



# Designing Interfaces: Patterns for Effective Interaction Design

*Jenifer Tidwell*

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Designing a good interface isn't easy. Users demand software that is well-behaved, good-looking, and easy to use. Your clients or managers demand originality and a short time to market. Your UI technology -- web applications, desktop software, even mobile devices -- may give you the tools you need, but little guidance on how to use them well.

UI designers over the years have refined the art of interface design, evolving many best practices and reusable ideas. If you learn these, and understand why the best user interfaces work so well, you too can design engaging and usable interfaces with less guesswork and more confidence.

*Designing Interfaces* captures those best practices as design patterns -- solutions to common design problems, tailored to the situation at hand. Each pattern contains practical advice that you can put to use immediately, plus a variety of examples illustrated in full color. You'll get recommendations, design alternatives, and warnings on when not to use them.

Each chapter's introduction describes key design concepts that are often misunderstood, such as affordances, visual hierarchy, navigational distance, and the use of color. These give you a deeper understanding of why the patterns work, and how to apply them with more insight.

A book can't design an interface for you -- no foolproof design process is given here -- but *Designing Interfaces* does give you concrete ideas that you can mix and recombine as you see fit. Experienced designers can use it as a sourcebook of ideas. Novice designers will find a roadmap to the world of interface and interaction design, with enough guidance to start using these patterns immediately.

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