# 10 Usability Principles to guide you through the Web design maze

1. **Motivate**
   Design your site to meet specific user needs and goals. Use motivators to draw different user "personae" into specific parts of your site.

2. **User taskflow**
   Who are your users? What are their tasks and online environment? For a site to be usable, page flow must match workflow.

3. **Architecture — it's 80% of usability**
   Build an efficient navigational structure.
   Remember — if they can't find it in three 3 clicks, they're gone.

4. **Affordance means obvious**
   Make controls understandable. Avoid confusion between emblems, banners, and buttons.

5. **Replicate**
   Why reinvent the wheel? Use ergonomically designed templates for the most common 8–12 page types.

6. **Usability test along the way**
   Test users with low fidelity prototypes early in design.
   Don't wait until the end when it's too late.

7. **Know the technology limitations**
   Identify and optimize for target browsers and user hardware.
   Test HTML, JavaScript, etc for compatibility.

8. **Know user tolerances**
   Users are impatient. Design for a 2–10 second maximum download. Reuse header graphics so they can load from cache. Avoid excessive scrolling.

9. **Multimedia — be discriminating**
   Good animation attracts attention to specific information, then stops.
   Too much movement distracts reading and slows comprehension.

10. **Use a stats package**
    Monitor traffic through your site. Which pages pique user interest? Which pages make users leave? Adjust your site accordingly.

**Human Factors International**

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**'We make software usable.'**

## We can help:

**HFI provides consulting and training in software usability.**

**If you have a specific project in mind or would just like to chat, call 1-800-242-4480.**