

Design

with an Open Mind

Creative

Frugal Education

Created by Alex Masters

Creative

Collaborative

Open



Experiment

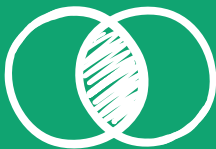
Allow yourself the freedom to experiment with new ideas and challenge existing practices. Give your ideas the space they need to develop and inform your designs. Keep an open mind, inspiration can come from the most unlikely of places.

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Combine

Combine ideas, techniques, and practices from a variety of disciplines to create novel solutions. Remixing existing approaches can not only save you time, but can also serve to inspire brand new designs based on tried and tested methods.

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Problem-Solve

Creative problem-solving thrives on design constraints. Identify the constraints your design is faced with and use them to your advantage. They provide an opportunity to try out new ideas and approaches to solve problems in creative ways.

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Listen

Listen to ideas and suggestions from the people you are designing for. You will gain valuable insight into the needs and expectations of your target audience. Their perspectives will help identify potential improvements to your design.

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Join Forces

Joining forces with others can bring fresh ideas, unique perspectives, and valuable resources to the design process. Seek collaboration with individuals, communities, and institutions that can provide additional inspiration and support.

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Co-Create

Use the power of co-creation to support the design process. Work in partnership with your target audience to co-create designs that are tailored to their specific needs. Through taking part, they'll develop valuable creative and problem-solving skills.

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Open Source

Enable educators and designers to benefit from your work and build upon it by open sourcing your designs. In doing so, you will be contributing to the democratisation of education globally, through the sharing of your knowledge and expertise.

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Open Access

Make your resources freely available and easily discoverable by others. Whether that is on the open web, within your local education community, or both. Ensure your resources are openly accessible by all. This includes any related research outcomes!

Design with an Open Mind

Leverage

Available Resources

Resourceful

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Resourceful

Practical

Resilient



Explore

Explore alternative methods for sourcing materials and resources. Ask within your workplace, local community, and businesses for spare materials, spaces, and equipment they may be willing to share or donate. You'll be surprised what's available!

Leverage Available Resources

Resourceful

Practical

Resilient



Upcycle

There's plenty of potential hidden away in store rooms, cupboards, and everyday items that people are ready to throw out. Upcycle waste materials and resources in your workplace, local community, and surrounding environment. With permission of course!

Leverage Available Resources

Resourceful

Practical

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Improvise

Use your initiative to improvise solutions using the resources at your disposal. Hack together a proof of concept using available materials to quickly test the practicality of your designs. This DIY approach is not only fun, but also great for sparking new ideas.

Leverage Available Resources

Leverage

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Fit for Purpose

Ensure your design is suitable for the job. Whether that's being intuitive to use, strong enough to withstand challenging conditions, or cheap and easy to fix in a pinch. Consider the suitability of your design in relation to its intended audience and environment.

Leverage Available Resources

Resourceful

Practical

Resilient



Standardise

Look to standardise the component parts that make up your design. This will make it easier for others to source the materials needed to replicate your design for their own use. The more bespoke you make it, the less practical it might be for others to use.

Leverage Available Resources

Resourceful

Practical

Resilient



User-Friendly

Consider the accessibility of your design. Overly-complex language, obscure cultural references, and unclear instructions can make things difficult to understand. Invest time in making your design as accessible and user-friendly as possible.

Leverage Available Resources

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Flexible

Equip your designs with the flexibility to adapt to unforeseen events. Sometimes technology fails, spaces are unavailable, and global pandemics grind life to a halt. Things rarely go to plan, so prepare ahead, and design in resilience from the start.

Leverage Available Resources

Resourceful

Practical

Resilient



Modular

Create a modular design that consists of interchangeable elements, enabling you to modify or substitute component parts of your design in response to changing needs and circumstances. This can also enable the reuse of elements across multiple designs.

Leverage Available Resources

Resourceful

Practical

Resilient



Universal

The more universal your design the easier it will be for others to adopt and apply for themselves. Avoid using custom materials that are impractical to source or reproduce. Try to use resources that are commonplace to make your design more accessible.

Leverage Available Resources

Build

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Minimal

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Minimal

Sustainable

Iterative



Function First

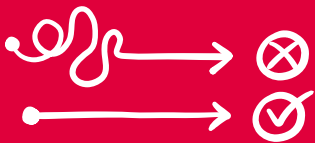
There's nothing wrong with creating a beautiful end product, as long as it's not at the expense of functionality. Make sure you're achieving your desired objectives before investing valuable resources into the aesthetics of your design.

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Iterative



Streamline

A lot of time, money, and resources are wasted on unnecessary administrative tasks and processes. Start with a clean sheet, remove everything, and only add in what is essential. Try to be efficient and combine multiple processes where possible.

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Sustainable

Iterative



Keep it Simple

The simpler your design, the easier it will be to build, deliver, and manage. This lean approach will free up valuable resources, such as time, money, and people, to be applied more effectively and better serve those you are designing for.

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Environmental

Prioritise the use of sustainable materials within your design. Minimise waste created through its application and consider the recyclability of any materials used. Ensure all locally sourced materials are used and disposed of safely and sustainably.

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Sustainable

Iterative



Economical

Minimise the resource cost of your design. Consider time, money, and human resource costs and how they might impact on delivery and sustainability in the long term. The more economical your design, the more practical it will be for others to adopt.

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Socio-Cultural

Ensure your design does not put an unsustainable amount of pressure on the systems that support it. Examples include the unsustainable consumption of natural resources, the overuse of communal spaces, or the exploitation of volunteer support.

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Iterative

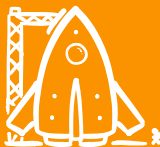
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Prototype

Theory only gets you so far. Build a rapid prototype of your design so that you can experience it physically. This will give you a better sense of its practicality, enabling you to identify issues and improvements, even before you've tested it out.

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Test & Refine

The most effective way to validate your design is by testing it out in the real world. Build only what you need, then test it on your target audience. The sooner you do this, the sooner you can gain valuable insights and begin iterating on your design.

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Gather Feedback

With each rapid prototype you build, gather valuable feedback from educators and participants alike. Use this feedback to identify strengths and weaknesses within your design and feed these insights into your next iteration. Then rinse and repeat!

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