

How to Use Sketches, Wireframes, and Prototypes

STAGE	USE	APPEARANCE	INTERACTIVITY
SKETCH	Discuss rough ideas, define general layout and workflow.	Hand-drawn on whiteboard or sketchpad	None
WIREFRAME	Define overall layout, content areas, and interactive elements	No text or images. Only outlines, boxes, and other shapes as needed.	Little to none
LOW-FIDELITY PROTOTYPE	Refine layout and begin mapping out on-page and navigation interactions	Black and white. Some text, outlines, boxes, and other shapes as needed. Shades of gray help indicate priority of elements.	Minimal, just enough to move between screens and high level functionality.
MEDIUM-FIDELITY PROTOTYPE	Discuss content placement and visual priority. Refine workflows and on-page interactions	Add minimal color. Some text and image content.	Adds some complex on page interactions and limited motion/animation if needed.
HIGH-FIDELITY PROTOTYPE	Discuss colors, fonts, images, and other visual elements.	Full-color with text and images. It should look and feel like a real application, without any actual functionality.	Nearly full-featured.

