Petchi User Test

User Test Explanation

I wanted to test if Petchi actually works the way I intended, so I got 5 people to try out the app and give me honest feedback. I was curious to see if people would understand the pet concept right away and if the goal tracking made sense to them.

Test Goal

I asked each person to use their own phone and go through the complete Petchi experience from start to finish. I watched them while they used it and asked questions afterward, I also made them use the app for the whole day after that.

What I wanted to learn:

- Do people get the pet concept immediately?
- Is the onboarding process confusing or smooth?
- Do they actually feel connected to their virtual pet?
- Is adding and completing goals intuitive?
- What would make them want to use this daily?

Participants

I tested with 5 people. ages ranged from 19-23, all students who use productivity apps sometimes but aren't obsessed with them.

Participant 1: Uses Apple Reminders, not really into cute apps.

Participant 2: Tried Habitica before, likes gaming elements.

Participant 3: Never uses productivity apps.

Participant 4: Never uses productivity apps.

Participant 5: Uses Notion, loves customizing everything.

Key Findings

The pet connection was immediate, everyone smiled when they first saw their pet and started talking to it like it was real. One person even said, "aww, he's so cute!" when naming their pet. The emotional connection happened faster than expected.

Onboarding felt natural. Nobody got confused during the setup process. People enjoyed naming both themselves and their pet, and the flow felt logical to everyone. Someone mentioned that it reminded them of getting a real pet.

Goal completion was satisfying. When users checked off their first goal and saw their pet get happier, they all had a positive reaction. One person said, "oh wow, he actually changed!" and seemed genuinely excited about it.

Issues:

Completed goals were annoying. This was the biggest complaint. One person said, "why are these crossed-out tasks still here? It's making my list look messy." Everyone wanted completed goals to disappear completely instead of just getting crossed out.

Progress tracking was unclear. Some users didn't understand what the progress bar meant at first. One person asked, "is this showing today's goals or all my goals ever?" I realized I needed to make this clearer.

Pet mood changes felt random. One user noticed their pet was sad even though they completed 1 out of 2 goals. They said, "I did half my work, why is he sad?" The mood calculation needed better explanation.

Feedback

Most loved features:

- **Pet naming process** - "It felt personal right away"
- **Immediate mood feedback** - "I could see the pet react to what I did"
- **Simple goal adding** - "Way easier than other apps I've tried"
- **Mobile-friendly design** - "Actually works well on my phone"

Biggest complaints:

- **Completed goals staying visible** - "Makes the app feel cluttered"
- **No explanation of mood system** - "I don't understand why he's sad"
- **Limited customization** - "Can I change his color or something?"

Changes

Based on this feedback, I made several important improvements:

1. **Disappearing completed goals -** I changed the system so completed goals disappear with a satisfying animation instead of staying crossed out. This was the most requested change and made the biggest difference.

2. **Better mood explanation -** I added a small tooltip explaining that the pet is happy when you complete 80% or more of your goals, neutral between 20-80%, and sad below 20%.

3. **Improved progress tracking** - I made the progress bar show "Goals finished today" more clearly and added better visual feedback when goals are completed.

4. **Smoother animations** - I added more satisfying feedback when goals are added or completed, making the interactions feel more responsive.

Results

Success rate: 100% - Everyone completed the full onboarding and goal management process **Would use daily: 4 out of 5** - Most people said they'd actually want to use this **Understood concept immediately: 5 out of 5** - The pet productivity connection was clear **Found it fun: 5 out of 5** - Everyone enjoyed the experience more than expected

Conclusion

The biggest insight was that people form emotional connections with digital pets much faster than I thought. Everyone started treating their pet like it was real within the first minute of using the app.

I also learned that small UI annoyances (like crossed-out tasks) can really hurt the experience, even when the core concept is good. Sometimes the simplest fixes make the biggest difference in how people feel about using your product.

The test confirmed that combining productivity with emotional attachment works well, but I need to be transparent about how it works. People want to understand why their pet is happy or sad so they can adjust their behavior accordingly.

Most importantly, I discovered that people actually want to use Petchi daily, which was my main goal. The combination of simple goal tracking with immediate emotional feedback created something that felt both useful and enjoyable.