Cheatsheet: Psychology *of* Design

List of Cognitive Biases & Principles That Affect Your UX

	Name	One-Liner	Category
1.	👀 **Hick's Law**	More options leads to harder decisions	Information
2.	💼 **Confirmation Bias**	People look for evidence that confirms what they think	Information
3.	👁 **Priming**	Previous stimuli influence users' decision	Information
4.	🚚 **Cognitive Load**	Total amount of mental effort that is required to complete a task	Information
5.	⚓ **Anchoring Bias**	Users rely heavily on the first piece of information they see	Information
6.	👉 **Nudge**	Subtle hints can affect users' decisions	Information
7.	🍰 **Progressive Disclosure**	Users are less overwhelmed if they're exposed to complex features later	Information
8.	🎯 **Fitt's Law**	It's easier to aim the bigger the target is.	Information
9.	🐠 **Attentional bias**	Users' thoughts filter what they pay attention to	Information
10.	💔 **Empathy Gap**	People underestimate how much emotions influence user behaviors	Information
11.	⛵ **Visual Anchors**	Elements used to guide users' eyes	Information
12.	🌶 **Von Restorff Effect**	People remember more items that stand out	Information
13.	🏅 **Visual Hierarchy**	The order in which people perceive what they see	Information
14.	🔭 **Selective Attention**	People filter out things from their environment when in focus	Information
15.	✈️ **Survivorship Bias**	People neglect things that don't make it past a selection process	Information
16.	🕶 **Sensory Adaptation**	Users tune out the stuff they get repeatedly exposed to	Information
17.	🍒 **Juxtaposition**	Elements that are close and similar are perceived as a single unit	Information
18.	🚦 **Signifiers**	Elements that communicate what it will do	Information
19.	🎭 **Contrast**	Users' attention is drawn to higher visual weights	Information
20.	🚨 **External Trigger**	When the information on what to do next is within the prompt itself	Information
21.	🕺 **Decoy Effect**	Create a new option that's easy to discard	Information
22.	🎪 **Centre-Stage Effect**	People tend to choose the middle option in a set of items	Information
23.	🖼 **Framing**	The way information is presented affects how users make decisions	Information

24.	🍣 Law of Proximity	Elements close to each other are usually considered related	Information
25.	🐝 Tesler's Law	If you simplify too much, you'll transfer some complexity to the users	Information
26.	🧨 Spark Effect	Users are more likely to take action when the effort is small	Information
27.	🛸 Feedback Loop	When users take action, feedback communicates what happened	Information
28.	😻 Expectations Bias	People tend to be influenced by their own expectations	Information
29.	🚄 Aesthetic-Usability Effect	People perceive designs with great aesthetics as easier to use	Information
30.	👥 Social Proof	Users adapt their behaviors based on what others do	Meaning
31.	🦄 Scarcity	People value things more when they're in limited supply	Meaning
32.	💭 Curiosity Gap	Users have a desire to seek out missing information	Meaning
33.	🕹️ Mental Model	Users have a preconceived opinion of how things work	Meaning
34.	👦 Familiarity Bias	People prefer familiar experiences	Meaning
35.	👼 Halo Effect	People judge things (or people) based on their feelings towards one trait	Meaning
36.	☎️ Miller's Law	Users can only keep 5±2 items in their working memory	Meaning
37.	🍱 Unit Bias	One unit of something feels like the optimal amount	Meaning
38.	🌊 Flow State	Being fully immersed and focused on a task	Meaning
39.	🕹️ Skeuomorphism	Users adapt more easily to things that look like real-world objects	Meaning
40.	🎁 Reciprocity	People feel the need to reciprocate when they receive something	Meaning
41.	👑 Authority Bias	Users attribute more importance to the opinion of an authority figure	Meaning
42.	🏺 Pseudo-Set Framing	Tasks that are part of a group are more tempting to complete	Meaning
43.	🎰 Variable Reward	People enjoy rewards, especially unexpected ones	Meaning
44.	🎉 Cheerleader Effect	Individual items seem more attractive when presented in a group	Meaning
45.	🚰 Curse of Knowledge	Not realizing that people don't have the same level of knowledge	Meaning
46.	🎉 Aha! moment	When new users first realize the value of your product	Meaning
47.	🚨 Self-Initiated Triggers	Users are more likely to interact with prompts they setup for themselves	Meaning
48.	🗳️ Survey Bias	Users tend to skew survey answers towards what's socially acceptable	Meaning
49.	🎭 Cognitive Dissonance	It's painful to hold to opposing ideas in our mind	Meaning
50.	🥅 Goal Gradient Effect	Motivation increases as users get closer to their goal	Meaning
51.	🔄 Feedforward	When users know what to expect before they take action	Meaning
52.	💈 Occam's Razor	Simple solutions are often better than the more complex ones	Meaning

53.	🎗️	**Noble Edge Effect**	Users tend to prefer socially responsible companies	Meaning
54.	🏒	**Hindsight Bias**	People overestimate their ability to predict outcomes after the fact	Meaning
55.	🎏	**Law of Similarity**	Users perceive a relationship between elements that look similar	Meaning
56.	🌘	**Law of Prägnanz**	Users interpret ambiguous images in a simpler and more complete form	Meaning
57.	🔦	**Spotlight Effect**	People tend to believe they are being noticed more than they really are	Meaning
58.	📅	**Fresh Start Effect**	Users are more likely to take action if there's a feeling of new beginnings	Meaning
59.	🏃	**Labor Illusion**	People value things more when they see the work behind them	Time
60.	🚶	**Default Bias**	Users tend not to change an established behavior	Time
61.	🏦	**Investment Loops**	When users invest themselves, they're more likely to come back	Time
62.	🕯️	**Loss Aversion**	People prefer to avoid losses more than earning equivalent gains	Time
63.	👞	**Commitment & Consistency**	Users tend to be consistent with their previous actions	Time
64.	🏝️	**Sunk Cost Effect**	Users are reluctant to pull out of something they're invested in.	Time
65.	🌛	**Decision Fatigue**	Making a lot of decisions lowers users' ability to make rational ones	Time
66.	🌋	**Reactance**	Users are less likely to adopt a behavior when they feel threatened	Time
67.	🥽	**Observer-Expectancy Effect**	When researchers' biases influence the participants of an experiment	Time
68.	🌱	**Weber's Law**	Users adapt better to small incremental changes	Time
69.	🔨	**Law of the Instrument**	If all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail	Time
70.	🍭	**Temptation Coupling**	Hard tasks are less scary when coupled with something users desire	Time
71.	🎈	**Parkinson's Law**	The time required to complete a task will take as much time as allowed	Time
72.	🎩	**Dunning-Kruger Effect**	People tend to overestimate their skills when they don't know much	Time
73.	🌤️	**Affect Heuristic**	People's current emotions cloud and influence their judgment	Time
74.	📉	**Hyperbolic Discounting**	People tend to prioritize immediate benefits over bigger future gains	Time
75.	💴	**Cashless Effect**	People spend more when they can't actually see the money	Time
76.	🌑	**Self-serving bias**	People take credits for positive events and blame others if negative	Time
77.	🥬	**Pareto Principle**	Roughly 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes	Time
78.	🔍	**Discoverability**	The ease with which users can discover your features	Time
79.	🔫	**Backfire Effect**	When people's convictions are challenged, their beliefs get stronger	Time
80.	🌈	**False Consensus Effect**	People overestimate how much other people agree with them	Time
81.	🧙	**Barnum-Forer Effect**	Some people believe in astrology and fortune telling.	Time

82.	🛋️ **IKEA Effect**	When user partially create something, they value it way more	Time
83.	🧚 **Planning Fallacy**	People tend to underestimate how much time a task will take	Time
84.	🏕️ **Provide Exit Points**	Invite users to leave your app at the right moment	Memory
85.	🎢 **Peak-End Rule**	People judge an experience by its peak and how it ends.	Memory
86.	👅 **Sensory Appeal**	Users engage more with things appealing to multiple senses	Memory
87.	🧩 **Zeigarnik Effect**	People remember incomplete tasks better than completed ones	Memory
88.	🧤 **Endowment Effect**	Users value something more if they feel it's theirs	Memory
89.	🛍️ **Chunking**	People remember grouped information better	Memory
90.	📷 **Picture Superiority Effect**	People remember pictures better than words	Memory
91.	📌 **Method of Loci**	People remember things more when they're associated with a location	Memory
92.	🧭 **Shaping**	Incrementally reinforcing actions to get closer to a target behavior	Memory
93.	💚 **Delighters**	People remember more unexpected and playful pleasures	Memory
94.	💛 **Internal Trigger**	When users are prompted to take action based on a memory	Memory
95.	💾 **Recognition Over Recall**	It's easier to recognize things than recall them from memory	Memory
96.	🏰 **Storytelling Effect**	People remember stories better than facts alone	Memory
97.	👹 **Negativity Bias**	Users recall negative events more than positive ones	Memory
98.	⏰ **Availability Heuristic**	Users favor recent and available information over past information	Memory
99.	🌌 **Spacing Effect**	People learn more effectively when study sessions are spaced out	Memory
100.	🏁 **Serial Position Effect**	It's easier for users to recall the first and last items of a list	Memory

Don't miss the new ones!

We update the list every few weeks here: https://growth.design/psychology/

Don't hesitate to share the link with your friends & colleagues who might enjoy it.

—Dan Benoni & Louis-Xavier Lavallée