Glossary

Use this Glossary to refresh your understanding of key terms.

**design constraints**: what you cannot change about a problem

**design freedoms**: the naturally occurring things in your environment that you can use to your advantage; opposite of design constraints

**design thinking process**: an iterative process to develop innovative solutions to ill-structured, sticky problems that is messy, contingent and contextual; includes problem finding and problem solving; encourages alternating periods of expanding and narrowing scope of thinking around a specific problem

**designer mindset**: an optimistic belief that problems can be addressed by engaging users and developing solutions through an iterative process

**discover**: the design process stage in which designers begin to unpack a problem by understanding the people, context and challenges to generate understanding and empathy; part of problem finding

**focus**: the design process stage in which designers use information to identify boundaries around a challenge in order to find a problem that is actionable and can anchor subsequent design work; part of problem finding

**imagine**: the design process stage in which designers brainstorm a wide range of possible solutions, evaluate those ideas, and choose one solution to move forward into the prototyping stage, part of problem finding and problem solving

**insight**: unique qualities about a user that inform design
**low-fidelity prototype:** a prototype that is somewhat unpolished, or may not have all desired features, usually made in order to quickly produce the prototype and test concepts.

**need:** a specific and meaningful, functional, or emotional goal of your stakeholders; a lens through which you can frame a problem

**problem:** a challenge or difficulty that requires a solution

**prototype:** 1) an artifact or draft of a solution (sketch, model, device, draft, storyboard, wire frame, etc.) which a user can interact with that articulates the designer's hypothesis 2) the design process stage in which designers begin the iterative process of building solutions; part of problem solving

**reflect and share:** the stage in the design process in which designers reflect on the design process as a whole both on their own and by presenting to others, leading to a better understanding of a user or context and potentially requiring designers to rethink whole problem from the beginning; part of problem solving

**sketch:** a type of low-fidelity visual prototyping

**storyboard:** a series of panels that express how a user will implement your solution

**try:** the design process stage in which designers test their prototype with their user to identify areas for improvement in the next iteration; part of problem solving

**user:** the person or group of people designers design with and for

**wireframe:** a mock-up of a digital solution

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