

ITI0209: User Interfaces

09. Design Systems - Layout and Sizing.

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Overall Tips for Style and Layout

Layout and Space

- White space should be removed, not added
- When designing for the web, white space is almost always added to a design - if something looks little too cramped, you add a bit of margin or padding until things look better.
- A better approach is to start by giving something way too much space, then remove it until it you're happy with the result.

Start layout with too much white space





Set up Two-Factor Authentication STEP 1 OF 3

Every time you sign in to your account, you will need your password and verification code

Setup your phone

Enter the phone number you would like to use.

Country Phone Number

 Canada ▼ 

Start layout with too much white space



Set up Two-Factor Authentication

STEP 1 OF 3

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Setup your phone

Enter the phone number you would like to use.

Country



Canada



Phone Number

+1 (555) 555-5555

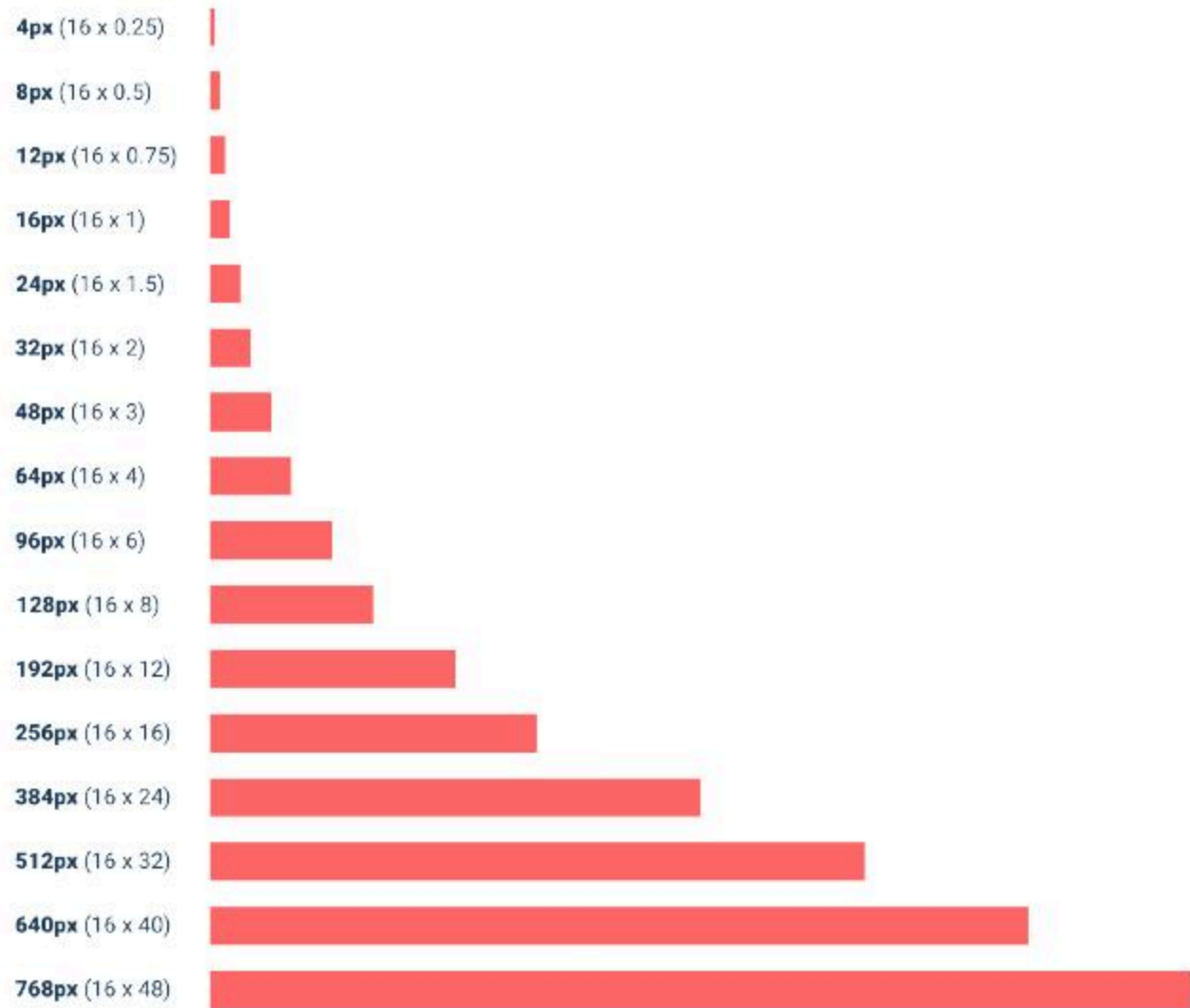


Next Step

Establish a spacing and sizing system

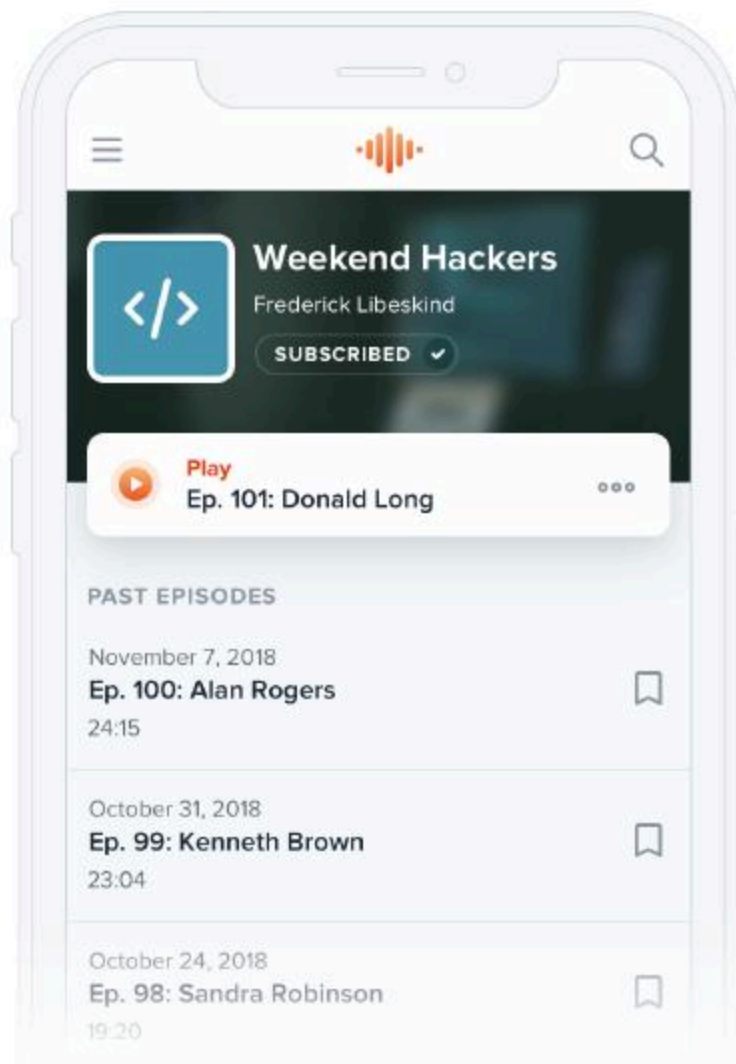
- Limit yourself to a constrained set of values, defined in advance.
- If you want your system to make sizing decisions easy, make sure no two values in your scale are ever closer than about 25%.
- A simple approach is to start with a sensible base value, then build a scale using factors and multiples of that value.

16px is a great number to start with because it divides nicely, and also happens to be the default font size in every major web browser.



You don't have to fill the whole screen

- If you only need 600px, use 600px. Spreading things out or making things unnecessarily wide just makes an interface harder to interpret, while a little extra space around the edges never hurt anyone.
- This is just as applicable to individual sections of an interface, too. You don't need to make everything full-width just because something else (like your navigation) is full-width.



Browser navigation bar: back, forward, refresh, home, address bar, menu.

Navigation: Browse Library

Weekend Hackers

Frederick Libeskind

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Play

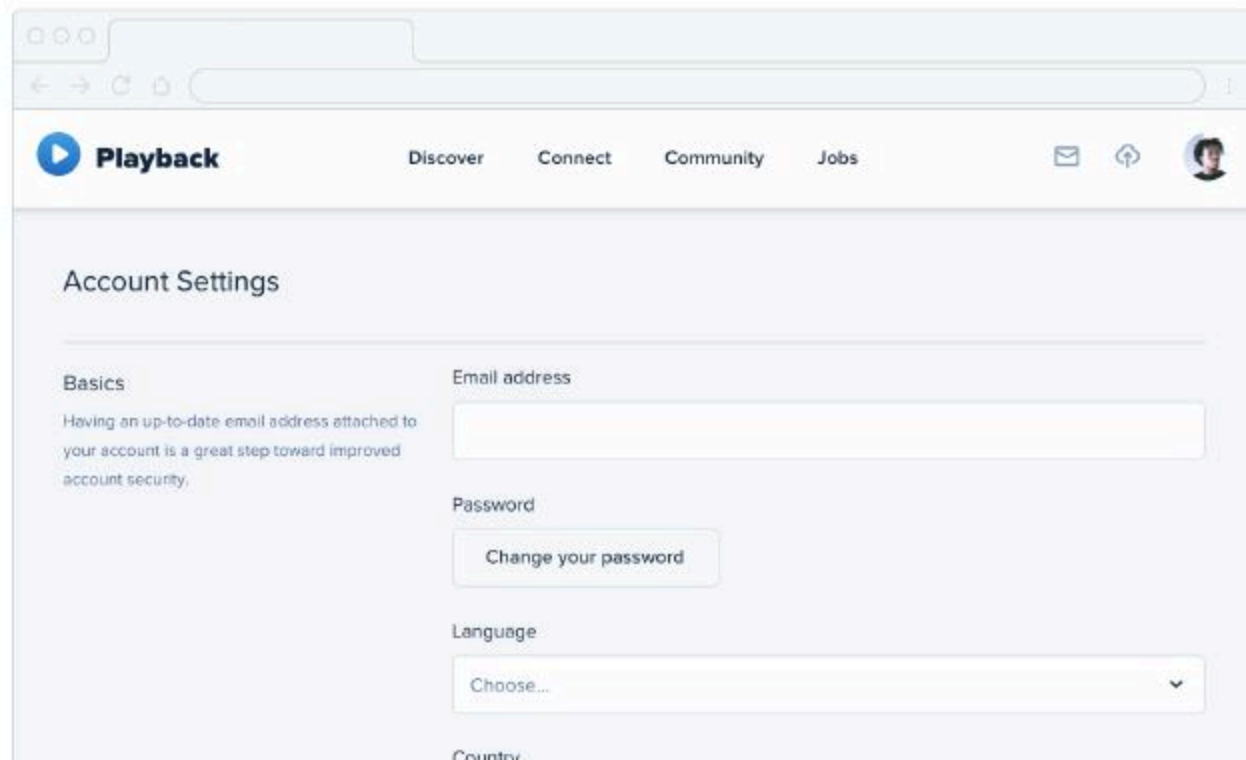
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23:09		
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22:16		

Thinking in columns

If you're designing something that works best at a narrower width but feels unbalanced in the context of an otherwise wide UI, see if you can split it into columns instead of just making it wider.



Avoid ambiguous spacing

- Relative sizing doesn't scale.
- When groups of elements are explicitly separated — usually by a border or background color — it's obvious which elements belong to which group.
- At best the user has to work harder to interpret the UI, and at worst it means accidentally putting the wrong data in the wrong field. The fix is to increase the space between each form group so it's clear which label belongs to which input.



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Keep your line length in check

- Too long lines make text hard to read. 75 characters per line is optimal width
- Line length isn't the only factor in choosing the right line-height — font size has a big impact as well.
- When text is small, extra line spacing is important because it makes it a lot easier for your eyes to find the next line when the text wraps.
- Line-height and font size are inversely proportional — use a taller line-height for small text and a shorter line-height for large text.

Line Length

Minimum 40 characters

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Narrower columns are read more quickly.

Maximum 75 characters

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Wider columns are read more slowly.

Alignment

- In general, text should be aligned to match the direction of the language it's written in, In general, text should be aligned to match the direction of the language it is written in.
- Center-alignment can look great for headlines or short, independent blocks of text.
- If you're designing a table that includes numbers, right-align them.



The one-size-fits-all solution

Build a beautiful website without touching code. We'll provide you with all of the tools and insights to grow your online business. Our templates are all you need to stand out from the rest of the competition.



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Border Radius

- As small of a detail as it sounds, if and how much you round the corners in your design can have a big impact on the overall feel.
- A small border radius is pretty neutral, and doesn't really communicate much of a personality on its own

Large border radius starts to feel more playful:

The image shows a dashboard for 'cleargrowth' with a clean, modern design. On the left, there is a header with the logo and a main heading 'A clear overview of your startups performance'. Below this is a sub-heading 'Get insights and stay engaged with your customers.' and two buttons: 'START FREE TRIAL' and 'SEE DEMO'. On the right, there are three overlapping cards showing performance metrics: 'Monthly Revenue \$103K' with a 1.4% increase, 'Net Revenue \$112K' with an 11.1% decrease, and 'Fees \$3,256' with a 3.2% increase. Each card includes a small line chart showing trends over time. The background features a large, light blue circular graphic.

cleargrowth

A clear overview of your startups performance

Get insights and stay engaged with your customers.

[START FREE TRIAL](#) [SEE DEMO](#)

Metric	Value	Change
Monthly Revenue	\$103K	↑ 1.4%
Net Revenue	\$112K	↓ 11.1%
Fees	\$3,256	↑ 3.2%


No border radius at all feels a lot more serious or formal:

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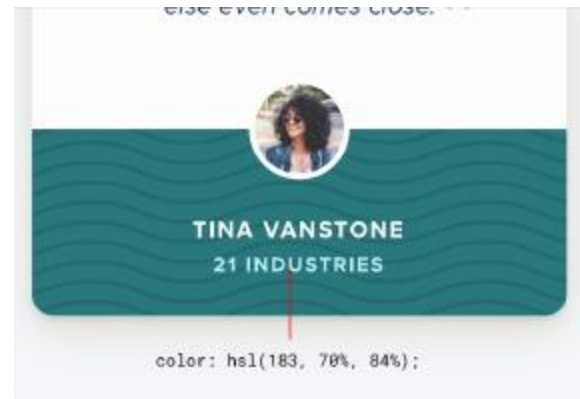
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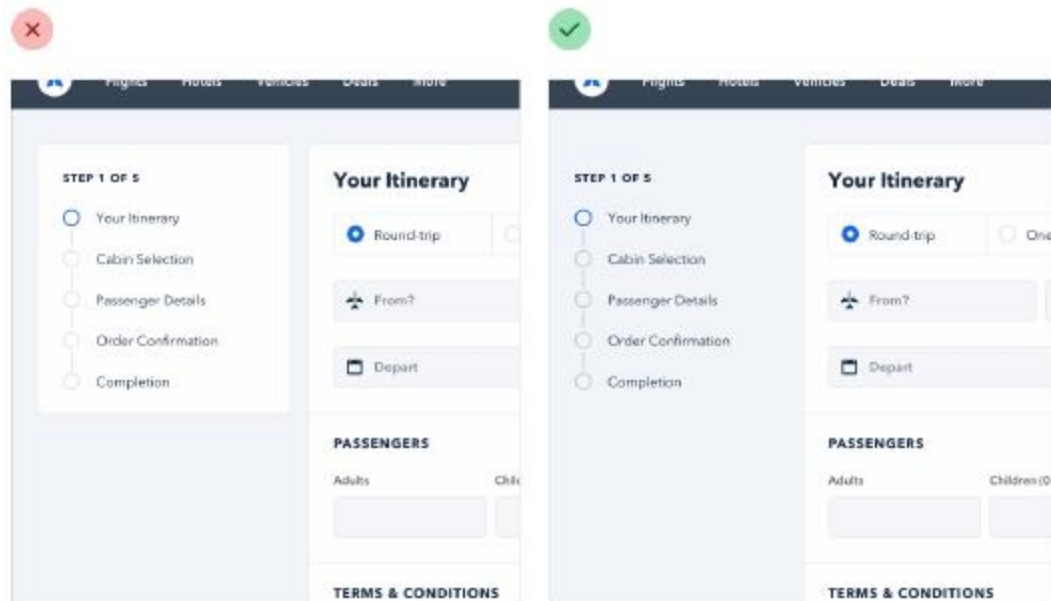
Don't use grey text on colored backgrounds

Making the text closer to the background color is what actually helps create hierarchy, not making it light grey. Choose a color with the same hue, and adjust the saturation and lightness until it looks right to you



Emphasize by de-emphasizing

Sometimes you'll run into a situation where the main element of an interface isn't standing out enough, but there's nothing you can add to it to give it the emphasis it needs.



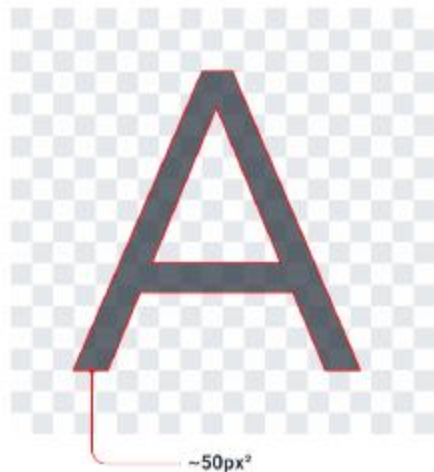
Combine labels and values

If you're building a real estate app, something like "Bedrooms: 3" could simply become "3 bedrooms".



Balance weight and contrast

The reason bold text feels emphasized is that in the same amount of space, more pixels are used for text than for the background. A simple and effective way to balance this is to lower the contrast of the icon by giving it a softer color.



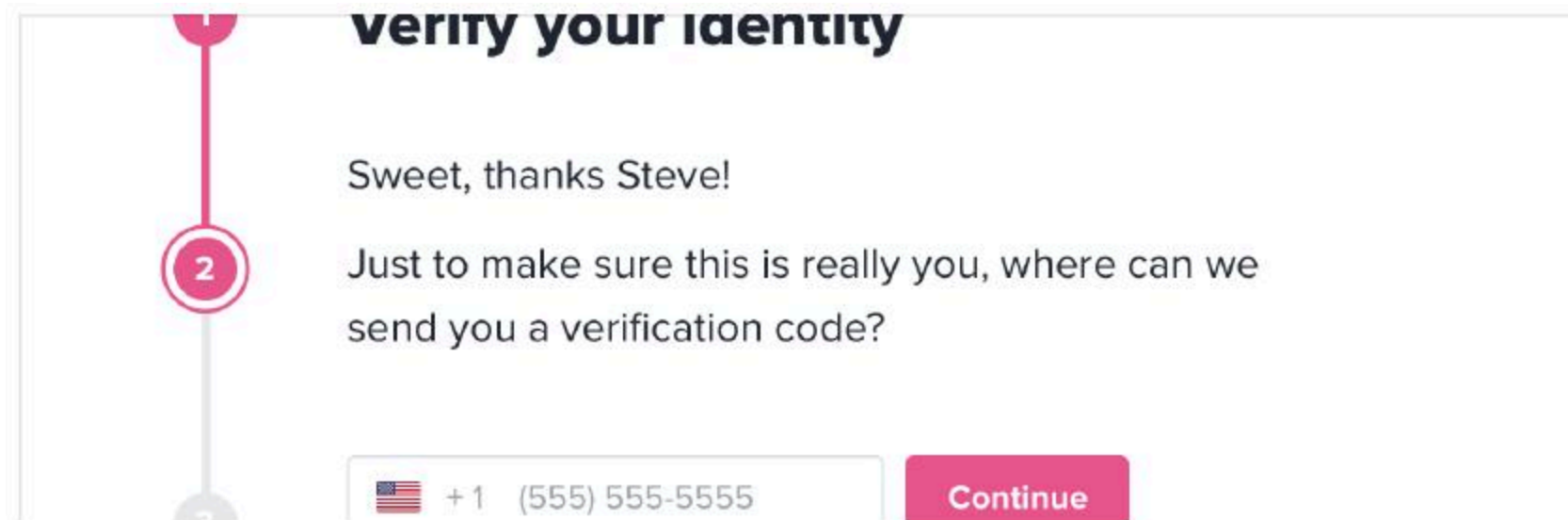
Language

- While not a visual design technique in itself, the words you use in an interface have a massive influence on the overall personality.
- Using a less personal tone might feel more official or professional
- Using friendlier, more casual language makes a site feel, well, friendlier.

See also: <https://rockcontent.com/blog/google-tool-inclusive-language/>

Language

Words are everywhere in a user interface, and choosing the right ones is just as (if not more) important than choosing the right color or typeface.



verify your identity

Sweet, thanks Steve!

Just to make sure this is really you, where can we send you a verification code?

+1 (555) 555-5555 [Continue](#)

Refactoring UI

Adam Wathan, Steve Schoger

2018

<https://www.refactoringui.com/>



Thank you!