

Real-time Prototyping

Design Method . Developing

Real-time Prototyping is a method for rapidly creating, modifying and comparing rough physical models. By working with materials and components that can be easily rearranged or reshaped, you can explore different design possibilities without starting from scratch each time.

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1. Gather materials and components that can be easily assembled, repositioned or reshaped. These might include construction blocks, cardboard pieces, modelling clay, foam, everyday objects or even a custom 3D printed kit of parts. Choose materials that suit the aspects of your design you want to investigate.

2. Create an initial rough prototype based on your selected idea and design criteria. For example, you might arrange small objects on a cardboard base to represent the positioning of switches on an accessible controller, or use modelling clay to explore the shape of a customised grip.

3. Explore and test your prototype to see what works well and what could be improved. For example, you might ask your end user to try different arrangements, check whether components are within comfortable reach, or assess how an object feels to hold. Photograph your prototype and record any useful observations.

4. Rearrange, replace or reshape components to create alternative versions. Experiment with different configurations, documenting each one as you go. Compare the results to identify promising directions for further development.