

Sketch for Mobile App Design: Core Fundamentals

Build professional mobile app interfaces in Sketch. Learn tools, components, prototyping, and modern workflows for UI/UX designers.

Web & Mobile Design

Instructor: Morgan Blake • 5 sections • 52 lessons • 17.50h total

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About this course

Many designers know they need to use Sketch for mobile work but feel unsure where to start with its specific features and best practices for app interfaces. This course cuts through the confusion. You'll get a clear, practical path from understanding Sketch's current place in the design landscape to building polished, interactive prototypes.

We'll walk through the essential tools, then move step-by-step into creating consistent UI components, setting up responsive layouts, and linking screens for realistic testing. The course includes real-world examples, hands-on exercises for building a sample app, and a focus on efficient workflows, including how to prepare your designs for developers. It's built for designers ready to turn their ideas into functional app screens.

Course curriculum

Introduction to Sketch and Mobile App Design Basics

- **Why Sketch for Mobile App Design in 2026 (15m)**
Understand Sketch's strengths in the current design workflow for mobile apps and how it complements other tools.
- **Setting Up Your First Mobile Project (18m)**
A step-by-step guide to creating a new Sketch document, choosing device presets, and organizing your file for efficiency.
- **Core Principles of Mobile-First Design (22m)**
Cover key constraints and opportunities for mobile screens, including thumb zones, navigation patterns, and prioritizing content.
- **Navigating the Sketch Workspace (12m)**
Get familiar with the toolbar, layers panel, inspector, and canvas. Learn to customize your view for focus.
- **Artboards: Your App's Screens (16m)**
Deep dive into using artboards effectively. Set up frames for different screens and states (login, home, profile).
- **Understanding Layers and Groups (20m)**
Learn the fundamentals of layer organization, naming conventions, and why grouping is critical for managing complex app designs.
- **Basic Shapes and Object Manipulation (25m)**
Practice creating rectangles, circles, and lines. Master aligning, distributing, and resizing objects precisely.

Core Tools and Interface in Sketch

- **Mastering the Pen Tool for Custom Shapes (28m)**
Move beyond basic shapes. Learn to draw custom icons, buttons, and interface elements with vector paths.
- **Working with Text and Typography (18m)**
Create and style text layers. Understand leading, tracking, and how to manage text styles for consistency.
- **Color and Fill Management (15m)**
Use the color picker, gradients, and opacity. A look at setting up a basic app color palette from the start.
- **Borders, Shadows, and Visual Effects (14m)**
Add depth and definition to your interfaces with borders, drop shadows, and inner shadows using the Inspector.
- **Using the Inspector Panel for Precision (17m)**
A practical tour of the Inspector's most useful sections for mobile design: size, position, alignment, and export.

- **Image Handling and Masks (20m)**
Import images, resize them, and use masks to create circular avatars, card layouts, and other common patterns.
- **Organizing Your Workspace with Pages (12m)**
Learn to use pages to separate your app's core screens, explorations, and component libraries in one file.
- **Keyboard Shortcuts to Speed Up Your Process (10m)**
Identify and practice the most impactful keyboard shortcuts for common mobile design tasks in Sketch.
- **Setting Up a Grid for Mobile Layouts (16m)**
Configure a simple column grid or baseline grid in Sketch to help align elements and create balanced layouts.
- **Boolean Operations: Combining Shapes (22m)**
Use Union, Subtract, Intersect, and Difference to create complex icons and interface elements from simple shapes.

Designing UI Components for Mobile Apps

- **Introduction to Symbols: Creating Reusable Buttons (24m)**
Build your first symbol from a button. Understand why symbols save time and enforce consistency.
- **Overriding Symbol Instances for Flexibility (19m)**
Learn to change text, images, and colors within symbol instances without breaking the master design.
- **Building a Navigation Bar Symbol (26m)**
Create a responsive top navigation component with back buttons, titles, and action icons.
- **Designing List Items and Cards (30m)**
Step-by-step construction of common mobile components: single-line lists, two-line lists, and media cards.
- **Creating a Scalable Color Style System (20m)**
Apply and manage shared color styles. Set up primary, secondary, and semantic colors for your entire app.
- **Defining Text Styles for Your App (18m)**
Create shared text styles for headings, body copy, and captions. Apply them globally for easy updates.
- **Using Smart Layout for Responsive Components (28m)**
Make your symbols resize intelligently. Set up padding and stacking rules for buttons and lists that adapt to content.
- **Building a Symbol Library (15m)**
Organize all your components into a dedicated symbol page or library document for easy access.
- **Designing Form Elements: Inputs and Toggles (22m)**
Create interactive-looking components like text fields, checkboxes, radio buttons, and toggle switches.
- **Applying Styles and Effects to Components (16m)**
Use shared styles for borders and shadows on your components to ensure visual uniformity across screens.

Prototyping and Interaction Design in Sketch

- **Linking Artboards: Your First Prototype (14m)**
Connect your main screens using Sketch's prototyping feature to create a basic, clickable user flow.
- **Adding Simple Transitions Between Screens (18m)**
Choose between slide, push, and fade transitions. Set directions and timing for natural screen changes.
- **Creating Overlay and Modal Prototypes (22m)**
Design for pop-ups, confirmation dialogs, and bottom sheets that appear over the main screen content.
- **Prototyping with Symbols: Button States (20m)**
Use symbol overrides within prototypes to show different button states (active, disabled, loading).
- **Building a Multi-Tab Navigation Prototype (25m)**
Create a persistent tab bar and link screens from each tab to simulate a full app's navigation structure.
- **Adding Animations for Micro-Interactions (30m)**
Implement subtle animations for elements like loading spinners, success checkmarks, and toggle movements.
- **Previewing and Sharing Your Prototype (12m)**
Use Sketch Mirror or the web viewer to test your prototype on a real device and share it for feedback.
- **Mapping the Complete User Journey (17m)**
Create a flowchart or diagram to plan your prototype's structure before building, ensuring logical connections.
- **Adding Hotspots and Scroll Areas (15m)**
Define custom hotspot zones for taps and set up fixed headers or scrollable content areas within your prototype.
- **Prototyping Forms and Input Interactions (19m)**
Simulate typing in text fields and selecting options from dropdowns to test form-based user flows.
- **Conducting a Usability Test with Your Prototype (21m)**
A brief guide on how to use your Sketch prototype to gather early user feedback on task completion and clarity.

Advanced Techniques and Workflow Optimization

- **Setting Up a Shared Sketch Library (26m)**
Export your symbols and styles as a library so your entire team can use the same components across projects.
- **Collaborating in Real Time with Sketch for Teams (20m)**
Use shared workspaces to co-edit documents, leave comments, and manage design versions with your team.
- **Essential Plugins for Mobile Designers (28m)**
Install and use key plugins for tasks like generating placeholder content, creating complex gradients, and managing layers.

- **Automating Design with Sketch Assistants (18m)**
Use built-in assistants to check for common accessibility and layout issues directly within your Sketch file.
- **Building and Maintaining a Design System (35m)**
Go beyond a component library. Document principles, spacing rules, and voice guidelines alongside your Sketch assets.
- **Advanced Symbol Techniques: Nested and Composed (32m)**
Create complex components by nesting symbols inside other symbols. Manage overrides for maximum flexibility.
- **Optimizing Assets for Developer Handoff (22m)**
Learn the best practices for naming layers, marking assets for export, and using developer-friendly settings.
- **Using the Inspector for Handoff Specifications (16m)**
Explore how developers inspect colors, fonts, spacing, and assets from your shared Sketch file or web link.
- **Exporting Multiple Formats: PNG, SVG, PDF (14m)**
Configure slice layers and export settings to generate assets for iOS, Android, and web at all necessary resolutions.
- **Integrating with Other Design and Prototyping Tools (19m)**
How to export screens for use in tools like Principle for advanced animation or Figma for broader collaboration.
- **Version Control: Managing Iterations of Your Design (15m)**
Use Sketch's version history or integrate with a cloud service to track changes and revert if needed.
- **Creating a Reusable Template for New Projects (24m)**
Package your preferred artboard sizes, color styles, and base components into a template file for future speed.
- **Final Project: Designing a Complete App Flow (40m)**
Apply everything learned to design 5-7 key screens for a sample app, including components and a linked prototype.
- **Review and Next Steps in Your Sketch Journey (12m)**
Recap the core skills learned and explore paths for further learning in advanced interaction or design systems.

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