



A Time Management Application
Designed by Audrey Zecha
Interaction Design Fall 2015
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Persona

Stephanie is a middler at Northeastern University, studying biology. She's taking a heavy course-load this semester and several of her classes also have labs with separate work. She's a part of several clubs and is a tour guide on campus, so she's quite busy. She's having a hard time keeping track of all her assignments and commitments, and needs a way to plan her days so that she can fit in everything she has to do, including her homework assignments. She wants to feel a sense of accomplishment when she finishes a task and needs an application where she would be able to check things off and see the progress that she's making. She also wants to know how much time she's spending on her homework every day, just so she has a better idea of how to allot her time.

Scenario

Stephanie signs up for checkr, an online application where she can plan her days and check off tasks she's finished. It also shows a graph of how her time is being split up in the day, so she can see how much time she's spending on homework overall. She enters her day into the task list - she has classes in the morning, needs to eat lunch, then wants to work on her anatomy assignment. She has lab in the afternoon and a meeting at night. She can choose the category of her task (homework, class, meeting, meal, etc), and the pie chart in the center of the screen displays the breakdown of her day into the task categories. When Stephanie comes back from class, has eaten lunch and finished her anatomy assignment, she checks all those things off. It gives her a great sense of accomplishment to be able to see the little checkmarks next to the tasks she's already done for the day.

Stephanie remembers after lab that she has a meeting with her academic advisor next week, so she goes back into checkr and goes to the calendar view where she can select any date in the future and add a task. She adds the meeting so she doesn't forget.

At the end of the day, Stephanie has checked off everything on her list. She takes a look at tomorrow and the things she's already entered for the day. She adds her new lab report that got assigned as something to work on tomorrow night, since she doesn't have a meeting. Feeling great that she checked everything off for today, she can go to bed feeling less stressed.

Actual Functionality

Known issues/Notes

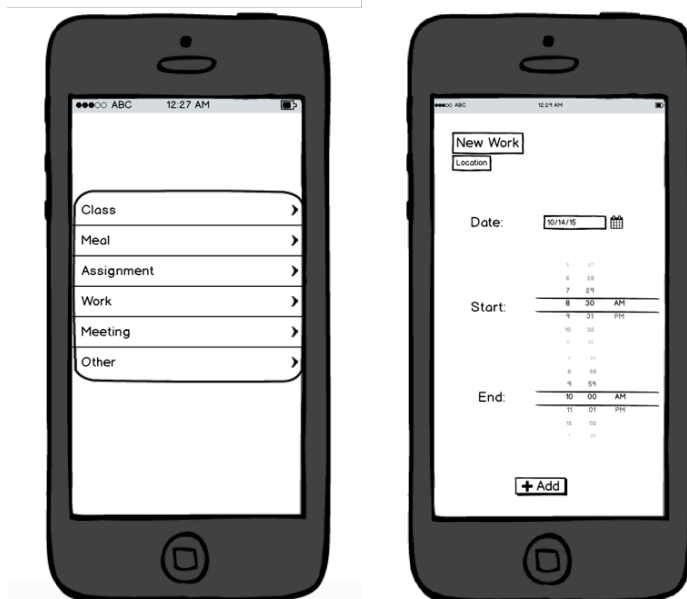
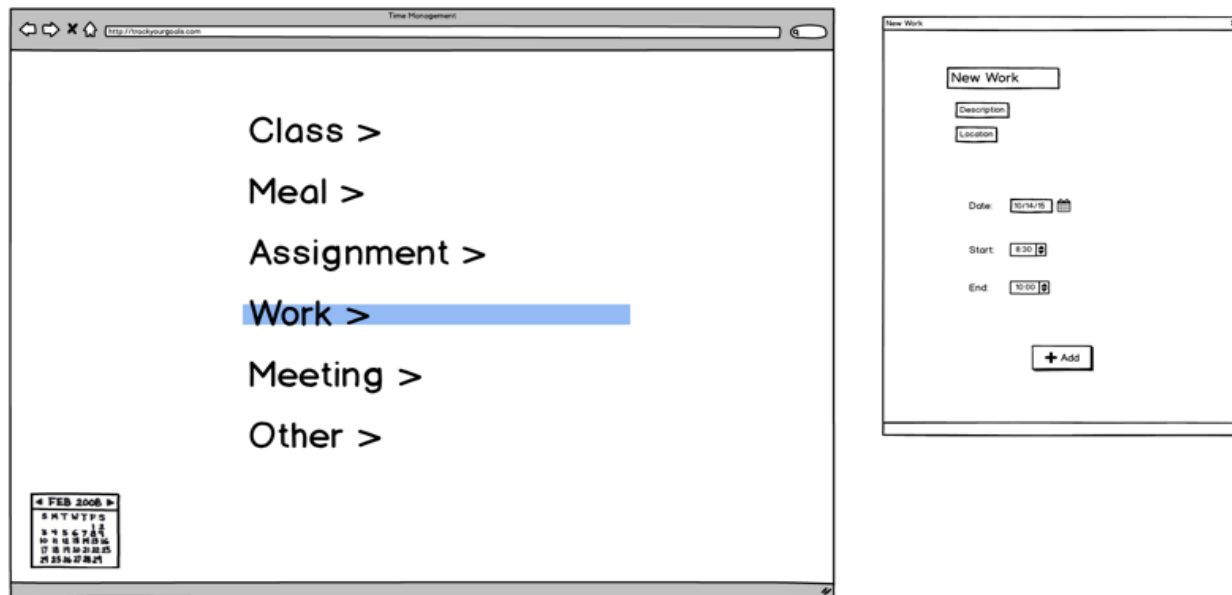
- Nothing in the “Audrey” settings menu is an active link, they’re just placeholders.
- The graph doesn’t actually update, it’s a static image.
- A new user wouldn’t have tasks already in the system, obviously, that’s just to show what it will look like with tasks. So the landing page for a new user is what it would look like in reality, but once they “sign up” and press “go” there are already tasks on the page to illustrate what that would look like.
- The homework tooltip takes a second to show up.
- The only links on the calendar are the 28, 29, and 30 of October, but in a fully functioning version you’d be able to click on any date obviously, as well as move months using the arrows at the top (which are also currently non-functional).
- If you add a new task or check one off it doesn’t stay loaded if you leave the page and come back because there’s no back-end functionality and the Javascript reloads if you leave the page.

The Design Process



Concept Wireframes - Week 5

Design I



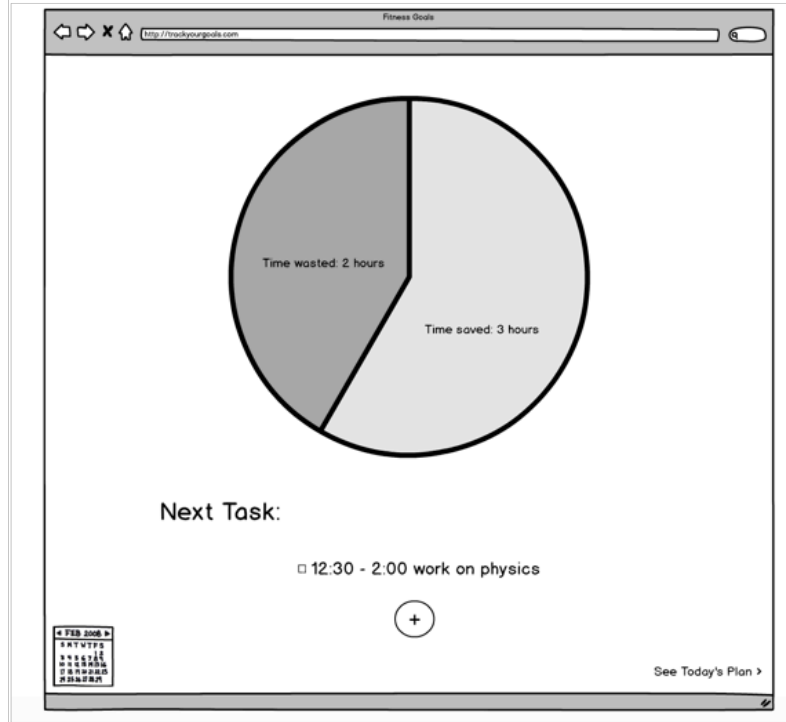
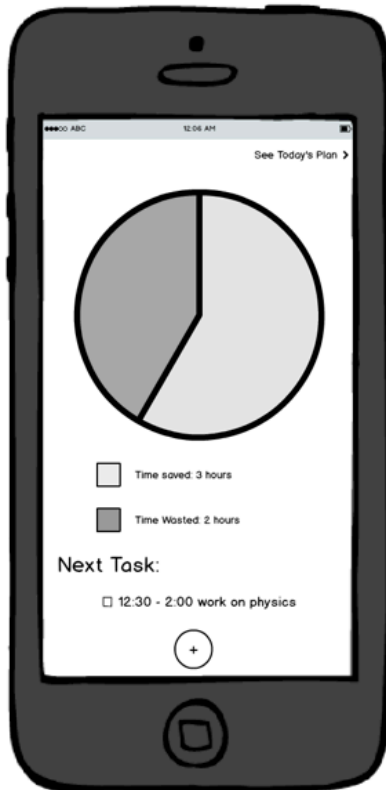
This first design idea was more of a guided process. The initial screen was simply a list of task categories, which they would select from and then add a new task. I decided not to go with this idea because I wanted the main page to show the current tasks, instead of always having to add a new task. However, the “new task” modal was kept very similar to this second screen in the final version of the application, simply adding a “category” menu in the modal as opposed to selecting that first.

The Design Process



Concept Wireframes - Week 5

Design 2



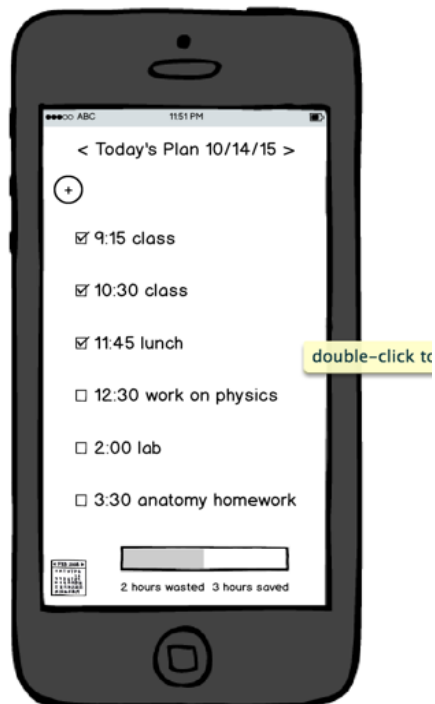
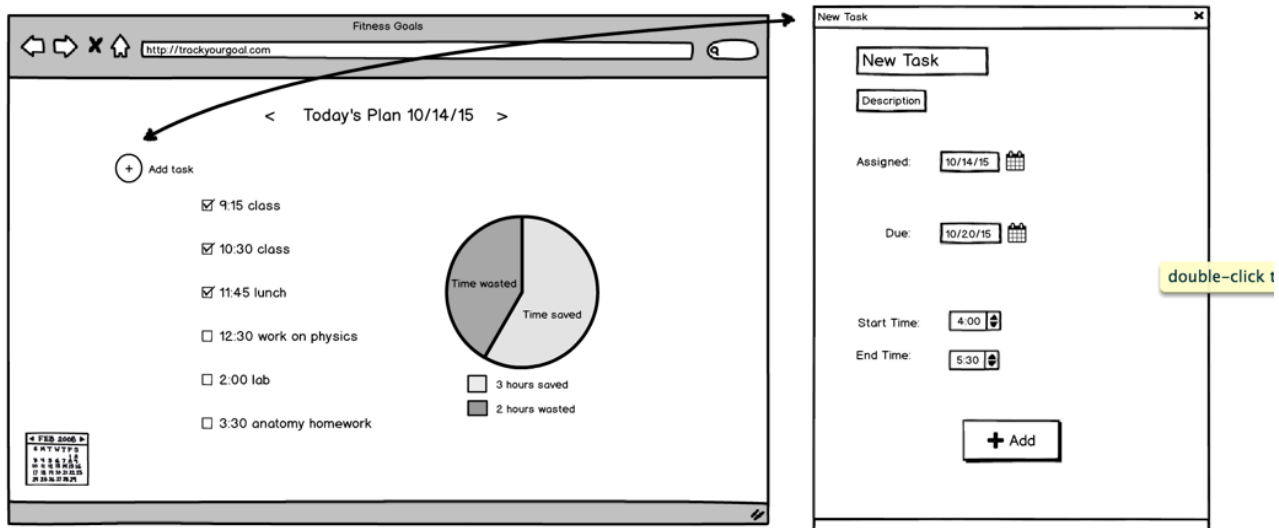
This design idea focused on the graph instead of the task list. It had simply the next task on the list, as well as an “Add Task” plus button. This graph showed only “saved” and “wasted” time, depending on how long it took the user to complete their tasks and if they completed them in the allotted time they had given themselves. This design was simple and aesthetically pleasing, but I decided it was a little too simple, and that the main goal of the user would be to see their task list and what they were doing that day, so that needed to be the focus of the main screen, over the graph.

The Design Process



Concept Wireframes - Week 5

Design 3

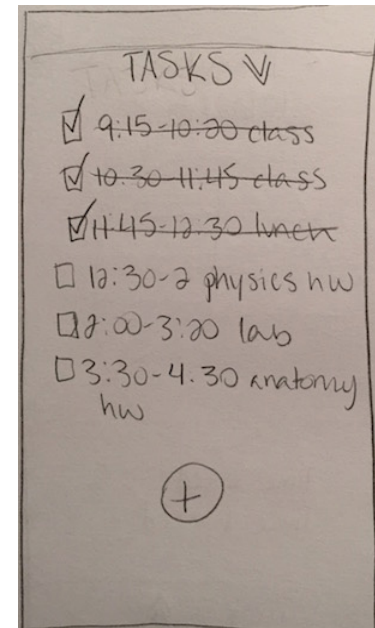
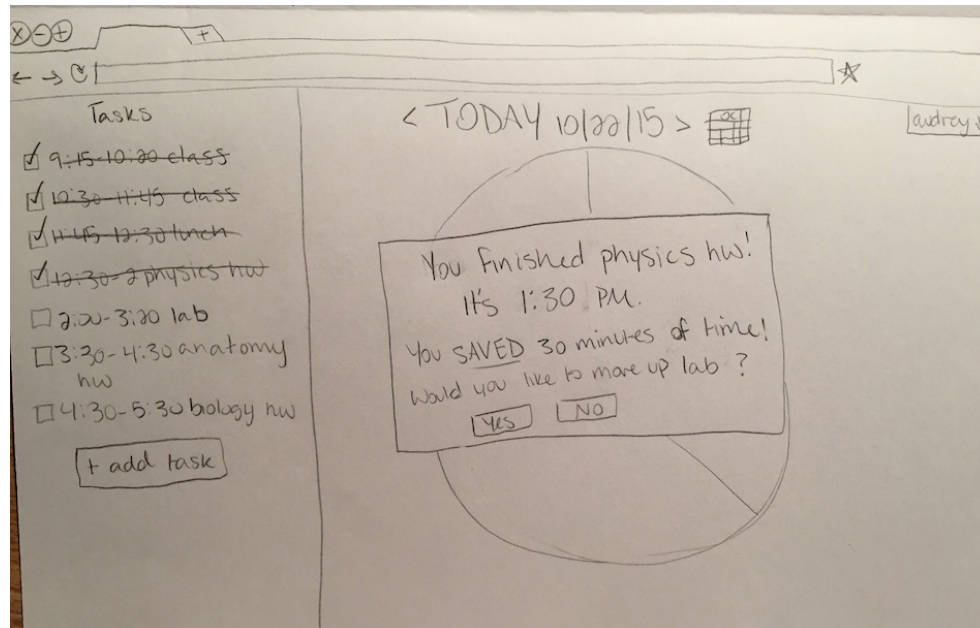
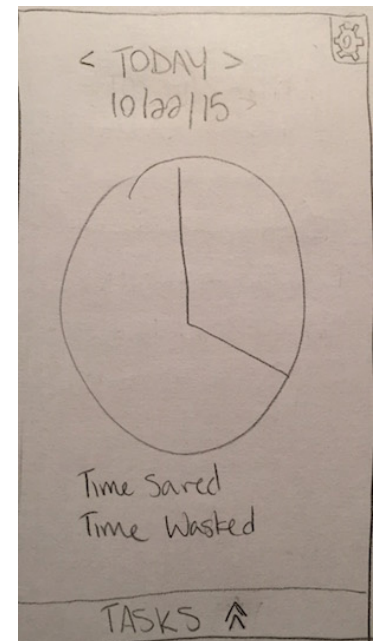
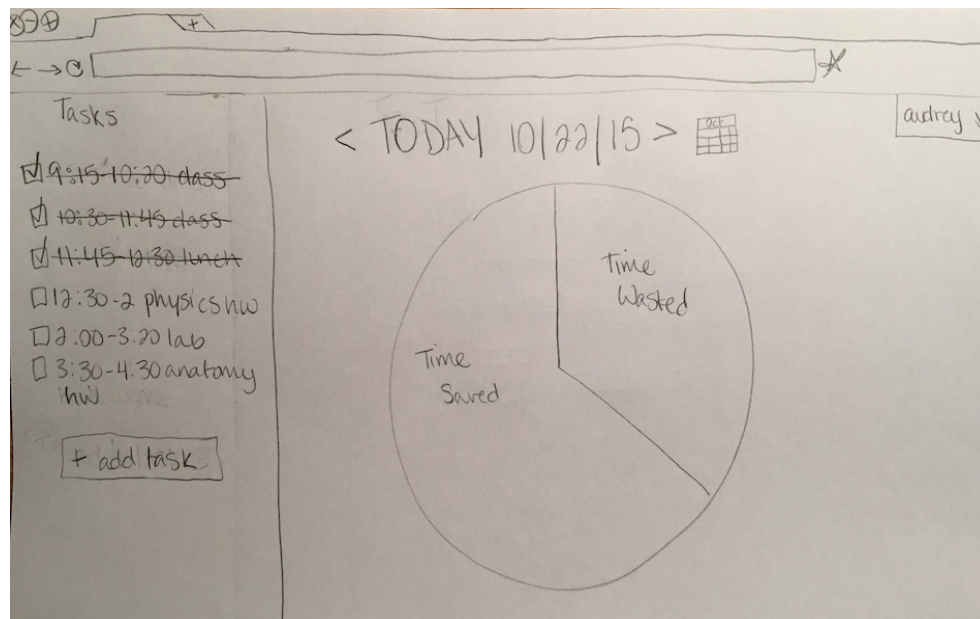


This design is the closest to what the final product ended up like. The main page shows the task list as well as the graph, and the user can see a calendar and add new tasks all from this main page. Some of the elements on this page were rearranged for better usability, but all of these elements are in the final version of the application.

The Design Process



Full Wireframes - Week 6



The design from the full wireframes is very close to the final product. Some small things changed, like the navigation bar and what the graph displayed, as well as the modal when a task was completed, but the design of the main page, although it moved away from this for a while, ended up coming back to a task side-bar design. The mobile design changed completely, however, because again, the tasks were deemed the more important thing to show and therefore the graph was moved down below them in the final version of the application. In this wireframe version, the user would've had to click on the "Tasks" bar at the bottom of the screen to see the tasks pulled up, and that was too many steps to view the key part of the application.

The Design Process



Clickable Prototype - Week 7

Time Management Log In/Sign Up

Time Management

Log In

Go

Not a member yet? [Sign Up!](#)

Time Management Audrey

< Today >

October 29, 2015

Tasks

☐ 9:15 - 10:20 class

☐ 10:30 - 11:45 class

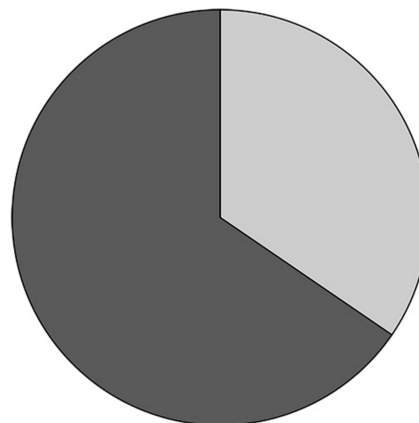
☐ 12:00 - 12:30 lunch

☐ 12:30 - 2:00 physics hw

☐ 2:00 - 3:20 lab

☐ 3:30 - 4:30 anatomy hw

Add Task +



Time
saved:
3
hours
Time
wasted:
2
hours

This was the first week that the prototype moved to a clickable html file, instead of just wireframes. This layout was pretty much what I kept up through the very last version of the application. The task-bar on the left side with the graph in the middle. The date is at the top of the page with links to go forward and backward that way. Main changes that happened from the week before to this week were creating the pages in html, and changing the task-bar from a side bar setup. This was not intentional, I just could not figure out a good way to create the side-bar using Foundation. I also changed the mobile version to keep the tasks at the top of the page (not pictured here).

The Design Process



Clickable Prototype 2.0 - Week 8

Time Management

Calendar

Audrey ▾

< October 2015 >

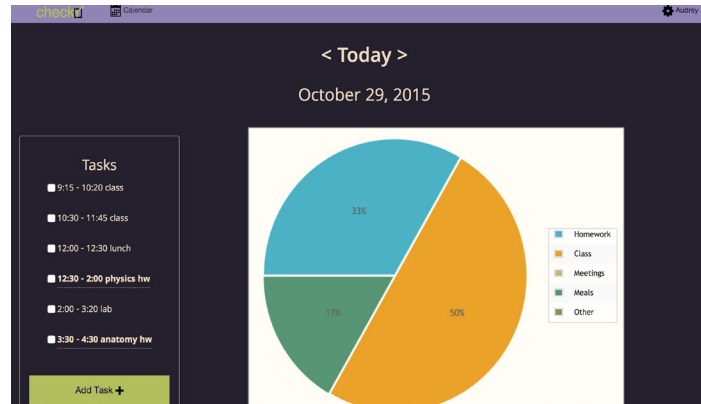
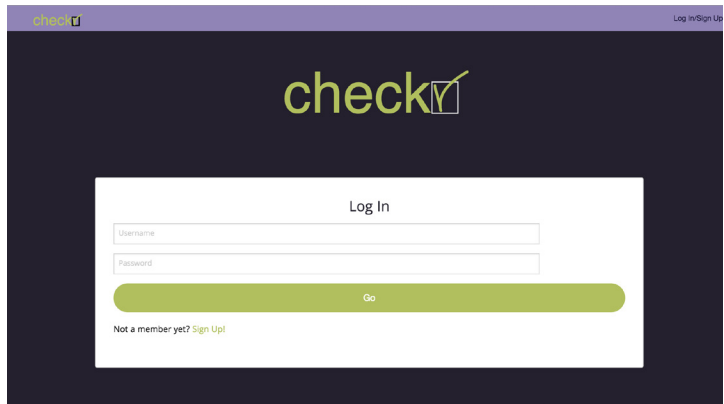
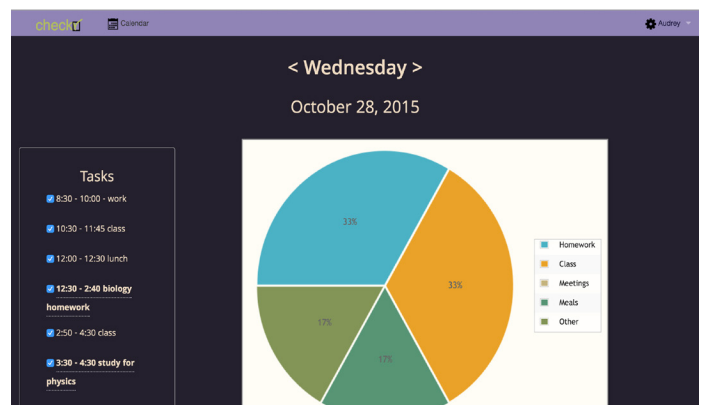
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24

After an in class critique of the prototype, classmates recommended that I add a calendar feature to the application, so that users could access dates in the future (or past) without having to click through day by day, as they would have to with the arrows on either side of the current day. Those are useful for seeing tasks for the next or previous day, but not if a user was trying to add something weeks in advance. During user testing for this week, results suggested that a breakdown of tasks instead of time spent/time wasted would be more helpful. Users also wanted the capability to add recurring tasks, as they can do on an iPhone or Google calendar. This functionality was not added ultimately, more because that would require a back-end, which this application does not have. The graph was changed to show a breakdown of tasks, however, instead of the time saved versus time wasted original idea.

The Design Process



Visual Design - Weeks 9-12

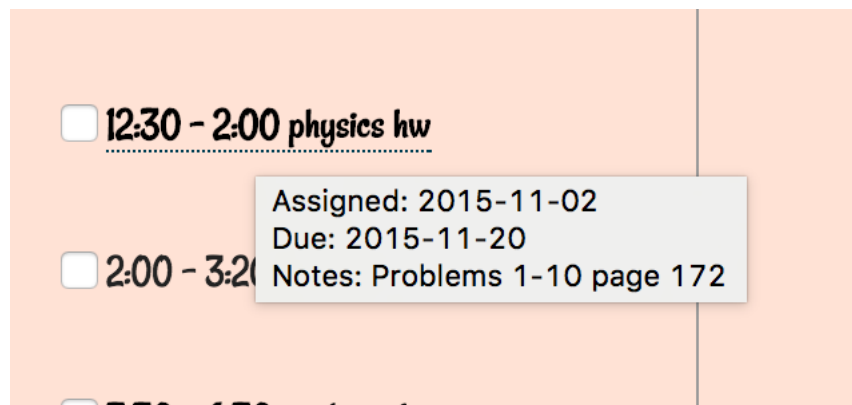
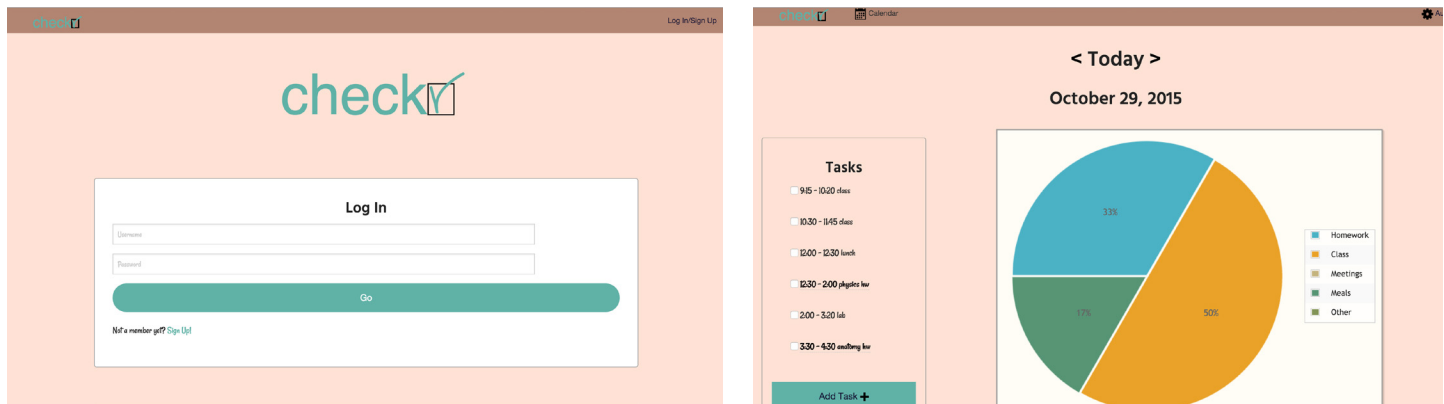
A screenshot of the "Add New Task" form. It has a dark purple background. The form is white and contains fields for "New Task", "Description", "Type" (a dropdown menu set to "Homework"), "Date Assigned:" (mm/dd/yyyy), "Date Due:" (mm/dd/yyyy), "Start Time:", and "End Time:". A green "Add Task" button is at the bottom.

In these weeks I explored different visual characteristics and applied them to my application. This version had a very dark purple background, a lighter purple navigation bar, and green accents for the button and the logo. The type was a cream color, and it used the Google Font Khula, which I kept in the final version. I liked this version of the design because I wanted to use a dark background to soothe the user. I wanted the app to give off a low-stress but still productive vibe, which is why I chose the green as an accent color. The consensus from the class critique, however, was that the green and purple together were too “fun” and bright. I also played with using JQPlot, a graphical Javascript plugin, and while the capabilities were cool, I ended up removing it in the final version for a static graph that matched the color scheme better.

The Design Process



Visual Design - Weeks 9-12



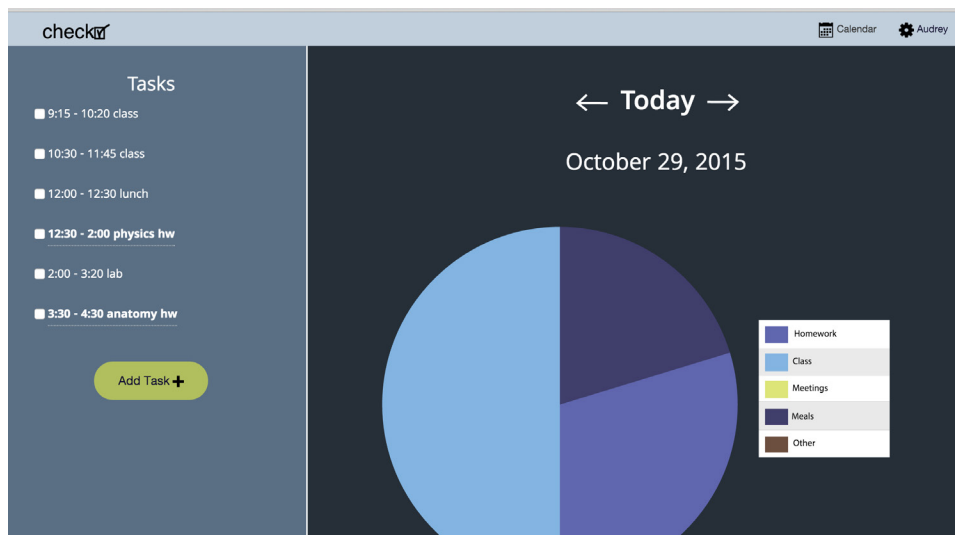
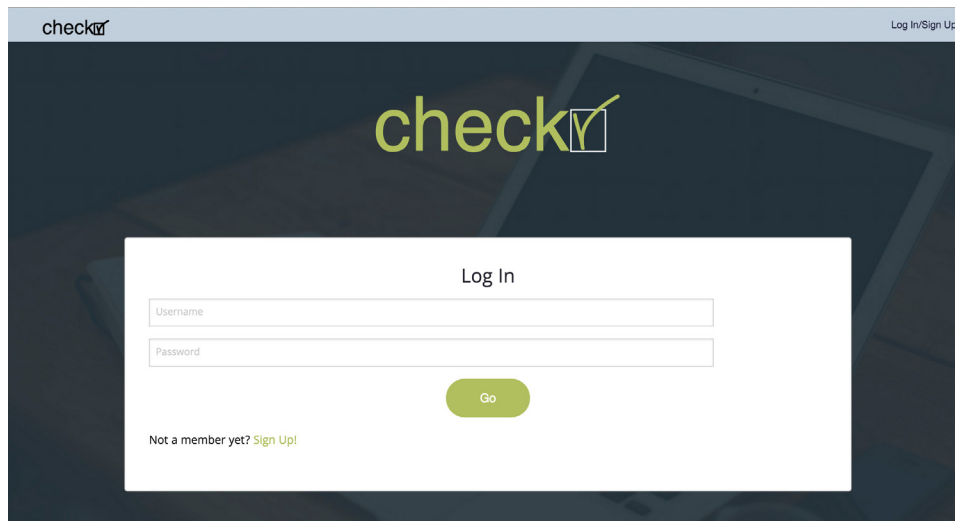
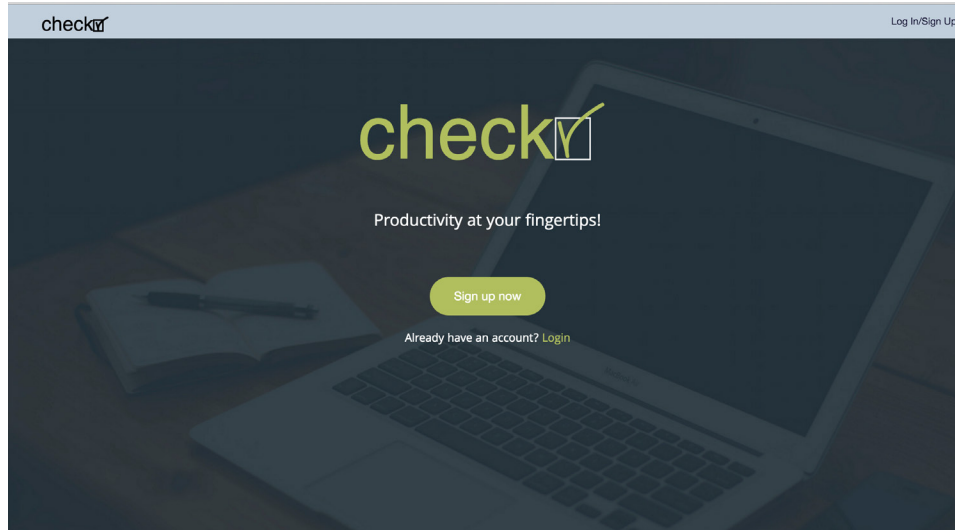
This second version of visual characteristics explored the idea of using a very light but non-white background to see if that was more or less soothing than using a darker background. I think it would've been more successful if I had made the color less saturated. It was still very bright. I used a complimentary teal for the accents and buttons, and the effect was not what I was going for. I also tried to use a handwriting font for the task list. This gave the application a less serious feel, and I almost immediately decided against it.

In terms of the name of the application, I originally had it as "Time Management", for lack of a more creative title, and ended up with "checkr", where the "r" is actually a checkmark. This left the awful "manage" concept behind and made the app more friendly but no less professional. I also added icons to the menu to add to the "friendliness" of the application. I didn't want it to feel intimidating but I wanted it to be useful and clear. These small options added the feel I was going for without giving up any of the simple aesthetic.

The Design Process



Final Design

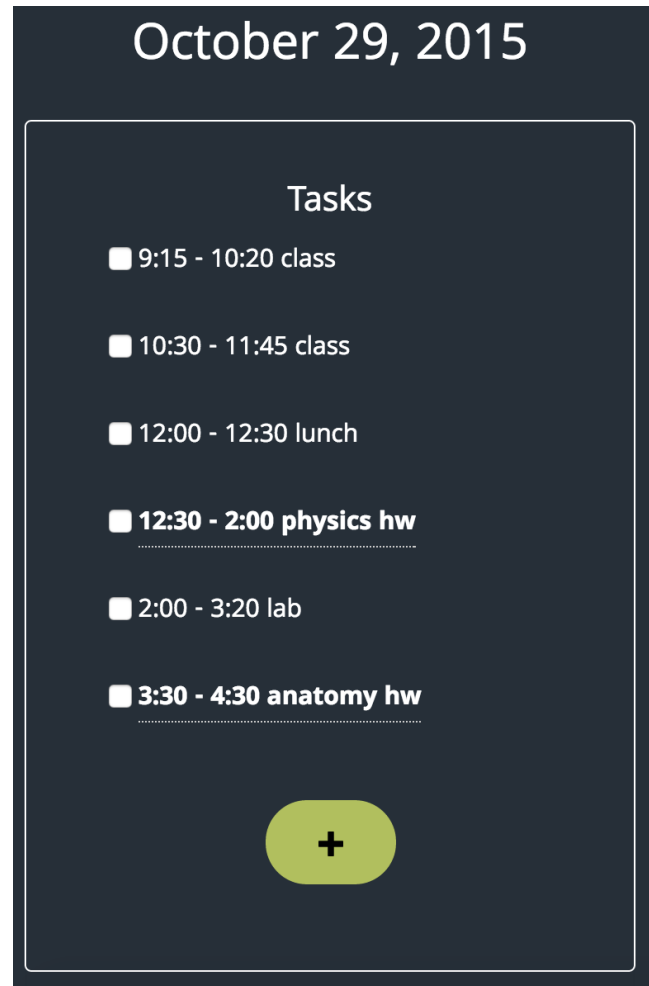
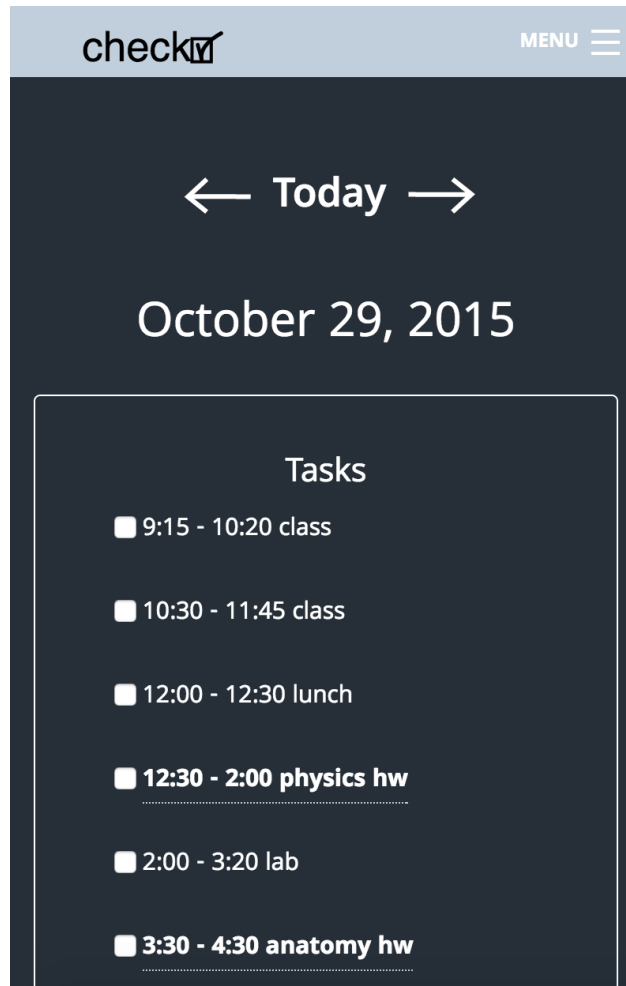


In the final version of the design, I chose to move to blue instead of purple. I kept the green to inspire action and productivity, but the blue made the green stand out on it's own more and faded into the background, as it was meant to. I used a dark grey blue for the main background (with a picture under it for the landing page and login screens). The task bar moved back to a side-bar design, as it originally had been, because I felt that gave it a more important hierarchy than just having it next to the graph. The navigation bar is a light blue. I moved the calendar button over to the right edge of the navigation bar as opposed to next to the logo, where it had been in previous versions, because it was discussed in the class critique that having it near the logo gave it too much importance. The arrows next to the day were redesigned to look more like arrows, and the graph was changed to a static image more in keeping with the color scheme, but still using brighter colors to make the graph pop.

The Design Process



Final Design



These are pictures of the mobile design. The design is not much different, the task bar moves to the top of the screen and becomes the same color as the background, the button loses the “Add Task” text and just becomes a plus sign, and the graph is smaller and underneath the tasks, as the focus of the application is on the users’ tasks.

I believe the end visual design of the application matches the look and feel that I was originally going for. I wanted to provide users with an application that they don’t have to think about because it’s so easy to use. The buttons and areas of interaction are straightforward and stand out. The background is soothing but still has color and is aesthetically pleasing. I don’t think this application will further the stress in users’ lives by being bright and flashy and complicated, I think it will be a good way for users to plan their days and see how they are spending their time without getting overwhelmed.

Style Guide



Logo

The logo for this application originally started with the concept of time, and moved later to the idea of checking things off, which is more relatable and concrete. The name of the application is checkr, and the “r” in the logo is a checked checkbox. The big logo on the landing page and on the sign in pages is in green so it stands out, but once the user is logged in it’s in black at the top left corner of the navigation bar. Keeping the logo green in the navigation bar brought too much attention to it. The word “check” is in Helvetica. This logo brings a sense of friendliness to the applicaiton with the hand-drawn looking checkmark, but the Helvetica font keeps it looking clean.



Typography

This application uses only one font, the Google font Khula. Different weights are used depending on the hierarchy of the text. The paragraph text, like that in the task list and the links in the navigation bar, are using the “Normal 400” weight. The day of the week is in the “Bold 700” weight, and the subheadings are in the “Semi-Bold 600” weight. The month on the Calendar page is also in the “Bold 700” weight. I chose this font because I wanted to use a clean sans-serif.

Normal 400

Grumpy wizards make toxic brew for the evil Queen and Jack.

Semi-Bold 600

Grumpy wizards make toxic brew for the evil Queen and Jack.

Bold 700

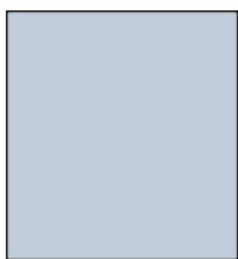
Grumpy wizards make toxic brew for the evil Queen and Jack.

Style Guide

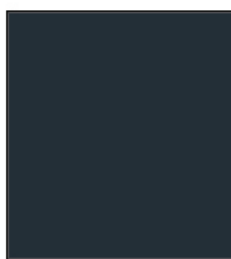


Color Palette

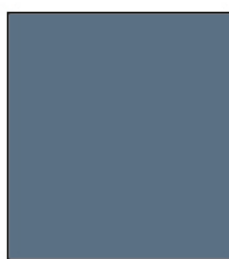
These soothing blues keep the background of the application as the background. They are soothing and quiet without being boring. The lightest blue is used for the navigation bar. The darkest blue is used as the main background of the application, and the shade in the middle is used for the task bar in the desktop version, where the task bar is presented as a side-bar. The green is the color of the main logo, as well as the color of the buttons. Outside of the logo, it signifies interactive elements on the screen, these mostly being buttons.



#c1cfdc



#242f38



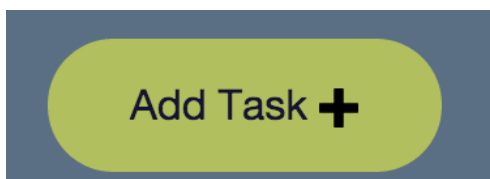
#5a6f84



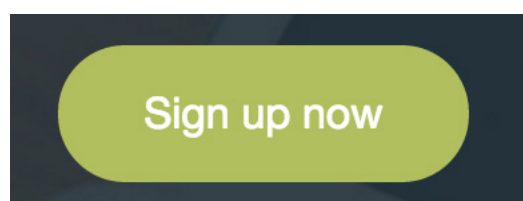
#b1bf5e

Buttons

The traditional buttons in this application are all the green color in the color palette. They all have rounded corners. In most situations, they are not expanded. However, in the “Add Task” modal the button to add a task is expanded to fit across the bottom of the modal.



The desktop version of the “Add Task” button has the text as well as the plus sign, while the mobile version simply has the plus sign. The text is black (above and left).



The buttons on the landing, login, and sign up pages all have white text on the green background (left).

The modal button has white text and is expanded to fit the size of the modal (below).



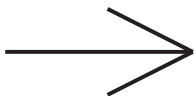
Style Guide



Icons/Imagery



This checkbox from the logo is also used as the favicon for the application.



These arrows are used as the arrows to navigate between the days on the main page of the application. They look more intentional than just using less and greater than marks as I was before.



The calendar icon is just used next to the calendar in the navigation bar.



The cog icon is similarly used next to the “users” name (Audrey in this version) in the nav bar.



The plus sign is used in the “Add Task” button on the main page in the task bar. In the mobile version, it is used as the whole button without the text, as it is well understood these days that the plus sign as a button means “add”.



Homework



Class



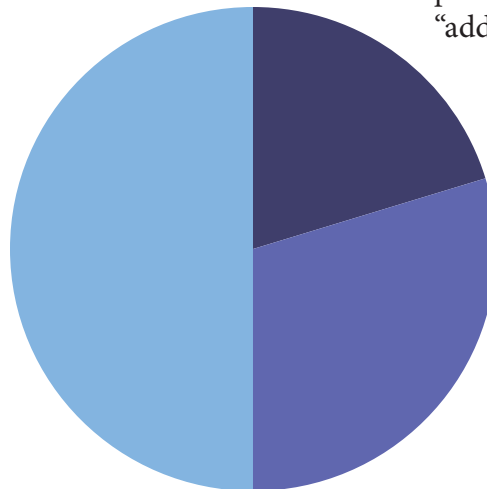
Meetings



Meals



Other



The graph images are made in Illustrator using these colors pictured in the key above. These colors all play off of the current color scheme of the application, but are brighter so that they draw attention to the graph.

Style Guide



Icons/Imagery



This image is the image used for the background of the landing, login, and sign-up pages. The image of a laptop, notepad, and coffee on the table highlights the feeling of productivity and getting things done, but the wooden table and the cup the coffee show a calm level of productivity. The image is overlayed using the dark blue of the background in the main pages, and the opacity of the blue is turned down to let the background image show through. This makes the image fade so as not to overwhelm but still provides a little bit more visually interesting content on the main page than just a button and the logo of the application.