



Labels and buttons on forms

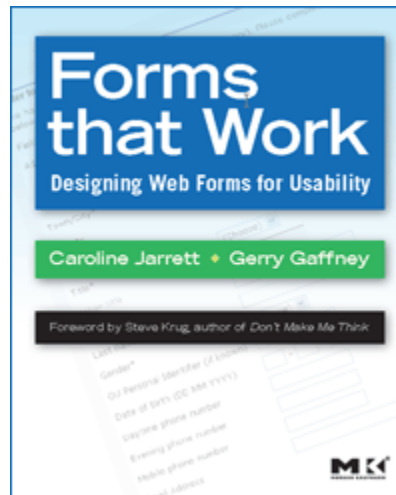
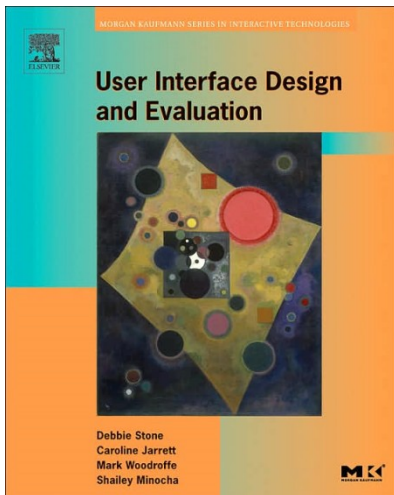
and other time-consuming forms controversies

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Agenda

Where people look on forms

What that implies for

- placing labels
- placing buttons

Let's stress about unimportant details

Two other details that affect users

Final reminder: it's what you ask and why that really matters

Reading forms is different from using them

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar containing `http://library.cornwall.gov.uk/www-bin/www_talis`. The page title is "Author Search". On the left is a navigation menu for "CORNWALL LIBRARY" with options: Author/Title, Author/Keyword, Title, Keyword, Author, Classification, Control Number, Borrower Info, Help, and Main. Below the menu are "Back" and "Forward" buttons. The main content area has a search form with an "Author" input field (with examples like "Shakespeare, William" or "Dickens, C"), a "Collection" dropdown menu (with options: Main Catalogue, Childrens, Audio/Visual), and "Begin Search" and "Clear entry" buttons. Below the form are four filter links: "Limit by Date", "Limit by Language", "Limit by Format", and "Limit by Opus". The footer of the page reads "Talis Information Ltd".

Are my observations confirmed by eye-tracking? A look at some heat maps

The screenshot shows the Open University website with several eye-tracking heat maps overlaid. The heat maps are color-coded, with red indicating the highest level of user attention. Key areas of high attention include the 'Request a general or subject-specific print prospectus' link, the 'How can I get an OU prospectus?' link in the 'SUBJECTS' sidebar, and the 'Request a printed prospectus' link. There are also red 'X' marks on the 'Request a printed prospectus' link and a red 'X' at the bottom of the page, indicating areas of low engagement or potential user error. The website layout includes a navigation bar at the top with links like 'OU Home', 'Study at the OU', 'About the OU', 'Research at the OU', 'Search', and 'Contact the OU'. A sidebar on the left contains a 'SUBJECTS' menu with several options, and a main content area with a heading 'How can I get an OU prospectus' and a list of bullet points. A right sidebar contains an 'ON THIS PAGE' section with a link to 'Request a prospectus' and an image of two people high-fiving.

Prospectus Request

Ordering a prospectus

- User has chosen a prospectus
- Postcode lookup for the address

If you need HELP
please email General-Enquiries@open.ac.uk
or call us on
+44 (0)845 300 6090

Order for myself

We have filled in your address (amend where necessary). Please complete the details below

Fields marked * must be filled in

Address*

Town/City*

County

Postcode

Title*

Other title

First name*

Last name*

Gender*

OU Personal Identifier (if known)

Date of birth (DD MM YYYY) - -

Daytime phone number

Evening phone number

Mobile phone number

Email Address

Which of these subject areas are you most interested in studying with the Open University?

Which of these best describes your reason for enquiring about study with the Open University?

When would you like to start studying with the Open University?

How did you find out about us?
Please tell us how you found out about our website

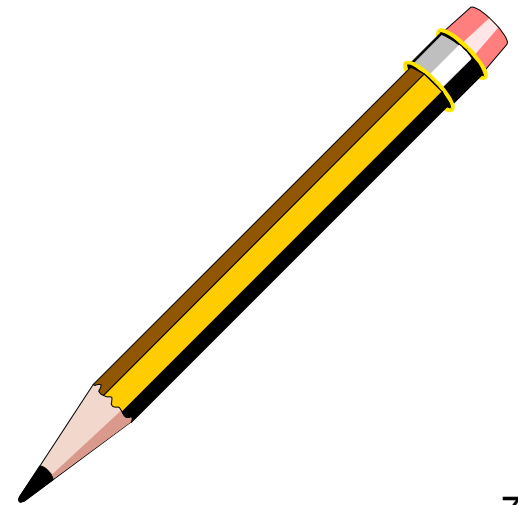
If the promotion you saw has a response code please enter it here (e.g. UGCHYZ)...

If you do not have the response code in which publication/website did you see our promotion?

[proceed](#)

Now try it for yourself

- Look at this printout of a forms page
- Circle the places where you think that users looked
- Put a cross on the places where users clicked



Prospectus Request

Order for myself

We have filled in your address (amend where necessary). Please complete the details below

Fields marked * must be filled in

Address*

Town/City*

County

Postcode

Title*

Other title

First name*

Last name*

Gender*

OU Personal Identifier (if known)

Date of birth (DD MM YYYY) - -

Daytime phone number

Evening phone number

Mobile phone number


Email Address

Which of these subject areas are you

If you need HELP
please email General-Enquiries@open.ac.uk
or call us on
+44 (0)845 300 6090

One person's heat map

- Small green dots show narrow focus on labels and left end of fields
- Red crosses show clicks

 Accessibility

Prospectus Request

If you need HELP please email [General: Enquiries@open.ac.uk](mailto:General.Enquiries@open.ac.uk) or call us on +44 (0)845 300 6090

Order for myself

We have filled in your address (amend where necessary). Please complete the details below

Fields marked * must be filled in

Address*	<input type="text"/>
Town/City*	<input type="text" value="READING"/>
County	<input type="text" value="Berks"/>
Postcode	<input type="text" value="RG4 6..."/>
Title*	<input type="text" value="(Choose)"/>
Other title	<input type="text"/>
First name*	<input type="text"/>
Last name*	<input type="text"/>
Gender*	<input type="text" value="(Choose)"/>
OU Personal Identifier (if known)	<input type="text"/>
Date of birth (DD MM YYYY)	<input type="text" value=" - -"/>
Daytime phone number	<input type="text"/>
Evening phone number	<input type="text"/>
Mobile phone number	<input type="text"/>
Email Address	<input type="text"/>
Which of these subject areas are you most interested in studying with the Open University?	<input type="text" value="(Choose)"/>
Which of these best describes your reason for enquiring about study with the Open University?	<input type="text" value="(Choose)"/>
When would you like to start studying with the Open University?	<input type="text" value="(Choose)"/>
How did you find out about us? Please tell us how you found out about our website	<input type="text"/>
If the promotion you saw has a response code please enter it here (e.g. UGCKYZ)...	<input type="text"/>
If you do not have the response code in which publication/website did you see our promotion?	<input type="text" value="(Choose)"/>

An aggregate

- Users focus on the left-hand edge of the fields
- Users read the labels

The Open University

Accessibility

Prospectus Request

Order for myself

We have filled in your address (amend where necessary). Please complete the details below

Fields marked * must be filled in

If you need HELP please email GeneralEnquiries@open.ac.uk or call us on +44 (0)845 300 6090

Address*

Town/City*

County

Postcode

Title* (Choose)

Other title

First name*

Last name*

Gender* (Choose)

OU Personal Identifier (if known)

Date of birth (DD MM YYYY) - -

Daytime phone number

Evening phone number

Mobile phone number

Email Address

Which of these subject areas are you most interested in studying with the Open University? (Choose)

Which of these best describes your reason for enquiring about study with the Open University? (Choose)

When would you like to start studying with the Open University? (Choose)

How did you find out about us? Please tell us how you found out about our website

If the promotion you saw has a response code please enter it here (e.g. UGCNY2)...

If you do not have the response code in which publication/website did you see our promotion? (Choose)

The 'narrow focus' means big jumps for the users' eyes.

Country

Postcode

Title* (Choose) X

Other title

First name* X X

Last name* X

Gender* (Choose) X

OU Personal Identifier (if known)

Date of birth (DD MM YYYY) X - X - X

Daytime phone number

Evening phone number X

Mobile phone number

Agenda

Where people look on forms

What that implies for

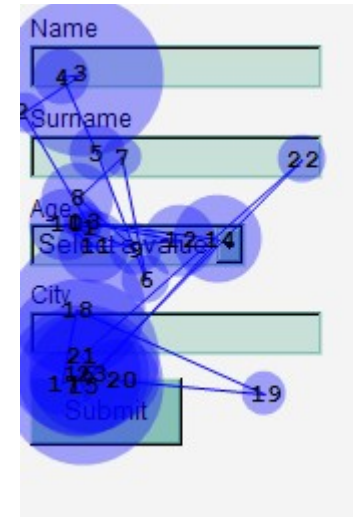
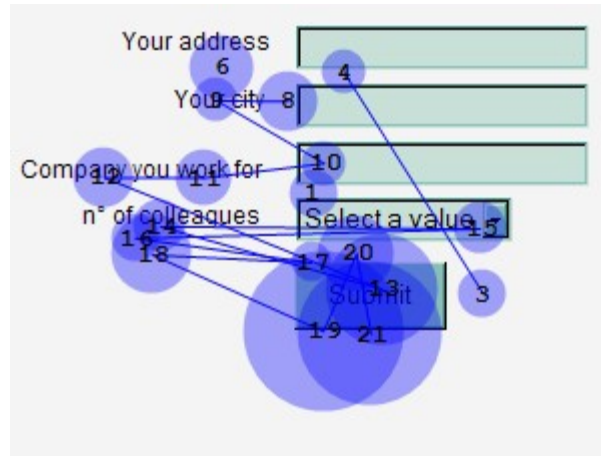
- placing labels
- placing buttons

Let's stress about unimportant details

Two other details that affect users

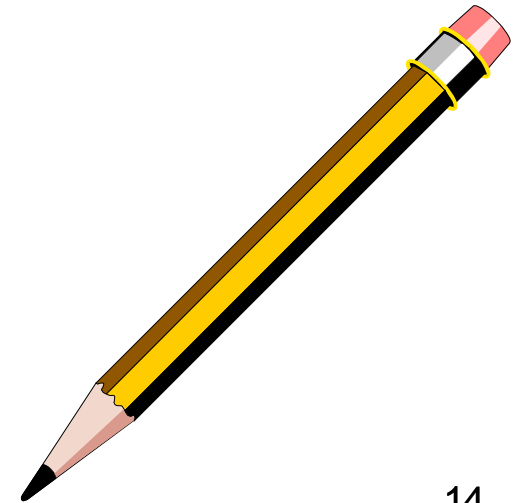
Final reminder: it's what you ask and why that really matters

Matteo Penzo's recommendation: "Place labels above or right-align them"



Are all these questions equivalent? Where do the answers come from?

- Your address
 - Your city
 - Company you work for
 - Number of colleagues
- Your address
 - Your city
 - Company you work for
 - n^o of colleagues
- Name
 - Surname
 - Age
 - City



Easy questions and hard questions prompt different patterns of reading

- Users glance at populated answers
- Users look mostly at the left end of the answer space for easy questions
- Users read complex instructions quite carefully...
- ... provided they are on the way to their goal

If you need HELP
please email General-Enquiries@open.ac.uk
or call us on
+44 (0)845 300 6090

Order for myself

We have filled in your address (amend where necessary). Please complete below

Fields marked * must be filled in

Address*

Town/City*

County

Postcode

Title* (Choose)

Other title

First name*

Last name*

Gender* (Choose)

OU Personal Identifier (if known)

Date of birth (DD MM YYYY) - -

Daytime phone number

Evening phone number

Mobile phone number

Email Address

Which of these subject areas are you most interested in studying with the Open University? (Choose)

Which of these best describes your reason for enquiring about study with the Open University? (Choose)

When would you like to start studying with the Open University? (Choose)

How did you find out about us? Please tell us how you found out about our website

If the promotion you saw has a response code please enter it here (e.g. UGCKY2)...

If you do not have the response code in which publication/website did you see our promotion? (Choose)

proceed

Update:

Labels above the fields may be no faster than right aligned labels


- Das, McEwan and Douglas investigated label placement
- Chose a simple form with simple questions
- Found no difference between labels above the fields and right-aligned labels


Das, McEwan and Douglas (2008)


Using eye-tracking to evaluate label alignment in online forms,


NordiCHI '08: Proceedings of the 5th Nordic conference on Human-computer interaction: building bridges


A section of a form where I think left-aligned labels really are necessary


Did you receive any **interest** etc, for example, from UK* 


banks, UK building societies, UK unit trusts? 


Did you receive any **dividends**, for example, UK companies,* 


authorised unit trusts, open-ended investment companies,
foreign companies (up to £300)? 


Did you receive any **UK pensions, annuities or state*** 


benefits, for example, state pension, occupational pension,
retirement annuity, incapacity benefit? 


Did you receive any **other UK income**, for example,* 

Employment lump sums, Share schemes, Life insurance
gains, Any other income? 

Have you made any **income tax losses** in the year* 

2007-08? 

Are you liable to **pension savings tax charges** or have you* 

received payments from overseas pension schemes? 

Method 1 (more effort, and may not work): Decide where to put your labels according to your users, their goals, and the questions

Your users and their goals	Your questions ...	Put the labels ...
Willing to reveal the answers; filling in the form helps them to achieve a goal	Simple, only a few of them	Above
	Simple but lots of them	Right-justified
Unwilling to reveal answers or reluctant to fill in the form	Complex	Left-justified
	Simple or complex	Left-justified (you'll need more explanation)

Users can survive a lot

Checkout

Step 1: Billing and Shipping Address

Step 1 2 3 4

*Indicates a required field

If you are a new customer complete this form.

Billing Address

Title (Mr., Mrs., Miss, etc.)

* First Name

* Last Name

Company

* Address Line 1

Address Line 2

Address Line 3

* City/Town

* Postal Code

* Country

* Daytime Phone Number

* E-mail Address (must be accurate for us to send your order confirmation)

Shipping Options

- Ship entire order to my billing address
- Ship entire order to ONE address (other than my billing address)
- Ship items in this order to MORE THAN ONE address

Catalogue Code

If you have a printed catalogue, please enter the catalogue code from the blue box on the back of the catalogue (See below).

CATALOG CODE

CUSTOMER CODE

WEB COUPON CODE

Catalogue Code

Coupon Code

If you have a printed coupon to apply to your order, enter the code here:

Coupon Code

[Continue](#)

Update: Roland Feichtinger looked at labels under the boxes

Einzugsermächtigung



<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Kundennummer	Frau	Herr	Firma	andere:	Titel	Firmenbuchnr.
<input type="text"/>						
Name/Firmenname/Anschrift						
<input type="text"/>						
Kontoinhaber (Name/Firmenname)						
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>				
Kontonummer	BLZ	Name der Bank				
<input type="text"/>						

E-Mail-Adresse (optional) Ich bin widerruflich damit einverstanden, zu Werbezwecken per E-Mail, Post oder per Telefon kontaktiert zu werden.

Hiermit ermächtige(n) ich/wir Konica Minolta Business Solutions Austria GmbH widerruflich, die von mir/uns zu entrichtenden Zahlungen bei Fälligkeit zu Lasten meines/unseres Kontos einzuziehen. Damit ist auch meine/unsere kontoführende Bank ermächtigt, die Lastschriften einzulösen, wobei für diese keine Verpflichtung zur Einlösung besteht, insbesondere dann nicht, wenn mein/unser Konto die erforderliche Deckung nicht aufweist. Ich/Wir habe(n) das Recht, innerhalb von 42 Kalendertagen ab Abbuchungstag ohne Angabe von Gründen die Rückbuchung bei meiner/unserer Bank zu veranlassen.

Datum _____ Unterschrift/firmenmäßige Zeichnung des Kontoinhabers _____

Bitte senden Sie diese Ermächtigung an Konica Minolta Business Solutions Austria GmbH, Amalienstr. 59-61, 1130 Wien, z.H.: Buchhaltung

Konica Minolta Business Solutions Austria GmbH, Amalienstraße 59-61, 1130 Wien, Tel: +43 (0)1 87882, Fax-DW: 112, Homepage: www.konicaminolta.at

Sitz: Wien, Gerichtsstand: Handelsgericht Wien • Bankverbindung: Bank Austria Creditanstalt AG, Kto.-Nr.: 245 109 272/00, BLZ 12000 • FB-Nr: FN 197364t • DVR-Nr: 0556459, UID-Nr: ATU49754500, ARA-Lizenz-Nr: 1302

<http://uxmatters.com/mt/archives/2010/10/label-placement-in-austrian-forms-with-some-lessons-for-english-forms.php>

Roland found the crucial point: labels need to be closely associated with fields

The image shows a user interface with two sections. The top section is for personal information, indicated by a person icon in the top-left corner. It contains five input fields: a single-line text field labeled "National ID", two side-by-side single-line text fields labeled "Family Name" and "Given Name", a dropdown menu labeled "Sex", and a single-line text field labeled "Date of Birth" with a calendar icon to its right. The bottom section is for address information, indicated by a house icon in the top-left corner. It contains three input fields: a wide single-line text field labeled "Country, Postal Code, City" with a search icon to its right, a single-line text field labeled "Street" with a search icon to its right, and a single-line text field labeled "House Number".

Labels too far from the fields

The image shows a user registration form with two sections. The top section is for personal information and the bottom section is for address information. In both sections, the labels for the input fields are positioned significantly below the fields themselves, which is a poor user interface design choice.

Personal Information Section:

- Input field:
- Label: National ID
- Input field:
- Label: Family Name
- Input field:
- Label: Given Name
- Input field:
- Label: Sex
- Input field:
- Label: Date of Birth

Address Section:

- Input field:
- Label: Country, Postal Code, City
- Input field:
- Label: Street
- Input field:
- Label: House Number



Submit a Complaint

AARP Elder Watch
A Program with the Colorado Attorney General and the AARP Foundation

Home

Do you have a fraud or financial exploitation concern?
Complete this complaint form or call us Monday - Friday 9am to 4 pm
Toll Free in Colorado: **1-800-222-4444**
Denver Metro: **303-222-4444**

If using this form, please note that labels in **bold with an asterisk (*)** are required

Your Information

* **First Name:**

* **Last Name:**

Phone Number: (nnn-xxx-xxxx)

Email:

Would you like to receive a status update?
 Yes No

* **Relationship to Victim:**

* **Type of Complaint:**

* **Estimated Amount of Financial Loss:** (to the nearest \$)

* **Are you the Contact?** Yes No

Will you share your fraud experience with the public in order to help others? Yes No

How did you hear about us?

Contact Information

* **First Name:**

* **Last Name:**

* **Phone Number:** (nnn-xxx-xxxx)

Email:

Method 2 (easier, and guaranteed success): Choose anything harmonious then test and test

- Choose an arrangement that looks harmonious to you
- Make sure each label is closely associated with its field
- The only guaranteed way of achieving a good form is:
 - Test YOUR form with YOUR users
 - Make changes based on what you find
 - Test again with (different) users
 - Make more changes
 - Repeat until the form works

Sign up

A variety of plans to fit everyone's needs. You can upgrade, downgrade, or cancel any time.
All pay accounts include a 30-day Free Trial.

Create your administrator account

This is the master log-in for your account. All fields are required. Once your account is set up you can add accounts for other people as well. Each person will have their own username and password.

First name

Last name

Email

Username

What you'll use to log in (or [use OpenID](#)).

Password

Password again

Confirm your password by entering it again.

Company/Group

Examples: Apple, UCLA, Red Cross

Time zone

Which web browsers work with Basecamp?

Any of the following web browsers work with Basecamp: **IE 7** (PC), **Firefox 2** or later (Mac, PC, or Linux), **Safari 2** or later (Mac).

Can I upgrade, downgrade, or cancel later?

Absolutely. Basecamp is a month-to-month service so you can upgrade, downgrade, or cancel at any time.

Which forms of payment do you accept?

We accept Visa, Mastercard, and American Express. We do not accept POs, checks, or invoices to be paid at a later date. We do email a "PAID" invoice each time you are billed.



Screenshot
best available

You're just 60 seconds away from your new Basecamp account.

Already use a 37signals product? Then [sign in](#) with your 37signals ID to save time.

1 Create your Basecamp account

First name

Last name

Email

Company

(Or non-profit, organization, group, school, etc.)

Time zone 

Now choose a username & password

Username

This is what you'll use to sign in. (or use [OpenID](#))

Password

6 characters or longer with at least one number is safest.

Enter your password again for verification

2 Create your Basecamp site address

Every Basecamp site has its own web address. For example, if you want your Basecamp site to be at `http://acme.basecamphq.com` you'd enter `acme` in the field below. **Letters & numbers only.**

http:// .basecamphq.com

Thanks 
for choosing
Basecamp!

You're in good company when
you use 37signals products.

Over 3,000,000 users

Thousands sign up every week

Secure and reliable

Your data is backed up daily

Great customer service

Fast, accurate, and friendly help

Agenda

Where people look on forms

What that implies for

- placing labels
- placing buttons

Let's stress about unimportant details

Two other details that affect users

Final reminder: it's what you ask and why that really matters

Buttons matter to users.


The image shows a screenshot of a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window. The main window displays the 'Phaser 8500DN' product page from 'CentraWare Internet Services'. The page includes a printer image, a 'Features' list, and a 'Refresh Status' button. A secondary browser window is open to 'http://www.tekcolor.com - Drivers - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by ev...'. This window shows a 'Drivers' page with sections for 'Windows Users' and 'Macintosh Users'. A modal dialog box with a blue header and the word 'XEROX' in red is overlaid on the page. The dialog box contains two input fields, one above the other, for user information. The browser's address bar shows 'http://192.168.1.16/'. The footer of the page contains the text 'COPYRIGHT © 2005 XEROX CORPORATION. All Rights Reserved.' and the 'XEROX.' logo.

Home - Phaser 8500DN - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by evesham.com

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Address http://192.168.1.16/

CentraWare Internet Services
Phaser 8500



Ink Low

Name: Phaser 8500DN
DNS:
IP: 192.168.1.16
Contact:
Location:
Status: warning

Refresh Status

Features

- ✓ Premium color printing
- ✓ Fast printing up to 24 ppm and unrivalled seconds to first page
- ✓ Outstanding performance with 800 MHz processor
- ✓ Easy to load solid ink consumables
- ✓ True Adobe PostScript 3
- ✓ Easy installation and use with Phaser Software

Optional Features (✓ = installed on this printer)

- ✓ Automatic two-sided printing
- 525-Sheet feeder
- Advanced Features
- ✓ Network Interface

Printer Drivers
[Install Printer Drivers](#)

http://www.tekcolor.com - Drivers - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by ev...

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Address http://www.tekcolor.com

CentraWare Internet Services
Phaser® 8500/85

Drivers

Windows Users

Click the link below to begin the

- [Windows Driver Instal](#)

Macintosh Users

Click the link below to download

- [Macintosh Driver Inst](#)

XEROX

Internet

COPYRIGHT © 2005 XEROX CORPORATION. All Rights Reserved.

XEROX.

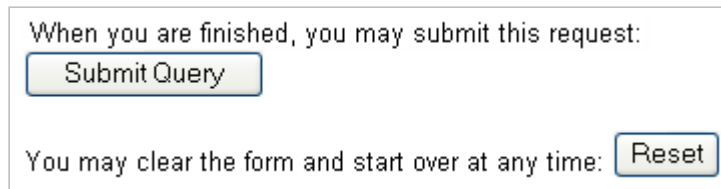
1. Label the button with what it does.
2. If the user doesn't want to do it, don't have a button for it.

- “OK” works – if it makes sense to say “OK” at that point
- “Reset” probably doesn’t work
 - Reset Button: INPUT TYPE=RESET

An INPUT element with `TYPE=RESET` represents an input option, typically a button, that instructs the user agent to reset the form's fields to their initial states. The VALUE attribute, if present, indicates a label for the input (button).

When you are finished, you may submit this request: `<input type=submit>
`

You may clear the form and start over at any time: `<input type=reset>`



When you are finished, you may submit this request:

You may clear the form and start over at any time:

http://www.w3.org/MarkUp/html-spec/html-spec_8.html#SEC8.1.2.8

<http://www.usabilitynews.com/news/article1944.asp>

LukeW writes about buttons

TYPICAL WEB FORM

Personal Information

First Name

Last Name

Contact Information

Address

City

County

Post Code Country

| [Cancel](#)

PRIMARY ACTION

SECONDARY ACTION

Which one do you prefer? Why? Is there a better option?

A

Post Code Country

| [Cancel](#)

B

Post Code Country

C

Post Code Country

D

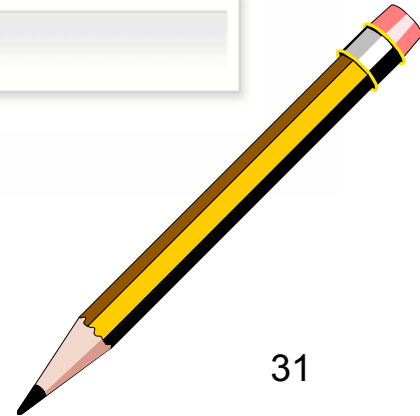
Post Code Country

E

Post Code Country

F

Post Code Country



Which one do you prefer? Why? Is there a better option?

A

Post Code Country

| [Cancel](#)

D

Post Code Country

B

Post Code Country

E

Post Code Country

C

Post Code Country

F

Post Code Country

“Only Option E performed poorly during our testing”

A new selection of options: get rid of E, add another one?

A

Post Code Country United Kingdom ▾

| [Cancel](#)

B

Post Code Country United Kingdom ▾

C

Post Code Country United Kingdom ▾

D

Post Code Country United Kingdom ▾

F

Post Code Country United Kingdom ▾

G

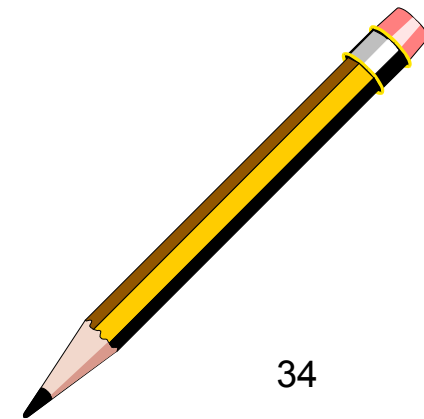
Post Code Country United Kingdom ▾

[Throw away my work](#)

Remember the basic eye movement:
look for a box, turn left to read the label

Town/City*	<input type="text" value="LEIGHTON BUZZARD"/>
County	<input type="text" value="Beds"/>
Postcode	<input type="text" value=""/>
Title*	<input type="text" value="(Choose)"/>
Other title	<input type="text" value=""/>
First name*	<input type="text" value=""/>
Last name*	<input type="text" value=""/>
Gender*	<input type="text" value="(Choose)"/>
OU Personal identifier (if known)	<input type="text" value=""/>
Date of Birth (DD-MM-YYYY)	<input type="text" value=""/> - <input type="text" value=""/> - <input type="text" value=""/>

Where to put the button?



Best place for a button: aligned with left-hand end of text boxes

Town/City* LEIGHTON BUZZARD

County Beds

Postcode

Title* (Choose) ▾

Other title

First Name* [text box]

Last Name* [text box]

Gender* (Choose) ▾

OU Personal Identifier (if known) [text box]

Date of Birth (DD-MM-YYYY) [] - [] - []

Looks here last

Looks here first for button

Then looks here second

Current: users had no problems

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Prospectus Request" with a sub-section "Order for myself". The form contains various input fields and dropdown menus for user information and preferences. A "process" button is located at the bottom left of the form area.

Prospectus Request

Order for myself

We have filled in your address (amend where necessary). Please complete the details below

Fields marked * must be filled in

Address*

Town/City* LEIGHTON BUZZARD

County Beds

Postcode

Title* ((Choose) v)

Other title

First name*

Last name*

Gender* ((Choose) v)

OU Personal Identifier (if known)

Date of birth (DD-MM-YYYY) - -

Daytime phone number

Evening phone number

Mobile phone number

Email Address

Which of these subject areas are you most interested in studying with the Open University? ((Choose) v)

Which of these best describes your reason for enquiring about study with the Open University? ((Choose) v)

When would you like to start studying with the Open University? ((Choose) v)

How did you find out about us? Please tell us how you found out about our website

If the promotion you see has a response code please enter it here (e.g. US0YVZ)

If you do not have the response code in which publication/website did you see our promotion? ((Choose) v)

process

Better: away from fields

The image shows a web form titled "Prospectus Request" with a sub-section "Order for myself". The form contains various input fields and dropdown menus. A blue "proceed" button is located at the bottom right of the form area.

Prospectus Request

Order for myself

We have filled in your address (amend where necessary). Please complete the details below

Fields marked * must be filled in

Address*

Town/City* LEIGHTON BUZZARD

County Beds

Postcode

Title*

Other title

First name*

Last name*

Gender*

OU Personal Identifier (if known)

Date of birth (DD-MM-YYYY) - -

Daytime phone number

Evening phone number

Mobile phone number

Email Address

Which of these subject areas are you most interested in studying with the Open University?

Which of these best describes your reason for enquiring about study with the Open University?

When would you like to start studying with the Open University?

How did you find out about us?
Please tell us how you found out about our website

If the promotion you see has a response code please enter it here (e.g. US01YZ)

If you do not have the response code in which publication/website did you see our promotion?

proceed

Best: in line with left edge of fields

Prospectus Request

Order for myself

We have filled in your address (amend where necessary). Please complete the details below

Fields marked * must be filled in

Address*

Town/City*

County

Postcode

Title*

Other title

First name*

Last name*

Gender*

OU Personal Identifier (if known)

Date of birth (DD-MM-YYYY) - -

Daytime phone number

Evening phone number

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Email Address

Which of these subject areas are you most interested in studying with the Open University?

Which of these best describes your reason for enquiring about study with the Open University?

When would you like to start studying with the Open University?

How did you find out about us? Please tell us how you found out about our website

If the promotion you see has a response code please enter it here (e.g. US0YVZ).

If you do not have the response code in which publication/website did you see our promotion?

proceed

If you need HELP please email help@open.ac.uk or call us on 044 33845 300 4090

Accessibility

Complication: a complex form needs a 'back' button

The image shows a screenshot of a 'Prospectus Request' form. The form is titled 'Order for myself' and contains various input fields for personal and contact information. At the bottom of the form, there are two buttons: 'back' and 'proceed'. The 'back' button is highlighted in blue, indicating it is the focus of the discussion. The form includes fields for Address, Town/City, County, Postcode, Title, Other title, First name, Last name, Gender, OU Personal Identifier, Date of birth, Daytime phone number, Evening phone number, Mobile phone number, and Email Address. There are also several dropdown menus for selecting options like 'Which of these subject areas are you most interested in studying with the Open University?', 'Which of these best describes your reason for enquiring about study with the Open University?', 'When would you like to start studying with the Open University?', 'How did you find out about us?', and 'If you do not have the response code in which publication/website did you see our promotion?'. A 'back' button is located at the bottom left of the form, and a 'proceed' button is at the bottom right.

Wrong.
Users will click
'back' in error

Slightly better, but still a high risk that users will click the wrong button

Prospectus Request

Order for myself

We have filled in your address (amend where necessary). Please complete the details below

Fields marked * must be filled in

Address*

Town/City* LEIGHTON BUZZARD

County Beds

Postcode

Title* ((Choose))

Other title

First name*

Last name*

Gender* ((Choose))

OU Personal Identifier (if known)

Date of birth (DD-MM-YYYY) - -

Daytime phone number

Evening phone number

Mobile phone number

Email Address

Which of these subject areas are you most interested in studying with the Open University? ((Choose))

Which of these best describes your reason for enquiring about study with the Open University? ((Choose))

When would you like to start studying with the Open University? ((Choose))

How did you find out about us?
Please tell us how you found out about our website

If the promotion you see has a response code please enter it here (e.g. US0YVZ)

If you do not have the response code in which publication/website did you see our promotion? ((Choose))

[Back](#) [Proceed](#)

Correct.

'Back' is secondary action and out of sight

Prospectus Request

Order for myself

We have filled in your address (amand where necessary). Please complete the details below

Fields marked * must be filled in

Address*

Town/City* LEIGHTON BUZZARD

County Beds

Postcode

Title* ((Choose))

Other title

First name*

Last name*

Gender* ((Choose))

OU Personal Identifier (if known)

Date of birth (DD-MM-YYYY) - -

Daytime phone number

Evening phone number

Mobile phone number

Email Address

Which of these subject areas are you most interested in studying with the Open University? ((Choose))

Which of these best describes your reason for enquiring about study with the Open University? ((Choose))

When would you like to start studying with the Open University? ((Choose))

How did you find out about us? Please tell us how you found out about our website

If the promotion you see has a response code please enter it here (e.g. US01YZ).

If you do not have the response code in which publication/website did you see our promotion? ((Choose))

Method 2 (easier, and guaranteed success): Choose anything sensible then test and test

- Any arrangement of buttons that puts the SUBMIT (primary action) button where users expect to find it will probably be OK
- Make sure that the SUBMIT button cannot be confused with destructive buttons
- The only guaranteed way of achieving a good form is:
 - Test YOUR form with YOUR users
 - Make changes based on what you find
 - Test again with (different) users
 - Make more changes
 - Repeat until the form works

Agenda

Where people look on forms

What that implies for

- placing labels
- placing buttons

Let's stress about unimportant details

Two other details that affect users

Final reminder: it's what you ask and why that really matters

Colons at the ends of labels are a matter of considerable debate

Where am I? telegraph.co.uk > My Telegraph > Register

Telegraph.co.uk

Telegraph Blogs myTelegraph.co.uk in association with CISCO

Home My news People Most popular Tags Announcements Help

Join the debate. Join My Telegraph

Already a member?

Please complete all fields

Screen name (only alphanumeric characters)

This is the name that will be displayed against all comments and posts that

First name

Last name

What is myTelegraph

Join the debate with the Telegraph

- Read blogs from other Telegraph
- Write your own blog
- Share your opinions with the res
- Save all your comments in one p

Joining is free and takes only a few

First name

Last name

The New York Times

Already a Member? [Log In](#)

Registering for NYTimes.com is free and easy!

Registration provides free and instant access to breaking news, reviews, online classifieds and more on NYTimes.com.

[Why Register?](#) | [What is TimesSelect?](#) | [Privacy Concerns](#) | [Cookies Information](#) | [FAQ's](#)

Create an Account (Required)

Choose a Member ID:

Choose a Password: (Five character minimum)

Re-enter your Password:

Secret Question: -- Select One -- [What's this?](#)

Secret Answer:

E-Mail Address: [Why do we need this?](#)

NYTimes.com will only use this address with your permission.

Remember my Member ID and password on this computer.

Choose a Member ID:

Choose a Password:

Re-enter your Password:

Pick one style. Stick with it. It's not worth arguing about.

<http://www.usabilitynews.com/news/article3200.asp> and
<http://www.usabilitynews.com/news/article3112.asp>

Sentence or title case?

Sentence case wins. (But only just).

- This is sentence case
- This is Title Case
- This Is Capitalisation Of Each Initial Letter
- ISO-9241 part 17 says
 - "Initial upper-case (capital) letter for field labels: To facilitate readability, the text field labels begin with an upper-case letter. The rest of the label should contain lower case (small) letters except for cases where the label is a logo, an acronym or language convention that requires each word in the label to begin with a capital letter."
- Sentence case is slightly more legible due to familiarity
- It's not worth changing a big suite of forms to fix this

Required field indicator?

There's a theme developing here

- **Miriam Frost Jungwirth:**

- “I was once charged with testing that.
Seriously. \$10,000 of manhours testing asterisk placement.

There was no difference in user performance. At all.“

- **I'm a little more interested in this discussion:**

- Indicators placed to the right of the field are likely to be invisible
- Put the text describing the indicator at the **top** of the **fields**
(that is, not at the end of the form and not in the instructions)
- Use the same indicator in both places (text and next to required field)
- Use the alt-text 'required' (not 'asterisk')
- Always indicate required; don't switch to indicating optional
- If you feel the urge to indicate optional, use the full word 'optional'
- Do not use colour on its own as an indicator

An example of required field indicators at the wrong end of the field

Department of
MDOT Transportation

Michigan.gov
An Official State of Michigan Web Site

Michigan.gov Home | MDOT Home | Site Map | Contact MDOT | FAQ | State Web Sites

Search

Printer Friendly | Text Version | Email Page | A- A+ Text Size

Order a Construction Prequalification Packet

To request a prequalification packet via email, fill in this form and click the Submit button below. * **REQUIRED INFORMATION**

Name: *

Email: *

Company: *

Address: *

Address 2:

City: *

State: * ZIP: *

* Required

doing business

- > Forms
- > Contractor Services
 - Disadvantaged Business Enterprise
 - Prequalification
 - Bid Letting
 - Payments & Awards
- > Vendor/Consultant Services
- > Local Agency Program
- > Passenger Transportation

roads & travel

rail & public transit

bridges, borders & ferries

news & information

projects & programs

Departments/Agencies

Online Services

Surveys

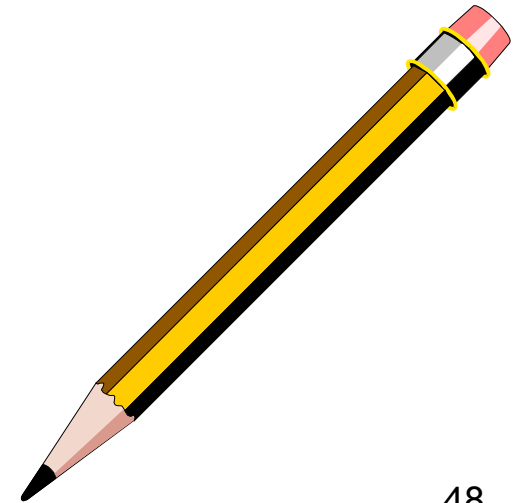
RSS Feeds

Related Content

- How to Become Construction Prequalified
- MDOT Prequalified Contractor Directories

Which is the most important problem

- Examine the Michigan Department of Transport form
- Find as many usability problems as you can
- Decide which ONE problem is the most important



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Two other
details that
affect users

1. Shorter preambles
2. 'False ends'

Tired of calling a list of mortgage providers only to be asked the same questions over and over again? Let our lenders and brokers come to you! By providing the following information, one or more companies in your area will provide a "personalized quote" on your borrowing request. Most will respond in less than 24 hours. Please complete this form as thoroughly as possible.

We respect your privacy. This is a confidential request and your personal information will only be sent to lenders and brokers in your area who are customers of CompareInterestRates.com For more information, see our [privacy statement](#).

Property State

Purpose of loan

Preferred mortgage product
(if you want quotes on multiple products please indicate additional products in the comment field below)

Approximate loan amount you wish to borrow \$
(please use whole numbers without any commas, decimals or dollar signs)

Purchase price of home or approximate value for a refinance \$
(please use whole numbers without any commas, decimals or dollar signs)

If purchasing a new home you have identified, when is the closing date?

Contact Information:

First Name
 Last Name
 Home Phone # () -
 Business Phone # () -
 Email Address

Please rate your credit

Are you willing to document your income throughout the loan process?

Have you ever had a bankruptcy?

Additional information, comments, and questions.

Do you wish to also receive quotes on home owner's insurance?

Do you wish to subscribe to our Daily Mortgage Rate Update email?

Please press submit button only once. Multiple submissions may transmit your request to more lenders than you requested.

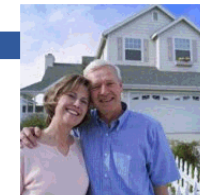
Submit Your Personalized Rate Quote Request

Start Over

A/B testing

Varied:

- photo
- background
- colours
- shading
- buttons
- preamble



This mortgage rate quote form will take approximately 30 seconds to complete. Here's how our service works:

- Complete our short form
- We will search hundreds of mortgage lenders and thousands of loan programs in our database
- You will then receive quotes from up to 4 competitive lenders in your state
- You choose the mortgage lender with the best rate and loan terms and save money

Property State

Purpose of loan

Preferred mortgage product
(if you want quotes on multiple products please indicate additional products in the comment field below)

Approximate loan amount you wish to borrow \$
(please use whole numbers without any commas, decimals or dollar signs)

Purchase price of home or approximate value for a refinance \$
(please use whole numbers without any commas, decimals or dollar signs)

If purchasing a new home you have identified, when is the closing date?

Contact Information:

First Name
 Last Name
 Home Phone # () -
 Business Phone # () -
 Email Address

Please rate your credit

Will you document your income? Yes No

Have you ever had a bankruptcy?

Additional information, comments, and questions.

Submit Information To Lenders

Please press submit button only once. Multiple submissions may transmit your request to more lenders than you requested.

In our 2004 study, we found that only a better preamble made any real difference

- We tested a wide selection of visual variants of a form
- Variants improved conversion rates
- The only variation that achieved statistical significance was the improved preamble:
 - Shorter
 - Clearer
 - Better layout

Sign up

A variety of plans to fit everyone's needs. You can upgrade, downgrade, or cancel any time.
All pay accounts include a 30-day Free Trial.

Create your administrator account

This is the master log-in for your account. All fields are required. Once your account is set up you can add accounts for other people as well. Each person will have their own username and password.

First name

Last name

Email

Username

What you'll use to log in (or [use OpenID](#)).

Password

Password again

Confirm your password by entering it again.

Company/Group

Examples: Apple, UCLA, Red Cross

Time zone

Which web browsers work with Basecamp?

Any of the following web browsers work with Basecamp: **IE 7** (PC), **Firefox 2** or later (Mac, PC, or Linux), **Safari 2** or later (Mac).

Can I upgrade, downgrade, or cancel later?

Absolutely. Basecamp is a month-to-month service so you can upgrade, downgrade, or cancel at any time.

Which forms of payment do you accept?

We accept Visa, Mastercard, and American Express. We do not accept POs, checks, or invoices to be paid at a later date. We do email a "PAID" invoice each time you are billed.



66 words

You're just 60 seconds away from your new Basecamp account.

Already use a 37signals product? Then [sign in](#) with your 37signals ID to save time.

1 Create your Basecamp account

First name

Last name

Email

Company
(Or non-profit, organization, group, school, etc.)

Time zone ▼

Now choose a username & password

Username
This is what you'll use to sign in. (or use [OpenID](#))

Password
6 characters or longer with at least one number is safest.

Enter your password again for verification

2 Create your Basecamp site address

Every Basecamp site has its own web address. For example, if you want your Basecamp site to be at `http://acme.basecamphq.com` you'd enter `acme` in the field below. **Letters & numbers only.**

http:// .basecamphq.com

Thanks  for choosing Basecamp!

You're in good company when you use 37signals products.

Over 3,000,000 users
 Thousands sign up every week

Secure and reliable
 Your data is backed up daily


Great customer service
 Fast, accurate, and friendly help

28 words

Two other
details that
affect users

1. Shorter preambles
2. 'False ends'

'False ends': if it feels like the end of the conversation, users will stop

[contact us](#) [help ?](#) [logout](#)

9 April 2007 EFFORTMARK LTD (Ref 362/E365) £
Tax Year 2006/2007

Employee Details

home

- > Employee List
- > Works Number Update
- Employer Annual Returns**
- > P35 End of Year
- > P38A Supplementary
- > P11Db Expenses & Benefits
- > P9D Batch Submission
- > Employer Actions
- Settings**
- > Employer Details
- > Change Tax Year
- > Feedback

You must complete any fields marked *

Next →

* Why is this employee being added? ?

- New employee with a form P45(3) from a previous employer
- New employee without a form P45(3) and requires a form P46
- Existing employee previously paid below the PAYE threshold and requires a form P46
- Existing employee to add to Employee List

* Surname:

* First name:

Middle name:

Title:
(For example. Mr, Mrs)

* Address line 1:

Address line 2:

Address line 3:

Address line 4:

'False ends': if it feels like the end of the conversation, users will stop

HM Revenue & Customs

contact us help ? logout

21 March 2007 EFFORTMARK LTD (Ref 362/E365) £

P46 - Tax Code Calculation

Tax Year 2005/2006

home

- > Employee List
- > Works Number Update
- Employer Annual Returns**
 - > P35 End of Year
 - > P38A Supplementary
 - > P11Db Expenses & Benefits
 - > P9D Batch Submission
 - > Employer Actions
- Settings**
 - > Employer Details
 - > Change Tax Year
- P46 New Employee**
 - > Statements
 - > **Tax Code Calculation**
- > Feedback

Back

Susan Roberts
AB631452C

Based on the information provided, the tax code to be used for this employee is shown below.

Tax code to be used: **503L**

Tax code operation basis: **week 1 or month 1**

[Do another P45, P46 >](#)

[Submit P45, P46 form\(s\)>](#)

Back

Avoid screens in the middle of forms that have no fields for user entries

- Option 1: save a 'false end' screen for the true end of the conversation
- Option 2: include a question that guides users around the 'false end' screen

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Final reminder: it's what you ask and why that really matters

It's what you ask and why that really matters

- Users rarely abandon forms because of:
 - Label placement
 - Use of colons
 - Required field indicators
 - Sentence or title case
- Users often abandon forms or lie on them because of:
 - Questions that they don't understand
 - Questions that they have no answer for
 - Intrusive questions that are inappropriate to the task
 - Validations that refuse their preferred or correct answer

Thanks
and
please
contact me

Caroline Jarrett

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+44 1525 370379

I'm a consultant, hire me:

Consultancy: www.effortmark.co.uk

Training: www.usabilitythatworks.com

Free stuff:

Forms advice: www.formsthatwork.com

Editing: www.editingthatworks.com

Columns: www.usabilitynews.com

“Caroline’s Corner”

www.uxmatters.com

“Good Questions”