING-INF/05 (6)	6	G. Marchetto	\odot	
2	02JEUOV	2012) 2012)	Formal languages and compilers ING-INF/05 (6)	6	R. Sisto	\odot	
2	05BIDOV	•	Ingegneria del software ■ ING-INF/05 (8)	8	G. Bruno	\odot	
2	04GSPOV	12 per 2012	Oppure Software engineering NG-INF/05 (8)	8	M. Morisio	\odot	
2	01UDFOV	o.	Applicazioni Web I IIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIII	6	E. Masala	\odot	
2	01TXYOV	20 JP 2 20 JP 2	Oppure Web Applications I ■	6	F. Corno	\odot	
2	02GRSOV	•	ING-INF/05 (6) <u>Programmazione di sistema</u> ■ ING-INF/05 (10)	10	G. Cabodi	\odot	
2	01NYHOV	27 P.	Oppure System and device programming ING-INF/05 (10)	10	S. Quer	\odot	
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Example (same page in 2020)



Example (2015 vs 2019)

Add an address Full Name: **A** Address Line 1: Street address, P.O. box, company name, c/o Address line 2: Apartment, suite, unit, building, floor, etc. City: State/Province/Region: ZIP: Country: United States • **Phone Number:** Learn more Optional Delivery Preferences (What's this?) Weekend Delivery: Select your preference Security Access Code: For buildings or gated communities Save & Add Payment Method

Save & Continue

Aggiungi un nuovo indirizzo Oppure ritira i tuoi colli quando desideri, presso i nostri punti self-service. Per aggiungere un punto di ritiro o un Amazon Locker, clicca qui. Paese/Regione Nome e cognome Indirizzo Via e numero civico Scala, piano, interno ecc. (Opzionale) Città Provincia Codice postale Numero di telefono Può essere utilizzato per aiutare consegna Aggiungi istruzioni di consegna Consegna nel fine settimana Seleziona la tua disponibilità

Il tuo account > I tuoi indirizzi > Nuovo indirizzo

Aggiungi indirizzo

Some guidelines

- When designing a template, start from the longest block of text
- Left-aligned text is (usually) faster to skim
- Alignment guides the eye and reduces clutter
 - Avoid slight misalignments
 - Patterns and deviations are "automatically" detected
 - Deviate form a pattern for strategic reasons
 - Use visual proximity and scale to convey semantic information

Colors

The most dangerous weapon in your toolset

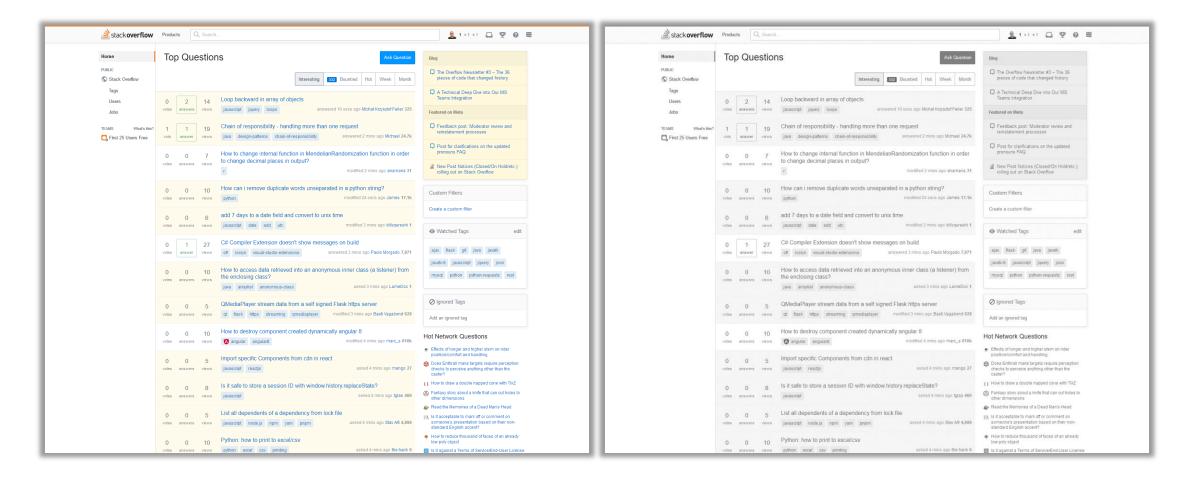
Colors...



Colors

- Be careful, don't exaggerate
- Design in grayscale, first
 - Ensure information is conveyed by text and layout
- When adding colors, try to conserve the same luminance of the grayscale design
- Assign meaning to color
- Use a limited and consistent palette and use slight variations

Example



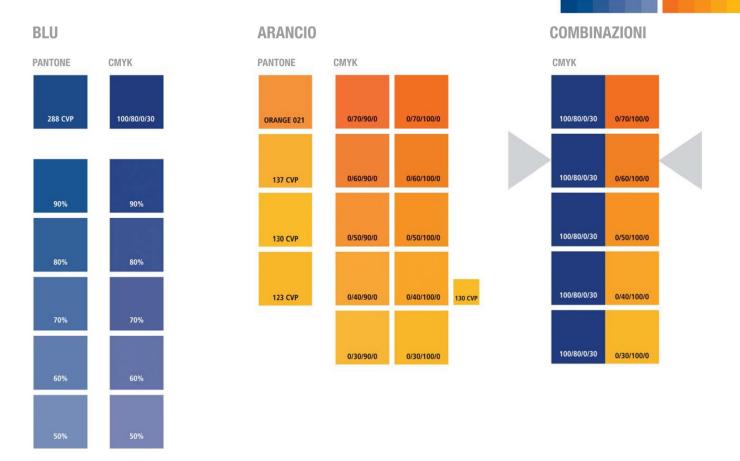
Example





Palettes

Allegato 1 ______ABACO COLORI POLITO

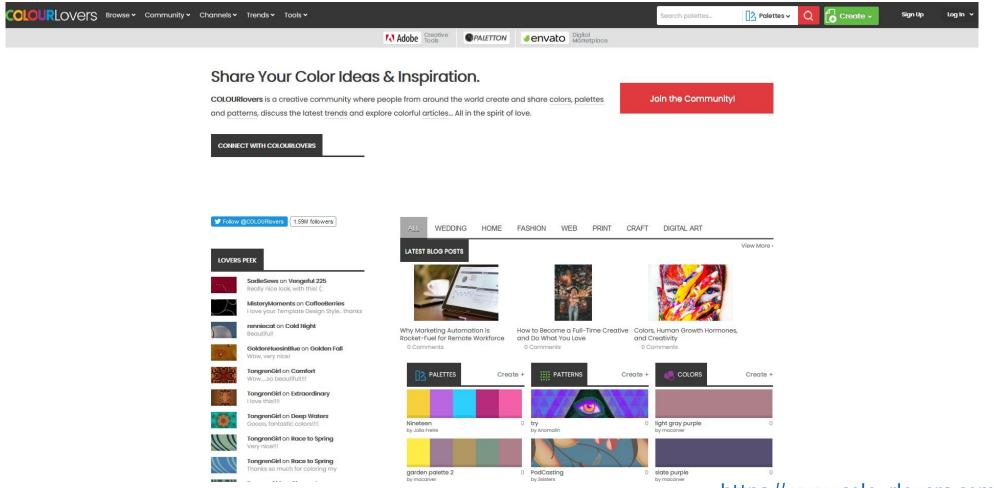


50

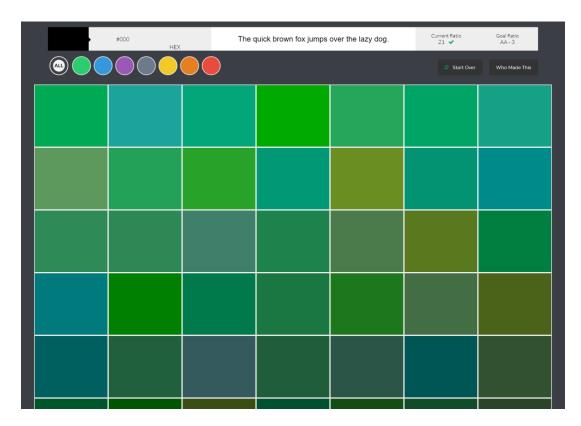
22

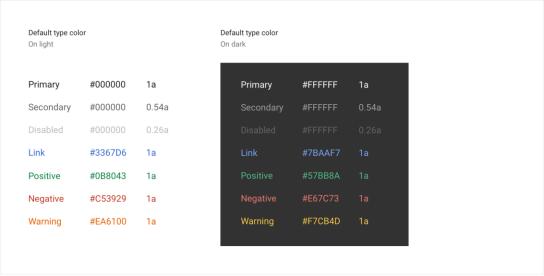
POLITECNICO DI TORINO_Corporate Image_

ColourLovers



Color contrast



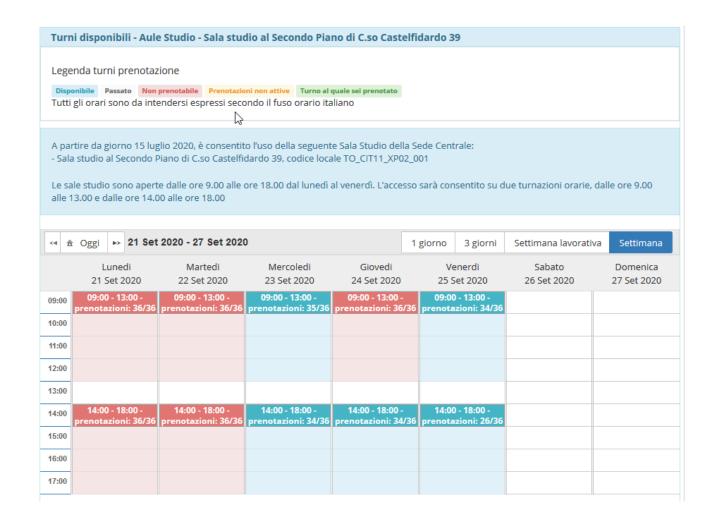


Google Chrome Palette

http://colorsafe.co/

Example

- Colors needing an explanation legend
- Time intervals are shaded with 2 different colors
 - "why is the first hour filled with a different color?"
- No indication of the "fill level"



Reading and Navigating

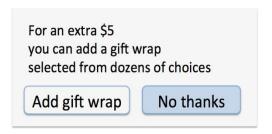
«Informavores» must quickly find the information they need

Navigation

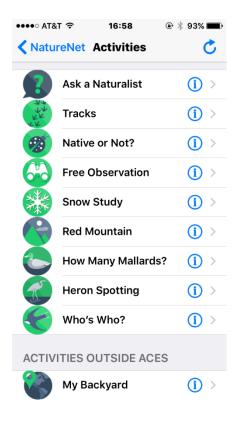
- Enables users to know where they are and to steer themselves to their intended destination
- Is about getting work done (or having fun) through a series of actions
- May consist of
 - Task navigation: successfully operating interactive applications, such as installing a mobile app, completing an on-line survey, or purchasing a ticket
 - o Web navigation: finding information on a website or browsing social media
 - Command menu navigation: finding the action needed in a desktop application
- Has nothing to do with visual elegance / graphic shininess

Navigation by selection

- Menu bars, pop-up menus, toolbars, palettes and ribbons
- Shortcuts and gestures for rapid interaction
- Long lists
- Linear versus simultaneous presentation





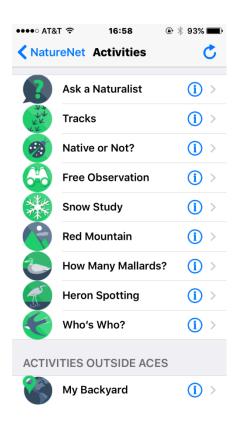


Navigation by selection

- Menu bars, pop-up menus, toolbars, palettes and ribbons
- Shortcuts and gestures for rapid interaction
- Long lists
- Linear versus simultaneous presentation

Tap
Long press
Double tap
Small swipe
Large swipe
Rapid swipe (fling)
Pinch and spread
2-finger swipe
...

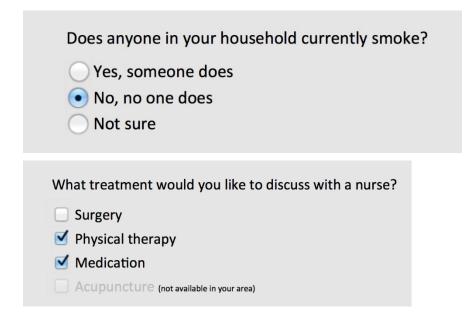


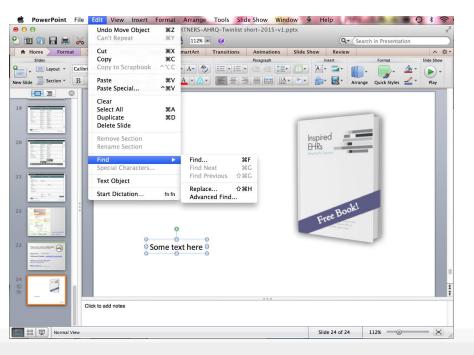


Navigation by selection

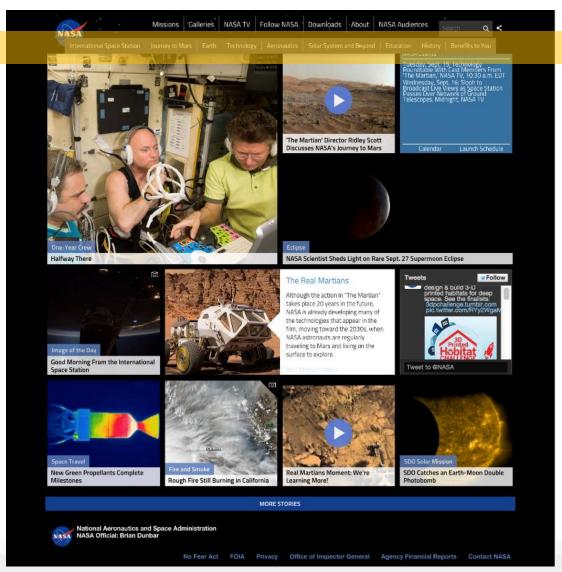
Radio Buttons and Checkboxes

 Menu bars, pop-up menus, toolbars, palettes and ribbons





Menus





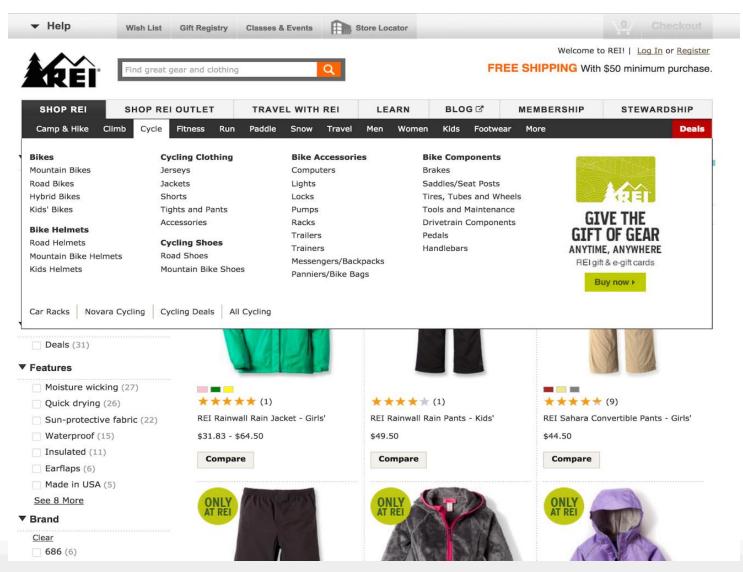
Content organization

 Organizing menus in a meaningful structure results in faster selection time and higher user satisfaction

Approaches:

- Linear sequence (e.g. in a wizard or survey)
- Hierarchical structure (tree) that is natural and comprehensible (e.g. a store split into departments)
- Network structure when choices may be reachable by more than one path (e.g. websites)

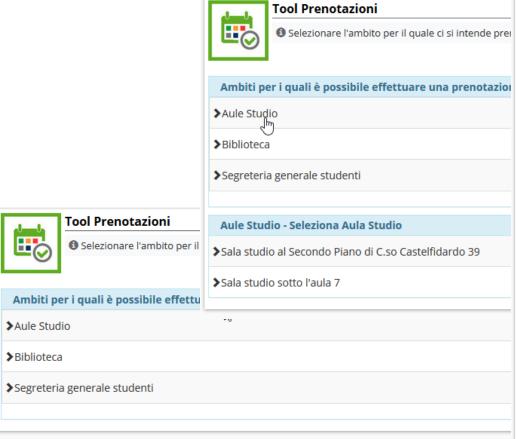
Tree-like content organization

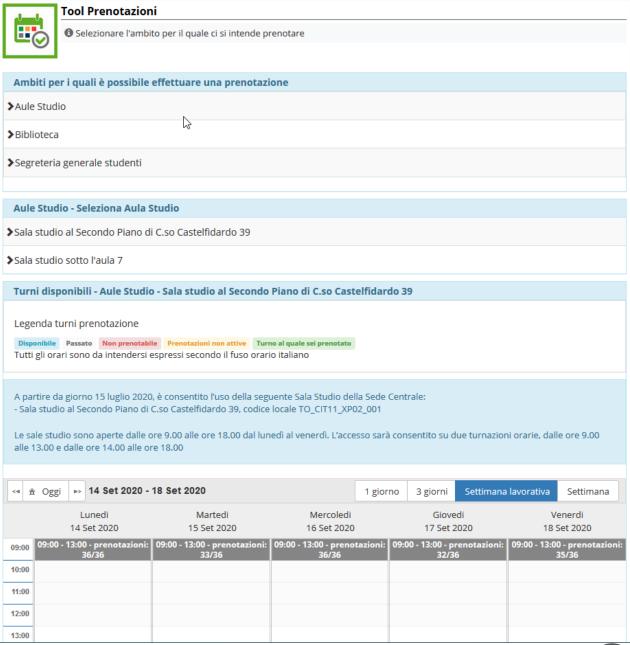


Rules for tree-like organization

- Use task semantics to organize menus
- Limit the number of levels (i.e. prefer broad-shallow to narrow-deep)
- Create groups of logically similar items: e.g. Level 1: countries, Level 2: states, Level 3: cities
- Form groups that cover all possibilities: e.g. Age ranges: [0-9][10-19][20-29] and [>= 30]
- Make sure that items are non-overlapping: e.g. use "Concerts" and "Sports." over "Entertainment" and "Events"
- Arrange items in each branch by natural sequence (not alphabetically) or group related items
- Keep ordering of items fixed (or possibly duplicate frequent items in dedicated section of the menu)

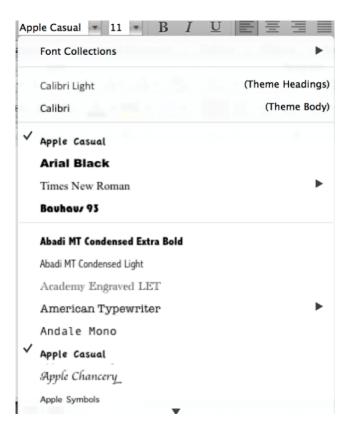
Example





Menu grouping (example)

- 3 groups
 - Template styles
 - Frequently used fonts
 - All fonts
- Alphabetical order within each group
 - Lack of a semantic ordering
- Preview for recognition
- Scrollable list



Information scent

- Informavores orient themselves using information scent
- How can we figure out how to get the information we want?
- Do we realize what options are available to us?
- Web pages (and UIs general) provide cues to suggest where to find information
 - o Icons, Menus, Breadcrumbs, Color coding, ...

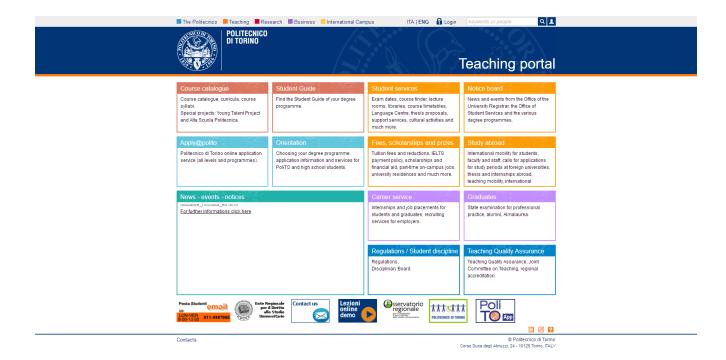


Informavore, an organism that consumes information

Poor information scent

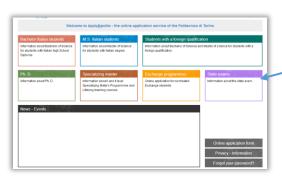
- Users flailing around...
 - Don't know where to go
- Low confidence
 - Users are not sure of their actions, both before executing it and after they see its effects
- Back button
 - When it's used too often...

Example



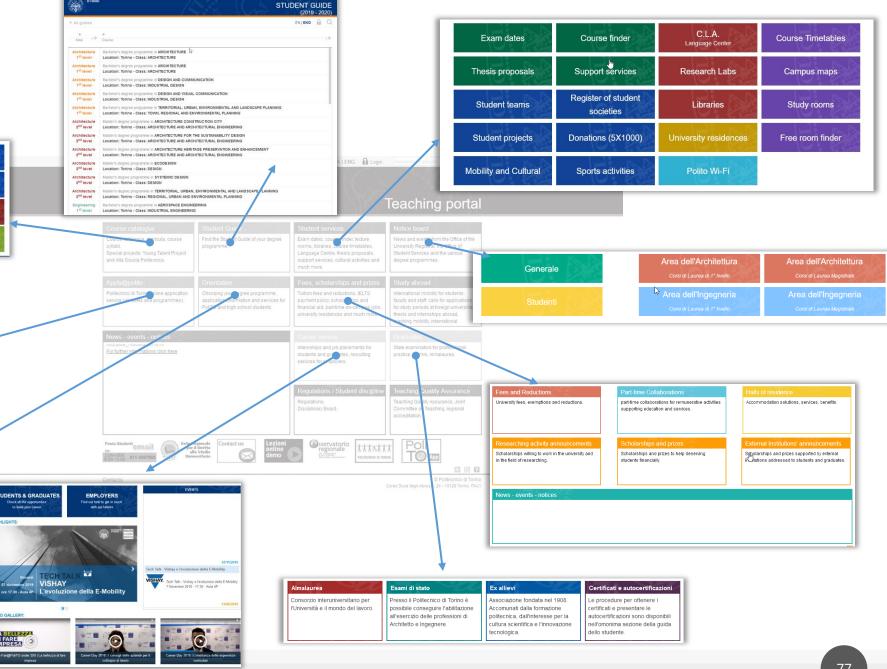
Example







STUDENTS & GRADUATES



Example



Common Problems

- Unexpected categories
- Short links
- Hidden navigation
- Icons are too generic, or not easily recognizable

Icons

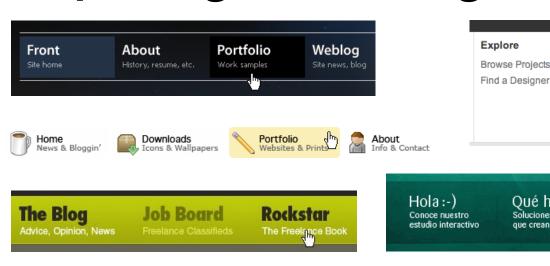
- Icons facilitate recognition over recall
 - When they are consistently used, and frequently visible
- Redundant coding helps recognition and memorization
 - Icon + Text + Tooltip + Context



Links

- Always use multi-word links
 - Download the <u>next assignment template</u>
 - Assignment template: click <u>here</u>
- Straight language, not jargon
 - Scor-o-matic download
 - Download the <u>spreadsheet for computing scores</u>

"Speaking" block navigation





WEB DESIGN

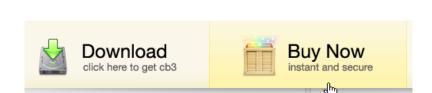
Discover

30elm Blog

Design Pro Blogs







Connect

FAQ

Support

Getting Started

ILLUSTRATION

Sign Up

Join 30elm now to

get great ideas for

your home projects. It's free and easy.

SIGN UP

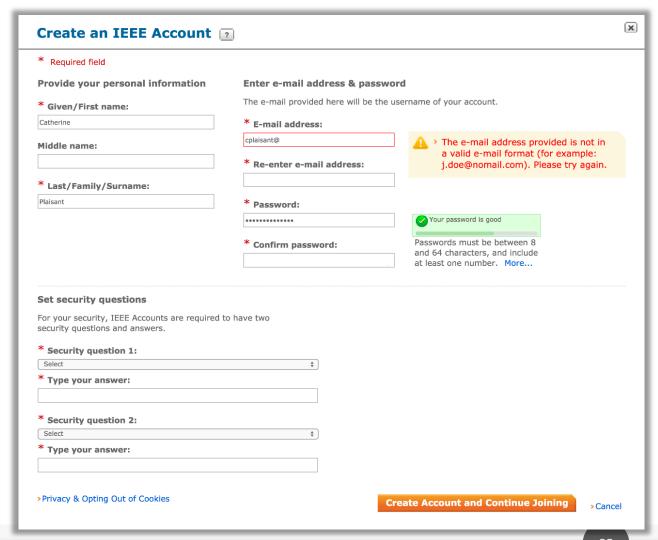
MUSIC





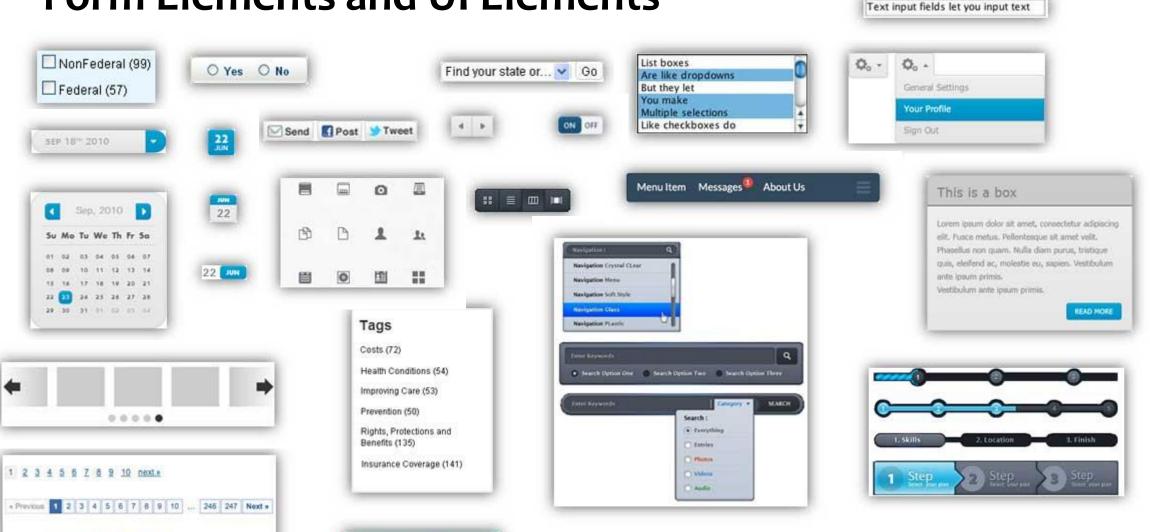
Forms

- Logical field grouping
 - Sections
 - Dividers
 - Columns (spacing)
 - Titles
- Real-time error checking and validation feedback
 - Suggestions for correction
- Explicit submit button



Form Elements and UI Elements

(Prev 1 2 3 4 5 8 ... 33 34 Next :



Modern

Fresh

Unique X

Example: redesign this

Attenzione, i seguenti insegnamenti sono in corso di spegnimento potranno essere sostenuti entro la sessione sotto indicata. Se terminata la sessione d'esame non risulteranno ancora superati, verranno sostituiti con l'insegnamento riportato in tabella.

Codice	Nome insegnamento	Crediti	Cod Ins Sostituto	Nome Ins Sostituto	Crediti sostituto	Scadenza esame
12BHDLZ	Informatica	8	14BHDLZ	Informatica	8	9/2021

Se non è ancora stato specificato un sostituto, il referente del corso provvederà in seguito a segnalare con quali esami sostituire gli spenti

Reading content

Organizing text and content for maximum visibility

Reading content

•How people read on-line?

They don't

How Users Read on the Web by Jakob Nielsen on September 30, 1997 https://www.nngroup.com/articles/how-users-read-on-the-web/

Eye Tracking



- Observe eye movements
 - One or more cameras
 - Usually in infra-red
- Infer where the user was looking (on the screen)
- Record the positions where your gaze will go
- Combine observations from many users

Location on the page

Eye tracking studies show where the users actually *look* on the page

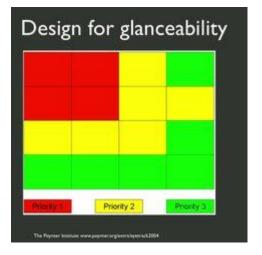
Search "eye tracking heat map" and see the major patterns

Users "glance" and spend limited amount of time on each page.

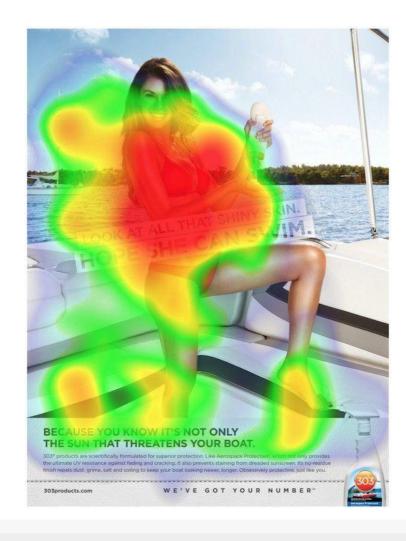
F-shaped pattern

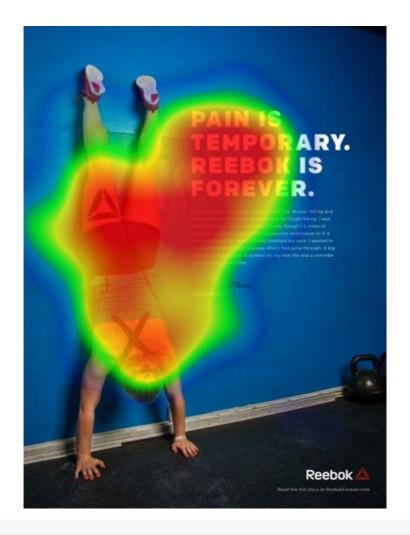






Did anyone ever look at the product name?





Scanning

WHAT DESIGNERS BUILD...



WHAT USERS SEE...





I want to buy a ticket.





How do I check my frequent flyer miles?

Experiment

Site Version

Sample Paragraph

Usability Improvement (relative to control condition)

		(can all a contained)
Promotional writing (control condition) using the "marketese" found on many commercial websites	Nebraska is filled with internationally recognized attractions that draw large crowds of people every year, without fail. In 1996, some of the most popular places were Fort Robinson State Park (355,000 visitors), Scotts Bluff National Monument (132,166), Arbor Lodge State Historical Park & Museum (100,000), Carhenge (86,598), Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer (60,002), and Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park (28,446).	o% (baseline)
Concise text with about half the word count as the control condition	In 1996, six of the best-attended attractions in Nebraska were Fort Robinson State Park, Scotts Bluff National Monument, Arbor Lodge State Historical Park & Museum, Carhenge, Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer, and Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park.	+58%
Scannable layout using the same text as the control condition in a layout that facilitated scanning	Nebraska is filled with internationally recognized attractions that draw large crowds of people every year, without fail. In 1996, some of the most popular places were: •Fort Robinson State Park (355,000 visitors) •Scotts Bluff National Monument (132,166) •Arbor Lodge State Historical Park & Museum (100,000) •Carhenge (86,598) •Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer (60,002) •Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park (28,446).	+47%
Objective language using neutral rather than subjective, boastful, or exaggerated language (otherwise the same as the control condition)	Nebraska has several attractions. In 1996, some of the most-visited places were Fort Robinson State Park (355,000 visitors), Scotts Bluff National Monument (132,166), Arbor Lodge State Historical Park & Museum (100,000), Carhenge (86,598), Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer (60,002), and Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park (28,446).	+27%
Combined version using all three improvements in writing style together: concise, scannable, and objective	In 1996, six of the most-visited places in Nebraska were: •Fort Robinson State Park •Scotts Bluff National Monument •Arbor Lodge State Historical Park & Museum •Carhenge •Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer •Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park	+124%

Best locations to put content

- Above the fold
 - Prioritize, don't cram
- Where people expect
 - Where other pages put similar content
 - Not where the ads usually go
- Users will scroll down if the first content is interesting

Banner blindness

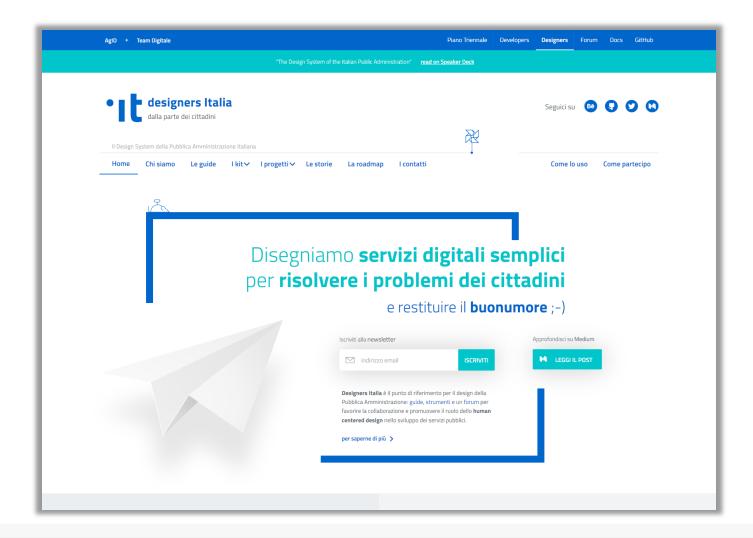
- The brain learns to avoid uninteresting content
- Banners and Advertisements are recognized subconsciously (by their appearance) and are never considered
 Ads also "poison" adjacent elements
- Lesson learned: never create a message / title / warning / etc. that might look like an ad. (Faux ads)



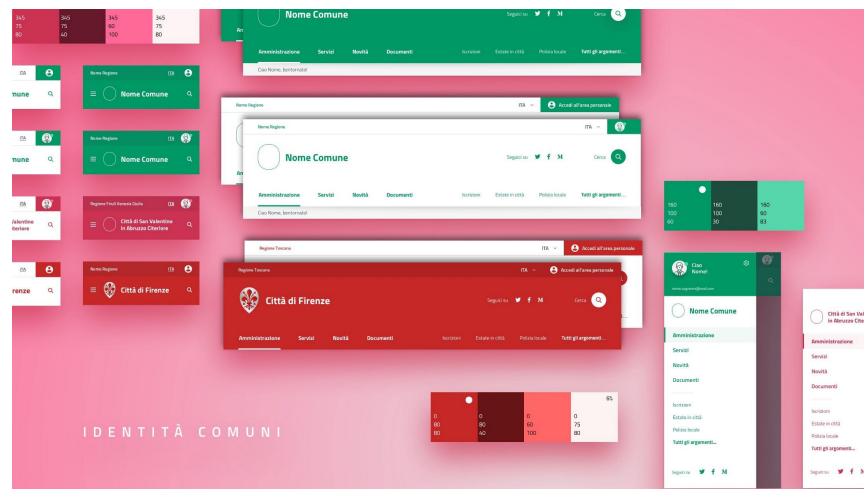
The Design System of the Italian Public Administration

An example toolkit for visual design (targeted at Public Administration websites and services, mainly)

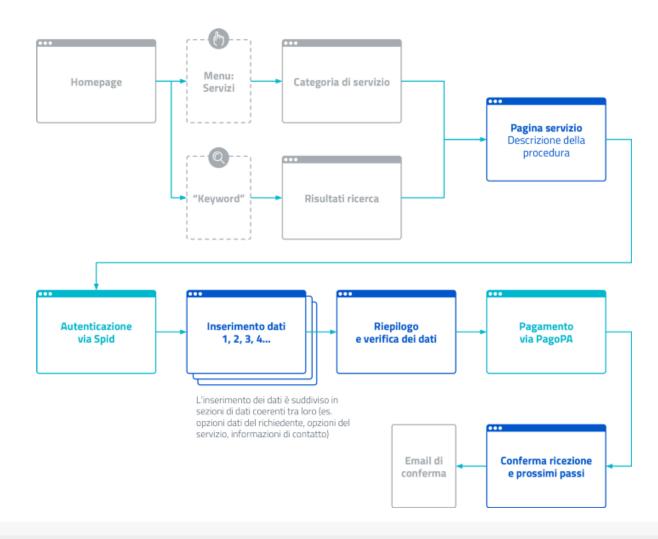
https://designers.italia.it/



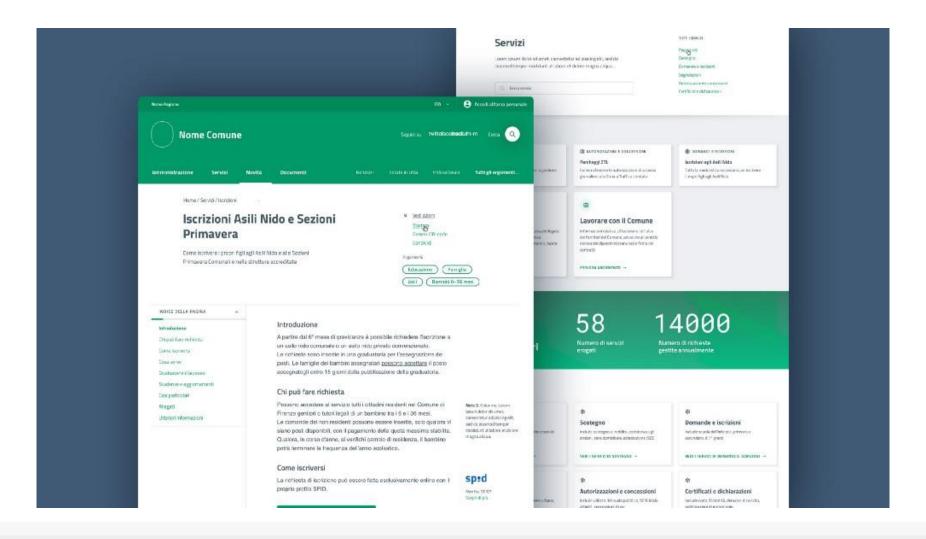
Application of the Design Kit: a City Website



A City Website: standard navigation path



A City Website: example page



References

- Scott MacKenzie: Human-Computer Interaction An Empirical Research Perspective, Morgan Kaufmann
 - Chapter 3: Interaction Elements
- Ben Shneiderman, Catherine Plaisant, Maxine S. Cohen, Steven M. Jacobs, and Niklas Elmqvist, Designing the User Interface: Strategies for Effective Human-Computer Interaction
 - Chapter 8: Fluid Navigation
- COGS120/CSE170: Human-Computer Interaction Design, videos by Scott
 Klemmer, https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLLssT5z_DsK_nusHL_Mjt87THSTlgrsyJ



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