

The Task

Project Type: Design Challenge, Individual project

Duration: 1-week

Deliverables: Mobile App Mockup

Background

Why this topic?

I attempted this project as a product design exercise to see if I am capable of developing a solution for a problem statement and designing the solution in the form of a mobile experience within a small span of time.

According to Pew Research, 79 million Americans, 31.9% of the adult population, live in a shared household. One in three adults has an adult roommate that is not a romantic partner or a college student. The National Apartment Association

says that 45% of renters live with one roommate and are extremely satisfied. After having a roommate, 80% would choose to have a roommate again and 24.7% were satisfied with living with a stranger. The average age for renters with a roommate is 27 years, and 30% of adults under the age of 35 live with someone who is not a family member.

Problem Statement:

Solving the challenges of designing an app that is easy to navigate for millennials is the mission. Creating real connections on a safe platform allows users to find a roommate and find a place to rent. Once an ideal roommate is established, what other services should the product provide to make the roommate experience better?

Opportunity:

This app would not only target big cities but also smaller towns near colleges, widening the accessibility for many age groups. This app should have similar tactics to social media apps, making each profile specific to the user's qualities, needs, and personality. This app would result in faster and better outcomes in finding a roommate.

Retention → App is specific to users' personalities and needs

Logic → Connecting strangers to matching compatible roommates

New Tech → Ignite interest in new areas for new users

Research

I started by looking up existing roommates' apps to see how they choose to solve the problem. I set up accounts on Roomi, SpareRoom US, and Roomster. From my experience, I was able to find similar pain points on all the apps:

ROOMI Spare Room US ROOMSTER

Complicated sign up	✓		
Limited messages, pay for more	✓	✓	✓
Complicated profile set up	✓	✓	✓
Formatted like an Ad		✓	
Difficult to navigate	✓	✓	✓
Limits for small cities	✓	✓	✓
Limits profile personality	✓		
Lack of verification of profiles	✓	✓	✓

Initial Research:

After completing my own analysis I then read the reviews of other users.

Reviews from the apps:

- Users need simple functionality
- Like Notifications
- Easy to delete the account
- A detailed search of characteristics/amenities
- Profiles verified from legal identification

- Want multiple photos for a person's profile

Secondary Research:

To get a better analysis, I then conducted an online survey that would provide some answers about consumer trends and behaviors and insight into the market structure.

Research Results:

- Arrage 60% between 18-20, 22.2% between 21-25, and 11.1% between 25-35.
- 55.6% of the users used Facebook, other ways: Snapchat, craigslist, or nothing
- Finding apartments: Facebook, Zillow, Apartments.com, and Google
- They preferred to talk to friends on Snapchat, Facebook, and text message.
- 55.6% essential to be friends with their roommate, 35.4% 50/50
- 66.7% want 5+ photos on their profile, and 33.3% said 3 photos were enough.

Ideation

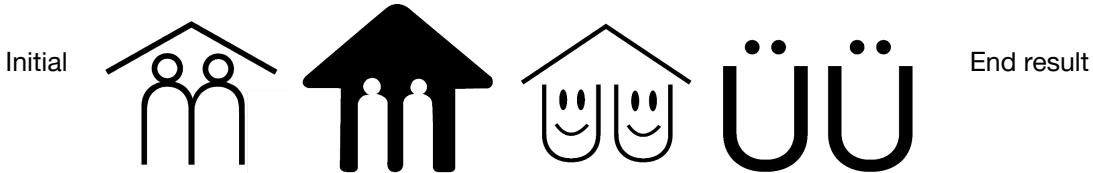
In current roommate apps, they do not have much profile personality, and the main focus is finding a roommate or place to rent based on typical filters like location, gender, and price. I wanted to think bigger and create an app similar to Snapchat and Facebook, so users could build a better connection before meeting up with a potential Mate. When a user creates a profile, they have the ability to add every preference, interest, and lifestyle attribute to create a personality. When you message a potential

Mate, you can do it through regular text, in the chat box, and send photo chats, voice calls, and video calls. Mates also do money exchanges and create lists between users.

Visual Design

Following all the gathered information, I started with deciding the brand identity and what colors UI aspects would be on the app. I chose blue and yellow as the main colors to represent friendship and trust. These colors are also WCAG contrast compliant. I then continued with pencil sketches of the app interface and moved those pages into Figma to explore more design options and create high-fidelity Wireframes. All design decisions were chosen from research and maximized the app's usability.

Process of creating the logo

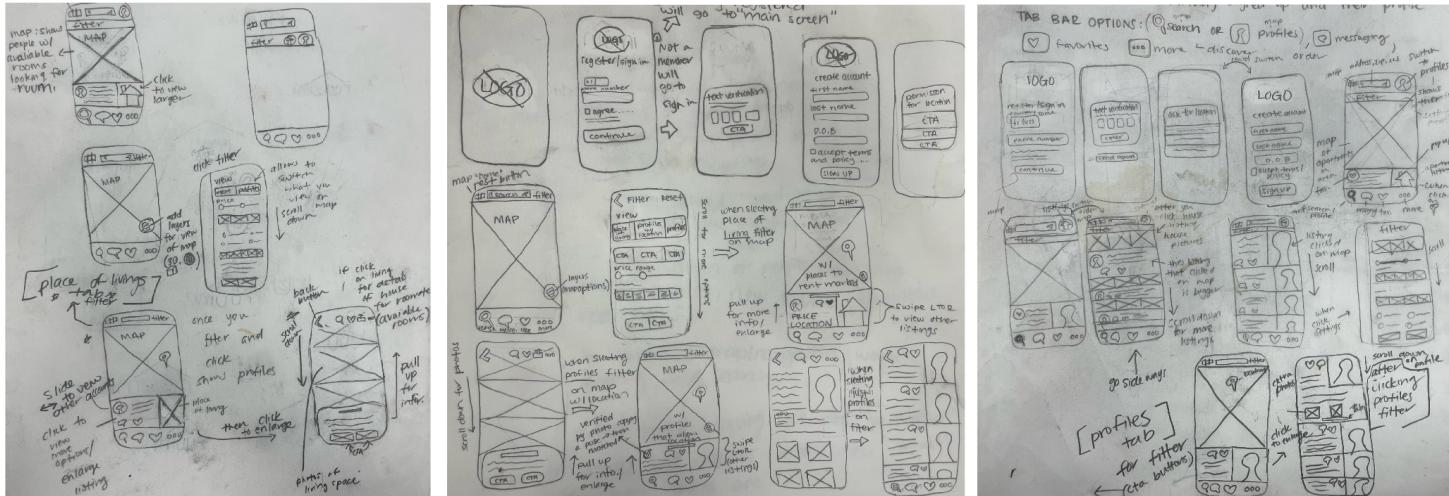


Brand Identity

Colors			
#1b365d	#ffc845	#333333	#f5f5f5

Buttons		Text		Logo
Not Active	Active	SF Pro	ABCDEF GHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmn opqrstuvwxyz 1234567890	
		SF Pro	ABCDEF GHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmn opqrstuvwxyz 1234567890	
		SF Pro	ABCDEF GHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmn opqrstuvwxyz 1234567890	
		SF Pro	ABCDEF GHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmn opqrstuvwxyz 1234567890	
		SF Pro	ABCDEF GHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmn opqrstuvwxyz 1234567890	
		SF Pro	ABCDEF GHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmn opqrstuvwxyz 1234567890	

Wire Frames



SIGN UP / LOGIN

Enter phone Number
We will send you a 4 digit verification code

+1 (US) 123-4567

Continue

1	2	3
A B C	D E F	
4	5	6
G H I	J K L	M N O
7	8	9
P Q R S	T U V	W X Y Z
0		

CREATE ACCOUNT

Full Name

Date of Birth

By continuing, you agree to
Terms of Service and Private Policy

Sign Up

Allow us to use your location?

Location when in Use Usage Description

Allow While Using App

Always Allow

Don't Allow

This screenshot shows a mobile application interface for searching profiles or rental spaces. On the left, there are five profile cards, each with a placeholder photo, name, pronouns, age, looking for (Heart icon), location (Location icon), availability (Availability icon), and budget (Budget icon). Below these are two sections: 'Rule Preferences' and 'Bio'. The 'Rule Preferences' section contains various checkboxes for Pet(s), No Pet(s), Kid(s), No Kid(s), Smoker, Non-Smoker, Smoke Outside, Employed, Not Employed, No Alcohol, Ok w/ Guest(s), Guest During Day, No Guest, Verified, Not Verified, Couple, Non-Couple, and OK w/ Alcohol. The 'Bio' section contains placeholder text about moving preferences, location, and stay duration.

Filter

Profiles **Rent Space**

Start of availability:
Month **10** Year **23**

Radius: 50 mi

Budget: Min USD **0** Max USD **5000**

Age: Min **17** Max **100**

Sex: Female Male Everyone

Rule Preferences

- Pet(s) No Pet(s) Kid(s)
- No Kid(s) Smoker Non-Smoker
- Smoke Outside Employed Not Employed
- No Alcohol Ok w/ Guest(s) Guest During Day
- No Guest Verified Not Verified
- Couple Non-Couple OK w/ Alcohol

Bio

Placeholder text about moving preferences, location, and stay duration.

Preferences

- No Kid(s) Non-Couple Non-Smoker
- Ok w/ Guest(s) Verified OK w/ Alcohol
- Employed Pet(s) Age

Interest

- Gym Music Travel
- Art Zodiac Sign Reading
- Dance Hiking Astronomy
- TV Food History
- Technology Gaming Gardening

Cleanliness:

- Guests: Average
- Habits: Rarely
- Wake Up / Bed Time: Study A lot
- Work Schedule: 8 am - 10 pm
- Student / Part Time: 4pm-10pm F S S

Cancel **Save**

Address, City, Zip.....

Map: A map of a residential area with green shaded regions indicating specific neighborhoods or search results. Labeled streets include W 29th Ave, W 30th Ave, W 31st Ave, W 32nd Ave, W 33rd Ave, and W 34th Ave. Parks like Quilchena Park are visible.

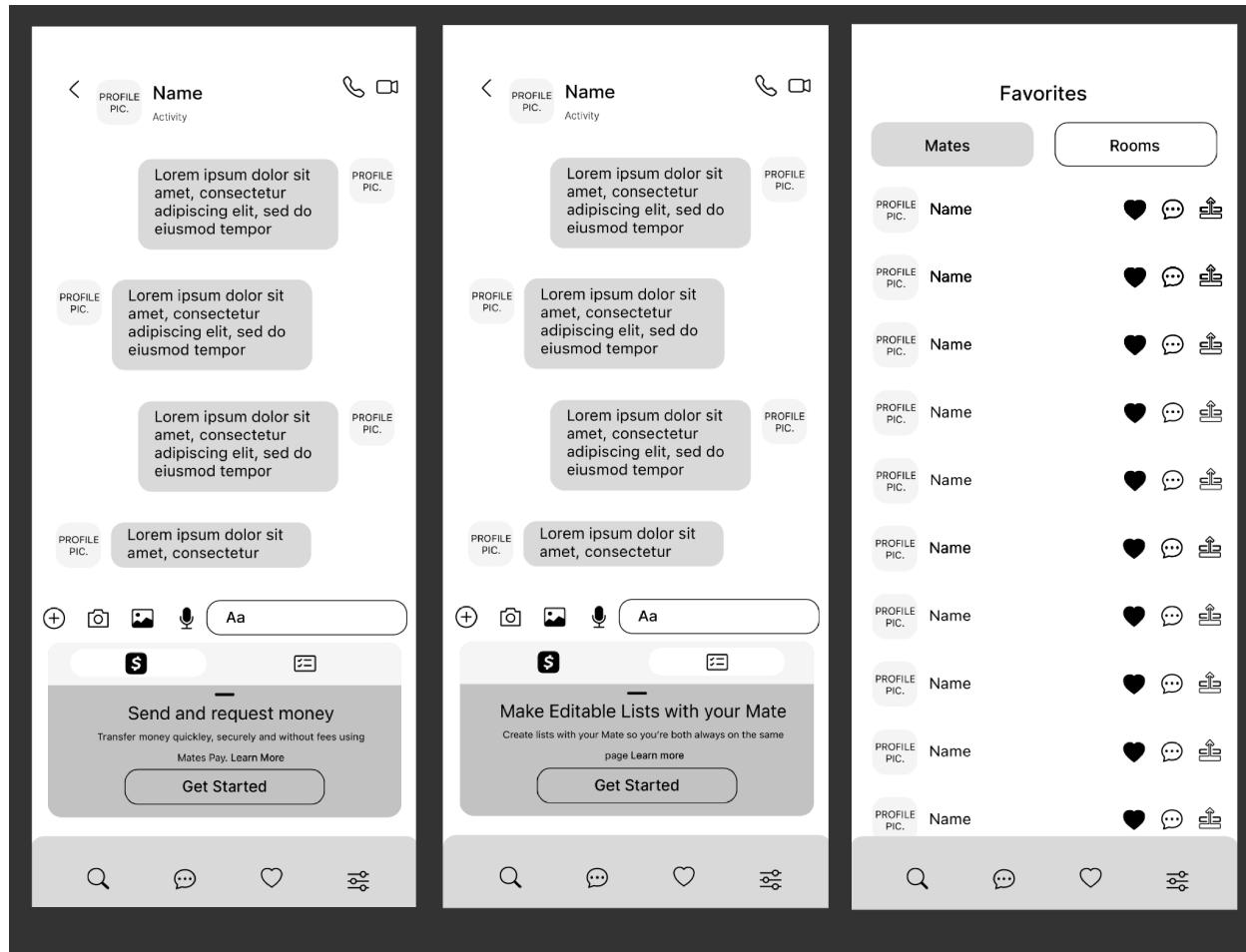
This screenshot shows a mobile application interface for messaging and viewing profiles.

Map: Shows the same residential area as the top map, with a green shaded region indicating a search result. It includes a search bar at the top labeled "Address, City, Zip.....". Below the map are several filter options: Price (des., ba), Address, State, What is for rent (Listing By: Name), Photos, and a "Verified" badge.

Chat: A list of recent messages from other users. Each message card shows the user's profile picture, name, and the last message sent along with the time. Placeholder text in the messages reads: "Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur (2000 character max)".

Profile View: A detailed view of a user's profile. It includes a placeholder photo, the user's name, a "Verified" badge, and a "PROFILE PIC." button. The profile information is identical to the one shown in the search filters.

Message Screen: A full-screen message interface for interacting with the user whose profile was viewed. It features a header with the user's name and profile picture, a text input field with placeholder text, and a keyboard at the bottom.



Settings & Privacy

- Create Profile
- Create Listing
- Account Settings
- Notifications
- Change Phone Number
- USD
- English (US)
- Share Mates
- Rate Us
- Logout
- Terms of Service
- Private Policy
- Delete account

Name's Profile

Profile Picture: Add your photo

About You Photos: Add atleast 5 photos

Get ID Verified: Join our trusted community and find your ideal mate!

Phone Number: +1 123-4***

Birthday: 00/00/0000

Identified as: pronouns

Language I Speak

Add +

About Me

Add +

Preferences

- No Kid(s)
- Non-Couple
- Non-Smoker
- Ok w/ Guest(s)
- Verified
- OK w/ Alcohol
- Employed
- Pet(s)
- Age

Add +

Interests

Gym	Music	Travel
Art	Zodiac Sign	Reading
Dance	Hiking	Astronomy
TV	Food	History
Technology	Gaming	Gardening

Add +

Lifestyle

Cleanliness: Aa

Guests: Aa

Habits: Aa

Wake Up / Bed Time: Aa

Work Schedule: Aa

Buttons

Cancel Save

Sign Up

When I signed up for other roommate apps the process was long and sometimes confusing. All the apps made you create your roommate profile first before you could see the interface. To maximize usability, I created a two-step sign-up process that would sign up users through their phone numbers. Then, after they have an account, they had the option to create a profile or a listing.

Home Page

The home page starts on potential Mates' profiles and if you click on the top left map icon, it takes you to available rent spaces in the area. On the top right corner, users then see the filter button to customize their search.

Chat Page

This page is where users can view chats sent from other Mates. One may contact their Mates through regular text, the provided messaging service, photo chats, voice calls, or video call. In the chat box, they also have the ability to do money exchanges and create personal lists to help with roommate needs and wants.

Favorites Page

This page stores a user's favorite profile and rooms. On this page, users can view their favorite Mates's profiles separate from their favorite rooms for rent.

Setting and Privacy

This page is where users create their profiles and listings and manage their app preferences. I made a profile photo mandatory and at least 5 photos added to each account to prevent scammers and build a personality for each user. Profile setup also requires ID verification to stop scammers. Users of other roommate apps found it obnoxious that they could not find how to delete their account easily, I made the “delete account” at the bottom of the page in red.

Retrospection and further additions

If time was not a constraint, there are many things I would've done differently or rather added to improve the UX.

- Testing the prototype with the users to observe their interactions with the product and figure out improvements in the user flows.
- Create all the pages on the app
- Add a personality test that users can take for physiological comparison

Key Take away:

- 1)Brands should focus on all User needs and wants to create a successful UI experience. Creating useful tools can be the greatest asset in an app. Focusing on what the customer or user wants will reflect what tool you make.
- 2)Try different layouts, and carefully arrange the material. Approach redesigning to drive effective UI. This encourages a better grasp for design and placement of particular functions.