9 Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors

Definition Error messages should be expressed in **plain language** (no error codes), precisely indicate the problem, and constructively suggest a solution.

WRONG WAY

Error messages should be presented with visual treatments that will help users notice and recognize them.

✎ **Tip:** Use *traditional* error message visuals, like bold, red text.

✎ **Tip:** Tell users what went wrong in language they will *understand* — avoid technical jargon.

✎ **Tip:** Offer users a *solution*, like a shortcut that can solve the error immediately.
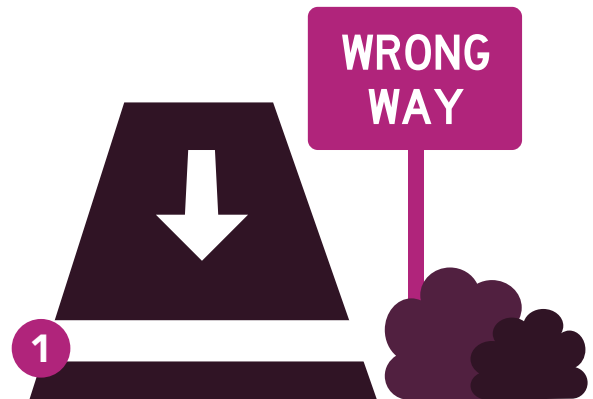
1 *Wrong way sign*
Wrong-way signs on the road remind drivers that they are heading in the wrong direction and ask them to stop.

2 *Internet connection error*
Good internet connection error pages show what happened and constructively instruct users on how to fix the problem.

3 *No search results*
Provide useful help when people encounter search-result pages returning zero results, such as popular topics.

There is no Internet connection
Try:

No results for "Teddy bear"

You might try