Barney The Owl – User guide

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What is Barney?

Barney is the barn owl mascot for our game. Owls are regarded as wise, which is what you'll become by using our app.



Figure 1. The Main Menu of our app.

Our application is for people struggling with focusing when working on the computer. Our app allows you to set a ***timer*** for how long you want to work and keeps you focused by warning you when you are opening a distracting app or web domain. You can customize the apps and web domains you deem distracting, by editing the ***filters*** in-game. You know best what commonly distracts you, but we have made a default filter you can load that blacklists common distractions.

When the timer is running, you can at any point take a 5-minute break by spending a token. 1 token is awarded every 30 minutes. We strongly recommend taking a break as this has proven to increase effectiveness in the long term.

After the timer is done you will be rewarded with points that you can spend on ***rewards***: books to fill out your bookshelf. This works as a visual representation of your progress to becoming the wisest owl. If you want more information about your focusing sessions, visit your ***profile***.

How does it work?

No technical details but ensure user isn't installing malware

You might wonder how we are detecting distractions, good cybersecurity awareness! For detecting distracting apps, we are using a windows function that lists the currently open processes, the same ones that show up in "Apps" when opening Task Manager in Windows. This means that **our app is restricted to only Windows operating systems**.

For detecting distracting web domains, we have developed a custom extension that sends URLs to a localhost port. Our app then listens to updates on that port to compare incoming URLs to your defined filters. Currently, the extension is available for Firefox, Edge and Chromium based browsers (Chrome, Opera, Brave, Vivaldi and more). The

chromium extension “Navigation Tracker” can be found here:
https://chromewebstore.google.com/detail/navigation-tracker/oapcganbphmhcfbpdmcijkalomlfkkfb



DISCLAIMER: This app is entirely local; we are NOT collecting any of your data NOR sending any data to any server. If you still are unsure, you do not have to use the extension, and instead only use the app detection. If you want to test the extension yourself, it sends data to localhost:54545

Our app is developed using the LOVE engine in the LUA programming language:
https://love2d.org
The detections are done using the Python programming language.
The extension is developed using Javascript.

Filters and user profile are saved to the path %APPDATA%/BARNEY/. The backend needs to run once to initialize these files. Note that any changes to these files may break the app. If the app cannot read the distractions.json, userFilter.json, or userProfile.json files: Delete the entire BARNEY folder in %APPDATA%, this will reset everything (you will lose all progress).

How do I get started?

Manual start

This document exists in the same folder as game.exe, backend.exe and BarneyLauncher.exe, along with some DLLs that allow the LOVE engine to run the game. Run the entire app by double clicking the BarneyLauncher.exe. Follow the tutorial and start using the game! Make sure the extension is enabled in your browser.

Steam

Launching the game on Steam will launch it correctly and you can simply follow the tutorial in game to start using our app!