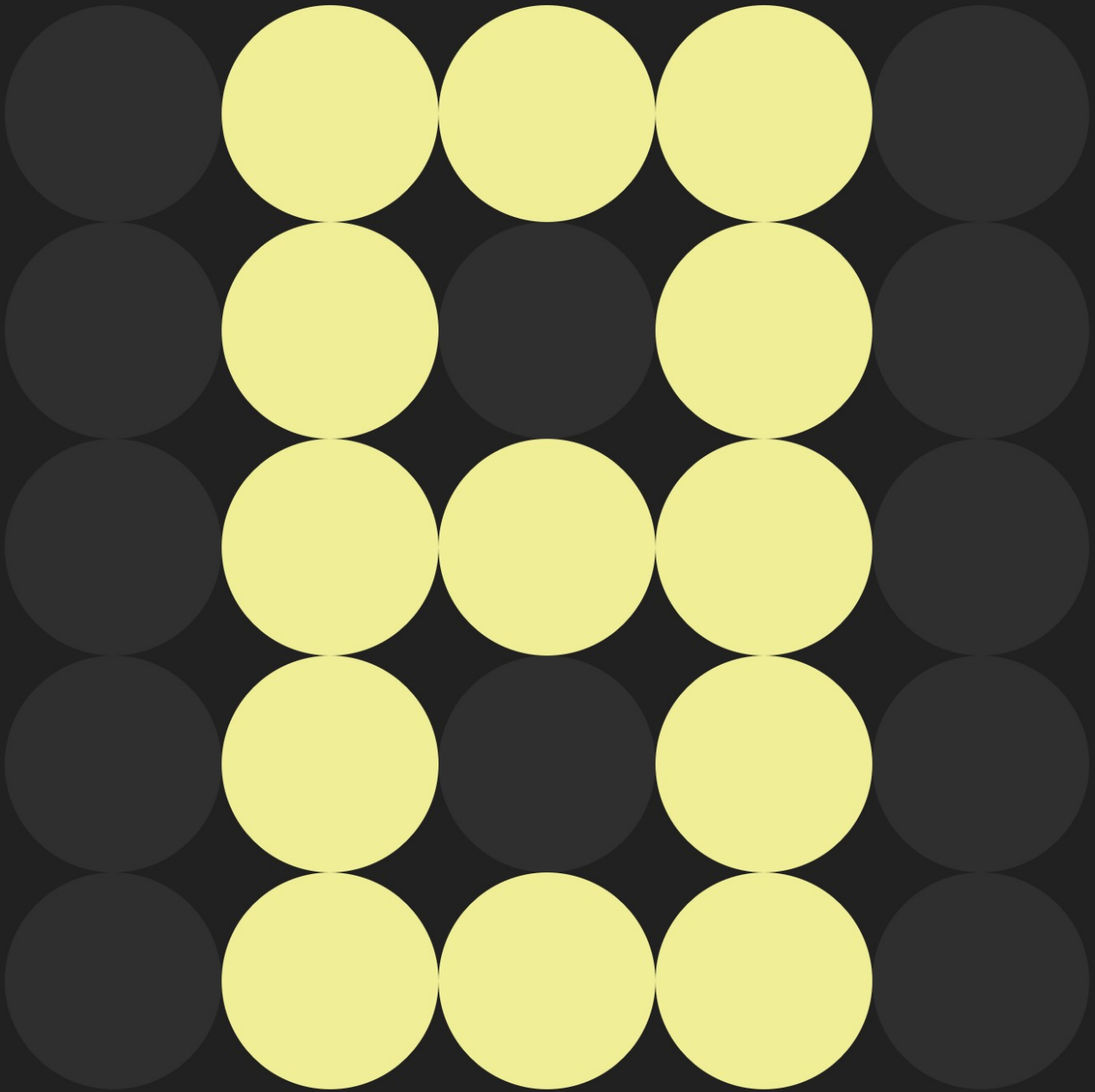




MARC ANDREW



# 8 Point Grid

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with the versatile 8pt Grid System

# **8 Point Grid**

**How to create stronger layouts with  
the versatile 8pt Grid System**

**By Marc Andrew**

## **Layout Grids are everything in UI Design.**

Well. OK. Don't discount Colour. Don't forget about Typography. But get your Layout Grids right, and you're half-way there in creating much better looking, and functioning UIs.

*Consistent, and scalable spacing* helps you eliminate guesswork whilst designing and developing. It requires fewer design decisions. And it enables a much faster turnaround on projects.

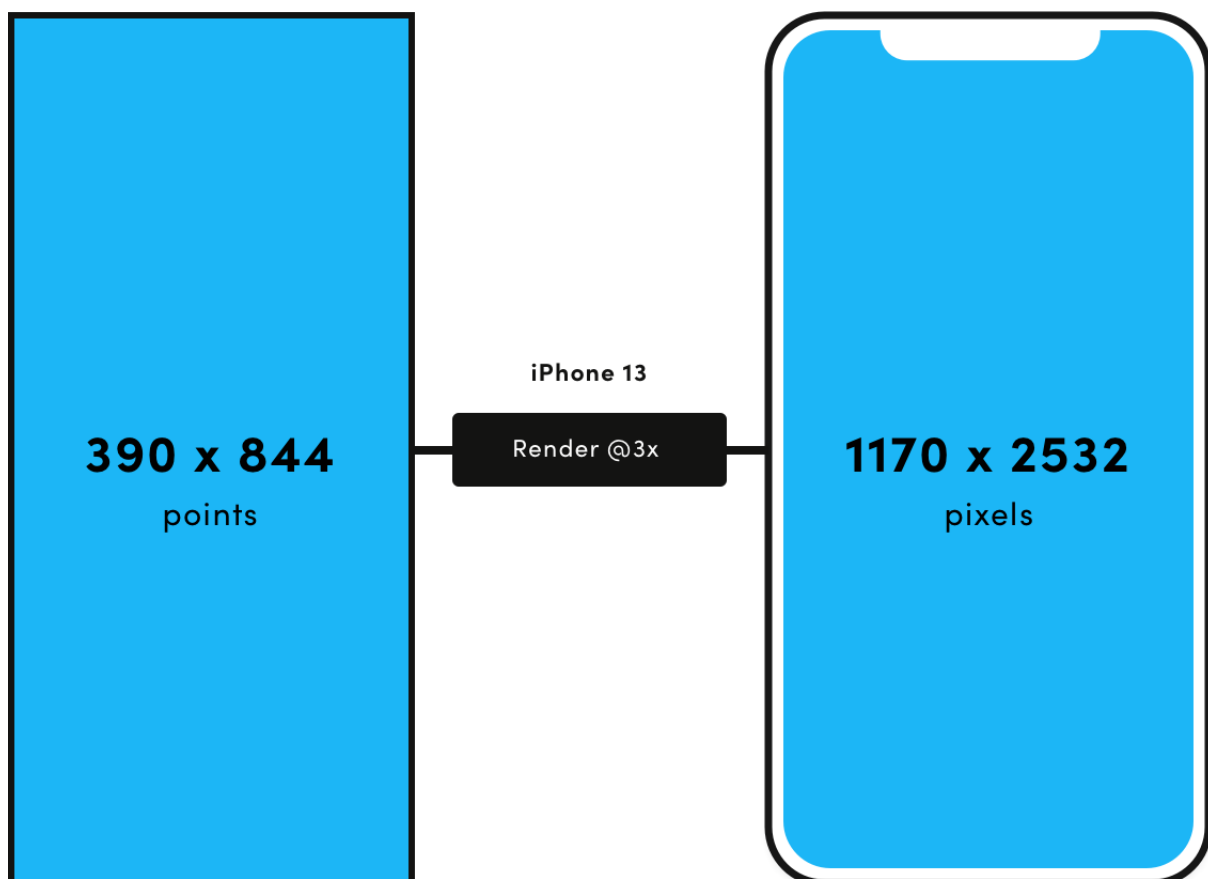
**The 8pt Grid** is probably one of the most commonly used *Layout Grid Systems* there is, and for good reason.

*Let me tell you more about it in this handy guide...*

## OK. So, what is a point (pt) exactly?

A point (pt) is a measurement of space that is dependent on screen resolution. The simplest explanation is that at a '**1x**' resolution (or **@1x**) **1pt = 1px**.

'Back in the day' when screens were 1x; 1pt equalled 1px. Then your *Retina* (**2x**), and *Super Retina* (**3x**) screens came along and things changed. When designing for the iPhone 13 (3x) your design would then be rendered with *three times as many pixels per inch* (ppi).



So for example, if you have an icon at the size of  $24px$ , when you export that icon as an asset **@2x** and **@3x** the rendered image would be either  $48px$  ( $2x$ ), or  $72px$  ( $3x$ ), which will then look great on *Retina* and *Super Retina* displays respectively.

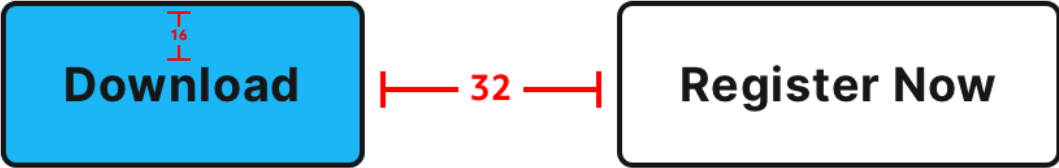
I always recommend designing in **1x**, then exporting your assets at the different sizes ( $@2x$ ,  $@3x$  etc...) as required. It reduces a lot of confusion.

# So, why 8 Points?

Like I mentioned earlier, the variety of screen sizes and pixel densities has continued to increase which can make the job of asset generation more complicated.

Using an *even number* like **8** to space, and size elements in your design makes scaling for a wide variety of devices much easier, and more consistent.

The basic principle of the *8pt Grid* is that you use multiples of **8** (8, 16, 24, 32, 40, 48 etc...) to *margins, padding, and sometimes dimensions*, on elements inside your design.



I always think in 8s now when creating my UIs, with the odd occasion when I'll call upon **4pt**, for example when designing for Mobile where the screen real estate is limited.

# Hard, or Soft Grid method?

'Soft Grid' for the win every time!

When I've created UIs before I've always opted to use the 'Soft Grid' approach, where you simply *measure 8pt increments* between individual elements in your design.

This as opposed to the 'Hard Grid' approach which places elements *into a grid pattern defined in 8pt increments* which I find a little too rigid and not practical for when it comes time to code up a design.

# Icons & The 8pt Grid

When it comes to *icons* and the 8pt Grid, you will find that most of them have been designed to sit inside of frames that are multiples of **8** (16×16, 24×24, 32×32 etc...)

If not, then make sure that any icon that you drop into your design you *frame it inside a container* that uses a value that is a multiple of **8** (ie; 24×24). This will just enable icons to be laid out consistently within your UIs.



# Typography & The 8pt Grid

When it comes to Type, using the *4pt Baseline Grid* alongside the *8pt Grid* gives you a much more *harmonious vertical rhythm* throughout your designs.

Simply align your type to a Baseline Grid of **4**, which uses a *line-height value* that is a multiple of **4** (*4, 8, 12, 16, 20 etc...*)

*Why 4?* Well, for me personally, I've found that scaling my Baseline Grid in multiples of 8 in the past has just pushed the text too far apart when working with certain text sizes.

The 4pt Baseline Grid gives you more *fine-grained control*, and *brings much better results*.

*Hopefully with this brief overview of the 8pt Grid you'll now feel confident in laying out your UIs faster, with more consistency, less guesswork, and fewer design decisions required.*

**Give 8 Points a try. Your designs will look 10x better for it.**

Oh. And if you're wanting more awesome tips like these then you can *Join my Weekly Newsletter* here - <https://www.marcandrew.me>

*Many thanks*

**Marc**