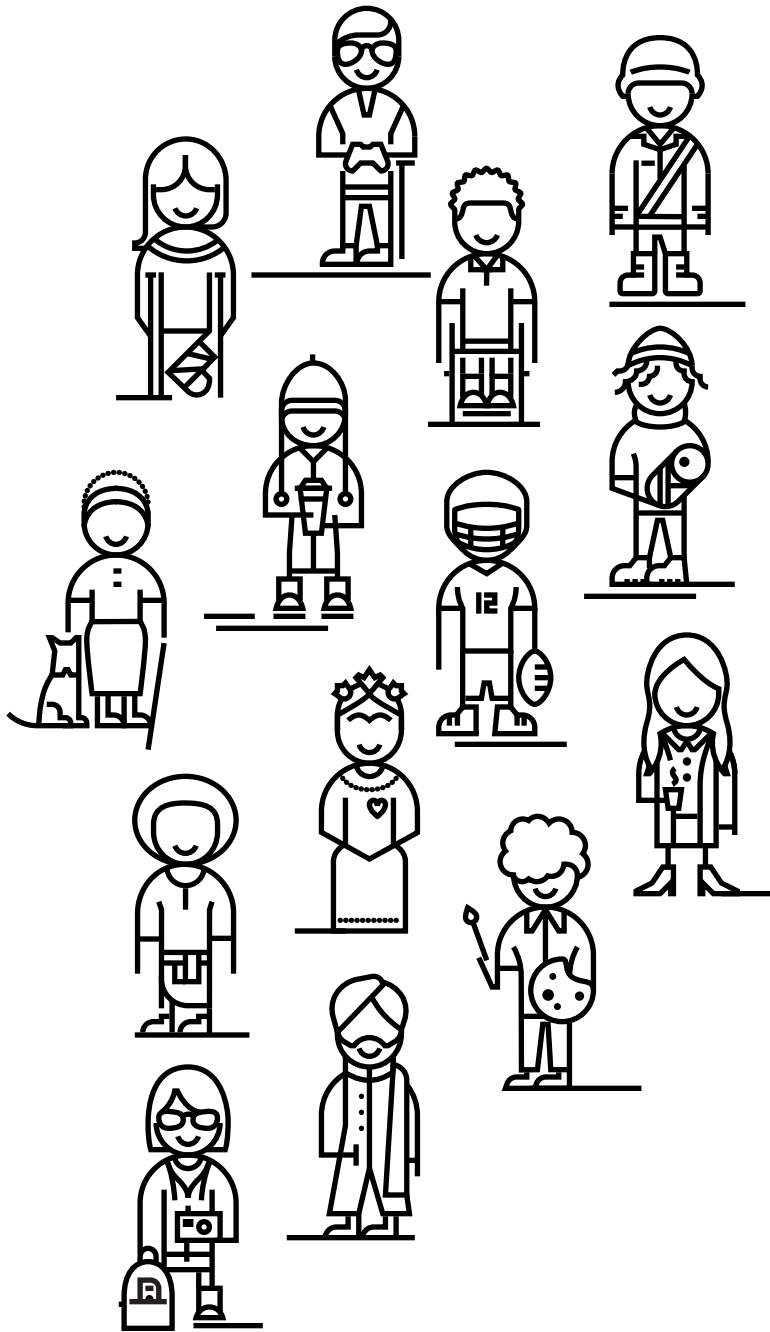


DESIGNING FOR GUIDANCE

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Everyone approaches learning differently depending on the circumstances or task. Some people like to dive right into a task, while others want to watch someone else do it first. Because technology is often designed for people who learn through trial and error, some product designs exclude those who want additional guidance or support.



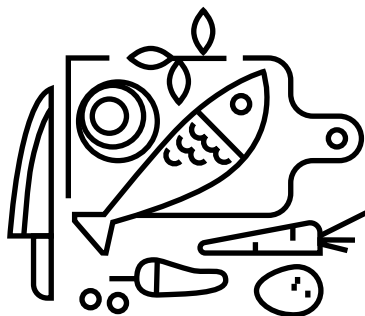
To empower people with different learning styles, we can apply the inclusive design methodology, which focuses on seeing moments of exclusion as opportunities to create more inclusive designs.

In this guide, we'll identify different approaches to learning, make recommendations for designing more inclusive products, and provide self-serve activities. Learn more about inclusive design in the [online inclusive design manual](#), or browse the [inclusive design toolkit](#) for additional self-serve activities.

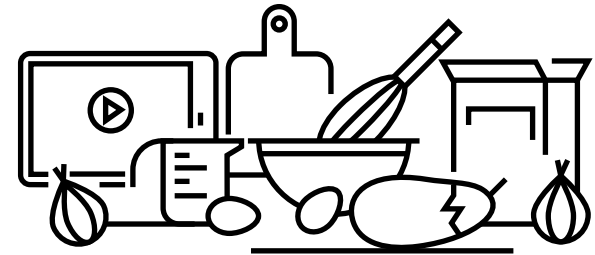
Different approaches to learning

Whether you're using a new app or trying out a recipe, everyone has a different approach to get about a task, seek help, or develop mastery.

Let's say you were asked to cook a new meal. There are multiple ways to approach this task:



- **Dive right in (trial and error):** Check your fridge for ingredients, grab a cutting board, and start putting together a dish.



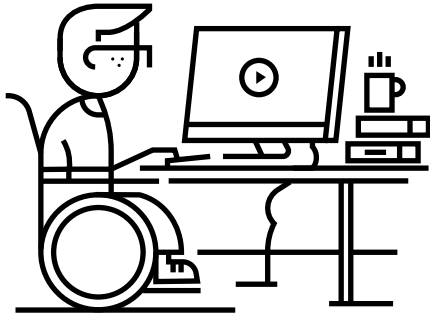
- **Find a recipe (semi-structured):** Find a few recipes online based on the ingredients in your kitchen.



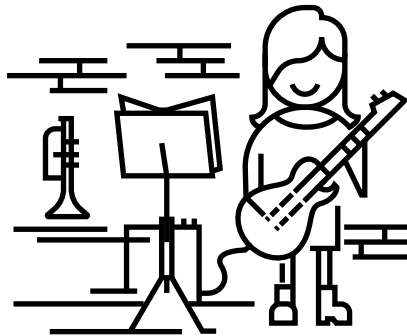
- **Attend a cooking class (guidance):** Work with an instructor to learn each cooking technique before trying it out

Our product designs must reflect people's diverse approaches to learning. This ensures that everyone can get help when they need it.

A person's desire for guidance can be influenced by:



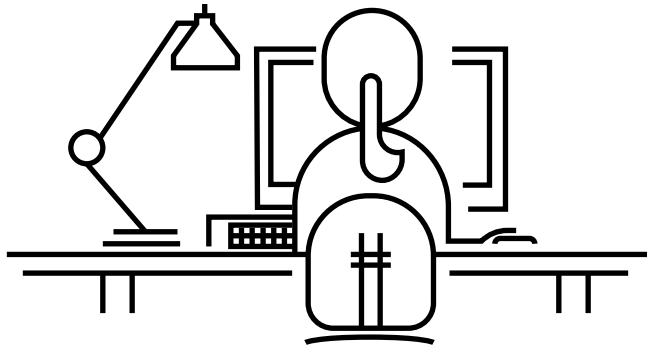
- **Confidence level:** Some people might feel intimidated if they don't have previous experience with a task or problem.



- **Motivation:** People may learn something to complete a task, teach someone else, or master it.



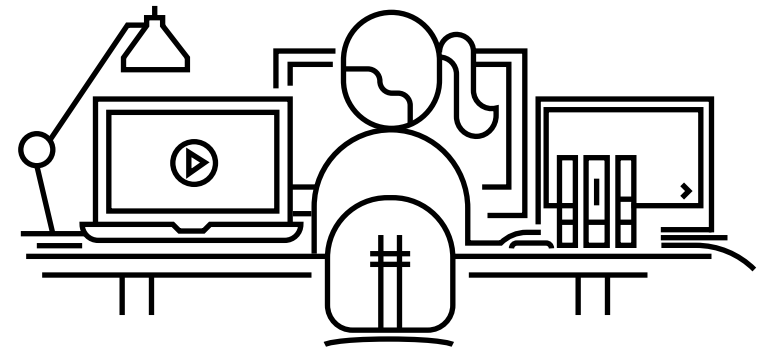
- **Context:** Guidance should be available in every context such as on a personal device or in a setting with no Wi-Fi.



Providing guidance can help customers feel supported at any point of the learning process. When creating an experience with guidance, consider the following:

Anyone can benefit from guidance - it just depends on the context: Some people prefer to tinker when they feel comfortable with the problem, but want structured guidance for new problems.

Guided learning is an approach to learning, not a facet of identity: Although there are communities and cultures associated with other facets of identity like deaf or blind culture, people don't necessarily self-identify as "guided learners." Instead, preferring guidance is an approach to learning.



People may want guidance at different points: For example, someone who prefers to learn through trial and error might look for guidance initially and then complete the task independently, but someone else might want structured guidance throughout the process.

Great guidance can vary from person to person: Some people may prefer high-level context about the end goal, specific step-by-step instructions, or just task completion.

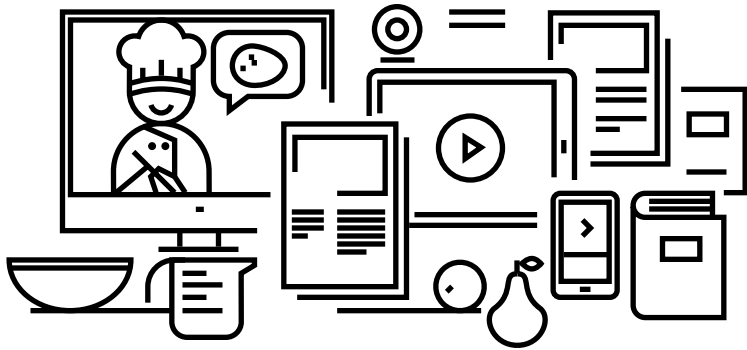
Recommendations for a guided learning experience:



Here are some **recommendations** for creating inclusive products or features that support different learning styles. These recommendations were developed through interviews and research studies with Microsoft customers. To illustrate the recommendations, we're using cooking as an example.

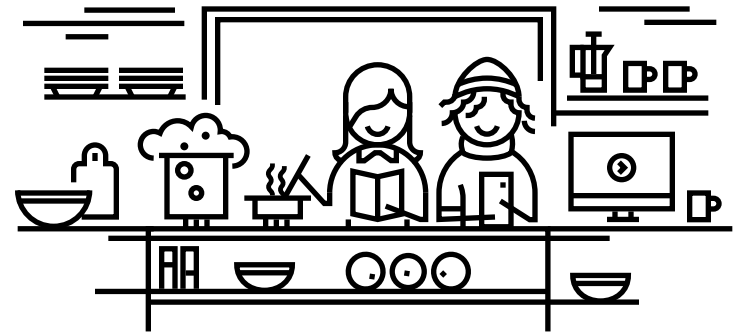
Discovery

- **Multiple entry points:** Individuals can find recipes, cooking techniques, or ingredient substitutes through sources like cooking shows on television, Pinterest inspiration boards, and recipe websites.
- **Guidance across contexts:** Guidance should be available using the internet, on a personal device, and offline.



Control

- **Provide context:** Most recipes include preparation and cooking time, expertise level, and an ingredient list. Then, an individual decides if they want to cook a specific meal or choose something else.
- **Request permission:** Individuals can choose a preferred form of guidance, or opt out, based on their specific needs, context, or comfort level with a task.
- **Offers multiple types of guidance:** There should be multiple forms of guidance available such as a video tutorial for different techniques, a step-by-step recipe with pictures, or a cooking class with an experienced chef.



Feedback

- **Indicate progress to task completion:** There should be ongoing feedback that indicates progress toward cooking a complete meal. For example, the oven light turns when it reaches the required pre-heated temperature, which is an indication to move on to the next step.

Voice:

- **Be approachable:** Most people seek cooking help from friends or family that they trust or see as an expert. Working with them can alleviate some of the fear or intimidation of learning a new task.
- **Use familiar language:** People should be able to express their questions or needs in their own words.

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank the many people who contributed to this guide. By design, it's a living collection of ideas and practices. It reflects a wide community of people across Microsoft and beyond. We'd like to give a special thanks to Dr. Margaret Burnett at Oregon State University. It was her work about gender bias in technology that led to conversations about how to create more inclusive software and products.

This guide was created by Tim Allen, Margaret Price, Doug Kim, Aleenah Ansari, Ashley Walls, Elena Dvorkina, Chris Tyler, and an extended team of people at Microsoft who are dedicated to advancing inclusive design.



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