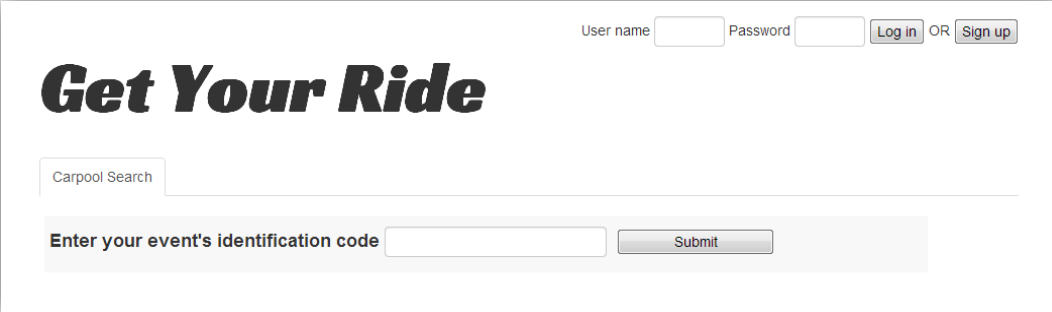Xiaoyu (Amy) Zhao
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# HW2: Heuristic Evaluation for "Get Your Ride"

This report summarizes my heuristic evaluation of the "Get Your Ride" application. Each page/tab with its respective comments is presented in order of its appearance (left to right) in the interface.

I did not collaborate with anybody on this assignment.

## Homepage (logged out)



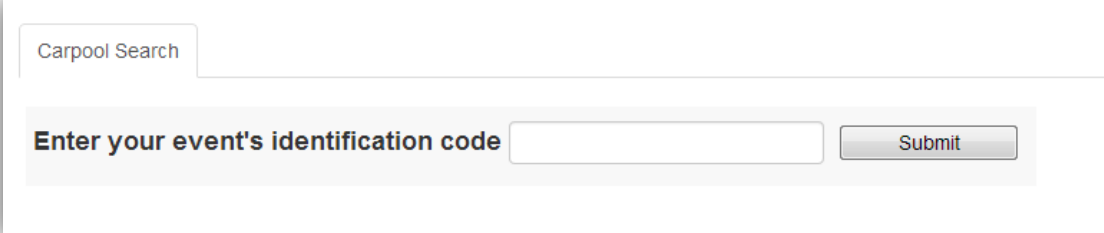**Figure 1: The homepage when the user has yet to log in.**

1. **Cosmetic**: There's no real need for the tabbed interface in the homepage, where "Carpool Search" is the only tab (simplicity in graphic design).



**Figure 2: In the central content area, there are no tabs other than "Carpool Search".**

2. **Major**: Clicking the 'Submit' button with an empty event identification code brings up a result (poor external consistency with search fields in other applications, and also unexpected feedback for the user).
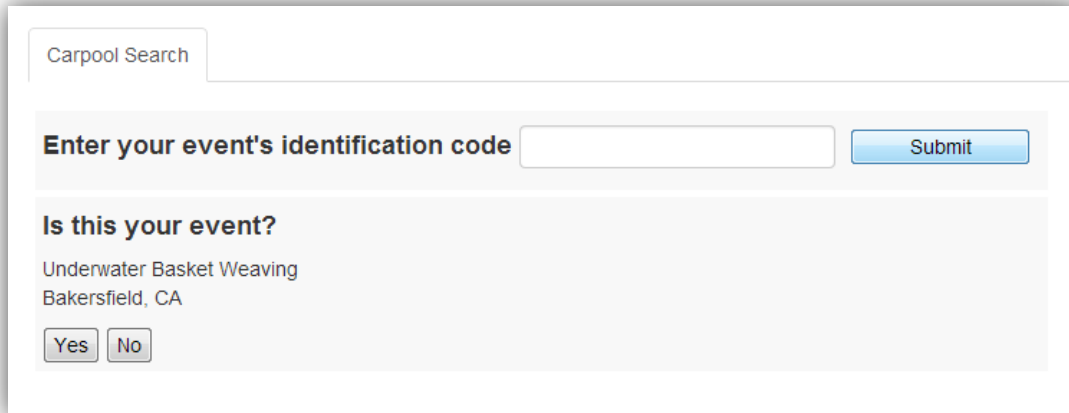


**Figure 3: In the central content area, even with no identification code, an event is found.**

3. **Good**: Prompts for user input (e.g. ID code field, "Is this your event?") are clear, concise and understandable (efficiency and simplicity).

4. **Minor**: Clicking the "No" button in response to "Is this your event?" (Figure 3) doesn't do anything (no feedback for the user's action).

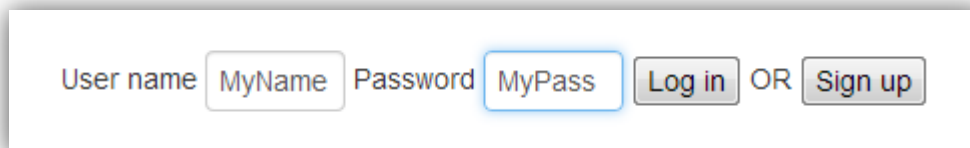5. **Major**: Any input into the password field appears as plain text (security issue).



**Figure 4: User account controls located at the top right of the page.**

6. **Cosmetic**: The "User name" input field and the "Password" label (Figure 4) are too close together. You could use white space better to clearly associate the labels with their respective input fields. The "Password" input field and "Log in" button are also very close together (graphic design).

7. **Cosmetic**: The input boxes and buttons (Figure 4) are different sizes, resulting in a strange-looking alignment of the top and bottom edges (graphic design).

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8. **Minor**: The "Sign up" option isn't usually as large as "Log in" option (Figure 4), since the options aren't really of equivalent importance or used with the same frequency for most users. Many other websites will use a small hyperlink under the "Log in" button saying something along the lines of ("Don't have an account? Register now." (poor external consistency).

## "Next Date" tab
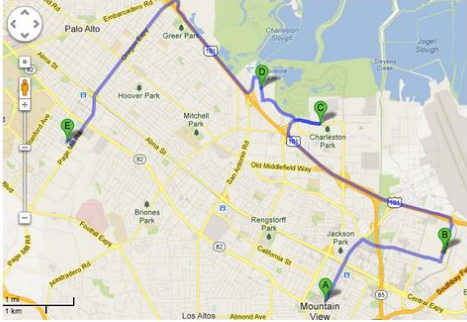


**Figure 5: The main page once the user logs in.**

9. **Good**: User is greeted by name (appropriate feedback).

10. **Good**: The tabbed interface with numerical alerts has external consistency with other tabbed interfaces such as Google Chrome.

11. **Minor**: Clicking on the "Next Date" tab scrolls the window to focus on "My next date is" (poor internal consistency, since none of the other tabs do this).
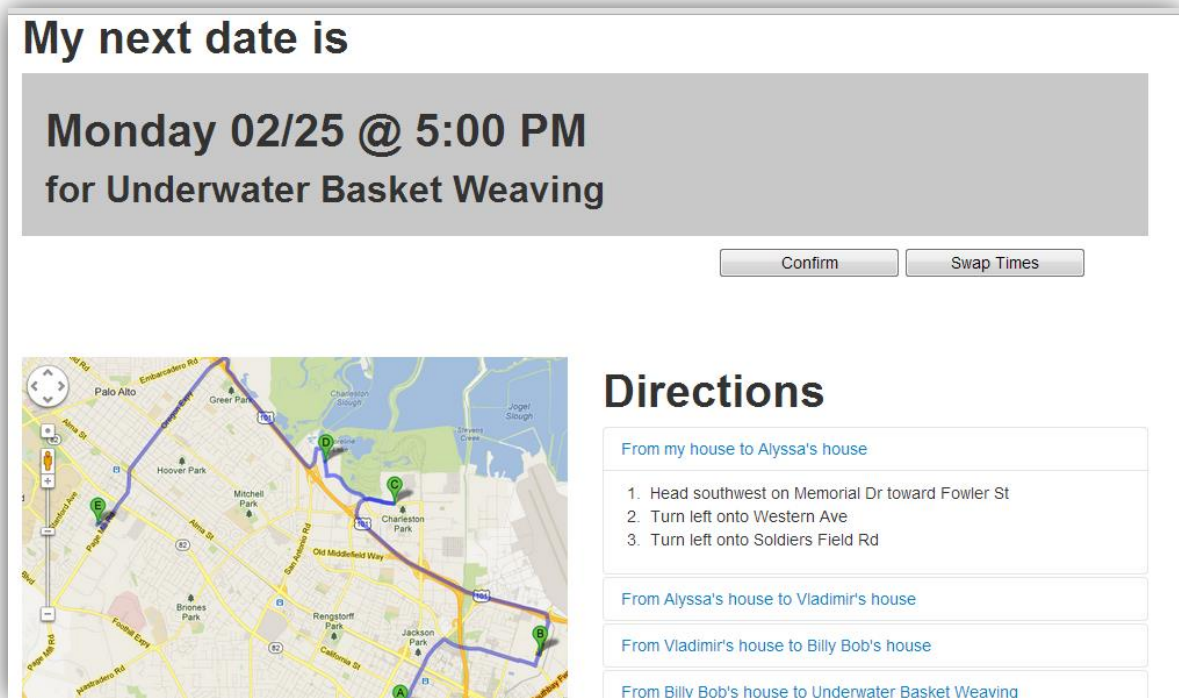


**Figure 6: Clicking on the "Next Date" tab causes the page to scroll to this content (such that the tabs have disappeared off the top of the page).**

12. **Major**: Clicking on the "Confirm" button causes the browser to pop up the alert "The page at sgupta17.scripts.mit.edu says: You have successfully confirmed your availability." You should try to avoid using alerts when possible, as they may cause the user to question the safety of the application (since it may look like an error) and they will lower the user's efficiency since he/she must then close the alert. There are a number of other alerts used in the application as well.
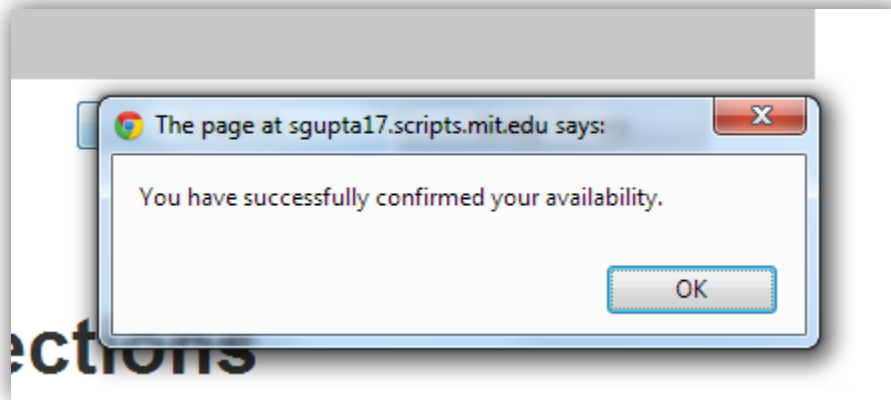
**Figure 7: An alert is shown when the user confirms his/her availability.**
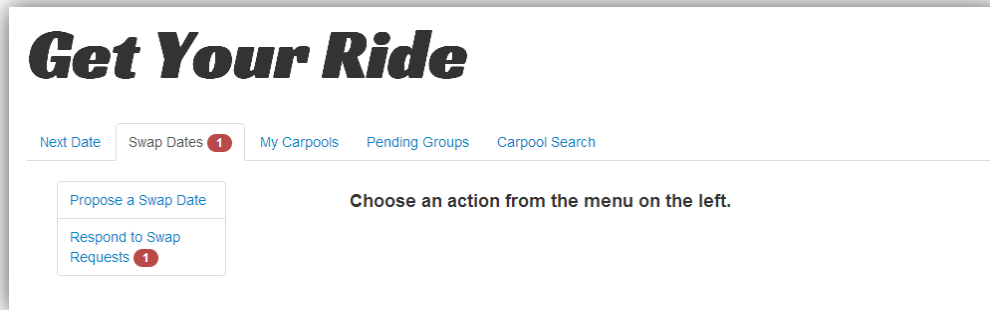
## "Swap Dates" tab



Figure 8: The "Swap Dates" tab.

13. **Cosmetic**: There is a lot of emphasis on the central text, some of which is not necessary. The important dates could be emphasized in bold, without the highlighting, if the rest of the text is non-bold (simplicity).
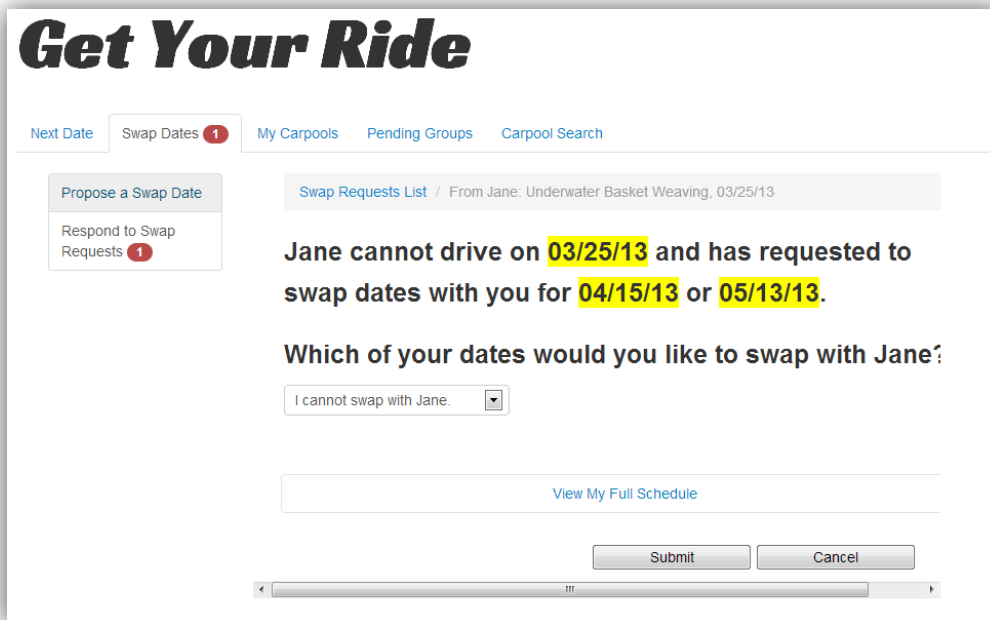


Figure 9: The "swap request" interface.

14. **Cosmetic**: There is a horizontal scrollbar (Figure 9) even though most of the content appears to fit on the page – the scrollbar is probably unnecessary (simplicity).

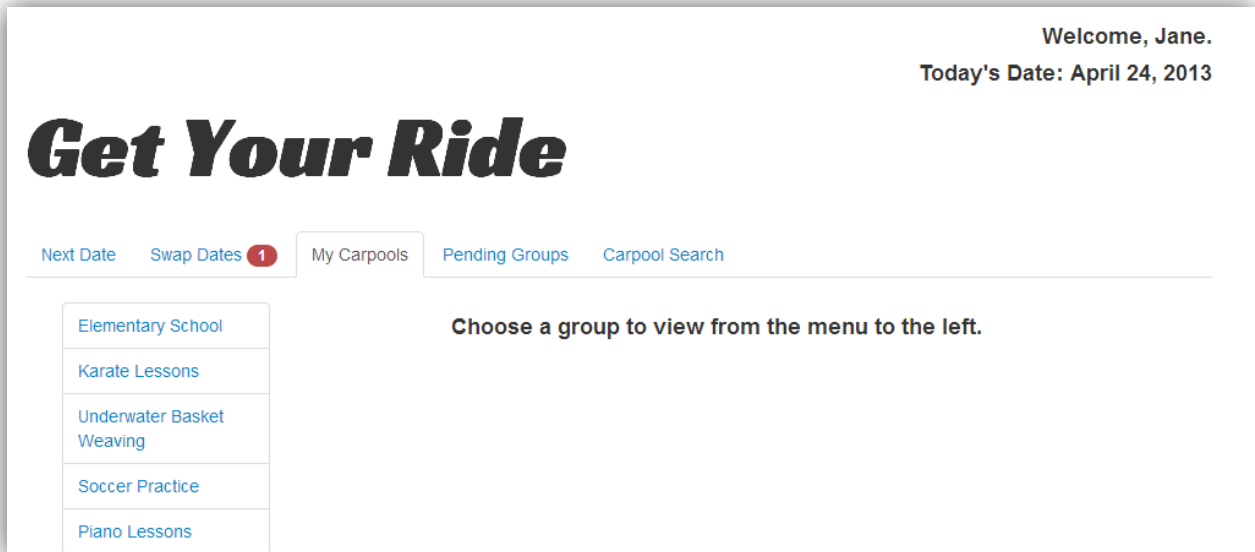Xiaoyu (Amy) Zhao
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## "My Carpools" tab



**Figure 10: The "My Carpools" tab.**

15. **Minor**: Multiple clicks are required to see the details of the carpools I belong to. A summary of the user's carpools in the central content area (with more info than just the event name) may be helpful (low efficiency).
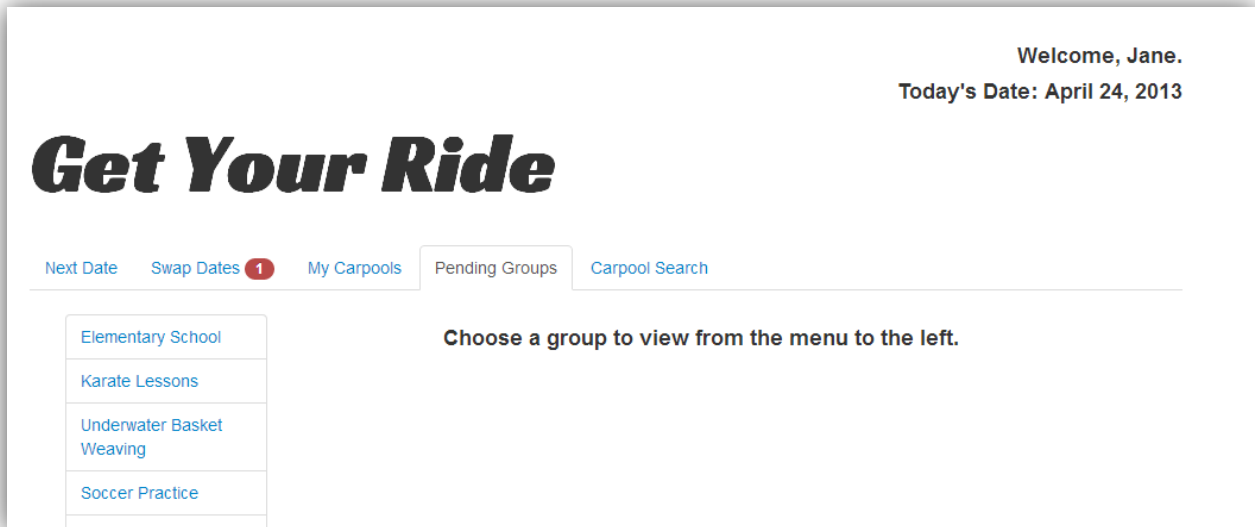
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## "Pending Groups" tab



Figure 11: The "Pending Groups" tab.

16. **Cosmetic**: The user's status in the group is not immediately obvious since there is no emphasis on the user's own entry (low efficiency).
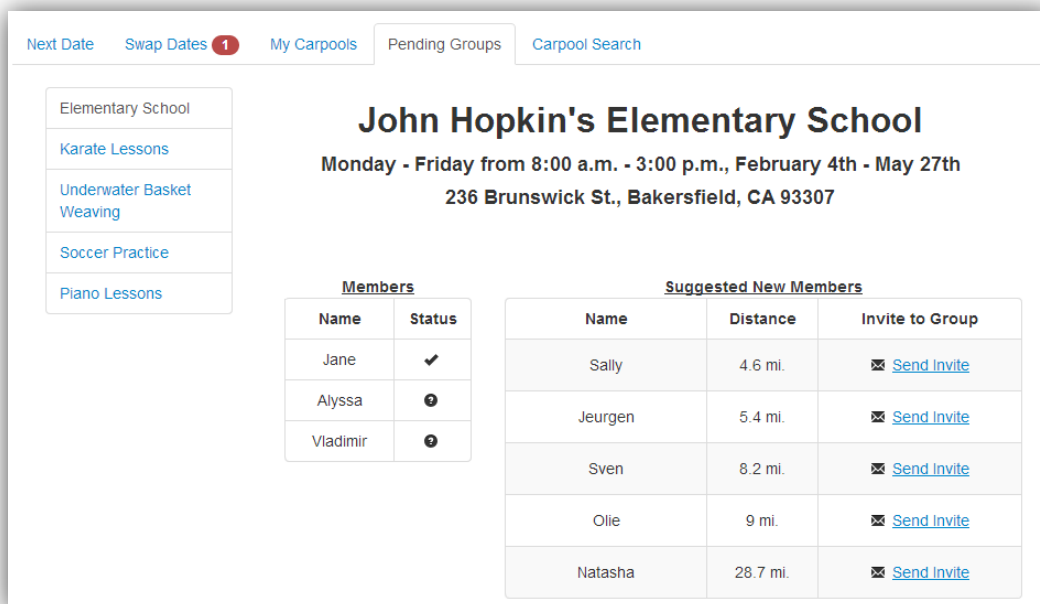


Figure 12: There is no emphasis on the current user's table entry.

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## "Carpool Search" tab/page



**Figure 13: The contents of the "Carpool Search" tab once the ID code, event, and people have been filled out.**

17. **Major**: The "Arrange carpool with the selected people" button give any feedback after it has been clicked once (no feedback for user action). Clicking it the first time will bring up a list of dates – however, selecting new people and then clicking the button again will not change the list of dates. This is presumably because the dates

are hardcoded in in this prototype regardless of the members of the carpool, but it may be a good idea to provide the user with some indication that the app is regenerating the list of dates based on the updated members of the carpool.

18. **Minor**: The checkbox next to the "Name" label doesn't do anything (bad affordance and feedback; the checkbox indicates that selecting "Name" will do something -- perhaps selecting/deselecting all -- when in fact it doesn't do anything).
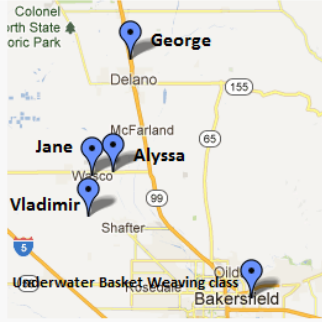


**These are other people that are interested in carpooling for this event:**

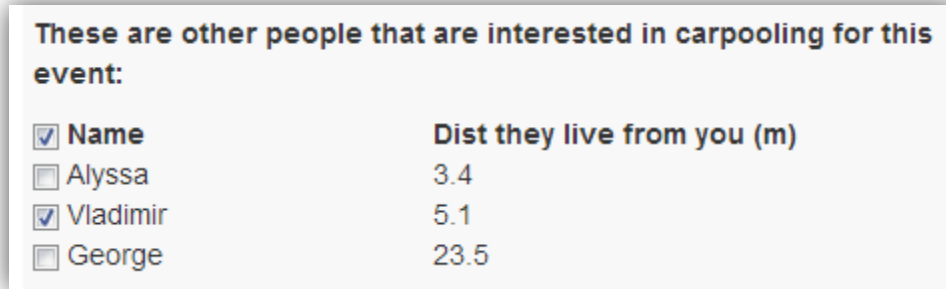| ☑ Name | Dist they live from you (m) |
|--------|------------------------------|
| ☐ Alyssa | 3.4 |
| ☑ Vladimir | 5.1 |
| ☐ George | 23.5 |

Figure 14: The "Name" label is associated with a checkbox that doesn't appear to do anything.

19. **Minor**: The label "Dist they live from you (m)" (Figure 14) looks unprofessional -- you should try to avoid using non-standardized abbreviations to facilitate the user's understanding of the label (efficiency).

20. **Major**: The long list of checkboxes for available dates should have a "select all" and "deselect all" option (poor efficiency, and bad external consistency compared to say, Gmail).



**Figure 15: In order to select/deselect many dates, the user has to click every checkbox.**
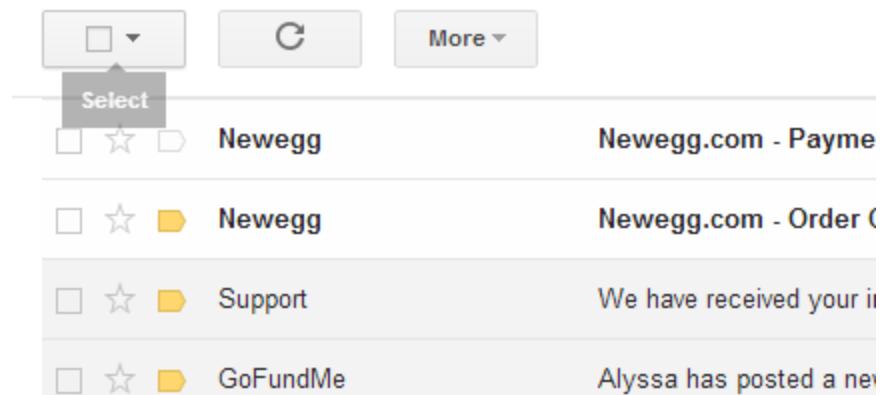


**Figure 16: Gmail offers many selection options, including select all, select all read, etc.**
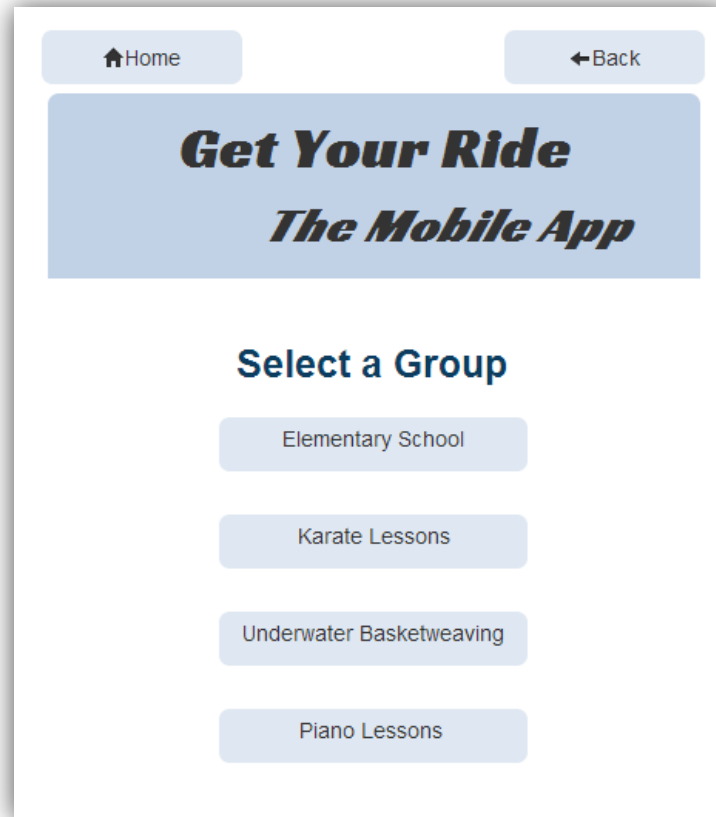
## Mobile application



**Figure 17: Homepage of the mobile application.**

21. **Cosmetic**: The "Enable Ride Tracking" button's text is red, and the "Disable Ride Tracking" button's text is green (poor external consistency). Normally, any "enable" button should be green.
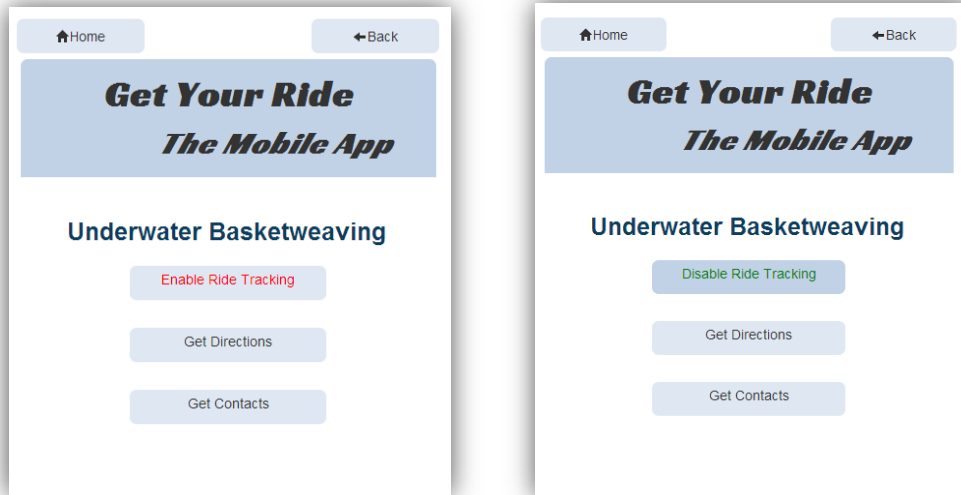
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**Figure 18: The text color of the "Enable/Disable Ride Tracking" button lacks external consistency.**

22. **Cosmetic:** The "Back" button in located in the top right of the screen (poor external consistency with other apps such as internet browsers).