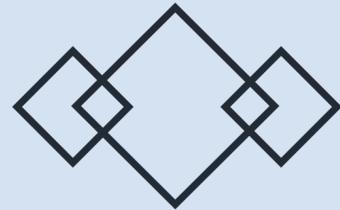




presents:

Design Hierarchy and Structure



Intro to hierarchy

The hierarchy and structure of a layout are key features that can make or break a design. Layouts with poor hierarchy are confusing and hard to navigate.

SneakerHeads Marketplace About Community Account
A place to buy, sell, and trade cool kicks.

Filter Shoes

Price

- \$0-\$50
- \$51-\$100
- \$101-\$150

Color

- Red
- Orange
- Yellow
- Green
- Blue
- Purple

Trending

Ultra Comfort 350

SimplySleek

Recent

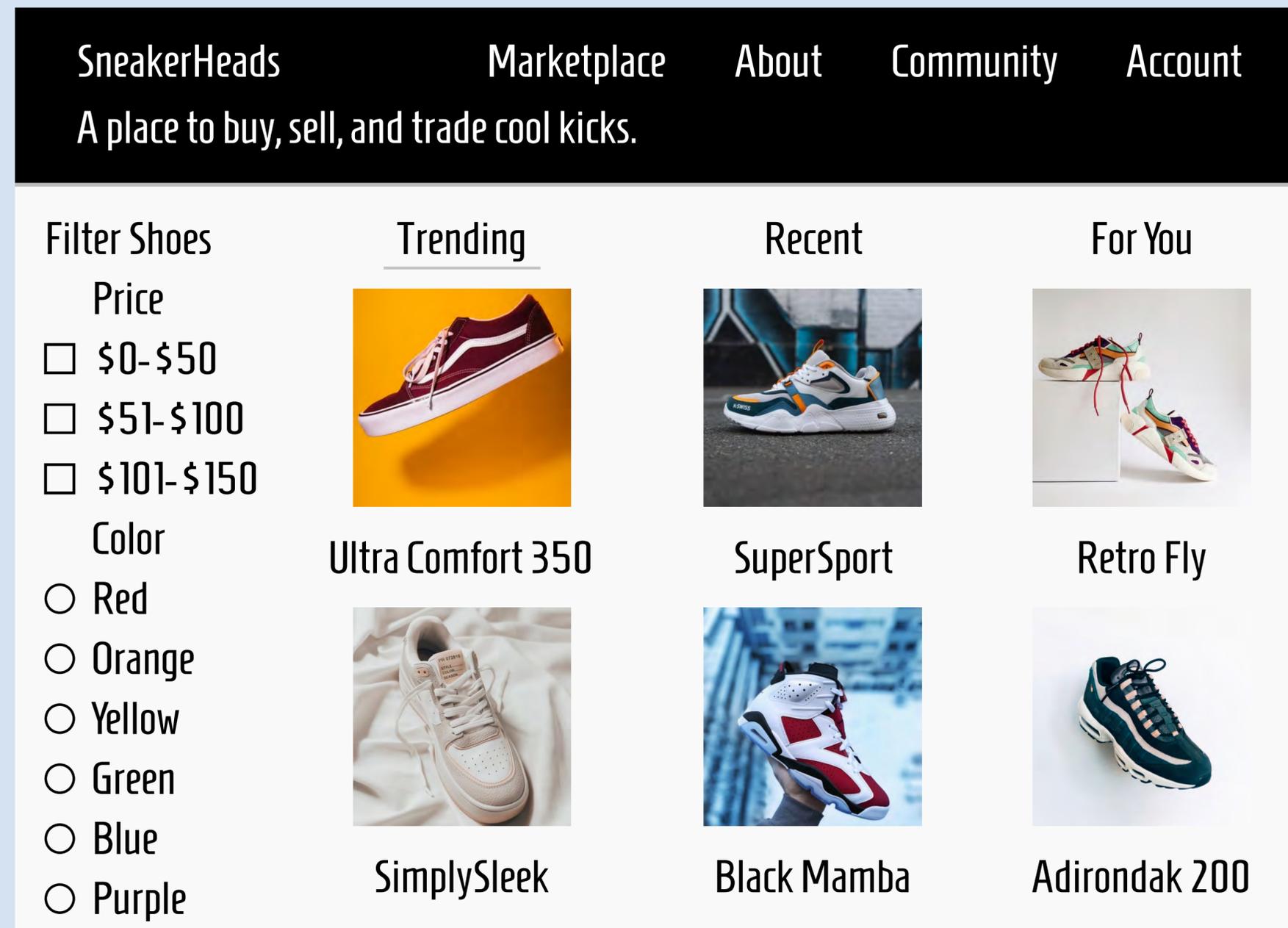
SuperSport

Black Mamba

For You

Retro Fly

Adirondak 200



It's unclear what is a header and what is a navigation link.

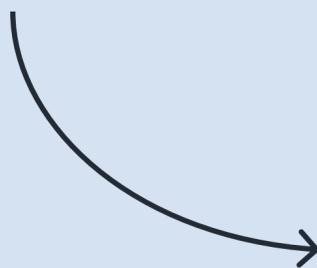


SneakerHeads Marketplace About Community Account
A place to buy, sell, and trade cool kicks.

These don't look like selector tabs at all!



With everything spaced the same and the same size, it's hard to scan.



Filter Shoes

Price

- \$0-\$50
- \$51-\$100
- \$101-\$150

Color

- Red
- Orange
- Yellow
- Green
- Blue
- Purple

Trending

Ultra Comfort 350

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Retro Fly

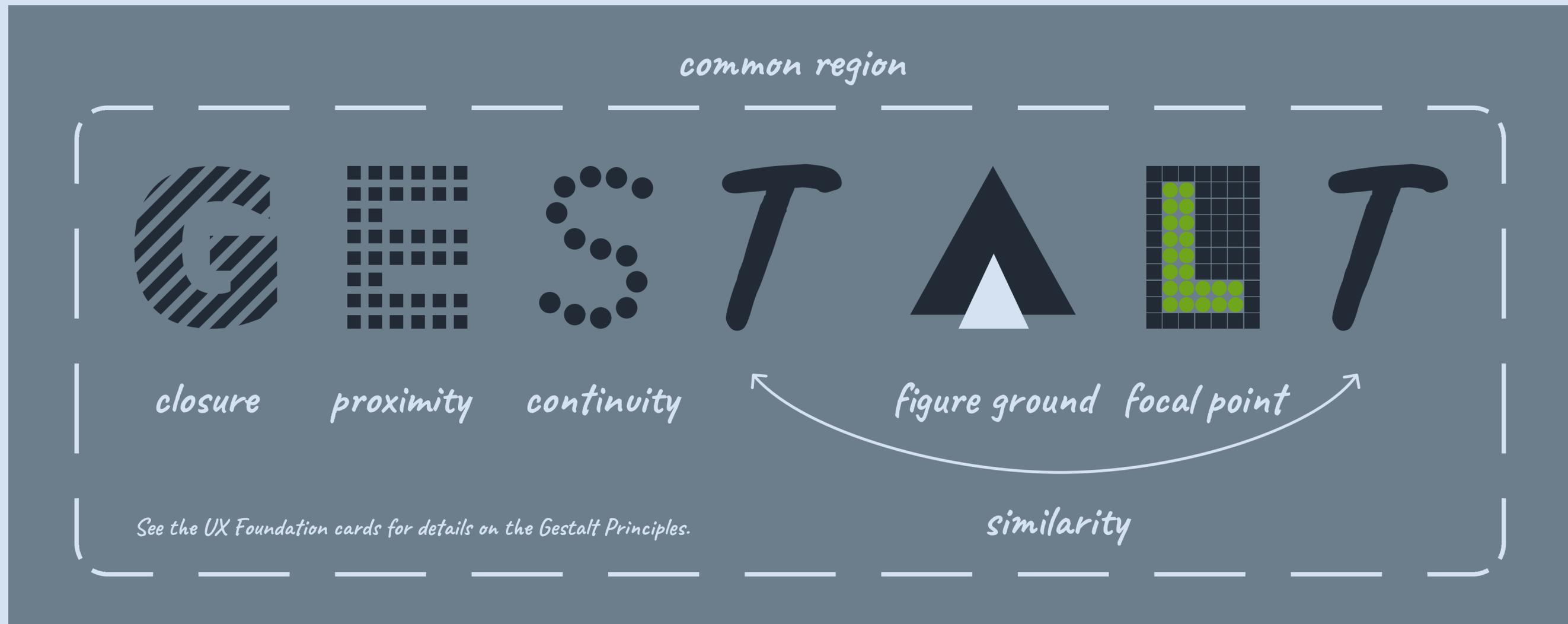
Adirondak 200

Hard to tell what label goes with which shoes.



Let's start with the basics...

A lot of visual hierarchy is rooted in psychology and how the brain perceives visual elements. Some principles that can help guide your layouts are called the Gestalt Principles.



Gestalt Principles

These principles can help guide the user's eye and help them understand what elements are related.

The screenshot displays a web interface for 'Wandering Lotus', a flower shop. The header includes the brand name with a pink lotus logo, and navigation links for 'Shop', 'About', 'Contact', and a shopping cart icon. A left sidebar titled 'Filter Items' allows users to filter by price (\$0-\$50, \$51-\$100, \$101-\$150) and color (Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Purple). The main content area, titled 'Flower Shop', features a search bar and a grid of six flower products. Each product card includes a high-quality image, the flower's name, its price, and an 'Add to Basket' button. The products are: Sapphire Wintercress (\$20), Imperial Snow Rose (\$55), Solar Shadebush (\$15), Southern Firebloom (\$150), Mage's River Daisy (\$5), and Spring Moonlilly (\$75).

Wandering Lotus

Shop About Contact

Filter Items

Price

- \$0-\$50
- \$51-\$100
- \$101-\$150

Color

- Red
- Orange
- Yellow
- Green
- Blue
- Purple

Flower Shop

Search flowers

Sapphire Wintercress
\$20 Add to Basket

Imperial Snow Rose
\$55 Add to Basket

Solar Shadebush
\$15 Add to Basket

Southern Firebloom
\$150 Add to Basket

Mage's River Daisy
\$5 Add to Basket

Spring Moonlilly
\$75 Add to Basket



Wandering Lotus

Shop

About

Contact



Filter Items

Price

\$0-\$50

\$51-\$100

\$101-\$150

Color

Red

Orange

Yellow

Green

Blue

Purple

Flower Shop

Search flowers



Sapphire Wintercress
\$20 [Add to Basket](#)



Imperial Snow Rose
\$55 [Add to Basket](#)



Solar Shadebush
\$15 [Add to Basket](#)



Southern Firebloom
\$150 [Add to Basket](#)



Mage's River Daisy
\$5 [Add to Basket](#)



Spring Moonlilly
\$75 [Add to Basket](#)

Closure: there are open spaces in the logo but it still reads as a flower

Continuity: These links on a line are all navigation options

Focal Point: the "Add to Basket" button stands out and draws attention

Similarity: the controls to filter the selection all look the same since they have the same function

Figure Ground: the white cards seem like they are in front of the green background

Proximity: labels and images they reference are close together

Common Region: all the info related to one flower is in the same card

The Basics: Visual Hierarchy

Visual hierarchy is a way of visually representing the priority or importance of content. It also helps make content easily scannable.

You might come back to read this.

**You will read
this first**

Then this second

You'll read paragraphs next, but only if you are interested after reading the headers. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Cursum condimentum tortor, adipiscing massa leo. Nunc in sociis mauris volutpat tincidunt turpis quis mi.

Visual Hierarchy

An element of visual hierarchy is the visual weight of something, or how much attention it draws. These are some factors of visual weight:

Size



Big things “weigh” more than small things

Contrast



High contrast draws attention

Shape



Solids are “heavier” than non-solids

Position



Things near the top feel more important since we read top to bottom

More information here: [Design Principles: Visual Weight And Direction](#)

Visual Hierarchy

You can combine aspects of visual weight and layout to achieve visual hierarchy.

The screenshot displays the top section of the 'Space Forums' website. At the top is a light orange navigation bar containing a rocket icon, the text 'Space Forums', and three menu items: 'Spacecraft', 'Xenobiology', and 'Astrology', followed by a search icon. Below the navigation bar is a main content area with a white background. It features a bold heading 'Breaking space news, now!', a paragraph of text, a smaller paragraph, and an orange button labeled 'Subscribe to Newsletter'. Below these are two article cards. The first card has the title 'New spacecraft powered by fungus', the author 'Paul Stamets | May 6, 2257', and a blue fiber-optic image. The second card has the title 'Are artificial intelligences a new species?', the author 'Dr. Noonien Soong | August 25, 2340', and a binary code image.

 Space Forums

Spacecraft Xenobiology Astrology 

Breaking space news, now!

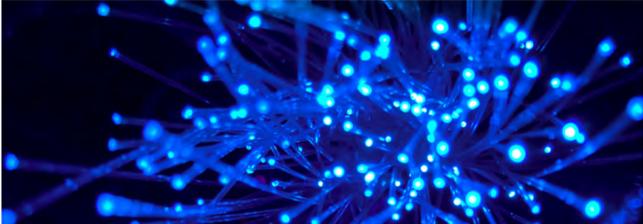
Space Forums is dedicated to reporting on the latest space related news. We gather articles and news from a variety of fields including spacecraft, xenobiology, and astrology.

Subscribe to our weekly newsletter to never miss a thing.

[Subscribe to Newsletter](#)

New spacecraft powered by fungus

Paul Stamets | May 6, 2257



Are artificial intelligences a new species?

Dr. Noonien Soong | August 25, 2340







The most important header is the biggest and boldest. Read this first!

Breaking space news, now!

Space Forums is dedicated to reporting on the latest space related news. We gather articles and news from a variety of fields including spacecraft, xenobiology, and astrology.

Subscribe to our weekly newsletter to never miss a thing.

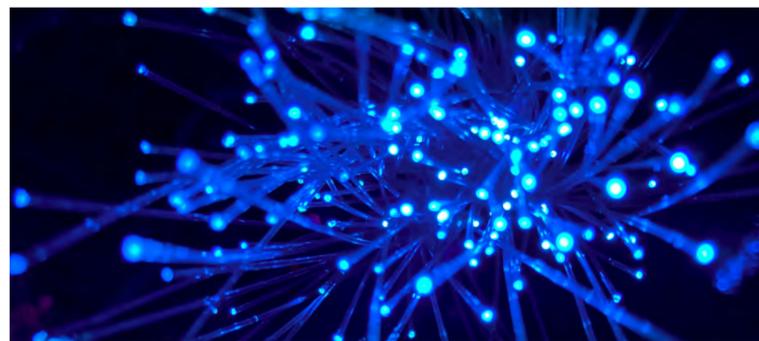
[Subscribe to Newsletter](#)

The call to action is a solid, high contrast shape to draw attention

Subheaders are also a larger font, but not as bold as the main header

New spacecraft powered by fungus

Paul Stamets | May 6, 2257



Are artificial intelligences a new species?

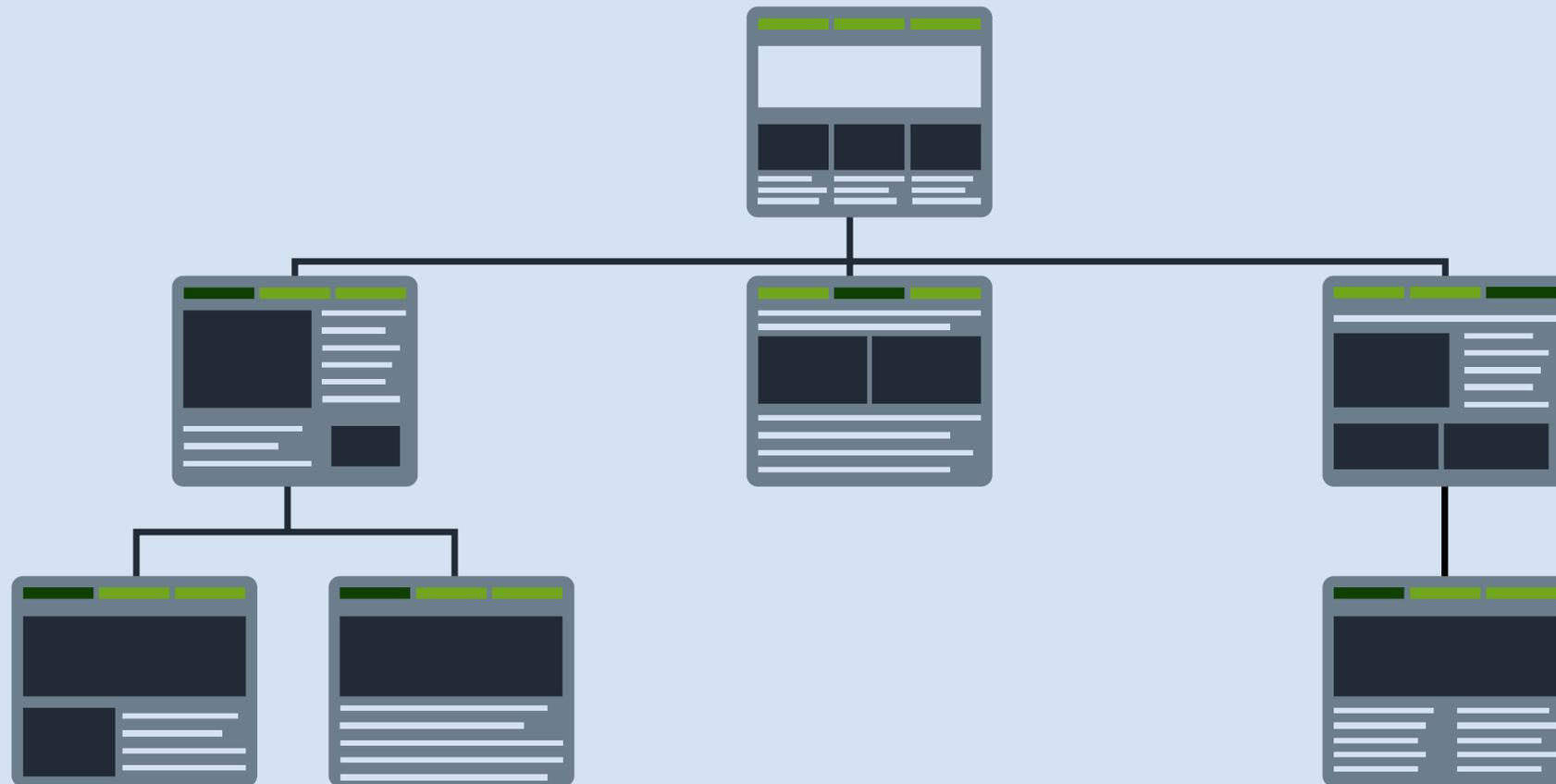
Dr. Noonien Soong | August 25, 2340



Author and date aren't as important, so they're smaller and more subtle

The Basics: Information Architecture

Aside from the visual hierarchy, it is important to consider the hierarchy of the information you are presenting. This focuses on organizing information so it makes sense when experienced as a whole.



Information Architecture

Information architecture is a complex field that encompasses many aspects. For now, just keep these things in mind:

Understandable Terms

The terms you use should be quickly recognizable and understandable. Don't use terms that most people won't know without a dictionary.

Understandable Groupings

The categories you use to group things should be clear and descriptive of what they contain.

Understandable Reasons for Grouping

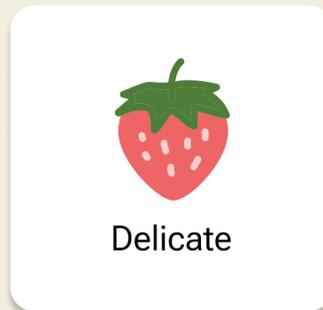
The rationale for why you chose to place something in a certain group should be pretty obvious or easy to understand.

Information Architecture

These are standard categories that almost all grocery stores use



Food Categories



What defines a 'delicate' food?

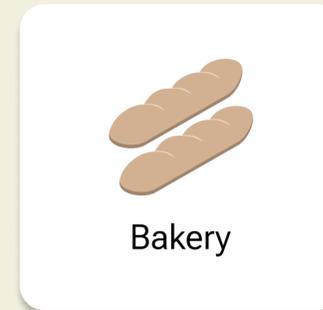
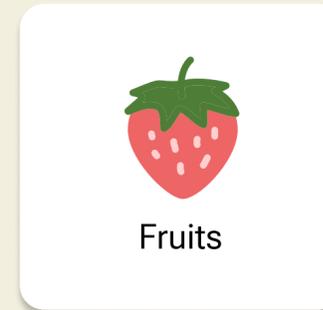
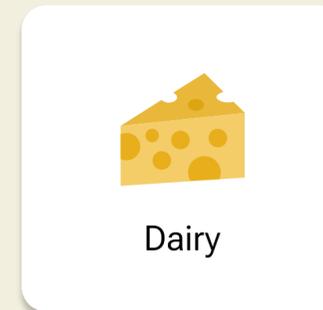
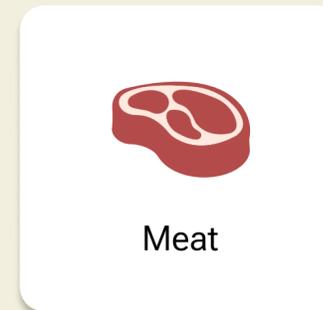
VS

Do most people know what 'umami' is?

This is very subjective



Food Categories



I know exactly what goes into these groups and why

In conclusion...

You don't have to be a designer to create well-structured layouts. Just keep these things in mind:

Visual Grouping



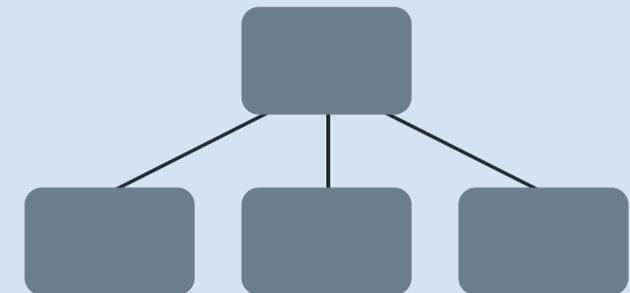
Use Gestalt Principles to group related elements together.

Visual Hierarchy



Use visual hierarchy to define the priority of elements and guide the user.

Information Architecture



Make sure your terms, groupings, and reasons for grouping elements make sense.