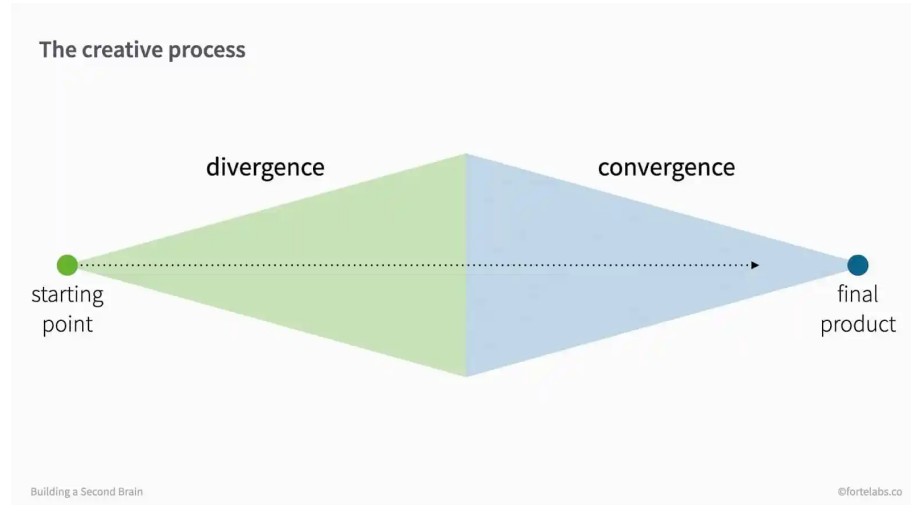


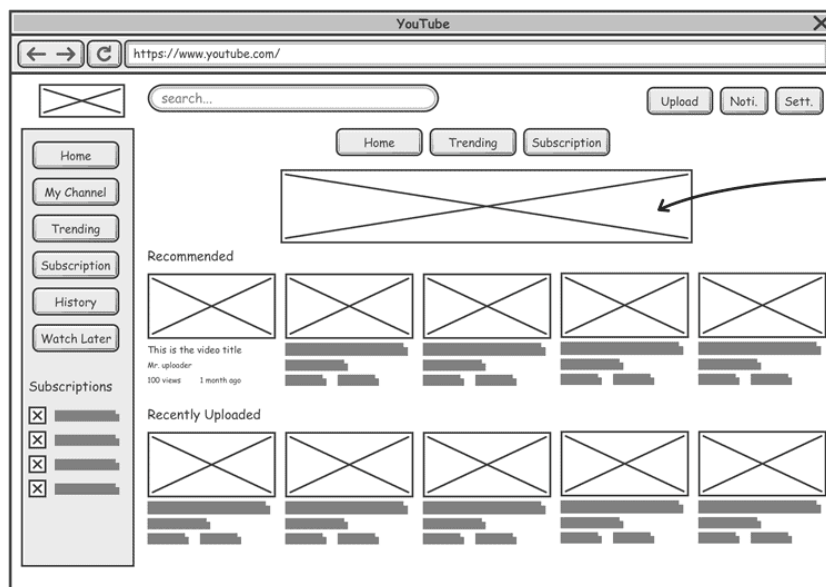
# Introduction to Wireframing - Student Notes

- **Building on last recitation about sketching**



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- At the convergent design part of the process, you can start wireframing to make your sketch of a concept more concrete. Wireframes can be a good intermediate between sketching and developing a website in code.

- **What is a wireframe + why make one?**



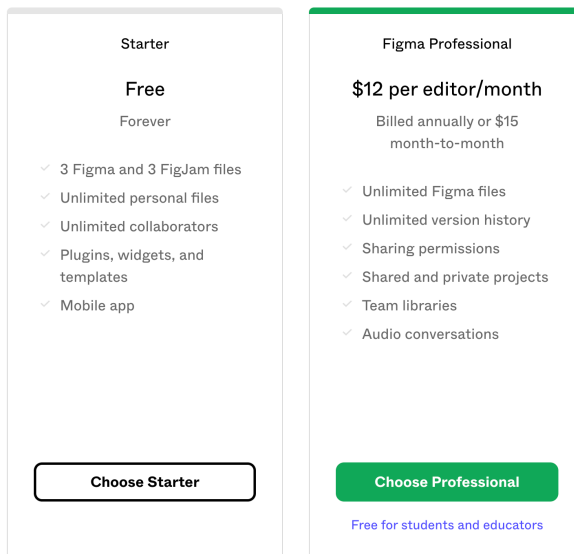
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- Wireframes represent the skeletal framework/blueprint of a website
  - ie. providing enough detail so that everyone knows the shape of the wall, but not getting so deep to give exact details the specific dimensions or type of brick to use on the wall
- Not setting anything in stone yet. Powerful aspect of wireframes is that they provide an opportunity to gather early feedback + input. Wireframes are much easier to make changes to than a webpage that is built in code.

- For this class: Focus is on layout, functionality, and user experience rather than colors + aesthetic elements.
  - How many of you have seen wireframing being used in industry?
    - In industry settings, you might see very detailed wireframes - so specific that it's essentially visually identical to the eventual webpage that the engineer is supposed to build. (the output of graphic designers work)
  - For this class - The goal isn't to create an exact picture of what your webpage will eventually look like. The goal is to convey your idea, and provide a **visualization + basic interactive flow** that is concrete enough for the viewer to fill in the remaining details with their imagination to understand what the webpage will eventually look like and work like.
- Isn't wireframing just for product designers? Why should I learn this if I just want to be a SWE?
  - This process will make you better SWEs—eg it will get you on the same page as your designers/PMs, allow you to even ideate back because they have a better understanding of technical requirements/specifications/etc.
    - A lot of the difficult of working in industry is that people speak very different "languages"/ways of thinking, and norming/getting on the same page is an enormously difficult task.
  - You never know when you might be in a position where you need to wear a designer "hat".
    - E.g. sometimes it's helpful to be able to throw together a quick visualization of an idea you have to get early feedback from stakeholders, and it's good to have the freedom to be able to create it yourself instead of requesting someone else make it.
  - Wireframing is a kind of prototyping, so just as you can test a design by building a partly working implementation or even a paper prototype, you can do the same with wireframes.
    - This works because the conceptual design tends to be very abstract, and it can be hard to anticipate the problems that will arise in context. But when you build a wireframe it makes it very real and you start thinking of all kinds of problems.
- **This recitation:**
  - How to design a detailed UI using a wireframing tool (figma specifically)
  - Some practice wireframing (a single frame + interactive flow)
  - Wireframing will be required for A3 (Complete design of a Twitter clone with fleshed out concepts; wireframes of UI)

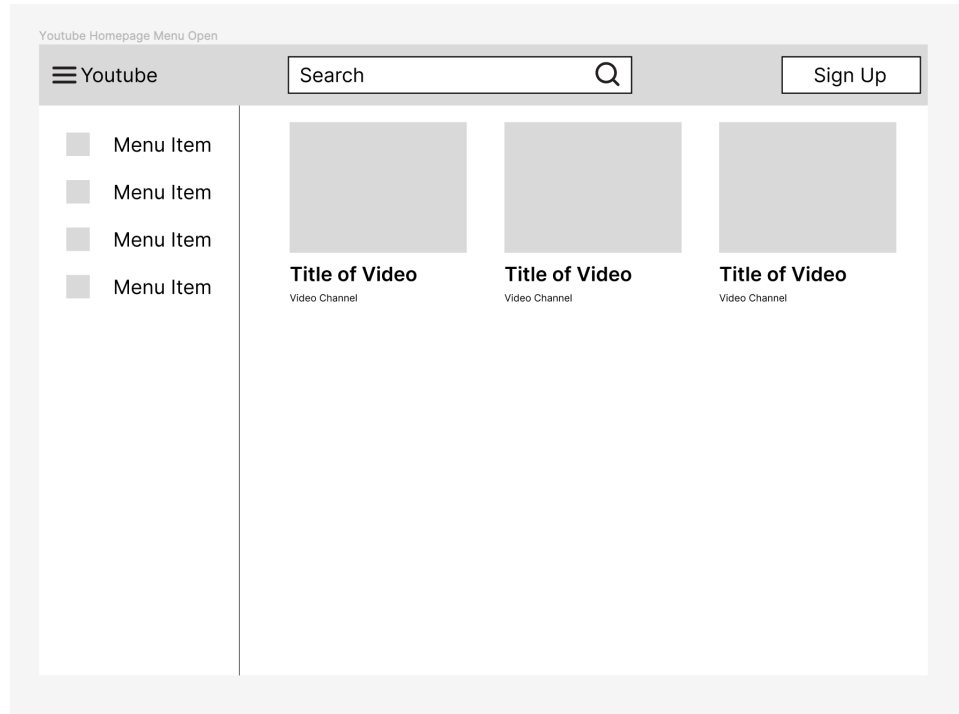
## Wireframing Tools/Quick Intro to Figma

- Wireframing is a skill, and there are many tools to help
- Figma (industry standard; other tools include whimsical, adobe xd)
  - Used for wireframing, graphic design, prototyping, even charts/visualizations

- Things to keep in mind when wireframing for this class:
  - Keep aesthetic elements simple
    - Colors should be grayscale: white, black, and gray
    - Choose a simple font; right now fonts are just used to communicate hierarchy of information
  - Represent graphics and images with boxes
  - Little bit of a learning curve, but once you get the basics, you can use figma in powerful ways
- Setup on Figma:
  - For now just make a free starter account
  - (For later) If you use your student email, you can upgrade to professional features for free <https://www.figma.com/education/>
    - Create education teams to collaborate on files. Education teams get all the perks of the Professional plan for free.



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- Example Figma file for students to follow along with:
  - Here we went through a 10 minute Figma Tutorial, going over basic Figma concepts by wireframing the youtube homepage UI
    - New design file → [Final youtube wireframe figma](#) (file linked)



- - Creating a frame
  - Nav bar (making a shape and naming components)
  - Sign up button (grouping and layers)
  - YouTube “logo” and hamburger menu (icon library)
  - Thumbnail (grouping and layouts)
  - New frame
  - Create component for Navbar (components)
  - Sidebar
  - Interactive flow
- Wireframing Features to highlight with the tutorial above ^:
  - How to layout
    - frames
    - shapes and text
    - grouping and layers
    - create a catalog of reusable elements (with components)
    - Extra: using [figma community templates](#)
  - How to create an interactive flow
    - prototype tab + draw connection lines for interactions
  - Lots of figma features you probably won't use + can ignore
    - [Figma documentation](#)
    - You can google other figma features we didn't go over

## Exercise 1: Wireframe with state transitions (12 min)

- Goal of this exercise: Practice what level of detail to communicate in wireframes + interactive flow
  - Where you put details should correlate with what is important in your concept
- **Exercise:** Create a wireframe from your favorite new Google docs concept from last recitation
- Practice going from a sketch of a new concept to a wireframe
  - It can feel difficult using new software, but really good practice
  - (For a3) you'll need to add a new concept to twitter, and decide what to wireframe from Twitter's existing ui
- 12 minutes to get as far as you can
  - You're not going to have time to put all the details, so focus on important aspects and interactions

## Exercise 2a: Sharing feedback/user testing (6 min)

- Goal of this exercise: Practice improving and editing their wireframes
- **Exercise:** Share with a partner + discuss/provide feedback
- User testing - share prototype with a partner without explaining concept
  - Can you understand my concept just by looking at the wireframe?
  - Does user flow make sense?
  - Does layout makes sense?

## Exercise 2b: Incorporate feedback/finish up wireframe (5 min)

- Goal of this exercise: Practice improving and editing their wireframes
- **Exercise:** Implement one change that your partner suggested

## Wrap-up

- Wireframing as a tool/skill between sketching and implementing
- Practicing communicating ideas + what level of detail to include (and not include)
- Useful for A3 - practice going from a sketch of a concept that doesn't exist yet → wireframe

## Some Figma Resources

- <https://www.figma.com/blog/how-to-wireframe/>
- <https://designlab.com/figma-101-course/introduction-to-figma/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dXQ7IHkTiMM>
- [Figma documentation](#)

