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Quackwell: Gamifying Healthy Habits

Intro

A wellness app for mobile users who want to develop long-term wellness habits. The app functionality includes hydration reminders, planner, calm sessions, community, and virtual pet feature.

Motivation

- We identified a gap for an app that combines functionality with a fun, approachable experience.
- Our solution applies UI/UX design and gamification to support long-term habit formation.
- We focused on creating something tangible, practical, and usable in everyday life.

Target Audience

Aimed at tech-savvy youth who enjoy playful, game-like experiences. The app offers a light and engaging way to build better habits, without the pressure of traditional productivity tools.

Pet Overview

Pets reactions are designed to reflect user's progress and interactions.

Research

Design Choices:

- Pastel colors were chosen because research (Kaya & Epps, 2004) shows they increase emotional comfort and visual approachability;
- Rounded elements follow the Aesthetic-Usability Effect (Kurosu & Kashimura, 1995), which links pleasing design to better usability.

Virtual Pet:

- Tamagotchi Effect (Reeves & Nass, 1996) shows users can develop emotional bonds with virtual characters;
- Parasocial Interaction Theory (Horton & Wohl, 1956) explains how one-sided connections still motivate and build empathy;
- Positive Reinforcement (Skinner, 1938) suggests that rewarding behavior increases habit consistency;
- Nudging Theory (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008) supports using subtle cues to steer users toward healthier choices without pressure.

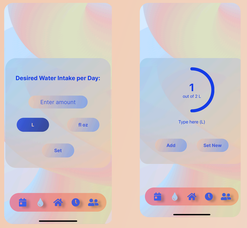
Gamification:

- Self-Determination Theory supports that users stay motivated when apps support autonomy, competence, and social connection (Deci & Ryan, 1985);
- Gamification Design Framework (Werbach & Hunter, 2012) shows rewards like badges and milestones increase engagement through intrinsic and extrinsic motivation
- Goal-Setting Theory (Locke & Latham, 2002) finds that visible progress and achievements help users pursue and complete goals more effectively.

Features

1. Planner:

- Enables users to schedule and organize their daily wellness activities and habits;
- Provides visual reminders to boost task completion.

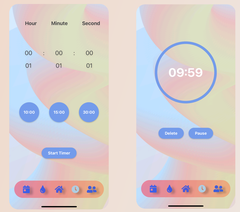


2. Hydration:

- Based on research, the app encourages users to consume no less than 1.5 liters and no more than 6 liters of water per day.

3. Calm

- Features a customizable timer to help users structure short wellness breaks or deep focus periods.



4. Community

- Leverages positive peer influence to encourage users to stay consistent with their wellness goals.

5. Virtual Pet

- Introduces a virtual pet that evolves and thrives based on the user's habit completion and overall progress;
- Acts as a visual representation of the user's consistency, reinforcing positive behavior through interactive feedback.

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