Figma Workshop | TA-Led Session

Today's Goal

Learn Figma by starting to translate your Assignment 1 screens to digital.

You've spent 5 weeks building design skills with markers and paper. Today you learn the tool that translates those skills to digital — everything you know still applies.

This work goes directly into **A1 Part 2: Digital Translation** — no separate submission.

Remember: analog = explore and decide. Digital = refine

Figma Setup Checklist

Before we start, make sure you have:

— A **Figma account** (Education plan — free)
— Figma open in your browser or the desktop app
— Your **Assignment 1 analog screens** ready as reference

If you haven't signed up yet, go to <u>figma.com/education</u> now.

Analog → Digital: What Transfers

Everything you learned on paper applies in Figma:

Analog Skill	Figma Equivalent
Grid lines on paper	Layout Grid (columns, rows, gutters)
8pt spacing ruler	Auto Layout spacing values
Marker color palette	Color Styles
Typography choices	Text Styles
Screen rectangles	Frames
Flow arrows	Prototype connections
IA diagram (boxes & arrows)	Prototype connections between frames
Navigation elements (tabs, menus)	Components with consistent placement

Figma doesn't replace your design thinking — it gives you precision tools for the decisions you already know how to make.

Figma Basics: Frames

Frames are your screens.

— Create a frame: Press **F** or click the Frame tool

— Choose a device preset (iPhone, iPad, Desktop) or set custom dimensions

— Frames are like artboards — each one is a screen in your app

— Frames can be nested (a frame inside a frame = a component inside a screen)

Start by creating 2–3 frames for the screens you want to recreate.

Figma Basics: Layout Grid

Your 8pt grid, built in.

— Select a frame → right panel → Layout Grid → **+**

— Set to **Columns**: 4 (mobile), 8 (tablet), or 12 (desktop)

— Set **Margin** and **Gutter** to multiples of 8

— Toggle visibility with **Ctrl/Cmd + G**

Set up the same grid you've been drawing by hand.

Figma Basics: Shapes & Text

Drawing elements:

— **R** → Rectangle

— **O** → Ellipse

— **T** → Text

— **L** → Line

— Drag to draw, use the right panel to set exact dimensions

Styling:

— Fill color → click the color swatch

— Stroke → add a border

— Corner radius → round the corners

— Opacity → transparency

— Effects → shadows, blur

Figma Basics: Auto Layout

Your 8pt spacing, automated.

— Select elements → right-click → **Add Auto Layout** (or **Shift + A**)
— Set direction: horizontal or vertical
— Set **gap** between items (use 8, 16, 24, 32, 48)
— Set **padding** around the group (use 8, 16, 24, 32, 48)
— Elements automatically space and resize

Auto Layout = your 8pt spacing scale, enforced by the tool.

Figma Basics: Color Styles

Your color palette, saved and reusable.

— Select an element with a color you want to save

— Click the **4 dots** icon next to the fill color → **+** to create a style

— Name it clearly: "Primary," "Secondary," "Background," "Error"

— Now you can apply this color to any element with one click

— Change the style → every element using it updates automatically

Set up your color palette as styles — same colors you chose with markers.

Get Started: Translate Your A1 Screens

Start translating your Assignment 1 screens to Figma.

1. **Set up frames** — create frames with the right device size for your A1 app
2. **Add your grid** — match the grid you used on paper
3. **Build the layout** — use rectangles, text, and Auto Layout
4. **Apply your colors** — create Color Styles for your palette
5. **Match your spacing** — use Auto Layout gaps of 8, 16, 24, 32, 48
6. **Add navigation** — keep tabs or menus in the same position on every screen

Use class time to get started and ask questions. A1 requires 2–3 Figma screens — aim to finish 1 by end of this week.

Tips & Shortcuts

— **Ctrl/Cmd + D** → Duplicate

— **Ctrl/Cmd + G** → Toggle grid

— **Shift + A** → Add Auto Layout

— **Hold Alt** → Show spacing between elements

— **Ctrl/Cmd + Z** → Undo (unlimited!)

— **Zoom:** Ctrl/Cmd + scroll, or press **Z** for zoom tool

Hold Alt and hover between elements to see exact spacing — compare with your 8pt scale.

A1 Figma Milestone

Milestone: By end of this week, aim to have at least **1 A1 screen** translated to Figma.

A1 requires 2–3 Figma screens total (due Monday, March 9). Focus on:

— Proper **frames** with device presets
— A **layout grid** matching your analog grid
— **Auto Layout** for spacing (8pt scale)
— **Color Styles** for your palette
— **Navigation elements** in the same position on every screen

This is your bridge from analog to digital. The goal is translation, not perfection — structure and systems matter more than polish.

Resources

— <u>Figma for Education</u> — free Education plan

— <u>Figma Learn</u> — official tutorials and docs

— <u>Auto Layout Guide</u> — the most important feature to master

— <u>Layout Grids</u> — setting up your grid system