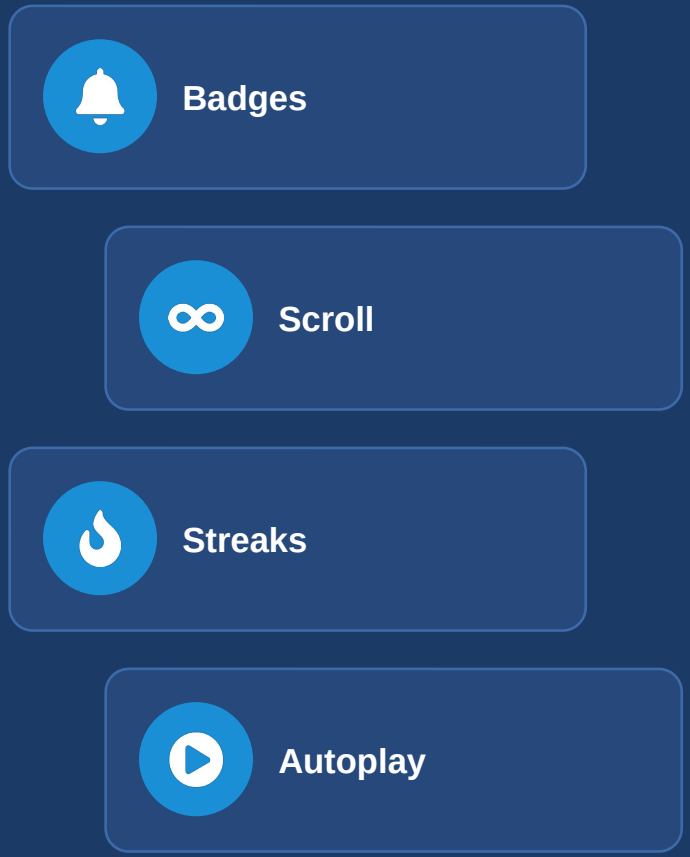
ENG4U The Machine Stops, Lesson 7

Design Tricks

A scavenger hunt for persuasive design



Today's goals

We are learning…

- The conventions and techniques of app design.
- How design techniques influence an audience.

I can…

- Name and explain five persuasive design techniques.
- Identify techniques in a real or mock app.
- Explain how each technique influences users.
- Judge whether a technique serves or works against users.

Today's plan

Time	What we're doing	You will…
0–8 min	**Hook**	Discuss
8–25 min	**Techniques**	Note
25–35 min	**Mock feed**	Analyse
35–60 min	**Scavenger hunt**	Hunt
60–75 min	**Serve or steer?**	Judge

Warm-up



Why are notification badges usually red? Why do videos start the next one automatically?

Sentence starters

“Red makes me…”

“Autoplay works because…”

“Someone chose this because…”

How it works

- Pairs: 3 minutes.

Big idea

Apps are media texts with conventions of their own: the red badge, the endless scroll, the streak, the autoplay countdown. Some of these techniques help us; some are designed to keep us longer than we meant to stay. Naming them gives us power over them.

Persuasive design techniques

Technique	How it works
Infinite scroll	No bottom of the page; no natural place to stop
Autoplay	The next video starts before you decide
Variable reward	Unpredictable likes and new posts, like a slot machine
Streaks and badges	Habits turned into obligations
Notifications	Urgent alerts, often red, pull you back
Defaults and friction	Easy to join, hard to leave; settings on by default

The Glimmer feed

On screen	Technique
🔴 12 — “Maya and 11 others reacted to your post!”	?
🔥 Spark: 211 days with Jordan. Don't let it go out!	?
▶️ Next video in 3… 2…	?
“You're all caught up!” (never appears)	?
“Turn off Glows? You'll miss what your friends are doing.”	?

Scavenger hunt

On page 1, in pairs:

1. Look at a real app (as your teacher directs) or the screenshots.
2. Find each technique.
3. Explain how it works.
4. Note its effect on you.

More terms

dark pattern	A design that tricks users into choices they didn't intend. *Hidden unsubscribe links.*
confirmshaming	Guilt-tripping wording on a “no” option. *“No thanks, I don't like saving money.”*
social proof	Showing what others do to persuade you. *“11 others reacted.”*

Which works on you?

Be honest. Which technique is hardest for you to resist?



Infinite scroll

No place to stop.



Autoplay

The countdown.



Streaks

Don't break it.



Badges

The red dot.

Serve or steer?

On page 2:

1. For each technique, decide: serves or steers?
2. Explain why.
3. When could it do the other?
4. Design one change that serves users better.

Talk it out



If a technique works on you even when you know about it, is it your fault, the designer's, or no one's?

Sentence starters

“It's my responsibility because…”

“It's the designer's because…”

“It's shared because…”

How it works

- Groups: 4 minutes.

Check yourself

Be honest. This helps you choose what to work on next.

Success criteria	Not yet	Almost	Got it
I can name and explain five persuasive design techniques.			
I can identify techniques in a real or mock app.			
I can explain how each technique influences users.			
I can judge whether a technique serves or works against users.			

Exit ticket

1. Name three techniques.
2. The one that works best on you.
3. One change that would serve users better.

Next class: The Algorithm Game.

Teacher reveal

Design tricks: key points

Infinite scroll and autoplay: Remove natural stopping points.

Variable rewards: Pull-to-refresh and unpredictable likes work like a slot machine.

Streaks and badges: Turn habits into obligations; fear of losing a streak.

Notifications: Red badges and urgent wording pull you back.

Defaults and friction: Settings that benefit the company are on by default; leaving is made harder than joining.

Serve or steer: The same technique can help (a reminder to take medicine) or steer (a reminder to scroll).