



Design 101

Whether your goal is to become a designer or just learn how to better interact with others on your team, design is a vital part of how a product or application comes to life. Design is about more than learning a piece of software. It's about recognizing needs and wants, making choices, and paying close attention to detail.

With this course you'll learn that design, just like programming, has fundamental concepts and best practices that will help you build a foundation for your journey toward becoming a designer.

OVER FOUR WEEKS, WE WILL COVER

Introduction

Design is about problem solving. It is often closely associated with art, but in actuality aesthetics are just part of what makes a well designed product. Before you begin learning the theory and foundations of design, it is helpful to have a solid understanding of “why”. This unit is intended to help you begin thinking of design as a thought process, rather than as a tool.

Project: Learning to see Design

Visual Hierarchy

Learn how web pages and apps are organized to convey importance to pieces of information. Get exposed to how a user is guided from element to element, and how to determine what matters most in your content. Design basic document flows without the stress of color and typographic choices.

Projects: Blog Layout, Social Timeline, News Listing

Layout

Learn the basic principles of page layout including: grids, rule of thirds, call to actions, and more. Get your hands dirty by designing your first wireframe.

Project: Wireframe

Typography

Choosing fonts can be scary. Learn the basics to get you up and running with great font-pairing techniques, learn the lingo, and gain the skills to know what looks good when and how your users will interpret different typefaces.

Project: Choosing Type

Color Theory

No more picking a random palette and hoping it works. Go beyond the color picker and discover best practices and foundations to help you better understand color choice and how to use it effectively on the web. Explore some of the science behind color, as well as the emotional connection users have with it.

Project: Color Style Tile

Process

Explore the process of going from concept to creating a final design by designing your own web page mockup from the ground up.

Projects: Full Landing Page, Mockup

TOOLS WE RECOMMEND

You can complete all of our projects using any design tool of your choice. However we strongly recommend the following professional design programs:



Sketch
Bohemian Coding



Figma
Figma Inc.



Illustrator
Adobe



Photoshop
Adobe

Your mentors are a great resource to discover tips and tricks to improve with the tools.

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

- ✓ Learn to recognize good design from bad
- ✓ Gain a basic understanding of typography, color theory, visual hierarchy, and layout
- ✓ Gain insightful feedback from peers and professional designers on your progress and work
- ✓ Concept and create components for apps
- ✓ Learn how to effectively communicate your ideas with others through your newfound understanding of design.
- ✓ Come away with a beginning collection of designs for your own portfolio

“I’ve started a new job at Microsoft as a Design Developer, three weeks ago. The design principles I learned during the Designlab course helped me during the interview process! Thank you so much :)”

Frederic was a freelance developer living in Paris, looking for solutions to improve his design skills. He’d tried other online tutorials and courses before, but nothing quite helped boost his abilities — so he signed up for Designlab, and was matched up with his own mentor, Daina.

The course helped him integrate everything he’d learned previously, especially since he was able to bounce his questions and ideas off of Daina.

Shortly after completing Design 101, Frederic got a new job at Microsoft, as a design-focused Front-end Developer.



WHAT YOU'LL CREATE

Here are some past examples of real student work.

