

Getting Started with Usability Reading and Resource List

Books

Usability

These are just the tip of the iceberg in usability, but are a good starting point.

- ❑ Krug, Steve, *Don't Make Me Think: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability*. New Riders Publishing, 2000.
- ❑ Coe, Marlana, *Human Factors for Technical Communicators*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1996.
- ❑ Rubin, Jeffrey, *Handbook of Usability Testing: How to Plan, Design, and Conduct Effective Tests*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1994.
- ❑ Dumas, Joseph S and Redish, Janice C, *A Practical Guide to Usability Testing*. Revised Edition, Intellect Books, 1999.
- ❑ Nielsen, J. *Usability Engineering*, Academic Press: Boston, MA, 1993
- ❑ Pearrow, Mark, *Web Site Usability Handbook*. "Chapter 3, Usability Toolbox" has a good summary of techniques Card sort, heuristics, interview, ethnography, etc.
- ❑ Hackos, Joann and Redish, Janice C, *User and Task Analysis for Interface Design*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1998.
- ❑ Lewis, Clayton and Reiman, John, *Task-Centered User Interface Design, a Practical Introduction*, an online shareware book, <http://hcibib.org/tcuid/>

Information Architecture

- ❑ Christina Wodtke, *Information Architecture: Blueprints for the Web*, New Riders, 2002. This new book is a wonderful introduction to concepts and techniques in information architecture. It's very readable.
- ❑ Rosenfeld, Louis, and Morville, Peter *Information Architecture for the World Wide Web, 2nd edition*, O'Reilly & Associates, Inc., 2002.

Articles

Usability (a few of many...see the Web Sites listed on the next page for many more)

- ❑ "The Best of Both Worlds: Combining Usability Testing and Documentation Projects" by Kantner, Rosenbaum, Leas, in the Proceedings of the 1997 IEEE International Professional Communication Conference (IPCC) <http://www.teced.com/PDFs/ipcc97.pdf>

- ❑ "Why You Only Need to Test with 5 Users" by Jakob Nielsen (Alertbox: 3/19/2000) <http://www.useit.com/alertbox/20000319.htm>
- ❑ "Paper Prototypes: Still Our Favorites" by Jared Spool and UIE <http://www.uie.com/prototyp.htm>
- ❑ "Six Slick Tests for Docs and Help" by Jared Spool and UIE. <http://www.uie.com/sixslick.htm>
- ❑ "Making Online Information Usable" by Jared Spool and UIE <http://www.uie.com/online.htm>
- ❑ "Giving people what they want: How to involve users in site design," by Jeannette Fucella and Jack Pizzolato <http://www-106.ibm.com/developerworks/library/design-by-feedback/expectations.html>

Heuristic evaluations

- ❑ "Structured Heuristic Evaluation of Online Documentation," by Laurie Kantner, Roberta Shroyer, and Stephanie Rosenbaum, Tec-Ed., Inc., IPCC 2002 Proceedings http://www.teced.com/PDFs/kantner_HE_of_online_doc.pdf
- ❑ "First Principles," by Bruce Tognazzini, <http://www.asktog.com/basics/firstPrinciples.html>
- ❑ "Ten Usability Heuristics," by Jakob Nielsen, http://www.useit.com/papers/heuristic/heuristic_list.html
- ❑ "How to Conduct a Heuristic Evaluation," by Jakob Nielsen, http://www.useit.com/papers/heuristic/heuristic_evaluation.html

Card Sorting

- ❑ "What is Card Sorting," by Gerry Gaffney, <http://www.infodesign.com.au/usability/cardsorting.html>
- ❑ "Card Sorting and Cluster Analysis," A tutorial available at IBM DeveloperWorks, <http://www-106.ibm.com/developerworks/usability/>
- ❑ "Ensuring Valid Data," From the IBM DeveloperWorks tutorial, <http://www6.software.ibm.com/developerworks/education/us-card/us-card-2-3.html>
- ❑ "Information Design Using Card Sorting," by James Robertson of StepTwo Designs, <http://www.steptwo.com.au/papers/cardsorting/>
- ❑ "Doing a Card Sort—An Exercise in Organization," page 104 in *Information Architecture: Blueprints for the Web*, by Christina Wodtke

Web Site Resources

- ❑ STC Usability SIG Website
<http://www.stcsig.org/usability/index.html>
- ❑ Papers and Presentations by Tec-Ed, Inc:
http://www.teced.com/c_and_p.html
("Best of Both Worlds" is one of their papers)
- ❑ ID Information & Design web site
<http://www.infodesign.com.au/usability/default.htm>
| Good summary definitions and descriptions of usability techniques, plus some files and other things
- ❑ James Thom's Usability Testing Toolbox
<http://jthom.best.vwh.net/usability> Another set of definitions and examples of usability techniques, with links to lots more information.
In addition, James Thom has a reading list of usability specific to technical communication and online help (from 1996 and earlier)
<http://jthom.best.vwh.net/usability/docbib.htm>
- ❑ The Dueling Gurus:
Both have lots of good stuff:
 - Jakob Nielsen's site: <http://www.useit.com/>
 - Jared Spool's site: www.uie.com
- ❑ Keith Instone's site: <http://usableweb.com/> Huge collection of links
- ❑ STC Publications: <http://www.stc.org> – then Publications→Search (requires membership)
- ❑ Tech Comm Online (requires being an STC member) <http://www.techcomm-online.org>
- ❑ ACM Digital Library <http://www.acm.org> (abstracts available to all, full use requires ACM membership)
- ❑ IBM DeveloperWorks: Usability <http://www-106.ibm.com/developerworks/usability/> (requires registration, but no fee required)
- ❑ Cooper's Newsletters on Personas:
http://www.cooper.com/content/insights/newsletters_personas.asp

Accessibility

- "Dive Into Accessibility," by Mark Pilgrim,
<http://diveintoaccessibility.org/>
- "Simplified Web Accessibility Guide," by Glenda Watson Hyatt
<http://www.webaccessguides.org/accessguide/>
- "Web Accessibility for Section 508," by Jim Thatcher,
<http://jimthatcher.com/webcourse1.htm> (**This site has the best explanations I have found!**)
- WebABLE <http://webable.com/>

Associations

- ❑ Usability Professionals Association:
www.upassoc.org
- ❑ CHI (Computer Human Interaction, special interest group of the ACM):
<http://www.acm.org/sigchi>
- ❑ BayChi (Bay Area Computer Human Interaction):
www.baychi.org
- ❑ Human Factors and Ergonomics Society (HFES)
<http://www.hfes.org/>