



Designing Things for the Right Person

KS4 DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

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What Does Designing for a User Mean?

When designers create something new—like a chair, an app, a video game, or a water bottle—they don't just make it randomly. They think very carefully about **who will actually use it**. This is called **designing for a specific user**. It means understanding the person (or group of people) who will interact with your creation, and building it to fit their needs perfectly.

A good designer asks lots of questions first. **How old are the users? What can they do? What do they struggle with? What do they care about? What will make their life easier?** The answers to these questions change everything about how something gets designed.

Think of it like writing a birthday card. You wouldn't write the same message to your gran as you would to a five-year-old cousin. You'd think about what they enjoy, how they like to read, and what would make them smile. Designers do the same thing—they match their creation to the person.

Real-World Examples

Consider a **smartphone**. Designers made it for people with different needs. An elderly person might want **larger text and bigger buttons** so they can see and tap easily. A young child might need **child-friendly content and parental controls**. Someone with a visual disability needs **voice commands and screen readers**. One design won't work perfectly for everyone, so designers think about different user groups.

Or imagine a **school desk**. If you design it only for teenagers, it won't work for seven-year-olds—their legs won't reach the ground! A good designer considers **height, strength, and how children learn**. Some desks might need to adjust up and down so many ages can use them.

Think of it like buying shoes. Your baby sister needs soft shoes for tiny feet. A footballer needs sturdy shoes with good grip. Your grandpa might need shoes that are

easy to put on. Everyone needs shoes, but the right shoe depends on who's wearing it.

Why This Matters

Designing for a specific user makes things **safer, easier, and more enjoyable**. When designers understand their users really well, they solve real problems. A wheelchair user helps designers understand what ramps and door handles should look like. A person who is colourblind helps designers pick colours that everyone can see. **Real feedback from real users** makes better designs.

This is why **good designers test their ideas with actual users** before finishing. They watch people use their creation, ask questions, and make changes. It's all about making something that genuinely helps the people who'll use it.