

Concept

Responsive design

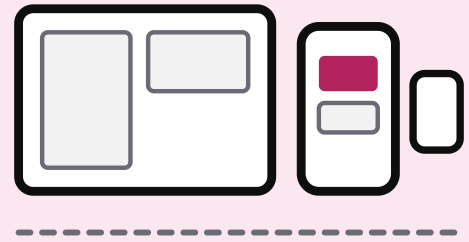
A way of designing websites so that a single page adapts to any screen size, instead of making a version for each device.

In Spanish

Diseño responsive

Origin

Marcotte (2010)



What problem it addresses

There are too many screen sizes to design a version for each one.

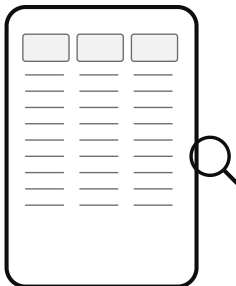
An example

The same article, opened on a phone.

The desktop version, shrunk

Tiny text

you have to zoom in



Three tiny columns. To read, you have to zoom in and scroll from side to side. **You have to fight the page.**

The version that adapts

One column

readable text



A single column, readable text and the menu tucked into a button. **You can read it without zooming.**

It is the same content. What changes is that the page rearranges itself to fit the space it has.

Why it happens



1 The grid uses **proportions**, not fixed measurements, and stretches or shrinks.



2 Images **adjust** to the available width.



3 **Media queries** change the layout when the screen is narrower.

Applications in design

Use it like this
Design the narrowest version first and add as space allows.

Avoid
Hiding content on the phone because "it doesn't fit": people using a phone need it too.

Don't fall for it
Test on real phones, not just by narrowing the browser window.

3 ingredients

What the research says

Marcotte (2010) proposed them to define responsive design: fluid grids, flexible images and CSS media queries.

- ● ● **Solid evidence.** Wroblewski (2011) also proposed starting with the phone: designing first for the smallest screen forces you to decide what is essential.

Connections

Used in

- Mobile app design
- Web design
- Digital publishing
- Design system

Related to

- Grid system

Authors and works

2010	Ethan Marcotte	Named responsive design and described its three ingredients.
2011	Luke Wroblewski	Proposed designing for the phone first.

Sources

Original sources

- Marcotte, E. (2010, May 25). Responsive web design. A List Apart. [View source \(https://alistapart.com/article/responsive-web-design/\)](https://alistapart.com/article/responsive-web-design/)
- Wroblewski, L. (2011). Mobile first. A Book Apart.

Last reviewed: October 25, 2026

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