

AI Tools for the Design Process

A stage-by-stage directory of AI tools across the design lifecycle, each linked to its site with its current free-tier status. Tool names are clickable. Many tools span more than one stage, so a few appear in more than one place.

How to read the Access column

■ **Freemium** a genuine free tier exists (usually with limits). ■ **Paid** no free tier, trial or subscription only.

** Free tier exists, but the specific AI or handoff feature noted usually requires a paid plan. Pricing shifts often, so confirm on the tool's site before you rely on it.*

1. Discovery & Research

User research, competitive analysis, stakeholder interviews

Tool	What it's for	Access
Perplexity	Cited AI answers for desk and competitive research.	Freemium
Dovetail	Research repository with AI transcription and theme analysis.	Freemium
Maze	Unmoderated studies, now with an AI moderator for interviews.	Freemium
Otter.ai	Live transcription and summaries for interviews and calls.	Freemium
Listen Labs	AI-moderated interviews at scale, with recruitment and synthesis.	Paid
Outset	Multimodal AI-moderated interviews for discovery and concept testing.	Paid
Similarweb	Competitor traffic, market and audience intelligence.	Freemium
UserTesting	Moderated and unmoderated testing with a large recruitment panel.	Paid

2. Synthesis & Strategy

Insights generation, persona development, problem definition

Tool	What it's for	Access
Marvin	AI tagging, transcript analysis and qualitative synthesis.	Freemium
Miro AI	Affinity mapping and AI clustering of research notes.	Freemium
Delve AI	Data-driven persona generation from your own sources.	Freemium
ChatGPT	Insight framing, clustering and problem statements.	Freemium
Claude	Synthesis, reframing and writing sharp problem definitions.	Freemium

3. Ideation & Concept Development

Journey mapping, feature prioritization, concept validation

Tool	What it's for	Access
FigJam	Journey maps and workshops with FigJam AI.	Freemium
Mural	Collaborative mapping and prioritization frameworks.	Freemium
Whimsical	Flows, diagrams and mind maps with AI generation.	Freemium
Uizard	Turn text or sketches into quick concept mockups.	Freemium
Maze	Preference and concept testing to validate directions.	Freemium

4. Design & Prototyping

Wireframing, visual design, interaction design, prototyping

Tool	What it's for	Access
Figma	Design, prototyping and generative help via Figma AI.	Freemium
Figma Make	Prompt to an interactive prototype inside Figma.	Freemium
UX Pilot	AI wireframes, UI flows and predictive heatmaps.	Freemium
Framer	AI generation of responsive, publishable site prototypes.	Freemium
Visily	Screenshot or text to editable wireframes, exports to Figma.	Freemium
v0 by Vercel	Text prompts to production-ready React UI (code-backed).	Freemium
Lovable	Describe an app and get a working, deployable build.	Freemium
Bolt.new	Text prompt to a functional web app in the browser.	Freemium
Google Stitch	Text or image to UI designs, free through Google Labs.	Freemium
Adobe Firefly	Commercially safe image and asset generation.	Freemium
Midjourney	High-end image generation for visual concepts.	Paid

5. UX Writing & Content

Microcopy, content design, voice and tone

Tool	What it's for	Access
ChatGPT	Fast microcopy, variants and tone exploration.	Freemium
Claude	Nuanced UX copy, voice and longer-form content.	Freemium
Frontitude	AI UX-writing assistant and copy library, inside Figma.	Freemium
Ditto	Single source of truth for UI copy, synced with Figma.	Paid
Writer	Enterprise AI writing with brand voice and style guides.	Paid
Grammarly	AI assistant for clarity, tone and consistency.	Freemium

6. Testing & Validation

Usability testing, feedback analysis, iteration planning

Tool	What it's for	Access
<u>Maze</u>	Usability and prototype testing with AI-summarized insights.	Freemium
<u>Sprig</u>	In-product surveys and replays with AI analysis.	Freemium
<u>Hotjar</u>	Heatmaps, session recordings and on-site feedback.	Freemium
<u>Attention Insight</u>	AI-predicted attention heatmaps before you run a real test.	Paid
<u>Dovetail</u>	Analyze and tag feedback to plan the next iteration.	Freemium
<u>UserTesting</u>	Moderated usability sessions with recruited participants.	Paid

7. Documentation & Handoff

Design specs, documentation, stakeholder communication, design-to-code

Tool	What it's for	Access
<u>Figma Dev Mode</u>	Specs and handoff, with an MCP server that feeds live design data to AI coding agents.	Freemium*
<u>Zeplin</u>	Design specs, tokens and organized developer handoff.	Freemium
<u>Anima</u>	Convert Figma designs into React, Vue or HTML code.	Freemium
<u>Locofy</u>	Turn Figma designs into production-ready front-end code.	Freemium
<u>Builder.io Visual Copilot</u>	Figma to clean, framework-ready code via AI.	Freemium
<u>Gamma</u>	AI decks and docs for stakeholder communication.	Freemium
<u>Confluence</u>	Team docs with Atlassian Intelligence built in.	Freemium
<u>Notion</u>	Docs and wikis; Notion AI ships on the paid Business plan.	Freemium*
<u>Claude</u>	Draft specs, release notes and stakeholder updates.	Freemium