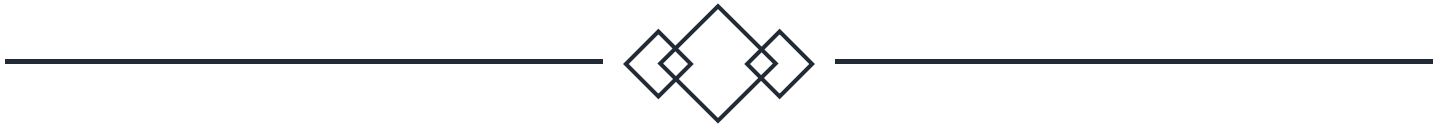


presents:

UX Foundation Cards

Your everyday guide to the Neilson-Normal Design Heuristics
and the Gestalt Principles



Introduction

Usability Heuristics

- Usability Heuristics are a set of principles used in design. They are broad rules of thumb on how to create a good user experience.

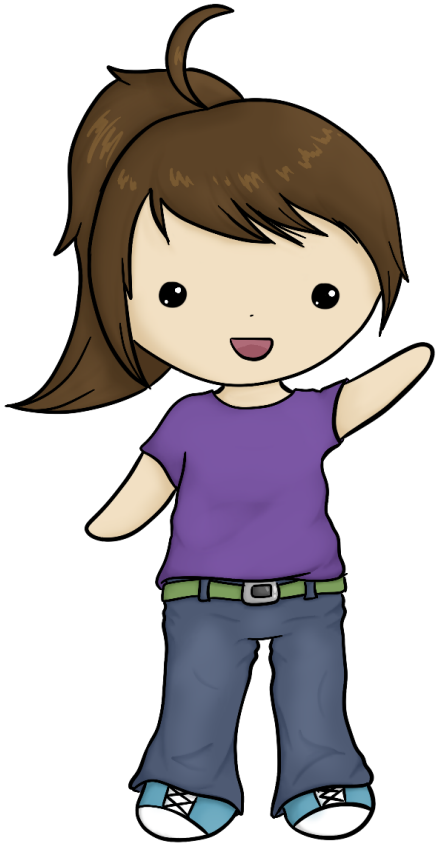
Gestalt Principles

- Gestalt Principles come from the practice of psychology. These seven principles define how the human brain interprets and makes sense of visual information.

Heuristics vs. Principles

- The Gestalt Principles can often play into the Usability Heuristics to help decide if your work is meeting that heuristic.

About the Author



Laura Buckles

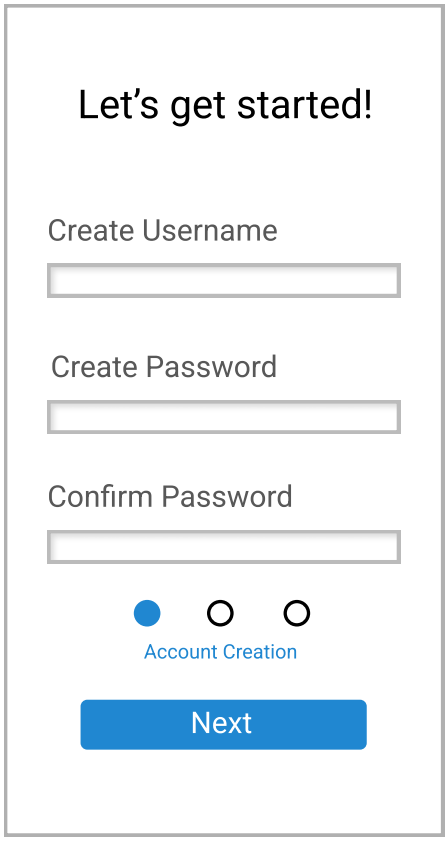
Hello! I am a UX Designer at SEP. I joined in 2020 after I had been a Design Intern with them through the 2019 Xtern program. My passions for art and my interest in technology brought me into the UX world. I love spending time working in Figma making screens or fun things like these cards.

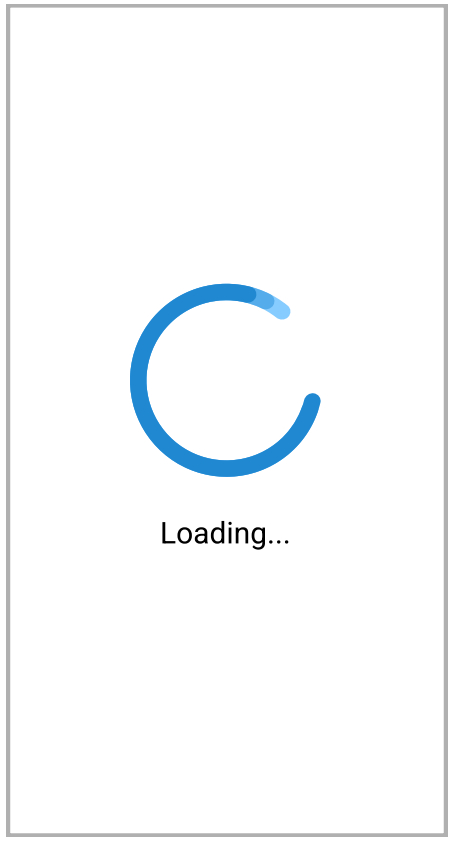
The story of my cards began as a professional development journey. However, as I made these cards and taught them to others on my team, I noticed that we were creating a shared language about design and my teammates were empowered to be more involved in the design process. My hope for these cards is that they bring that experience to other teams!

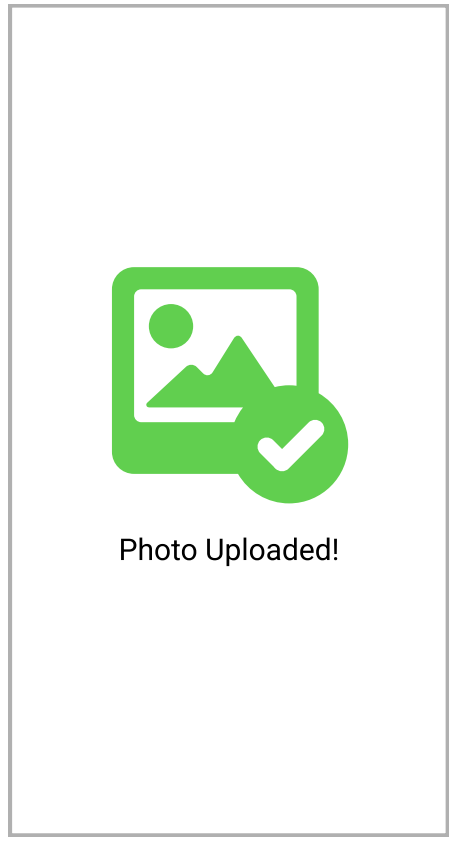
Visibility of System Status

- Keep the user informed about what's going on through appropriate, timely feedback.
- This can be in the form of progress indicators, loading spinners, or status messages.

Visual Examples







More information at: https://www.nngroup.com/articles/visibility-system-status/

Match Between System & Real World

- Use common language, real-world conventions, and display information in a logical order.
- When a design's controls follow real-world conventions and match desired outcomes, that is called natural mapping.

Visual Examples

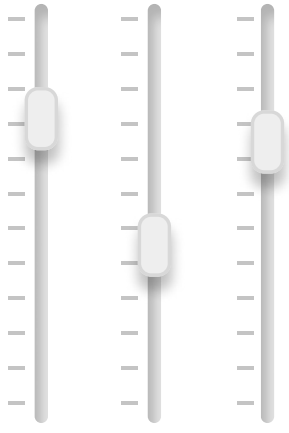
Common language:

Wording should be instantly clear

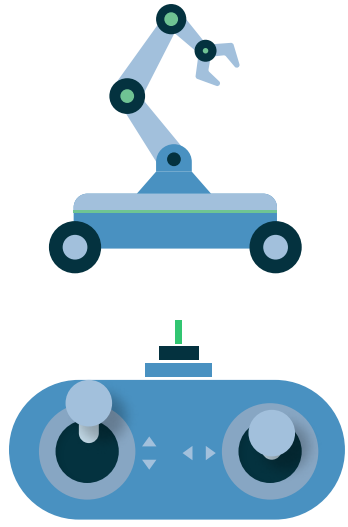


Follow real-world conventions

Mimic how people are used to seeing things in their day-to-day life.



Lay out info logically



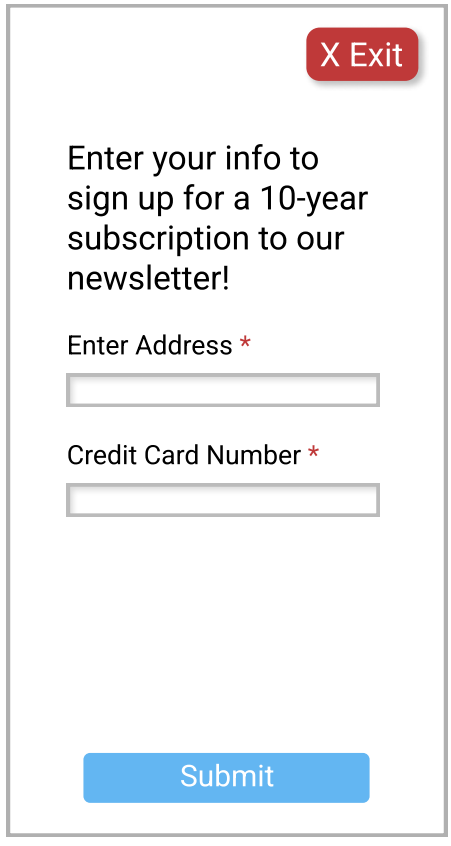
More information at: https://www.nngroup.com/articles/match-system-real-world/

User Control and Freedom

- Give users a way to back out of actions/processes.
- Give emergency exits and support undo/redo.
- The ability for the user to back out of an action easily gives the users a sense of freedom and confidence. Exits let users stay in control of the system instead of getting stuck and feeling frustrated.

Visual Examples







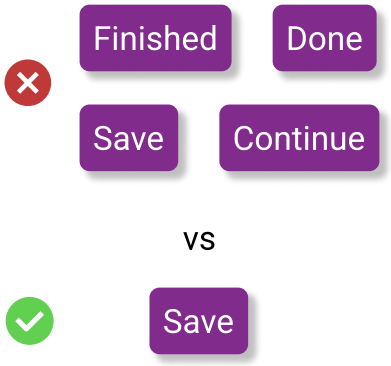
More information at: https://www.nngroup.com/articles/user-control-and-freedom/

Consistency & Standards

- Users shouldn't have to worry if words, actions, or situations mean different things.
- People spend more time on other apps/programs than yours, so matching expected conventions makes yours easier to use.
- Following conventions will lessen the cognitive load for the user.

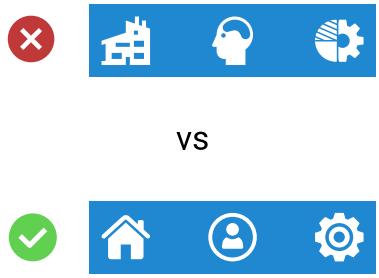
Visual Examples

Maintain internal consistency within your own design

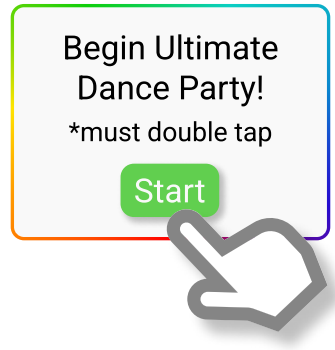


Having many buttons that do the same thing is confusing.

Follow Industry Conventions



Follow platform conventions



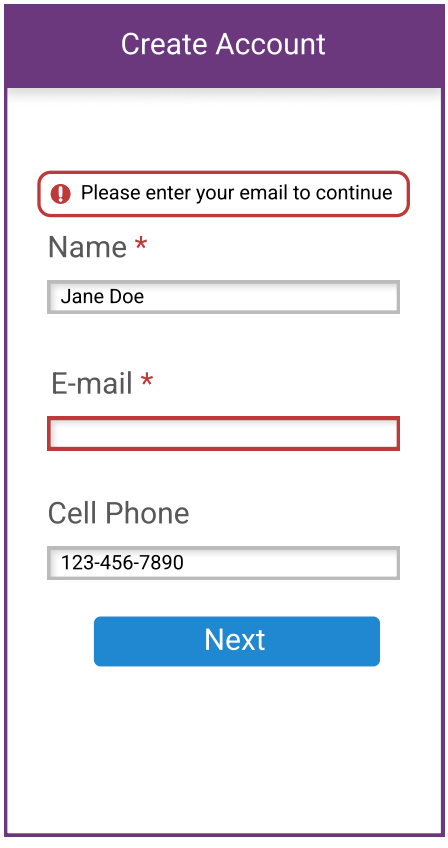
Don't use interactions that users won't think to try

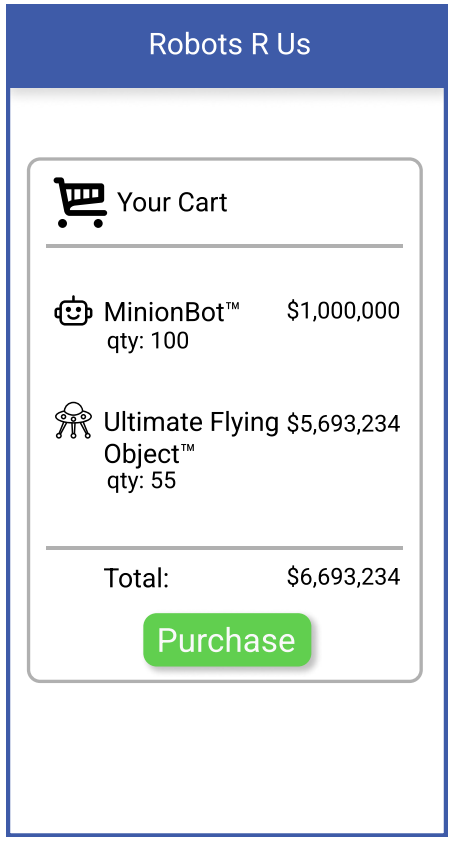
More information at: https://www.nngroup.com/articles/consistency-and-standards/

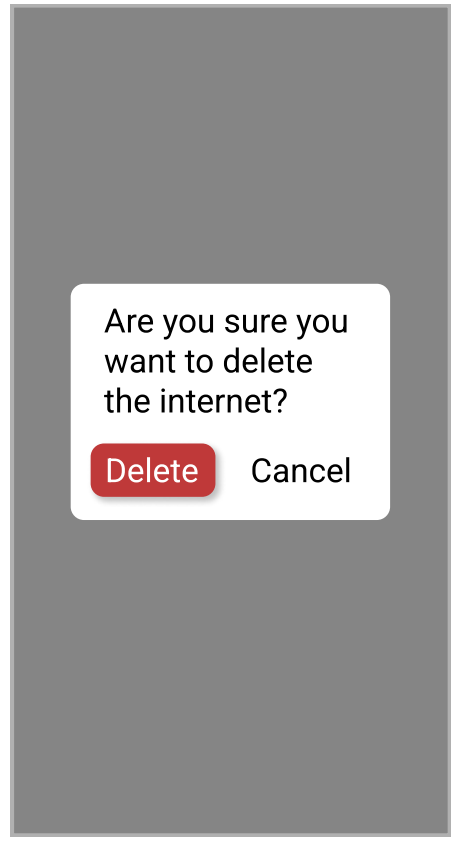
Error Prevention

- If you can, prevent errors from occurring before they happen.
- Remove memory burdens and use helpful constraints and defaults to prevent errors.
- If you can't prevent an error give a confirmation before the user commits to an action - especially for high-stakes tasks!

Visual Examples







More information at: https://www.nngroup.com/articles/slips/

Recognition Over Recall

- Recognizing presented information is easier than recalling information from scratch.
- Reduce memory load by showing previously made choices.
- Make required info easily accessible or visible.
- Give users help in context rather than long tutorials up front.

Visual Examples

Company Finder

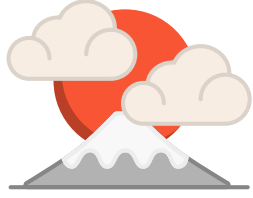
bakery with cat

Cat Supplies Unlimited
A place for all your cat supply needs

Dog Bakery
We specialize in artisanal doggy treats. No cats allowed!

Lucky Cat Cafe & Bakery
Local bakery full of tasty goodies and friendly cats to hang out with.

Mt. Fuji Tours



You are scheduled for:

- 9AM - guided hike up the mountain
- 11AM - mountain top tea ceremony

Continue to Checkout

Mini Ninjas
The Game

Press X to kick



More information at: https://www.nngroup.com/articles/recognition-and-recall/

Flexibility and Efficiency of Use

- Shortcuts or accelerators can speed up use for expert users and won't impede beginners while they are learning.
- Personalize the content and functionality for individual users.
- Allow users to customize the program to fit how they want to work.

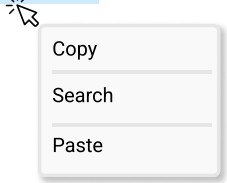
Visual Examples

Accelerators are UI features that speed up an interaction or process

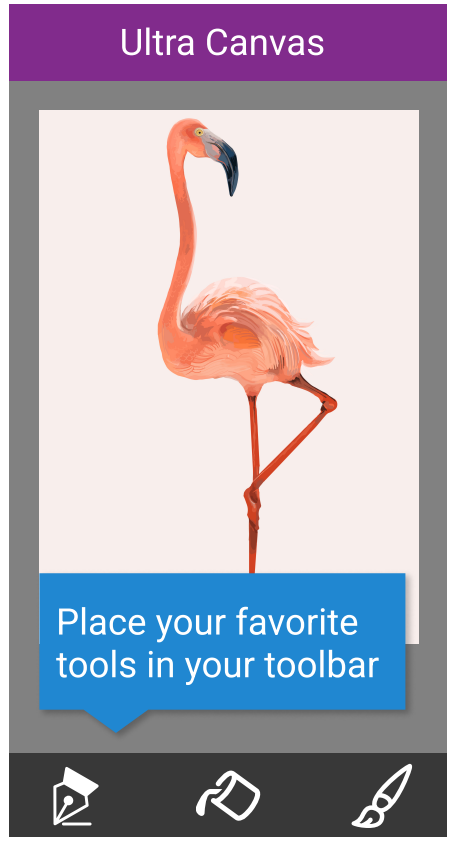
Ctrl + c to copy

vs.

Hightlight Text and Right Click





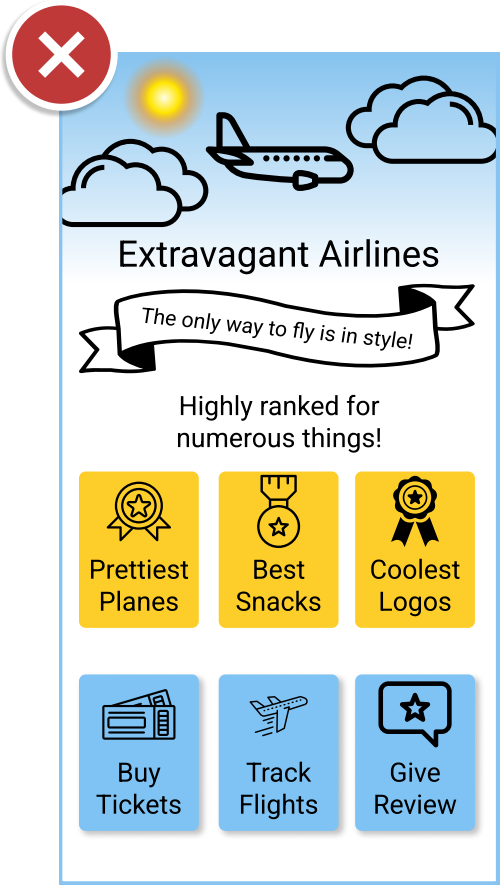


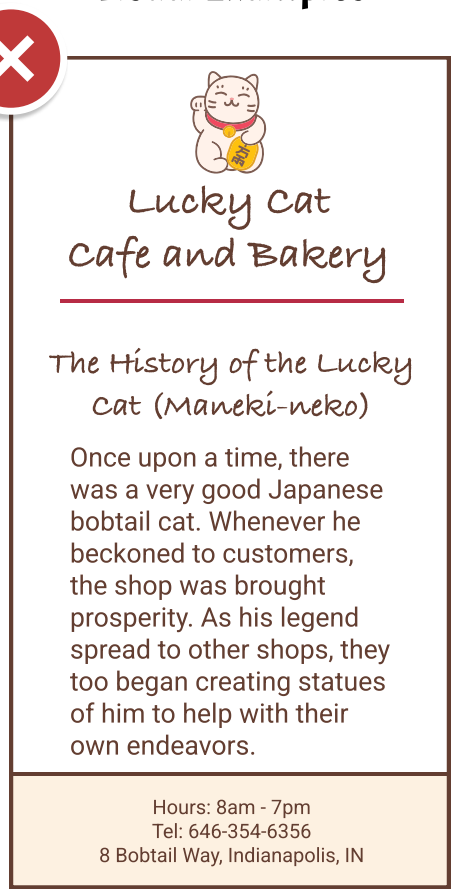
More information at: https://www.nngroup.com/articles/flexibility-efficiency-heuristic/

Aesthetic and Minimalist Design

- Extra visuals can make important information harder to find.
- Prioritize things that support the user's goals over extra decoration.
- Just focus on the essentials! Minimal designs can still look good.

Visual Examples







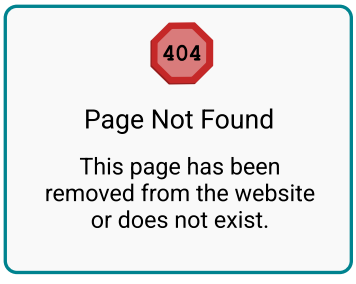
More information at: https://www.nngroup.com/videos/aesthetic-and-minimalist-design/

Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors

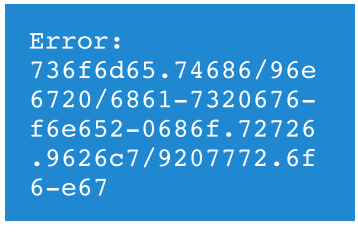
- Error messages should be in plain language, clearly state what the problem was, and offer a way to fix it.
- Style errors in a way that users can notice them and identify them as an error message.

Visual Examples

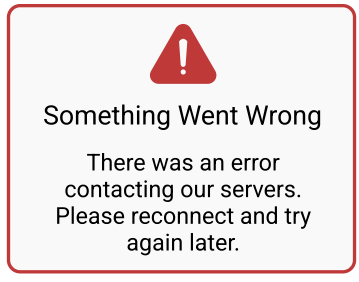
State the problem in plain language, not error codes and jargon.



VS.



State what the actual problem is and give the user a solution.



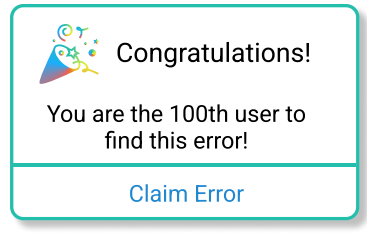
VS.



Style the errors so they are noticeable and recognized as errors.



VS.



More information at: https://www.nngroup.com/videos/usability-heuristic-recognize-errors/

Help and Documentation

- Make help and information easy to find, searchable, and accessible.
- If you can, present the help in context or when the user needs that piece of information.
- Keep the help concise and focused on the user's task.
- Give the user concrete steps to follow.

Visual Examples

Tech Support Ninjas

Select a category for help articles or search for specific issues.

Internet | Mobile | Laptop | Desktop | Smart Home

internet broken

How to reset Wi-Fi

Network Troubleshooting

Router Configuration

Collab-board

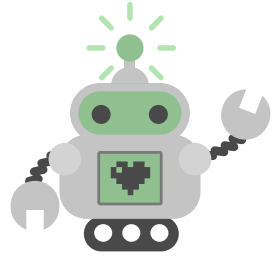
What kind of board would you like to make?

Brainstorm | Affinity Map | Mind Map | Kanban

No Template

Robot Corp Support

Robo-Friend 1000 reconnection steps:



1. Flip on power switch on back panel
2. Press and hold red "restart" button for 3 seconds
3. Select "Robot-Friend" from your device's Bluetooth list in settings

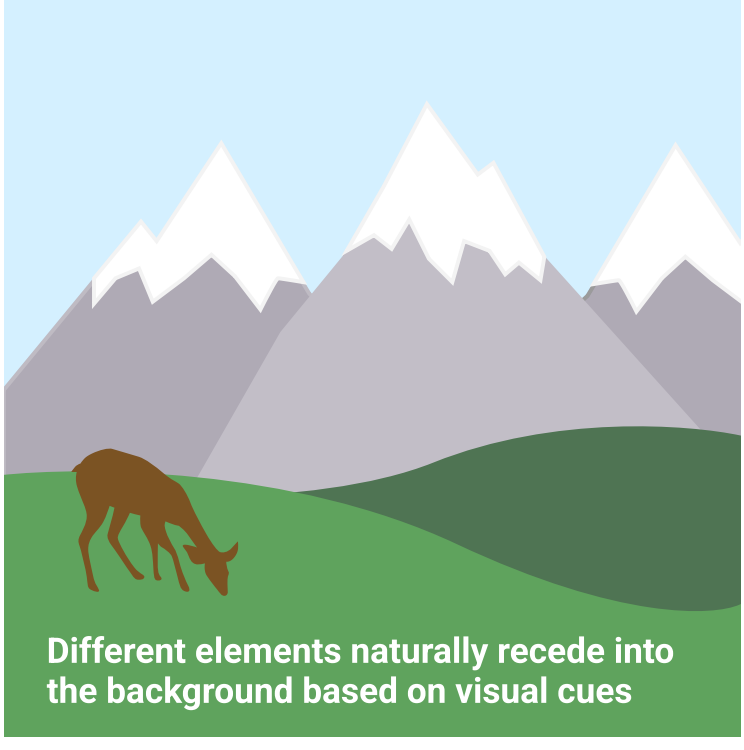
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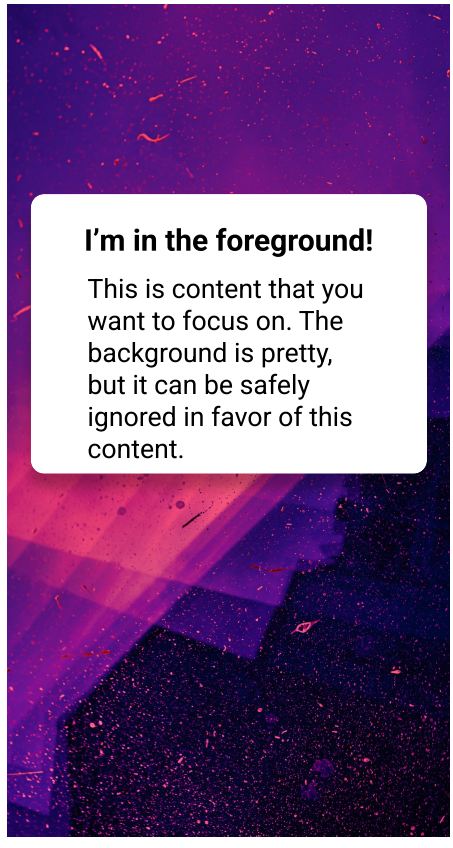
More information at: https://www.nngroup.com/articles/help-and-documentation/

Figure-ground

- Objects on a page will naturally be interpreted as either in the foreground (the figure) or farther back in the background.
- This helps people know what they need to focus on as opposed to what is just background design or decoration.

Visual Examples



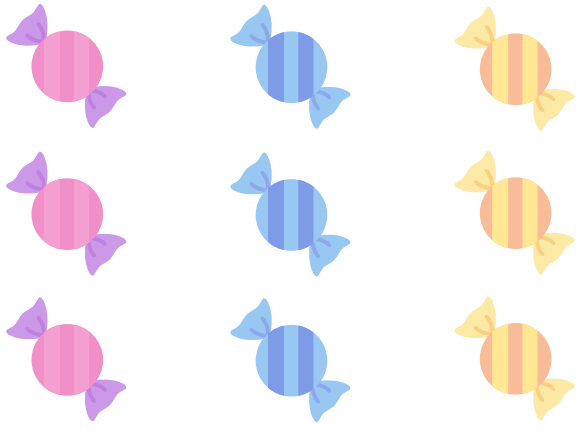


More information at: https://www.usertesting.com/blog/gestalt-principles#figure

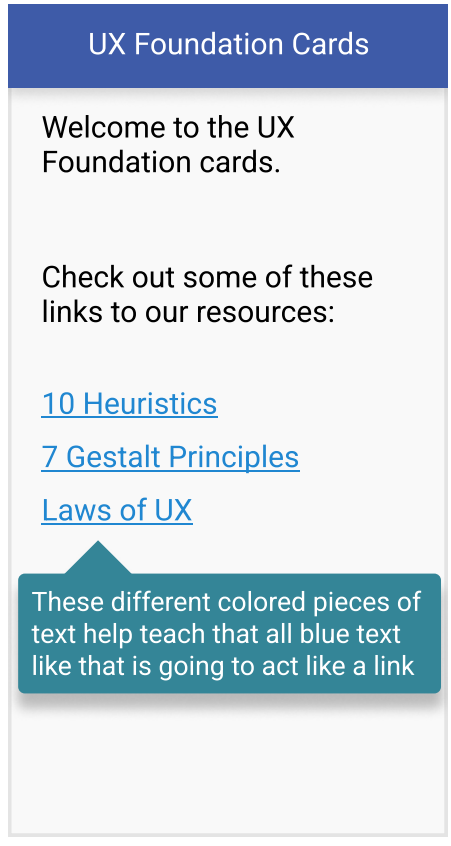
Similarity

- People will group similar things together.
- It is also assumed that similar things will have similar functions.
- Some common examples of similarity are common color for primary buttons and same font and styling for links.

Visual Examples



Even if the shapes are all the same, other methods like color or organization can help similarly group things.

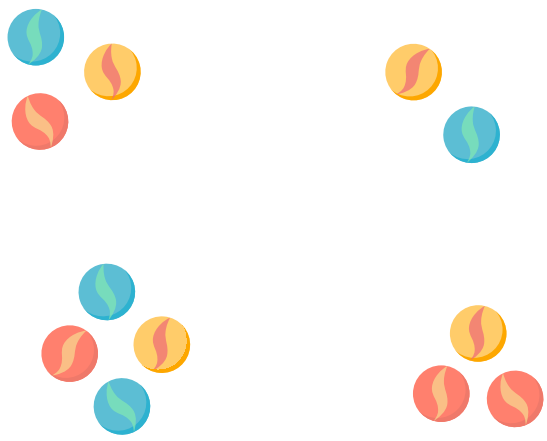


More information at: https://www.usertesting.com/blog/gestalt-principles#similarity

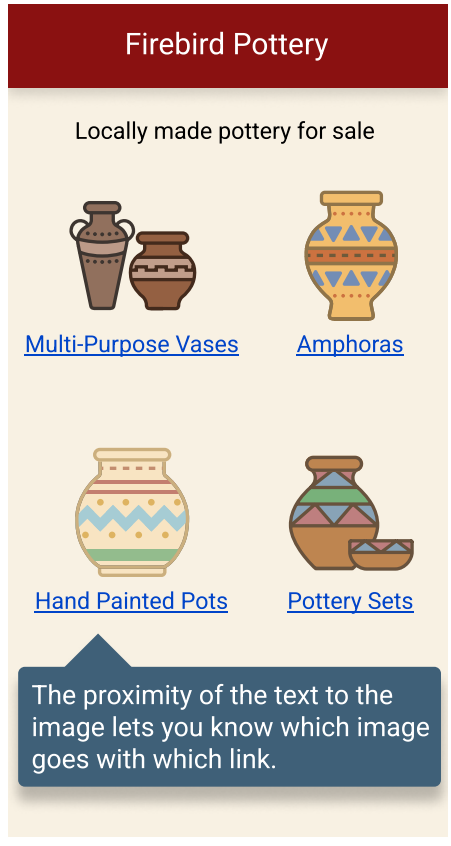
Proximity

- Things that are closer together appear to be more related than things that are farther apart.
- Proximity can override similarity traits like color and shape.

Visual Examples



Even though the colors in each group are different, the marbles still read as 4 separate groups.

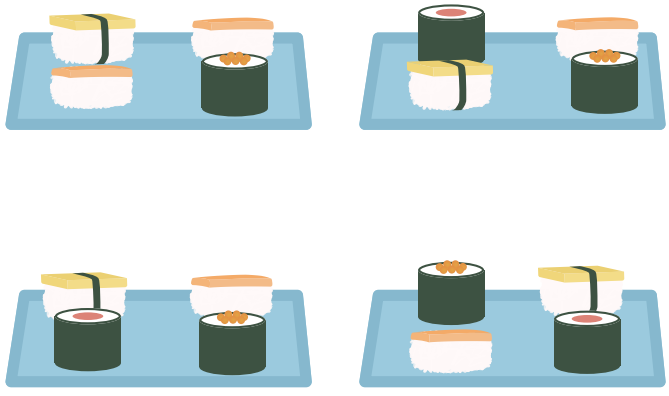


More information at: https://www.usertesting.com/blog/gestalt-principles#proximity

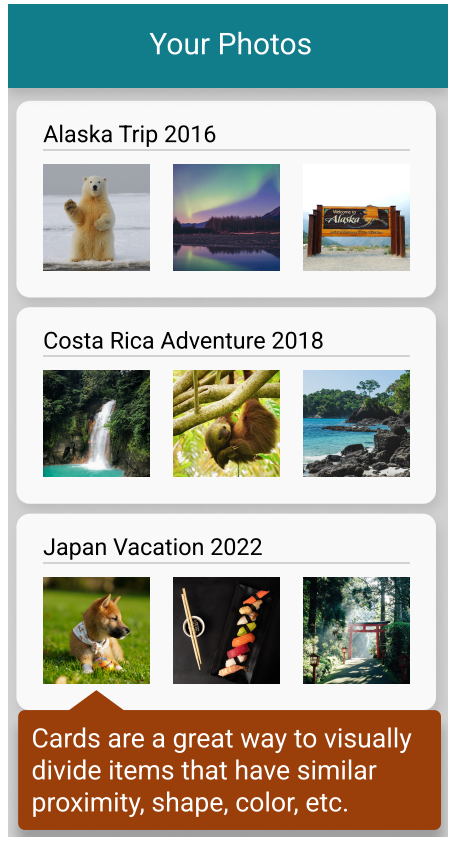
Common Region

- Similar to proximity, if things are located within the same closed region, we perceive them as related and grouped.
- Adding borders, lines, or other visible barriers is a good way to make things seem grouped together even if they have a similar shape, color, etc.

Visual Examples



The visual borders override the similar shapes and colors. The groups still read as 4 visually separate sushi plates.

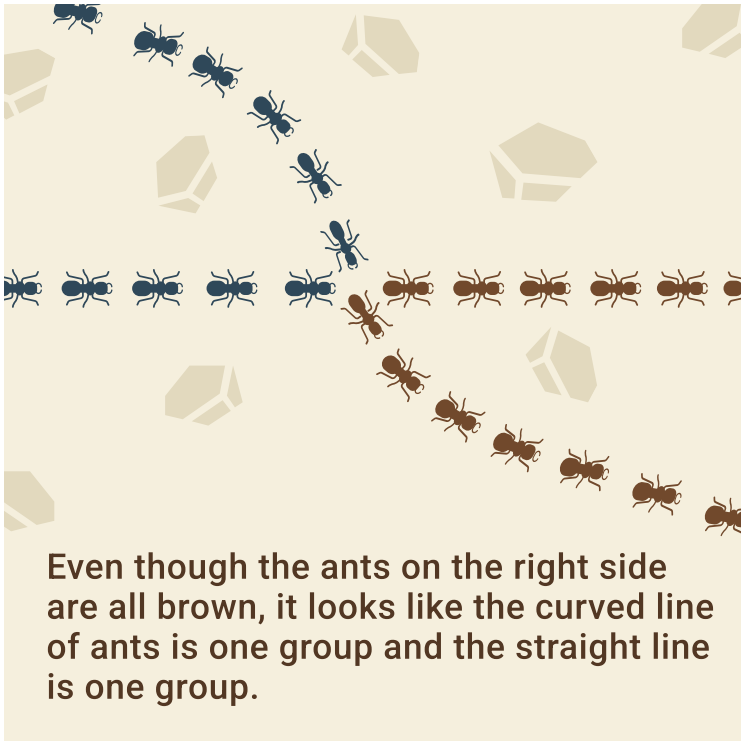


More information at: https://www.usertesting.com/blog/gestalt-principles#common

Continuity

- Things that are on a line or a curve are perceived to be more related than things that are not on the line/curve.
- The eye will naturally follow lines as a path. This can make a stronger visual relation than aspects like color.

Visual Examples



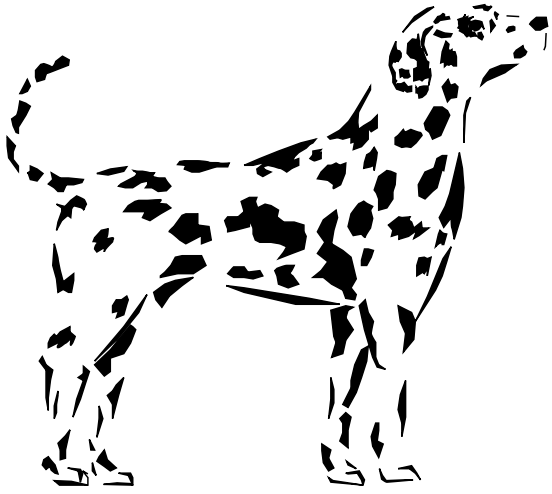


More information at: https://www.usertesting.com/blog/gestalt-principles#continuity

Closure

- When our brains see complex visual elements, we tend to look for recognizable patterns.
- Our brain will fill in the blanks if an element has “missing spots” like dotted lines.
- Can also be used to lower the visual weight of an element.

Visual Examples



There may not be any outlines on this image, but your brain can clearly interpret it as a dalmatian.

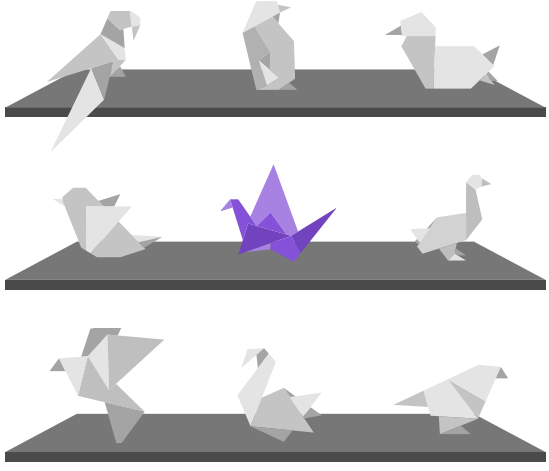


More information at: https://www.usertesting.com/blog/gestalt-principles#closure

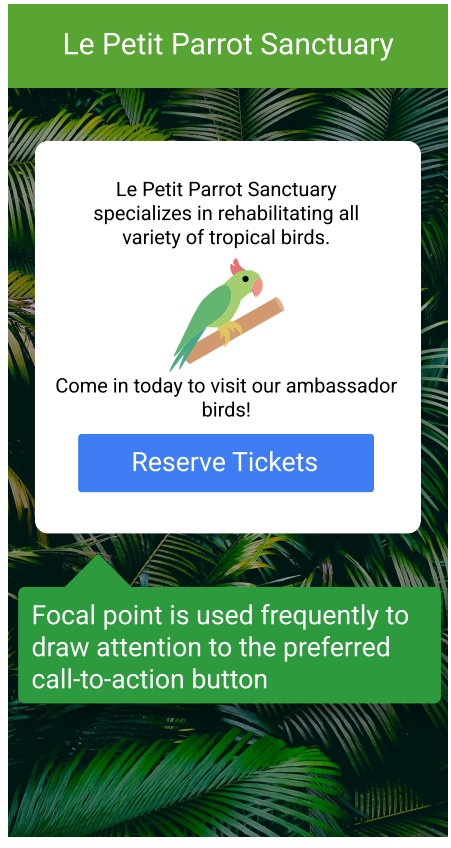
Focal Point

- Whatever element stands out the most will draw the viewer's attention first.
- This can be used to point out the preferred action or the most important element on a page.

Visual Examples



Out of all the origami birds, the purple bird in the middle stands out the most and catches the eye first.



More information at: https://www.usertesting.com/blog/gestalt-principles#focal