

Menu Design

Checklist

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Make Navigation Visible

- ☐ Use visible navigation menus on **larger screens** to avoid hiding them under a hamburger menu.
- ☐ **Place primary navigation menus in the header on** websites and on the left side in applications.
- ☐ Include utility navigation above primary navigation and search areas.
- ☐ **Locate local navigation along the left-hand side on desktop websites.**
- ☐ **Ensure footer menus are positioned at the bottom of the screen** and include categories for secondary personas.

Contrast and Visibility

- ☐ **Use link text colors that contrast highly with the background** to ensure visibility and legibility.
- ☐ Avoid covering the screen with menus when megamenu or submenus are open on larger screens.

Communicate the Current Location

- ☐ **Indicate the user's current location within the menu** using visual cues like breadcrumbs, H1/H2s, and underlining or highlighting the current navigation category.
- ☐ Provide local navigation menus for closely related content to facilitate easy **browsing of related sections.**

Clear Text Labels

- ☐ **Use clear, specific, and familiar wording for link labels** to enhance understanding and relevance.
- ☐ **Avoid Internal Jargon:** Use terminology that is common and understandable to the general user, not just to insiders within the organization or industry.
- ☐ **Use Descriptive Labels:** Choose menu labels that clearly describe the content or destination, helping users to anticipate what they will find upon clicking.
- ☐ **Keep Labels Concise:** Aim for brevity to enhance scanability, using the fewest possible words to convey the necessary information.
- ☐ **Standardize Terms Across the Site:** Ensure consistency in terminology across all navigation elements to avoid confusing users with different labels for the same content or function.
- ☐ **Make link labels easy to scan** by left-justifying text in vertical menus and front-loading key terms.

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Menu Design and Interaction

- ☐ **For large websites, display several navigation tiers in submenus** to simplify deep navigation.
- ☐ **Use Visual Cues:** such as images, icons, or formatting differences to increase information scent and aid in menu navigation.
- ☐ Make menu links large enough to be easily tapped or clicked.
- ☐ **Clearly signify submenus with a caret or arrow icon** to indicate expandability.
- ☐ **Use click-activated rather than hover-activated submenus** to improve accessibility across devices.
- ☐ Avoid multi-level cascading menus; use mega menus or landing pages instead.

Accessibility and Usability

- ☐ **Consider sticky menus for long pages** to maintain accessibility without excessive scrolling.
- ☐ **Optimize the placement of frequently used commands** to reduce physical effort in navigation. To increase information scent and aid in menu navigation.
- ☐ **Use Descriptive Labels:** Choose menu labels that clearly describe the content or destination, helping users to anticipate what they will find upon clicking.