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Images

Meta | Excerpt
Looking to enhance your website's user experience? Check out our top 5 tips for optimizing website navigation to improve customer satisfaction and retention!

5 Best Website Navigation Tips To Smoothen Your Customer Experience [2023 Updated]

Poor web navigation can lead to frustration, confusion, and a high bounce rate. That's why optimizing your **website navigation** is essential to ensure your visitors can find what they're looking for quickly and efficiently.

In this blog, **LitExtension - #1 Shopping Cart Migration Expert** will share:

- **What is website navigation?**
- **Common types of website navigation and when should you use it**
- **5 essential tips to improve your website navigation**

Let's discover together!

What is Website Navigation and Why is it Important?

Website navigation is the process of guiding users through a website's pages, features, and content. It includes menus, links, buttons, search bars, and other tools users can use to move from one page to another, access information, and complete desired actions.

Optimizing website navigation is essential because it can directly impact user engagement and overall user satisfaction when they browse through your site**. An optimized website navigation helps users **easily find the information or products** they're looking for, encouraging them to **stay on the website for longer periods** and explore more content.

This, in turn, can help increase the chances of users completing desired actions, such as filling out forms, subscribing to newsletters, or making purchases. As a result, you can eventually increase your sales.
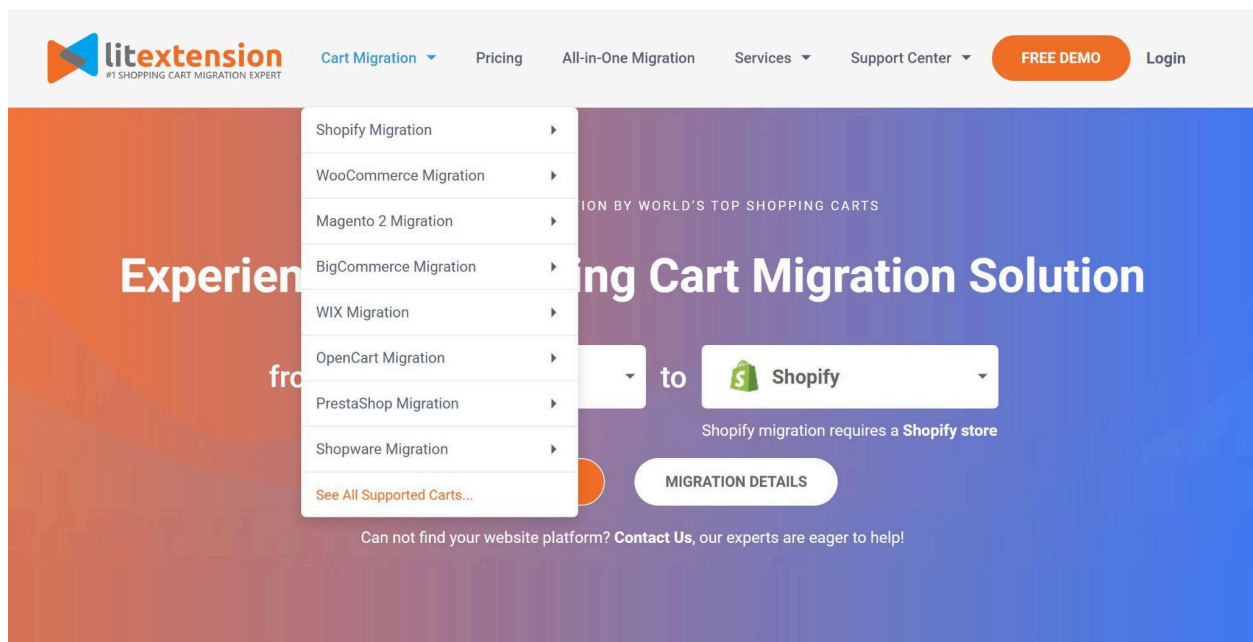
Website navigation example (Alt text: Website navigation example)

5 Common Types of Website Navigation Menus You Can Copy

A website menu, also known as a navigation menu, is **a set of links or buttons that allow users to access different sections or pages of a website**. It is usually located at the top or side of the website and is one of the most important design elements for website navigation.

Website menus can be designed in various formats, such as horizontal or vertical, drop-down or mega-menu, or even hamburger icons that expand into a slide-out menu.

Here are the **5 most common website navigation menus** you can choose depending on your needs and the complexity of your site structure.

#1. Horizontal navigation

Horizontal navigation is the most common website navigation type where the **primary navigation menu is placed horizontally across the top of the website**.

This type of navigation is **commonly used for websites with fewer pages**, as it can become cluttered and difficult to use if there are too many menu items.

An example of horizontal navigation is Apple's website. The main menu at the top of the page displays the primary categories such as Mac, iPad, iPhone, and Watch.
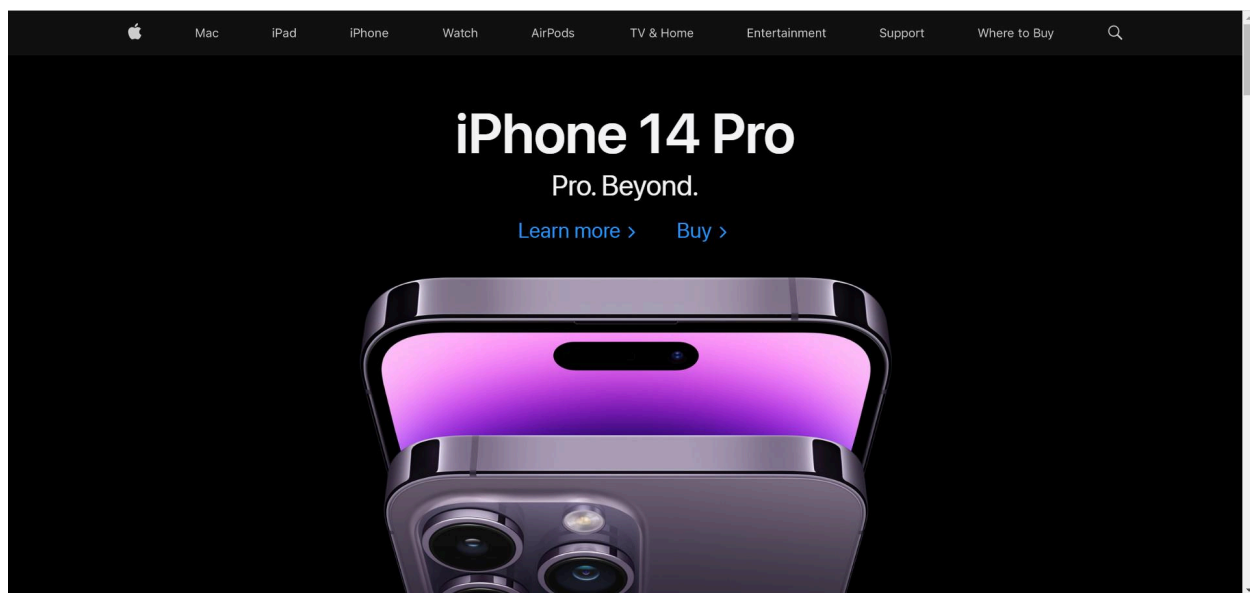
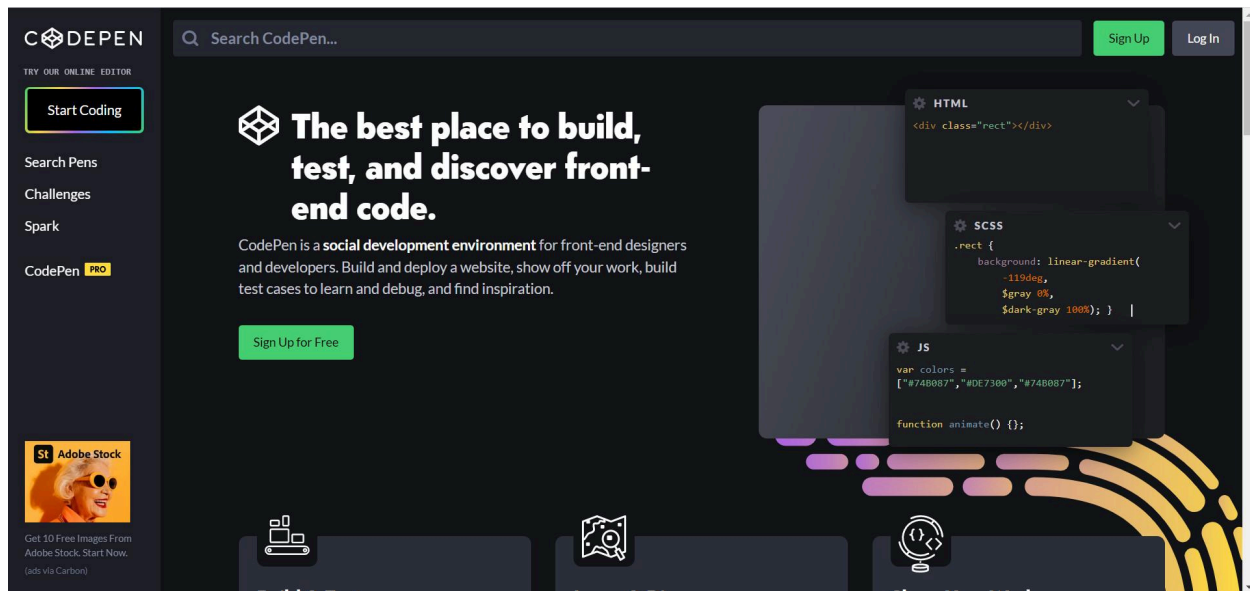*Apple has a classic horizontal navigation menu (Alt text: Horizontal website navigation)*

#2. Vertical navigation

Vertical navigation is a type of website navigation where the **main navigation menu is put vertically on the left or right side of the website**.

Vertical navigation is **largely used for websites with a lot of content and pages**, as it allows for more menu items to be displayed without cluttering the interface.

An example of vertical navigation is CodePen - a social development environment for front-end developers. They use a sidebar navigation menu on the left side of the page. The menu

includes links to explore different pens, challenges, and collections and links to the user's profile and settings.
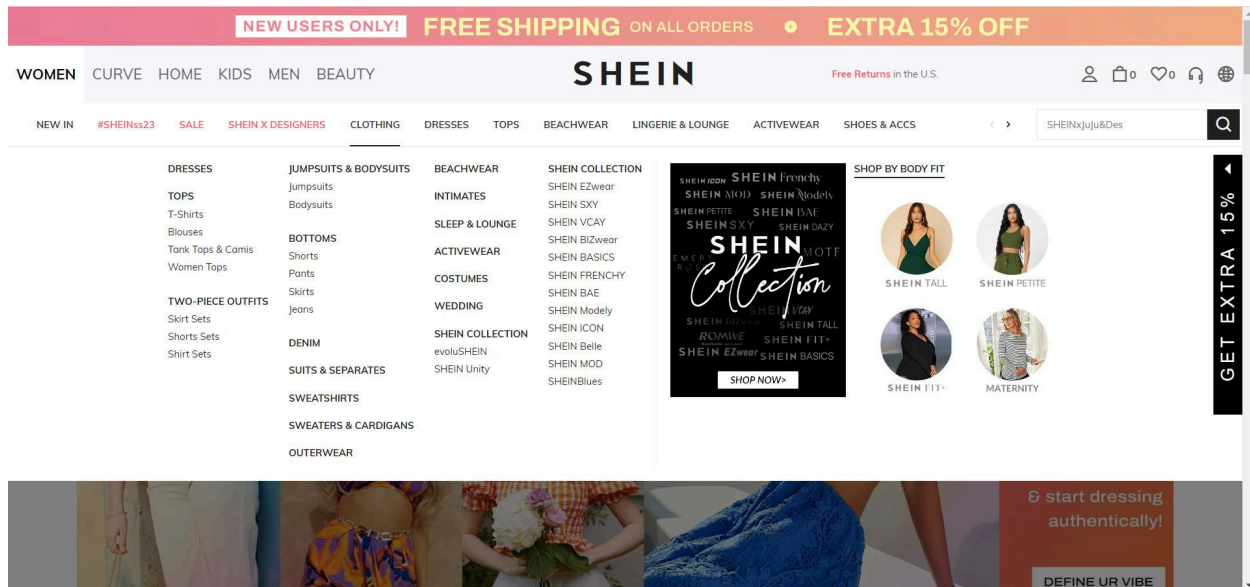

A vertical navigation website menu example from Codepen (Alt text: website navigation)

#3. Drop-down navigation

Drop-down navigation is a type of website navigation where the **primary menu items expand into submenus when clicked or hovered over**. This type of navigation is **commonly used for websites with many content or categories**.

An example of drop-down navigation is Shein's website, where the main menu displays the primary categories such as Clothing, Dresses, Activeware, etc. and each category has a drop-down menu with sub-categories.

A drop-down navigation menu of Shein (Alt text: Drop-down website navigation)

#4. Hamburger navigation

Hamburger navigation is a type of website navigation where the **main menu is hidden behind a hamburger icon. When clicked, the menu slides out from the side or drops down** from the top of the page.

This type of navigation is **commonly used for mobile devices or websites with limited space**. An example of hamburger navigation is Yang's Place website, where the primary menu is hidden behind a hamburger icon and slides out from the left side of the page when clicked.
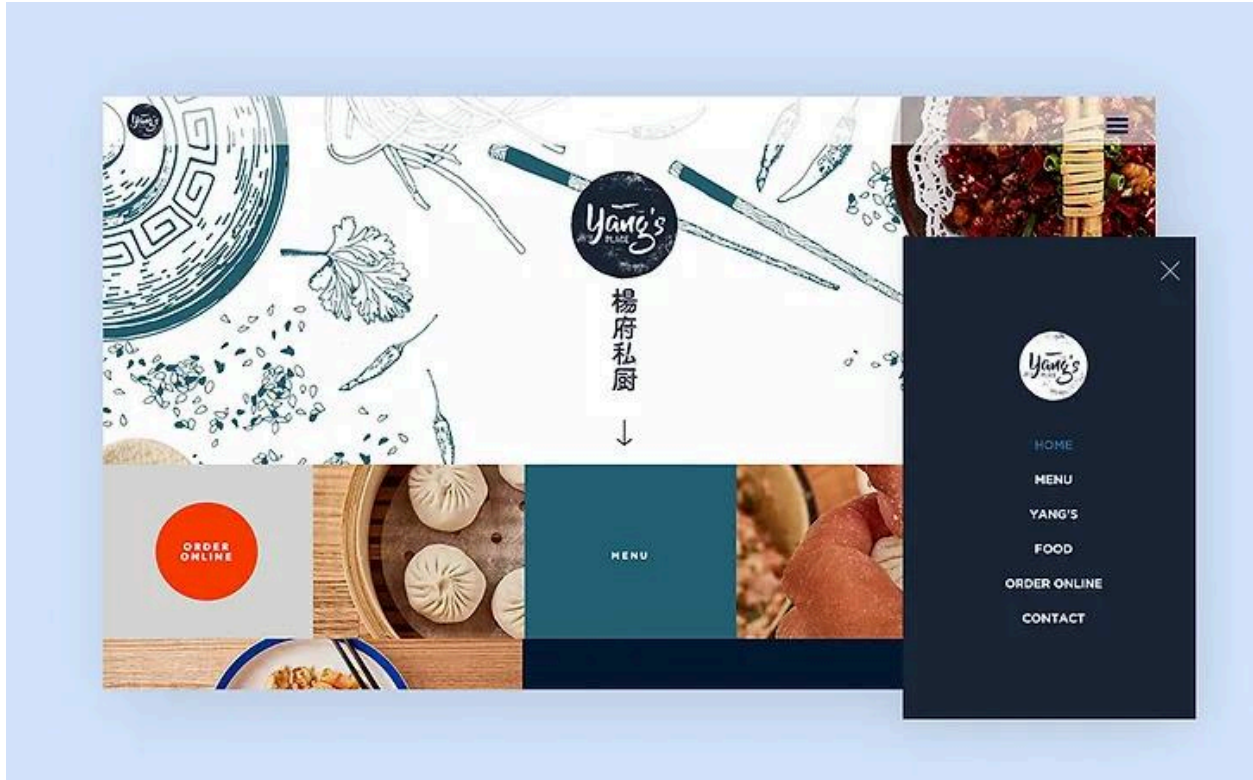
Hamburger website navigation (alt text: Hamburger website navigation)

#5. Footer navigation

Footer navigation is a type of website navigation where the **menu is placed at the bottom of the website, usually in the footer section**.

This type of navigation is **often used for websites with fewer pages or as a secondary menu** to supplement the primary navigation.

For instance, Shopify, one of the best eCommerce platforms, uses the footer navigation to direct people to less important pages.
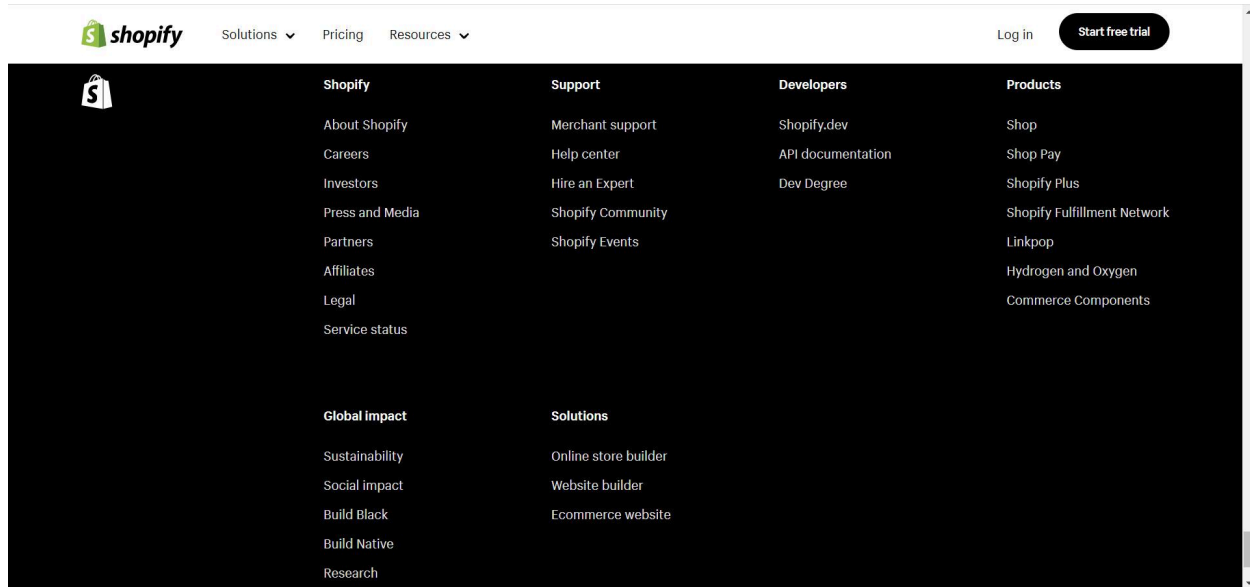
A usage of footer navigation by Shopify (Alt text: Footer navigation)

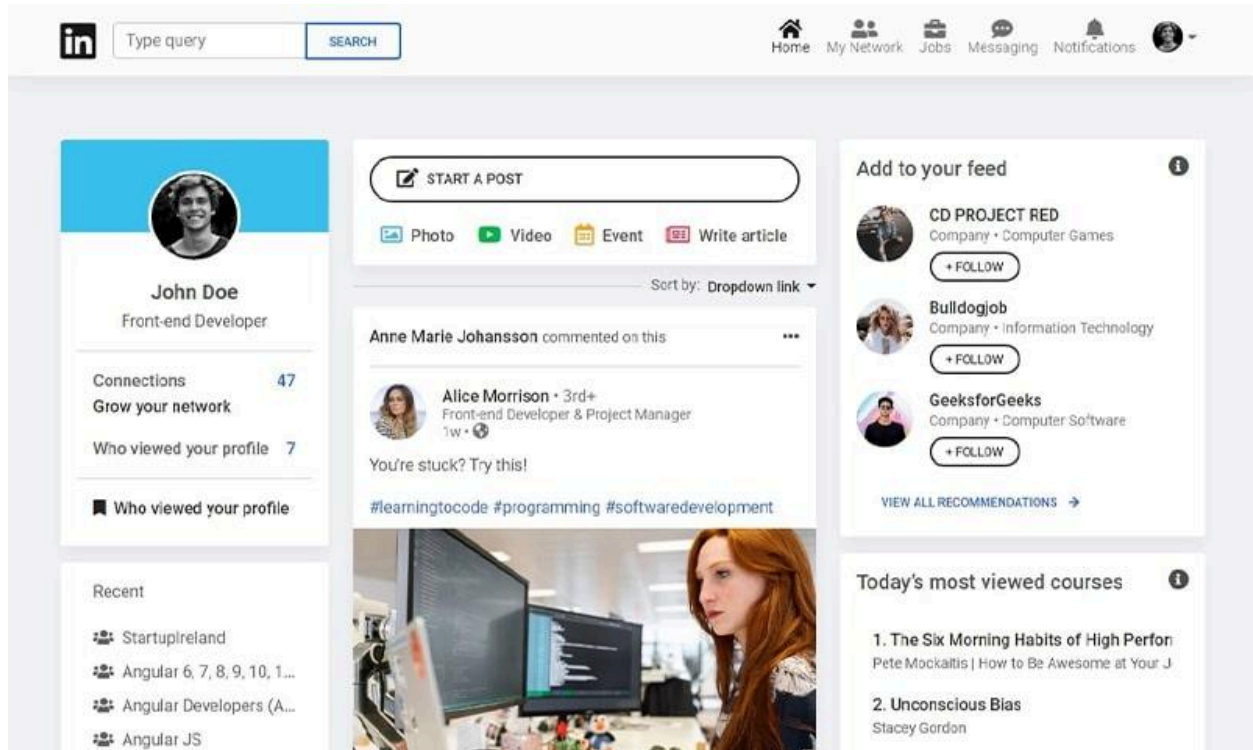# 5 Best Tips to Improve Your Website Navigation

Website navigation is crucial in providing users with a smooth and seamless browsing experience, ensuring that they can find the information they need quickly and efficiently. Therefore, it's important to improve your website navigation, and here's how!

#1. Be consistent with the layout

Using a consistent layout throughout your website can improve navigation for your users, making it easier for them to find the information they need quickly and efficiently.

When the layout of each page on your website is similar, **your users are less likely to become confused and more likely to feel comfortable exploring your site**.

One great example of a website that does this well is LinkedIn. **LinkedIn has a consistent layout** throughout its site, **making navigating from one page to the next easy**. Whether looking at someone's profile, job postings, or newsfeed, the layout is always the same, making it easy to find what you need.

*LinkedIn website navigation (Alt text: LinkedIn website navigation)*

By maintaining consistency with the layout of your website, you can improve your user experience, leading to better engagement and increased conversions.

#2. Give easy access to important pages

Easy access to important pages is key to improving website navigation. **To create a compelling and user-friendly website, you must ensure your potential customers can easily find and access your most crucial pages.**

Important pages include the homepage, about us page, contact page, product or service pages, and any other pages relevant to your business or industry. By placing links to these pages prominently in the header or footer of your website or using a dropdown menu, you can ease up your customers' journey to the content they want.

One example of a website that does this well is AliExpress. Their sidebar navigation menu includes links to all of their main categories, such as Women's Fashion, Men's Fashion, Phone & Telecommunications, etc. making it easy for users to find what they are looking for quickly and efficiently.
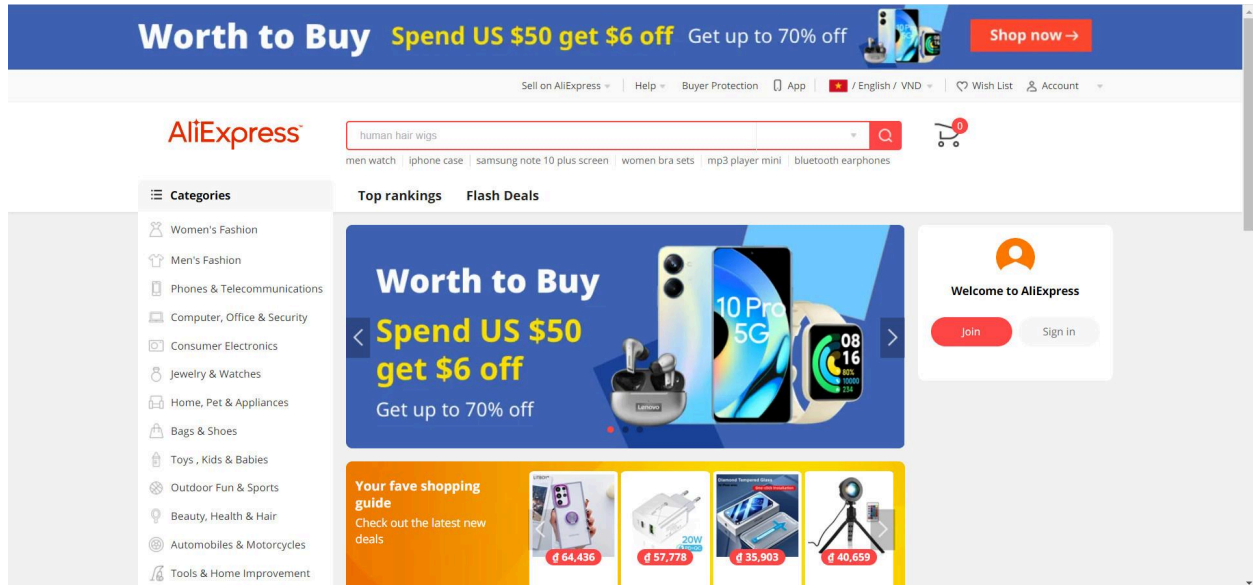
AliExpress has a neat and tidy website navigation where they give instant access to the site's main product categories (Alt text: website navigation example)

Overall, making important pages easily accessible is a crucial aspect of creating a successful website that is user-friendly and meets the needs of your target audience.

#3. Include a search bar

Including a search bar in a website is an excellent way to enhance your website navigation and ease finding specific information for your customers.

Many websites have taken this approach and made it a standard platform feature. For instance, Amazon, one of the largest eCommerce websites globally, has a search bar that helps users find products easily.

Etsy is another excellent example of a website that uses a search bar effectively. The website offers a range of products from different sellers, and with the search bar, customers can quickly locate products based on specific keywords.
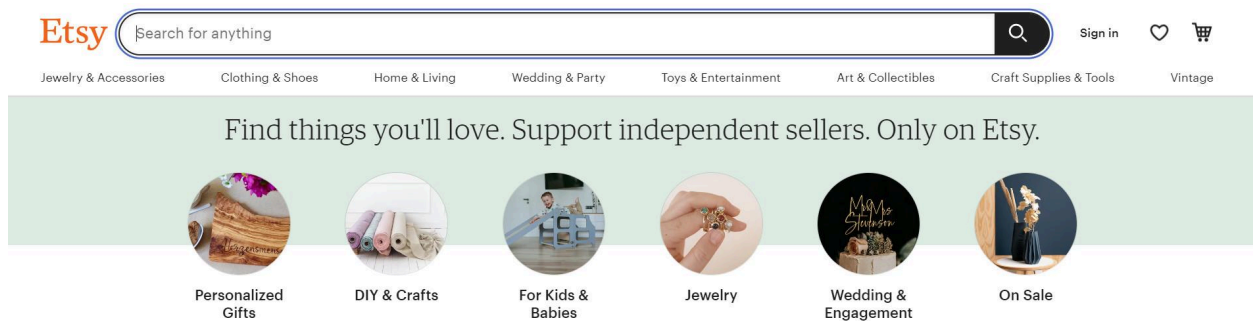
If you have an eCommerce website selling a wide range of product lines, a search bar like Amazon or Etsy is a must, not a plus. It helps save time for customers who may not have the patience to browse different product categories to find what they want.

#4. Leverage breadcrumbs

Breadcrumbs are a popular navigation technique that **helps users understand where they are on a website and how to navigate back to previous pages**.

By displaying the path of pages a user has visited, breadcrumbs make it easier for users to retrace their steps and explore other website areas. **Not only do breadcrumbs improve user experience, but they also improve search engine optimization** by providing additional context and internal linking opportunities.

The Paula's Choice website leverages this tactic really well. Thanks to the breadcrumbs showing everywhere, customers can always know which pages they are on, making navigation easier.
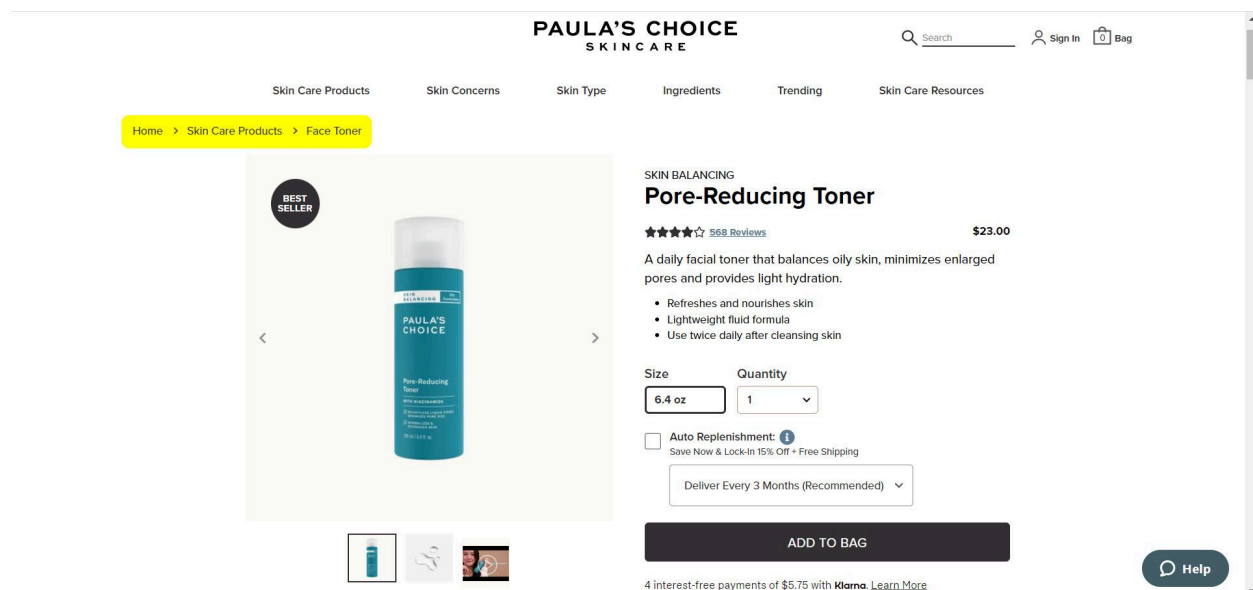
A breadcrumb on one of Paula's Choice product detail pages (Alt text: Paula Choice website navigation)

#5. Optimize for mobile devices

Optimizing website navigation for mobile devices is crucial to enhance user experience and increasing website traffic. With the growing number of mobile users, it is imperative to ensure that website navigation is seamless and user-friendly.

Mobile-optimized navigation involves:
- Creating a responsive design that adjusts to different screen sizes.
- Using intuitive icons.
- Decluttering the menu options.

For instance, the website of Starbucks has optimized its navigation for mobile devices, offering a streamlined menu and navigation bar that is easy to use. The menu is collapsible and does not take up too much space on the screen, providing a hassle-free experience for the users.

Users can find the desired information with a few clicks, including menu items, store locations, and rewards programs.
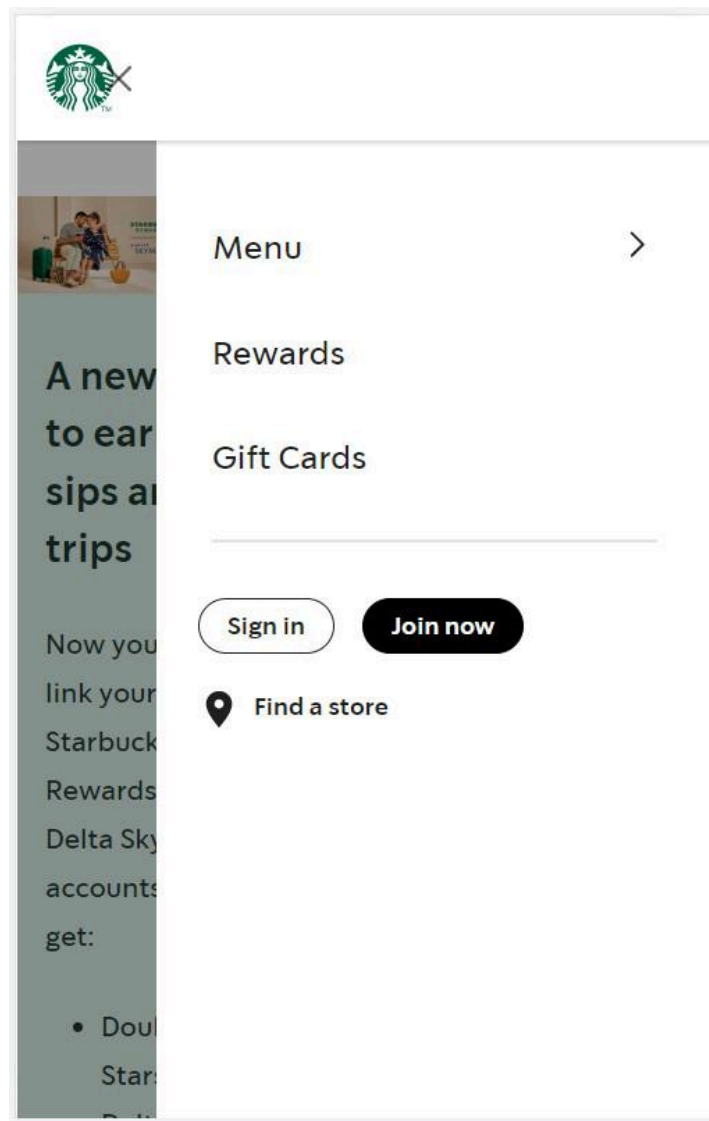
Starbucks with a mobile-friendly website navigation (Alt text: Starbucks website navigation)

👀 A newbie who wants to build a website with intuitive navigation? Then you might love to host your website with **Shopify**, **BigCommerce**, and **Wix**.

These popular platforms give you **lots of free pre-built website templates with UX-UI design best practices** in mind, and of course, that includes an optimized website navigation layout.

Website Navigation - FAQs

What is navigation in a website?
Website navigation refers to the menu or set of links that allow users to move between different pages or sections of a website. It typically appears at the top or side of the webpage and provides users with a hierarchical view of the site's content, helping them to easily find the information they're looking for.

What are the 5 types of website navigation?
There are 5 main types of website navigation, including:
- Horizontal navigation
- Vertical navigation
- Drop-down navigation
- Hamburger

Ready to Improve Your Website Navigation?

In conclusion, website navigation is critical to a website's success, and implementing the best practices is essential to improve customer experience.

By adopting user-centric design, creating clear and concise labels, using intuitive icons, simplifying the menu, and optimizing the navigation for mobile devices, businesses can improve user engagement, increase online visibility, and boost customer loyalty.

Providing a hassle-free experience to customers can go a long way in achieving business goals, and it all starts with intuitive and well-designed website navigation.

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