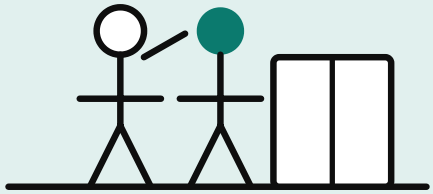
Method

Bodystorming

Ideating in the real place, or a similar one, and acting out the situations and ideas there with your body, instead of imagining them from a meeting room.



Origin

Studied by Oulasvirta, Kurvinen and Kankainen (2003)

Output

Ideas tried out physically in the real place

What it's for

It helps you check ideas on the spot, in the real place, and see details of the context that are missed from a meeting room.

Key elements

On site

You ideate where things happen.

With the body

Situations are acted out, not just described.

With data

You start from what was observed in the research.

How it's done

1 

Go to the place or recreate a similar one.

2 

Act out the situation and the ideas.

3 

Note what works and what doesn't.

Applications in design

When to use it

When you are designing for an activity the team doesn't know well.

Avoid

Doing it without research data: you would be acting out your assumptions.

Don't fall for it

What works when acted out still has to be tested later with real people.

Connections

Used by

- Service design

Related to

- Ethnography
- Contextual inquiry
- Role playing
- Prototyping
- Experience prototyping
- Desktop walkthrough

Authors and works

2003	**Antti Oulasvirta, Esko Kurvinen and Tomi Kankainen**	Tested it in real cases: it let them check ideas on the spot and understand the context better.

Sources

Original sources

- Oulasvirta, A., Kurvinen, E., & Kankainen, T. (2003). Understanding contexts by being there: Case studies in bodystorming. Personal and Ubiquitous Computing, 7(2), 125–134. View source (https://doi.org/10.1007/s00779-003-0238-7)

Last reviewed: October 25, 2026

Atlas público de diseño, de Adriana Ojeda. Texto e ilustraciones bajo licencia CC BY 4.0.