

IDEO DESIGN KIT: DESIGN PRINCIPLES

As you build out your ideas, you'll notice that certain unifying elements are starting to guide the design. Here's how to recognize them.

Think of Design Principles as the guardrails of your solution—quick, memorable recipes that will help keep further iterations consistent. These principles describe the most important elements of your solution and give integrity and form to what you're designing. Odds are, they will align with the Themes you find during the Ideation Phase. You'll also find that they'll evolve as you design things, so don't be afraid to revise them. Keep them short and memorable, like, "Talk like people talk," "The service always connects to the community," or "Keep women at the center of business." Lower-level ideas like "The logo should be blue" or "We offer discounts" are not Design Principles.

Steps:

- 1** Look at all of your research, notes, Post-it's, and our Themes in particular.
- 2** Consider the core principles underpinning of our research, the Brand Narrative we have developed, and our themes. Frame these as positive statements that might tell you how and what to design. Remember, Design Principles operate as a group, and it's likely that you'll need to identify several.
- 3** Look at the Design Principles you've come up with. Are they short and to the point? Do they describe just one idea? Try to avoid overly complicating them. If it feels like there are multiple ideas going on, break them into smaller parts.
- 4** Review your Design Principles and make sure they cover the key aspects of your solution. Modify any that don't.
- 5** Be ready to revise your Design Principles as you start to build Prototypes and test your ideas. Some Design Principles won't reveal themselves until you've actually designed something, but once you spot them they'll quickly become essential.