

# User Flows

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## WHAT IS IT?

User Flows (also known as UI or IX Flows) are a map of the complete path that users follow to complete tasks in a product. In some cases the map may have been enriched by including wireframes (known as Wireflows), but are more commonly traditional flow charts.

The flow will focus on a task to be accomplished by the user and the alternative paths and system responses to the user interactions. As the flow may not be linear — it could contain decision nodes, alternative paths, modes (e.g. expert) and loops, these are all represented in the flow.

Unlike customer journey maps, user flows do not usually incorporate user feelings, external touchpoints or mention of solution design opportunities based on user insights.

## WHY DO YOU NEED IT?

- User flows are a very good way to double-check that your solution's processes are complete.
- When tied to clear goals, user flows support you in creating a positive user experience by reducing and optimising.
- The flows also make the solution easy to understand by the team from the product owner to development.

## WHEN DO YOU NEED IT?

Always create the flows ahead of any design work. Remember that the flows help you to understand the product structure and the steps to achieve a task; consequently this translates into pages, option selection, modals etc.

If you are updating an existing product, starting with the flows makes sense as you can focus on the flow objective and look for ways to optimise the journey. If you are working on something brand new, the journey map is a better place to start as you can identify the pain points and which parts of the flow need to be simplified/improved.

Whether a new or improved design, speaking to users and understanding their needs will always help ensure that your solution provides an optimal user experience.

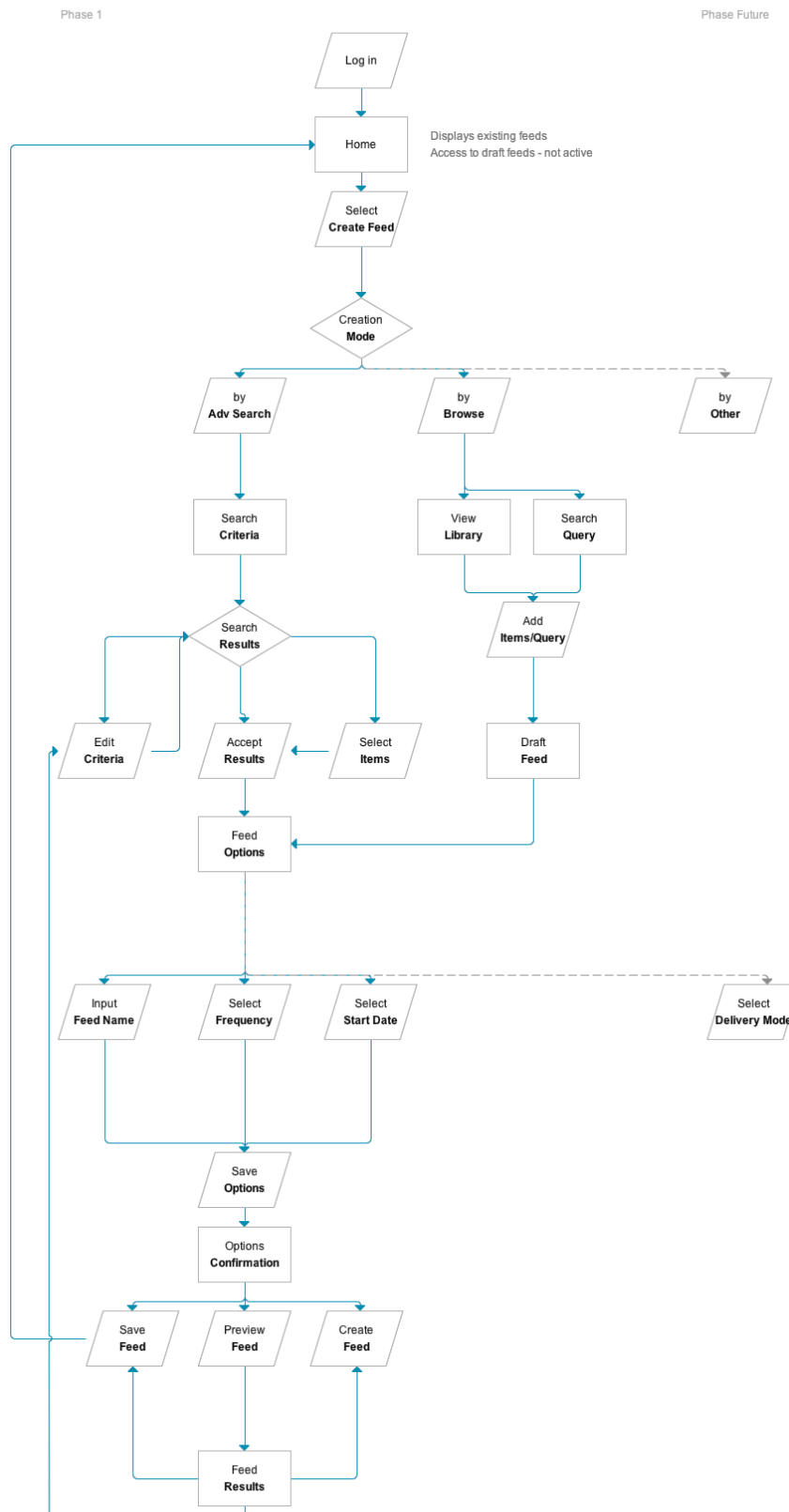
## HOW DO YOU DO IT?

If you are uncertain about any of the flow – perhaps because you haven't done enough research, the flows can form the basis of a workshop.

- Include relevant stakeholders: product owners, business analysts, customer support etc, and go through one flow at a time.
- Sketch on a whiteboard or paper – don't start with a digital version as you spend more time moving things about than thinking about the flow!
- During the sketching process, consider the following:
  - **Entries and Exits** – how is the user coming into the flow and where do they leave?
  - **Steps** – these will be a combination of user or system actions.
  - **Connections** – indicate the desired path and alternative flows, for example in expert mode.
  - **Decision Points** – there may be several of these, where a user must choose from two or more options.

- Once sketched, it's then a good time to convert these to a digital version for clarity and easier distribution.

## EXAMPLE



## REFERENCES

- <https://uxplanet.org/ux-glossary-task-flows-user-flows-flowcharts-and-some-new-ish-stuff-2321044d837d>
- <https://uxplanet.org/an-introduction-to-interaction-flows-a4f783402529>
- <https://medium.com/sketch-app-sources/user-journey-maps-or-user-flows-what-to-do-first-48e825e73aa8>