

Buddy

Executive Summary

Buddy is a habit-tracking app designed to help users form and maintain good habits through a motivating, gamified experience. By combining progress tracking with an evolving virtual companion, Buddy makes habit-building more visual, engaging, and emotionally rewarding. The app was developed based on user-centered research and behavioral science principles to encourage consistency, self-awareness, and long-term growth.

Project Objectives

- Help users visualize progress to stay motivated or get back on track.
- Create a customizable and accessible habit-tracking experience.
- Encourage consistency through a companion system that evolves with users.
- Balance simplicity and functionality for both new and advanced users.

Research Approach

Methodologies

- **User Interviews (5):** Conducted in-person to explore personal habit-building journeys.
- **Surveys (47 responses):** Distributed via direct links and QR code posters at Emily Carr University.
- **Competitive Analysis:** Assessed popular habit-tracking apps and user pain points.

Participant Criteria

- People who have struggled or succeeded in building habits.
- Users from various domains (fitness, wellness, productivity).
- Recruited from Vancouver, Canada and surrounding areas.

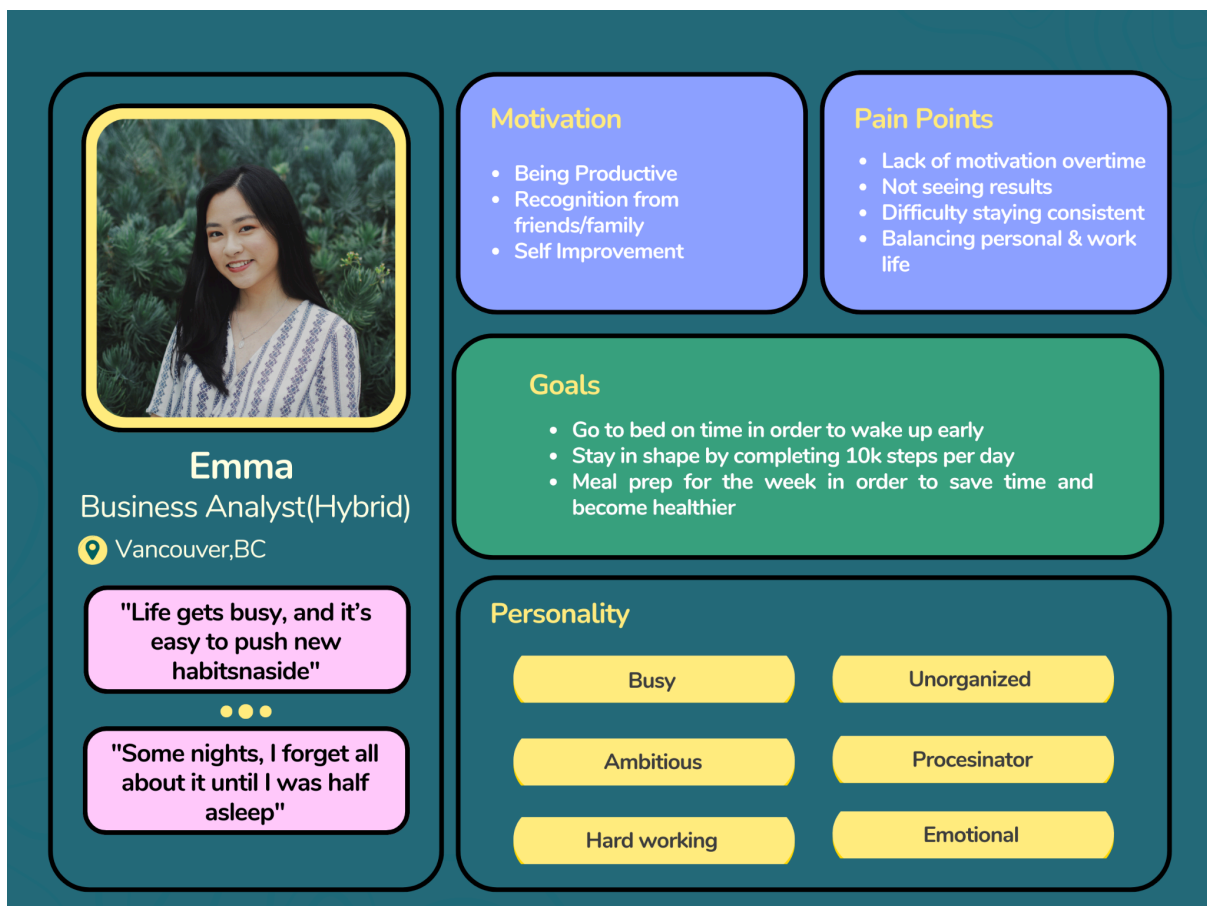
Key Insights & Takeaways

- **Visualization = Motivation:** 72% of users felt more motivated when they could see their progress.
- **Gamification Matters:** 64% found the idea of a virtual pet appealing for daily motivation.
- **To-do Lists Reign Supreme:** Half of the participants track habits with simple to-do lists.
- **Simplicity + Analytics:** Users want minimal UI with meaningful insights and detailed habit stats.
- **Re-engagement is Crucial:** Users need gentle nudges and a way to restart after missed days.

Problem Statement

- Habit formation is hard—especially when progress is slow, invisible, or disrupted. **How might we** create a visual and emotional experience to help users stay motivated or easily get back on track?

Persona



Design Process

We approached the *Buddy* project using a human-centered design methodology with the following stages:

1. Concept Development

Based on initial market research and user interviews, we discovered that many users abandon habit-tracking apps due to lack of emotional connection and boring UI.

Our goal: create an app that makes habit tracking feel **motivating**, **visual**, and **personally rewarding** through the use of a **virtual companion** called *Buddy*.

2. Information Architecture & User Flows

We mapped the core journey:

- Onboarding and habit setup
- Logging habits with minimal friction
- Tracking progress visually
- Watching Buddy evolve with user consistency

3. Prototyping

We developed low-fidelity wireframes in Figma to test:

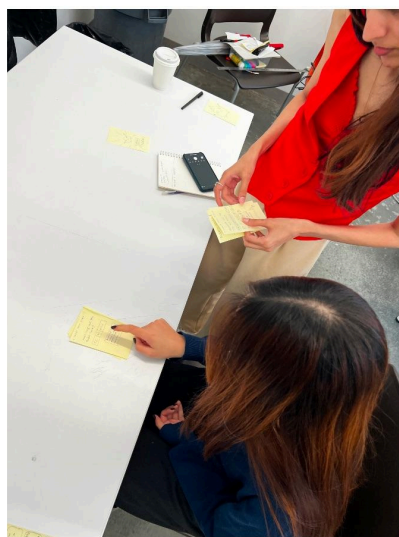
- Habit setup screens
- Home dashboard featuring the evolving Buddy
- A visual progress tracker (calendar + stats)

4. Testing & Iteration

We conducted usability tests with 5 target users. Feedback led to:

- A more prominent “Add Habit” CTA
- Simplified long-press habit logging
- A more intuitive reminder setup
- Clearer progression feedback from *Buddy*

We then moved to high-fidelity mockups incorporating playful animations, celebratory UI moments, and calming colors.



Key Features

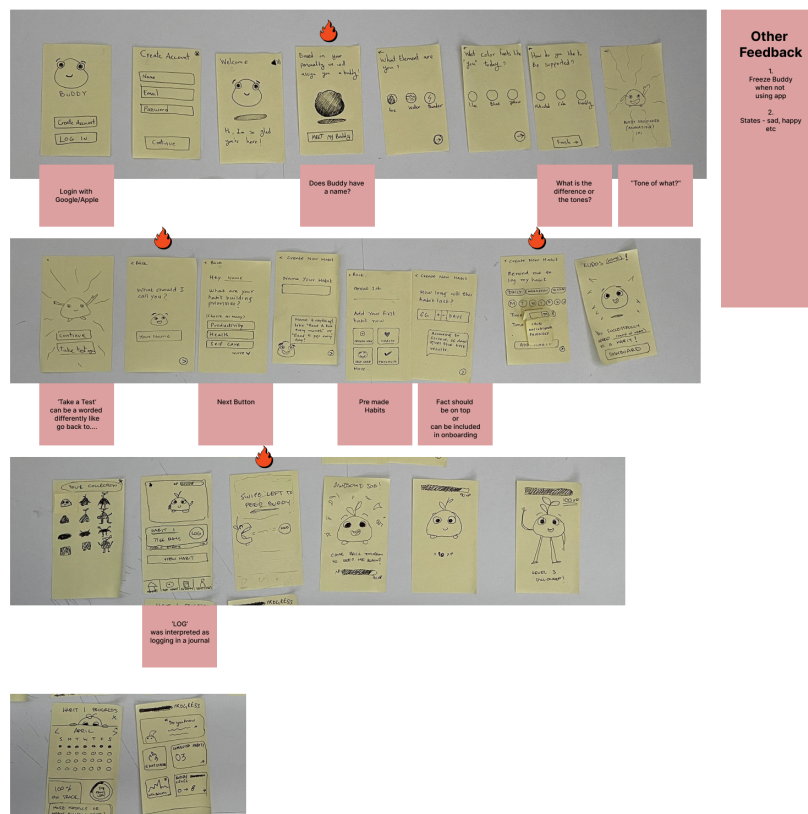
- **Virtual Buddy Evolution:** Your character grows as you complete habits
- **Streak & Progress Tracking:** Visual calendars and milestone indicators
- **Motivational Messages:** Encouragement from your Buddy and insights
- **Reminder System:** Smart scheduling with push notifications
- **Gamification Layer:** Achievements, unlockable traits, mini-celebrations
- **Data Insights:** Weekly/monthly performance summaries and streak tracking

Design Solutions

Our final design balanced playfulness with productivity:

1. Wireframes

- Structured layouts for home, habit list, and analytics
- Prioritized clean hierarchy and gesture-based interactions (e.g., long-press to log habits)



2. Interactive Prototypes

- Built using Figma's prototyping tools
- Simulated habit completion animations and Buddy evolution

[Pitch deck presentation](#)

[Onboarding - flow](#)

[Dashboard- flow](#)

[Cheer up Buddy - flow](#)

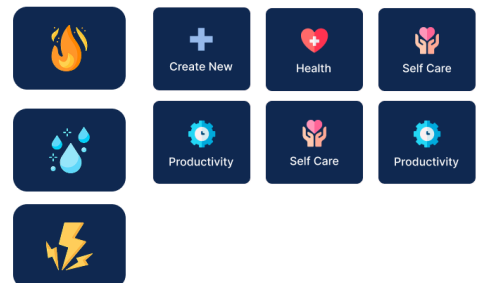
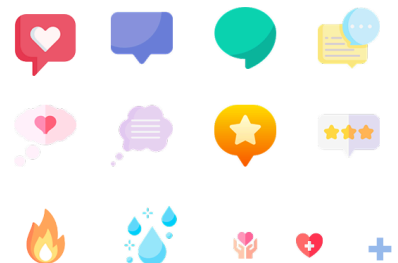
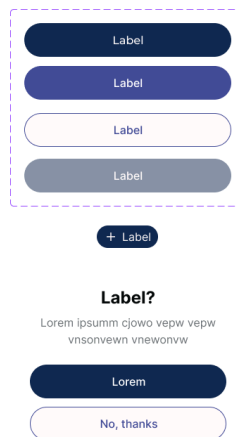
3. High-Fidelity Designs

- Visual Language:
 - Colors: Navy Blue (#102C54), Mint Green (#DAF8EC), Soft Pink (#F6C0C9)
 - Fonts: *Montserrat* for headers (friendly) + *Inter* for body (clean and readable)

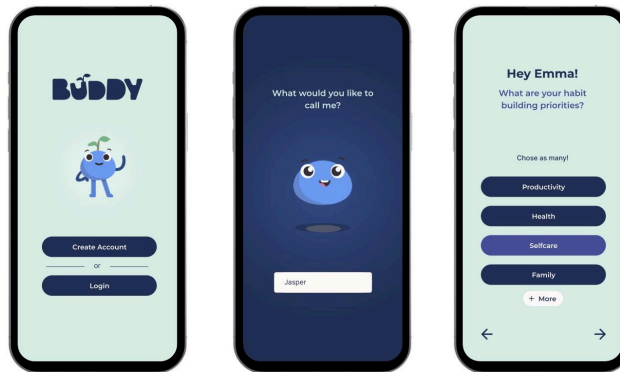


Body-Inter (2.488rem/32px)
Inter (2.074rem/27px)
Inter (1.728rem/22px)
Inter (1.440rem/19px)
Inter (1.200rem/16px)
Inter (1rem/13px)

Title-Montserrat (1.200rem/29px)
Montserrat (1rem/24px)
Montserrat (0.833rem/20px)
Montserrat (0.694rem/17px)



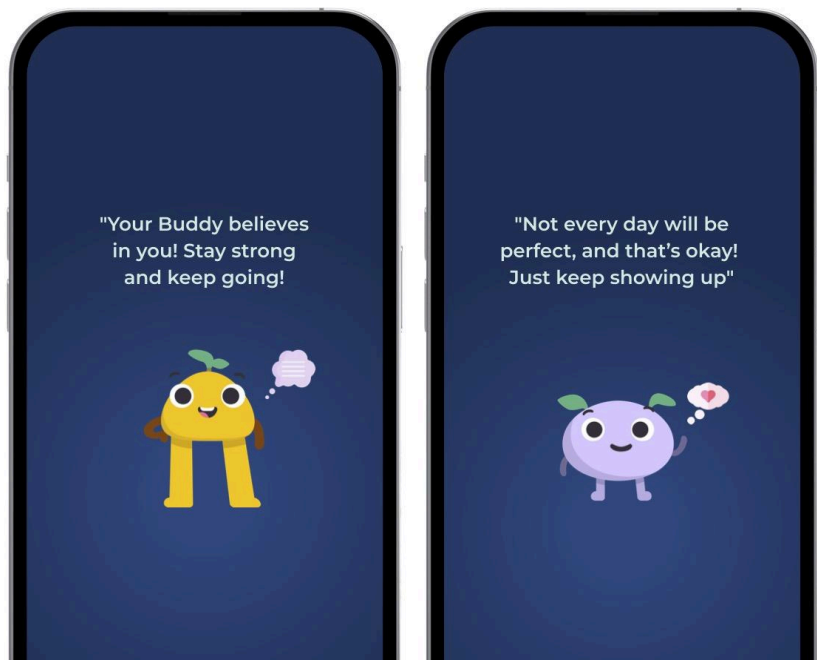
- UI Elements:



- Habit progress calendar
- Motivational streak animations

Buddy reaction messages (e.g., "You crushed it today!")

Miss a habit?
Buddy
nudges you.



Outcomes & Results

User Feedback

- **95% of test participants** said Buddy's evolving character made them feel "more connected" to their progress
- Habit logging felt "fun and frictionless" due to the long-press interaction
- Users appreciated the **balance between simplicity and optional depth**
- **Positive Feedback:** Frequent mentions of "feeling rewarded" and "loved seeing my Buddy grow"

Lessons Learned

Challenges

- Balancing simplicity for new users with depth for experienced ones
- Avoiding gamification fatigue—ensuring Buddy's evolution feels meaningful
- Finding the right tone for motivational messages (supportive, not patronizing)

Successes

- Buddy's character truly increased emotional investment in habit tracking
- Gamification worked best when tied to **personal growth**, not just rewards
- Long-press to log proved to be a **delightful micro-interaction** that felt satisfying

Opportunities for Improvement

- Adding **habit groups/routines** (e.g., Morning Ritual)
- Deeper **data insights and mood-based suggestions**
- Optional **social sharing or co-tracking** for accountability