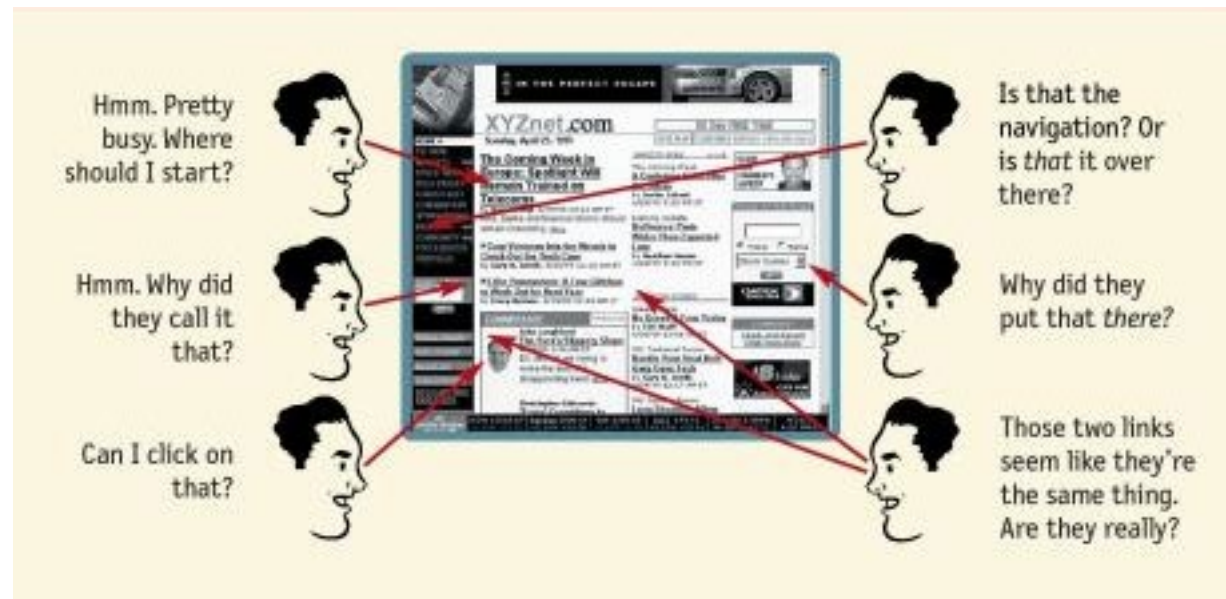


# Information Architecture (IA)

Connects the user to the content



Time spent trying to *find* the content is time that is *not* spent looking at your content.

## Create Content Categories

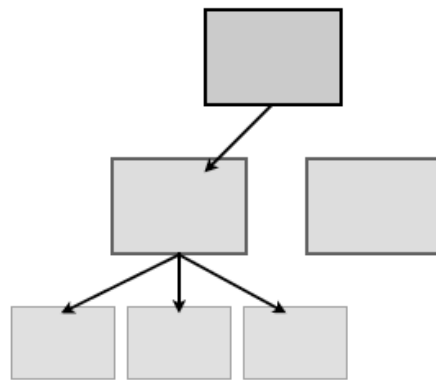
Through user research and consultations with the clients, clearly defined categories or chunks of content will emerge. The next step is to organize those areas of content based on the goals and objective of the project.



Content areas in IA are referred to as nodes.

## Create Hierarchy, Create Connections


Information architecture defines the organization and navigation of content so that the user may achieve their goals (and therefore yours) quickly and correctly.




# Organizing Principles

The organizing principle is the criterion by which one determines which nodes are grouped together or kept separate. Organizing principles may change on different levels of a site structure.

The screenshot shows the homepage of Kutztown University of Pennsylvania. At the top, there is a dark red navigation bar with the university's logo on the left and links for 'web', 'people', 'Text Only', 'Español', 'Maps', and 'Virtual Tour' on the right. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links for 'About KU', 'Academics', 'Admissions', 'Athletics', 'Campus Life', 'Employment', 'News & Events', 'Library', and 'KU Home'. A vertical sidebar on the left contains links for 'Prospective Students', 'Transfer Students', 'Current Students', 'Faculty and Staff', 'Alumni', and 'Visitors'. The main content area features a large photograph of a modern brick building with large windows, partially obscured by bare tree branches. Below the photo is a white banner with the handwritten text 'Learn... to Make a Difference'. In the bottom right corner of the main area, there is a search bar labeled 'Search with Quick Click' and a row of social media icons for RSS, Flickr, Facebook, and Twitter. At the bottom of the page, there are two columns of news items. The left column is titled 'ANNOUNCEMENTS' and features a red RSS icon and a news item: 'TRAFFIC ADVISORY: ROUTE 737 TO BE CLOSED UNTIL AUGUST'. The right column is titled 'LATEST NEWS' and features a red RSS icon and a news item: 'FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR AT KU PROVIDES INSIGHT ON EGYPT'. To the right of the news items is a row of social media icons for RSS, Flickr, Facebook, and Twitter, and a large red button with the text 'APPLY ON'.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**  **TRAFFIC ADVISORY: ROUTE 737 TO BE CLOSED UNTIL AUGUST**

**LATEST NEWS**  **FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR AT KU PROVIDES INSIGHT ON EGYPT**

**APPLY ON**



# Innovative Technology for a changing world

## Select a Location

Welcome to 3M. Select a region to find product and company information relevant to you.

### The Americas



### Europe



### The Middle East & Africa



### Asia & The Pacific



[Argentina - Español](#)

[Bolivia - Español](#)

[Brazil \(Brasil\) - Português](#)

[Canada - English](#)

[Canada - Français](#)

[Chile - Español](#)

[Colombia - Español](#)

[Costa Rica - Español](#)

[Dominican Republic \(República Dominicana\) - Español](#)

[Ecuador - Español](#)

[El Salvador - Español](#)

[Guatemala - Español](#)

[Honduras - Español](#)

[Jamaica - English](#)

[Mexico \(México\) - Español](#)

[Nicaragua - Español](#)

[Panama \(Panamá\) - Español](#)

[Paraguay - Español](#)

[Peru \(Perú\) - Español](#)

[Puerto Rico - English](#)

[Puerto Rico - Español](#)

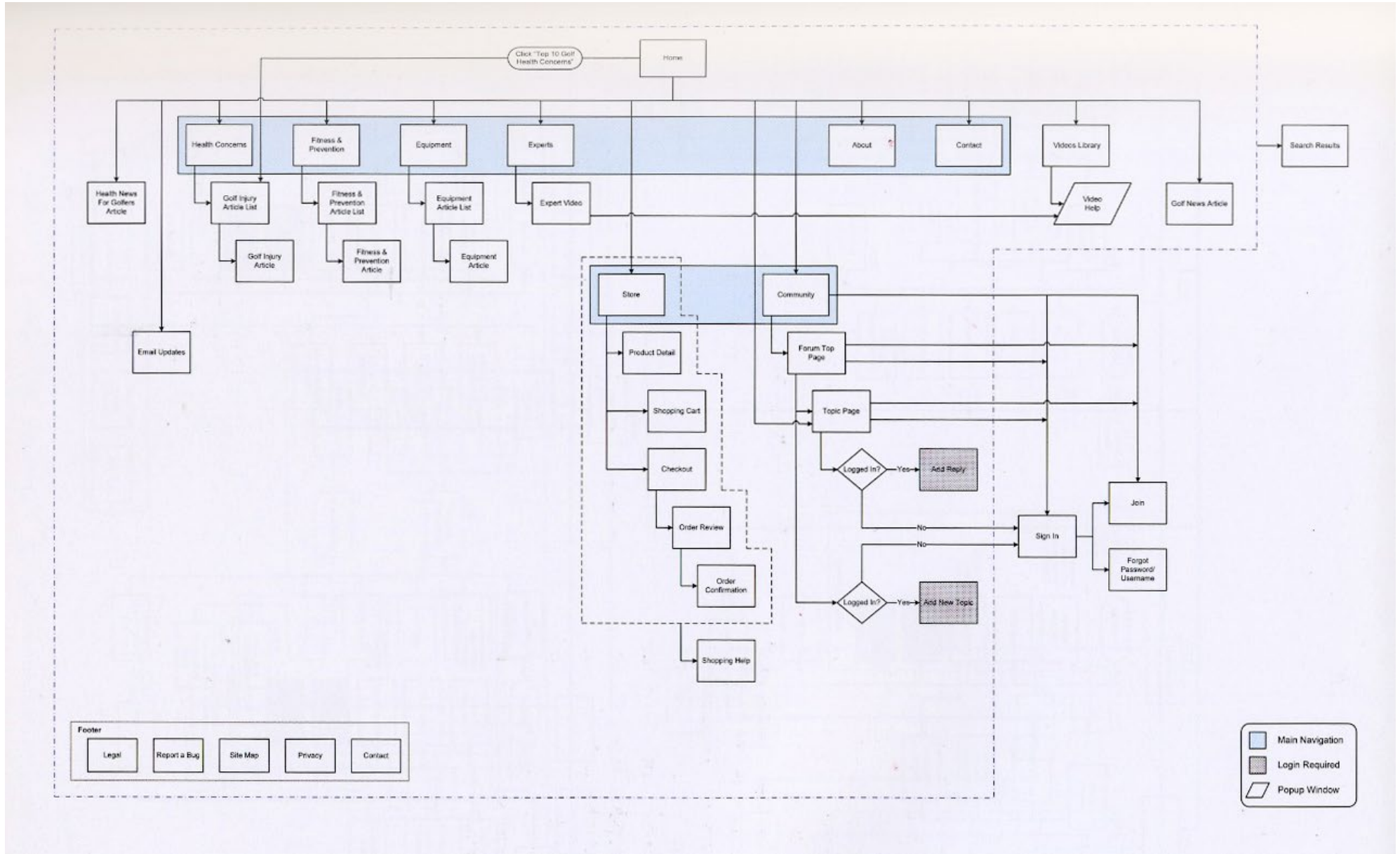
[Trinidad and Tobago - English](#)

[United States - English](#)

[Uruguay - Español](#)

[Venezuela - Español](#)

# Site Maps / Flow Charts



## Many Uses

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The tool for documenting and representing the architecture of a site or project is the flowchart or sitemap. The flowchart shows the hierarchy of information and connections users may follow to navigate the content. The flowchart is used for many purposes such as:

- Defining content hierarchy
- Navigation
- Communicating with client, team members, other stakeholders
- Managing division of labor, timeline of project development process
- Pricing and understanding full scope of the project undertaking

# Common Symbols in Site Maps

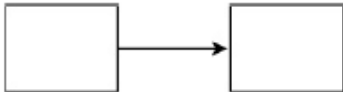
Pages, Files, Stacks

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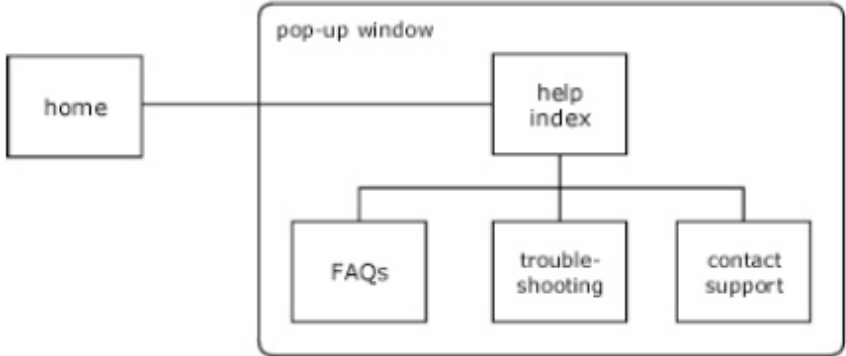
Connectors/Arrows

---



Commonalities

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# Consistency

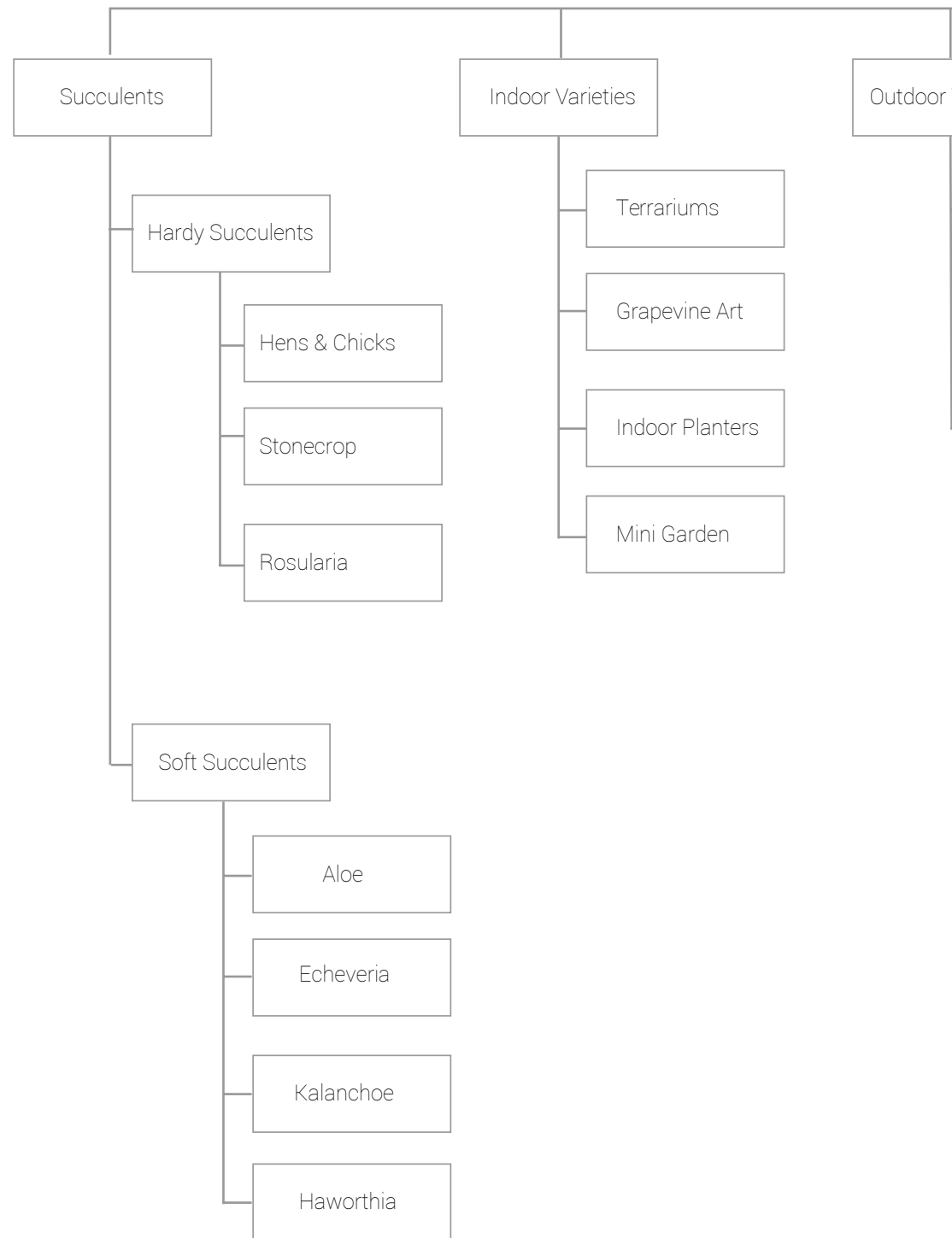
---

- Some authors, experts advise the lines and arrows for connectors exactly touch the edges of boxes. More importantly be consistent and establish a rule for how the connectors touch or overlap boxes.

# Alignment

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- Boxes that represent content with equal importance in the hierarchy should be aligned on the same baseline, the same size and should be evenly spaced.



# In-class Exercise

## CARD SORTING

The Goal: find out how hypothetical users naturally categorize grocery items by using the card sorting technique to determine the Information Architecture for Online Grocery Shopping service.

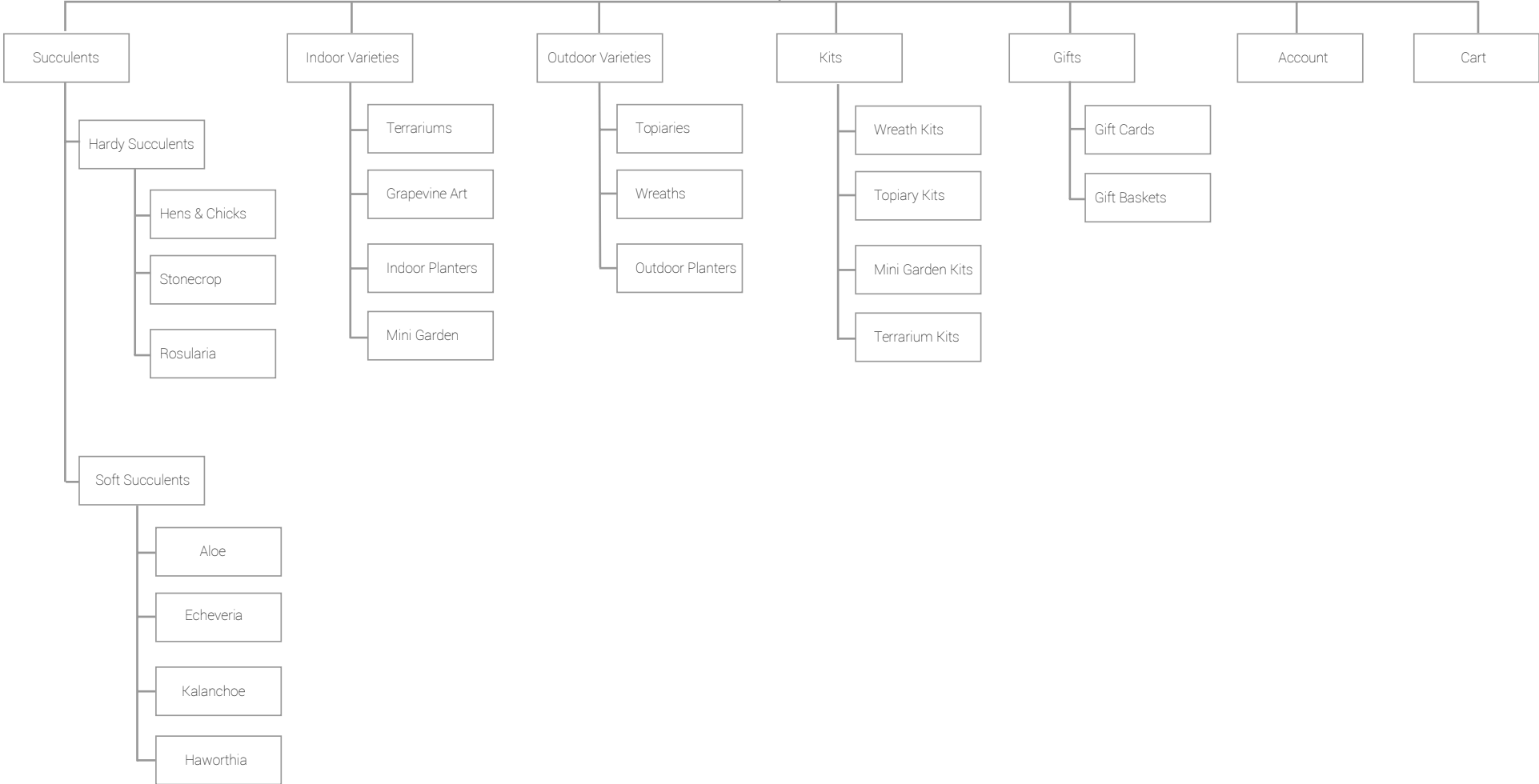
### 6 PARTICIPANTS

### 20 grocery items

bananas	carrots	kale	oats
milk	eggs	cookie dough	whole wheat ravioli
baguette	orange juice	olive oil	boneless skinless chicken
avocados	almonds	rice crackers	roast beef
broccoli	soy yogurt	bottled water	apple sauce

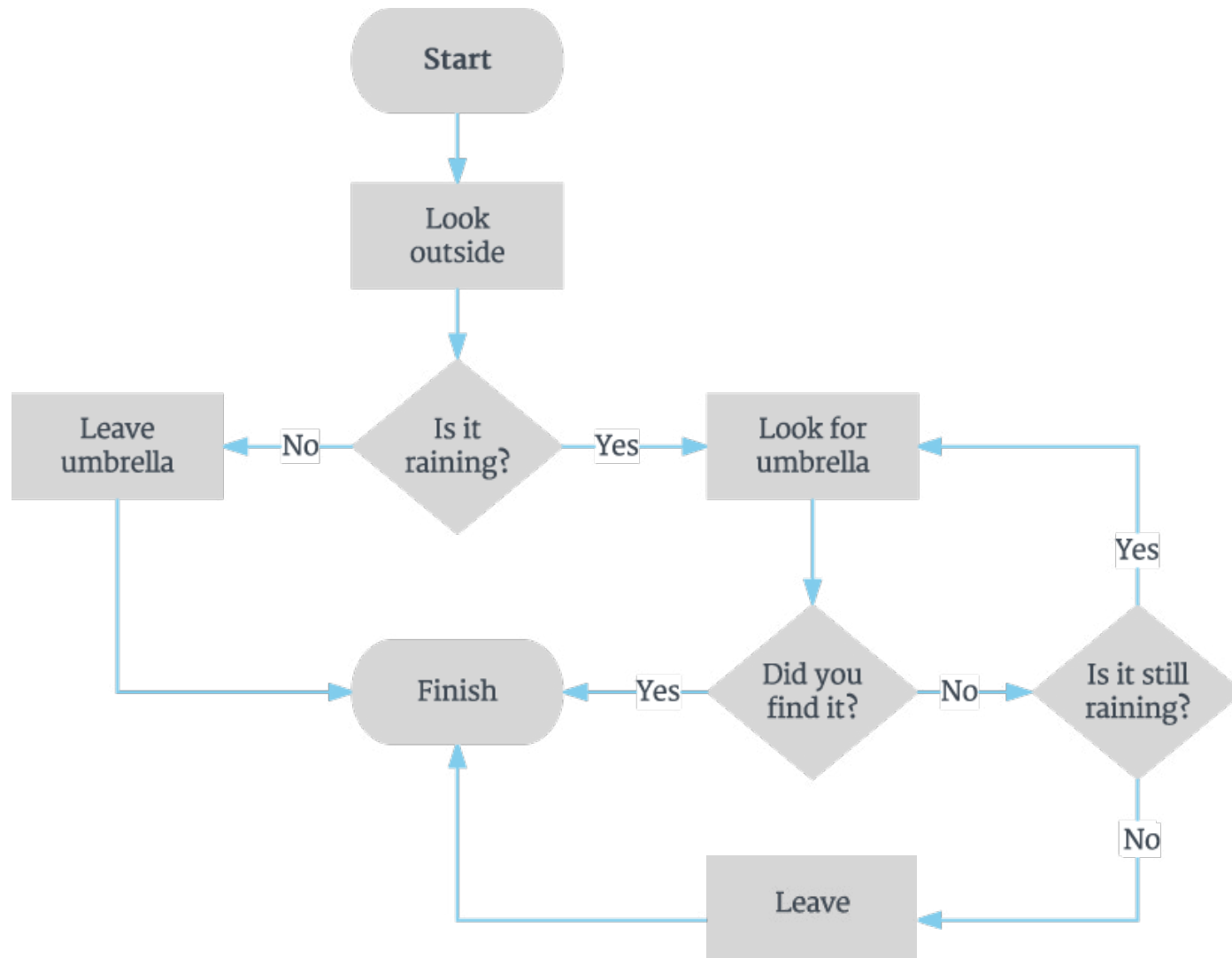




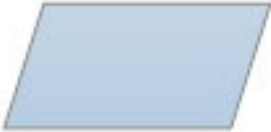


Subtle Succulents



# Task Flows

- Task flows identify more detailed information about the process a user uses to navigate or use an application. Task flows are developed to visualize specific processes not the overall relationship or hierarchy of information.



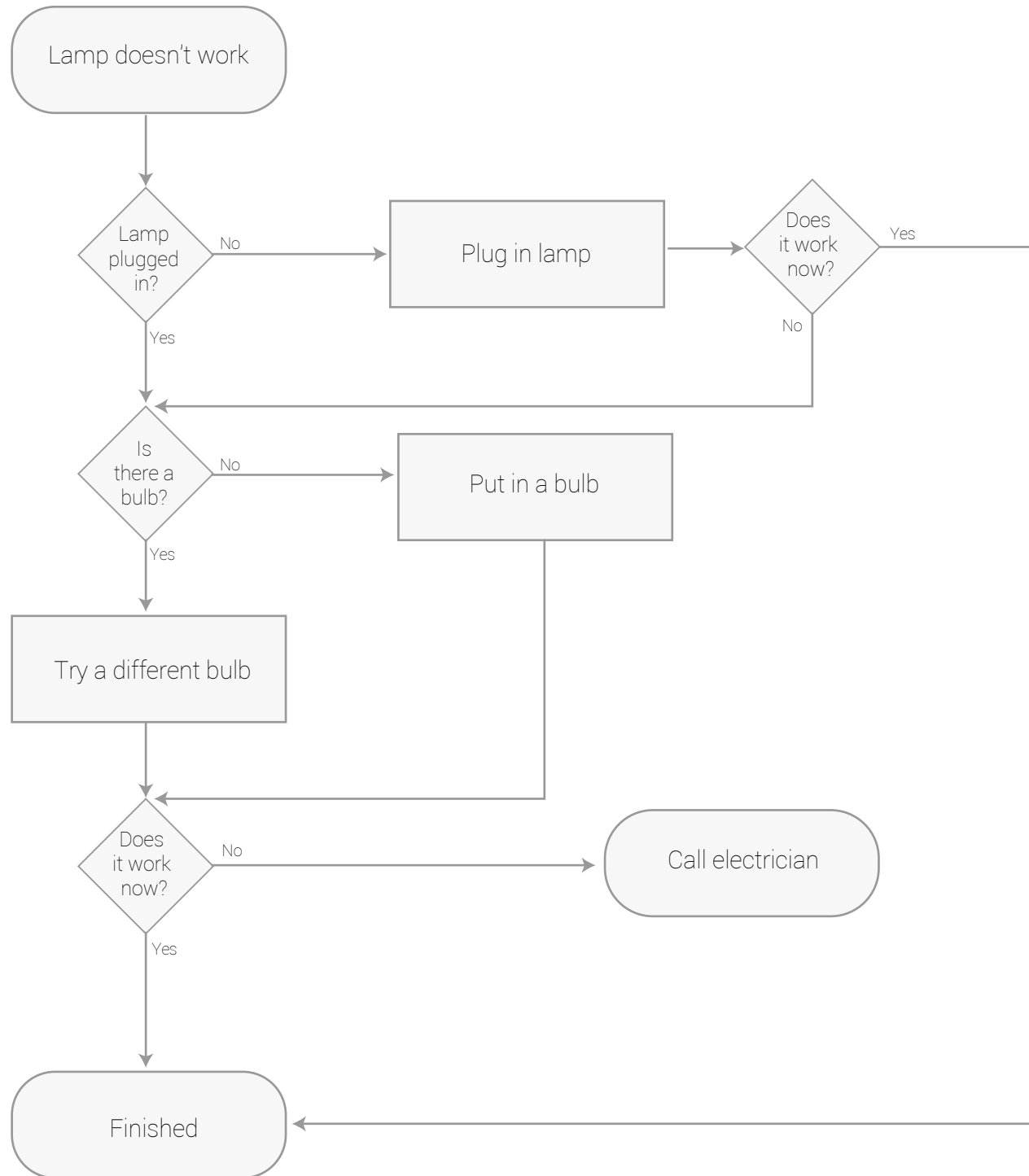
Symbol	Name	Function
	Start/end	An oval represents a start or end point
	Arrows	A line is a connector that shows relationships between the representative shapes
	Input/Output	A parallelogram represents input or output
	Process	A rectangle represents a process
	Decision	A diamond indicates a decision

# TASK FLOW EXERCISE

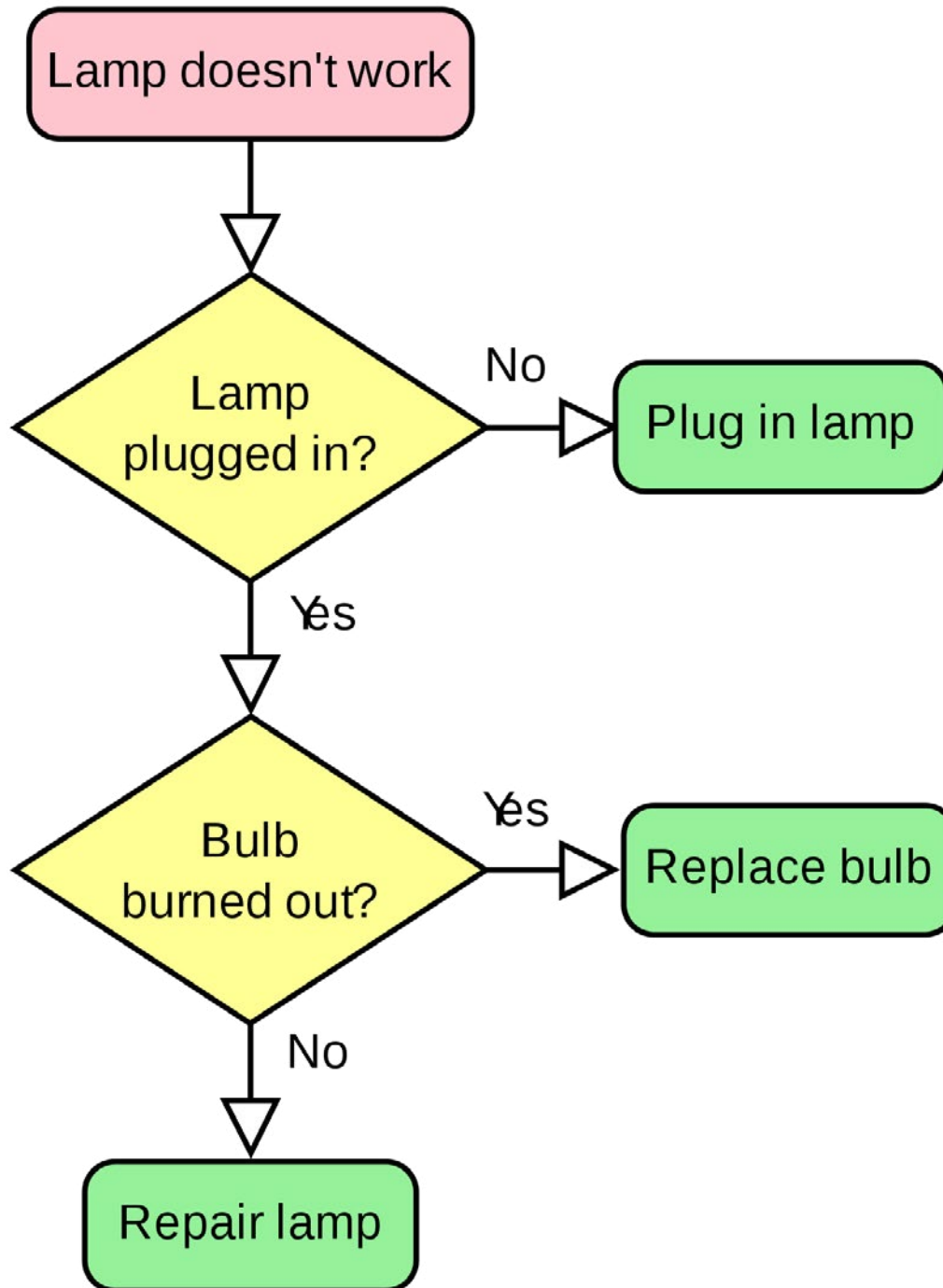


# Don't scroll any further!

(We'll do a task flow exercise first.)







# Site Map + Task Flows

ABOUT THIS PAGE 6.1 Sign in or create account

