

Game UI Design: Minimalist, Fantasy, and Sci-Fi Styles

Learn to create polished UI for three popular game genres. Perfect for game designers, UI artists, and developers using Figma, Unity, or Unreal.

Design Instructor: Jordan Lee • 5 sections • 55 lessons • 14.25h total

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About this course

Many game designers find it challenging to adapt UI styles to fit different game atmospheres, leading to interfaces that feel out of place or confusing for players. This course teaches you to design UI in minimalist, fantasy, and sci-fi styles through video tutorials and real-world projects. You'll work on mobile, RPG, and shooter game interfaces, building a portfolio that demonstrates your range.

Course curriculum

Foundations of Game UI Design

- **Core Principles of Game UI Design (18m)**
Learn the fundamentals of clarity, consistency, and feedback that make game interfaces intuitive.
- **How UI/UX Shapes Player Retention (12m)**
Explore the connection between good UI design and keeping players engaged in your game.
- **Essential Tools: Figma, Photoshop, and Game Engines (25m)**
A walkthrough of setting up and using key software for game UI design projects.
- **Common UI Elements: HUDs, Menus, and Health Bars (15m)**
Break down the standard components found in game interfaces and their functions.
- **Intuitive vs. Frustrating UI: Case Studies (20m)**
Analyze real game UIs to understand what works and what doesn't, with actionable insights.
- **Designing for Clarity: Information Hierarchy (12m)**
Techniques to organize UI elements so players find what they need without confusion.
- **Hands-On Exercise: Critiquing Existing Game UI (15m)**
Apply your knowledge by evaluating a game's interface and suggesting improvements.

Style 1 — Minimalist / Flat Design

- **Introduction to Minimalist Game UI (10m)**
Understand the principles behind flat design and when it's most effective in games.
- **Characteristics of Flat Design: Colors, Lines, Icons (18m)**
Deep dive into visual elements that define minimalist UI, with examples.
- **When to Choose Minimalism: Genre and Platform Fit (12m)**
Learn which game types benefit from clean, simple interfaces and why.
- **Project Brief: Designing a Mobile Game HUD (8m)**
Set up your hands-on project, outlining goals and constraints for a mobile game.
- **Setting Up Your Project in Figma (15m)**
Step-by-step guide to creating a new file and organizing artboards for your HUD.
- **Designing the HUD: Status Bars and Icons (25m)**
Create key HUD elements with a minimalist approach, focusing on functionality.
- **Typography for Small-Scale Readability (12m)**
Choose fonts and sizes that remain clear on small screens, with practical tips.
- **Spacing and Layout Techniques (15m)**
Use whitespace and alignment to enhance usability without adding clutter.
- **Balancing Simplicity and Information (18m)**
Case studies on how to display essential data without overwhelming players.
- **Iterating Your Design: Feedback and Refinement (12m)**
Methods to test and improve your minimalist UI through iteration.
- **Adding Subtle Motion to Flat UI (20m)**
Explore animation principles for minimalist design, enhancing user feedback.

- **Finalizing and Exporting Your Minimalist HUD (15m)**
Prepare your project for use in game engines, with export settings and tips.

Style 2 — Stylized / Hand-Painted / Fantasy UI

- **Exploring Fantasy and Stylized UI Aesthetics (10m)**
Introduction to the visual language of fantasy games and how UI can reflect theme.
- **Key Elements: Ornate Frames and Textured Backgrounds (18m)**
Break down the components that give fantasy UI its distinctive look.
- **Genre Alignment: RPGs and Adventure Games (12m)**
Why stylized UI works well in narrative-driven and exploratory game types.
- **Project Start: Fantasy Inventory Design (8m)**
Outline your project goals for creating a thematic inventory screen.
- **Sketching and Planning UI Art Assets (15m)**
Techniques for brainstorming and sketching designs before digital work.
- **Integrating Illustration Workflows (25m)**
How to incorporate hand-painted or illustrated elements into your UI designs.
- **Designing the Quest Log Interface (20m)**
Create a quest log that fits the fantasy theme while remaining user-friendly.
- **Crafting Thematic Dialogue Boxes (15m)**
Design dialogue systems that enhance storytelling through visual style.
- **Usability in Ornate Designs (12m)**
Strategies to keep fancy UIs functional and easy to navigate.
- **Completing Your Fantasy UI Project (15m)**
Final touches and presentation of your inventory, quest log, and dialogue box.

Style 3 — Sci-Fi / Futuristic / HUD-Driven UI

- **Introduction to Sci-Fi and HUD-Driven UI (10m)**
Overview of futuristic design trends and their application in games.
- **Visual Language: Holograms, Neon, and Data Overlays (18m)**
Explore the elements that create a sci-fi aesthetic in user interfaces.
- **Ideal Genres: Shooters and Space Simulations (12m)**
Understand why sci-fi UI suits fast-paced and technology-focused games.
- **Project Brief: Animated Sci-Fi HUD (8m)**
Set goals for designing a dynamic, animated in-game heads-up display.
- **Planning Dynamic Data Readouts (20m)**
Design systems for displaying real-time information like health, ammo, and maps.
- **Layered Design: Transparency and Glow Effects (25m)**
Techniques to add depth and visual interest using layers and effects.
- **Creating Animated Transitions (18m)**
Implement smooth animations for UI elements to enhance player feedback.
- **Integrating Real-Time Feedback Loops (15m)**
How to make your UI respond to in-game events with dynamic updates.

- **Responsive Animations for Fast-Paced Play (12m)**
Ensure animations are quick and informative without causing distractions.
- **Testing and Refining HUD Animations (20m)**
Methods to playtest animations for clarity and performance impact.
- **Advanced Motion Graphics Techniques (25m)**
Take your UI animations further with advanced motion design principles.
- **Final Assembly of Your Sci-Fi HUD (15m)**
Compile all elements into a cohesive HUD ready for game implementation.

Advanced Integration, Prototyping & Portfolio

- **Introduction to Game Engine UI Integration (10m)**
Overview of how UI designs translate into interactive elements in Unity and Unreal.
- **Setting Up Unity UI Toolkit for Your Projects (18m)**
Step-by-step guide to importing and configuring UI assets in Unity.
- **Working with Unreal UMG Widget Blueprints (20m)**
Learn to create and customize UI widgets in Unreal Engine's UMG system.
- **Adding Interactivity: Buttons and Menus (15m)**
Make your UI designs functional with interactive components and navigation.
- **Responsive Design for Multiple Resolutions (25m)**
Techniques to scale your UI for different screen sizes and aspect ratios.
- **Handling Input Methods: Mouse, Touch, Gamepad (12m)**
Design interfaces that work seamlessly across various input devices.
- **Prototyping Tools and Methods (18m)**
Use prototyping software to test interactions before full implementation.
- **Conducting Effective Playtests (15m)**
Plan and run playtests to gather meaningful feedback on your UI.
- **Iterating Based on User Feedback (12m)**
How to analyze feedback and make iterative improvements to your designs.
- **Measuring Usability: Metrics and Heuristics (12m)**
Learn to evaluate UI usability with established principles and data.
- **Building a Compelling UI Portfolio (15m)**
Structure your work to showcase skills and projects to potential employers.
- **Showcasing Three Styles: Comparative Display (20m)**
Create portfolio pieces that highlight your range across minimalist, fantasy, and sci-fi UI.
- **2026 Trends in Game UI Design (10m)**
Current industry trends and emerging technologies in game interface design.
- **Career Paths and Next Steps (8m)**
Explore opportunities and continuous learning paths for UI designers.

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