The naked truth about grids

Grid systems are nice. But you have to understand them well before implementing in your project.

Who is Andrey:

- Drupal user and developer for over 9 years (D.o. id=920!)

- Mostly into site architecture, themes and consulting.

- Dozens of sites created internationally.

- Happily serving community as drupalsites.net guy.

- There new project to come soon: nood.org, a place to find stock Drupal themes.

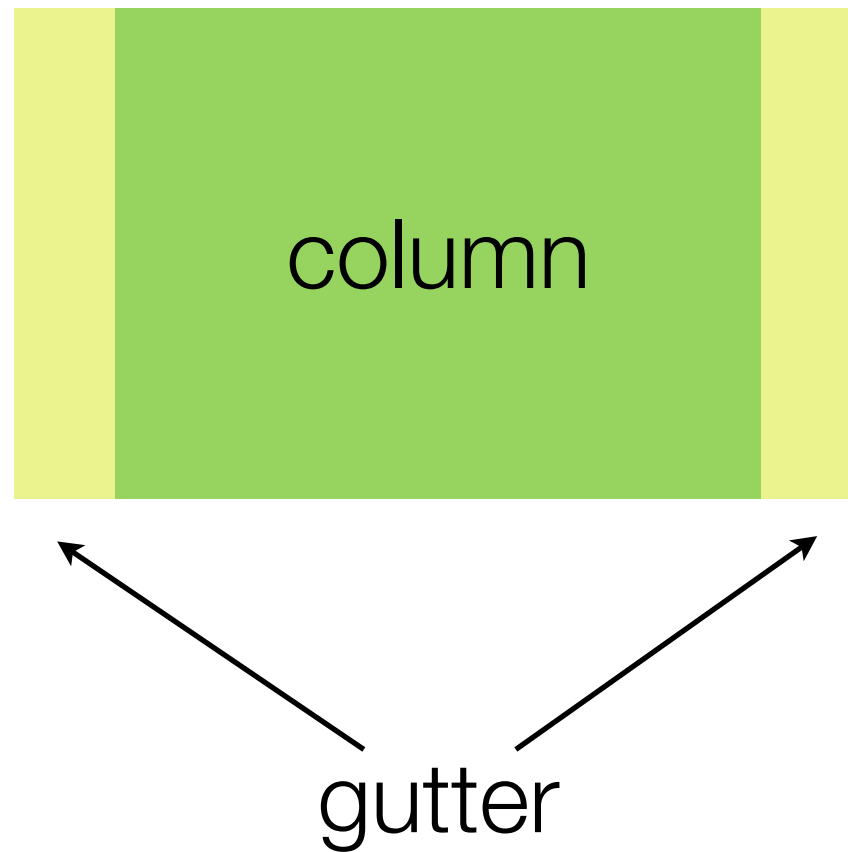- + my blog: andreys.info with links to twitter, flickr etc.

Short introduction to grids

For those who don't use it yet

Most popular grid systems

- **960.gs** (http://960.gs/). Usually 12 or 16 column layout.

- **Blueprint** (http://www.blueprintcss.org/) and **Bluetrip** (http://bluetrip.org/) with 24 column layout.

- **1kb Grid** (http://www.1kbgrid.com/)

- **Golden Grid** (http://code.google.com/p/the-golden-grid/)

- and much much more....

Grid basics: the column
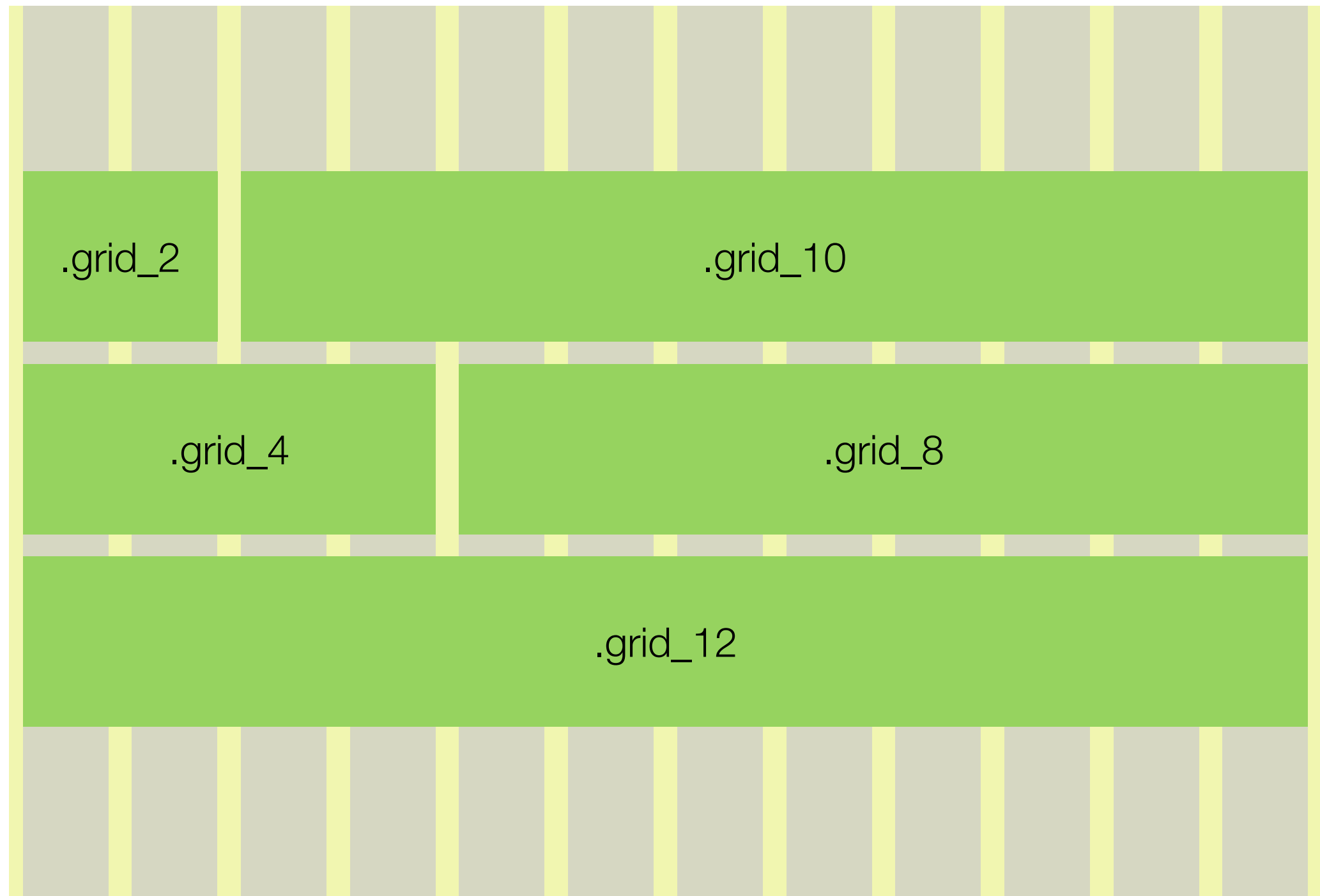
column

gutter

Grid basics: CSS sample

column
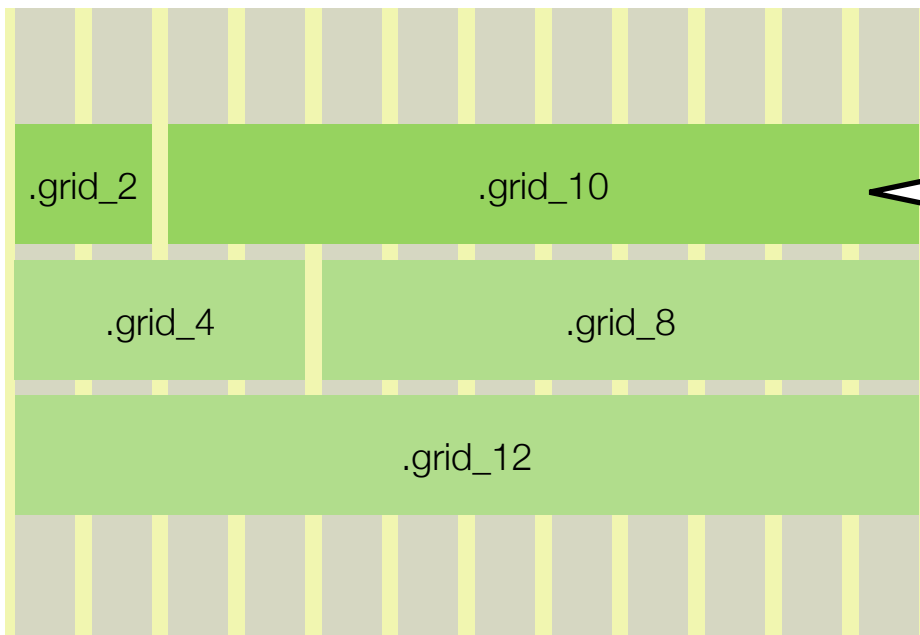
gutter

```
.container_1 {
    width: 80px;
    margin-left: 10px;
    margin-rigt: 10px;
    float: left;
    ...
}
```
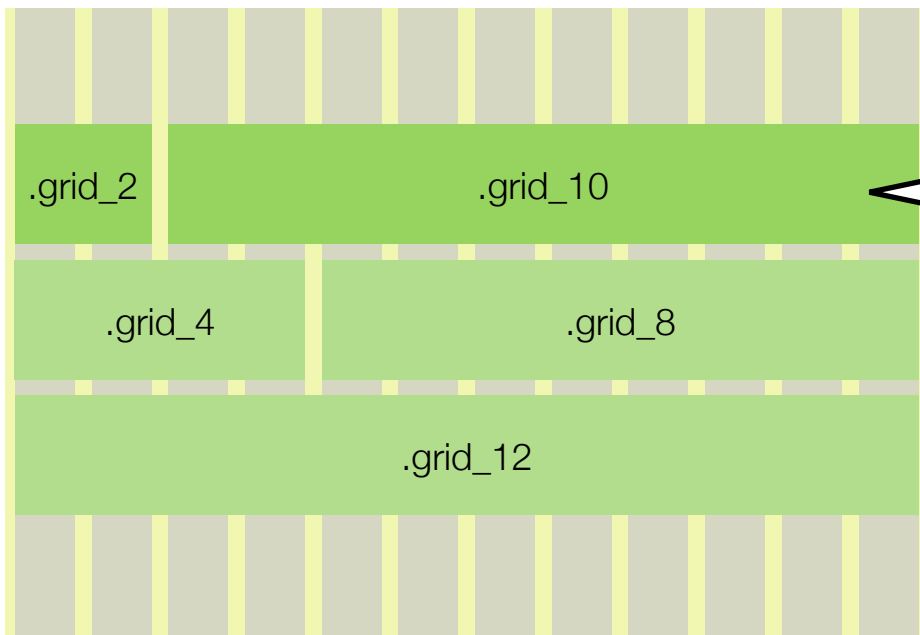
Grid basics: layout (960.gs markup)

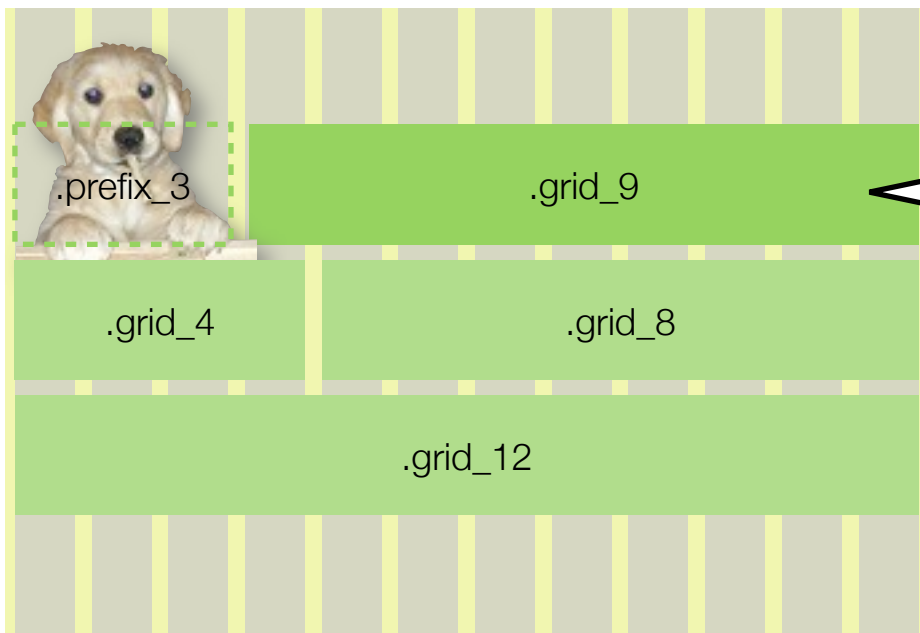.grid_2   .grid_10

.grid_4   .grid_8

.grid_12

Grid basics: code (960.gs markup)

.grid_2 .grid_10

.grid_4 .grid_8

.grid_12

```
<div class="container_12">
    <div class="grid_2">...</div>
    <div class="grid_10">...</div>
    <div class="clear">
    ...
</div>
```

Grid basics: code (960.gs markup)

.grid_2   .grid_10

.grid_4   .grid_8

.grid_12

```
<div class="container_12">
    <div class="grid_2">...</div>
    <div class="grid_10">...</div>
    <div class="clear">
    ...
</div>
```

.prefix_3   .grid_9

.grid_4   .grid_8

.grid_12

```
<div class="container_12">
    <div class="grid_9 prefix_3">...</div>
    <div class="clear">
    ...
</div>
```

puppy source: flickr:jsmjr

Grids are nice

• Easy to work with (clear markup)

• Layout rules are set for the whole team (designers, coders, themers)

• Great for prototyping

• Easy to replicate

Useful grid resources

- Grid generator for 960.gs, 1k grid, Golden Grid, Simple Grid: http://www.gridsystemgenerator.com/

- Variable Grid System, an excellent 960.gs customizer / generator: http://www.spry-soft.com/grids/

- Khoi Vinh and Mark Boulton's excellent design tutorial, Grids are Good.

- More Mark Boulton sessions at DrupalCon(s) are also nice (just google it).

Comic time! Real life example

There was this building... and a double bed.
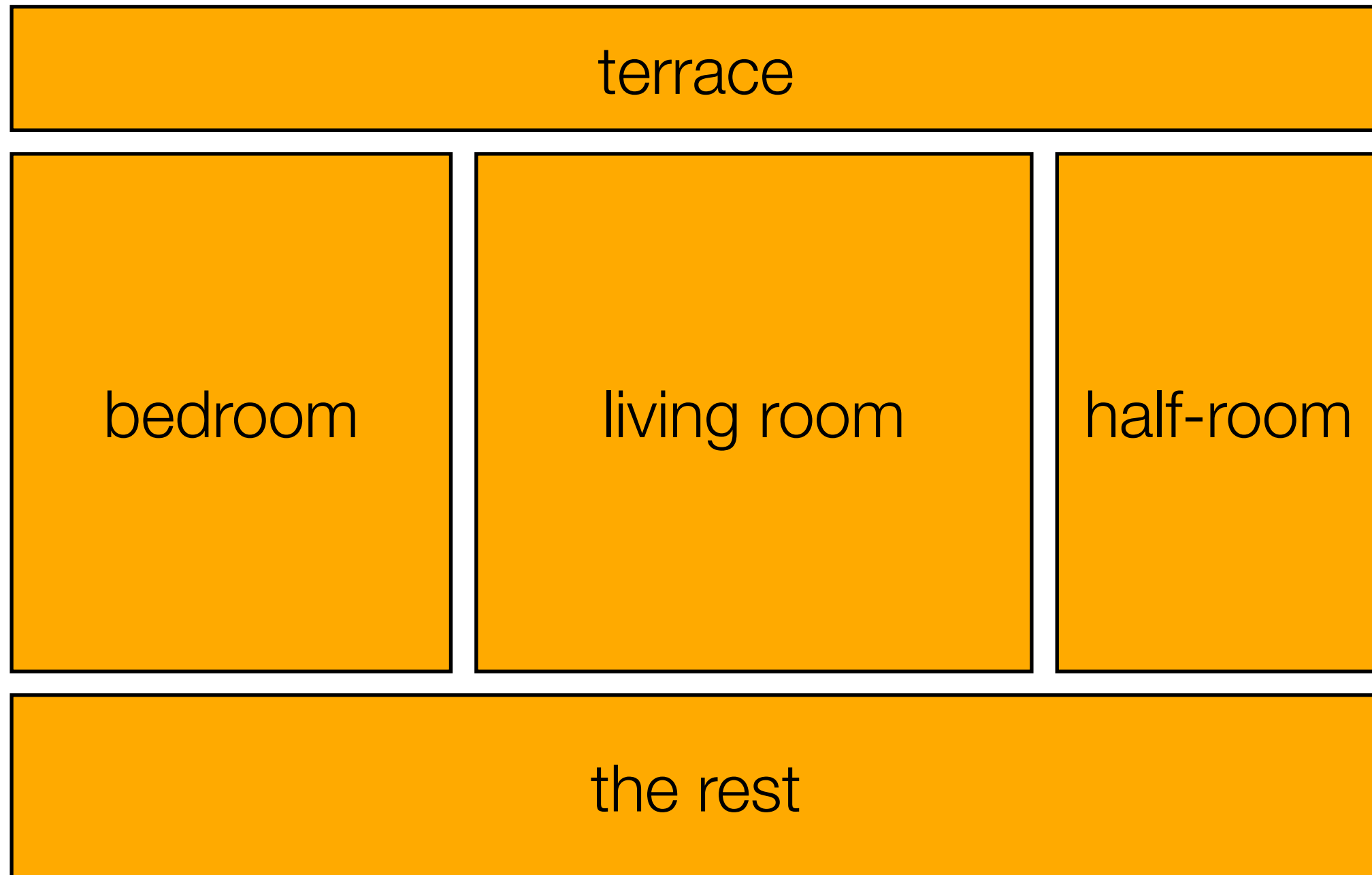
The architect: happy!
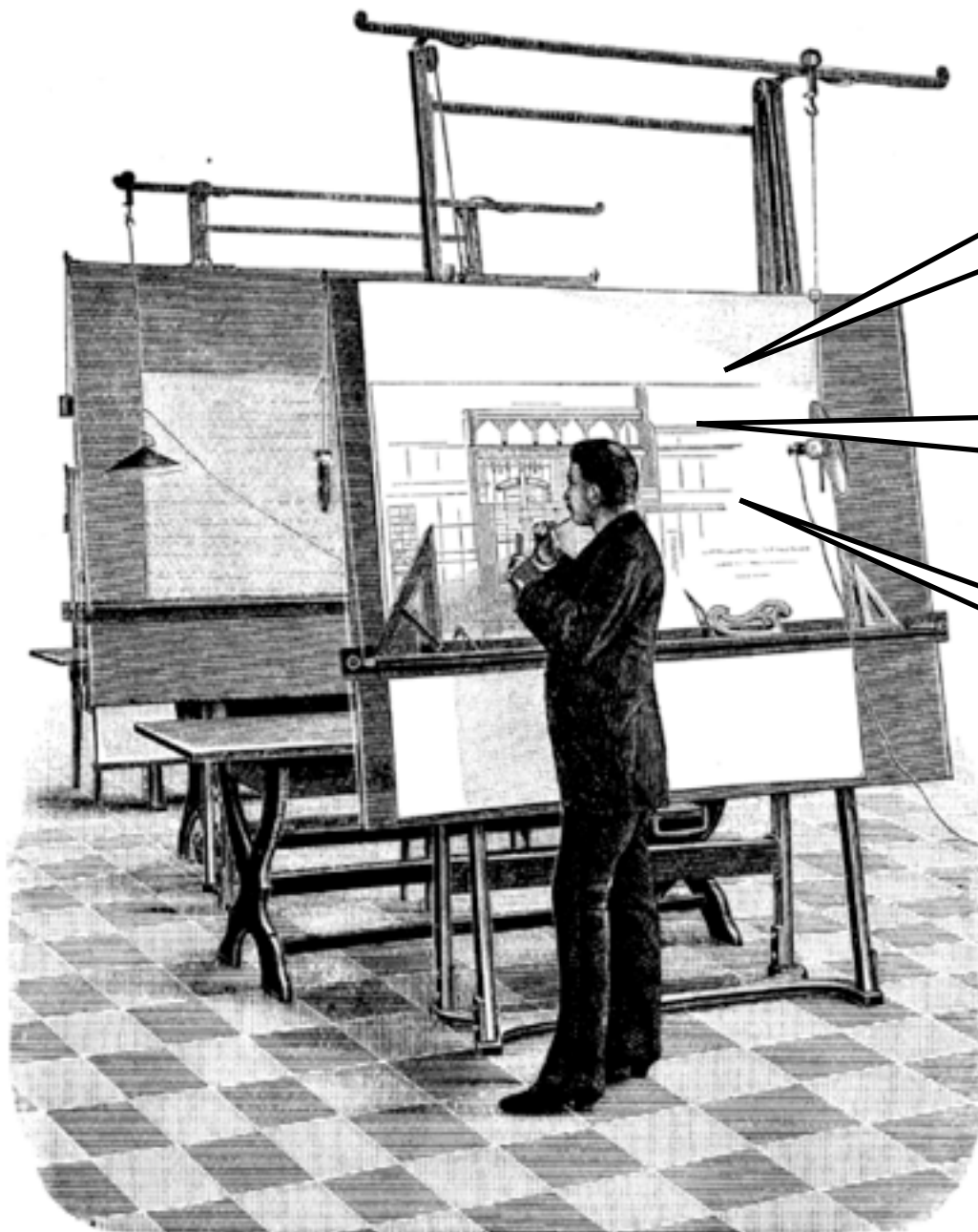
The plan: it's perfect!

terrace

bedroom

living room

half-room

the rest

The mover guys: ready and skilled

Background voice:

The plan SRSLY reminds of something
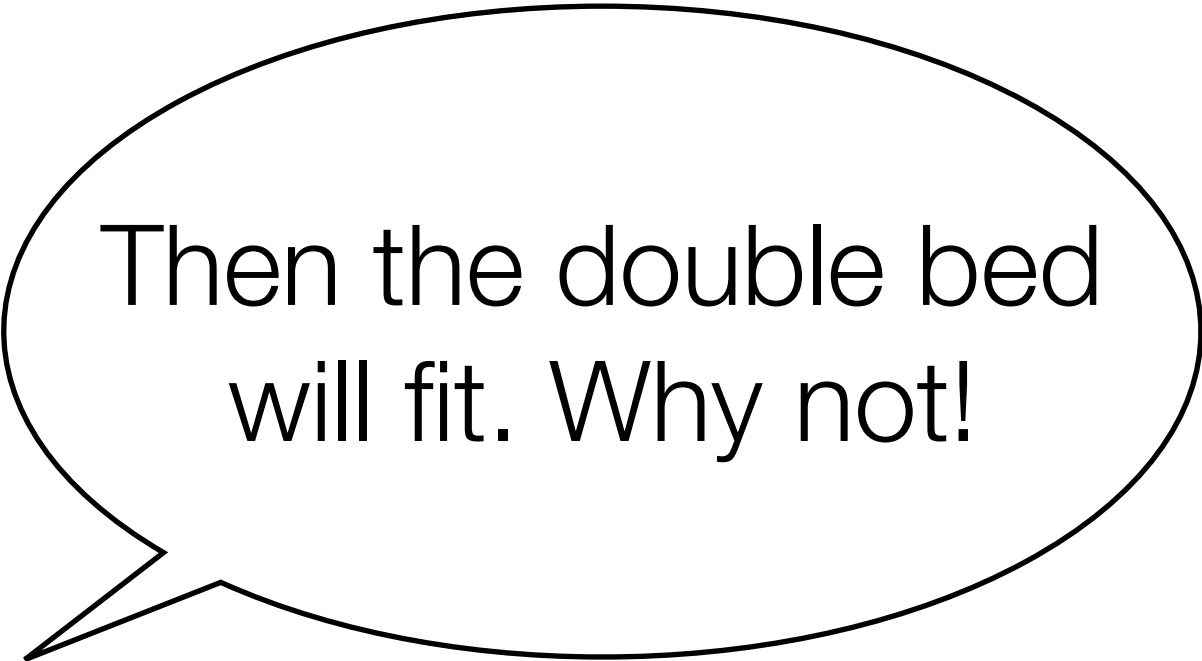
It's the GRID! Wow.

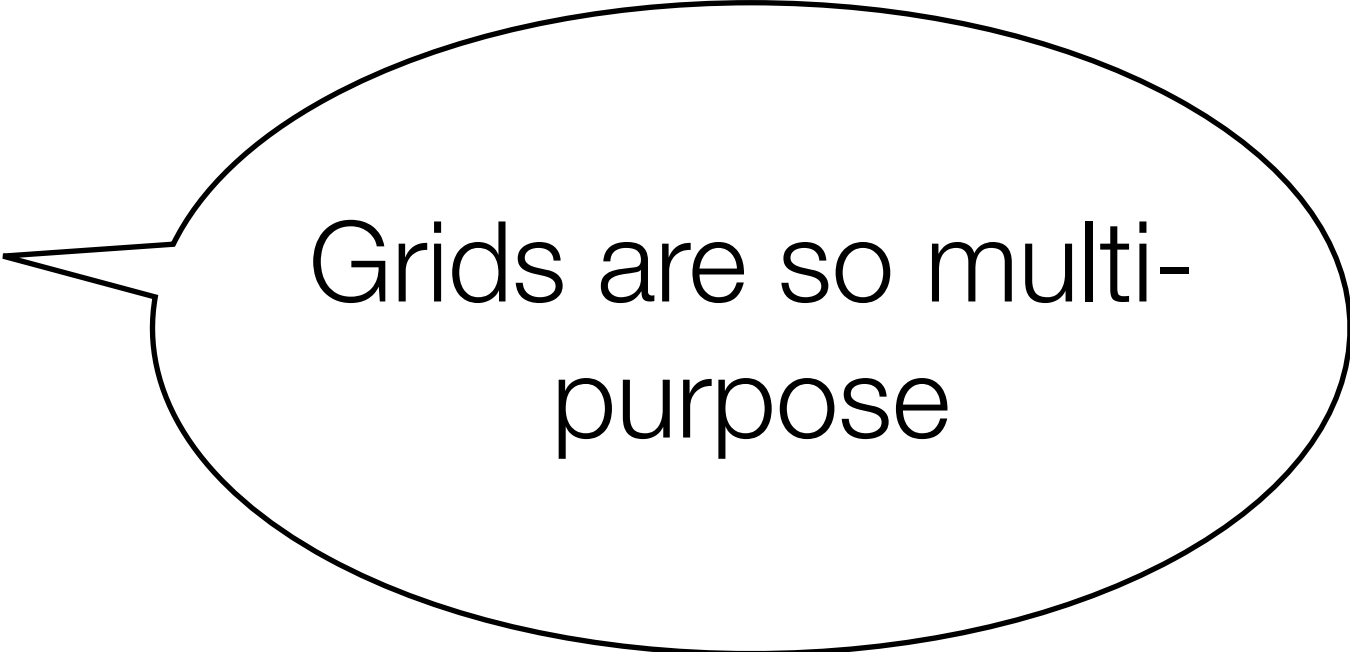# Well, yes, it's the grid

terrace

bedroom   living room   half-room
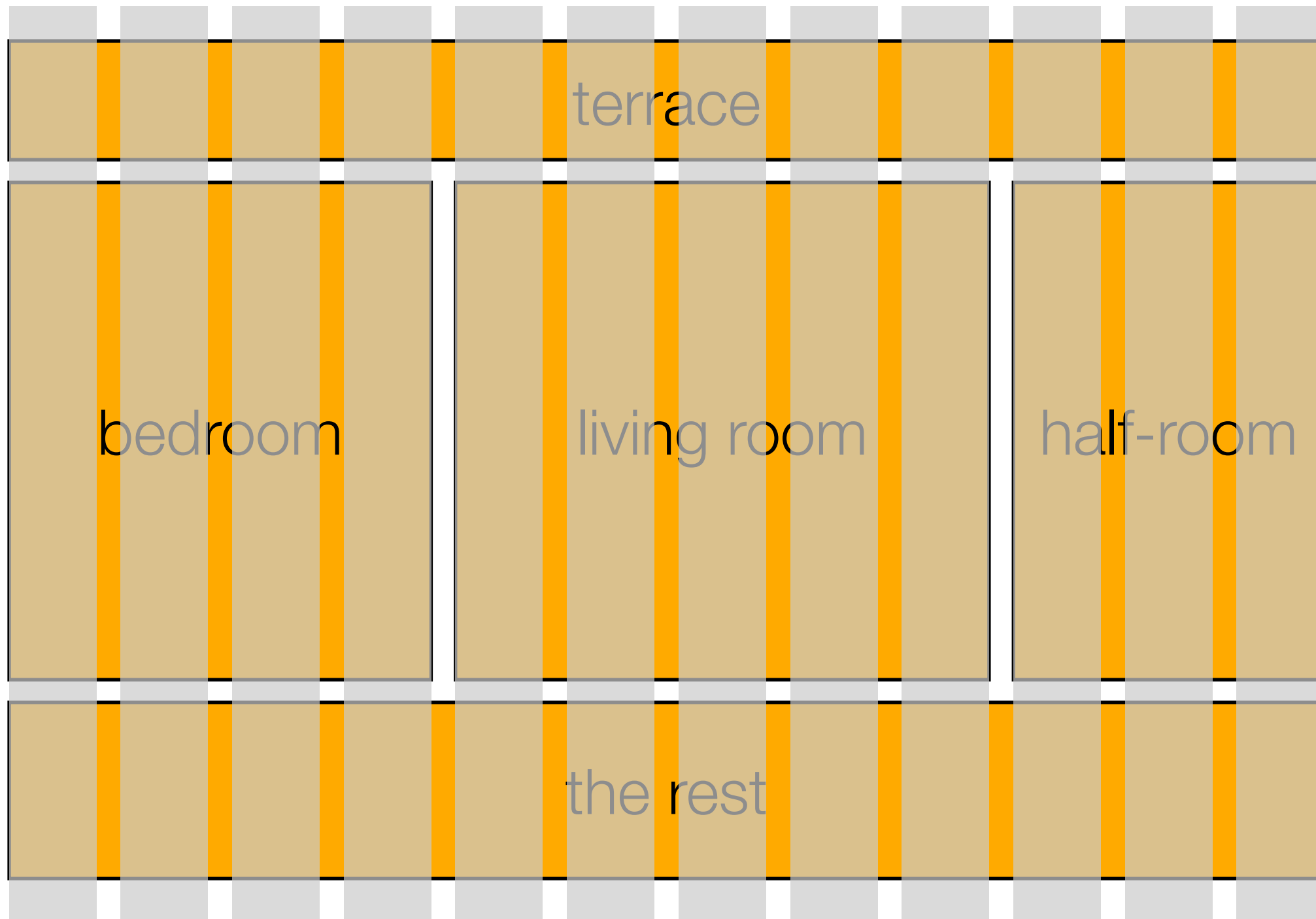
the rest

Background voice:

Then the double bed will fit. Why not!

Grids are so multi-purpose

The mover guys: on duty

Oops, we've blocked terrace access
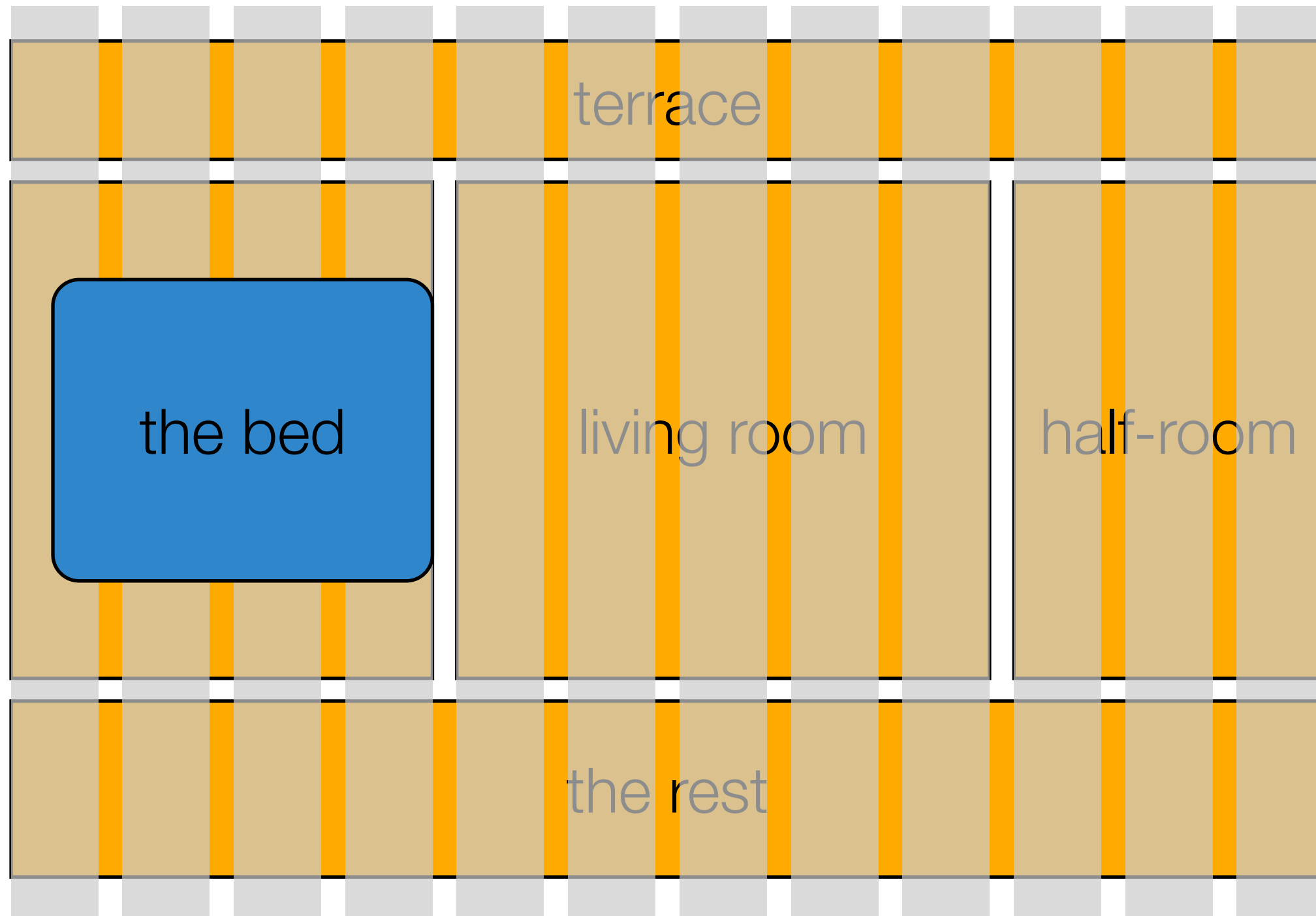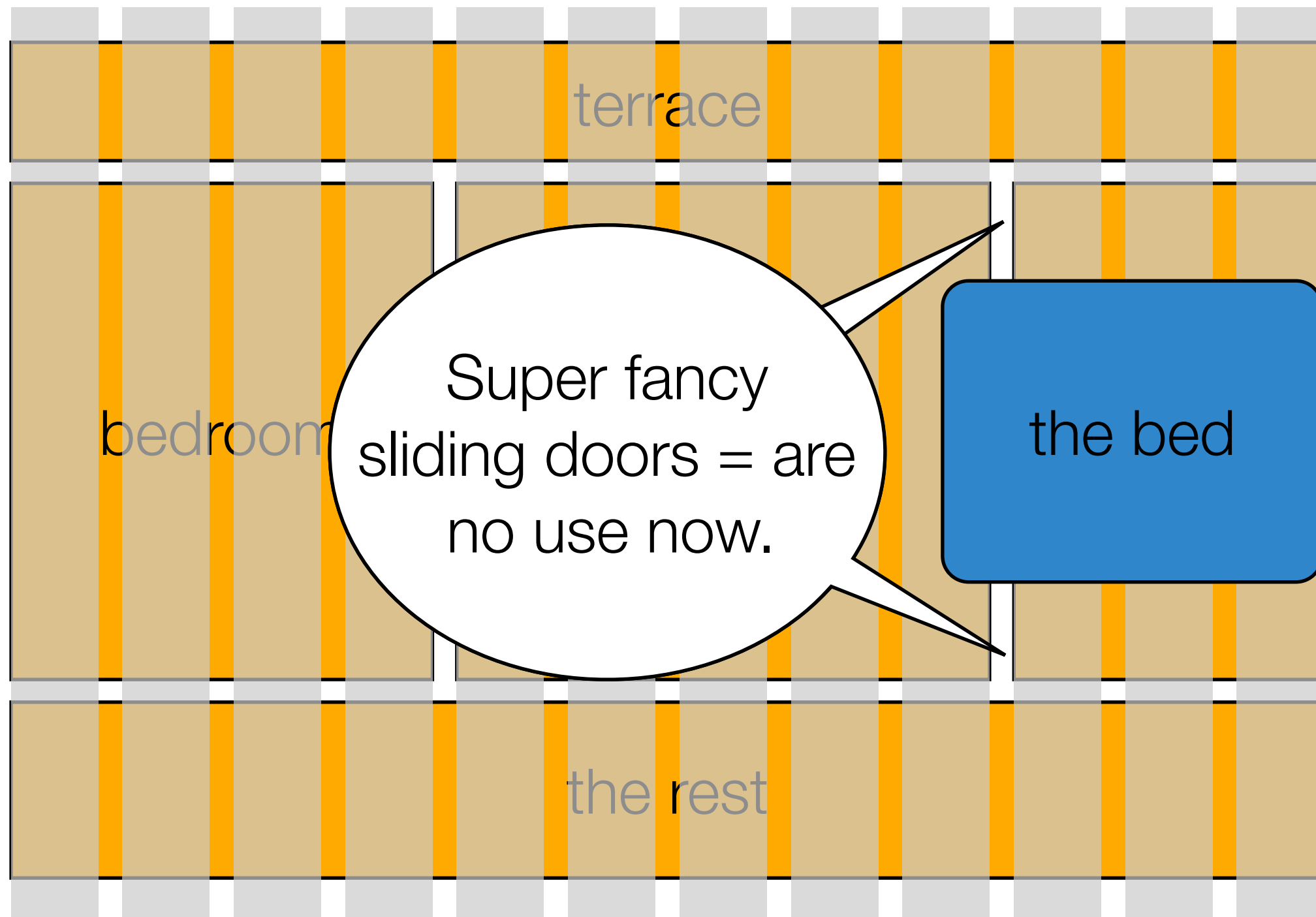
Something is sticking out

terrace

bedroom

living room

the bed
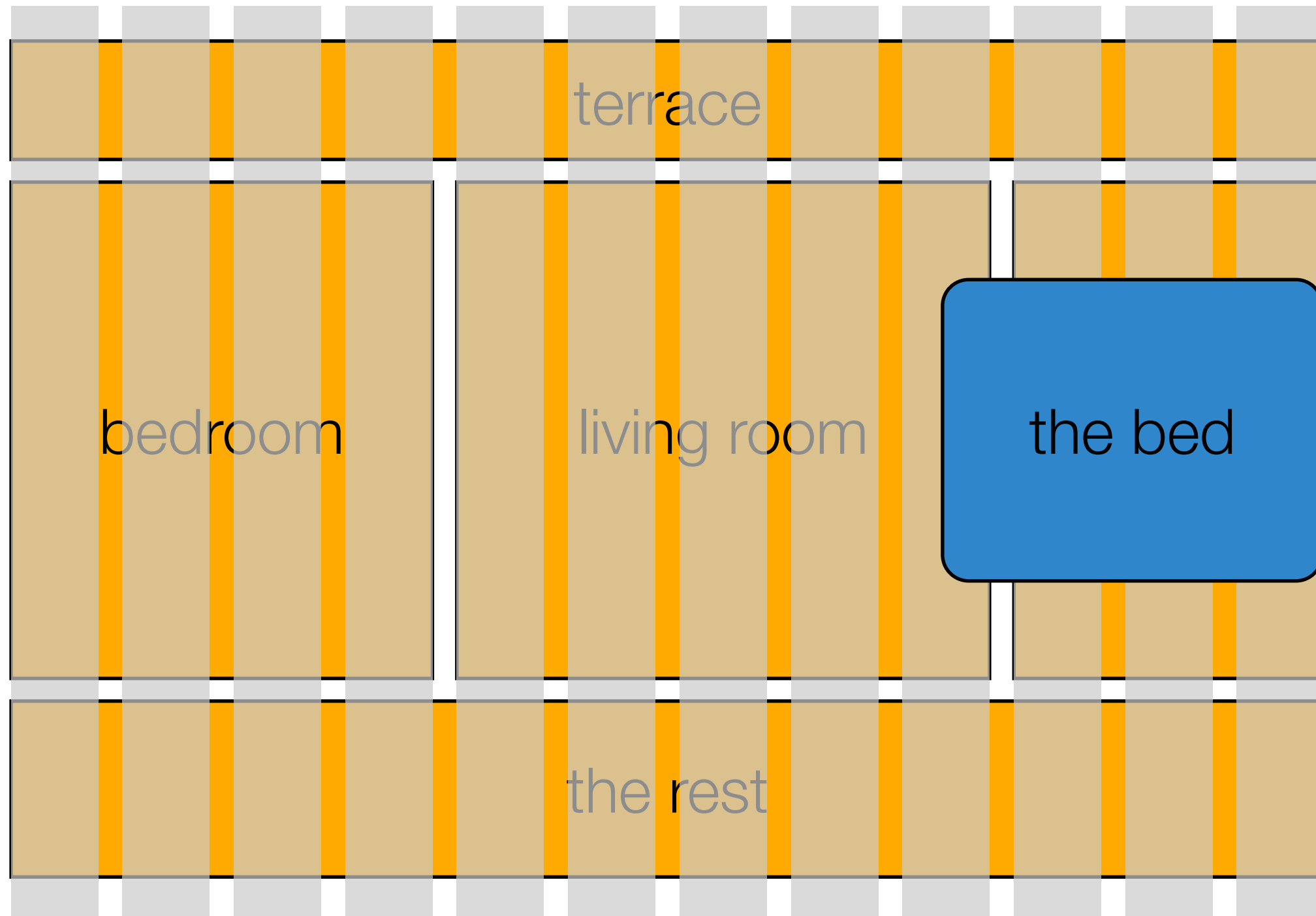
the rest

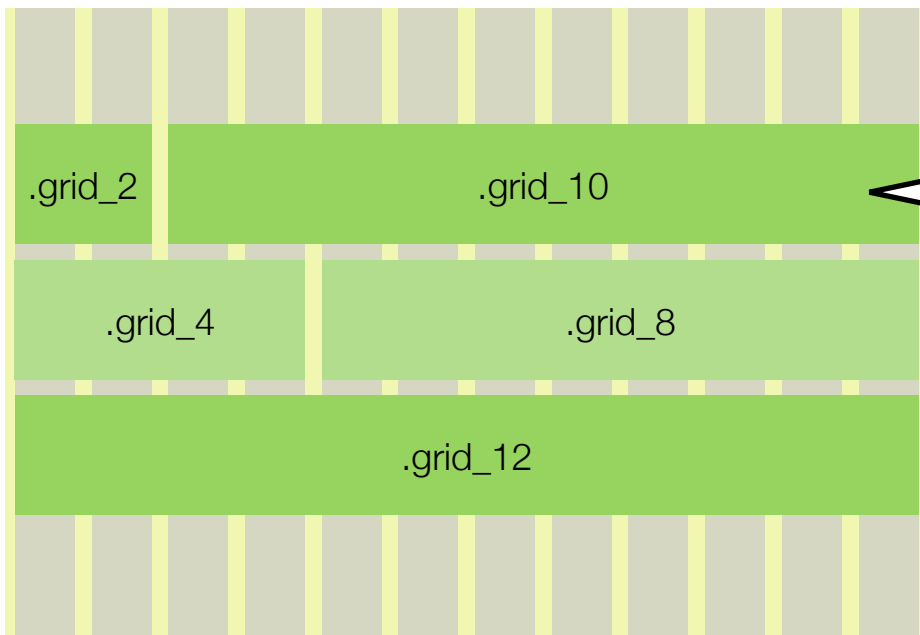# The result. It's not only ugly:

The mover guys: off duty

What's bad about grids

Things you have to keep in mind when using CSS grids

Grids are not semantic

- Out of the box grids are not semantic at all.

- Hard to read structure (for those who are not familiar)

- May affect mobile device browser behavior

- May affect screenreader rendering

Grids are not semantic: fixed


```
<div class="container_12" id="page-wrapper">
    <div class="grid_2 sidebar">...</div>
    <div class="grid_10" id="content">...</div>
    <div class="clear">
     ...
    <div class="grid_12" id="footer">...</div>
    <div class="clear">
     ...
</div>
```

Use case: upgrading old content

- http://www.budapestindex.com/

- The site was created 6 years ago.

- One of the major points back then was to fit content on 800x600 screens (as standard for internet cafes).

- More than 2000 images posted over years.

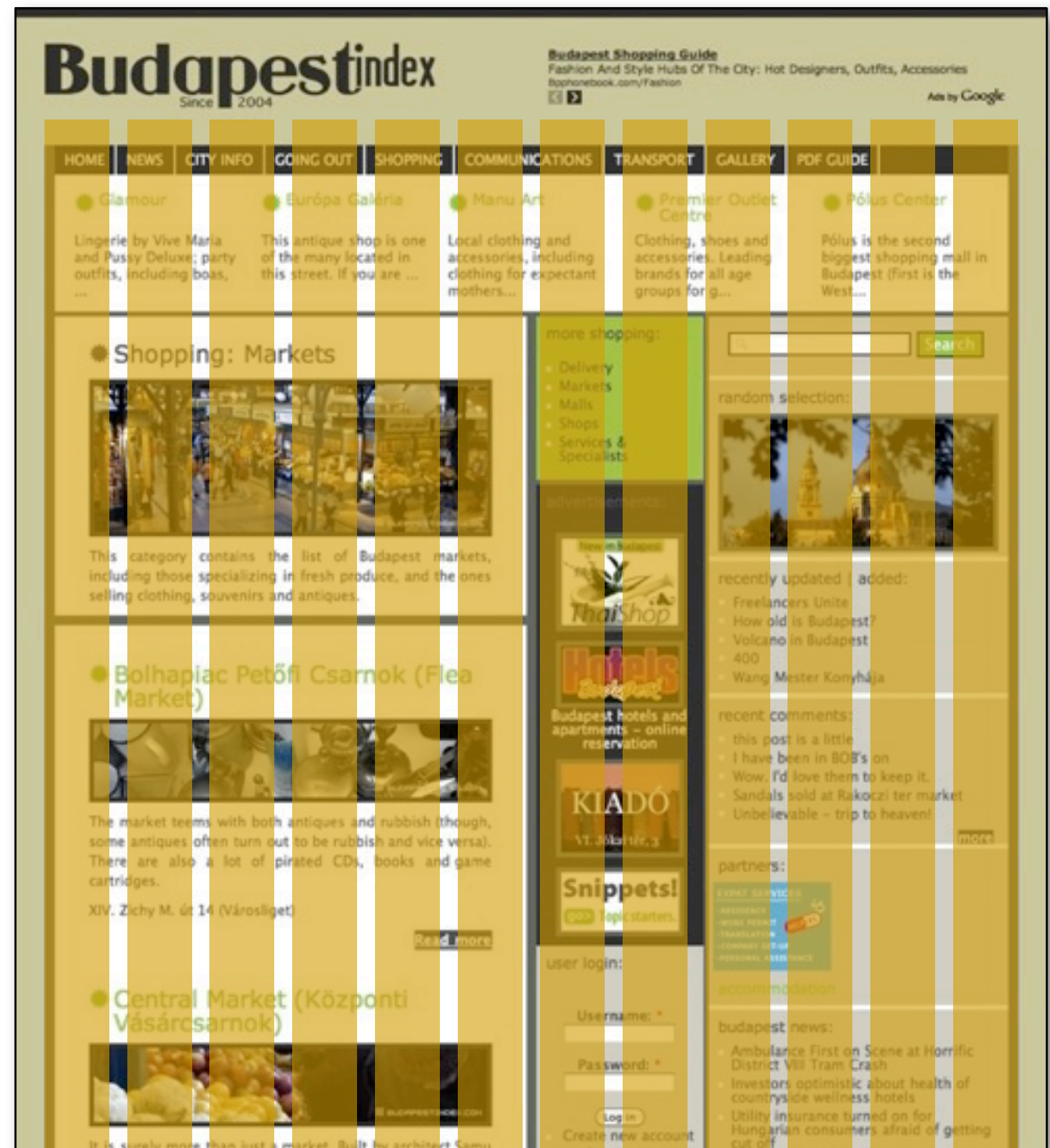# Use case: upgrading old content

Main image width is 400px. And will be kept this size.

IAB size ads and information banners. And IAB units are really hard to mix on grids without some sacrifices.
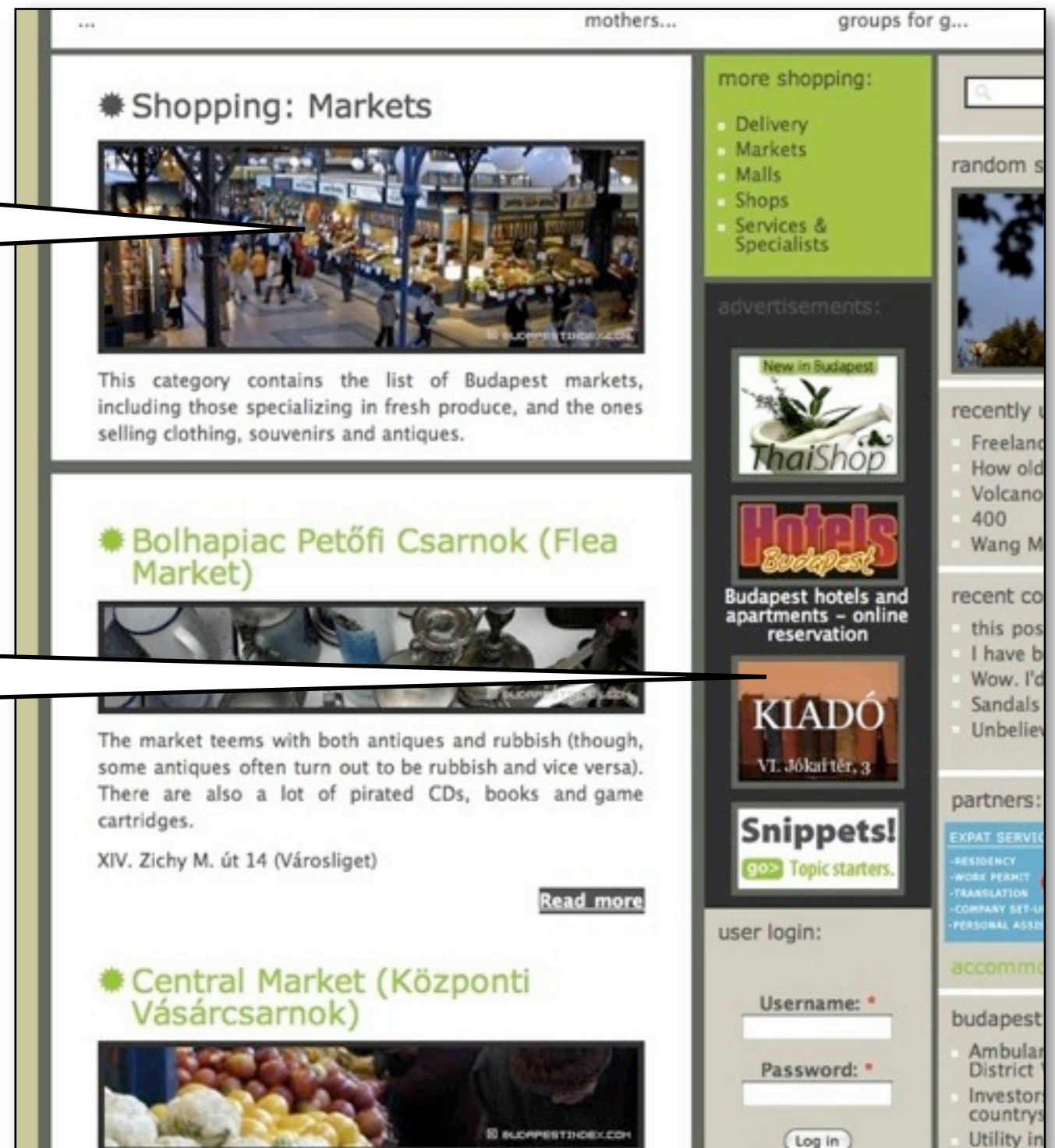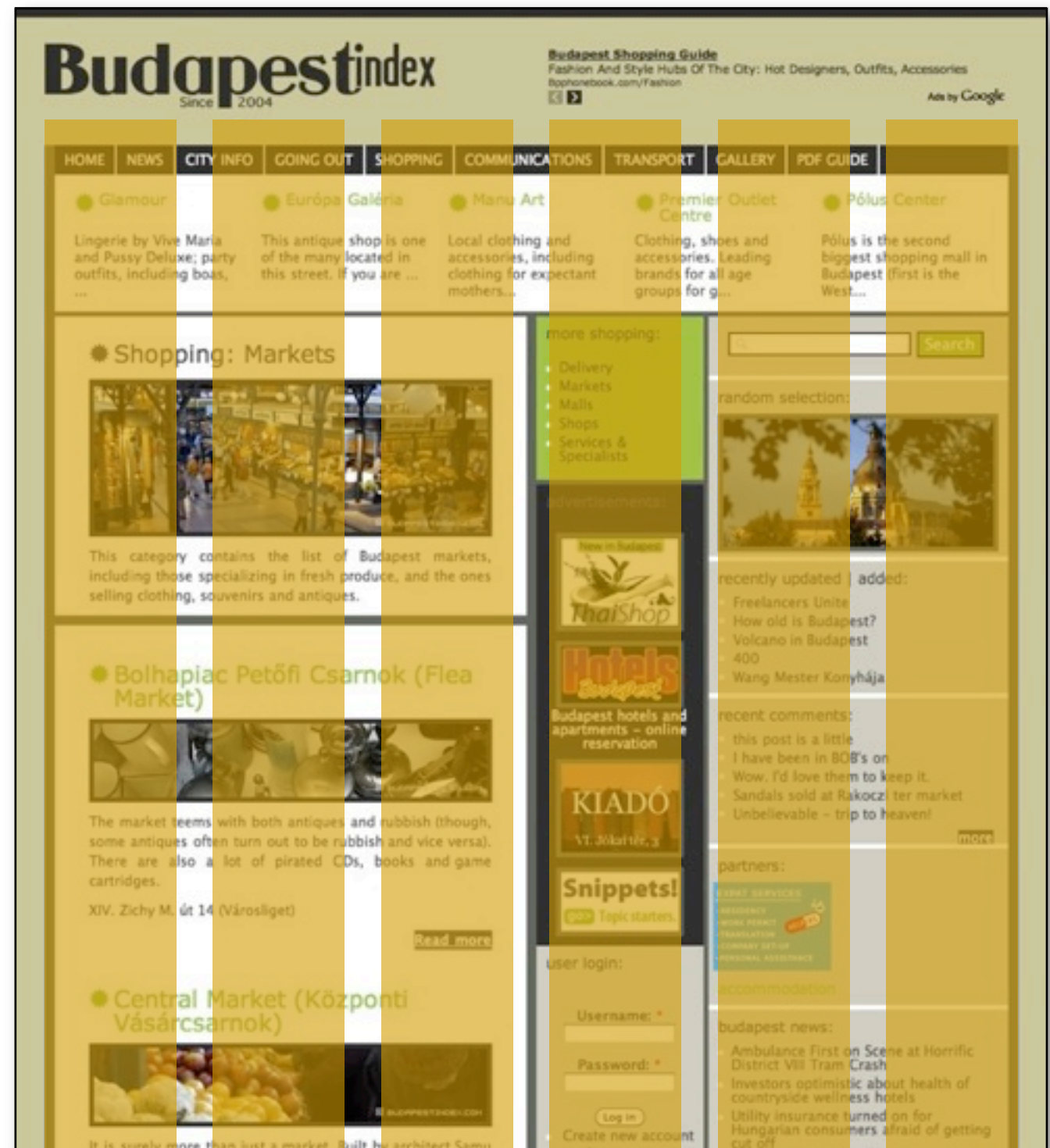
Use case: 12 column grid

- Let's try 12 column grid

- Almost fits to grid

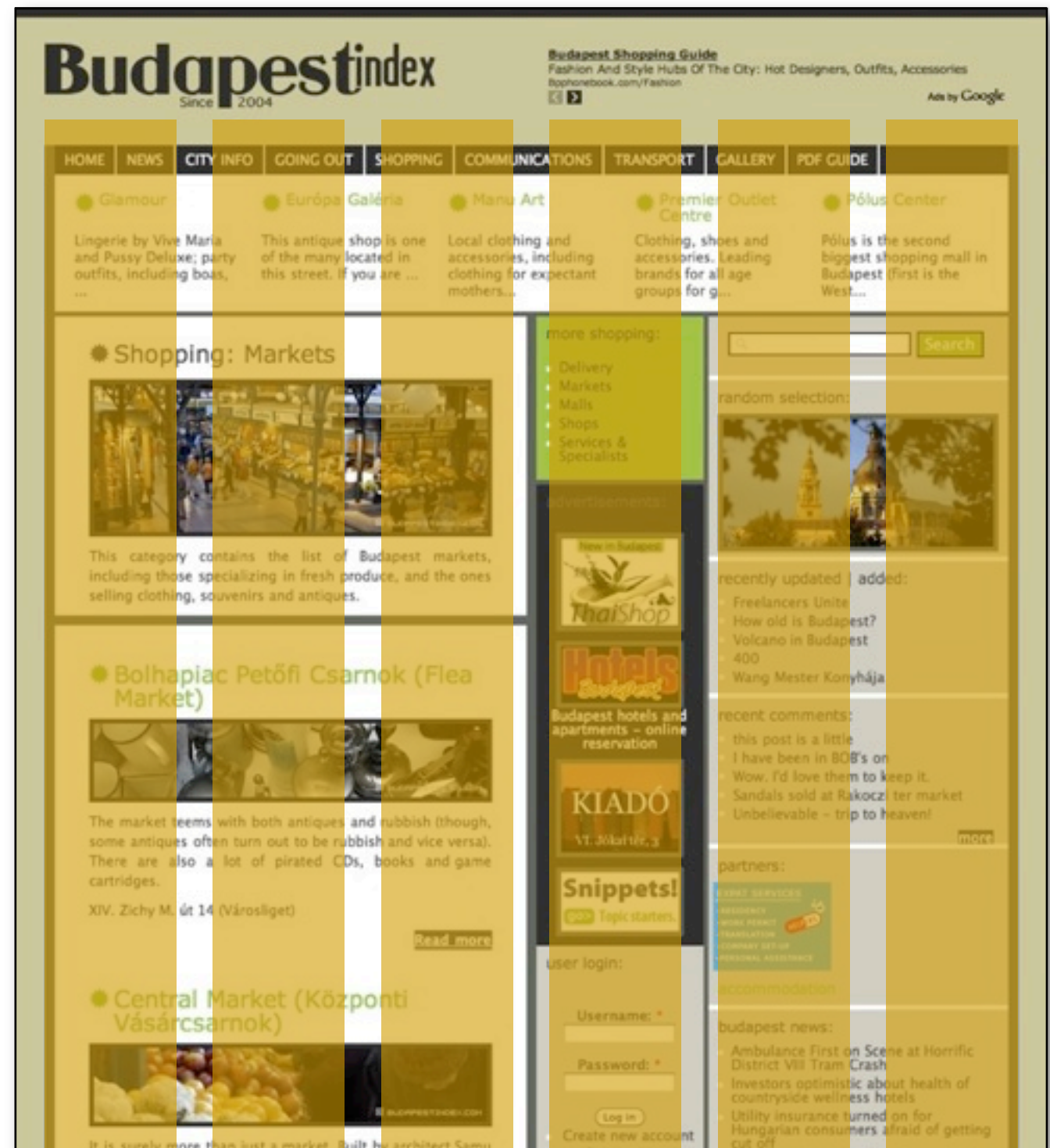- We might loose some nice existing margins

Use case: 6 column grid fits better

- 6 column will be just enough.

- Larger gutter will look nice to separate content.

Use case: 6 column grid fits better

- 6 column will be just enough.

- Larger gutter will look nice to separate content.

- But still... **the grid is not so needed here!**

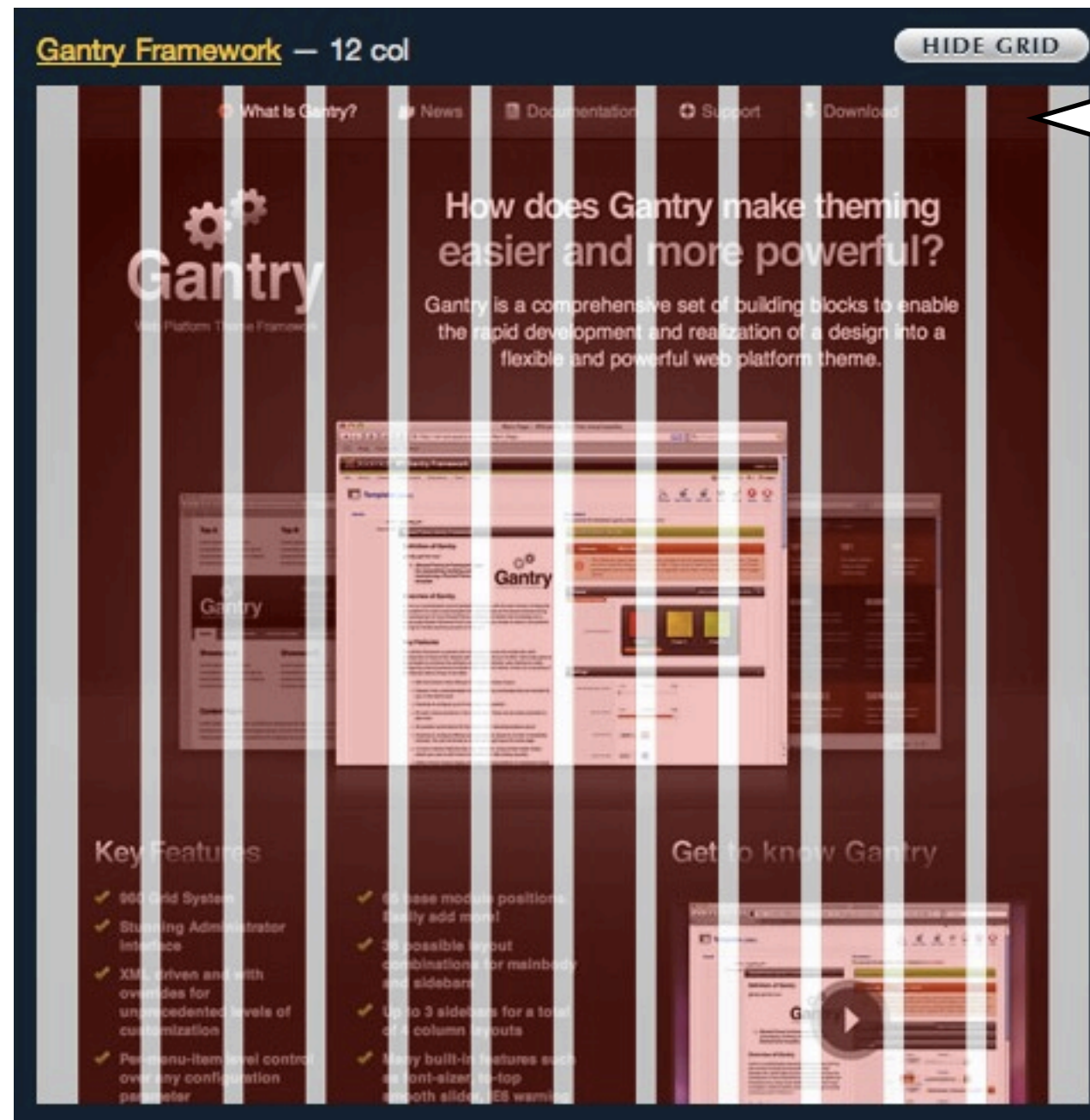# Column count

How many columns we need?

Columns to consume: 12

Perfectly aligned. Even top navigation.

image source: 960.gs

Columns to consume: 12

Columns to consume: 16

Nice example in general.

But what is it sticking out?

image source: 960.gs

Columns to consume: 24

Columns to consume: 24
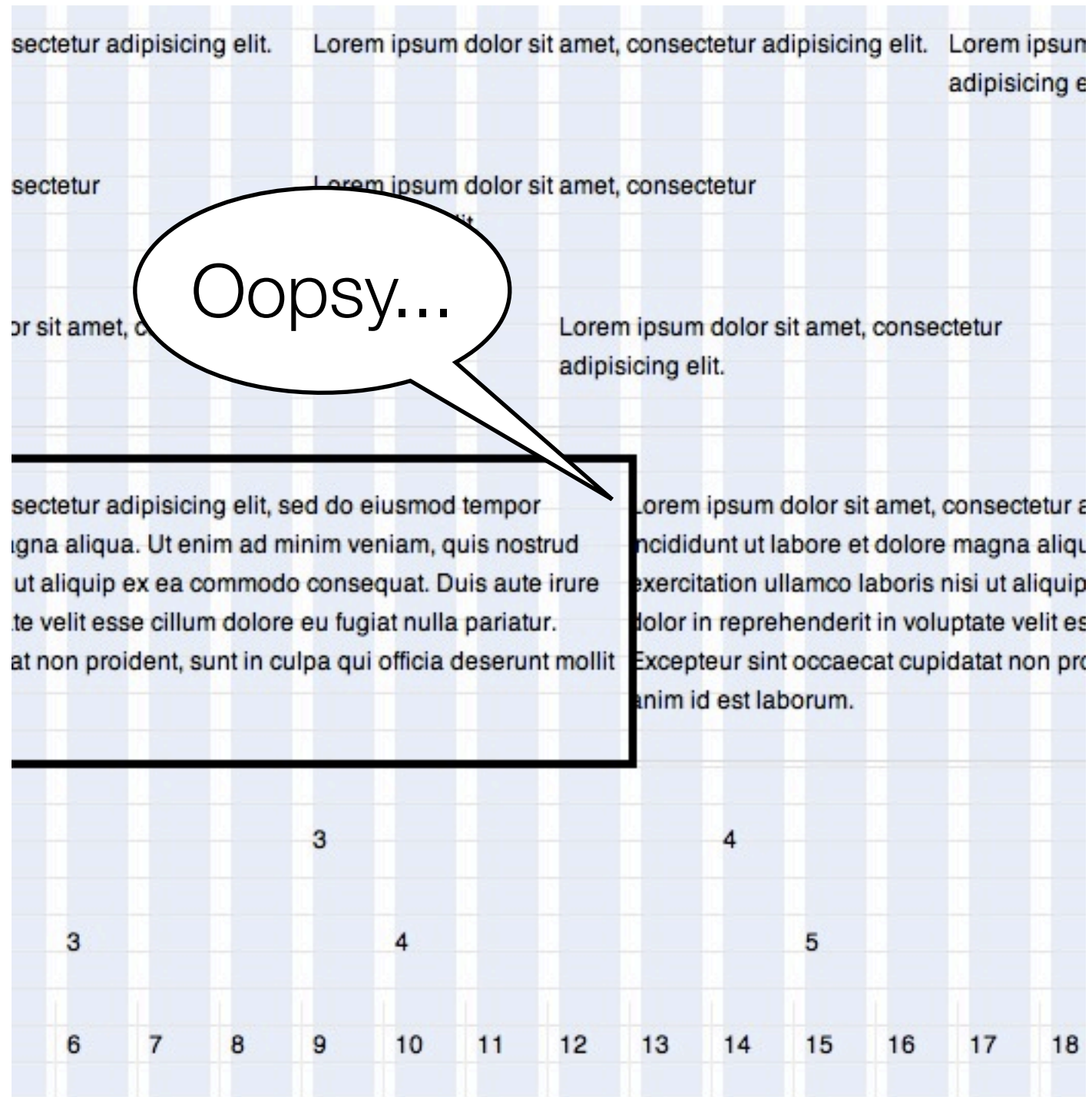
Let's go extreme: 320 columns!

- Well, we can: http://www.spry-soft.com/grids/grid/?column_width=2&column_amount=320&gutter_width=1

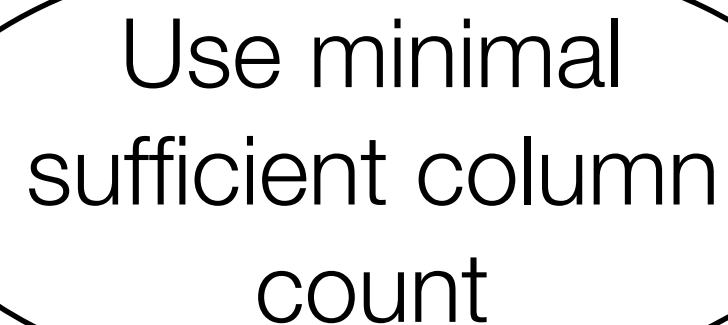- But it makes no sense (or actually it's nonsense).

Best column solution:

Check in with designer

Roll your own

Use minimal sufficient column count

Gutter model

margin vs padding
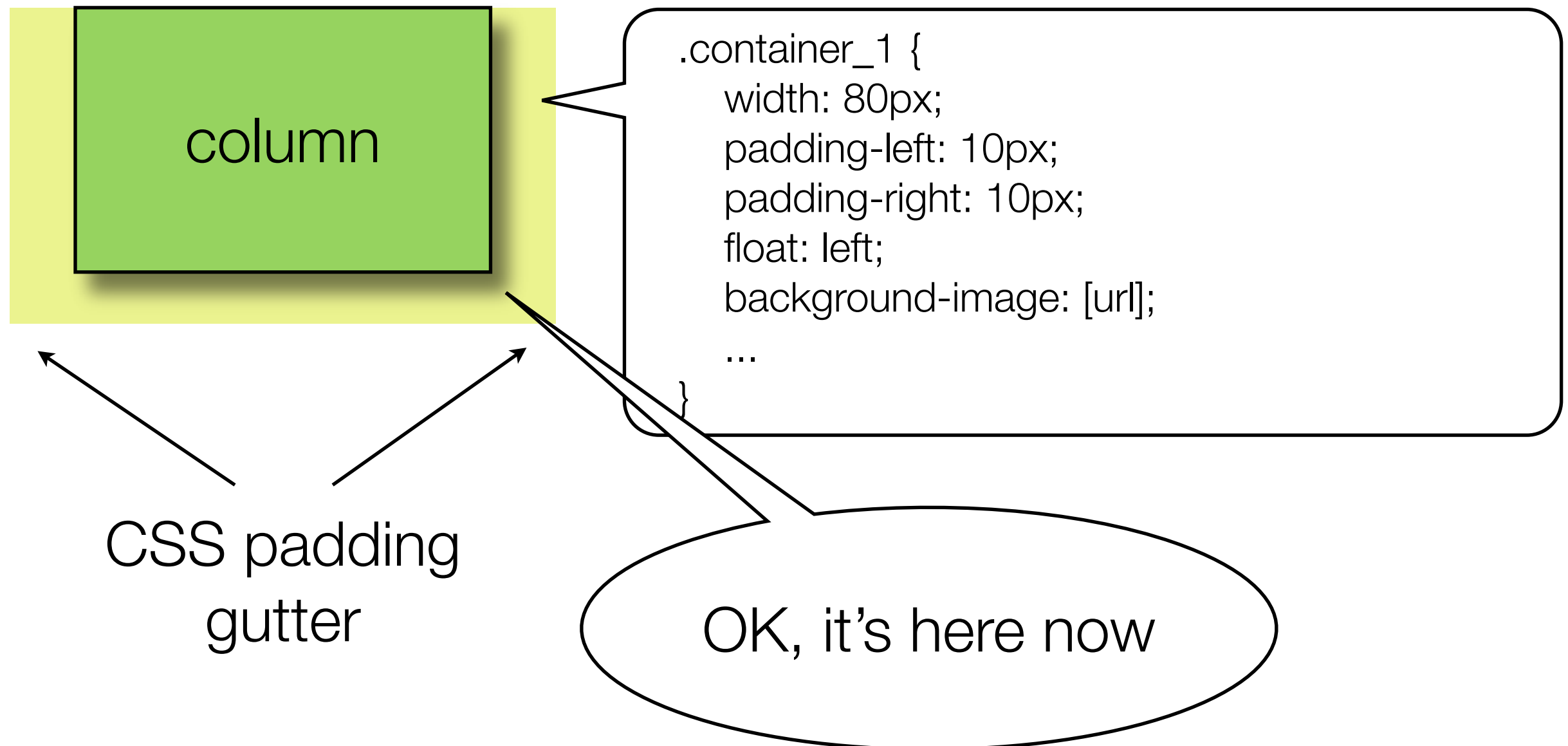
Gutter model: CSS margin

column

.container_1 {
    width: 80px;
    margin-left: 10px;
    margin-right: 10px;
    float: left;
    background-image: [url];
    ...
}

CSS margin gutter

Where is my shadow?
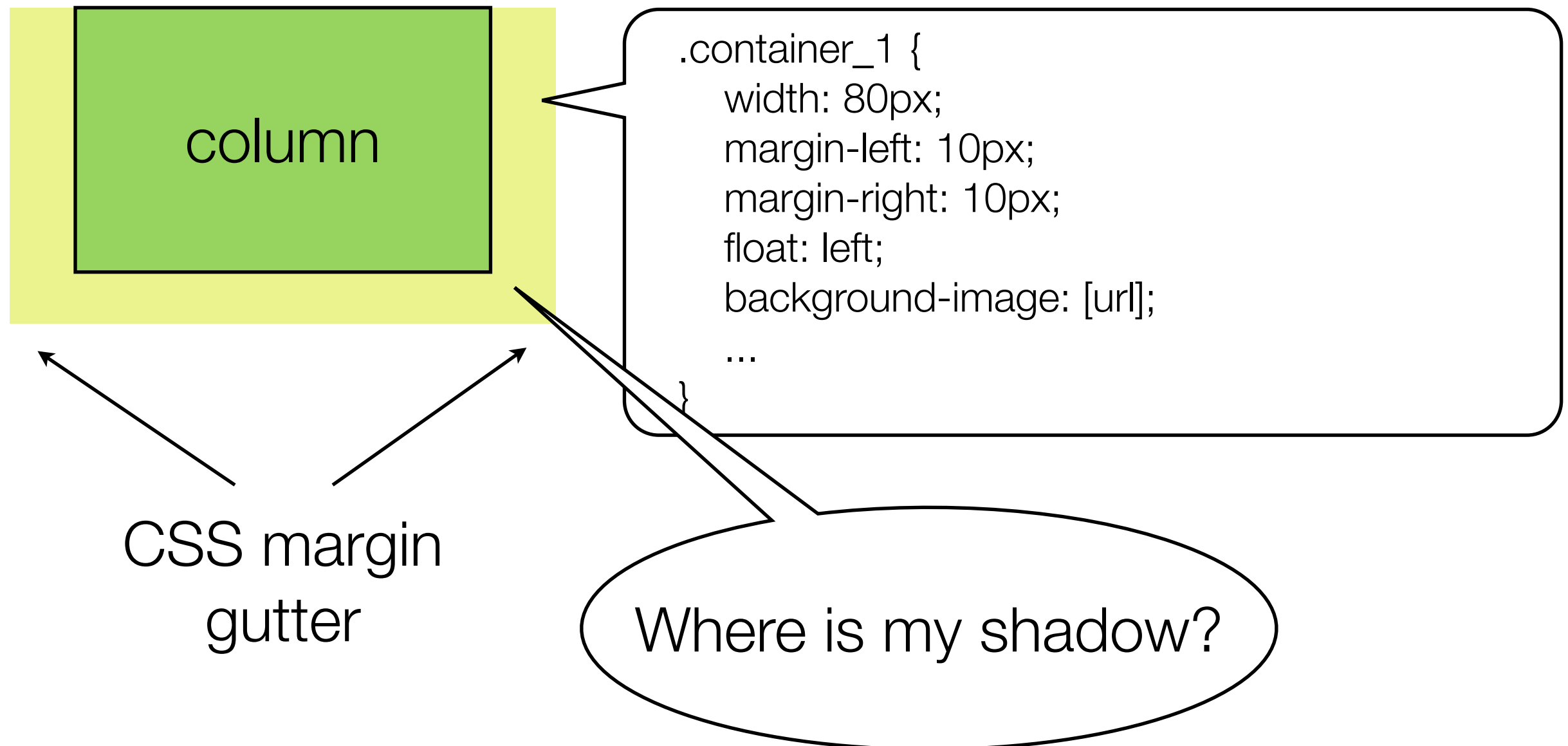
Gutter model: CSS padding

IE6/7 CSS Issues

- There will be a few depending on exact grid framework.

- Hurray! We have IE fix in separate CSS file!

- But IE can handle only about 30 CSS links (including @links in CSS).

- Advanced Drupal site can have "slightly" more CSS files than that.

- Some will have IE issues some not.

- Why would you care about IE6? In many corporations it is still the default one with up to 60% users (esp. in finance).

The bottom line

- Grids are nice for communicating design and layout as well as for prototyping.

- Grids may become a trouble in many cases if used with (just!) default settings/code.

- Create and use the your own grid for your team or even a project.

That's it for now.

Whoat? Just testing new layout model...