

GRADE 9 DESIGN

USER RESEARCH FOR PORTFOLIOS

Research planning ♦ short interviews

Ask better questions

Interview 3 users

Find patterns

A designer who guesses what users want is gambling.

From assumptions to evidence

By the end, you should know something real about your audience.



Research is useful only when it changes a design decision.

RESEARCH TYPES

Use both. They answer different kinds of questions.

SECONDARY

Information that already exists

portfolio website examples
articles and design guides
competitor analysis
visual references

PRIMARY

Information you collect yourself

interviews
surveys
observations
user testing

Today = planning both, then doing short interviews.

Turn unknowns into questions

A good plan says what you need, how you will get it, and why it matters.

Research question	Method	Who / source	Why it matters

Required: 2 primary questions ♦ 2 secondary questions. Prioritize High / Medium / Low.

Do not lead the witness

Your question should not tell the user what answer you want.

WEAK / LEADING

“Do you think simple navigation is better?”

“Would you like a project grid?”

BETTER / OPEN

“What makes navigation easy or difficult?”

“When you open a portfolio, what do you want to see first?”

Write 5 interview questions + 1 of your own

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Fast, polite, focused. Take notes; do not transcribe.

- 1 Ask permission** “Can I ask you 5 quick questions for Design?”
- 2 Stay neutral** Do not argue or explain your design idea.
- 3 Listen for surprises** Useful research often contradicts you.
- 4 Thank them** Record role/type of user, not gossip.

Record: role / key answer / interesting quote / what surprised me

From comments to insights

A comment is raw material. An insight is a design-useful conclusion.

RAW COMMENT

“I don’t want to click through five pages just to see someone’s work.”

INSIGHT

Users want strong project evidence visible quickly with minimal navigation.

Find: repeated need • repeated frustration • disagreement • surprise

Today's sequence

Use your handout. Keep moving.

1

Research plan

12 min

2

Question writing

8 min

3

3 short interviews

12 min

4

Patterns ♦ insight

8 min

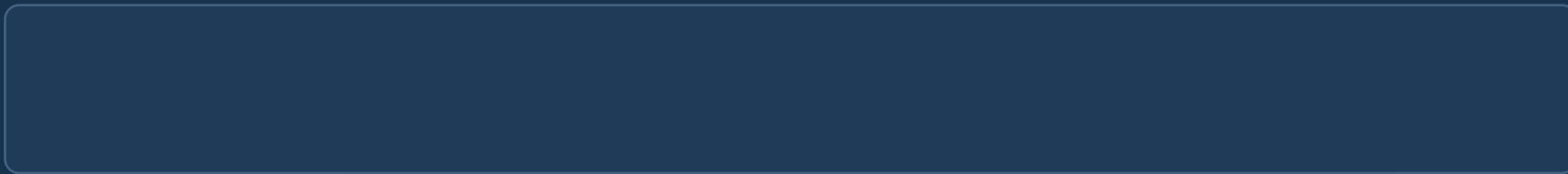
5

Exit reflection

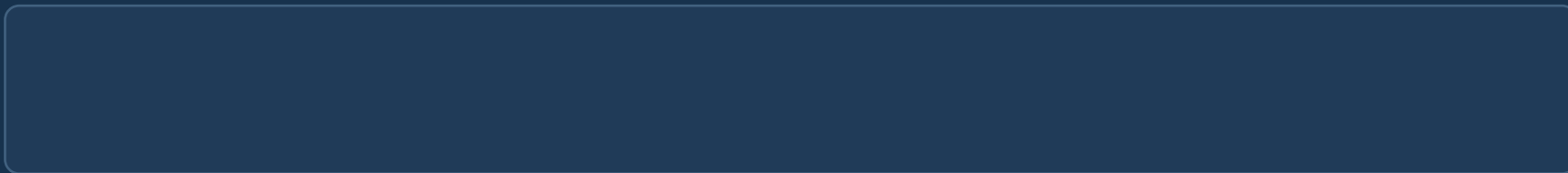
3 min

Do not design screens yet. Today is evidence day.

The most useful thing I learned from users was...

A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a thin white border, intended for the user to write their response to the question above.

This may change my portfolio because...

A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a thin white border, intended for the user to write their response to the question above.

Next: insights → design brief → specification → wireframes