

A8 README



Dante Danelian | Melody Fuentes | Blaine Wells | Hamidou Guechtouli

Grow Your Good Times.

Welcome to your very own, personalized virtual memory garden! The Arbor app is a place for documenting, reflecting on, and sharing your past, positive memories. In our needfinding, we found that there is a tendency to dwell on negative memories, and a desire for a space to reflect positively on the past, and cement uplifting experiences for the future. With Arbor, we hope to provide just that: a garden of memories as rich as your own life experiences, that prompts you to engage with your past in a healthy and regular fashion.

Here, memories are captured in the form of trees. They start off as seeds, which you can acquire at the marketplace. When you plant a seed in an empty plot in the garden, you can log the memory it represents by adding text, photos, videos, and even embed a song that captures the right vibe. As this seed grows into a tree over time, it then starts to bear fruit, which reminds you of the memory as you feed it to your character to keep them happy and healthy. You can also share memories with others, by sending seeds through the mail to your contacts, which they can then plant in their respective gardens.

How to Access

Arbor app can be accessed on an iOS device, on an android device, or online. We recommend accessing it on an iOS device. (Note: the app is optimized for the iPhone 14.) To access the app on an iOS device:

1. Download “Expo Go” from the App Store
2. Navigate to this link:
<exp://u.expo.dev/update/d98ae665-daf9-453f-a718-8223f7b85896>

Operating Instructions

Navigation

To move around the garden, you can press on the white arrows present on the sides of the screen. In menus, tap on objects and buttons to select them, or press the “x” to move back one screen.

Town Area

The central screen of the app is the town area, where your character can interact with several buildings. In the top left corner is **your home**, which would typically be a customizable indoor location where you could change your character’s outfit or browse through your memories by viewing an almanac of seeds. In the top right, there is the **farmer’s market**, where you can acquire seeds that allow you to plant memories. In the bottom left, there is the **post office**, where you can view incoming mail from friends on the app, or share memories by sending seeds through the mail. Lastly, there is the **general store** in the bottom right, where you can unlock accessories, clothing, seeds, and pets for your character! Due to the fact that this is a medium-fi prototype, your home and the general store are not yet functional.

Garden Areas

To the left and right of the town are the garden areas, where you can plant memories or review them by revisiting trees. To plant memories, simply tap on an empty plot and log the associated event. As the seeds grow into trees, they will start to bear fruit, which will trigger a notification prompting you to tap on the tree and review whichever memory is associated with it. In the final version of the app, you will be

able to tap on any tree to view its associated memory, as well as move trees around to suit your design preferences.

Limitations

There are some features we do not plan to prototype, as they do not relate to the tasks but would require extensive additional work:

1. **Town marketplace:** We have chosen not to implement the market, where users can buy outfits or pets for their character. This would require the creation of many more assets, as well as a whole new task.
2. **Customization of the Garden:** Our Hi-Fi prototype does not support full customization of the character or garden, as this would require a back end to track these changes.
3. **Almanac:** Typically, the user would be able to access a bank of all their memories in chronological order, and export it to friends. However, for similar reasons to the above, we do not have the back end to implement this.

Wizard of Oz Techniques

1. **Tree Growth:** Instead of implementing a back-end method for tree growth, where fruits become naturally ripe over time, the user starts the app with a fruit ready to pick. This helps expedite the demo so the user doesn't have to wait to start the simple task. In line with this, the user also does not receive notifications when a fruit is ready, as there is only ever one fruit which ripens in the demo.
2. **Sending Mail:** Since we don't have a user base, the social component of the app is simulated. Thus, sending mail to a friend is a function we are simulating for the sake of the prototype.

Hard-Coded Features

Several aspects of our prototype were hard-coded, so as to maintain the audience's immersion in the product while also illustrating use cases for the product.

1. **Multi-media Inputs:** Our prototype does not have an extensive back end for supporting multimedia inputs, and thus we hard-coded text, photo, and embedded media when planting seeds and reviewing memories.
2. **Social Component:** Since our app does not yet have a user base, we hard-coded friends into the system. Thus, if you tap on the post office, there is hard-coded mail from friends, and a list of contacts you can send seeds to.
3. **Customization of Garden:** Seeing as our Hi-Fi prototype does not support full customization of the character or garden (as this would involve creating a backend to track these changes), the character's outfit and the layout of the garden are hard-coded in, as if the user set up their app this way.
4. **Seed Inventory:** For similar reasons as the previous point, we had to hard-code the seeds in the user's inventory at the time of planting or sending mail, as keeping track of the seeds would require a more significant back-end.

Thank you for reading, and **have fun!**