Assignment 5: Web HTML & CSS Prototypes

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Link to website: ehofstedt.github.io/homework_5/
Link to source code: https://github.com/ehofstedt/ehofstedt.github.io

Muddy Paws finally has its day in the sun as a live website. In this assignment, we took our high-fidelity prototypes and implemented them using HTML and CSS. After completing the Heuristic Evaluation and developing a few pages of the site, I have a prototype to share with the client to give them a feel for how their website will look for pet owners eager to take their furry friends on an adventure.

During the heuristic evaluation, I discovered four usability bugs, three of which I corrected in my Web Prototype. (*See Appendix for details*) I did not correct the fourth because it did not appear on one of the pages that I built in HTML/CSS.

The first bug I fixed was on the Item Detail page. In the navigation bar, the 'Shop' button is highlighted in dark green. While this was originally intended to indicate to the user that they're in the 'Shop' portion of the website (as opposed to 'About' or 'Contact'), it's confusing because the user may not know that it is still clickable in order to get back to the main shop browsing page. This is a violation of both the **Visibility of System Status** and **User Control and Freedom** heuristics. To fix this, I added a 'Return to Shop' button in the top left corner above the item detail, so that the user has a better understanding of where they are in the site and has the control to exit their current location.

The second bug, also on the Item Detail page, was that users do not have the option to select Size or select Color for their product. This is another violation of the **User Control and Freedom** heuristic. Users are only able to choose one size or color for their product, which doesn't follow conventions of most e-commerce sites. There is also no message or indicator that says the product itself is 'One Size' or 'Only comes in blue', so a user might think they are missing the step where they can choose their preferences. To fix this, I added two dropdown menus for the user to select their Size and Color for the product.

The third bug was on the Checkout Page (my bonus page). When filling in their address in the Shipping Info section, the input for state is a text box. Given that state can be written in many

forms (CA, California, etc.), the user might enter it incorrectly and receive an error. This is an example of the **Error Prevention** heuristic. As a fix, I changed the state input to a dropdown menu, so the user must select their state from a list. This prevents them from inputting the incorrect format.

During the implementation process, I faced several challenges but learned a lot along the way. This was my first time creating a multi-page website; my only previous experience was in an introductory class this summer in which we created a simple one-page site with HTML and CSS. I guess you could say that every part of this assignment was a challenge, but while this was daunting at first, I had a lot of fun seeing my website come to life.

My main challenge was with learning how to use Grid and Flex systems. At first, based on research, I attempted to use Float to align and space my site's content. After further research and talking to other students, I learned more about Grid and Flex and understood that those were conventions I should use when creating websites.[1]

I also struggled with creating dropdown menus, but remembered that we learned about them in our Codecademy course for Assignment 0.[2] I returned to that material to re-familiarize myself with forms and learned how to create not only dropdowns, but also a text-input form which I used on my Checkout page. I ended up using the dropdown menu on three of my four pages: the Browsing Page, where a user can select which category of items they would like to look at, the Item Detail page, where a user can select Size and Color of their item, and the Checkout page, where the user can input their state in the Shipping Address field.

The Muddy Paws owners will see their brand reflected in the website through a few key design choices. First, the navigation on the Shop Browsing page. Pet owners are usually shopping for one type of animal (unless they're feeling ambitious and want to take both their dog and cat on an adventure at the same time). To give the user more control and to follow ecommerce conventions, I included a dropdown menu that allows the user to filter by product category: Dogs, Cats, or Humans. (This dropdown menu is not yet interactive, but will be when we incorporate JavaScript).

The second design choice was the color scheme for the website. As previously mentioned, I chose to use green for the website to evoke nature. People who take their pets on adventures are typically looking to bring them into nature. Using green to remind them why they are here will help them feel welcomed and will also provide further incentive for them to purchase an item that will allow them to complete their goal of spending time in the wild with their pet.

This assignment pushed me out of my comfort zone in many ways, but I learned several new things about HTML, CSS, and how to create a website. I'm excited to further develop my prototype to make it interactive and learn more about JavaScript along the way.

Appendix

Heuristic Evaluation

Heuristic: User Control and Freedom

Description: User only has two options to get out of this overlay box. If they had an 'x' in the top corner, they might feel like they have more control because they can then choose their next destination on the site.

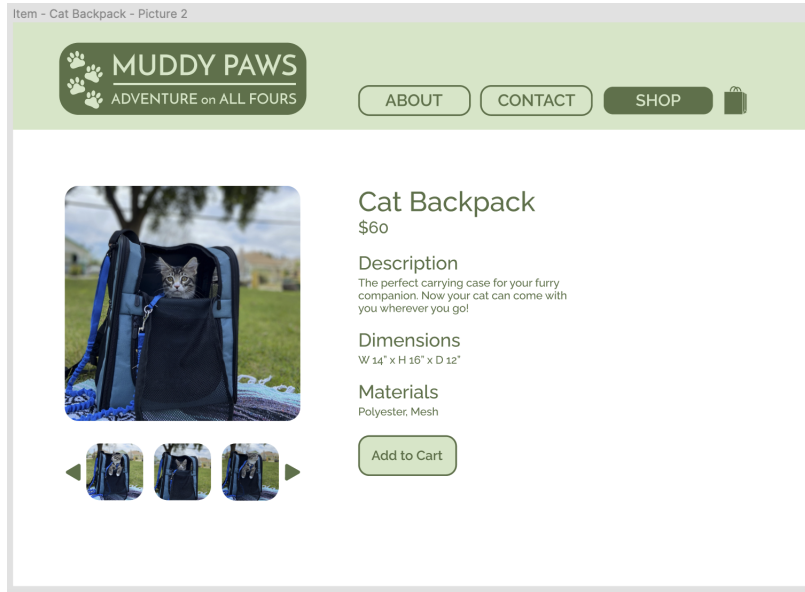**Fix**: Add an 'x' to allow the user to exit the overlay.

Heuristic: Error Prevention

Description: The portion of the address where the user enters their 'State' is a freeform text input right now.

Fix: Create a dropdown with the State options so that the user inputs the information in the correct format.

Item – Cat Backpack – Picture 2

Heuristic: Visibility of system status / User Control and Freedom

Description: On the item detail page, the 'Shop' tab is highlighted in dark green. This may be confusing if the user doesn't know how to get back to the main shop. They may feel like they're already in the shop if that button is highlighted and they're unsure if they can click it again to go back to the item browsing page.

Fix: Add a 'Return to Browsing' in the top left corner to clarify how to get back to the main shop.

Item – Cat Backpack – Picture 2
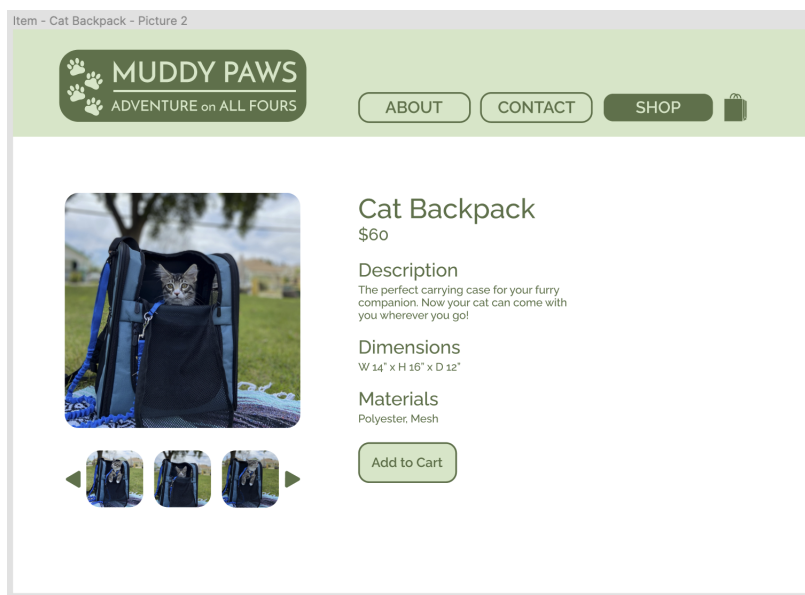
Heuristic: User Control and Freedom

Description: Users do not have the option to select Size or select Color for their product

Fix: Add two dropdown menus, one for Size and one for Color.

Sources

Help with HTML & CSS

Note: I didn't capture every website I visited to look something up, but I did my best to remember to cite the sources when I did.

1. [LinkedIn Learning - CSS Layouts: from Float to Flexbox and Grid with Christina Truong](#)

2. [Codecademy - Learn HTML - Forms](#)

3. [W3Schools - CSS NavBars](#)

4. [W3Schools - CSS Backgrounds](#)

5. [W3Schools - CSS Font Family](#)

6. [W3Schools - Text-transform](#)

7. [W3Schools - Text transform 2](#)

8. [Dropdown Bar](#)

9. [HTML Label](#)

Images

Note: All other images belong to me.

1. [Dog Booties](#)

2. [Cat in Rain Jacket](#)

3. [I Heart My Dog Sticker](#)

4. [I Heart My Weird Cat Sweatshirt](#)

5. [Best Dog Dad Hat](#)