

ACTIVITY: Copy an Existing UI to Design Your Own

OVERVIEW

Copying as a form of learning has been used for millennia. Think of the study of the old masters in the fine arts. Think tradespeople teaching their craft to their apprentices. Copying is a great way to become truly intimate with a piece of art, or an app, or software application, and learn how and maybe why it was designed.

This exercise is designed to help folks become more comfortable working in the tool *and* to learn some basic UI design practices. Once they've copied an existing UI, encourage them to identify patterns that are reused as content blocks. Also, have them create a few screens on their own so they can get a sense of what is possible when wireframing new ideas. Encourage them to explore possibilities and have fun with it!

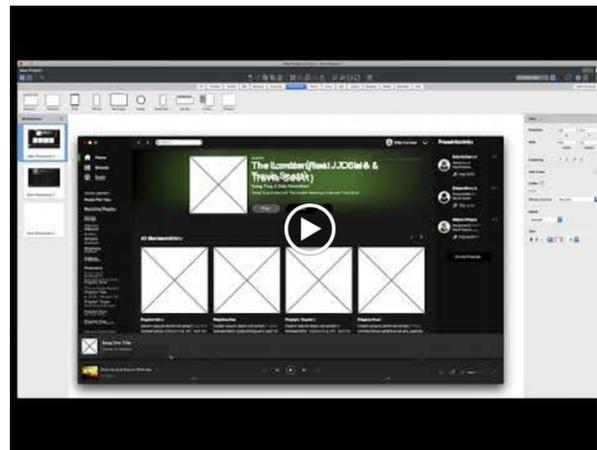
PROJECT ASSETS

Balsamiq file (.bmpr) Download: [Copying to Learn Exercise](#)

Video demonstrations of the technique used in this exercise

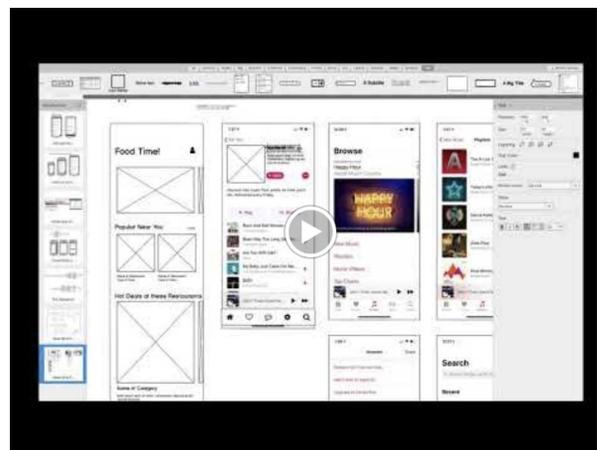
Turning Spotify UI into wireframes

A timelapse of the process of copying the Spotify interface in Balsamiq



Apple Music to Food Time

A walkthrough of the process of taking screenshots of Apple Music and changing the content to a new app, Food Time. This is the activity the students will do during class.



PROMPT

Today we'll practice wireframing by copying a few screens of an existing application and turn it into something new.

We'll take Apple Music and turn it into a food delivery app called Food Time

ACTIVITY

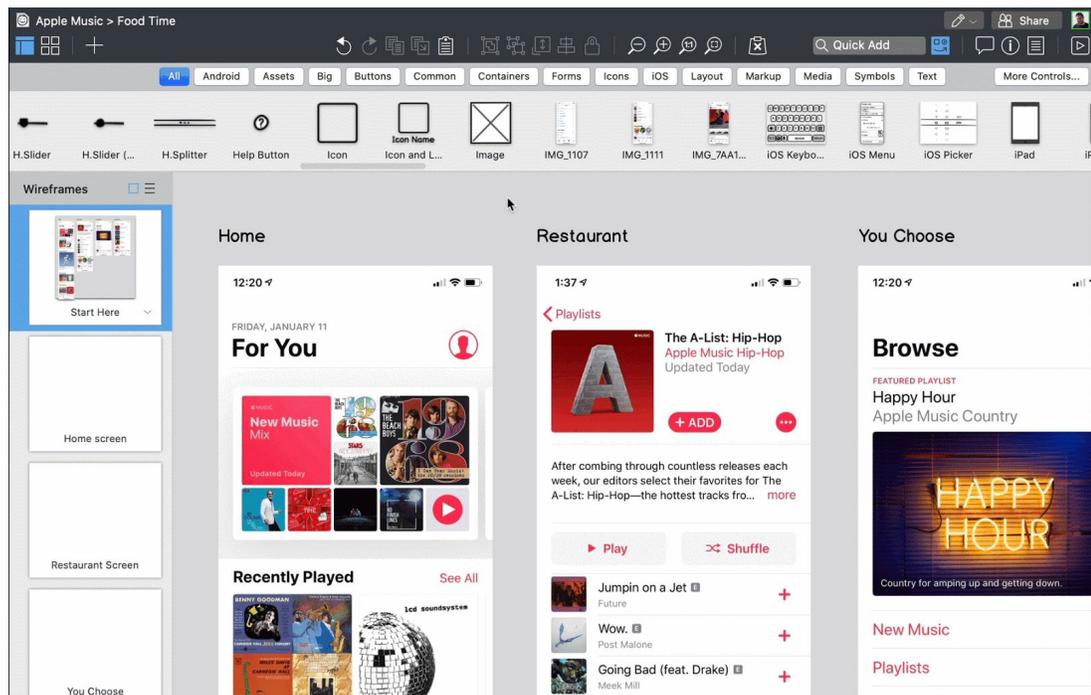
1. Have the class open the exercise file in Balsamiq.

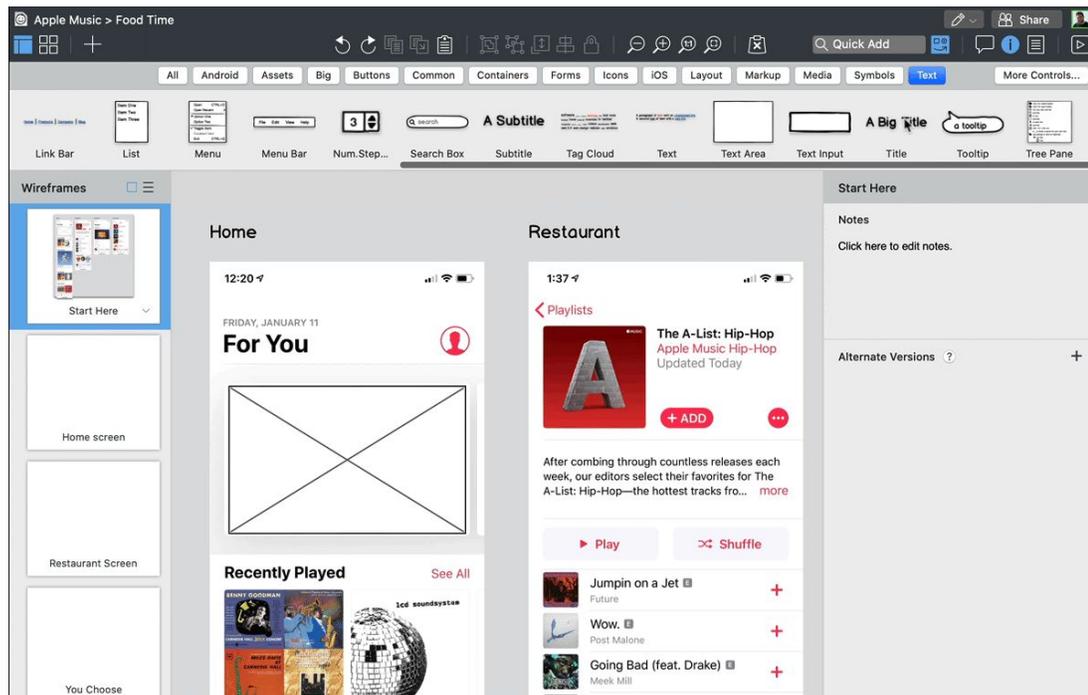
You can share this file with them in whatever manner is easiest for your situation. Canvas, Slack, email all will work fine.

2. Demonstrate the process.

Overlay placeholder text, image controls, and icons over the existing interface for a few parts and encourage them to begin.

Use the UI Library to add elements to the canvas that match the interface and resize them to fit over what you're copying. Take notice of areas in the interface that are used more than once so you can reuse them in other places.



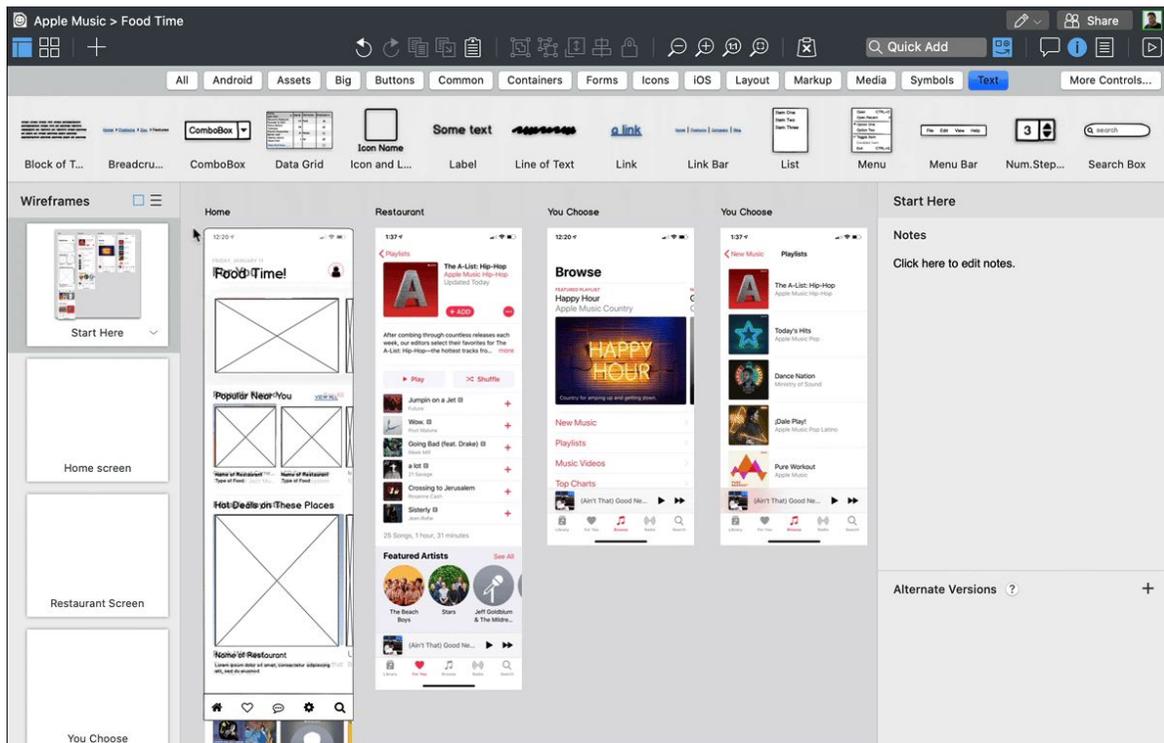


3. Repeat for the rest of the screenshots

The students should copy the Home (For You) and Restaurant (Playlists) Screens, then encourage them to create two or three more screens based on what they've copied, or using the other two Apple Music Screens we've supplied.

4. Move each wireframe to their own page

Copy each wireframe screen and paste them into their wireframe pages



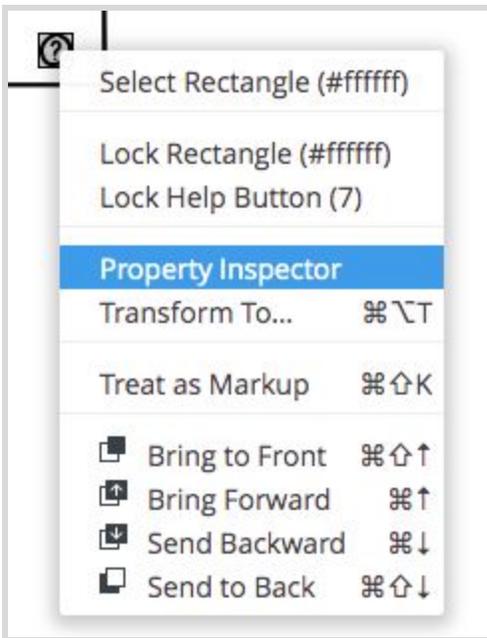
5. Change the copy and images to turn the music app into a food delivery app.

Encourage the students to write whatever copy they see fit. You can also choose to show them the two finished screens we've provided, for guidance.

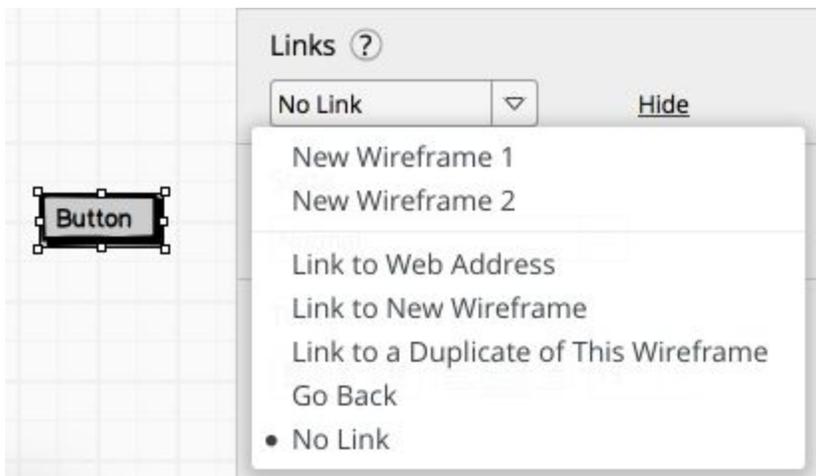
6. Link the screens together to make a clickable prototype of their new app

Once you have created all the wireframes needed for your project, go back to the first wireframe and choose an element on the screen that you will click on, to take you to the next screen.

1. Select an element in the canvas. Right click on it and select *Property Inspector*.



2. go to the **Properties** panel and under **Links**, select the next wireframe and link it.



3. Go through all of your wireframes and link them together following these steps.
4. Use the **Full Screen Presentation** mode to click through your wireframes

Details on how to link wireframes here:

<https://balsamiq.com/wireframes/cloud/docs/linking/#linking-to-a-new-wireframe>