Research Is a Method, Not a Methodology

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All projects should include research.

Guesswork is an inescapable part of our work. More importantly, the quality of guesswork is what differentiates a good architect from a bad one.

—Jesse James Garrett

Most experienced designers have enough expertise to get many products 80% designed without ever doing research, and sometimes that 80% is all that's needed. Research can be a useful tool, but it can also be an ineffective waste of time. Good designers make good designs, not research. Even with good research, you can follow users (and time and money) down some serious rabbit holes, never to return.

—Dan Saffer

When to use research

1. You don't know the subject area well.
2. The project is based in a culture different to your own.
3. You don't know who the users are.
4. The product is one you'd never use yourself.
5. The product contains features and functionality that are for specific types of users, who are doing specific types of work, work you don't necessarily do yourself.
6. You need inspiration.
7. You need empathy.
8. You don't have much expertise.

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Questions?

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