

UI terminology

A good understanding of **UI terminology** makes it much easier to communicate with designers, developers, and AI tools. Below is a fairly complete list of common GUI terms used in web application development.

1. Layout

Term	Description
View	A complete screen/page shown to the user.
Page	A browser page.
Screen	A complete application view (often used for mobile).
Layout	The overall arrangement of UI elements.
Container	Holds other components. (<code>div</code> , <code>section</code>)
Panel	A grouped area of related controls.
Pane	A resizable section of the interface.
Region	A logical area of the page.
Sidebar	Vertical panel at the left or right.
Content Area	Main working area.
Header	Top section.
Footer	Bottom section.
Toolbar	Row containing action buttons.
Status Bar	Displays application status.
Navigation Bar	Contains navigation items.
Dock	Area where panels attach.
Split View	Two or more resizable panes.

2. Navigation

Term	Description
Menu	Collection of commands.
Menu Bar	Horizontal row of menus.
Context Menu	Right-click menu.
Hamburger Menu	Three-line menu icon.
Breadcrumb	Shows current location.
Tabs	Switch between pages or panels.
Pagination	Page navigation.
Stepper	Multi-step wizard indicator.
Wizard	Guided multi-step interface.
Accordion	Expandable sections.
Tree View	Hierarchical navigation.
Drawer	Sliding side panel.

3. Buttons & Actions

Term	Description
Button	Performs an action.
Icon Button	Button containing only an icon.
Floating Action Button (FAB)	Large floating action button (Material Design).
Toggle Button	On/off button.
Split Button	Main action with dropdown.
Dropdown Button	Opens a menu.
Scroll Button	Scrolls content.
Chevron Button	Uses chevron icon (< > ^ v).
Collapse Button	Hides a panel.
Expand Button	Shows hidden content.
Close Button	Usually X.
Back Button	Navigate back.
Next Button	Navigate forward.

4. Input Controls

Term	Description
Text Box	Single-line input.
Text Area	Multi-line input.
Password Field	Hidden text input.
Search Box	Search input.
Checkbox	Multiple selection.
Radio Button	Single selection.
Toggle Switch	Modern on/off control.
Slider	Select numeric value.
Spinner	Numeric input with arrows.
Date Picker	Calendar selector.
Time Picker	Time selector.
Color Picker	Select color.
File Picker	Upload file.
Dropdown	Select from list.
Combo Box	Input + dropdown.
Autocomplete	Suggests matching values.
Multi-select	Select multiple items.

5. Lists & Data

Term	Description
List	Collection of items.
List Item	Individual entry.
Table	Rows and columns.
Data Grid	Interactive table.
Card	Self-contained information block.

Term	Description
Tile	Card-like item.
Grid	Rows and columns layout.
Gallery	Image collection.
Carousel	Horizontally scrolling items.
Timeline	Chronological events.
Tree	Nested hierarchy.

6. Containers

Term	Description
Card	Small grouped container.
Panel	Larger grouped container.
Modal	Dialog blocking interaction.
Dialog	Popup window.
Popup	Temporary overlay.
Popover	Small contextual popup.
Tooltip	Small hover help.
Toast	Temporary notification.
Snackbar	Material Design notification.
Overlay	Layer above content.

7. Feedback

Term	Description
Alert	Important message.
Notification	General message.
Confirmation Dialog	Asks for confirmation.
Error Message	Shows an error.

Term	Description
Success Message	Indicates success.
Warning	Potential problem.
Badge	Small count indicator.
Progress Bar	Shows progress.
Progress Ring	Circular progress.
Spinner	Loading animation.
Skeleton Screen	Placeholder while loading.

8. Scroll & Viewport

Term	Description
Scrollbar	Draggable scroll indicator.
Scroll Thumb	The draggable part.
Scroll Track	Background of scrollbar.
Scroll Button	Arrow button for scrolling.
Viewport	Visible area.
Infinite Scroll	Loads more while scrolling.
Sticky Header	Remains visible.
Sticky Footer	Remains visible.
Scroll Snap	Snaps scrolling to items.

9. Windows & Panels

Term	Description
Window	Independent application area.
Docked Panel	Attached to an edge.
Floating Panel	Can be moved freely.
Inspector	Shows selected object properties.

Term	Description
Properties Panel	Edit properties.
Sidebar	Secondary panel.
Explorer	Hierarchical browser.

10. Icons

Term	Description
Chevron	< > ^ v
Caret	Small filled triangle
Arrow	Directional icon
Hamburger	≡
Kebab Menu	⋮
Meatballs Menu	⋯
Plus	Add
Minus	Remove
Gear	Settings
Trash	Delete
Pencil	Edit
Magnifier	Search
Home	Home page
Bell	Notifications
User Avatar	User profile

11. Common States

Term	Description
Default	Normal state.
Hover	Mouse over.

Term	Description
Focus	Keyboard focus.
Active	Currently pressed.
Selected	Chosen item.
Disabled	Cannot interact.
Read-only	Viewable but not editable.
Hidden	Not visible.
Expanded	Open.
Collapsed	Closed.
Loading	Busy.
Empty State	No content yet.

12. Layout Concepts

Term	Description
Responsive Layout	Adapts to screen size.
Breakpoint	Width where layout changes.
Grid System	Column-based layout.
Flex Layout	Flexible alignment.
Whitespace	Empty spacing.
Padding	Space inside an element.
Margin	Space outside an element.
Alignment	Positioning of content.
Gap	Space between flex/grid items.
Z-index	Stacking order.

The most important terms

If someone is discussing a web application's UI, these are the terms you'll hear most often:

- Header
- Footer
- Sidebar
- Toolbar
- Navigation Bar
- Content Area
- Card
- Panel
- Modal
- Dialog
- Drawer
- Accordion
- Tabs
- Breadcrumb
- Table / Data Grid
- Form
- Button
- Icon Button
- Dropdown
- Toggle Switch
- Checkbox
- Radio Button
- Search Box
- Tooltip
- Toast
- Notification
- Scrollbar
- Scroll Thumb
- Scroll Button

- Spinner (loading)
- Skeleton Screen
- Empty State
- Pagination
- Carousel
- Tree View
- Badge
- Progress Bar
- Chevron
- Kebab Menu
- Hamburger Menu

These terms are widely used across frameworks such as Bootstrap, Material UI, Ant Design, Fluent UI, Tailwind UI, and most design systems.

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