

iOS 26.5 Mobile App Design: UI/UX in Photoshop

Complete beginner's guide to designing professional iOS 26.5 apps in Adobe Photoshop with no prior experience required.

Web & Mobile Design Instructor: Jordan Lee • 5 sections • 51 lessons • 19.00h total

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About this course

Apple's iOS 26.5 introduces new visual patterns, system components, and updated Human Interface Guidelines that change how apps should look and feel. If you've been wanting to design mobile apps but didn't know where to start, this course walks you through everything from setting up Photoshop specifically for UI work to exporting final assets ready for developer handoff.

You'll design real screens, build reusable components, create a full design system, and assemble a portfolio-ready case study. Each lesson uses practical examples pulled from current app design trends as of 2026, so you're learning what actually gets built today. By the end, you'll have the skills and confidence to take on freelance projects or join a product design team.

Course curriculum

Foundations of iOS 26.5 Design and Photoshop Setup

- **What iOS 26.5 Means for Mobile App Designers Right Now (12m)**
We'll look at the key visual and structural changes in iOS 26.5 and why they matter for how you design screens today.
- **Reading the Updated Human Interface Guidelines Efficiently (18m)**
A practical walkthrough of the HIG sections you'll actually reference most, with tips on how to use it as a living design reference.
- **Configuring Photoshop as a Dedicated UI Design Workspace (25m)**
Step-by-step setup of artboards, grid presets, guides panel, and a custom workspace optimized for app screen design.
- **Building Your First Artboard for iPhone Screens (15m)**
Create properly sized artboards for all current iPhone models in iOS 26.5, including safe area guides and status bar setup.
- **Design Principles That Make Apps Feel Native to iOS (20m)**
Covers hierarchy, consistency, depth, and direct manipulation as Apple defines them, with visual examples from real apps.
- **Accessibility Standards You Must Design For in 2026 (18m)**
Contrast ratios, Dynamic Type scaling, touch target sizes, and color blindness considerations baked into every design decision.
- **Working With the SF Symbols 7 Library in Photoshop (22m)**
How to import, organize, and use the latest SF Symbols set inside Photoshop for authentic iOS iconography.
- **Typography Scales and the San Francisco Font System (16m)**
Set up character styles matching iOS 26.5's type ramp, from Large Title to Caption, with proper weights and tracking values.

Designing Core UI Components

- **Designing Primary and Secondary Buttons the iOS 26.5 Way (20m)**
Build filled, tinted, and gray button styles with proper padding, corner radius values, and pressed-state variations.
- **Creating Navigation Bars and Large Title Transitions (25m)**
Step-by-step construction of the standard navigation bar, including the collapsible large title pattern iOS uses throughout.
- **Building Tab Bars With the Updated Icon Style (18m)**
Design a tab bar component with active/inactive states, labels, and the new subtle depth treatment in iOS 26.5.
- **Card Components: From Simple to Layered Content Cards (28m)**
Create cards with images, text, action buttons, and shadow treatments that match current iOS conventions.

- **List Rows and Table View Cells From Scratch (22m)**
Design standard list items with chevrons, toggles, subtitles, swipe action hints, and grouped/ungrouped table styles.
- **Mastering Shape Tools and Smart Objects for Reusable Elements (24m)**
Turn your UI pieces into Smart Objects so you can update a component once and have changes reflect everywhere.
- **The iOS 26.5 Color System: Semantic Colors and Dynamic Themes (30m)**
Set up a color palette using Apple's semantic color names, then create linked dark mode and light mode variations.
- **Dark Mode Design: Testing and Adjusting Your Components (22m)**
Flip your designs to dark mode, fix contrast issues, and learn the specific color adjustments Apple recommends.
- **System-Provided UI Patterns: Alerts, Sheets, and Popovers (20m)**
Design modal presentations, action sheets, share sheets, and alert dialogs matching iOS 26.5 system appearance.
- **Widget Styles and Lock Screen Component Design (26m)**
Build small, medium, and large widget layouts along with Lock Screen complication-style elements for the current OS.

Crafting Complete Screens and User Flows

- **Planning an Onboarding Flow: Screens, Content, and Progression (22m)**
Map out a 4-screen onboarding sequence with permissions requests and sign-in, then design each screen in Photoshop.
- **Designing a Feature-Rich Home Screen Layout (32m)**
Build a scrollable home feed with a search field, section headers, a horizontal carousel, and bottom tab bar in view.
- **Settings Screen: Grouped Lists, Toggles, and Profile Sections (25m)**
Create a full settings page with profile header, grouped table sections, navigation links, and toggle controls.
- **Grid-Based Layouts for Current iPhone Aspect Ratios (20m)**
Use column grids and spacing rules that scale properly across the iPhone lineup shipping in 2026.
- **Search Interface and Results Design (22m)**
Design the search bar, scope filters, recent searches state, and a results list with proper empty and loading states.
- **Gesture Indicators and Haptic Feedback Visual Cues (18m)**
Add swipe indicators, pull-to-refresh markers, and long-press affordances that hint at interactive behavior.
- **Designing for Motion: Page Transitions and Animations Specs (24m)**
Annotate your screens with transition directions, timing notes, and easing curves so developers know exactly what to build.
- **Prototyping Interactive Flows With Photoshop and Linked Tools (28m)**
Connect your Photoshop frames into a clickable prototype and share it for feedback using current prototyping platforms.

- **Error States, Empty States, and Loading Skeletons (20m)**

Design the screens people often forget: network errors, empty lists with illustrations, and placeholder skeleton loaders.

Advanced Visual Design and Branding

- **Creating Custom Illustration Assets in Photoshop for Apps (30m)**

Build spot illustrations for onboarding and empty states using shapes, gradients, and the pen tool with an app-ready style.

- **Designing a Custom Icon Set That Works at Every Size (28m)**

Create a cohesive icon family at 20px, 24px, and 28px optical sizes matching the weight of SF Symbols.

- **Micro-Animation Storyboards Rendered as Sprite Sheets (24m)**

Frame-by-frame an icon animation or loading spinner in Photoshop and export it as a frame sequence for developers.

- **Glassmorphism and Material Effects in iOS 26.5 (22m)**

Recreate the frosted glass and vibrancy effects Apple uses for overlays, using blur layers and blend modes in Photoshop.

- **Depth and Layering: Shadows, Elevation, and Z-Axis Cues (20m)**

Apply shadow styles and elevation levels that show visual hierarchy while staying true to Apple's depth model.

- **Building a Cohesive Design System Document (35m)**

Create a style guide page covering colors, type, spacing, shadows, corner radii, and component usage rules all in one file.

- **Component Library: Organizing and Cataloging Your UI Kit (28m)**

Set up a separate Photoshop file as a living component library with labeled groups, variants, and usage notes.

- **Exporting Assets at 1x, 2x, and 3x for Developer Handoff (18m)**

Use Photoshop's export settings and generator features to output correctly named and sized assets for Xcode.

- **Design Tokens: Preparing Colors and Spacing for SwiftUI (20m)**

Document your design decisions in a format developers can translate directly into SwiftUI modifiers and tokens.

- **Spec Documentation: Making Your Designs Developer-Ready (26m)**

Add dimension annotations, spacing callouts, state tables, and interaction notes to each screen for a clean handoff package.

- **App Icon Design: From Concept to All Required Sizes (25m)**

Design an app icon that reads well at 60px and 1024px, then export the full set of sizes Apple requires.

Professional Workflow and Portfolio Launch

- **Layer Naming Conventions That Save Hours of Confusion (15m)**

Adopt a consistent naming system for layers and groups so your files stay readable six months from now.

- **Project Versioning: Saving Milestones Without File Chaos (12m)**
Set up version folders, use Photoshop's history snapshots, and keep a simple changelog inside each project.
- **Collaboration-Ready Files for Teams and Clients (18m)**
Organize your Photoshop file so another designer can open it immediately and understand the structure.
- **Creating Presentation Mockups for Stakeholder Reviews (24m)**
Place your screens into device mockups, build a slide deck layout, and present designs in context that non-designers understand.
- **Storytelling Your Design Decisions in Presentations (20m)**
Frame each screen with the problem, your reasoning, and the outcome to build trust with product managers and leadership.
- **Heuristic Review Checklist for iOS App Screens (22m)**
Run through a structured evaluation of your designs using Nielsen's heuristics adapted for mobile and iOS specifics.
- **Planning and Running a Quick Usability Test on Your Designs (28m)**
Recruit testers, write task scenarios, run a moderated test on your prototype, and document findings for iteration.
- **Iterating on Feedback: Prioritizing and Applying Design Changes (20m)**
Triage usability findings, decide what to fix now versus later, and revise your screens with version control.
- **Writing a Case Study: Structure, Content, and Visuals (30m)**
Draft a case study that covers the brief, process, key decisions, final designs, and measurable impact.
- **Building a Portfolio Site That Showcases Your Case Studies (25m)**
Choose a platform, set up a clean layout, and publish your iOS 26.5 project as a polished case study page.
- **Preparing for Freelance: Pricing, Proposals, and Client Onboarding (22m)**
Set your rate using 2026 market data, write a basic proposal template, and create a kickoff questionnaire for new clients.
- **Joining a Product Team: What Hiring Managers Look For in 2026 (18m)**
Understand the iOS designer hiring process, portfolio expectations, and interview exercises teams are using right now.
- **Your Next Steps: Keeping Skills Current and Growing Your Career (14m)**
A roadmap for continued learning, communities to join, and how to stay aligned with Apple's platform updates going forward.

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