Project Pitch : Pomodoro Timer

Team Internet Bowser

Members:

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Problem:

The members of Team Bowser started working out and planning out this project after recognizing a common and important problem in all of our lives. This problem had to do with time management. As students who mainly major in computer science and computer engineering, we often build up a ton of stress due to the amount of work that we have in our life. This work could be homework, it could be midterms, it could be finals, or it could be any other type of work such as preparing for an interview or learning a new skill. The problem that arises from this is that since there are so many different tasks to pay attention to, it is hard to get everything done without getting bogged down. Managing time for each task is difficult, and it is hard to stay focused. We all agreed that we often tried to get everything done in one sitting, whether it would take 2 hours, 3 hours, or even an all nighter. This is clearly unhealthy and just a bad lifestyle in general, piling a lot of unnecessary stress and fatigue. This was our main problem, where we resorted to a bad schedule to get work done, and we wanted to find a solution to this problem.

Appetite

5 weeks

User Personas

Name: Amy
Age: 16
Occupation: Student
Scenario of using our app:

Goals: Finish homework on time; Prepare for exams and get A's

Challenges/ Pain points: Forgetting to finish certain assignments occasionally; Missing deadlines due to procrastination; Distraction by social media; Generally lack of focus;

Needs: An app to remind her of all the assignments, to organize rest and work, and to help her focus.

Device: Phone or laptop.

Name: Greg
Age: 34
Occupation: Software engineer
Scenario of using our app:

Goals: Lead his developer team to meet clients' requirements.

Challenges/ Pain points: Large amount of different tasks; Tasks come in different priorities, and some need to be done before others to achieve maximum efficiency; Lack of time; Sometimes he works intensively for hours and becomes too exhausted for the subsequent tasks.

Needs: An app to help organize tasks so that the ones with higher priorities are guaranteed to be finished, and to balance rest and work for sustainable efficiency.

Device: Desktop

Name: Karen
Age: 36
Occupation: Writer
Scenario of using our app:

Goals: Finish writing book

Challenges/ Pain points: Distracted by kids, housework, alerts; Sometimes feeling overwhelmed by tasks and wasting time; Work well once in the groove, but hard to start.

Needs: An app to help me solely focus on my tasks when working, and check on other duties during breaks only.

Device: Laptop

Name: Brad
Age: 21
Occupation: D1 Basketball Student-Athlete
Scenario of using our app:

Goals: Keep grades high enough to be eligible to play

Challenges/ Pain points: Gym rat, finds it hard to focus on studying but loves to workout and work on his craft in basketball.

Needs: A way to help him focus while studying. He struggles to work in long periods so prefers a way to keep him accountable even when working in shorter times.

Device: Laptop

Name: Olivia
Age: 20
Occupation: College student
Scenario of using our app:

Goals: Get on Provost Honors

Challenges/ Pain points: Addicted to social media, cannot stay off phone very well, is distracted easily

Needs: A method of studying that will allow her some space to stay on social media. Needs to achieve the goal of Provost Honors so needs to study a lot.

Device: Laptop

Name: Sean
Age: 30
Occupation: Software Engineer
Scenario of using our app:

Goals: Work in a structured and organized manner

Challenges/ Pain points: Social media, video games, tiktok, etc

Needs: An app that could help me to manage my time.

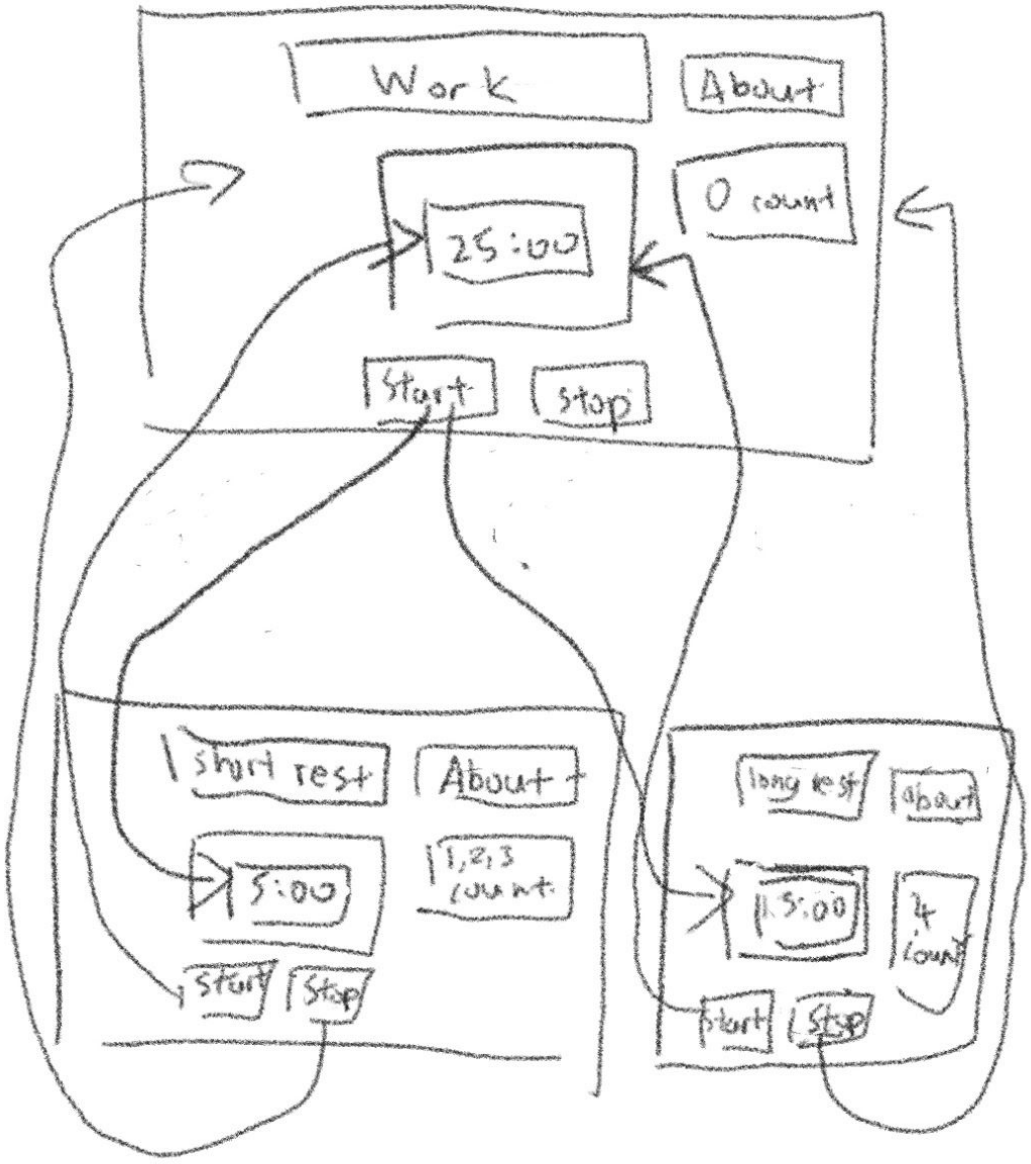
Device: Laptop or phone

Solution

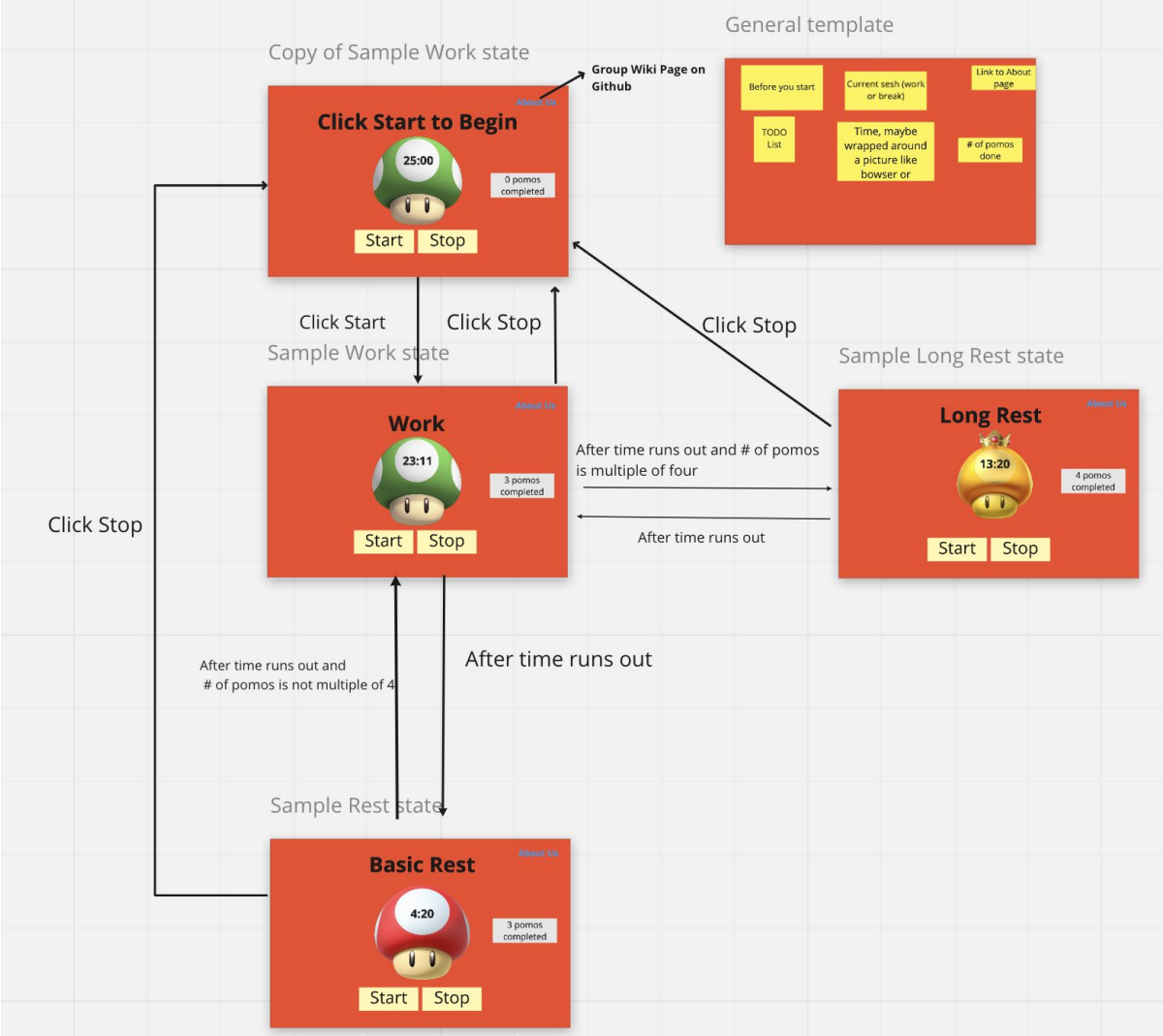
Our proposed solution is a reference to the Pomodoro Technique by Francisco Cirillo. The Pomodoro Technique involves working in fairly short but very focused intervals. The general rule is that there are 25 minute intervals of focused work, followed by 5 min intervals of break. This cycle is repeated, with a longer break of 15-30 minutes every 4 cycles.

The solution for our time management problem is to have a Pomodoro Timer. This timer would implement the Pomodoro Technique, where it would have a 25 minute work countdown timer followed by a 5 minute rest countdown timer. This would repeat, and after 4 cycles a longer 15-30 minute rest countdown timer would show. This process repeats. Our solution, to make sure the Pomodoro Technique and our ultimate goal of focus, time management, and efficient work is pursued, is very simple. The interface essentially contains 4 aspects: current state (work, rest, long rest), time, start button, and stop button. However, there are no pause and play buttons, the start button cannot be clicked once the timer is started and clicking the stop button will completely reset the timer. This decision was made to make sure every part of our design was working towards the final goal of undistracted work. Having a pause button implies the need of pausing the timer, which means a need to stop work. This is not what we want as the point of the Pomodoro Technique is to have 25 minutes of **uninterrupted** work. No pausing, no distractions. Our design also contains no animations during a given interval. This, again, is to emphasize having no distractions and being 100% focused. However, as the intervals are important, we need to make sure that we are taking breaks every 25 minutes. As a result, our timer changes images and plays a sound anytime the current state changes (work, rest, long rest). This is to ensure that the user is reminded to take a break or go to go back to work. The way different aspects are connected can be seen in our **fat marker diagram** as well as **wire frame below.**

Fat Marker Sketch



Wireframe



Risks & Rabbit-Holes

This section includes some additional features our team is interested in including into our product/solution. However, we understand that these features could lead to an endless road where we cannot complete them. As a result, we have them here to make sure that it is clear that if we cannot finish these features within our appetite, it is clear that we will scrap these features that are not absolutely essential.

1. **Front-end ToDo List**
    - A ToDo list implemented fully on the front end. This ToDo list can add, check off, or delete items. The list is completely deleted and reset once the tab/window is closed.

- (Optional) We allow the user to put in how many pomo intervals they used to complete the task to give the user a better understanding of their workflow/progress.
- The most realistic additional feature in terms of implementation. Given our relatively short appetite, this is likely the most feasible feature to implement in time.

2. **Saved ToDo List**
    - A ToDo List that is saved in a database with user authentication so that users can get their previous ToDo List.
    - Rabbit holes in terms of members are not very experienced so are unsure of the feasibility of a login system as well as implementing a database system.
    - With the short appetite that we are given as well as our team's current experience with databases and authentication (essentially 0), researching and learning about how to manage the databases as well as user authentication will consume a lot of time and thus it is less prioritized.

3. **Pomodoro customisation**
    - Keep saved states in case the user accidentally closes the tab/window. In this case, the timer state should be saved for around 5 minutes. Any time longer is assumed that they intentionally closed the tab, so the timer is reset again.
    - Option to change length of states (work, rest, long rest) as well as number of pomos needed to "earn" a long rest.
    - Users can also choose to either turn on/off notifications from other sites. For example, if they choose to turn off notifications, they will no longer get alerts from social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.

4. **Progress Tracker**
    - Ideal scenario: Every five levels can provide a new badge and title to the user. In certain levels, the background could possibly change/image. The most complicated system could be that each level up provides coins. These coins could be used to customize the mushroom image or perhaps a unique user avatar.
    - Feasible scenario: A tracker that keeps track of how many days the user used the timer, and the number of successful pomos vs interrupted pomos(user pressed stop before pomo was over). We imagine like a level up system that progresses each time a successful pomo is done.

- After feasible scenario: Certain Mario-theme badges and titles given in different levels.
- Rabbit hole in the sense that this would also likely require some type of database to record successful and unsuccessful pomos, however no members have any previous experience with authentication nor databases. Furthermore, this could require custom designs that the designer must create.

No-gos

We decided that, parallel to the Pomodoro Technique, our main focus would be on not distracting the user unless it was to remind them of an interval change. As a result we came up with the following no-gos:

1. **No Pause or Play buttons**
    - A pause or play button would be highly counterintuitive as this would mean that there is a possibility for the 25 minute work intervals to not be fully undistracted. Allowing for pausing and playing would allow the user to pause the clock if they wanted to take a break within the work interval, which is not the point of the Pomodoro Technique.

2. **No animations, limited graphics**
    - Similar to our first nogo, the existence of animations, graphics and a flashy page in general would be very distracting to the user. What we wanted was for the page to be fairly dull in general, not eye catching, so that the user could be fully focused on their work during the work intervals.