

PUI HW5: Web HTML & CSS Prototypes

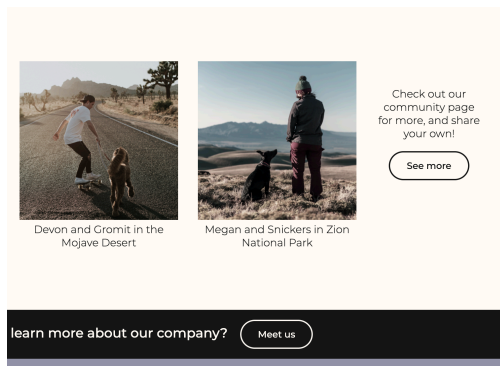
Ally Hopping

Github Repo: <https://github.com/hoppinga/hoppinga.github.io/tree/main/PUI/HW5>

Published Site: <https://hoppinga.github.io/PUI/HW5/index.html>

Heuristic Evaluation

1. I am using a consistent button style for CTAs throughout the site, however I noticed that many of the buttons are different heights, violating the consistency and standards heuristic. To fix this, I've implemented a standard height for all CTA buttons, as can be seen in the screenshot below.

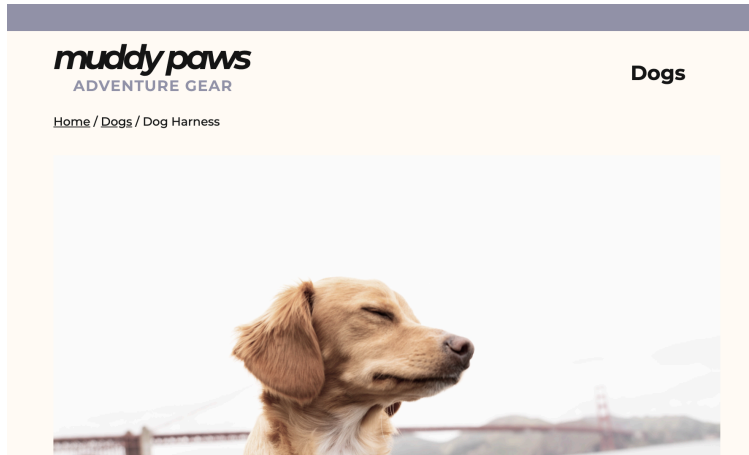


2. On the product browsing page, my original design had color buttons for each product to let the user see the different color options without leaving the browsing page. Unfortunately, there weren't enough relevant photos available to represent each color for each product. Additionally, the color buttons failed to inform users that different sizes were available as well as colors. If I had left it as is (letting users switch between colors) but didn't change the image, this would violate platform conventions and standards, as users would expect the image to change to the selected color; otherwise, the buttons don't provide any value. To fix this, I replaced the color buttons with a line of text: "Other sizes/colors available."



3. On the product detail page, my original design had breadcrumbs above the product image. Each breadcrumb would be clickable to inform the user of where they are on the site and provide an easy

way to go back, except the last breadcrumb stating the name of the current page. However, the name of the current page was styled the same as the previous breadcrumbs, suggesting it would be clickable too. To fix this consistency issue, I've added an underline to the links to differentiate them and show they are clickable.



Development Challenges

The process of building these three pages using HTML & CSS was more difficult than expected and involved a larger than anticipated amount of trial and error. The process of adding raw HTML elements was easy, but styling each element and positioning them properly relative to each other was a learning process that gave me a deeper understanding of when to use a variety of elements and styles such as divs, classes, headers, and grids.

One of the biggest problems I faced throughout the build was figuring out the best way to position elements relative to each other. For example, on the homepage, I had trouble positioning the Community Adventures CTA next to the community adventures images because the CTA was not included in the image grid. After some Googling and trial and error, I realized that because the width of the CTA should be the same as the images, it would be better to keep it within the same grid. However, on the Dog Harness page, the product detail tile was stuck at the bottom of the page and I could not figure out how to bring it up next to the main product image. I tried implementing a parent grid for the image and text like I used on the Community Adventures, and then I tried a flexbox, but neither were working and I couldn't figure out why. After digging a little more on stackoverflow and other sites, I ended up using "position: absolute" and "left: 65%" to move the product detail tile next to the main product image. This made sense in retrospect but challenged my original thought process that I'd be able to style the Community Adventures and product details elements in a similar way because their positioning relative to each other was so similar. On the All Products page, I also had trouble positioning the Sort menu relative to the grid of products while maintaining my original design. Using the float property caused the menu to overlap with the images. After trying a few other properties, I decided to leave the Sort menu on the left side for now since it's equally functional and visible there and would allow me to prioritize other more important changes.

Another positioning challenge was adding text beneath my images in alignment with my original design. I spent some time Googling the best way to add them and found the <figcaption> tag may be my best option. I implemented this on the homepage and All Products pages and was pleased to find the text aligned perfectly to the image. However, when I ran my pages through the HTML validator, I received errors on the <figcaption> tag because they are supposed to be used as child elements to the <figure> tag. I didn't have time to determine how best to fix this issue while maintaining the styling, and there weren't any visible bugs present in the browser, so I decide to waive this issue for a second release.

I also ran into some issues with pushing to Git and Github, and while troubleshooting was frustrating, it gave me a better understanding of the two programs and how they work together. I unintentionally started my homework files in the folder I was using for labs, and in trying to fix this, I deleted one of my parent folders. I thought that because I didn't change the name of the child folder that held my files, Git and Github would still recognize it as the same one. This was not the case and it took me a few hours to figure out how to fix it without losing any of my files. Unfortunately, I had to clone the repository and move it to the correct repository, which caused me to lose some of the version history I had stored in Github. I now have a better understanding of how important it is to set up your files correctly at the beginning of a project and to check Github each time you push to make sure your files are pushing to the right place throughout the course of a project.

Brand Identity

Muddy Paws Adventure Gear's target demographics are college-educated men and women ages 18-40 who live in urban or semi-urban areas, think of themselves as socially and politically conscious, live active and adventurous lives, and own 1 or more cats or dogs. Most importantly, these consumers think of their pets as human beings. Single people in our target demographic often refer to their pets as their best friend; if a couple takes care of an animal together, they treat that animal as completing their family, almost like a test run for having children together. Our customers expect the brands they engage with to reflect these values, so in designing the Muddy Paws e-commerce site, we've chosen a clean, modern sans-serif font and color palette that invokes a confident and comfortable feel throughout the site. We're also using lots of images featuring people and their animals enjoying the outdoors to align with the image-heavy styles that our target users are accustomed to seeing through social media apps. We also emphasize usability by creating clear patterns and connections between pages and links; for example, we've include breadcrumbs and the main nav on each product page to help customers understand where they are on the site and easily navigate to other pages.

In addition to developing the look and feel, we've included user-generated content (UGC) to highlight and build upon Muddy Paws identity as a personal lifestyle and community-oriented brand. Muddy Paws treats their customers like part of their team; they genuinely care about their customers and their pets and want to engage with them on a person-to-person level. The inclusion of UGC will pull new customers into the existing community and create new connections between customers and the Muddy Paws team that run deeper than monetary exchange. Lastly, our content is written in a warm and friendly tone that humanizes the brand, almost like a conversation between friends. Taken together, these design choices help Muddy Paws Adventure Gear both strengthen the loyalty of existing customers and reach new ones who can see themselves and their values reflected in the brand.

