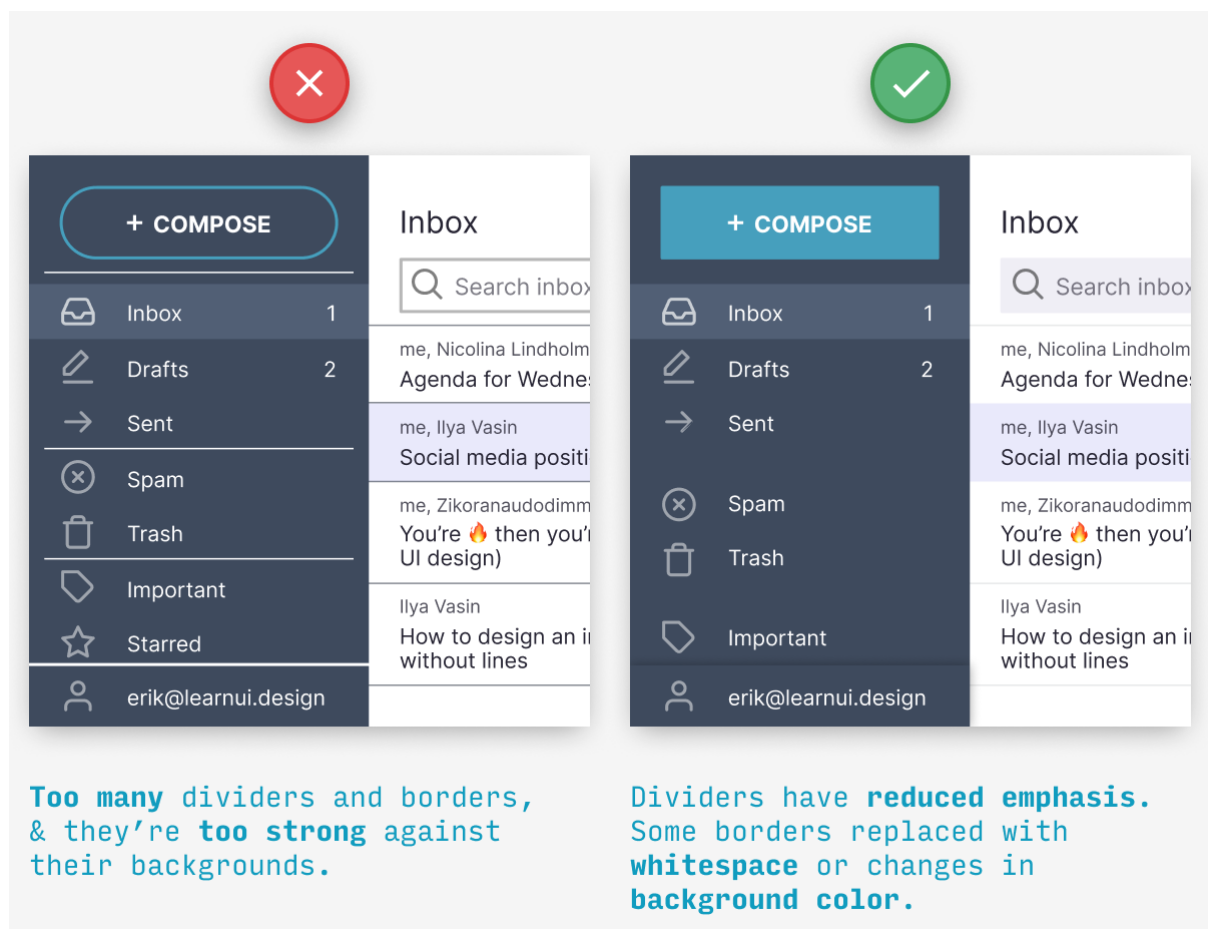


✗ Mistake 1: Divider lines are too dark

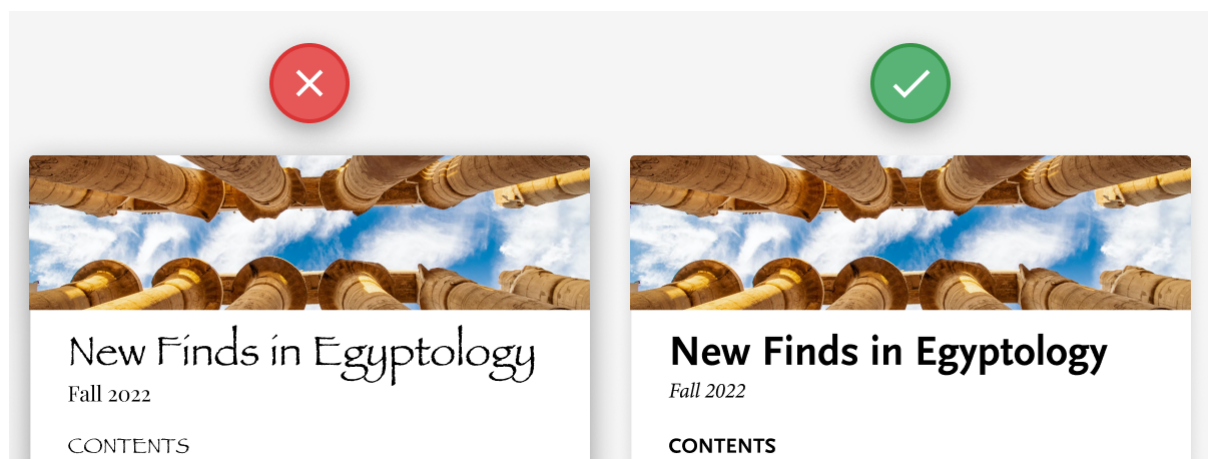
Dividers and borders should (almost) always be *very subtle*. I like using 10% opacity of my default text color, then adjusting from there.



(If the image is too small on your phone, [you can view the web version](#) 😎)

✗ Mistake 2: Over-the-top fonts

Most projects should use fonts that *subtly convey the brand* you need. Especially when you add imagery/color/other design elements, a subtle font can communicate *more powerfully than you think* 💪



1. Evidence in Bahariya Oasis
2. Pyramids of the Middle Kingdom
3. The Sea People: Hypotheses and Field Work

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Papyrus is Egyptian (on-brand), but way too gimmicky. **Playfair Display** is meant to inspire trust, but feels overly formal - and isn't good for body text.

Scala Sans is modern yet refined, understated, with human touches to it. **Minion Pro** is trustworthy without being stuffy. The scholarship vibe is achieved!

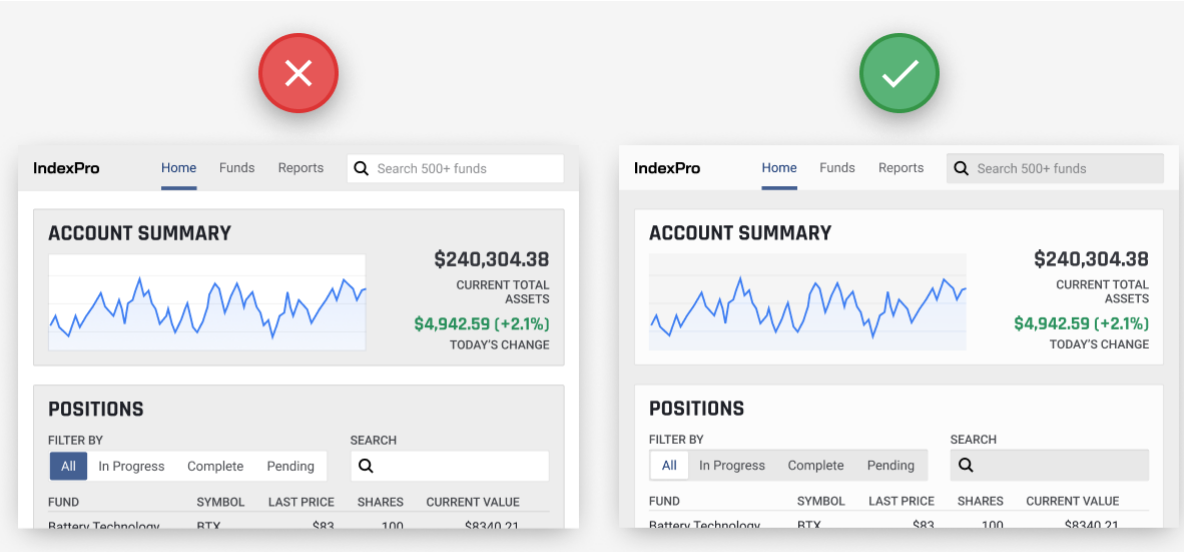
(I should mention: *all* of these tips are covered in [Learn UI Design](#) 👍)

❌ Mistake 3: Dark cards on light background

Since [light comes from the sky](#), things that "pop out" from their backgrounds will catch the light, therefore appearing brighter. Things that are *recessed into their background* will likewise appear darker.

Therefore, we usually want cards to be *lighter* than their background (in both light and dark mode 🕶️).

Compare which is more natural:



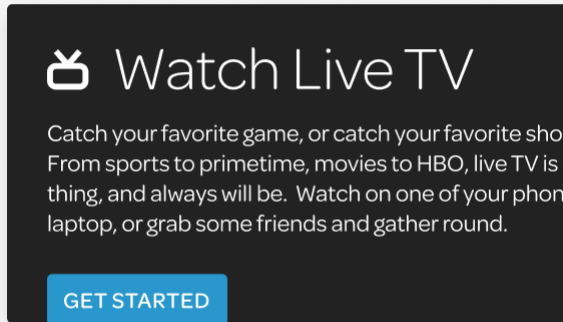
White is the default Figma background color, but that doesn't mean your card-filled design needs to follow suit!

Lighter cards:

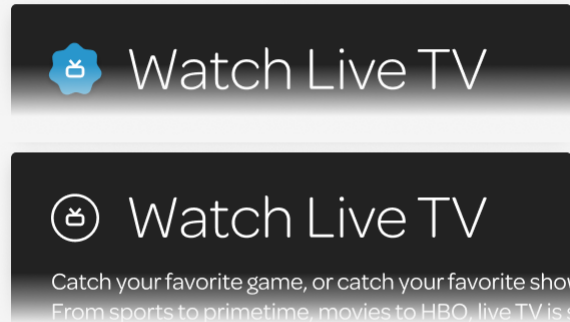
- Subtly **draw the eye**
- Appear **"popped out"** from their background

❌ Mistake 4: Enlarged icons

Don't resize icons. Their level of detail and stroke weights are meant to work best *at a certain size*. Instead, try adding a border or container around them for some extra visual pop 🌟



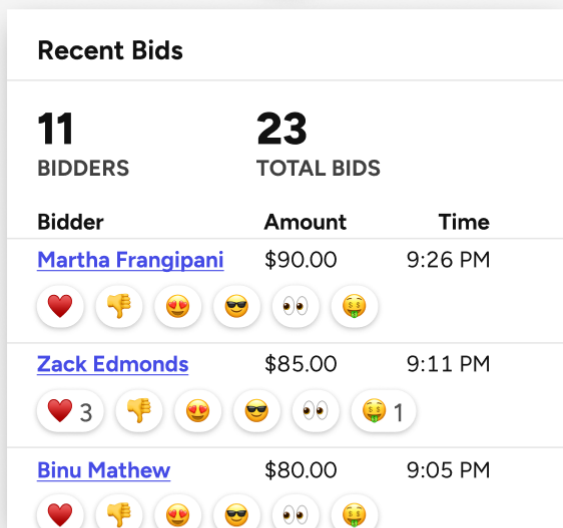
The larger icon **feels awkward** next to the thinner text - and **attracts too much attention**.



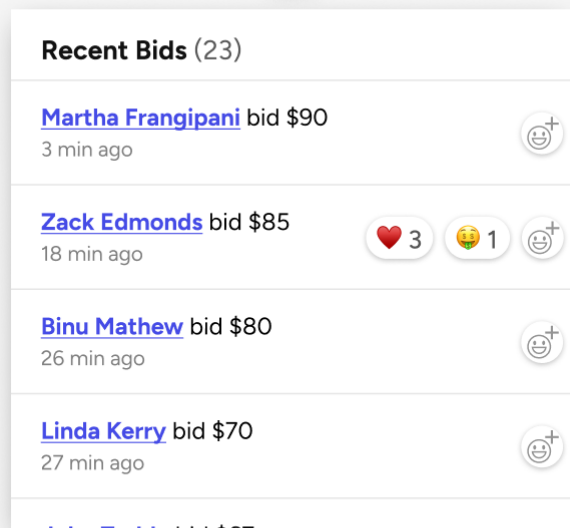
The original icon **matches the header** and provides options for how to surround it with a parent element.

X Mistake 5: Too many attention-grabbing elements

Here's a trick for cleaning up designs: **REMOVE-HIDE-LIGHTEN**. Remove the clutter; if you can't remove it, hide it behind a menu/popover/etc; if you can't hide it, lighten it.



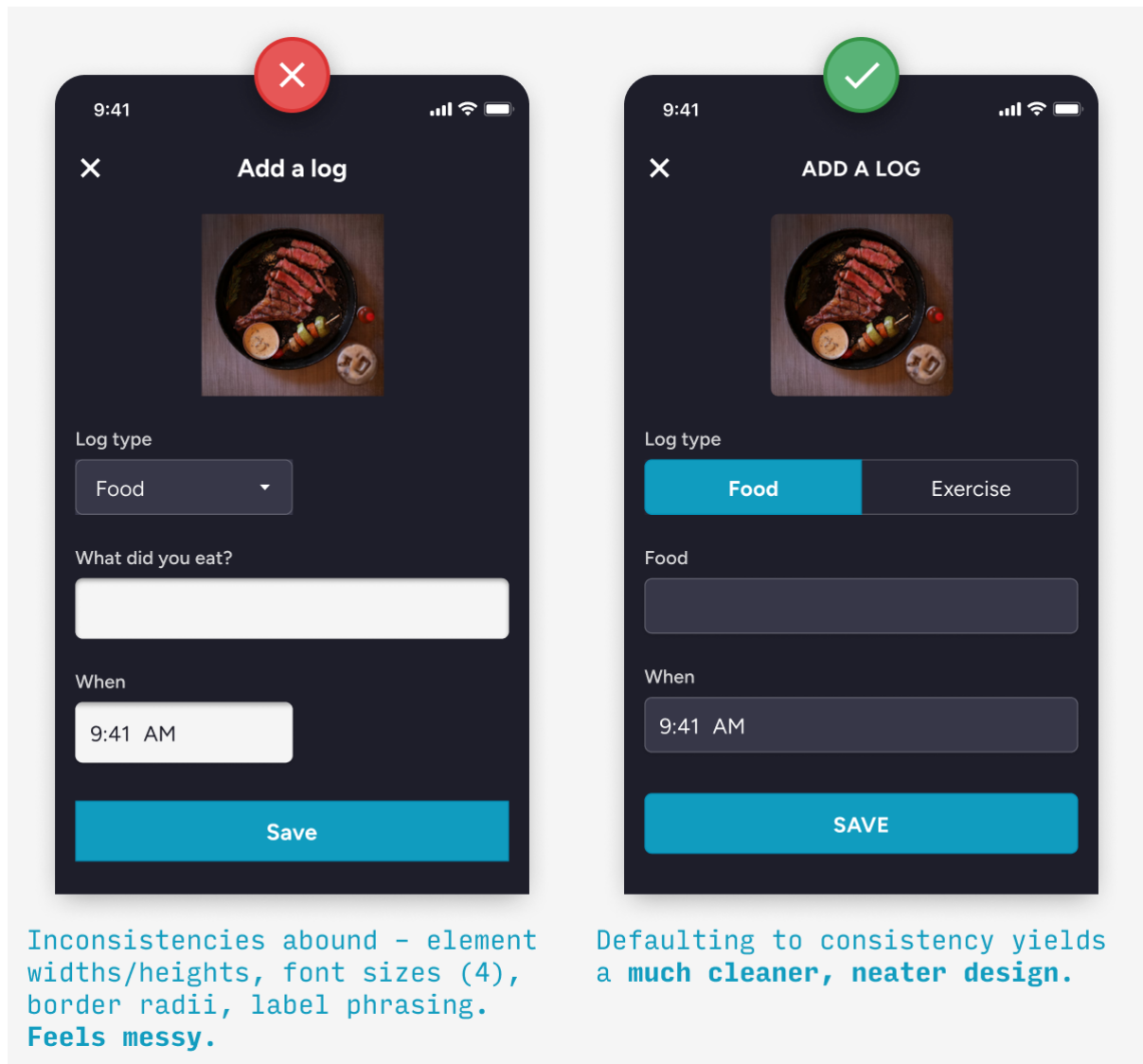
Too messy! Try 3 strategies:
1. **Remove** obvious column labels
2. **Hide** emoji reactions behind hover
3. **Lighten** bid count, timestamp



Much better!

✗ Mistake 6: Needless inconsistency

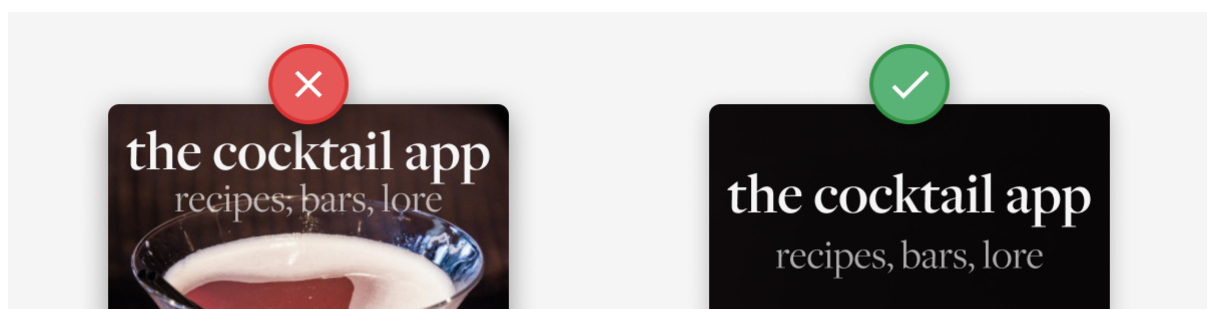
Default to making everything as consistent as possible, but deviate *when there's a clear reason* (e.g. to catch the user's eye). What should you be consistent about? For starters: lengths/widths, border radii, font sizes, colors, and more.



✗ Mistake 7: Bad imagery

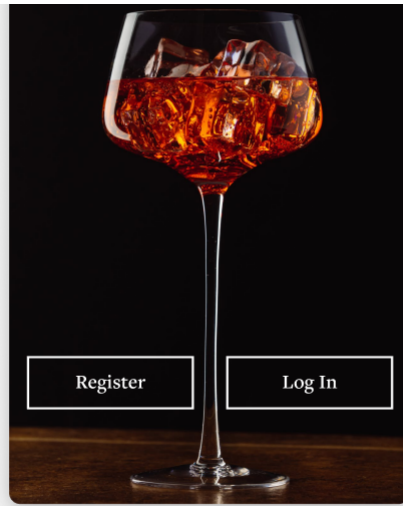
If you've been on Design Hacks a while, you probably know this. Say it with me: good 🙌 imagery 🙌 is 🙌 a 🙌 cheat 🙌 code 🙌!

For starters, find **simple, in-focus images with non-distracting backgrounds**.





Unappetizing, poorly-lit subject. Distracting bg.



Gorgeous, in-focus subject. Dramatic yet subtle bg.