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It is as if you were on your phone (pippinbarr.com) 852 points by bookofjoe 15 days ago | hide | past | favorite | 132 comments

pmarreck 14 days ago | next [-]
From the same creator (so funny):

https://pippinbarr.com/itisasifyouweremakinglove/

```
mlmonge 13 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

Well this is odd... my mouse ran out of charge a minute into this "exercise." That's never happened before reply

PakG1 9 days ago | root | parent | next [-]

Well, performance issues, it's not uncommon...

reply

m463 13 days ago | root | parent | prev | next [-]

you need a gamer mouse with gold chain^H^H^H... RGB.

reply

halkony 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]

This is excellent I loved this so much. I cant stop laughing.

derangedHorse 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]

That was hilarious. I wasn't expecting to play it all the way through at first.

tjbiddle 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]

I wasn't going to play all the way through - but felt like I'd be a tease if I just stopped

testplzignore 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]

I feel like I played this wrong, but it eventually let me win anyways.

ciconia 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-] Hilarious!

logikblok 14 days ago | prev | next [-]

Related by the same creator https://pippinbarr.com/itisasifyouweredoingwork/

More accessible on desktop.

```
ricardobeat 14 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

This is perfect. Especially the fact that 1) it never ends, and 2) you eventually figure out that the best way to get a promotion is not to be faster of more efficient but the exact opposite - delay ending the current task, and keep making it larger, until the next one comes along. Beautiful.

```
irjustin 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
```

haha hilarious, it does end though when you become "CTO". You can read the code and it takes a LONG time to get there by "typing emails" or you can run `givePromotion()` or update the variables holding that.

tomjen3 13 days ago | root | parent | prev | next [-]

You can progress by just putting something heavy on the spacebar.

<u>reply</u>

wkat4242 14 days ago | root | parent | prev | next [-]

This sounds like something that needs to be automated with AI;)

yard2010 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]

The sounds made me feel like I live 1998 again. Surreal.

nickdothutton 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]

The stuff of nightmares.

s1artibartfast 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]

Just like a normal day in the office

multjoy 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]

Thanks, I hate this

getnormality 14 days ago | prev | next [-]

Wow, I hated this experience within seconds. So I think it achieved its artistic aims.

```
because_789 14 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

Heh, I loved it within seconds. So relaxing while also so darkly funny. Everyone is a bit different I guess. I sent it to some of my art-biz friends.

kobalsky 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]

> So relaxing while also so darkly funny

it has that early internet screamer vibes, I was a bundle of nerves all the time.

flanbiscuit 14 days ago | prev | next [-]

Love this. Thank you. I'm eating lunch at the moment, by myself, in a local casual establishment, so of course I pulled out my phone and the first thing I looked at was HN and this was the top post. I started playing and couldn't help smiling. Felt like I was watching a robot mimicking me as it was studying human behavior.

It also got me thinking about what I would do before smart phones. During the dumb phone era I was still pulling out my phone to text a lot so wasn't too different, but I also read books a lot more back then

```
jagged-chisel 14 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

Knowing I would be out alone for a meal, I would have carried reading material- book, magazine, paper articles. Maybe a notebook to scribble notes.

Now, I have an internet of reading material via my phone. Or my tablet.

My family and I are close. We talk lots and often and tend to have enough context when a sentence or two needs speaking. We go out together, we chat a bit at the start of a meal, and we don't need to speak much afterwards. We don't get awkward, we can be quiet. But my brain continues - write a note, surface-level research on an idea ... so we each look at a device for a few minutes. My daughter is keeping in touch with her significant other, my wife is likely gaming or maybe window shopping. If anyone speaks up, we pull away from the devices to talk.

I'm personally not addicted to the device itself. But I'm like Johnny 5 - my intellectual curiosity is difficult to satiate. The readily available access to "input" is what keeps me plugged in.

Back on topic: these art projects, or statements, or whatever that are designed to bring attention to our attention to our phones ... interesting, fun, perhaps important. But I'm not a fan of the social nostalgia that sometimes appears in the comments. I never did just interact with strangers. Never had a meaningful conversation with a random person. I would have had my face in a book.

In 2025, my phone is my book.

thierrydamiba 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]

Agreed. This is amazing. Really awesome aha moment when you realize what's going on.

I'm going to start reading physical books again.

Thank you.

```
nicbou 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]
```

I went on a trip without a smartphone, as an experiment. You get used to the lack of entertainment. On the second day I got a book and a notebook. I talked to people more, paid more attention to my surroundings. It was a fun time.

```
jajko 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]
```

There was even an era before dumb phones:) Some people burried their heads in newspaper or books, some looked and watched the world go by. I still do it, phone is really last resort since I strongly believe its slowly making me more addicted to it (more like my brain is doing it on its own).

Which is pathetic IMHO, I don't want to be tied to gizmo who is spying on me to sell me more tailored adverts, I want to have it as a servant and nothing more and certainly not reverse.

There is an art in enjoying a situation while doing absolutely nothing, just looking around at the world and people. One shouldn't be uncomfortable when left with oneself alone for a while. This does a lot with stress management and cleaning up cluttered mind.

```
magic_hamster 13 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

I guess this really shows my age because I can't find any reason for this to exist. Do people really feel "pressured" to be on their phone? What kind of terrible dystopia do these people live in? Why do you give a flying f** about what people on the bus that you'll never see again think that you should be doing? I feel so much pitty for anyone feeling this. It's not a healthy mindset.

reply

```
wasabi991011 13 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

I'm pretty sure it is a sort of art game / digital experience. Compare with "it is as if you were making love"[1] by the same creator, which gives a sex-inspired series of input tasks with an extremely barebones interface yet claims to be a "usable and efficient experience of pleasuring a partner".

[1] https://pippinbarr.com/itisasifyouweremakinglove/

reply

```
zyklu5 13 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]
```

You know how in every zombie movie there's a bit where our intrepid protagonists must blend in to avoid capture. I think this is that sort of thing.

<u>reply</u>

```
pmontra 13 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]
```

An anecdote about that pressure and how we assume that people are messaging or browsing all the time.

I was playing a game of Power Grid [1] about one year ago and I noticed that everybody were tapping on their phones all the time between their turns. After half an hour I finally said, "Oh well, I'll also start sending messages or you guys will think that I have no social life." They raised their eyes and looked at me startled. "But I'm using the calculator!" "Me too."

[1] https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/2651/power-grid

<u>reply</u>

```
awongh 13 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]
```

I've actually been socially pressured to check my phone at a dinner table if at a certain point everyone else at the table checks theirs (which is not even a jab at them- at least a few people probably had a legitimately urgent-enough notification to attend to... making after-dinner plans, checking train schedule etc.) It's just funny how strong the social urge is to not just sit there if everyone else is also checking their phones.

<u>reply</u>

```
DCH3416 13 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
```

It's kinda like the early 2000s where someone on their cellphone (and later bluetooth pieces) had the appearance of must be important because they're on the phone.

<u>reply</u>

RandallBrown 13 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]

It's art.

<u>reply</u>

```
DCH3416 13 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]
```

Well yeah. Otherwise what are you suppose to just sit there awkwardly in public?

<u>reply</u>

```
mostlysimilar 13 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
```

I would encourage you to take a breath and observe the world around you every once in a while.

<u>reply</u>

```
drumttocs8 13 days ago | root | parent | prev | next [-]
```

Public buses existed before cellphones

reply

```
TeMPOraL 13 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
```

So did newspapers, which served the same social purpose on the buses before cellphones.

```
reply
Willingham 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
I love that it tells me when to scratch my ear. I am always confused about when I should be doing that. 11/10
      mattgreenrocks 14 days ago | parent | next [-]
      Is that the phone analog of your nose suddenly feeling itchy when playing music?
dnzm 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
"Swipe right" doesn't do anything for me (Fennec on Android).
      furyofantares 14 days ago | parent | next [-]
      You press Play Online to play. Swipe Right is just a (confusing) image on the page.
             ddq 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
             Swiping right on that image should definitely start the game.
                    olddustytrail 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
                    Actually, having a simple and straightforward instruction that you need to ignore and do something
                    totally different instead... kind of sums up the modern computer UI.
                    stavros 14 days ago | root | parent | prev | next [-]
                    For me, it just drags the image elsewhere.
                           furyofantares 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
                           Yes, by "should" they mean "the site author should have made it work that way."
                                  stavros 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
                                  Ahh, I see.
             jeffhuys 14 days ago | root | parent | prev | next [-]
             Goes to show; you can check every box and try so hard, but still fail and lose lots of people on screen 1.
                    wruza 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
                    The trick is to not have screen 1.
                    cafeinux 14 days ago | root | parent | prev | next [-]
                    In the end, it doesn't even matter.
      AznHisoka 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]
      I tried swiping right 10 times like an idiot, thinking I didn't swipe fast enough or something
             fluidcruft 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
             I tried swiping a bunch, figured it must not work in Firefox for Android, tried in Chrome only to find out it didn't
             swipe there, either.
      BolexNOLA 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]
      Same. Firefox iOS
      throawayonthe 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]
      that's a screenshot, you have to click on the link to play
             ludicrousdispla 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
             is this supposed to work on desktop?
```

s1artibartfast 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
Yes, this is a multiplatform game/art experience.

Technically yes but absolutely not.

Wowfunhappy 14 days ago | root | parent | prev | next [-]

```
knowknow 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

The worst part about this is that I immediately thought that it would be useful in awkward transitory moments. Everybody pulls out their phone on the bus, so you could fit in pretty well with this instead of staring outside.

```
teamspirit 14 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

What's wrong with looking outside? I'm at the point where I treat my phone like it's radioactive, actively trying to limit each encounter with it. I think we should all be staring out the window more often.

```
knowknow 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
```

The way the buses are laid out in my city is that the seats are directly facing each other. So staring outside could make it seem like your staring at people if it's too crowded. So it's more comfortable to pretend to use your phone.

```
wkat4242 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
```

People have a pretty good sense of whether you're staring at them or something just beside or behind them. Not really from the angle of your eyes but the way you react (or not) when the other person looks back.

I wouldn't worry about that so much. And I worry about a lot of social things:)

```
alwa 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]
```

That's kind of the weird trap, isn't it? That it feels like there's normative social pressure to do your phone too, right at the moment that everyone who would notice you doing or not doing so has turned their attention elsewhere?

```
inopinatus 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]
```

One of my hobbies when visiting London is smiling whilst taking the Tube somewhere. Oftentimes I am the only person in the carriage not wearing a glum or flat expression.

```
hkpack 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
```

Ha ha, I remember I was beaten in USSR when I was a teenager and smiled on a bus without a reason for some time (was daydreaming about some random things).

Was approched with "why are you fucking laughing?"

```
wruza 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]
```

You can simply scroll and tap a black locked screen. No one's going to ask anyway.

```
jiveturkey 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]
```

What's so awkward about that?

Do you also tip just because there's a line behind you and the self-service cashier tells you the machine "is going to ask you a question"?

```
throwway120385 13 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
```

I feel like I should program an easter egg into one of those that occasionally asks people the question "do you like me?" and then has two boxes to tick that say Yes or No.

<u>reply</u>

```
noman-land 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]
```

Just yell instead.

```
svennidal 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

Thanks! I needed this. My youngest son pointed out to me the other day while waiting in a doctors reception that I was the only adult not on my phone. When I looked around me, everyone was on their phone except for the occasional uncomfortable look they gave me every now and again. Now I can be on my phone without exhausting myself.

```
Shocka1 10 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

This was a compliment from your kid and the way they should see you. The addiction is real. The fact I can walk into any private/public establishment and see the majority of people doing an endless scroll is actually really sad. There is a time and place of course, but 100% of any perceived downtime isn't it IMO.

<u>reply</u>

I like this concept! Although it doesn't accurately reflect how I normally use my phone.

Maybe monitoring someone using e.g. some social media app and recording all taps and swipes might make it more realistic :)

Maybe also some directions like "now smile" or "now look awkwardly at someone in your environment like you're hiding something".

```
seabass-labrax 14 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

Did the creator of the site just update it? Because it definitely has instructions like that now: it told me to narrow my eyes and grimace!

```
arjonagelhout 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
```

Ah it might be that I didn't try long enough!

It does appear the instructions are randomized, so I might have been unlucky.

```
bmcahren 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

This is actually perfect for AI robots to blend in waiting in public. Just like bartenders polishing glasses, you can't have them just staring making people uncomfortable.

```
autoexec 14 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

You can bet that it won't matter if the robot is looking at you, it'll be capturing audio/video and collecting huge amounts of sensor data about its surroundings at all times. A robot looking at a phone would be redundant. Maybe the publishing lobby could push to get them to read physical books instead.

```
thinkingemote 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

It is good to be able to catch yourself or see yourself from another perspective. I liked it.

I wonder about the dopamine effect, could it be made even more boring?

```
furyofantares 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

You tricked me into meditating. Thanks, I love it.

```
amarant 14 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

I also found this weirdly meditative!

Almost made me worry: how much of a phone addict am I when I find this meditative?

```
larodi 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
```

Being non-present on a screen reminds of meditation but is more akin to dissociation and is really dreaming awake. It takes you away but you dream a weird dream which is not yours .

```
furyofantares 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
```

Well, I used the opportunity to be present. I was being a bit facetious about being tricked into it; it's a state I like to enter instead of being on a screen to begin with.

```
DecentShoes 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

Make this 10x faster, add music, and you have Elite Beat Agents, genuinely one of the best games on the DS.

```
Lucasoato 14 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

Elite Beat Agents changed my life and how I perceive music. What an amazing game. If you didn't cry when doing the You're the Inspiration level, you have no soul.

```
DecentShoes 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
```

Yeah. I was so sad they nobody ever made a bigger better version for the WiiU.

Wish I could emulate it on my phone with S-Pen too but audio latency killed it last time I checked.

I have been meaning to get a drawing tablet and try Osu, and I will, but the songs in it are unknown Japanese anime stuff and don't appeal to me so it's not quite the same.

```
skyyler 13 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
```

There are countless songs in Osu!, but you may need to seek the ones that don't appeal exclusively to weeaboos.

Heck, I think most of the tracks from Elite Beat Agents have Osu maps now.

<u>reply</u>

dunham 13 days ago | prev | next [-]

It reminds me of the book "Press Here" by Herve Tullet

https://www.amazon.com/Press-Here-Board-Herve-Tullet/dp/1452...

<u>reply</u>

```
floren 13 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

Somebody gave us that when our child was born. I donated it somewhere pretty quickly, not interested in reading a smartphone training guide to a 6 month old.

reply

```
sfilmeyer 13 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
```

How is the book a smartphone training guide? I've read it a few times with my toddler and enjoyed it, and felt like it was a very different experience from screentime (which they don't really get). I don't think it would have been enjoyable at 6 months old, since it's more about the kid doing things (encouraging them to help shake the book, et cetera) than just reading straight through.

<u>reply</u>

```
pmarsh 4 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
```

Yeah, it's a fun interactive book.

As any parent is aware a toddler doesn't need training to use a screen. If anything it shows just how intuitive these UI/UX have become.

<u>reply</u>

```
floren 13 days ago | root | parent | prev | next [-]
```

As I read through it, it all felt like it was designed to give the kids the feeling that they were doing the same things mom & dad do on their phones.

<u>reply</u>

```
praptak 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

We need this on a device which is *not* a phone. It could be a simple mechanical device which presents the instructions on a slowly scrolling paper tape.

```
simojo 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

It's incredible how pointless it seems when there's no wall of content in front of us. Great commentary.

```
gblargg 13 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

I enjoyed it. I wish it had gave performance metrics so I could track improvement in speed.

<u>reply</u>

```
deweywsu 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

I think it's sad that we've created a society that feels social pressure to stare at a screen when they find themselves somewhere without something to say to someone else. This explains why social skills are on the decline.

```
wkat4242 14 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

It's always been there. Before the phone we had the walkman. Before that the newspaper. There's always something to indicate 'do not disturb'.

When I'm having a busy day I don't always feel like talking to randoms. I live in a city, not a village and I'll never know everyone.

```
Sir_Twist 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]
```

Is it a social pressure to stare at a screen or to just pretend to be occupied with something else? Would reading a few pages of a book, for instance, satisfy this social pressure? I do agree more generally that smartphones are borderline essential for many social expectations, though. I personally find smartphones really distracting, being a device that allows for instant information at merely the hint of boredom, and if they were less socially enforced I probably wouldn't have one.

```
Ylpertnodi 14 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
```

I'm reading hn - your comment - at the doctors. I'm early, she's gonna be, of course, slightly delayed = free hn time, for me.

```
johnhamlin 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

Love this. It's the Zen TV Experiment for the 21st Century. https://adam.nz/zen-tv-experiment

```
nakedneuron 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

Author could add 'close your eyes' at some point.

Instant meditation app.

```
johnea 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

Why are so many people suffering mental illness?

It's not funny, it's stupid, and sad.

If you find that "you're feeling intense pressure to be on your phone", throw it in the ocean!

```
deadbabe 14 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

The problem is you can't just tell people throw their phone away. You have to tell them what to do instead.

Otherwise? They'll just open their phone again and scroll Reddit or Hackernews.

```
eimrine 13 days ago | root | parent | next [-]
```

People with mental ilnesses on HN? Too low probability IMO.

<u>reply</u>

```
raldi 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

I'm getting a novel optical illusion with the spinning line in the box that shows up near the beginning: Whichever end I'm looking at looks normal, but the other end looks like a split hair, or an open pair of chopsticks. Like what's spinning isn't actually a "/" but actually a very narrow "V" .. only, if I try to look at the split part of the V, that part closes up and the opposite end splits.

Is anyone else getting that?

```
noman-land 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

I hated this. Thank you.

```
atlintots 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

This is perfect for when I'm awkwardly walking past the huzz and need to seem like I'm busy on my phone.

```
aio2 14 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

never fail to impress the huzz

```
TZubiri 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

Love it, very creative counterattack on the attention wars.

I remember decades ago, first phones came out, and I was at a party and I had not much to do, so I took out my phone and pretended to send messages with someone. It felt weird, but now it would be such a "natural" thing to do when bored.

```
hn666 13 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

I'm gonna use this for when I gotta pretend I'm on my phone in public.

<u>reply</u>

```
inopinatus 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

This was not a realistic simulation of my usage. My primary glassface activity is reading books. So it should be a continuous slow scroll with infrequent access of a burger menu. Fortunately I can simulate this by reading a book.

```
dbtc 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

"Jiggle one leg". This is hilarious and very well done.

```
akpa1 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

Ohhhh, this felt so familiar. Listening to music while mindlessly scrolling and waiting for... something. Yikes. I really don't think I like technology any more.

```
scottmcdot 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

Whenever I'm waiting for the bus or waiting for anything, I love to people watch (while not making anyone uncomfortable). People are so interesting!

```
nakedneuron 14 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

Whenever I spot people watchers , I secretly observe them (not to make them suspicious or feel uncomfortable). They are the most interesting species!

```
keybored 14 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

How irreverent and at the same time non-committal. Just right. Instant hit.

Become an instant hit in your Internet subculture with this one weird trick.

```
nsxwolf 13 days ago | prev | next [-]
```

Is this supposed to be interactive? I see it says "Swipe Right" but nothing happens on iPhone.

<u>reply</u>

dailykoder 14 days ago | prev | next [-]

Ok good, but I don't browse the web on my fone. Thank you for posting this

bongodongobob 14 days ago | prev | next [-]

I want to get caught using this next time I'm at lunch.

EugeneOZ 14 days ago | prev | next [-]

Repetitive and boring.

```
Handler9246 14 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

That's the point lol

rullelito 14 days ago | prev | next [-]

This doesn't work on my phone. What is it?

personjerry 14 days ago | prev | next [-]

> Follow the prompts and be free.

Which is it?

boxedemp 14 days ago | prev | next [-]

Found that painful, only got a 3 in

Interesting

anotheryou 14 days ago | prev | next [-]

oh you have to click the title and the swipe thing is an image... $% \label{eq:controlled}$

that took me.. long

computerdork 14 days ago | prev | next [-]

hee-larious:)

boomskats 14 days ago | prev | next [-]

Irrationally disappointed that I can't install this as a PWA.

```
wkat4242 14 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

It won't need much. Just a manifest really.

frostyel 14 days ago | prev | next [-]

A great addition to this would be if everything was synched from a central server. 20 commuters pressing their toes down and letting out a sigh at the same time. It would be like a multiplayer protest against attention-grabbing phones. Everybody playing the game would know if someone else was playing the game, but no one else. It may defeat the original purpose of the game to blend in, but I think it could be pretty fun to observe something like that.

```
seabass-labrax 14 days ago | parent | next [-]
```

No idea why this was downvoted; I love your idea. After all, what are social activities but doing things, and sometimes pointless things, together?

```
praptak 14 days ago | parent | next [-]
      Most of culture is (hopefully) new takes on topics which are much older than smartphones. "The topic is old" is not a
      sufficient condition to consider something tired/cliche/old.
      I'd say this one is different enough to be considered at least mildly interesting, even if you take into account that the
      genre "purposefully absurd pastiche of attention-stealing tech" is not new.
      256_ 14 days ago | parent | prev | next [-]
      Welcome to Hacker News.
themusicgod1 14 days ago | prev [-]
yet another github project. STOP USING GITHUB
      nerdile 14 days ago | parent [-]
      why?
             eimrine 13 days ago | root | parent [-]
             It is owned by the Evil corp?
             <u>reply</u>
                           Join us for AI Startup School this June 16-17 in San Francisco!
                              Guidelines | FAQ | Lists | API | Security | Legal | Apply to YC | Contact
                                             Search:
```

kindeyoowee 14 days ago | prev | next [-]

do people not get tired of the ooo phones bad trope?