

Designing for the Web

Information Architecture and Visual Design

Luigi De Russis

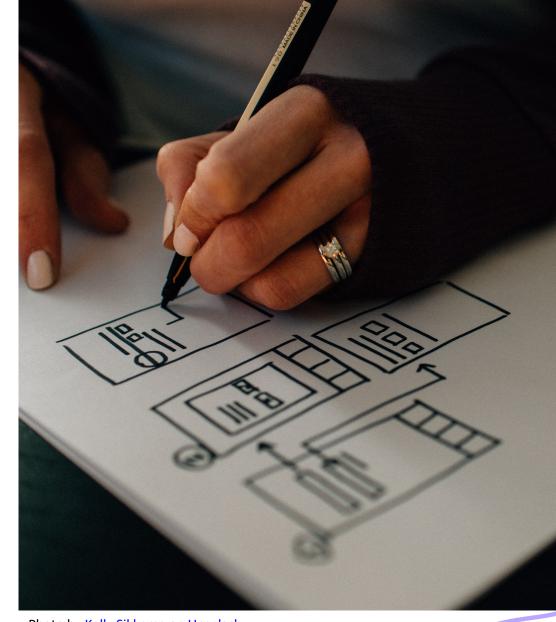


Photo by Kelly Sikkema on Unsplash





Goal

- To introduce the main concept behind
 - Information Architecture
 - Visual Design
- To design effective web applications



INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE



Information Architecture

- "The structural design of shared information environments"
- The combination of organisation, labelling, search, and navigation systems within web sites and applications
- A discipline focused on making information findable and understandable



Information

- Information architecture is not data and knowledge management
- Data is facts and figures
 - Relational databases are highly structured and produce specific answers to specific questions
- Knowledge is the "stuff in people's heads"
 - Knowledge managers develop tools, processes, and incentives to encourage people to share that stuff
- Information is in the middle
 - With information systems, there is often no single "right" answer to a given question
 - Information can be of all shapes and sizes: websites, documents, software applications, images, and more
 - Metadata: terms used to describe and represent content objects such as documents, people, processes, and organizations

Users, Context, and Content

Users

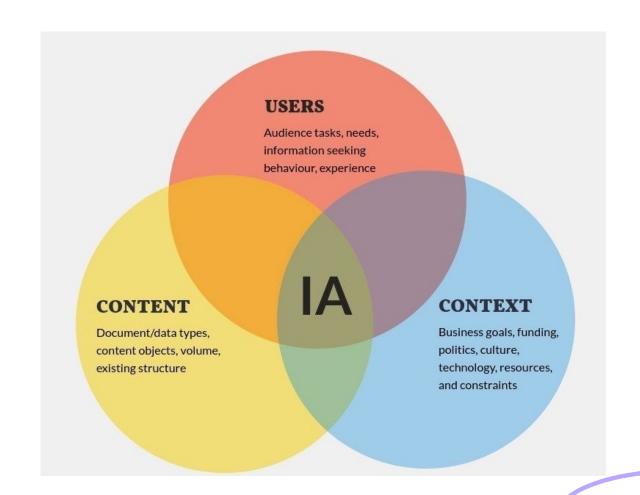
 Do you know who is using your system? Do you know how they are using it? Do you know what information they look for on your system?

Content

 The documents, links, media, ... that people need to use or find in the system

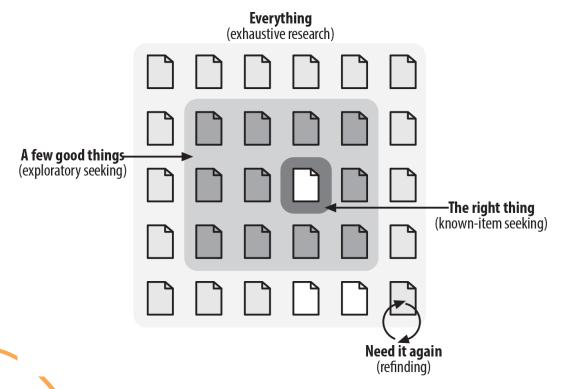
Context

All digital system exist within a particular business or organizational context



Finding and Understanding

Information architecture is focused on making information **findable** and **understandable**

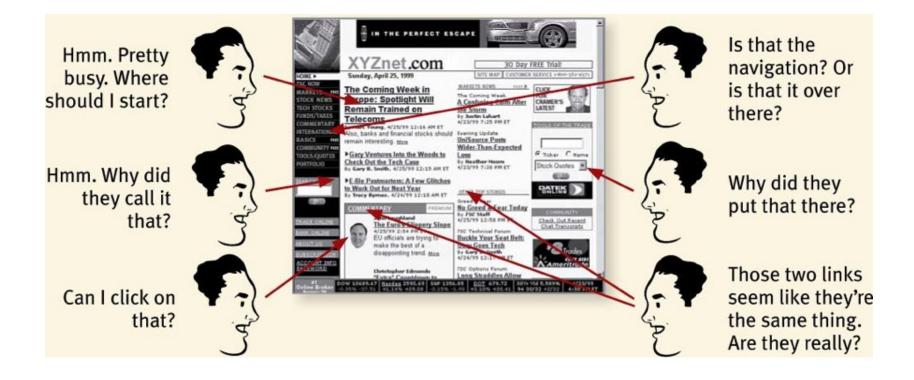


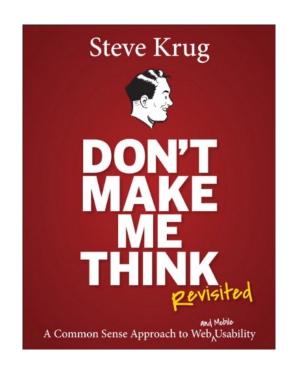
We only *understand* things in relationship to something else

e.g., most bank/university/...
 buildings are similar; their websites
 are similar as well



Don't Make Me Think



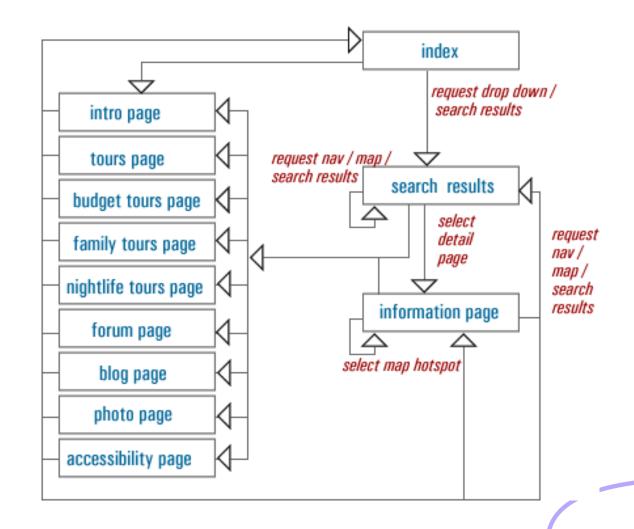


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Sitemaps

- Show the relationships between information elements
- Can be used to portray organization, navigation, and labeling systems





VISUAL DESIGN



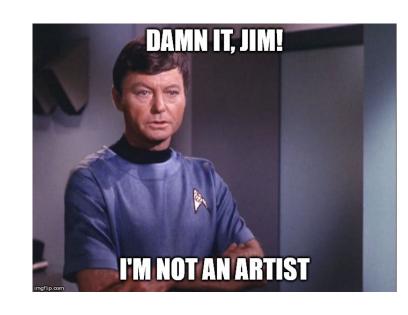
Visual Design

- **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



The Basic of VisualDesign

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.



Whitespace

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.



Hierarchy

Basic visual design involves ...

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.

Layout

Colors



Alignment

BASIC VISUAL DESIGN

Text

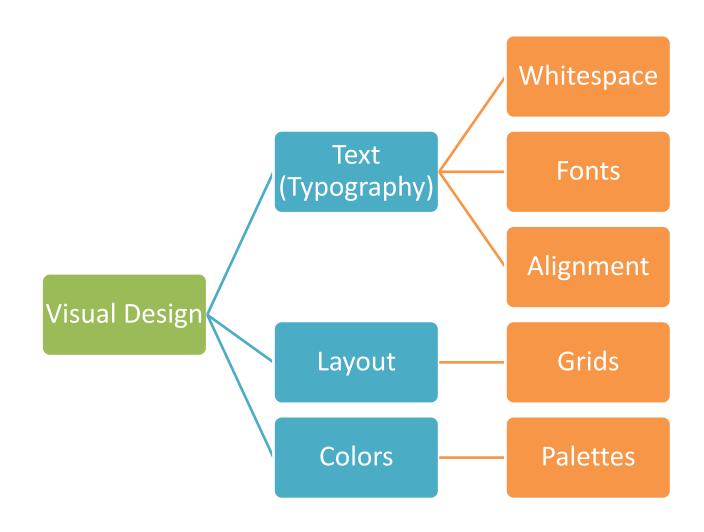
- Whitespace: helps separate out logical chunks of content
- **Font**: size and style differences convey hierarchy
- Alignment: crucial for helping readers scan quickly

Layout

Colors



Key Ingredients



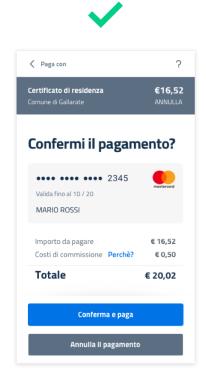
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Text

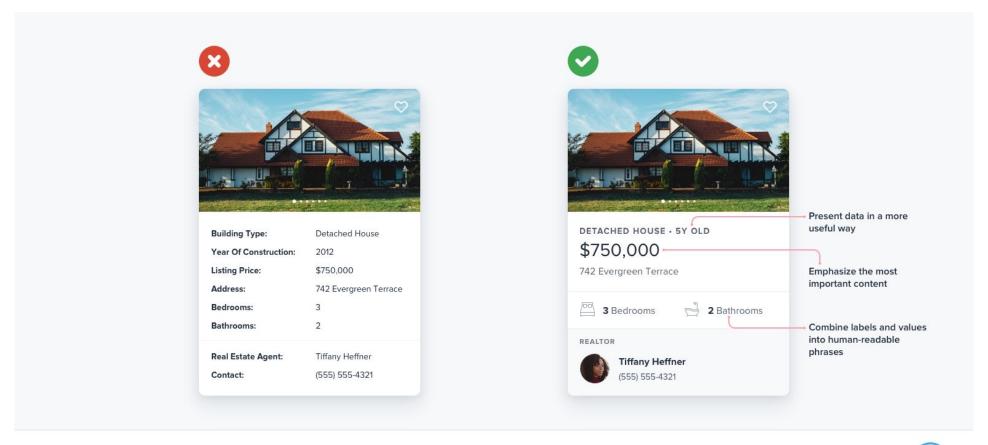
- Font size, color and spacing define a hierarchy of visibility and attention
- The visual hierarchy should match the relative importance of the information content







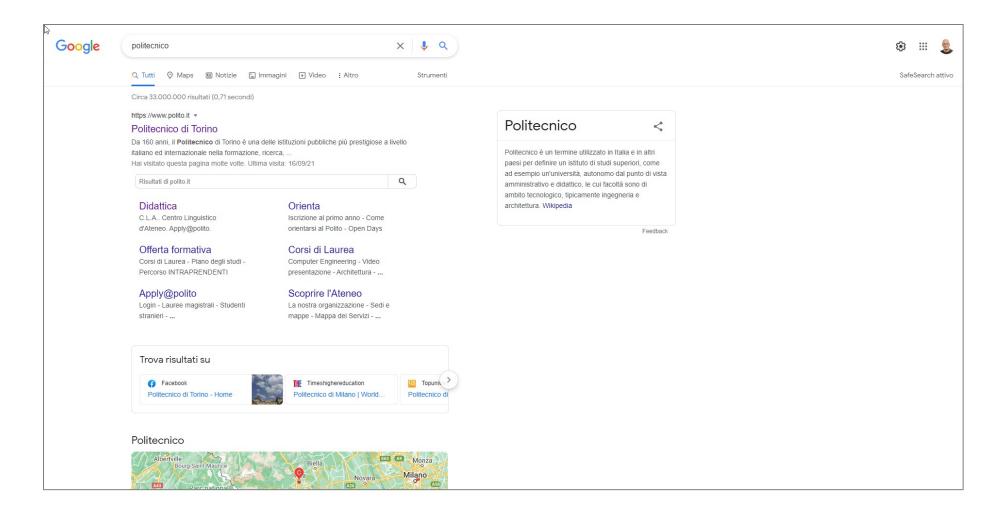
Text and Layout Convey Meaning

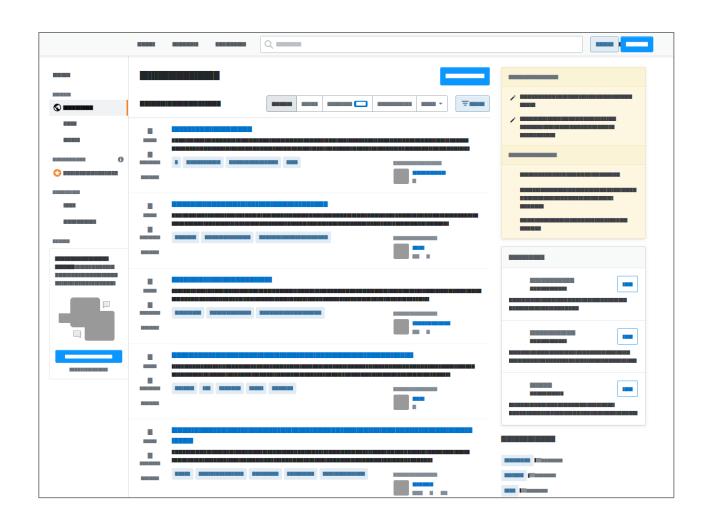


www.refactoringui.com

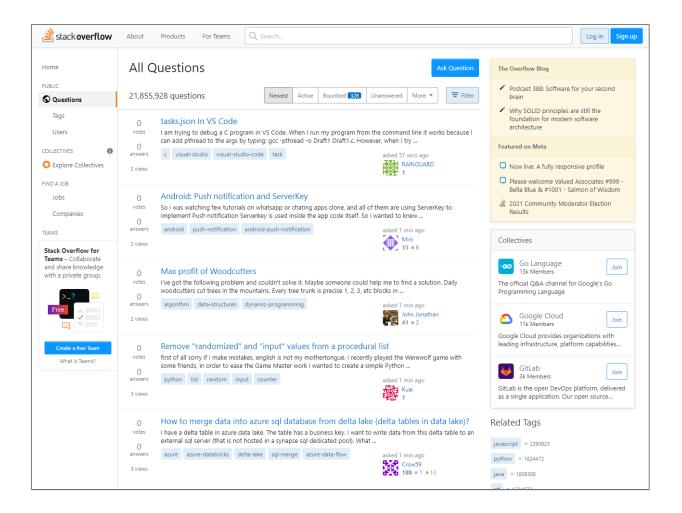














Conventions Help Recogniting Structure



'GESTALT' PRINCIPLES



'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



Some Gestalt Principles

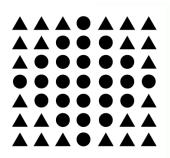
- **Figure/Ground**: Disliking uncertainty, we look for solid, stable items. Foreground catches the eye first
- Closure: Preferring complete shapes, we automatically fill in gaps to perceive a complete image; we see the whole first
- Common Region: We group elements that are in the same closed region
- 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

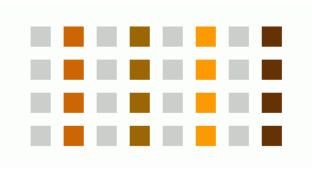
- Meaningfulness (Familiarity): We group elements if they form a meaningful or personally relevant image.
- **Prägnanz**: We perceive complex images as simple ones.
- Convexity: We perceive convex shapes ahead of concave ones
- **Regularity**: Sorting items, we tend to group some into larger shapes, 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.

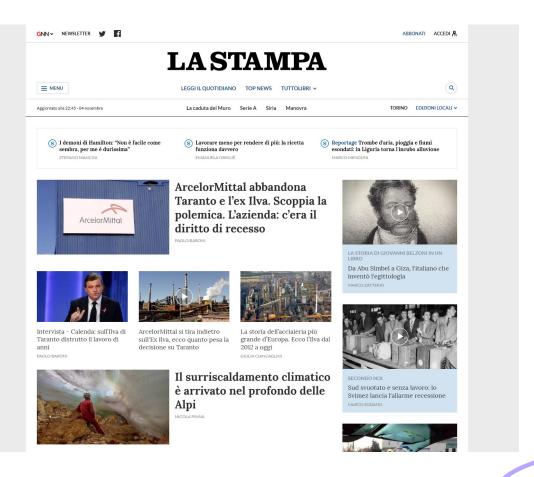


Examples: Similarity



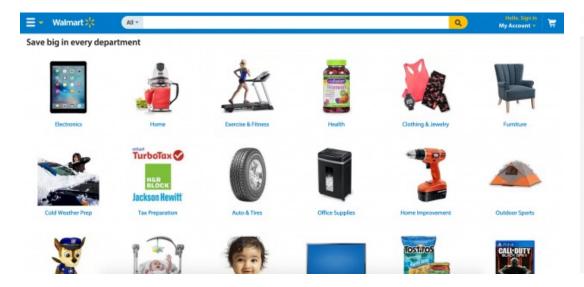


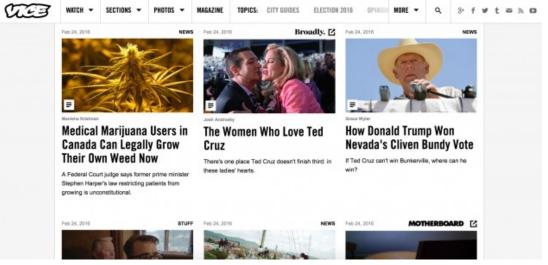




Example: Proximity









Example: Continuity



Customers Who Bought This Item Also Bought





The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to > Eric Ries

\$16.66 - Prime



The Innovator's Diemma: The Revolutionary Book That Will Change the Way Clayton M. Christensen 全点量量。209

Management...
Paperback
\$10.08 \(\sqrt{Prime} \)





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

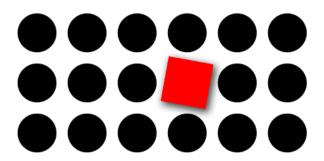


Our friendly servers organize your food for delivery - hot and ready to eat!

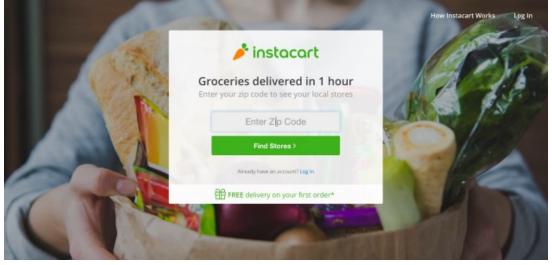


Your meal arrives in around 20 minutes - like a home-cooked meal without the efforti

Example: Focal Point







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GRID AND ALIGNMENT

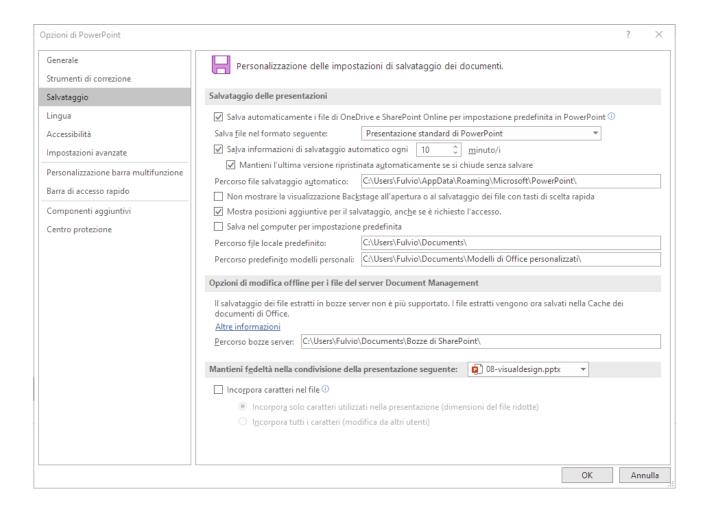


Alignment

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



Example

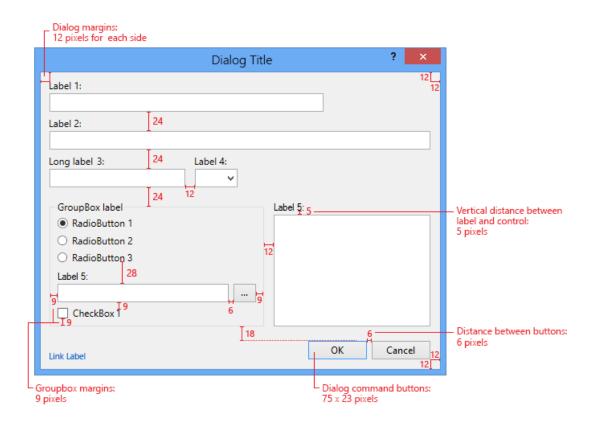


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Example





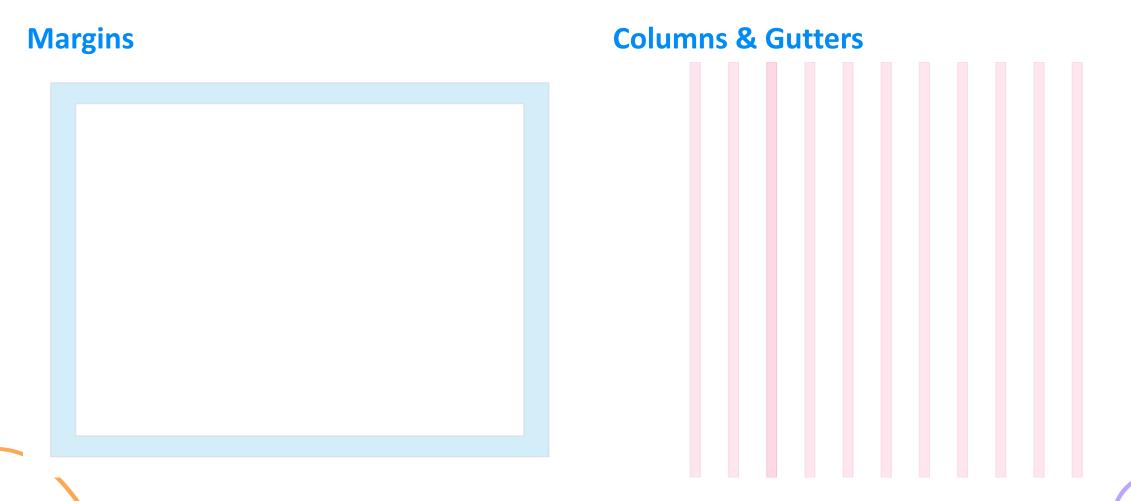
https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/visualstudio/extensibility/ux-guidelines/layout-for-visual-studio?view=vs-2019



Grid Layout Ingredients

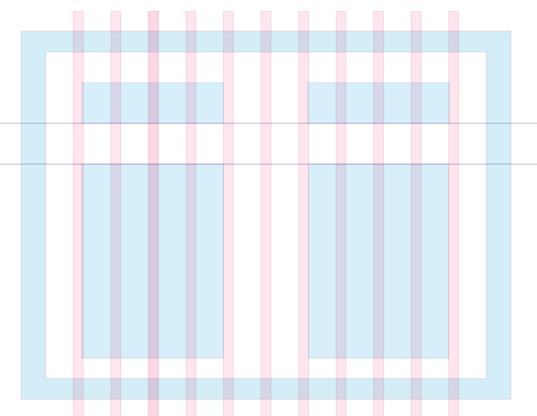
- Guides: The edge which you choose to align content with
- Column: A vertical division of content
- Row: A horizontal division of content
- Margins: The area surrounding your content
- Gutters: The margins between columns
- Hang-line: A horizontal guide to align content to hang off of
- Baseline: The 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



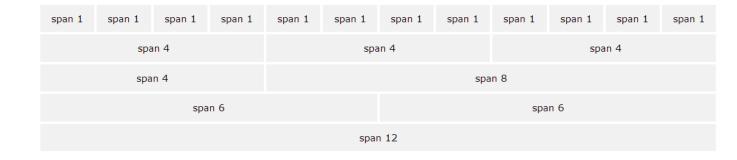
Example of Grid-based Layout

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



Example: Bootstrap Grid

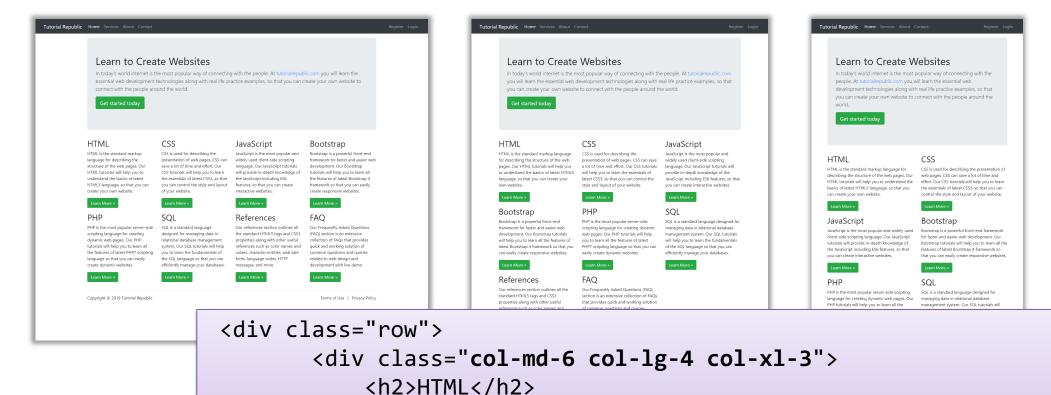
- Always 12 columns in total
- May choose to span a group of columns
- Each column is tagged according to the screen size:
 - xs (phones <768px)
 - sm (tablets >=768px)
 - md (small laptops >=992px)
 - lg (laptops and desktops ->1200px)



Example: Responsive Grid Layout

...

</div>



https://www.tutorialrepublic.com/twitter-bootstrap-tutorial/bootstrap-responsive-layout.php

...

Learn to Create Websites

In today's world internet is the most popular way of

technologies along with real life practice examples,

so that you can create your own website to connect with the people around the world.

HTML is the standard markup language for describing the structure of

CSS is used for describing the presentation of web pages. CSS can save

a lot of time and effort. Our CSS tutorials will help you to learn the

JavaScript is the most popular and widely used client-side scripting

language, Our JavaScript tutorials will provide in-depth knowledge of

the JavaScript including ES6 features, so that you can create interactive

JavaScript

the web pages. Our HTML tutorials will help you to understand the

basics of latest HTML5 language, so that you can create your own

connecting with the people. At tutorialrepu

you will learn the essential web development

Grid Structure

Main body: Mix of 2x and 3x columns

Alternating row types



Title area outside the grid

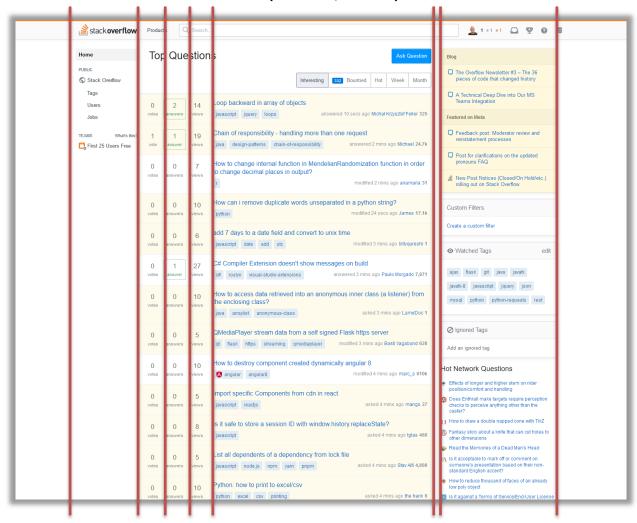
Right column for other types of articles



Grid Structure

Main content (center, wide)

Navigation (left, smaller)



Related content (right, smaller)



Example (2019)

oftware							
° anno							
Periodo	Codice	Lingu	a Insegnamento	Crediti	Docente	Note	Vincoli
1	01PDWOV	200	Information systems	6	M. Morisio	\odot	
1	02GOLOV	•	ING-INF/05 (6) <u>Architetture dei sistemi di elaborazione</u> ING-INF/05 (10)	10	P. Bernardi E. Sanchez Sanchez	\odot	
1	02LSEOV	22 P 2	Oppure Computer architectures	10	P. Montuschi	\odot	
1	01SQJOV		NG-INF/05 (10) <u>Data Science and Database Technology</u> MG-INF/05 (8)	8	S. Chiusano	\odot	
1	01SQMOV	•	Oppure Data Science e Tecnologie per le Basi di Dati MG-INF/05 (8)	8	E. Baralis	\odot	
1	010TWOV	2017) 2012	NG-INF/05 (6) Oppure NG-INF/05 (6)	6	M. Baldi	\odot	
1	02KPNOV	•	oppure T <u>ecnologie e servizi di rete</u> ■ NG-NF/05 (6)	6	G. Marchetto	\odot	
2	02JEUOV	20 pe	ING-INF/IOS (6) NG-INF/IOS (6)	6	R. Sisto	\odot	
2	05BIDOV	•	Ingegneria del software ■ ING-INF/05 (8)	8	G. Bruno	\odot	
2	04GSPOV	271 PS 501 ER	Oppure Software engineering	8	M. Morisio	\odot	
2	01UDFOV	•	NG-INF/05 (8) <u>Applicazioni Web I</u> NG-INF/05 (6)	6	E. Masala	\odot	
2	01TXYOV	100 mg	Oppure Web Applications I ■	6	F. Corno	\odot	
2	02GRSOV	•	NG-INF/05 (6) Programmazione di sistema NG-INF/05 (10)	10	G. Cabodi	\odot	
2	01NYHOV	22 PG	Oppure System and device programming ING-INF/05 (10)	10	S. Quer	\odot	
o anno Periodo	Codice	Lingu	. ,	Crediti	Docente	Note	Vincoli
1		_	Insegnamento a scelta 1	6			
1	01TYMOV		Information systems security ING-INF/05 (6) Oppure	6		\odot	
1	01UDUOV	•	Sicurezza dei sistemi informativi ING-INF/05 (6)	6		\odot	
1	01SQNOV	22 PG	Software Engineering II ING-INF/05 (6)	6		\odot	
1,2			Crediti liberi	6			
1,2	29EBHOV		Tesi	30			
2			<u>Insegnamento a scelta 2</u>	6			
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Periodo	Codice	Lingu	a Insegnamento	Crediti	Docente	Note	Vincoli
1	01TYDOV	27 pe	Cloud Computing ■ NG-INF/05 (6)	6		\odot	
1	01PDCOV	27 (V) 24 (27)	Digital control technologies and architectures NG-NF/04 (6)	6		\odot	
1	01TXZOV	271 PS 501 ER	Distributed systems programming NG-NF/05 (6)	6		\odot	Si
1	01NWPOV	•	Relaborazione dell'audio digitale	6		\odot	
1	01UDGOV	100 per 100 per	Regress (6) NG-NF/05 (6)	6		\odot	Si
1	02JSKOV		Human Computer Interaction ■ NG-NF/05 (6)	6		☆ 😢)
1	01SQIOV	20100 20100	Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence ■ NG-NF/05 (6)	6		\odot	
1	01PDXOV	201 PA	Modern design of control systems NG-NF/04 (6)	6		\odot	
1	010UVOV	101 P	Optimization methods and algorithms ■ MAT(9) (6)	6		\odot	
1	DACETOV		5 1 ·	6		△	



Example (same page in 2020)

✓ Software								
1º anno 20	020/2021							
Periodo	Codice	SSD	Insegnamento	Lingua	Crediti	Docente	Note	Orario
1	01PDWOV	ING-INF/05 (6)	Information systems	#	6	M. Morisio (118 iscr.)		O
1	02GOLOV	ING-INF/05 (10)	Architetture dei sistemi di elaborazione	0	10	P. Bernardi (150 iscr.) E. Sanchez Sanchez (159 iscr.)		O
			oppure					
1	02LSEOV	ING-INF/05 (10)	Computer architectures	#	10	P. Montuschi (207 iscr.)		©.
1 01SQJOV	01SQJOV	ING-INF/05 (8)	Data Science and Database Technology	\$	8	S. Chiusano (172 iscr.)		©
			oppure					
1	01SQMOV	ING-INF/05 (8)	Data Science e Tecnologie per le Basi di Dati	0	8	E. Baralis (254 iscr.)		©
1	010TWOV	ING-INF/05 (6)	Computer network technologies and services	#	6	G. Marchetto (161 iscr.)		O
			oppure					
1	02KPNOV	ING-INF/05 (6)	Tecnologie e servizi di rete	0	6	G. Marchetto (253 iscr.)		O
2	02JEUOV	ING-INF/05 (6)	Formal languages and compilers	#	6	R. Sisto (60 iscr.)		©
2	05BIDOV	ING-INF/05 (8)	Ingegneria del software	0	8	G. Bruno (132 iscr.)		©.
			oppure					
2	04GSPOV	ING-INF/05 (8)	Software engineering	#	8	M. Morisio (202 iscr.)		©
2 01UDF	01UDFOV	ING-INF/05 (6)	Applicazioni Web I	0	6	E. Masala (91 iscr.) L. De Russis (57 iscr.)		0
			oppure					
2	01TXYOV	ING-INF/05 (6)	Web Applications I	#	6	F. Corno (185 iscr.)		©
2	02GRSOV	ING-INF/05 (10)	Programmazione di sistema	0	10	G. Cabodi (100 iscr.) A. Savino (112 iscr.)	■ 🗐	0
			oppure					
2	01NYHOV	ING-INF/05 (10)	System and device programming	#	10	S. Quer (108 iscr.)		0
2° anno 20 Periodo	021/2022 Codice	SSD			6 150	Docente	N	Orario
Periodo 1	Codice	220	Insegnamento	Lingua	Crediti 6	Docente	Note	Orario
1	01TYMOV	INC INCOCAC	Insegnamento a scelta 1	40	6		_	<u> </u>
1	UTTWOV	ING-INF/05 (6)	Information systems security	#	0		_	U
1	01UDUOV	INC INCOCAS	oppure	4	6			0
1	010DUOV 01SQNOV	ING-INF/05 (6)	Sicurezza dei sistemi informativi	0	6			0
	UISQNUV	IING-INF/US (D)	Software Engineering II	⊕				U
1,2	20EBITO1.		Crediti liberi		6		_	
1,2	29EBHOV		Tesi		30			
2			Insegnamento a scelta 2		6			

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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





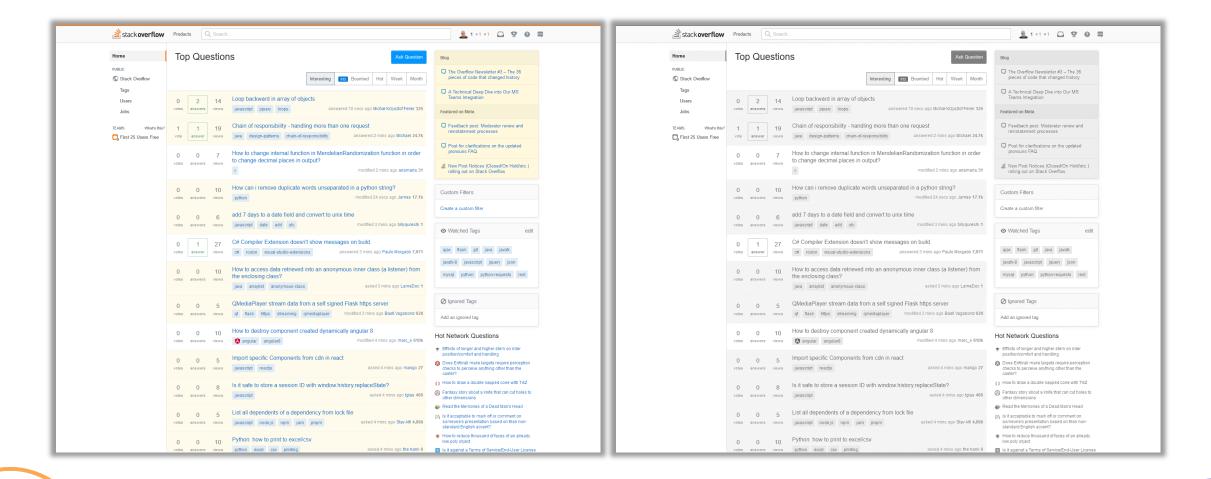
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Colors

- Be careful, do not 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





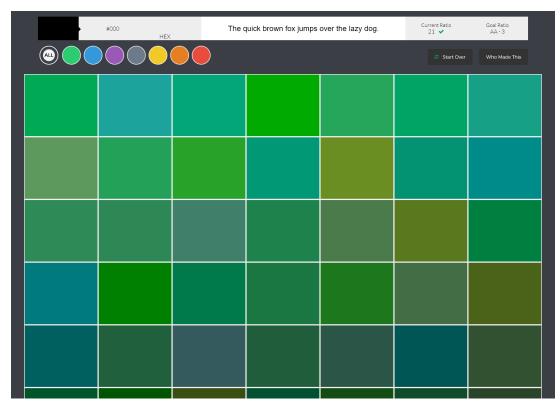
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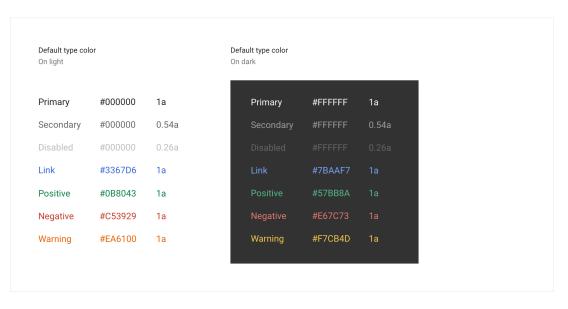
Palettes





Color Contrast





Google Chrome Palette

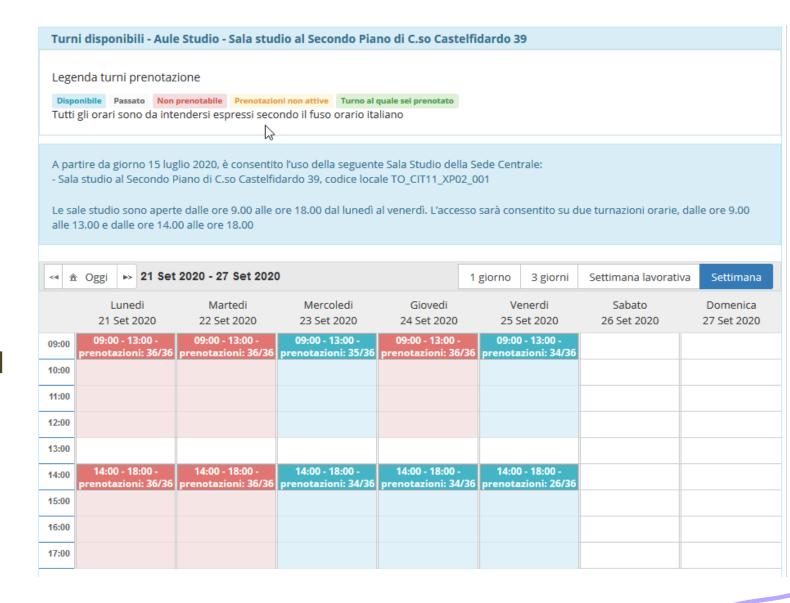
http://colorsafe.co/

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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"







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