Benji Welner

I am an Israeli-American designer and programmer building secure, clean, and effective systems as an undergraduate student at Stanford University. I use modern tools to build solutions that avoid bloat and unnecessary complexity. I enjoy real and interesting problems in challenging areas that matter. You can contact me via email at: figbert@figbert.com.

WORK

SwiftUI Engineer @ Envelope [YC S23] (2024)
Joined as the second-ever engineer at the company. Built and redesigned the UI of the native iOS app, Envelope's primary consumer offering.

Software Engineer @ Beeper [YC S21] (2023)
Led software development for Beepy, the company's hardware effort. Adapted an existing Matrix chat client to run in an embedded environment and created a bespoke CLI for device setup and management.

Founder @ FIGBERT LLC (2020-Present)
Incorporated a single-member LLC to provide a home for project and client work.

Founder @ SMMR Software (2021-23)
Formed and led a three-person programming collective through the development and monetization of software projects.

LANGUAGES

Human
Fluent: *English, Hebrew*
Proficient: *Arabic, Chinese*

Computer
Fluent: *Golang, Swift*
Proficient: *Python, HTML/CSS/JS, Blender*

EDUCATION

Stanford University
Class of: 2027
GPA: 3.82
Major: Design
    Track: Physical + Manufacturing
    Advisor: David Kelley
Minor: Political Science (International Relations)

TECHNOLOGY FOCUS

Passive technology. How can we shape devices that enrich users' lives and disappear into the background? How can we make software as intuitive as the physical world?

Next-gen user interfaces. The window system was a huge innovation to a text-only world. What is the next big leap that will supplant this paradigm and in retrospect feel obvious?

PROJECTS

figbert.com (2020-Present)
Authored a blog on technology and contemporary society with significant engagement built on open standards and a modern, minimal tech stack.

Blind Date A Book (2025)
Built an online bookstore where books are sold purely based on quippy one-line descriptions. Made with new web technologies and a Shopify backend.

Roll Call (2024)
Hacked a receipt printer to issue critical information when I wake up in order to replace my phone in my morning routine. Engaged in a rigorous design process and produced advertising material.

Mabel (2021-23)
Developed the first text-based client for sharing files using BitTorrent on macOS and Linux and received over 400 GitHub stars.

txtodo (2020-21)
Developed a minimalist to-do list application designed to eliminate the buildup of delayed tasks, which received >5K downloads on the App Store.

Privacy Redirect for Safari (2021-23)
Developed a browser extension for Safari to redirect users to alternative, privacy-focused web services utilizing novel inter-process communication technologies to store user data out of the browser in native application storage. Received over 4.9K downloads on the App Store.

Caret (2023-24)
Built a command line tool for browsing Lobsters, the popular computing-focused link aggregator, in your terminal.

CSS System Colors Dashboard (2024)
Built a dashboard to give web developers a visual preview of a specific underutilized feature of CSS.

Personal Infrastructure (2020-Present)
Installed and operated essential utilities on Linux servers, including email, RSS, and IRC.

PERSONAL INTERESTS

Seriously good food. I love discovering, making, and sharing amazing food experiences.

Israel and the Middle East. I am deeply engaged with the history and complex realities of the region. My Hebrew music playlist is almost five days long!

Weightlifting. I am in the gym almost every day. Our minds are healthier when our bodies are too.