

YAOBOX

Integration of Tradition and Modernity

Introduction

After developing and evaluating several proposals, I present Yaobox, a pill organizer designed to functionally and respectfully merge Western Medicine (WM) with Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). The goal is to offer a product that is useful for managing daily medication while also reinforcing cultural connection and therapeutic rituals for the users.

Central Concept

Yaobox combines two worlds in a single object: a compact and personal container for medication dosing (WM) with sensory and therapeutic elements inspired by TCM. The chosen name, Yaobox (yào 药 means “medicine” in Chinese), establishes an immediate cultural connection. (I hope this is correct)

Design and Structure

- **Format:** a pillbox with a semicircular profile and subtle square elements (see “Top View”). Its compact shape ensures discretion and portability.
- **Modular interior:** the internal organizer is interchangeable to adapt to different quantities and frequencies of medication (per person / per treatment).
- **Intuitive:** designed to be very simple and minimalistic so as not to confuse older users.

Sensory and Therapeutic Integration (TCM)

- **Massage tool in the lid:** the inner side of the lid houses a rigid L-shaped piece that clips onto the lid from the inside of the pillbox, designed for acupressure and massage of specific points.

For this piece, I was inspired by the examples provided in the briefing.



- **Integrated aromatherapy:** a central cavity in the lid holds a “scent ball.” Small perforations in the lid allow for controlled diffusion of the aroma, evoking familiarity and calm.
- **Modular massage accessory:** elastic bands along the edges of the pillbox allow a flexible strap (fabric/felt/leather) with small beads to be attached for complementary massage and tactile therapies. For this tool, I was inspired by the one in the photo, but I wanted to make it more portable.



Smart Assistance and Familiarity

- **Screen and digital reminder:** a small screen is integrated into the top of the lid, displaying the pill to take and the time, improving adherence to the treatment.
- **Dose illumination (proposed evolution):** the possibility of internal LEDs that illuminate only the cavity of the corresponding pill, reducing errors.
- **Transport pouch with traditional elements:** a hanging textile pouch (to be worn around the neck, similar to traditional aromatic sachets) decorated with motifs and tassels inspired by Chinese clothing, preserving the emotional connection to TCM. Inspired by these sachets and traditional garments and details.



Added Value: Support for Older Adults and Improved Adherence

In the brief, we were told that many older adults find it difficult to take Western medication: they sometimes forget doses, feel disconnected from this type of treatment, or struggle to accept routines that are not part of their tradition.

Yaobox was created to respond directly to this need.

This design combines clear digital reminders with elements deeply familiar to older users: traditional aromas, massage tools, the textile pouch inspired by Chinese clothing, and the option to wear it around the neck like typical aromatic sachets.

All these elements create an immediate emotional bond, offering an experience close to their health customs and helping them feel comfortable using the device.

Thanks to this emotional and cultural connection, Yaobox not only organizes medication: it facilitates treatment adherence, reduces missed doses, and supports older adults in a process that might otherwise feel complex or distant. It blends tradition, technology, and wellbeing to make self-care simpler, more intuitive, and more meaningful.