

# Paper Prototyping Kit

Paper prototyping is a simple prototyping method that asks us to use paper, pen, and our sketching skills to bring ideas to life.

This technique is often employed when prototyping digital experiences, but it can be used to prototype and iterate on physical experiences, services, programs, and even policies.

Paper prototyping relies on two simple kinds of sketching.

First, it requires that you be able to draw simple shapes: if you can sketch a square, a line, or a circle, you can paper prototype!

Second, it relies on common elements from currently-existing experiences to communicate ideas (think, “it’s like the Google search bar, but for our problem” or “it’s like the map on Uber, but to point people towards our service”). By replicating existing patterns, we can more quickly communicate our ideas.

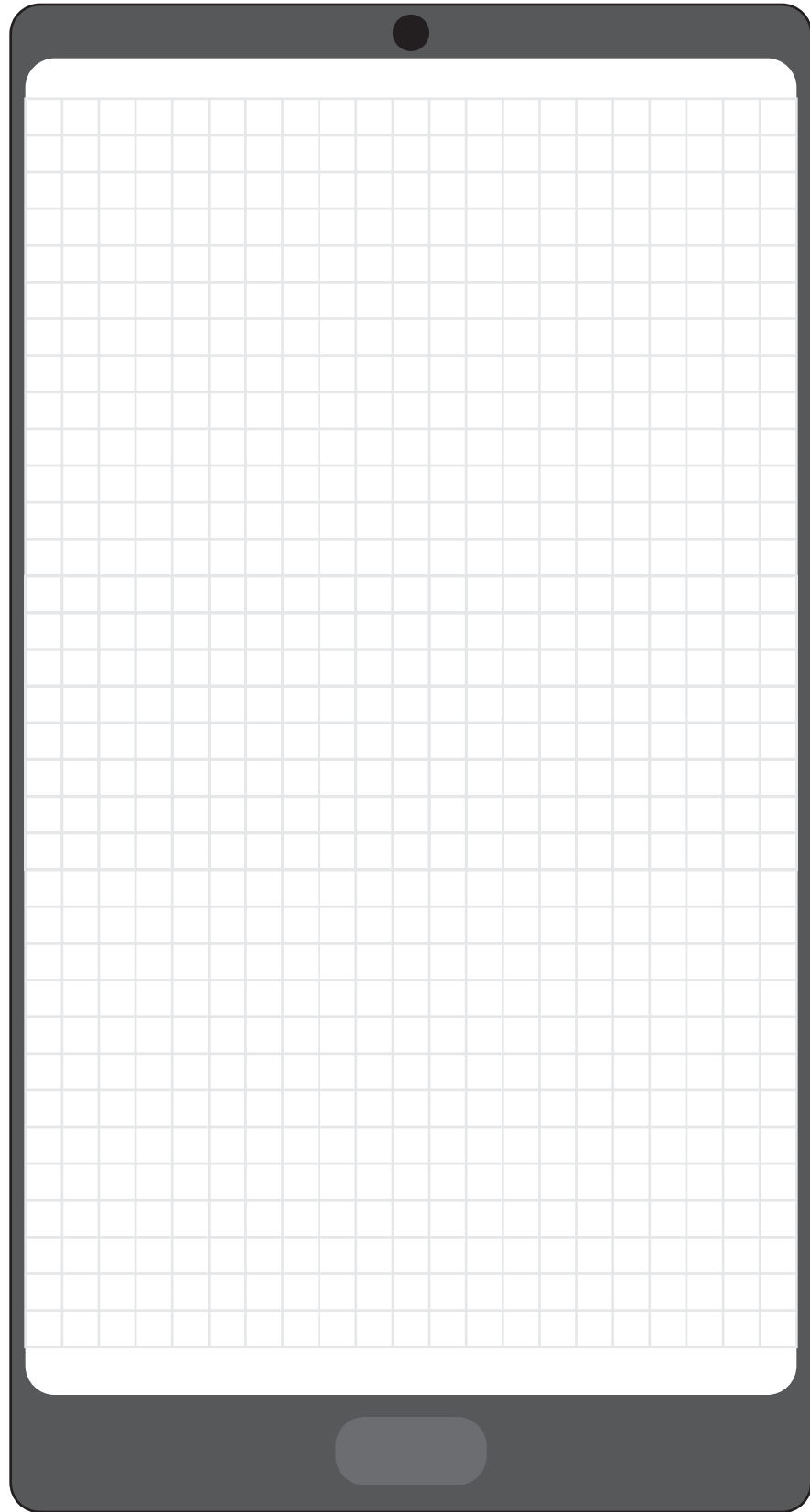
This kit contains templates for paper prototyping digital experiences, paper forms, and physical spaces (like a doctor’s waiting room).

Use the grid-lined template to craft your prototype, and draw on the simple shapes and elements on the righthand side of each page to fill that space and communicate your ideas.

To get started, think of a ‘How Might We’ question that needs attention. For example: how might we make it easier for people to access information on childcare benefits? How might we encourage people to make more environmentally sustainable transportation choices?

You can also think about a challenge that needs some attention. For example: wait times in a downtown emergency room have reached critical levels; there is a need to divert non-emergent cases to other sources of care.

Here’s a fun one: unicorn ownership is growing and the Government of Alberta has discovered a need for unicorn licensing. Because of thier mystical nature, Albertans are required to bring thier unicorns with them as part of the registration process. This raises unique challenges. What might this registration process look like?



# Prototyping Mobile Experiences

Prototyping mobile experiences is a great first step for thinking about a digital experience. Many end users might default to a mobile device as their first step. By starting with prototyping mobile first, it can help you boil your idea down to the essential components and information, making it easier to communicate.

## Things To Consider

- **Keep It Brief:** Mobile screens are small, so pare text down to minimal, plain English messages.
- **Work the Scroll:** While the viewport of the device is small, users can scroll. However, think about what they need to see first, and how much content is too much.
- **Touch & Go:** Remember that users will be interacting with the device using thumbs and fingertips. Size your elements appropriately.

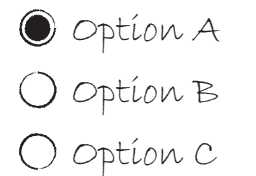
## Paper Prototyping Elements



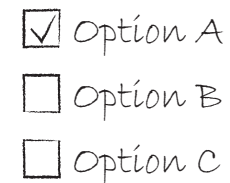
**Call to Action:** Draw a button, with a clear descriptor of what it does (e.g., Submit, Go, Next, Cancel, etc.).



**Text Input:** Draw a rectangle with a vertical line as the “cursor” indicating where text will go. Make sure to label what the input is for.



**Radio Buttons:** Each circle with a label represents an option. Users can only select one option at a time.



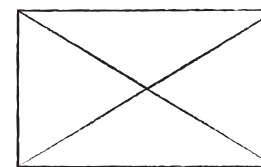
**Check Boxes:** Each box with a label represents an option. Users can select more than one option.



**Slider:** Draw a line with a marker on it. This can be used to represent sliding-scale values (such as volume or percentages).



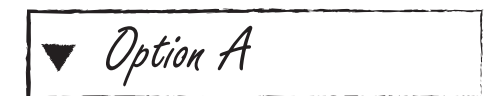
**Text:** Draw a shaded in box to represent a line of text. Providing a general sense of how much text needs to be created is fine!



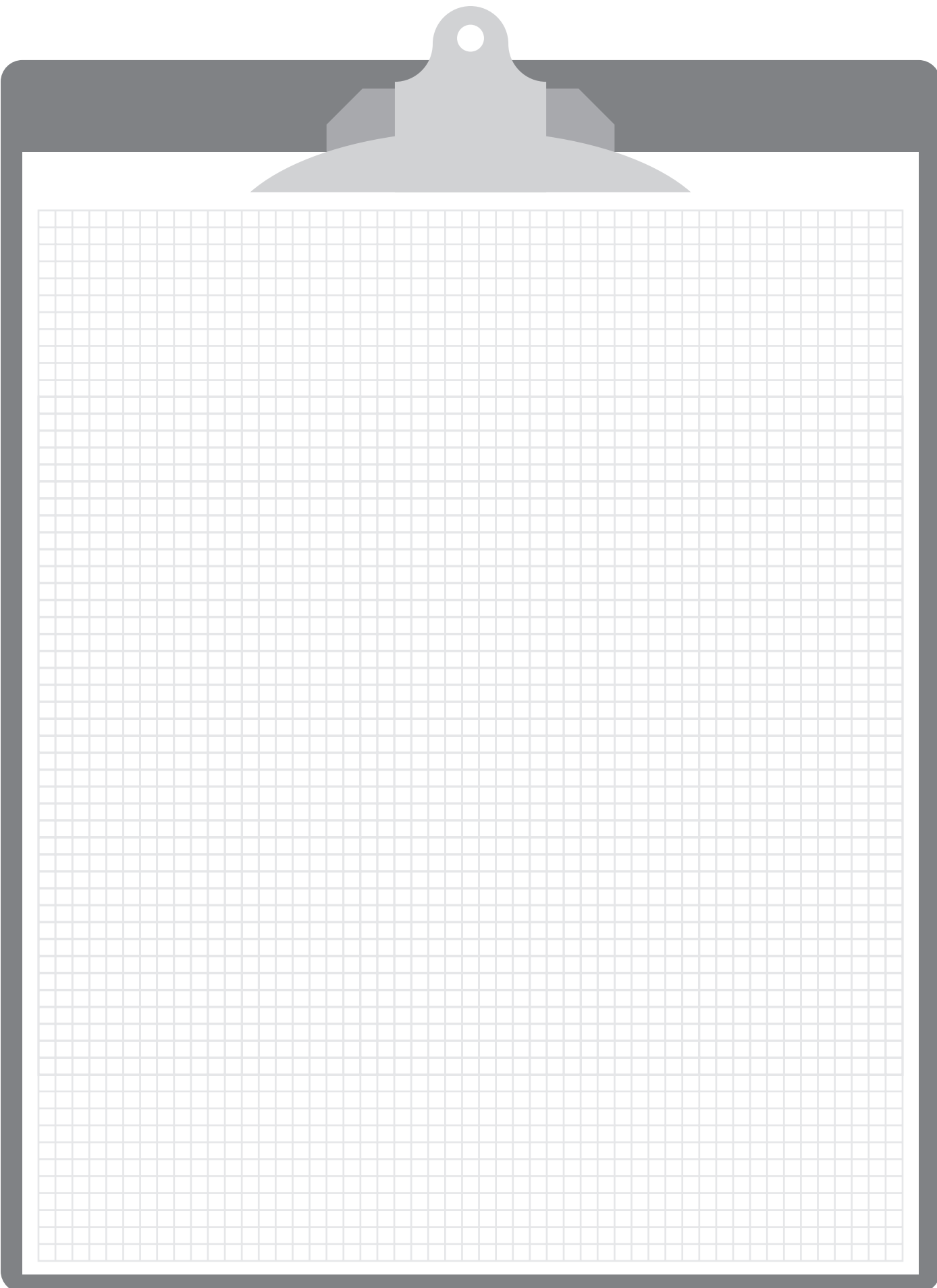
**Image:** Draw a box with lines dividing it from corner to corner. Add a label describing what the image should be.



**Video:** Draw a box, and put a “play” symbol in the middle. Add a label describing what the video should be.



**Dropdown Menu:** Draw a box with a downward-facing triangle on one side of it. Label what the menu options should be.



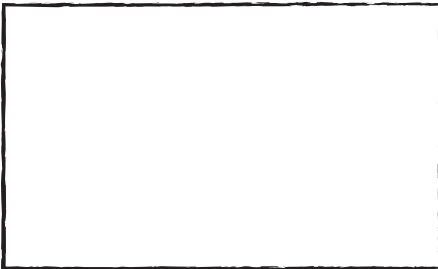
# Prototyping Physical Materials

Although it may seem obvious, don't forget that you can use paper prototyping to prototype paper materials. Sketching out a paper form, for example, might help accelerate conversations about how a program might need to work while keeping user needs at the centre.

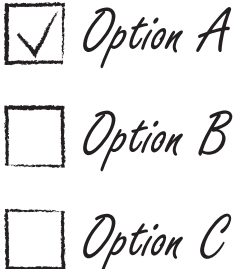
### Things To Consider

- **Information Life Cycle:** Think about security, privacy, and processing time. Do you need to collect all of that information?
- **Storytelling:** How might you help users understand why they're sharing certain information, and how the process proceeds from here?
- **Think Beyond The Form:** Consider the other processes and functions that this form connects to.

### Physical Material Elements



**Form Field:** Draw a box, where a user might write text or numbers. Make sure to label what kind of information you're looking for.



**Check Boxes:** Each box with a label represents an option. Users can select more than one option.



**Headings:** Use large, underlined text to indicate sections in your form, making it easier to navigate.



**Text:** Draw a shaded in box to represent a line of text. Providing a general sense of how much text needs to be created is fine!

# Prototyping Spaces

Sketching a space can help us think about flows, relationships, power dynamics, and accessibility. Especially when prototyping a service, sketching spaces can help us think through the details that will really make the experience sink or swim.

## Things To Consider

- **Think In Journeys:** Use the sketch to map out all of a user's experiences with the service, not just their interaction with an employee.
- **Time Keeps On Ticking:** Imagine how long things should take, using minimums and maximums to define the experience

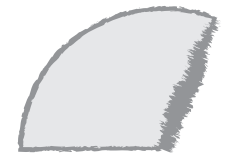
## Paper Prototyping Elements



**Furniture:** Think about where users might need to sit, for conversations, waiting, or other purposes.



**Barriers:** What walls, counters, or other barriers need to exist to separate spaces, provide privacy, or guide the flow of people?



**Doors:** Draw a line, with a semi-circular shape showing where the door swings.



**Signage:** Indicate what kinds of signage might be important in the space.



**Movement:** Draw an arrow showing how people might move through the space. Make sure to label what the movement is for.



**Time:** Use the visual of a clock to give a sense of how much time an action takes.



**Dialogue:** Use dialogue balloons to give a sense of how interactions might play out in the space.



**Action:** Indicate what actions are accomplished and where.