

Heuristic evaluation of Team Nutmeg

Introduction:

Your app was very well done. Our group picked up your app and immediately understood it. Your use of icons really helped us understand exactly what button does what without having to parse the labels. Finally, your use of a spinner was greatly appreciated in giving feedback to the insides of the system.

Below is the compiled list of Heuristics we found. We took the approach of listing many issues, despite some of them being bugs in implementation or extremely small issues, in a hope that they will be useful.

Heuristic # and Name	Description	Severity	Number of People Who Found The Violation
[H1 Visibility of system status]	The homepage does not indicate what information am seeing. It was not clear to me that this was a list of my dishes.	2	1
[H2 Match between system and the real world]	The addEntry button on the homepage caused me to pause. I was not sure if an "entry" was a dish. Maybe rename to Add Dish or something?	2	2
[H5 Error prevention & H9 Recover from errors & H4 Consistency and standards]	Clicking on the first image on the homepage gives me a Cannot GET /viewEntry/.	2	3
[H8 Aesthetic]	There is a small line in the background on the homepage where the background stops. It is distracting.	2	1
[H8 Minimalist & H4 Standards]	On the top bar on the homepage, My Dish is mentioned twice. This is probably extra and unneeded information. We called this a 0 because it follows the android style guidelines.	0	1
[H10 Help and Documentation]	When creating a new dish, it's not obvious what the drop-down menu does until you click on it	3	3

[H5 error prevention]	When I was editing a recipe, I cleared the data in the recipe and the notes column. There was no label or placeholder text in these inputs and I forgot what was supposed to go in each input. The user will be confused without labels if they make a mistake which could mean they enter a recipe in the notes column or vice versa.	4	2
[H5 Error Prevention]	Creating a dish with the same name as an existing dish doesn't display properly- it results in two identical dishes. There is also nothing to warn me that I may have that dish already.	3	2
[H5 Error Prevention]	Creating a dish with no name displays strangely and there is no validation on the form to make sure a name was entered	3	2.5
[H5 Error Prevention]	Nothing reminds me to save if I try to hit "back" after editing a recipe, thus losing my changes.	3	2
[H8 aesthetic and minimalist design]	I don't understand the point of having the entre/ appetizer/ etc. categorization. It doesn't seem to do anything, and I would assume that if you have the recipe open, you would know what kind of dish it was anyway.	2	2
[H4 Consistency]	The "... " on "Other..." on the Create a Dish suggests to me a text input to enter my own preferences instead of selecting the string "Other..."	2	2.5
[H4 Consistency and Standards]	The edit page and the create new page are extremely similar yet I can only share on the edit page. This is confusing because the views are so visually similar and I got confused when I tried to share a new recipe and couldn't. I would recommend adding the share link to the create new recipe page.	2	1
[H2 Match between system and the real world]	The recipe screen is just a text area even though most people tend to view recipes as a list of steps instead of a paragraph. The information would be clearer if it was broken into individual steps and instead of being a text box was an ordered list.	2	1

[H2 Match between system and the real world]	Typically a recipe contains both ingredients as well as steps to follow. The input clumps both types of information which is problematic because user's recipes can easily become disorganized. I would split the recipe input into steps and ingredients.	2	1
[H2 Match between system and the real world]	I suspect that most users associate notes with a recipe with a step in the recipe. Therefore I don't think it makes sense to have notes be a separate category of information for a recipe since they are typically tied to a specific step. I would implement notes like tags for steps in the recipe.	2	1
[H3 User control and freedom]	The back button on the camera page does not appear to work.	2	3
[H4 Consistency]	On the dish creation / editing page the camera button has no icon. Every other button on your site uses one to great effect. It would be nice to also include one for this as well.	1	2
[H6 Consistency and Standards]	There is no rhyme or reason to how the recipes are ordered, making it hard to locate particular recipes, especially when there are a lot of them	3	2
[H5 Error prevention]	On the "addEntry" page, the resizable text boxes can be resized to arbitrary sizes in both the X and Y direction. This produces some weird and sometimes irreversible situations such as shrinking it really small.	1	1
[H5 Error Prevention]	After I cleared the recipe information, I was able to save the recipe. I think its strange that a user would want a dish without a recipe so at the least I would bring up a dialogue asking them if they really wanted to save a dish without a recipe. Otherwise, I would validate that the dish has a recipe before letting them submit.	1	1
[H4 Consistency and	On the "View Entry" page, the top right hand corner	1	2

standards]	button is “share”. In the same location and in the same color on the homepage it is “addEntry”. This was unexpected for me.		
[H4 Consistency and standards]	The edit page and the create new page are extremely similar yet I can only share on the edit page. This is confusing because the views are so visually similar and I got confused when I tried to share a new recipe and couldn't. I would recommend adding the share link to the create new recipe page.	2	1
[H2 Match between system and the real world]	Will users be willing to type in entire recipes on their mobile phone. I think that writing a recipe would take a while especially without a full keyboard.	1	1
[H3 User control and freedom]	No way to delete recipes	3	2
[H3 User control and freedom]	The share screen has no visible exit. First I looked for one for ~ 2 seconds ~ then I clicked outside to close it.	2	1
[H7 Flexibility and efficiency of use]	Definitely a minor issue but there are no power user commands. I would want some shortcuts for editing images and descriptions especially if I'm using this app a lot.	1	1
[H6 Consistency and Standards]	“back” and “cancel” are essentially the same	0	2
[H5 Error prevention & H1 visibility of system status]	When editing a dish, pushing the retake photo button brings me to the homepage.	2	3
[H2 Match between system and the real world]	On the addEntry page there is a button labeled Retake Photo. This is a little counterintuitive because I had not previously “taken” (selected) a photo.	1	2
[H4 standards]	The share icon on the dish page does not remind me	1	2

	of sharing. I thought it was slightly weird but I thought nothing of it beyond that. There might not be a solution to this.		
[H4 Consistency]	The aspect ratios for the images on the homepage are different. That was distracting to me.	1	2
[H3 User control & H4 Standards & H8 Minimalist]	The back button on the viewEntry page seems slightly off/ misplaced. I feel like the android standard is where you have it, upper left hand corner, and the one in the bottom is a duplicate.	0	2
[H4 Standards & H1 Match between system and real world]	On the share screen, there is no alt text for the images. When first using screen I was not sure if the first one was email. My first reaction was to to check the alt text.	0	1

Conclusion:

While our group enjoyed the app overall, we had a few criticisms which don't violate design heuristics but should still be considered. One concern we have is understanding how this app is unique to cooking and why it doesn't solve any problems with documenting hobbies. We want to know how this app is different than apps which already exist and why this uniquely helps people who cook. For example, someone who does woodworking would probably use this app in a similar way but insert steps of their process instead of steps in the recipe. We would be curious to see ideas that are more blue sky.

A second concern we have is on the application's platform. It appears to be a mobile app but we don't know if mobile is the best space for typing out long recipes. That being said, we understand that we are not your usergroup and have no way to validate that this is true. Users might not be willing to type in lengthy recipes on their mobile device making this app better suited for the desktop experience.

One last feature our group would like to see improved is the share button. It seems kind of strange that you could share a recipe on facebook but not to other user's account. Most applications let you share content within the application to other users so it would be more consistent if users could do this.

Total Number of Violations By Severity And Violation Type:

[H1] Visibility of system status : 1

[H2] Match between system and the real world: 6

[H3] User control and freedom: 5

[H4] Consistency and standards: 10

[H5] Error prevention: 9

[H6] Recognition rather than recall: 2

[H7] Flexibility and efficiency of use: 1

[H8] Aesthetic and minimalist design: 4

[H9] Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors: 9

[H10] Help and documentation: 1

Nathan Lintz - Individual Heuristic Evaluation

1. [H2 Match between system and the real world](Severity 1)

When I'm on the site, it says retake photo. Its strange that it says this instead of take photo or there being a photo icon. I think that most users would be used to seeing the android photo icon and using it to transition into the camera.

2. [H5 User Control and Freedom](Severity 3)

When I click 'cancel', the dish automatically deletes itself without checking to make sure that I actually wanted to delete it. Its way too easy for users to accidentally click this. After taking a while to type in a recipe, I would be frustrated if my data was lost because of a misclick. I would recommend implementing a dialog that asks the user if they wanted to delete the dish.

3. [H4 Consistency and Standards](Severity 4)

When I tried to edit a dish, I clicked the link on the dish. Immediately I was brought to an error page which said "cannot get /view entry". On other dishes, clicking them brings me to an edit screen. The interaction about which dishes can be edited should be consistent.

4. [H4 Consistency and Standards](Severity 3)

The edit page and the create new page are extremely similar yet I can only share on the edit page. This is confusing because the views are so visually similar and I got confused when I tried to share a new recipe and couldn't. I would recommend adding the share link to the create new recipe page.

5. [H2 Match between system and the real world](Severity 2)

The recipe screen is just a text area even though most people tend to view recipes as a list of steps instead of a paragraph. The information would be clearer if it was broken into individual steps and instead of being a text box was an ordered list.

6. [H5 Error Prevention](Severity 2)

When I was editing a recipe, I cleared the data in the recipe and the notes column. There was no label or placeholder text in these inputs and I forgot what was supposed to go in each input. The user will be confused without labels if they make a mistake which could mean they enter a recipe in the notes column or vice versa.

7. [H1 Visibility of System](Severity 2)

When I added a new recipe, I wasn't given any feedback that my dish was correctly added except for seeing it show up as the newest item in the list. It would have definitely been clearer if a small notification popped up saying that the new dish was correctly added.

8. [H2 Match between system and the real world](Severity 3)

I suspect that most users associate notes with a recipe with a step in the recipe. Therefore I don't think it makes sense to have notes be a separate category of information for a recipe since

they are typically tied to a specific step. I would implement notes like tags for steps in the recipe.

9. [H2 Match between system and the real world](Severity 3)

Typically a recipe contains both ingredients as well as steps to follow. The input clumps both types of information which is problematic because user's recipes can easily become disorganized. I would split the recipe input into steps and ingredients.

10. [H5 Error Prevention](Severity 2)

After I cleared the recipe information, I was able to save the recipe. I think its strange that a user would want a dish without a recipe so at the least I would bring up a dialogue asking them if they really wanted to save a dish without a recipe. Otherwise, I would validate that the dish has a recipe before letting them submit.

11. [H5 Error Prevention](Severity 3)

After I click edit a photo, if I accidentally click to retake the photo it overwrites the old photo. Its too easy for users to be editing a recipe and then hitting retake photo and lose their image. If the user is editing the recipe days after they've made it, for example, they won't be able to take the correct picture until they make a recipe again.

12. [H7 Flexibility and efficiency of use](Severity 2)

Definitely a minor issue but there are no power user commands. I would want some shortcuts for editing images and descriptions especially if I'm using this app a lot.

Side Notes:

What happens if a lot of dishes are added? Will the user have to scroll through a huge list or will there be sorting or some sort of clustering of dishes?

Will users be willing to type in entire recipes on their mobile phone. I think that writing a recipe would take a while especially without a full keyboard.

Shouldn't I be able to share a recipe with other users of the app. Since the data is already formatted as a recipe it would make sense that users would want to receive it in that format and within this app.

Luke Metz - Individual Heuristic Evaluation

1. [H1 Visibility of system status] (Severity 2)

The homepage does not indicate what information I am seeing. It was not clear to me that this was a list of my dishes.

2. [H2 Match between system and the real world] (Severity 2)

The addEntry button on the homepage caused me to pause. I was not sure if an "entry" was a dish. Maybe rename to Add Dish or something?

3. [H5 Error prevention & H9 Recover from errors] (Severity 2)

Clicking on the first image on the homepage gives me a Cannot GET /viewEntry/.

4. [H8 Aesthetic] (Severity 1)

There is a small line in the background on the homepage. It is slightly distracting.

5. [H8 Minimalist] (Severity 1)

On the top bar on the homepage, My Dish is mentioned twice. This is probably extra and unneeded information.

6. [H1 Visibility of system status] (severity 3)

Drop down for "Entree" and "Appetizer" on the Create a Dish page is not clear as to what info I am selecting.

7. [H4 Consistency] (severity 2)

The "..." on "Other..." on the Create a Dish suggests to me a text input to enter my own preferences instead of selecting the string "Other...".

8. [H3 User control and freedom] (severity 2)

The back button on the camera page does not appear to work.

9. [H5 Error prevention] (severity 1)

On the "addEntry" page, the resizeable text boxes can be resized to arbitrary sizes in both the X and Y direction. This produces some weird and sometimes irreversible situations such as shrinking it really small.

10. [H1 Visibility of system status] (severity 3)

On the "addEntry" page, once text is added to the inputs, it is impossible to know what the fields correspond to.

11. [H4 Consistency and standards] (severity 1)

On the "View Entry" page, the top right hand corner button is "share". In the same location and in the same color on the homepage it is "addEntry". This was unexpected for me.

12. [H3 User control and freedom] (severity 2)

The share screen has no visible exit. First I looked for one for ~ 2 seconds ~ then I clicked outside to close it.

13. [H5 Error prevention & H1 visibility of system status] (severity 2)

When editing a dish, pushing the retake photo button brings me to the homepage.

14. [H3 User control and freedom] (severity 3)

To my knowledge, there is no way to remove a dish.

15. [H2 Match between system and the real world] (severity 1)

On the addEntry page there is a button labeled Retake Photo. This is a little counterintuitive because I had not previously “taken” (selected) a photo.

16. [H4 standards] (severity 1)

The share icon on the dish page does not remind me of sharing. I thought it was slightly weird but I thought nothing of it beyond that.

17. [H4 Consistency] (severity 1)

The aspect ratios for the images on the homepage are different. That was distracting to me.

18. [H3 User control & H4 Standards & H8 Minimalist] (severity 0)

The back button on the viewEntry page seems slightly off/ misplaced. I feel like the android standard is where you have it, upper left hand corner, and the one in the bottom is a duplicate.

19. [H4 Consistency] (severity 1)

On the dish creation / editing page the camera button has no icon. Every other button on your site uses one to great effect. It would be nice to also include one for this as well.

20. [H4 Standards & H1 Match between system and real world](severity 1)

On the share screen, there is no alt text for the images. When first using screen I was not sure if the first one was email. My first reaction was to to check the alt text.

Berit Johnson- Individual heuristic evaluation

1. [H10 Help and Documentation] (Severity 2)

When creating a new dish, it's not obvious what the drop-down menu does until you click on it

2. [H5 Error Prevention] (Severity 2)

Creating a dish with the same name as another dish doesn't display properly- it results in two identical dishes. There is also nothing to warn me that I may have that dish already.

3. [H5 Error Prevention] (Severity 3)

Nothing prevents me from making a new recipe with no name. As far as I can tell, this nameless recipe is dropped into the ether.

4. [H5 Error Prevention] (Severity 2)

Nothing reminds me to save if I try to hit "back" after editing a recipe, thus losing my changes.

5. [H2 Match between system and the real world] (Severity 2)

+Entry button seems too technical. You should probably use more natural language like "new recipe"

6. [aesthetic and minimalist design] (Severity 1)

I don't understand the point of having the entre/ appetizer/ etc. categorization. It doesn't seem to do anything, and I would assume that if you have the recipe open, you would know what kind of dish it was anyway.

7. [H6 Consistency and Standards] (Severity 3)

As far as I can tell, there is no rhyme or reason to how the recipes are ordered, making it hard to locate particular recipes, especially when there are a lot of them

8. [H6 Consistency and Standards] (Severity 2)

"back" and "cancel" buttons appear to do the same things but have different names

9. [other] (severity 3)

There's no way to delete recipes

10. [H1 Visibility and System Status] (Severity 3)

Presumably this is because the camera stand-in doesn't work properly, but the photo for a new recipe doesn't update if you try to take a picture.

11. [H3 User control and freedom] (Severity 3)

When attempting to take a picture, there is no way to back out of taking the picture except for the small link in the top left which is non-functional.

12. [bug]

There are several images without associated names that break the app when you click on them

13. [bug]

Hitting retake photo will either prevent a new dish from being saved or will exit out of an existing dish

Comments:

I really like your app. I found it quite simple to use and understood it almost instantly. The important features are clear and quick to access.

I really like the icons. I could probably use your entire app entirely based on them without text.

Your app icon is awesome.

The spinner is a great form of feedback when clicking buttons. It also looks quite nice.

I really like how you made up for the lack of a camera

Berit Johnson- Individual Heuristic Evaluation