

Building a Global Experience Language for the BBC

- 00 Introduction**
- 01 Philosophy**
- 02 Foundations**
- 03 Building Blocks**
- 04 Patterns**
- 05 Thanks**

We are evolving a global experience language for the BBC's digital services.

The GEL guidelines are a reference point for all designers creating BBC websites (future iterations will also incorporate mobile and IPTV recommendations).

The design philosophy underpins everything we do as a user experience and design team. It informs the way our services look, the way they behave and the way we operate as a team.

The foundations should be used by all. They include a vertical grid, baseline grid and recommended templates.

The building blocks help create consistent interaction and visual design across the site; from typography to iconography.

Our design pattern library will offer a comprehensive set of re-usable page components.

We welcome feedback and suggestions.

01 Philosophy

10 Principles
Cultural Map

01 **Modern British**

Our services are woven into the fabric of everyday life in the UK. They embrace a modern British design aesthetic that extends outside national boundaries. Our character is vibrant and sometimes quirky.

02 **Compelling**

Our voice ranges from serious and authoritative through to witty and entertaining. We sound authentic and relevant, warm and human. We engage our audiences with compelling storytelling.

03 **Authentic**

We value the familiarity and trust placed in us. We acknowledge the BBC's heritage of iconic design and broadcasting history with subtle references.

04 **Pioneering**

We pioneer design innovations that surprise and delight. We introduce the unexpected but always take our audiences with us.

05 **Current**

We curate a timeline of Britain; reflecting the present as it happens and adding relevant contextual links with the past.

06 **Distinctive**

We stand out by looking to tomorrow instead of simply referencing the design trends of today. We strike a balance between cookie-cutter design and beautiful anarchy.

07 **Joined-up**

All our services and platforms are one connected whole which deliver experiences sensitive to their context of use. We enable coherent journeys both within and outside familiar paths. We connect our audiences where there are shared interests and experiences.

08 **Local/Global**

We need to speak to everyone but we recognise the individual. Our message is scalable and localisable.

09 **Universal**

Our messages are clear and are communicated through simple, useful and intuitive interfaces. Our services are inherently open and accessible.

10 **Best**

Last but not least, we put quality first...

GEL is the glue that ties all BBC services together. The BBC masterbrand will speak directly to the audience on the homepage. A rich brand experience will still be distinctly 'BBC' on Doctor Who.

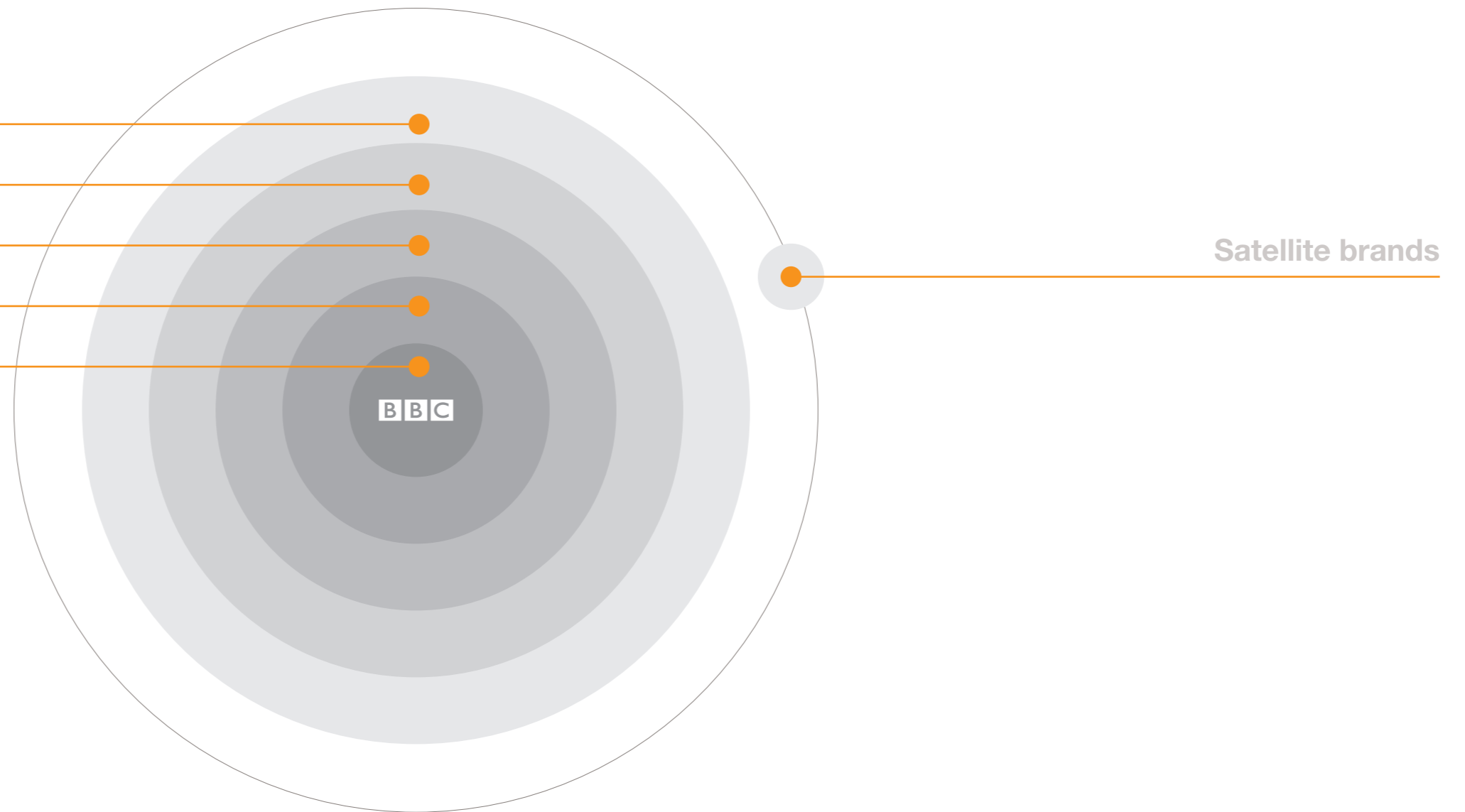
Programmes

Channels

Genres

Sport, News, Weather

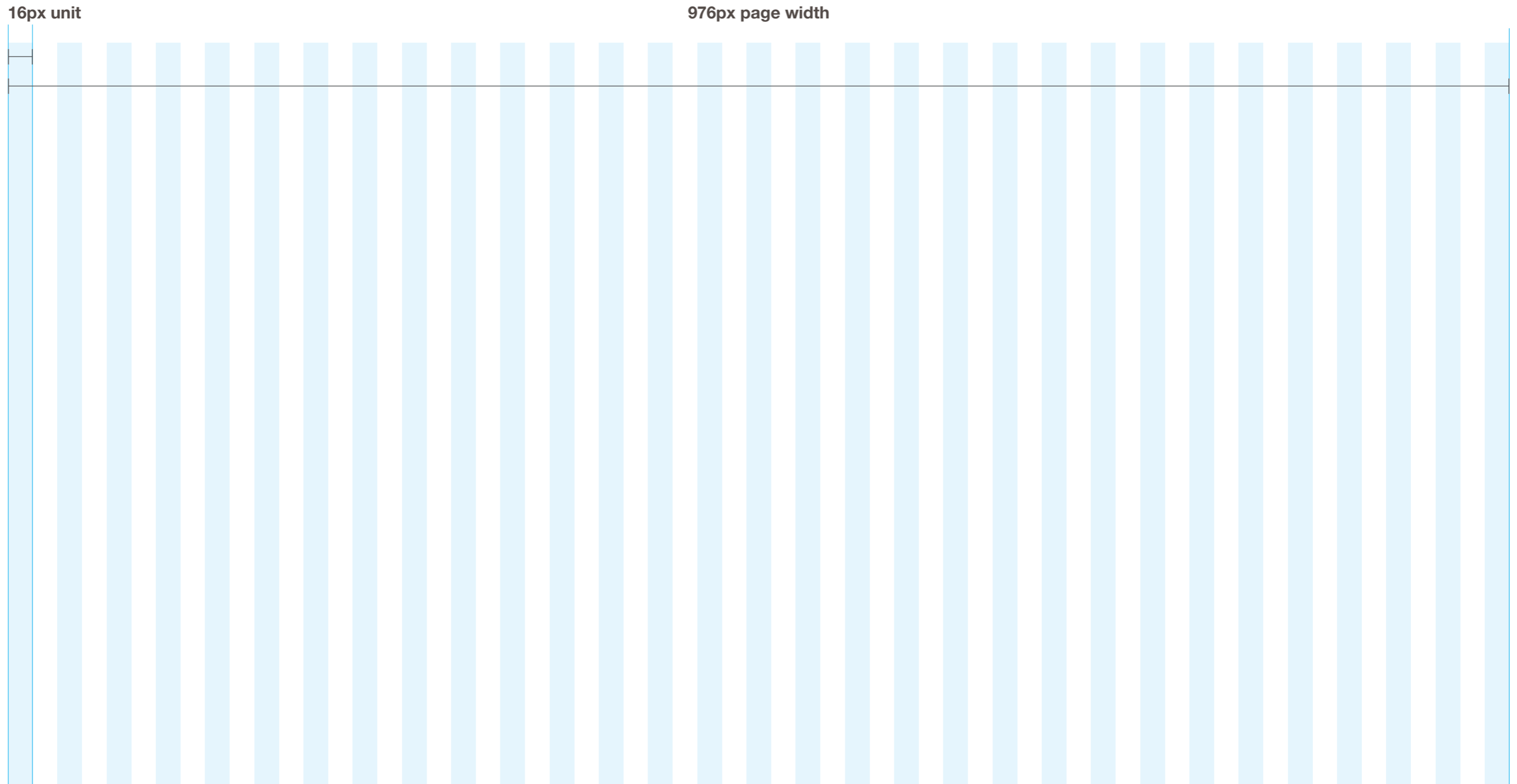
Homepage, Search, Help



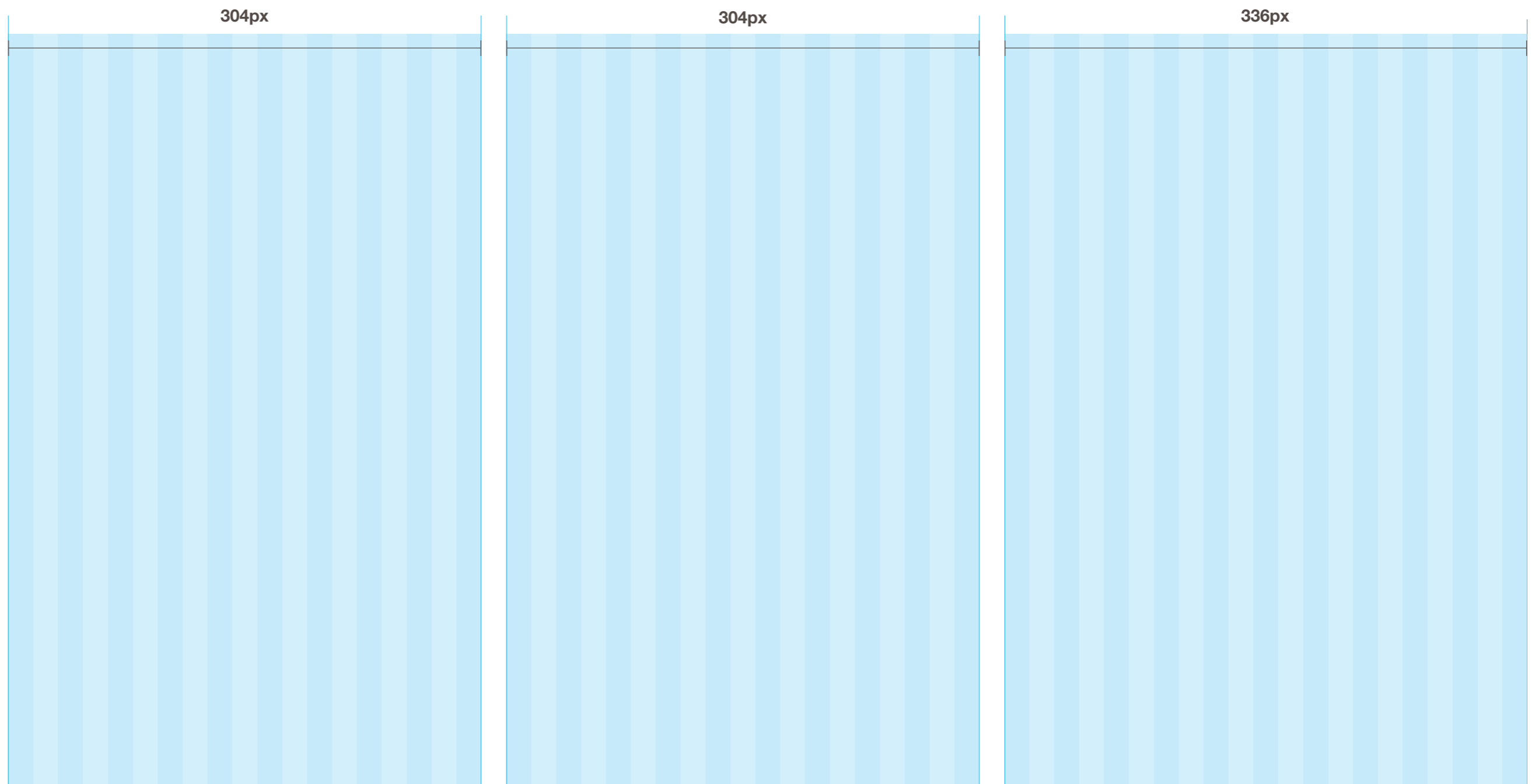
02 Foundations

- Universal Grid
- Columns
- Grid Variations
- The Baseline
- The Masthead
- Horizontal Navigation
- The Local Masthead
- Backgrounds
- The Footer

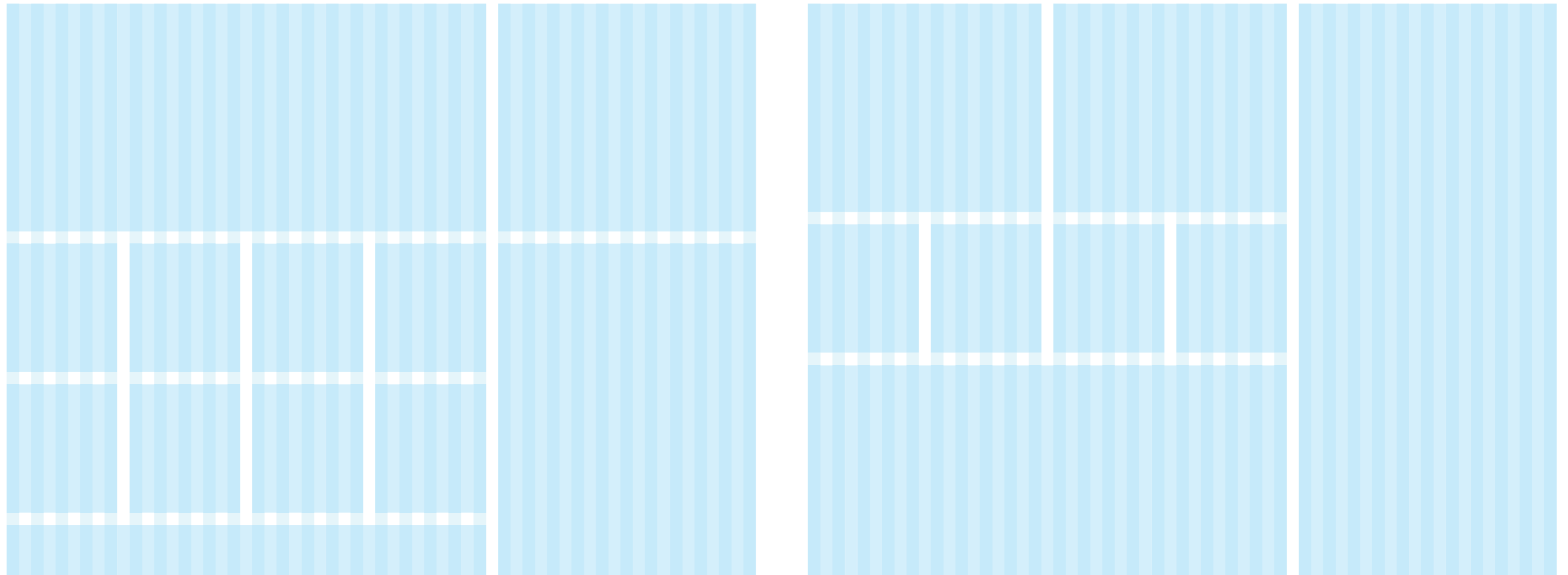
Your starting point is a universal grid, divided into **61 x 16px vertical units**. This has been created to align with existing EMP sizes, image ratios and advertising requirements.



The grid allows for a standard split across **three columns with 16px gutters**, creating a feature of the slightly wider column on the right that accommodates ‘fixed panel’ adverts.

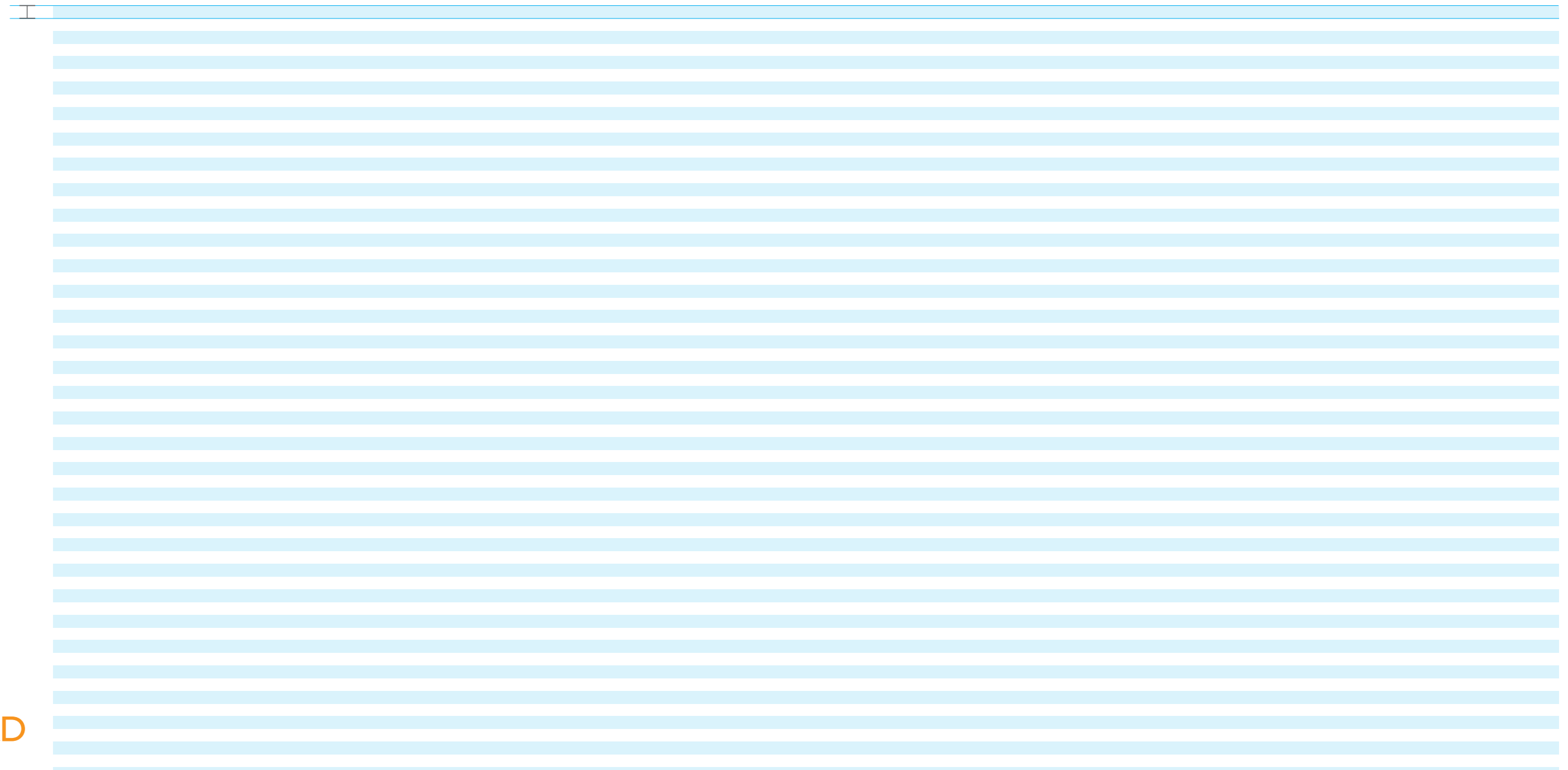


Columns can be further divided. The grid allows for a huge range of **experimental layouts and templates.**

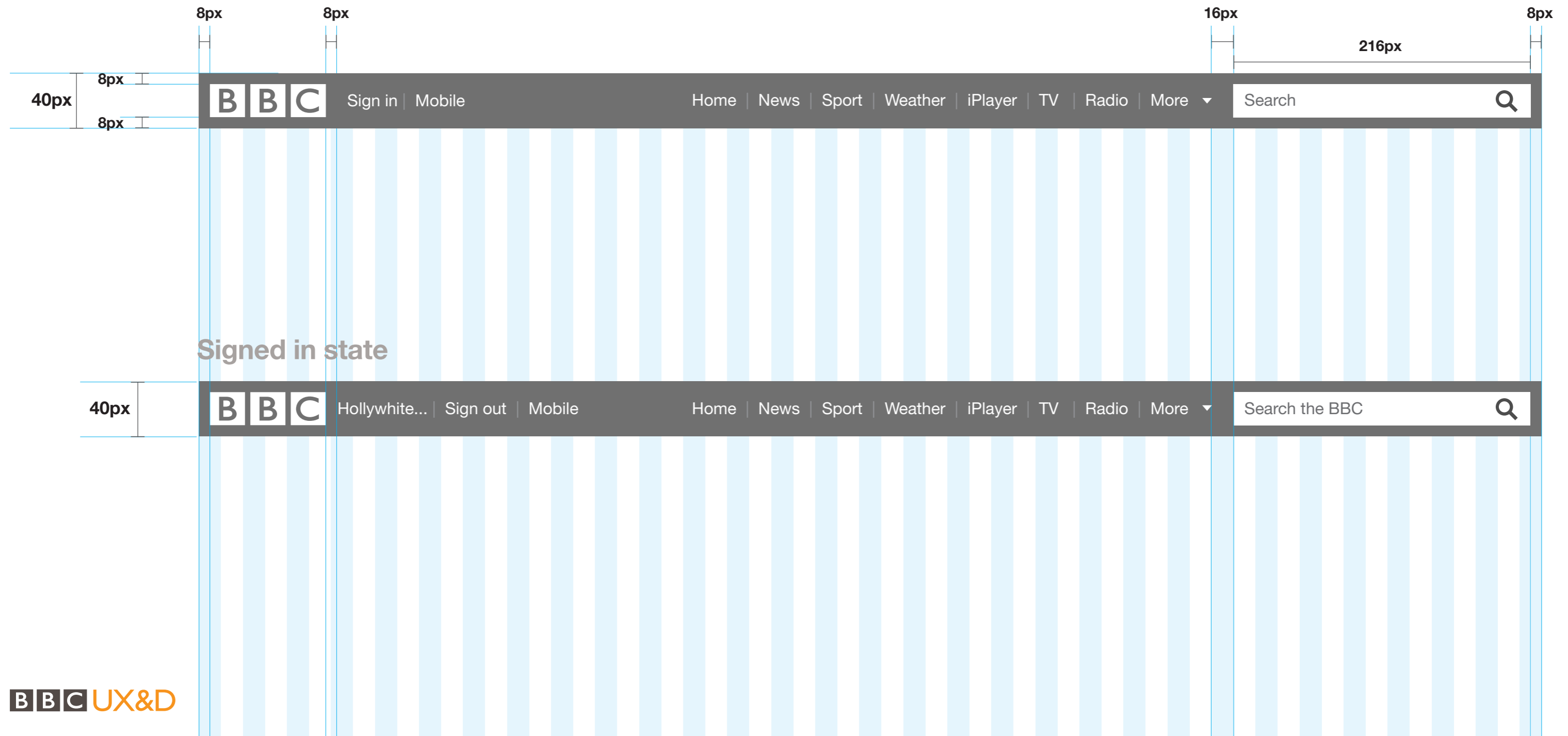


We're also employing an **8px baseline grid** to help with vertical alignment of page components. Slavish adherence to the baseline isn't necessary for all typography but it does help to create vertical rhythm on the page.

8px



The global masthead retains the current **global navigation links** with additional links in an overlay panel. BBC iD and mobile links are positioned to the right of the BBC blocks. The masthead is black but either 40% opaque or 70% solid grey.



We are proposing up to two lines of horizontal navigation with tabs and a crumbtrail solution for deeper hierarchies. More details are available in the design patterns library.

Single tier menu

Lorem ipsum | Dolor sit amet | Consectetur adipiscing | Vestibulum faucibus | Enim at odio | Fusce fermentum | Neque sed gravida

Double tier menu

Lorem ipsum | Dolor sit amet | Consectetur adipiscing | Vestibulum faucibus | Enim at odio | Fusce fermentum | Neque sed gravida

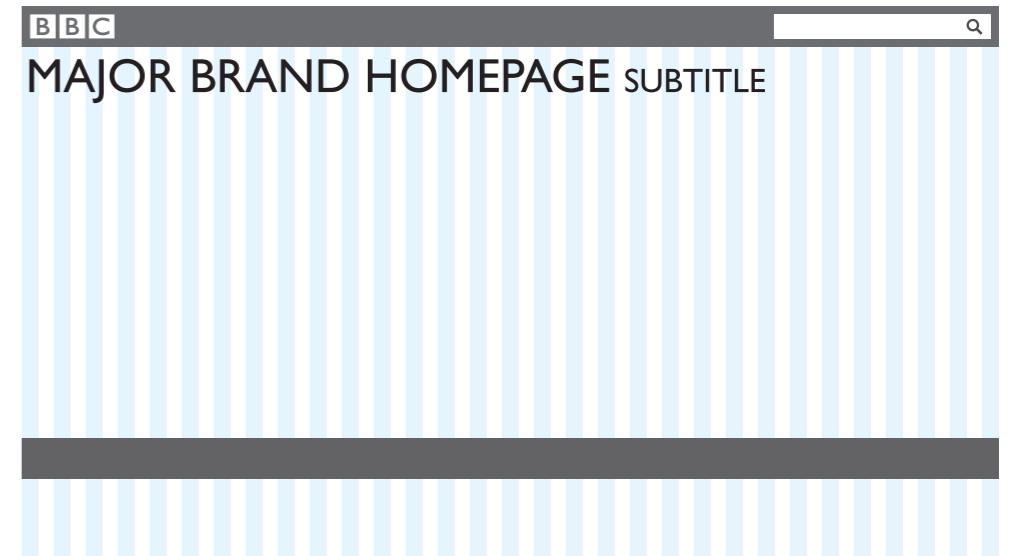
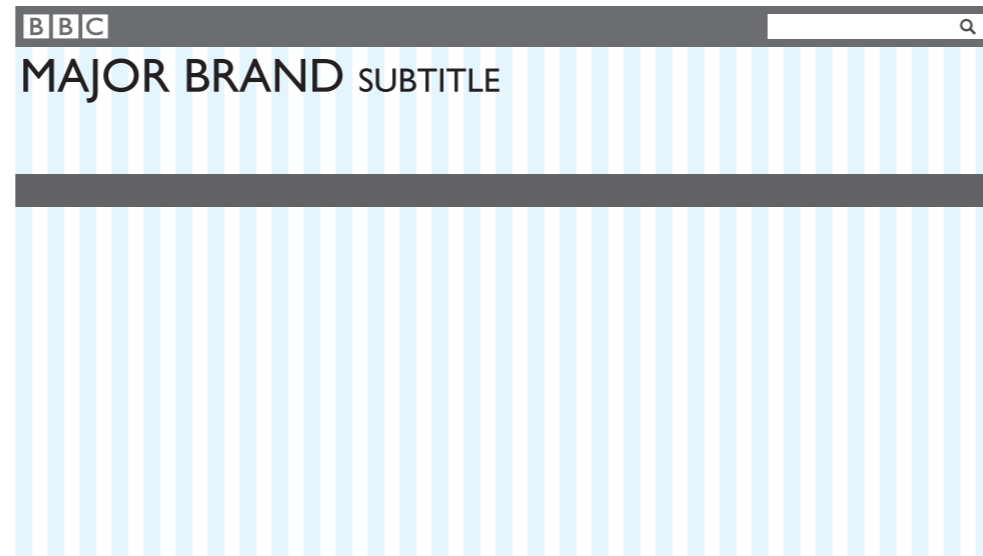
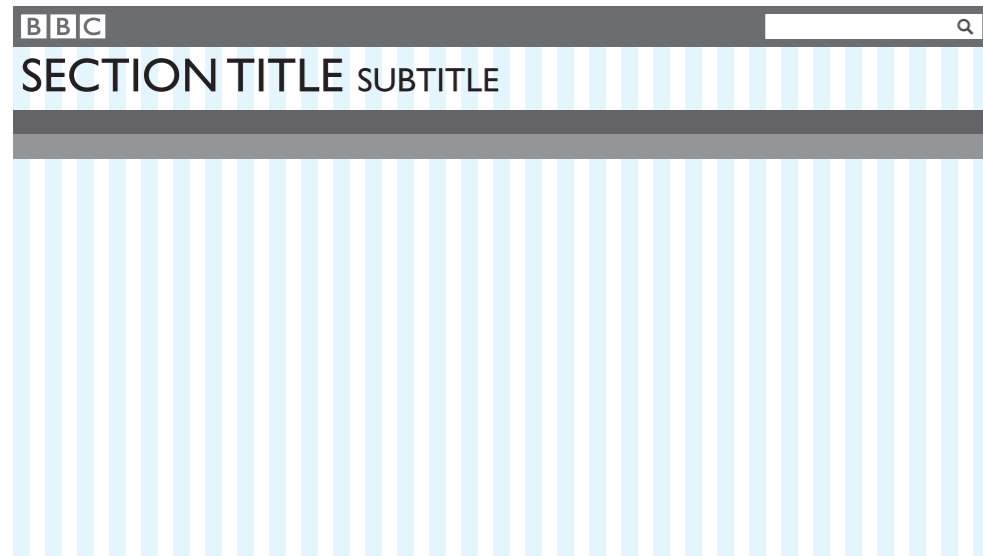
Proin euismod | Condimentum tellus | Vulputate quam | Bibendum | Nullam auctor | Euismod lobortis | Duis auctor | Neque malesuada

Deep hierachies

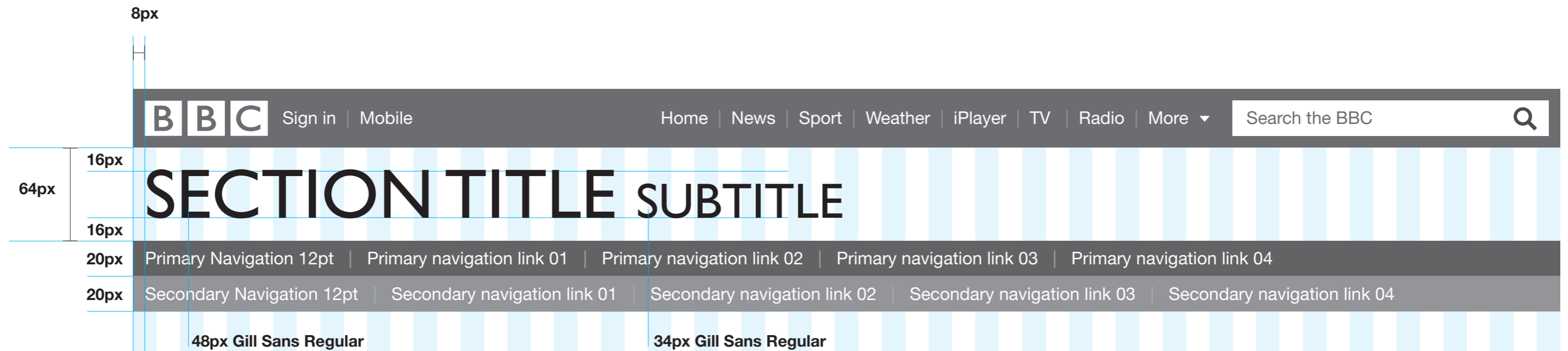
Lorem ipsum | Dolor sit amet | Consectetur adipiscing | Vestibulum faucibus | Enim at odio | Fusce fermentum | Neque sed gravida

Euismod lobortis | Proin euismod | Condimentum tellus | Vulputate quam | Bibendum | Nullam auctor | Duis auctor | Neque malesuada

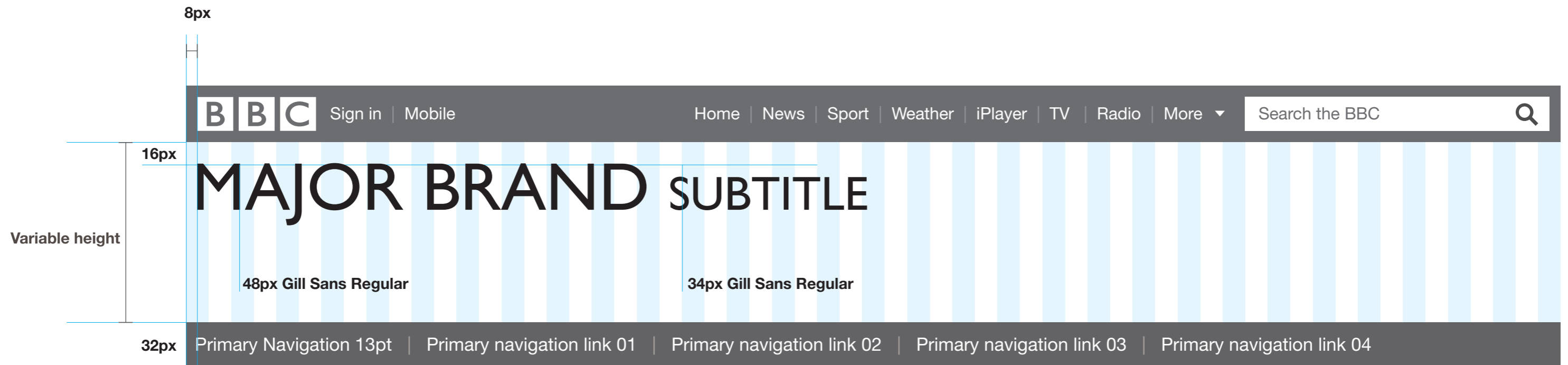
The new masthead approach provides the flexibility to accommodate various brand elements.



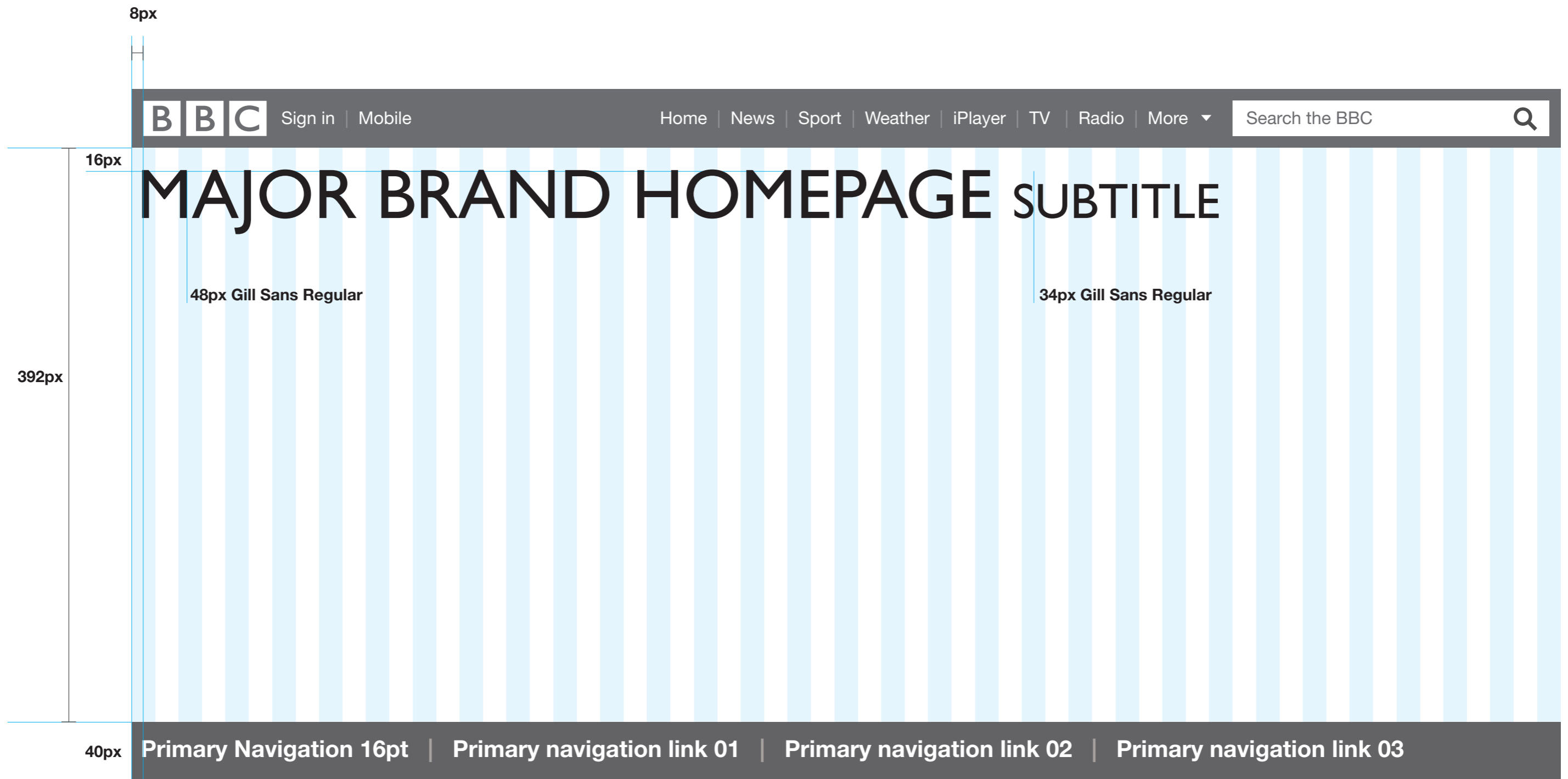
The local masthead will vary in height depending on the type of service. The minimum depth will be **64px for content heavy sites such as News.**



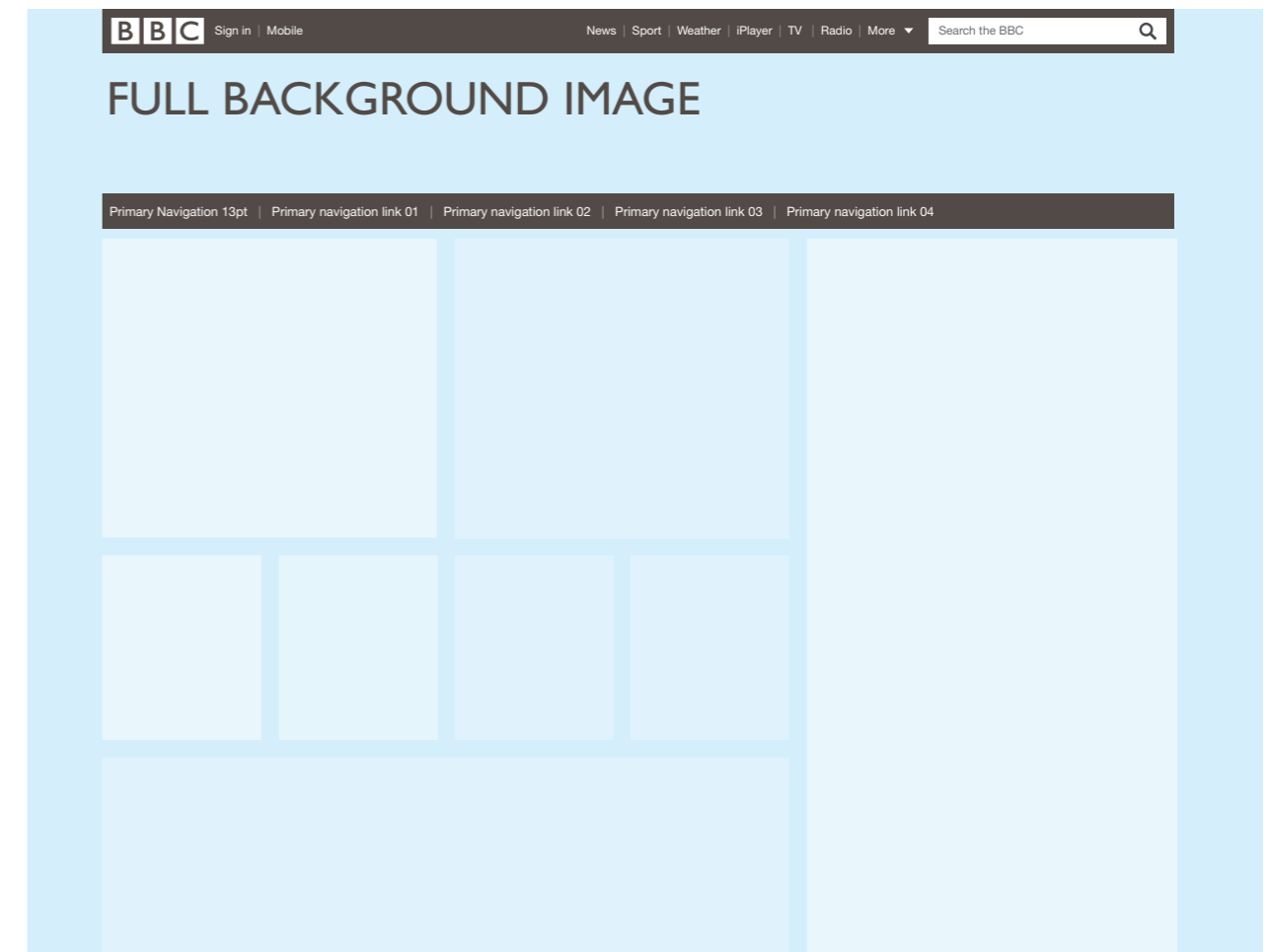
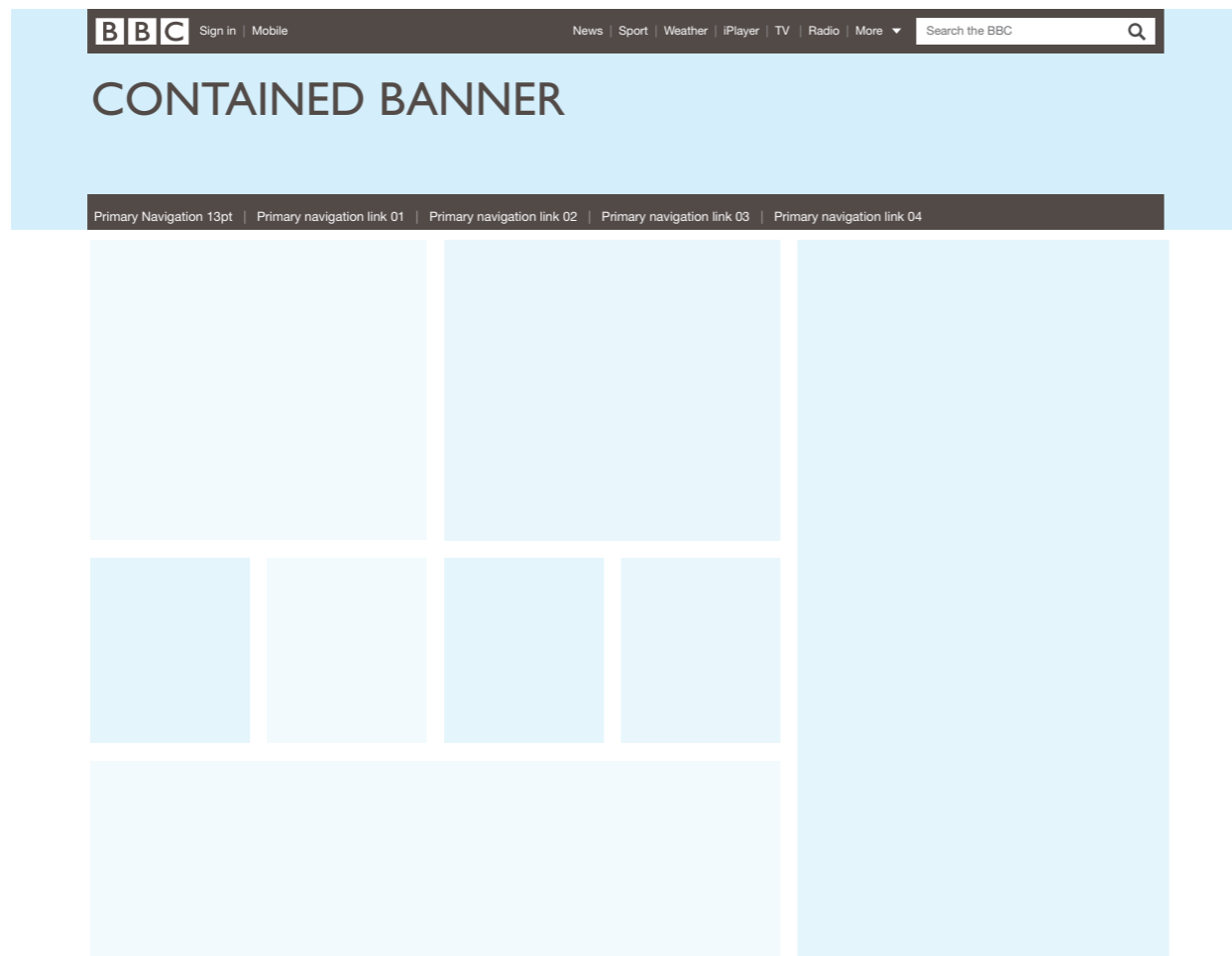
Other brands such as Radio 1 or BBC One may be deeper.



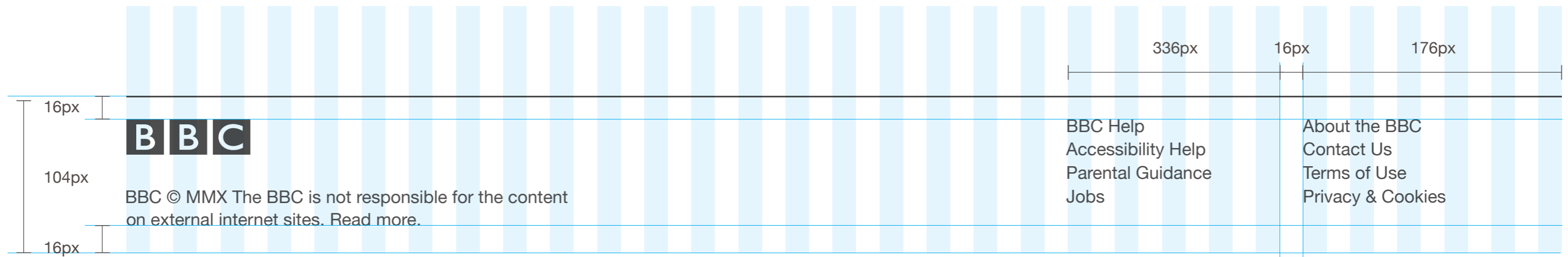
Rich programme experiences such as Doctor Who could be deeper still – **up to 392px**. The default font for the local masthead is **Gill Sans regular (48px)**. Local branding should be left-aligned.



There is no longer a requirement for consistent placement of page backgrounds or page ‘shoulders’ across the site. **Backgrounds can be white, full colour, gradient or image backgrounds (full browser width) and content may feature within panels or as free-floating elements.**



The GEL footer is a variant of the existing GVL 2.0 footer. Colour options are **white, grey, black and semi-transparent over an image.**



03 Building Blocks

Typography
Iconography
Linking Conventions
Image Size Ratios

GEL uses bold typography to create stronger hierarchies and drama across the site. We're moving from Verdana to Helvetica Neue / Arial as the BBC's default web font for both headers and body copy.

Helvetica Neue Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890!@£\$%^&*()_+

Helvetica Neue Bold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890!@£\$%^&*()_+

Gill Sans Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890!@£\$%^&*()_+

Large bold type should be used to establish a clear information hierarchy. These are the recommended type sizes.

Helvetica Neue Bold 48px

48px Leading / -40 Tracking Dev Pixel Spec: -2px Letter spacing

Helvetica Neue Bold 36px

36px Leading / -30 Tracking Dev Pixel Spec: -1px Letter spacing

Helvetica Neue Bold 32px

32px Leading / -30 Tracking Dev Pixel Spec: -1px Letter spacing

Helvetica Neue Bold 28px

28px Leading / -36 Tracking Dev Pixel Spec: -1px Letter spacing

Helvetica Neue Bold 24px

24px Leading / -43 Tracking Dev Pixel Spec: -1px Letter spacing

Helvetica Neue Bold 20px

20px Leading / -47 Tracking Dev Pixel Spec: -1px Letter spacing

Helvetica Neue Bold 16px

18px Leading / 0 Tracking Dev Pixel Spec: 0px Letter spacing

Helvetica Neue Bold 14px

18px Leading / 0 Tracking Dev Pixel Spec: 0px Letter spacing

Helvetica Neue Bold 13px

16px Leading / 0 Tracking Dev Pixel Spec: 0px Letter spacing

Helvetica Neue Bold 12px

HELVETICA NEUE BOLD CAPITALS 11px

Putting it together with body copy...

Super Header 36px

Header 32px

Subheader 20px

TIME STAMPS 11PT CAPITALS

Copy 13px Helvetica Bold on 16px leading Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce sed leo. Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla. Duis libero diam, condimentum et, condimentum in, congue eu, tellus. Phasellus eu elit at nisi ultricies lobortis. Suspendisse porta commodo leo.

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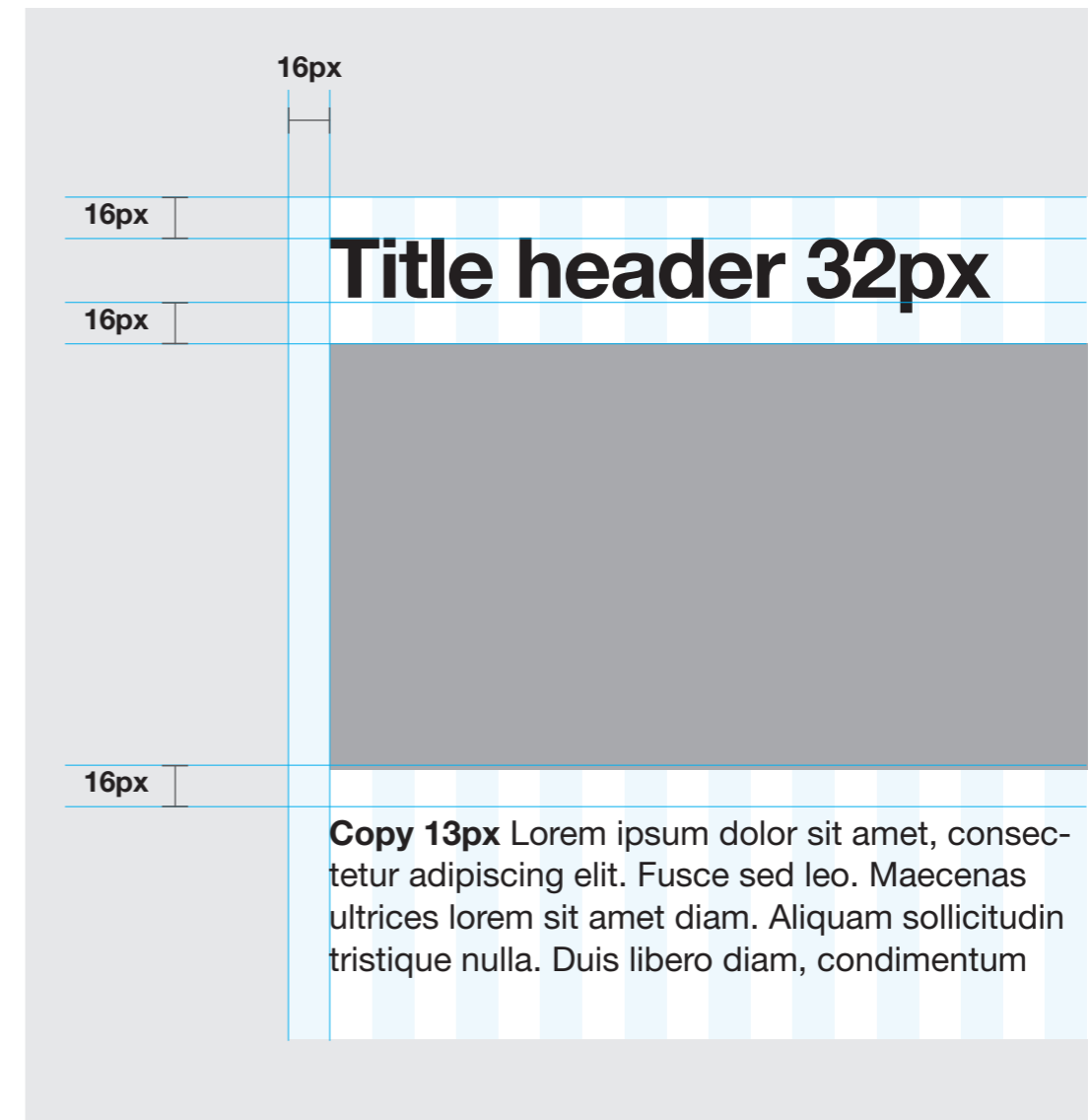
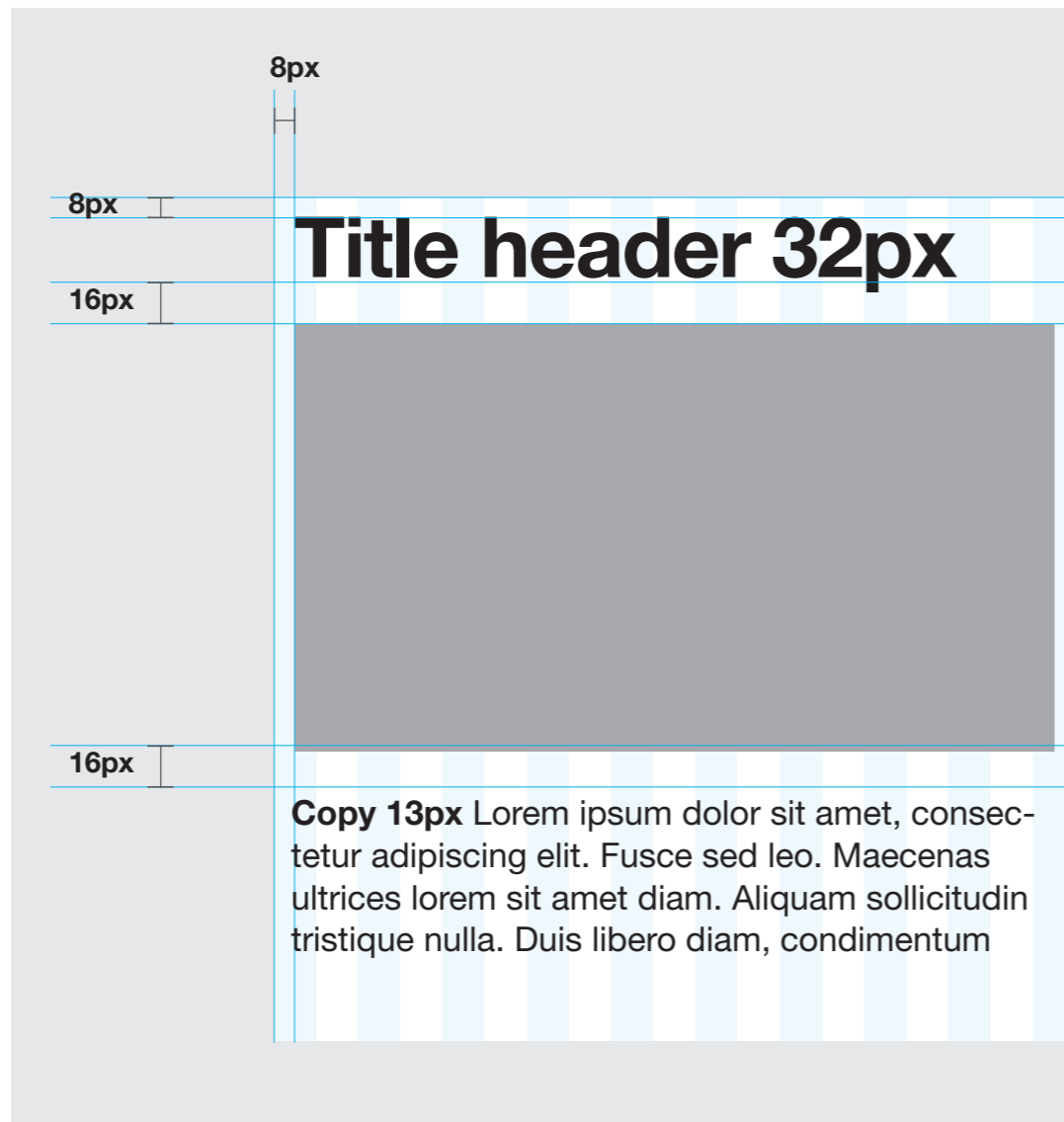
Copy 13px Helvetica Regular on 16px leading Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, 8px

consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce sed leo. Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla. Duis libero diam, condimentum et, condimentum in, congue eu, tellus. Phasellus eu elit at nisi ultricies lobortis. Suspendisse porta commodo leo. Sed tincidunt tincidunt massa. Cras scelerisque diam non arcu. Donec egestas. Integer a mi. Aenean tempus, mi eu luctus imperdiet, erat ligula semper turpis, consectetur faucibus libero ante non sem. Aliquam quis diam. Pellentesque mollis nisi eget purus. Aenean iaculis metus vel sem. Integer at erat.

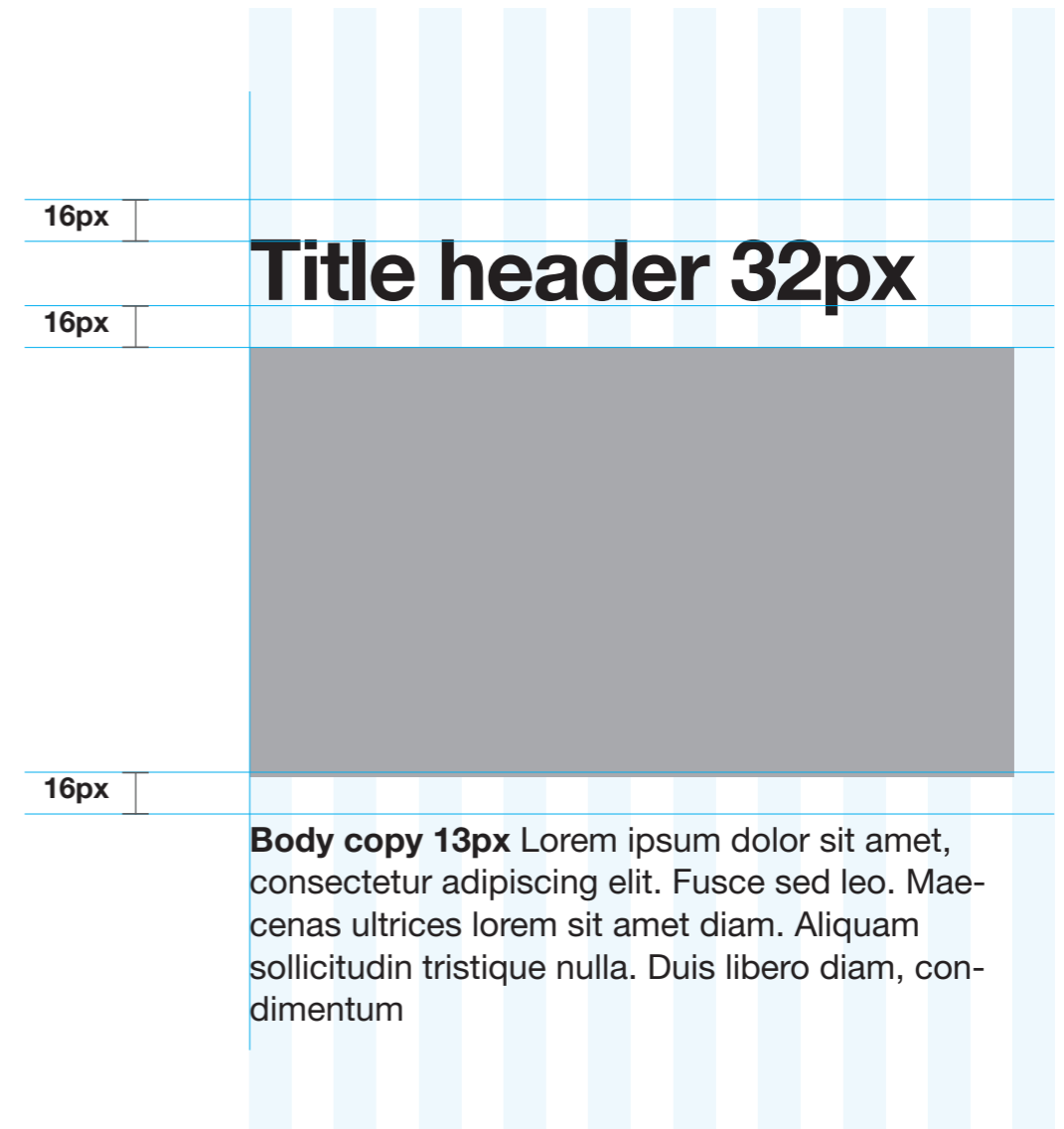
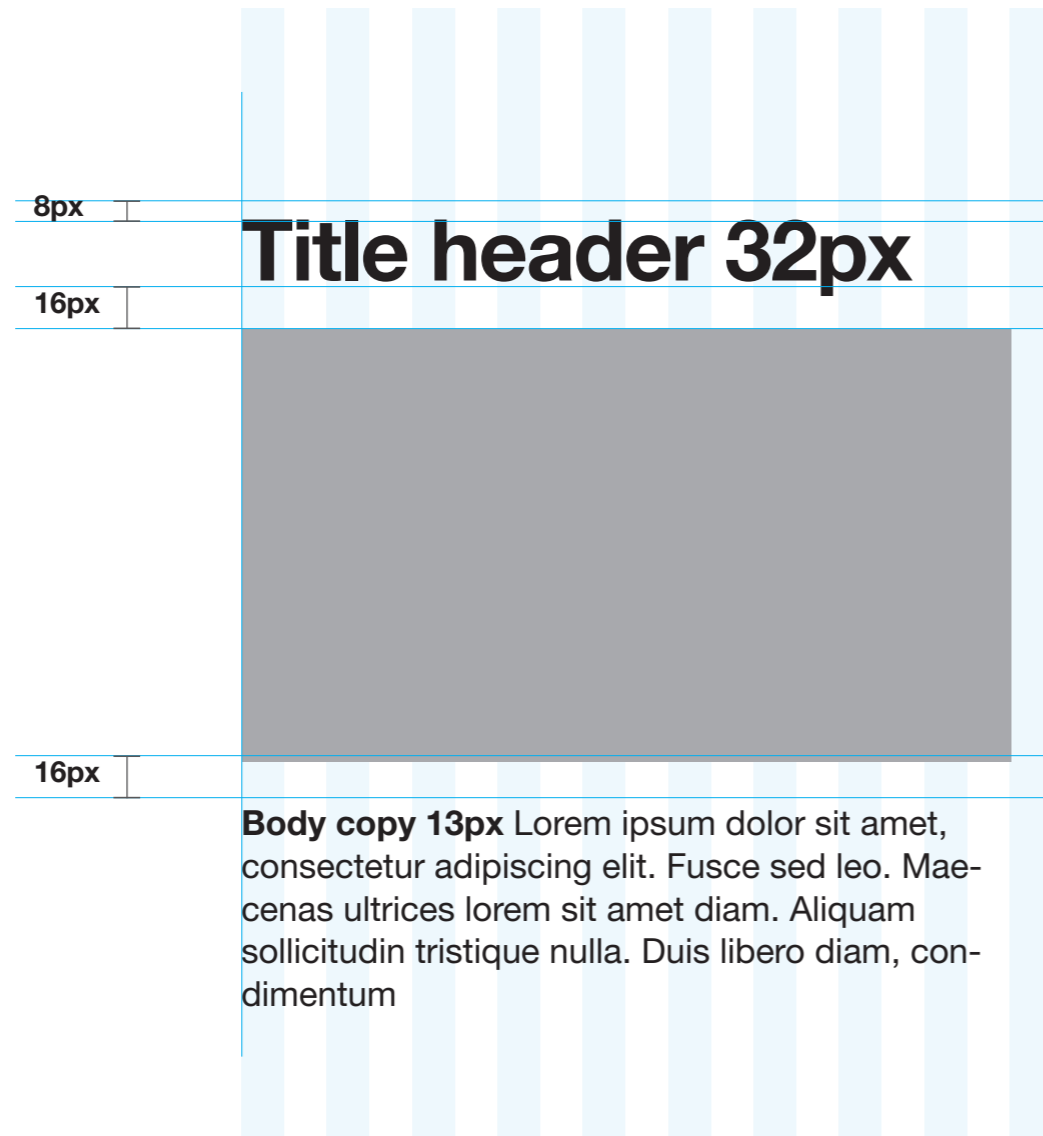
Link – Nam dictum nibh eu arcu

Link – Donec egestas integer a mi

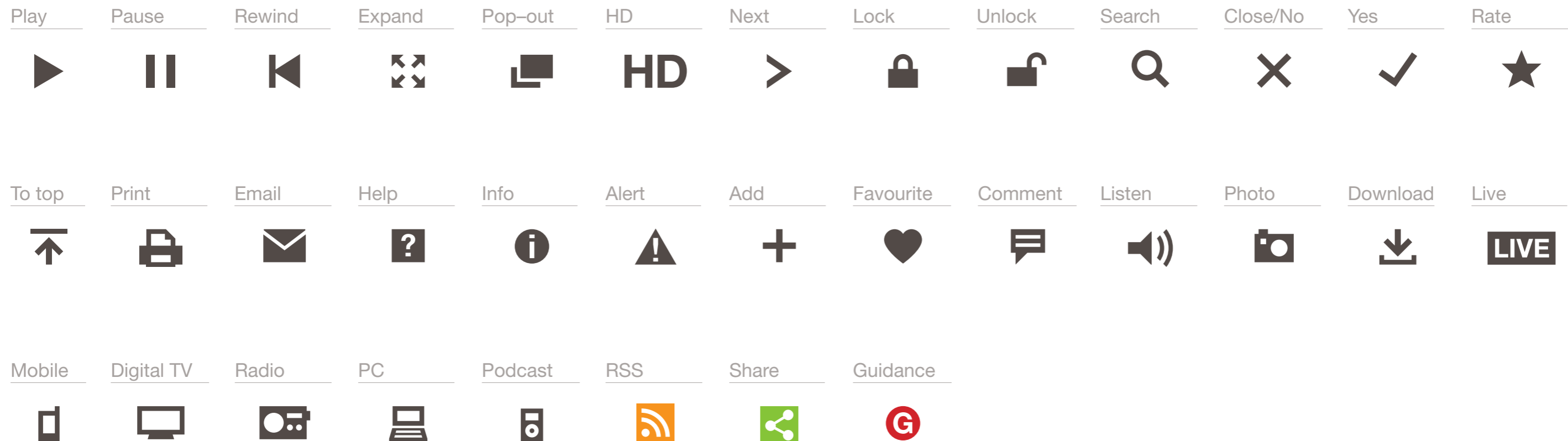
Our typographic style relies on **tight tracking, tight leading and large headers**. There should be consistent spacing around headers and body copy. Either 8px or 16px above and to the left when content is contained...



...or aligned to the grid when there is no container.



We have designed a **new set of icons** to work in harmony with the new visual language. The default **size is 13px** and icons can be used with or without a flat button container. These can be used in any colour unless otherwise specified.



Icons should appear to the left of text or in the top left corner of thumbnails.

Header 36px

8px

Subheader 20px

TIME STAMPS 11Px CAPITALS

Copy 13px Helvetica Bold on 16px leading Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce sed leo. Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla.

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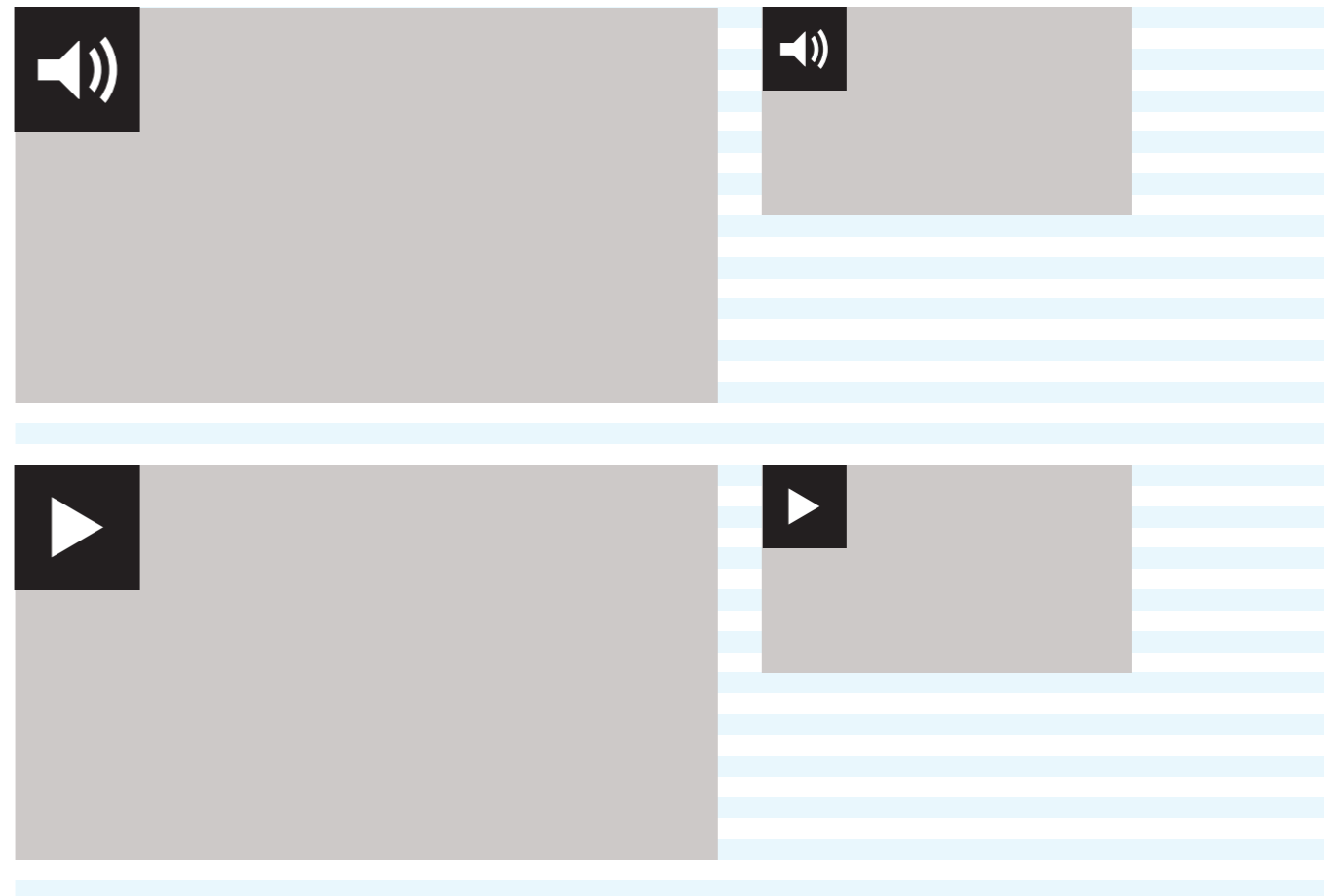
 **Link Suspendisse porta commodo leo. 13px**

 **Link Pellentesque mollis nisi eget purus 13px**

 **COMMENTS 11PX CAPITAL**

 **EMAIL 11PX CAPITAL**

 **PRINT 11PX CAPITAL**



Links should comply with existing standards and guidelines. They should be easily distinguishable from body copy using a combination of bold type and colour, along with underline or underline on hover. **On rollover links should change colour (and underline if under 24px).**


Header 36px 8px


Subheader 20px


TIME STAMPS 11Px CAPITALS


Body Copy 13px Helvetica Bold on 16px leading Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce sed leo. Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla.


Body Copy 13px Helvetica Regular on 16px leading Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Fusce sed leo. Maecenas ultrices lorem sit amet diam. Aliquam sollicitudin tristique nulla.



 [Link Suspendisse porta commodo leo. 13px](#)



 [Link Pellentesque mollis nisi eget purus 13px](#)



 COMMENTS 11PX CAPITAL


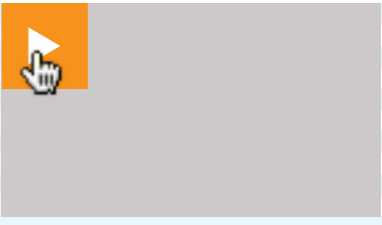
 EMAIL 11PX CAPITAL

 [PRINT 11PX CAPITAL](#)

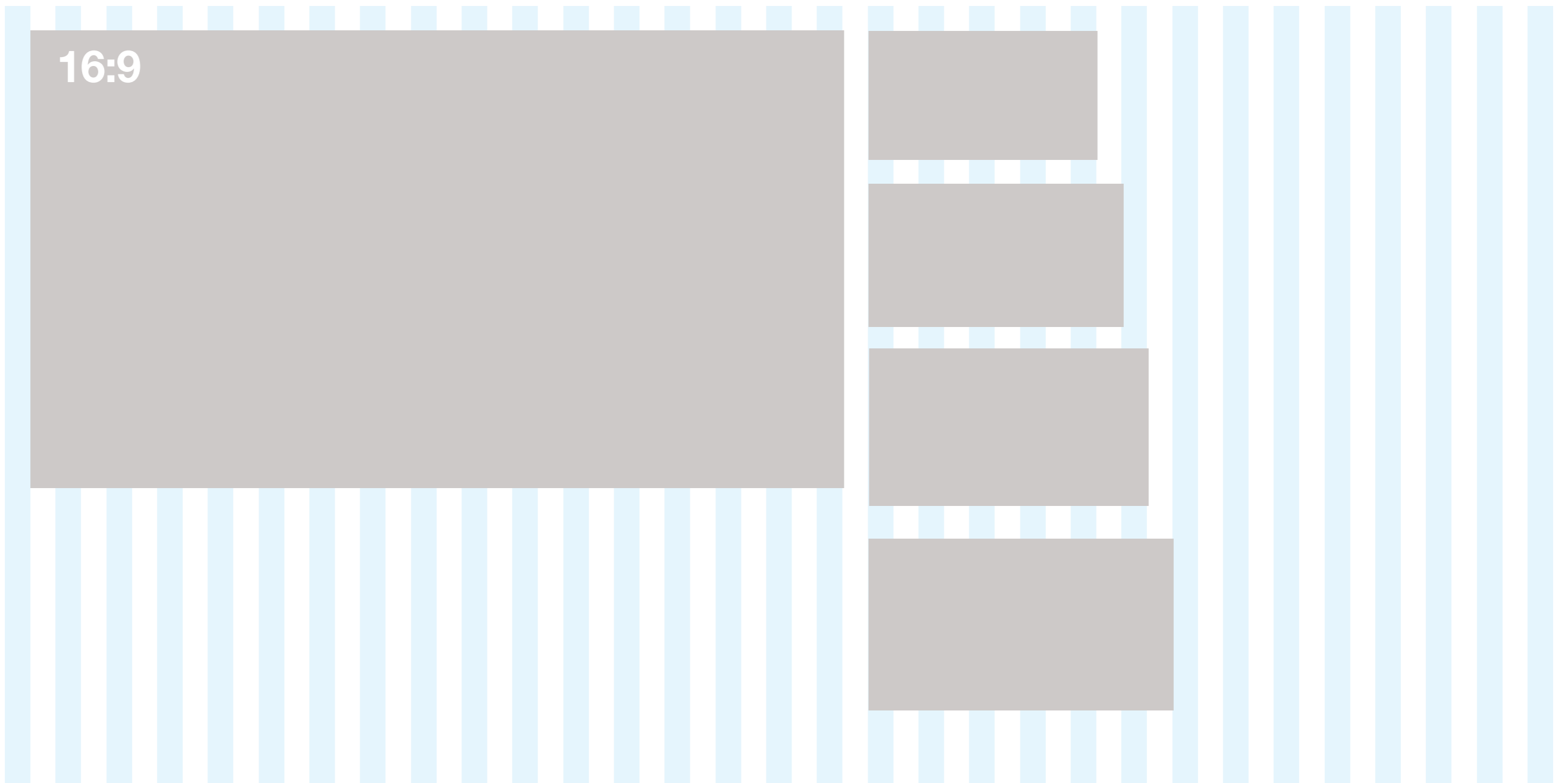
 

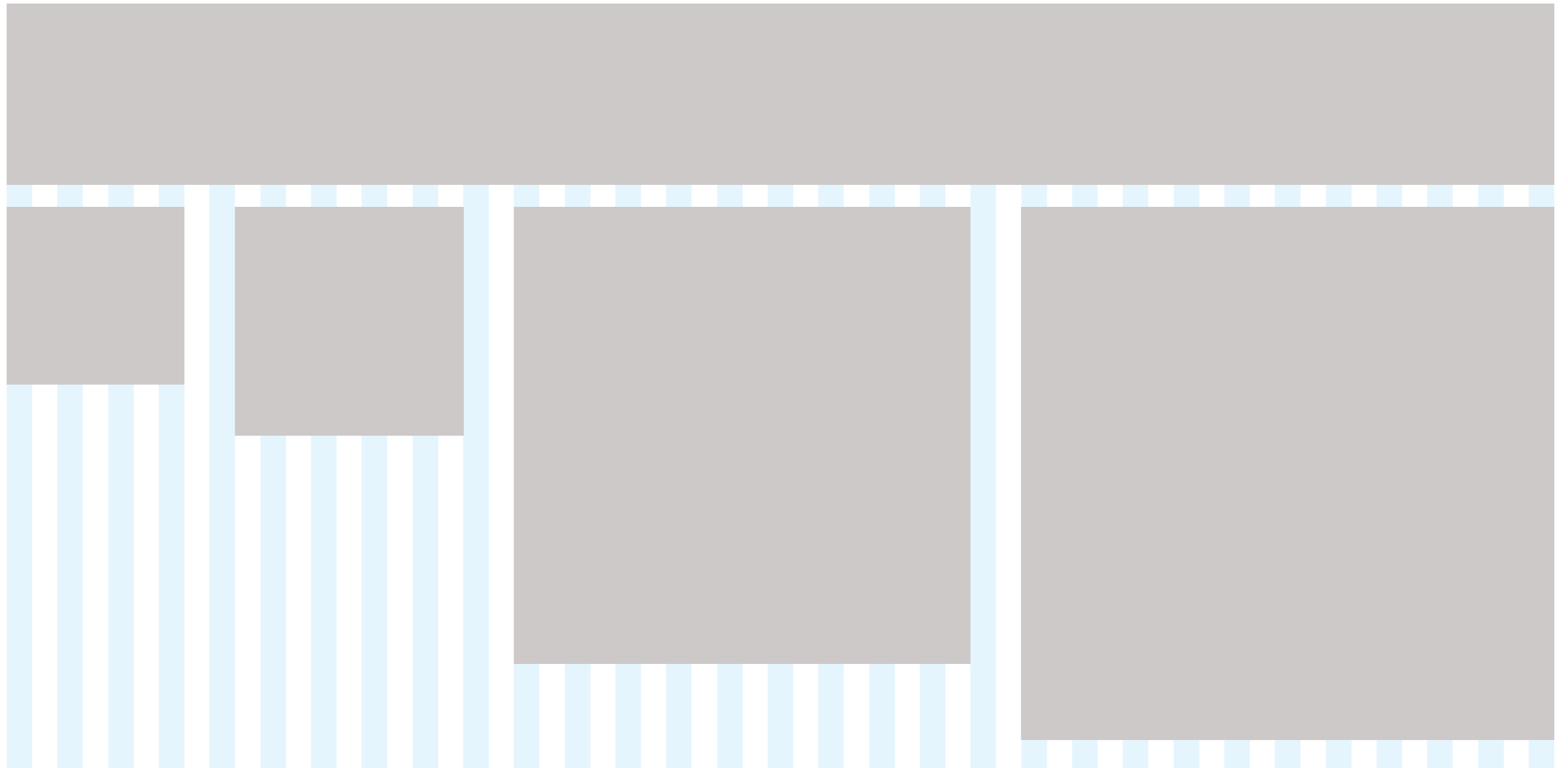
 

We recommend using **16:9 images at any size that aligns with the grid**. This is particularly important where there is likely to be significant re-use across BBC Online.



Backgrounds, banners, promos and cut-outs could be a variety of shapes and sizes as long as there is **alignment with the universal grid.**



04 Patterns

The design patterns library will be a living repository for simple, re-skinable page components. Several of these patterns are available at bbc.co.uk/gel

Carousel

EMP

Autosuggest

Image gallery

Tooltips

Local navigation

Contextual navigation

Localisation

Pagination

Overlay panels

Identity

Infographics

Local search

Accordions

Form elements

Drag and drop

Editor

Slider

Sortable

Timeline

Mapping

Legacy content

Vote

05 Thanks

BBC

Marcelo Marer
Bronwyn van der Merwe
Liz Citron
Jason Fields
Adam Powers
Duncan Swain
Chris Sizemore
Ben Gammon
Steve Gibbons
Michael Tiffany
Paul Sissons
Yuri Kang
Mike Albers
Jo Patterson
Chris Hankins
Frances McNamara
Yasser Rashid
Andy Braxton
Sean McVeigh
Dan Ogunkoya

Lyra Xharra-Loxha
Dan Shallcross
Adam Hutchinson
Annoushka Ferrari
Sarah Challis
Olivia Rofail
Mike Atherton
Audrey Rapier
Lynsey Smyth
Sylwia Frankowska
Nourdine Aarsalane
Patrick Walsh
Toby Mildon
Isabel Nunes
Mat Hampson
Tom Cartwright
Richard Hodgson
Andrew Greenham
Rowun Giles

Research Studios

Neville Brody
Nick Hard
James Nelson
James Le Beau–Morley
Jeff Knowles
George Sheldrake
Phil Rodgers

Fitzroy & Finn

Paul Finn

The GEL Steering Group, the Global Design Working Group
and all contributing designers

B B C UX&D

For more information visit bbc.co.uk/gel