



# TYPES OF PROTOTYPES

A prototype is a cheap, scaled down, trial version of a solution or idea you want to test. Ideally, your final product will have gone through many iterations of prototypes that have allowed you to learn, test, and improve your solution. Prototypes can include products, services, experiences, conversations, pitches, or systems.

The benefit of multiple types of prototypes is that you can pick and choose the features you want to test. Different prototypes will emphasize particular aspects of your design. You can make and test lots of prototypes; the more the better.

## OBJECTIVE

Researchers can use the many types of prototypes to create simple, quick versions of their solutions and test early to learn and refine their solutions.

## WASH-HCD CONNECTION

In the design process, prototypes are important for trial and error and there are many types of prototypes to accommodate for the range of WASH solutions possible. Selecting the ideal prototype to continually test, will help you iterate quickly and produce relevant feedback.

## TIMING

Early stage prototypes: 2+ hours, depending on what you create  
 Late stage (close to final version): 2+ days, depending on the solution

## MATERIALS

- VARIES - BASED ON THE PROTOTYPE

## STEPS

- 1. Select the idea you want to test.**
  - Choose a "big win" idea from the idea prioritization matrix.
  - Write down the key elements of the idea. Think practically about what needs to be tested and write down the primary questions for each component.
- 2. Select a type of prototype.** Choose the type of prototype based on the questions you would like answered. Instead of testing the entirety of a product or service, isolate features that strive to fulfill your design principles and priorities.
  - Prototypes can include a product, service, experience, conversation, pitch, or system. Different types of prototypes exist because of the range of desired designs that can be created as well as the ability to answer various questions with each one.
  - Sketches and mock-ups are commonly used to build-out a product and develop it from a drawing, to a 3D cardboard model, to the physical thing.
  - Services can be tested through models and storyboards to pitch the design and improve upon it.
  - Experiences can be used to test how users will interact and find use in a certain aspect of your business or product.
  - Role playing and conversations are useful for testing interactions and perceptions.





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## STEPS

### 3. Make the prototype

- Decide the most critical features of the selected idea and represent those in your prototype.
- Make the prototype, and remember you do not need to build a perfect design at this phase.

### 4. Get feedback and iterate.

- Answer the questions you had at the beginning pertaining to the specific aspects. Continue building and learning from your prototypes.
- Use the recommendations from the Testing Prototypes tool to refine your design.
- \*\*\*\*Remember: The possibilities are endless with prototypes. Do not be discouraged if some prototypes are not successful. Be explicit about the components you want to test and each iteration of the prototype will be a valuable learning opportunity.

