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# Designing with Kids and Teens in Mind

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# Design Tips

A quick list of usability considerations for designers

## Design Tip #1

Create touchscreen-first designs and interactions.

## Design Tip #2

**Make clickable targets big. Really big. At least 2.5cm by 2.5cm (about 70 pixels).**

## Design Tip #3

Give visual cues for scrolling,  
even for touchscreen.

## Design Tip #4

Font size needs to be *at least* 14pt for all devices 1024x768 or larger. Line spacing should be 1.5 to account for poor motor skills and make it easier to read.

## Design Tip #5

Do not use the word ‘kid’ or ‘child’.

## Design Tip #6

You will offend your audience if you use imagery that is not age-appropriate. Avoid it unless you are targeting a specific grade level.

## Design Tip #7

Stick to icons that represent things children have actually seen in the world (not lists or floppy disks).

## Design Tip #8

Do not have more than one scrollbar. Do not have horizontal scrolling.

## Design Tip #9

**Make actions reversible. Give students a way to undo what they've done.**

## Design Tip #10

Every action a student takes requires some sort of feedback (hover, sound, alert, confirmation) on every device.

## Design Tip #11

**Give positive feedback when students have done something correctly. It boosts engagement!**

## Design Tip #12

Instructions should be video, audio, or pictures with text. Do not assume they can read.

## Design Tip #13

Make interactive elements appear 3D. Make non-interactive elements 2D.

## Design Tip #14

**Pair labels and titles with consistent icons. Do not assume they can read.**

## Design Tip #15

Give audio or interactive, contextual prompts and other wayfinding hints when students are 'lost'.

## Design Tip #16

If an interaction requires dragging, it needs to be for very short distances.

## Design Tip #17

For users under 8yo, do not require a quick response to an element or make it a moving target.

## Design Tip #18

**Give explicit instructions for any new interaction. Do not assume they have seen it before (e.g. image carousel, drag and drop, etc.)**

## Design Tip #19

**Do not require students younger than 8yo to log in or fill out a form. Even if they have a lot of online experience, their parents almost always do that.**

## Design Tip #20

Do not hide important content in a tab. Most students have never seen a file folder.

## Design Tip #21

**Avoid crowding text into a small box with a scrollbar. Scrollbars are very difficult for younger users with a mouse.**

## Design Tip #22

Reward students for sticking through hard stuff. Badges and animations go a long way towards boosting engagement!

## Design Tip #23

Provide progress indicators so students know how much more of this to expect.

(P.S. you have 4 more slides to go.)

## Design Tip #24

Do not suggest how a student should interact with an element in instructions (i.e. "use the mouse to..."). They are too literal and will not consider anything else (even if they can't do it).

## Design Tip #25

**Allow users to control multimedia and sound.**

## Design Tip #26

Design with the assumption students of all ages will use accessibility features like highlighting text and reading aloud.

## Design Tip #27

**‘Mark the exits.’**

**Let students know when they are done or are entering a section for adults.**

**Good job! You're done!**