

UX Designer

Decide how an app or a website actually works. UX (user experience) design is well paid and nobody licenses it.

TYPICAL PAY

\$104,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$54k to \$202k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

2 to 4 years

after high school

DEMAND

Very high

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Software companies, design agencies, in-house product team...

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
 Art, computer science, psychology and statistics. Start redesigning things you already use and write down why.
- 2 Learn the craft** 2 to 4 years
 A bachelor's degree in design, human computer interaction, psychology or computer science, or a self-taught route through free courses. Learn Figma properly either way.
- 3 Build three or four case studies** During school
 Not pretty screens. A real problem, what you learned from users, what you tried, what you changed, and what happened. This is the whole job application.
- 4 Internship or first junior role** 3 to 12 months
 Work alongside engineers and a product manager. Shipping something real is what separates you from every other applicant.
- 5 Specialize** 3 to 7 years in
 Toward research, interaction design, design systems, or management. Pay steps up at each level.

Pros and cons

- + Strong pay without a license or a graduate degree
- + One of the most remote-friendly jobs there is
- + Your work reaches thousands of people
- The junior market is crowded and hiring is cyclical
- Design is often the first team cut in layoffs
- Your best idea gets overruled by a deadline

Good to know

The job title was invented at Apple

Don Norman coined user experience as a job description while working at Apple in the early 1990s, because he thought interface and graphic design were too narrow a way to describe the work.

Five people find most of the problems

Classic usability research found that testing with about five users uncovers the large majority of problems in an interface. That is why teams test small and test often instead of running one huge study.

Optional boosts

User research. Design systems. Front-end code. Accessibility.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Web and Digital Interface Designers (15-1255.00)
 Nielsen Norman Group: user experience research, training and certification
 Carnegie Mellon University: Master of Human-Computer Interaction
 Apprenticeship.gov: apprenticeship job finder

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/us/careers/ux-designer>



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