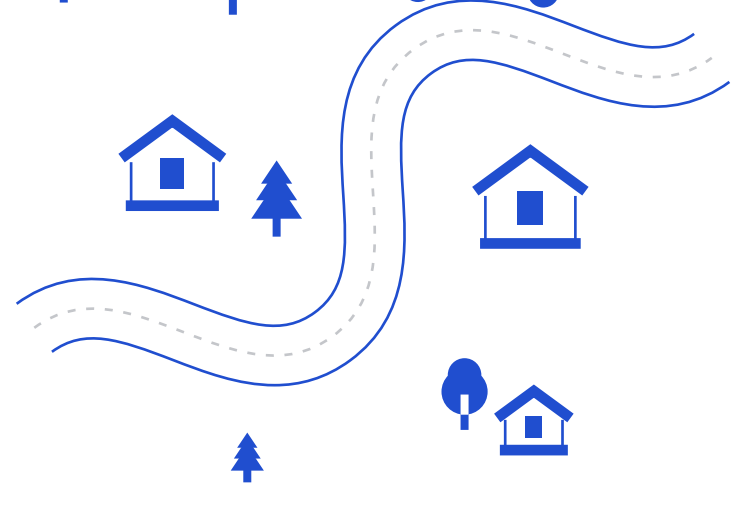
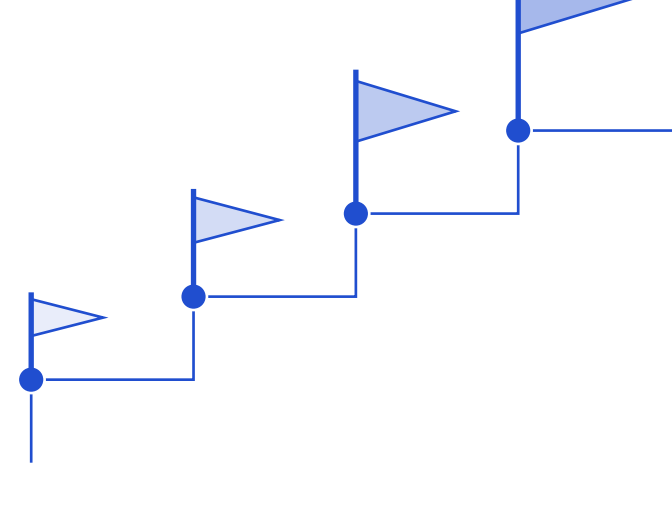


# Understanding Cognitive Bias in Product Design, the Good and Bad

## Goal Gradient Effect

Motivation to finish a task increases as a user makes strides toward a goal. Breaking a larger undertaking into smaller steps and showing progress can be an incentive to save a little more for a dream vacation or walk more blocks to reach a daily exercise target.

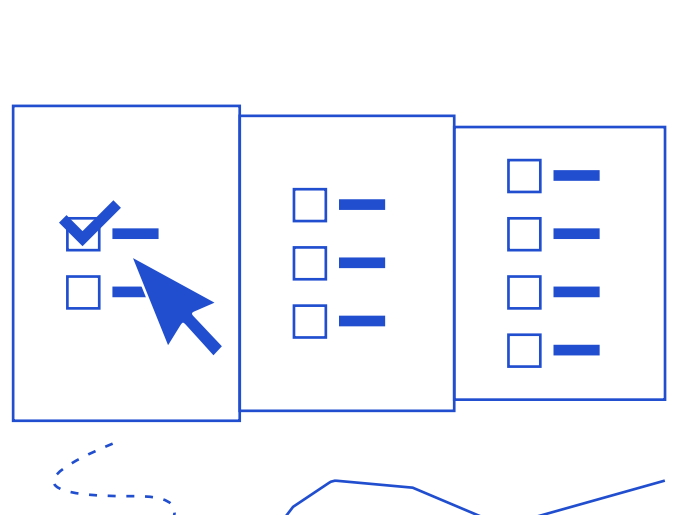


## Labor Illusion

People like to know a complicated system is working for them behind the scenes—for example, a ride-sharing site that shows how far away your driver is or a banner that reads "Retrieving your results."

## Progressive Disclosure Effect

People often feel overwhelmed when embarking on a complicated project. Breaking it down into individual tasks that start off simple and then grow increasingly complex can encourage a user to stay with an endeavor, even as it gets harder.

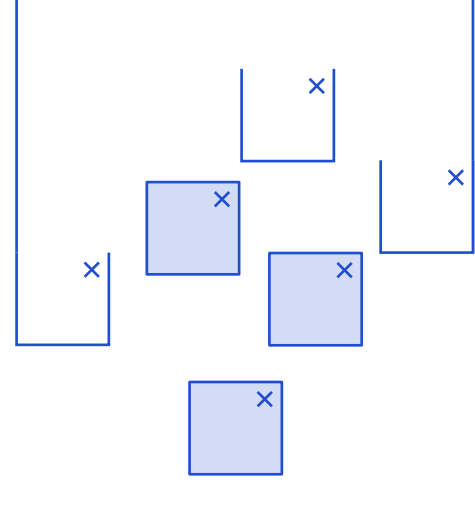


## Social Proof

For better or worse, people prefer to follow the actions of others when making decisions. Integrating ratings and reviews—even the negative ones—into a website or app helps a user feel validated in their choices.

## Halo Effect

People's opinions about one aspect of something color their perceptions of an unrelated piece of it. It's why attractive people are often seen as intelligent. Users' initial interactions with an app must be flawless; otherwise, they're likely to find fault with the entire site.

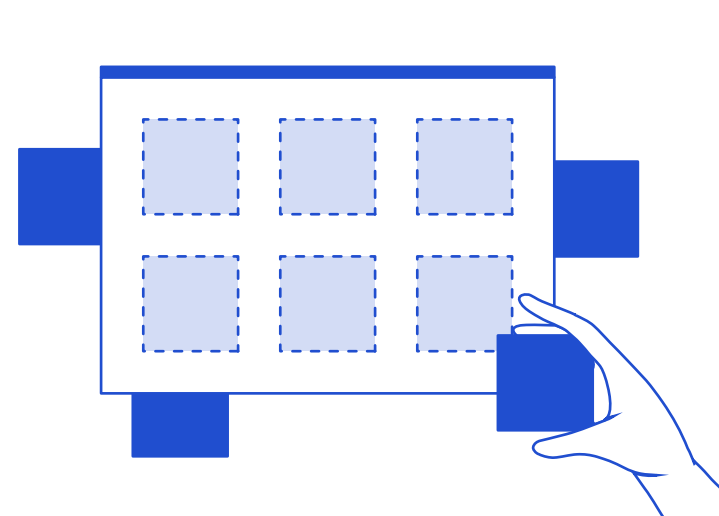


## Miller's Law

People can memorize only a finite amount of information. Designers should limit how much they present at once. Details should be broken into manageable chunks and organized into categories.

## Ikea Effect

A user places extra value on things they help build. If a digital product requires a user to act as a co-creator in their own experience, they may be more likely to remain a consistent customer. Music-streaming apps, for example, allow users to do this by creating custom playlists.

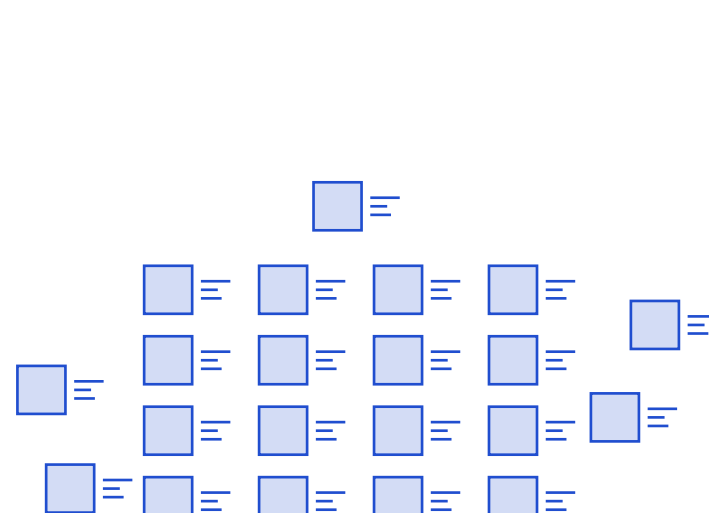


## Loss Aversion

People will go to great lengths to avoid loss, even if doing so means they'll miss out on something better. That's why free trials are popular; once a customer has a subscription, especially if they've put time into setting it up, they are loath to let it go.

## Decision Fatigue

People tend to feel paralyzed by too many choices. Being faced with an abundance of options can dilute the quality of a user's decisions, or cause them to abandon a site or app altogether.



## Variable Reward

Rewards cause a hit of dopamine, the brain chemical associated with satisfaction. When a payoff, such as access to an exclusive deal, comes at random intervals, a user is more likely to keep using an app, thinking the reward is just around the corner.

## Von Restorff Effect

When presented with a set of items, our brains tend to remember the one unlike the others. For example, designers can make a quote stand out from text by making it larger and applying a different color or font.



## Center Stage Effect

A user tends to select the middle item from a set of like choices. Designers trying to promote a particular pricing plan, for instance, may set it off by placing it between two others.