

Heuristic Evaluation of Fetch

1. Problem/Prototype

[Insert one sentence description of the project idea and UI you are evaluating.]

2. Violations Found

1. [H8: Aesthetic & Minimalist Design] / Severity 1/ Found by: B

Small typo: “This weeks rewards available...” is missing an apostrophe (week’s).

2. [H1. Visibility of system status] / Severity 3 / Found by: A, B, C, D

After a task has been claimed, it’s unclear who has taken it or how many other tasks they have taken. If the goal is to evenly distribute work, it’s unclear here if that goal is being achieved. This could be as simple a fix as just changing the label from “Snatched” to “Snatched by Jon”.

3. [H1. Visibility of system status] / Severity 2 / Found by: C

This violation is similar to the one above: when you check the leaderboard, you can see how many points each person has, but not how they acquired them. Since one of the goals is to help more evenly distribute work, it would be good to show what work people actually did here. You could even just add the same graphics you use when grabbing tasks below the name.

4. [H2. Match between system and the real world] / Severity 2/ Found by: B, C, D

The leaderboard does not seem to be organized in any particular way. Traditionally, I would assume a leaderboard is ranked by who has the most points. It’s hard to tell how everyone is doing if it is unordered. I would suggest ranking the people in the order in which they’re “winning.”

5. [H5. Error prevention] / Severity 3 / Found by: A, B, C, D

What happens if you accidentally claim a task? It’s not clear to me that you can “unclaim” a task. Consider fixing this by letting users drag tasks back into the unclaimed bar.

6. [H5. Error prevention] / Severity 3 / Found by: B, C

Similar to the above, what happens if you claim a task and are unable to complete it? Say you agree to feed the dog and then get stuck late at work. How do you make sure the dog still gets fed? It would help to show both who has claimed the task so that other members of the family can be aware and to let people relinquish a task if they cannot complete it. (Maybe consider a point deduction just to keep the incentives working.)

7. [H5. Error prevention] / Severity 3 / Found by: B, C

If you tap a task and accidentally mark it as complete, there's no way to undo this. Prevent users from accidentally checking things off by letting them "unclick" a task.

8. [H3. User control and freedom] / Severity 3 / Found by: C, D

It's not clear whether and how users can create a new task. I couldn't find a way to do it on the interface. There should be some way for users to add tasks to the workflow. Maybe add a "+" button on the tasks interface.

9. [H1. Visibility of system status] / Severity 3 / Found by: A, B, C, D

What is the hourglass for on the tasks page? Is there an actual time limit? Is this just part of the design? I couldn't figure out whether there was an actual countdown happening or this was part of the design. If it's the former, consider adding the actual time remaining. If it's the latter, maybe consider making it smaller or a less central part of the interface.

10. [H1. Visibility of system status] / Severity 3 / Found by: C

How many outstanding uncompleted tasks are there? Is there a way to see which tasks people haven't completed? Maybe consider adding uncompleted but claimed tasks to the task page. Especially if you are designing this app to help keep people accountable, it would be helpful to see what other people were supposed to be doing.

11. [H3. User control and freedom] / Severity 2 / Found by: C

How do you assign tasks to other people? It looked like some of the tasks were assigned by one person to another (there was a notification about it), but it wasn't clear to me how to do it. If that's a feature, there should be a way to do it in the interface.

12. [H5. Error prevention] / Severity 4 / Found by: C, D

How can you tell if people have actually completed their tasks? What stops someone from saying they washed the dog and claiming their reward without really doing it? You could fix this by having people snap a quick photo of the completed task.

13. [H10. Help and documentation] / Severity 3 / Found by: B, C

What is the difference between the red bowl task and the blue bowl task? It's unclear what some of the tasks are before you claim them and then there's no way to "unclaim" them. There's already a popup that explains the tasks once you've claimed it; consider letting users see this popup before they claim the task.

14. [H1. Visibility of system status] / Severity 2 / Found by: C

Who assigned tasks to me? Tasks were suddenly assigned to me if I waited long enough, but I couldn't tell who assigned them. Was it my mom or my brother? Consider adding a tag about who assigned the tasks: "Assigned by Mom to Jon".

15. [H8. Aesthetic and minimalist design] / Severity 2 / Found by: A, D

It should not be necessary to direct users to the leaderboards after each task- it feels like this abruptly the flow of completing the tasks, then checking to see if they have done enough to reach the top.

16. [H2. Match between system and the real world] / Severity 2 / Found by: C, D

The tasks don't seem to be organized in any particular way. They are not ordered by the time they are to be execute nor by the number of points they are worth. The tasks should have some sort of intuitive order to them, rather than just being random.

17. [H8. Aesthetic and minimalist design] / Severity 1 / Found by: A, C

The user interface is so cute and playful when you first pull tasks up, but after tasks are claimed or completed, it loses this aesthetic. Consider including some of the same playful graphics the whole way through to maintain the playful, fun aesthetic.

18. [H8. Aesthetic and minimalist design] / Severity 1 / Found by: B, C, D

The leaderboard is not very visually appealing. The icons for the different family members are all identical and a bit boring. The task list is so fun and appealing, that design should carry over into the leaderboard. Maybe consider more fun, playful icons for the family members.

19. [H8. Aesthetic and minimalist design] / Severity 1 / Found by: C

The spacing between tasks is inconsistent once tasks start getting claimed. (The farthest right task is much farther from the other tasks than say the middle ones.) Try to keep spacing more consistent in the task list.

20. [H1. Visibility of system status] / Severity 4 / Found by: C

Some tasks need to be completed in a certain order. For example, you probably have to wash the dog before you brush him. These tasks may be claimed by different people and you can't see when the previous task has been completed. If another task is "blocking" the user from completing their task, they should be able to see when that task has been completed. Consider doing something like greying out tasks that are blocked and adding a message like "Waiting for Dad to wash the dog."

21. [H7. Flexibility and efficiency of use] / Severity 2 / Found by: C, D

Some tasks, like feeding the dog, are repeated at the same time everyday. Is there a way to make the task automatically repeating? Or claim it for multiple days in a row? If you're only taking 30 seconds to feed the dog each day, it doesn't make sense to spend another 30 seconds claiming it on the app every day. Give users flexibility to claim tasks for multiple days or have repeating tasks i.e. "Feed Bentley for a week."

22. [H3. User control and freedom] / Severity 3/ Found by: A, B, C, D

If all the tasks hadn't been claimed, it wouldn't let me check any other tasks. It would be helpful to let users see what the incentives are and where they stand if they want to before they claim a task. Especially if the rewards are what is going to incentivize users to claim less desirable tasks like cleaning up after the dog, they should be able to see those rewards. Allow users to click freely between tabs.

Also, The user is not able to see how many points they have until after they have snatched tasks and then completed them and are taken to the leaderboard. You could either be able to see your score on the snatching tasks page, as this may influence which tasks you choose, or be able to access the leaderboard page at any time.

23. [H8. Aesthetic and minimalist design] / Severity 1 / Found by: A, C, D

The reward screen is not particularly appealing. It would be nice to have some fun colors or graphics to get users excited about the rewards. This would help boost the incentive structure of the app.

24. [H1. Visibility of system status] / Severity 2 / Found by: B, C, D

Are the users eligible for all of the rewards? Or do they just get to pick one? It's not clear on the "Rewards" screen whether the champion gets all four rewards or they get to pick their favorite. The fix could be as simple as just changing the wording in some of the labels: "This week's champion will get one/all of the rewards below!"

25. [H8. Aesthetic and minimalist design] / Severity 1 / Found by: C

Once a task is completed, the message "YOUR FURRY FRIEND THANKS YOU < 3" pops up. Consider using an actual heart graphic rather than < 3. Using the old-school emoji does not match the rest of your graphic usage and looks out of place.

26. [H3. User control and freedom] / Severity 0 / Found by: C, D

Users can only claim tasks for the day of. There doesn't seem to be any way to claim tasks for the next day or anytime in the future. Allow users to plan ahead and claim tasks ahead of time.

27. [H5. Error prevention] / Severity 2 / Found by: A, B, C

Once you click to redeem a reward, there's no way to undo your choice. If a user clicks the wrong reward, or somehow that reward is no longer available, they should be able to change their mind and make another selection.

28. [H6. Recognition rather than recall] / Severity 4 / Found by: A, B, C, D

Once you redeem a reward, there's no way to see which reward was redeemed. The screen label just says "New rewards coming soon!" Users shouldn't have to remember which reward they redeemed. This could easily be fixed by adding another label that says "You redeemed 'Pick a Movie' this week."

29. [H8. Aesthetic and minimalist design] / Severity 1 / Found by: C

Once a reward is redeemed, the screen become mostly white with just a little bit of text. Consider filling this space with a fun graphic or congratulating the winner!

30. [H10. Help and documentation] / Severity 2 / Found by: C

When you first launch the app, there's no context for what the app is for. After 7 weeks of presentations, it's clear what the app is trying to do, but I'm not sure it would be for a new user. Consider adding a help button to give the user some context or an onboarding tutorial.

31. [H5. Error prevention] / Severity 2 / Found by: C, D

There's no way to ensure a reward was properly redeemed. Users should have a way to mark off once they've actually received their reward. This will prevent users from not getting properly rewarded or at least let users keep track of when they haven't yet gotten their reward.

32. [H3. User control and freedom] / Severity 0 / Found by: C

There doesn't seem to be a way to add new users to the group. How do you add family members to the app? Maybe on the leaderboard page give users the ability to add more people.

33. [H1. Visibility of system status] / Severity 2 / Found by: C

What happens if there are multiple pets? Which dog are you supposed to feed? Can you bundle the tasks i.e. Feed Bentley and Fido? There should be a way to see which pet a task is for. Consider using colors to distinguish between pets.

34. [H4. Consistency and standards] / Severity 2 / Found by: C

When are tasks due? What timescale is this app operating on? The task section is on the scale of 1 day, the rewards section is on the scale of a week, and the leaderboard has no given scale. Make sure all tasks are on the same scale and make it clear what timescale the leaderboard is. Is this the champion for the day or the week?

35. [H10. Help and documentation] / Severity 0 / Found by: C

Are the tasks pre-designed to be dog specific or can you create your own unique tasks? There's no way to tell whether the chores must be dog specific or you can create your own. There needs to be some explanation as to whether these tasks are preset or they can be generic chores.

36. [H8. Aesthetic and minimalist design] / Severity 1 / Found by: C

There are a number of categories this could fall under, but it's not clear on any task that this app is dog care specific, other than the name fetch. I put this under design because I think you could make the design more dog specific to communicate this. Consider adding a paw-print or dog graphic to communicate to the user that this app is about dogs.

37. [H6. Recognition rather than recall] / Severity 2 / Found by: A, B, C

Once a task has been claimed, you can't see what that task was anymore. The user shouldn't have to remember that feeding the dog is a task that's normally up for grabs. Once task is claimed, consider not blacking it out with the pawprint so that a user doesn't have to remember what's already been done.

38. [H1. Visibility of system status] / Severity 2 / Found by: B, C, D

The tasks have different weights as they are worth different points, but this is not communicated in the unclaimed task list. Consider using size or color to communicate the importance/weight of the different tasks.

39. [H9. Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors] / Severity 0 / Found by: C

If a user claims a task for a time when they are not home, the system should detect and flag this. You could pull in data from the calendar or current location to make sure users don't claim tasks they can't actually do.

40. [H9. Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors] / Severity 0 / Found by: C

Is the system ensuring that users can only create dog specific chores? What prevents a user from having "Washing the car" be a task? Do you want users to have this flexibility or do you want to keep it dog specific? There's clearly some ways to customize tasks by adding notes, but since this interface doesn't let me create new tasks, I can't see what the restrictions are. There needs to be some balance between creating tasks that are appropriate and specific to the family and dog but doesn't allow the user to go rogue.

41. [H9. Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors] / Severity 2 / Found by: C

What stops a user from doing a bad job on a task? For washing the dog, what stops them from just spraying the dog with a hose and calling it a day? Consider letting parents also check a task off or forcing users to include a photo, to ensure the dog is properly taken care of.

42. [H7. Flexibility and efficiency of use] / Severity 2 / Found by: C

What happens if there is only one person using the app i.e. a solo owner of a dog? It would be redundant to make them claim all of the tasks everyday though they may still want to use the app to keep track of dog care. You could fix this by automatically assigning all the tasks to the user if they are the only user of the app.

43. [H4. Consistency and Standards] / Severity 1 / Found by: A

As the tasks are getting snatched, they show this "snatched" banner across them and the tasks that you take disappear and leave this white space. But then, (what appears to be magically) all of the tasks disappear after the time runs out.

Fix: Either always just put the "snatched" banner or always make them disappear.

44. [H3. User control and freedom] / Severity 1 / Found by: A

Has little bubbles for avatar placeholders next to the family member's names in the leaderboard, but I do not see any profile button that the user could eventually click on to go in and change their avatar or profile picture.

Fix: Provide a profile button and page for the user to be able to choose an avatar or profile picture.

45. [H2. Match between system and real world] / Severity 1 / Found by: A

What if one of the parents wins the game? Do they have the same rewards available? I ask because it is a little weird that the parents would want the same rewards that are available. Who sets the parents rewards (as I assume the parents set the kids awards)?

Fix: Make rewards equally as attractive for all users.

46. [H1. Visibility of system status] / Severity 1 / Found by: A

The user only visibly sees that they have won or "left the competition behind" and actually unlocked the rewards after they click on a reward.

Fix: Show the "CONGRATS" when they first click to the rewards screen.

47. [H4. Consistency and Standards] / Severity 1 / Found by: A

The task screen and the Leaderboard have an icon next to the title, but the Rewards screen does not. It is unclear from the wording on the rewards page if you've won until you click a reward.

Fix: Add an icon to the Rewards screen banner.

48. [H4. Consistency and Standards] / Severity 1 / Found by: A

The icon on the leaderboard only appears after the user completes all their tasks for the day and is now the leader. Now confused on whether the crown that later shows up in the header is the icon for the leaderboard title or whether it is supposed to represent that the user has won for the day/week.

Fix: Either make it the actual page title icon or if it is supposed to mean that user has won, make this more obvious with words.

49. [H1. Visibility of System Status] / Severity 3 / Found by: B, D

The user can't see the lower or upper bound of how many tasks they are able to snatch. Assuming you would want to distribute the tasks fairly evenly among family members, there should be a minimum and maximum number of tasks that an individual should take on. Allowing the user to see how many additional tasks they are able to take, as well as seeing how many tasks would be assigned to them if they didn't snatch any tasks would be helpful.

50. [H1. Visibility of System Status] / Severity 2 / Found by: B

When you're assigned a task after not choosing one in time, it's uncomfortable for the tasks to just appear in your queue. User may want a message saying that they were assigned this task, so that the user doesn't think it's a mistake in the app. This may be especially useful for a user that snatches one task, and then maybe closes the app. They may then come back to the app to see that they have two tasks in their queue. This could be confusing to new users, and unnerving to others who can't remember if they snatched that task or not.

51. [H8. Aesthetic & Minimalist Design] / Severity 1 / Found by: B

The time frame (e.g. “5-8pm”) is not centered under the icon circle in the task details pop-up.

52. [H8. Aesthetic & Minimalist Design] / Severity 1/ Found by: B

The done button should be centered and larger in the task details pop-up. It is very small and may not be the most rewarding to press. Maybe think about more satisfying ways that the user could indicate that they completed their task. Checking a checkbox or dragging the task to a “done” pile may be more exciting, especially for the younger users you are targeting.

53. [H8. Aesthetic & Minimalist Design] / Severity 1/ Found by: B

The point value should be more prominent in the task details pop-up. I would suggest making it a different color and larger than the info text. It looks like normal information rather than something meant to excite the user.

54. [H8. Aesthetic & Minimalist Design] / Severity 1/ Found by: B

Point values look a little too low on the leaderboard -- I would align them vertically with the avatar, not with the avatar and the name.

55. [H6. Recognition not Recall] / Severity 2/ Found by: B, D

It would be helpful to see more info for the rewards rather than the same pop-up for each. When real families use the app, the rewards are going to be much more specific, and the descriptions may not fit nicely into the layout. For these cases, it would be nice to have an additional details pop-up. This would also be good for families who may be too busy to discuss the rewards all together. In this case, some family members may be seeing the rewards for the first time, and would possibly want more information.

56. [H8. Aesthetic & Minimalist Design] / Severity 1/ Found by: B

The “you” avatar on the leaderboard should be highlighted in some way to show that the logged in user owns it. It should draw the user’s eye, because in most cases, the user wants to check their own score.

57. [H8. Aesthetic & Minimalist Design] / Severity 1/ Found by: B

On the leaderboard, the names under the avatar aren’t centered or left aligned.

58. [H4. Consistency and standards] / Severity 1/ Found by: A, D

It isn’t really apparent that I can side scroll the tasks- the small bar appears at the bottom of the screen, instead of at the bottom of the tasks available segment. It is more conventional to have the scrolling bar closer to the section that is scrolling.

[...list violations here with a blank line between each -- number from 1 to n, where n is total # of violations]

3. Summary of Violations

Category	# Viol. (sev 0)	# Viol. (sev 1)	# Viol. (sev 2)	# Viol. (sev 3)	# Viol. (sev 4)	# Viol. (total)
H1: Visibility of Status	0	1	6	4	1	12
H2: Match Sys & World	0	1	2	0	0	3
H3: User Control	2	1	1	2	0	6
H4: Consistency	0	4	1	0	0	5
H5: Error Prevention	0	0	2	3	1	6
H6: Recognition not Recall	0	0	2	0	1	3
H7: Efficiency of Use	0	0	2	0	0	2
H8: Minimalist Design	0	14	1	0	0	15
H9: Help Users with Errors	2	0	1	0	0	3
H10: Documentation	1	0	1	1	0	3
Total Violations by Severity	5	21	19	10	3	58
Note: check your answer for the green box by making sure the sum of the last column is equal to the sum of the last row (not including the green box)						

4. Evaluation Statistics

Severity / Evaluator	Evaluator A	Evaluator B	Evaluator C	Evaluator D	All
sev. 0		0	5	1	5
sev. 1		8	8	6	21
sev. 2		7	16	8	19
sev. 3		8	9	4	10
sev. 4		1	3	2	3
total (sev. 3 & 4)		9	12	6	13
total (all severity levels)		33	41	21	58

*Note that the bottom rows are *not* calculated by adding the numbers above it.

5. Summary Recommendations

Based on your presentations, it seems like the two main goals of this app are to evenly distribute work and incentivize people to do their chores. In the app it's not entirely clear how the work gets evenly distributed. What prevents someone from always claiming the easiest tasks like feeding or not claiming any tasks at all? Furthermore, if someone claims a task they can mark it as complete without any evidence that they actually completed it. I have two main recommendations on how to improve accountability. The first is around ensuring users have actually completed the task they say they have. This could either mean they have to include a photo of the task – which they could snap right from the app – or a parent checks off that they actually completed the task. Maybe, when someone marks a task as completed, a parent also has to mark that task as done before it is properly considered finished. In terms of evenly distributing the work, I think the visibility of the system status should be dialed way up. Users should be able to see how other users are earning their points and which tasks they've claimed. In the task list, there's no way to see who claimed which tasks or even what the claimed tasks are. You also cannot tell whether those tasks have been completed or just claimed. Furthermore, on the leaderboard, you cannot see which tasks users have completed to earn their points. Especially since this app concerns the health of a living animal, users should be able to see which tasks are being done by whom and which tasks are claimed and not completed (or worst-case-scenario which tasks are never completed.) Revealing to other users who is doing what and what is not getting done will increase the internal social pressure to complete tasks. Furthermore, consider penalizing users for not completing tasks, completing them poorly, or waiting too long to do them (I'm thinking a simple point deduction).

Finally, I like how you're catering to a very niche market, but I'm not sure that your audience is clearly communicated in the app. Especially when a user first logs in, it is not clear that this is a dog specific app. There are some dog puns here and there and the pawprints from claimed tasks, but otherwise, the app could be designed for a generic chore list. I think there is a lot of room to really play with the dog theme in your design. A lot of the tasks are fairly barebones in terms of design – it's fairly text heavy with not a lot of graphics or variety in colors. Consider making the dog theme and the graphics from the task list more ubiquitous throughout the app. For example, the people icons on the leaderboard are all identical generic people. Maybe you could make them fun, distinct dog cartoons. Overall, I think you need to use visuals to demonstrate to the user that this is a dog specific app.

Severity Ratings

- 0 - don't agree that this is a usability problem
- 1 - cosmetic problem
- 2 - minor usability problem
- 3 - major usability problem; important to fix
- 4 - usability catastrophe; imperative to fix

Heuristics

H1: Visibility of System Status

- Keep users informed about what is going on

H2: Match Between System & Real World

- Speak the users' language
- Follow real world conventions

H3: User Control & Freedom

- "Exits" for mistaken choices, undo, redo
- Don't force down fixed paths

H4: Consistency & Standards

H5: Error Prevention

H6: Recognition Rather Than Recall

- Make objects, actions, options, & directions visible or easily retrievable

H7: Flexibility & Efficiency of Use

- Accelerators for experts (e.g., gestures, kb shortcuts)
- Allow users to tailor frequent actions (e.g., macros)

H8: Aesthetic & Minimalist Design

- No irrelevant information in dialogues

H9: Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, & Recover from Errors

- Error messages in plain language
- Precisely indicate the problem
- Constructively suggest a solution

H10: Help & Documentation

- Easy to search
- Focused on the user's task
- List concrete steps to carry out
- Not too large