Match between System and the Real World

Definition The design should speak the users' language. Use words, phrases, and concepts familiar to the user, rather than internal jargon. Follow real-world conventions, making information appear in a natural and logical order.

The language you should use depends very much on your specific users.

Tip: Ensure users can understand meaning without having to go look up a word’s definition.

Tip: Never assume your understanding of words or concepts will match those of your users.

Tip: User research will help you uncover your users' familiar terminology, as well as their mental models around important concepts.

1 Stovetop controls
When stovetop controls match the layout of heating elements, users can quickly understand which control maps to each heating element.

2 “Car” vs. “automobile”
If users think about this object as a “car,” use that as the label instead.

3 Shopping cart icon
A shopping cart icon is easily recognizable because that feature serves the same purpose as its real-life counterpart.

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