



## PROJECT GAME DESIGN DOCUMENT (GDD)

Submit a 5-7 page document containing headers and sections discussing each of the following. Include illustrations when applicable. If you're planning on submitting an optional paper prototype of your game, please focus on the prototype in this document:

- **Title** – Make sure your title is brief, descriptive, memorable – and it should attract players to your game.
- **Description/feature set** – Provide a short description of your game, along with a bulleted list corresponding to your “feature set” (features of your game that make it unique and compelling – involving any element we’ve discussed in class . . . including gameplay, technology, story, characters, visuals, sound, interface or mood).
- **Purpose/application** – What is the game’s purpose? Every game should be entertaining – but your game might also meet one or more non-entertainment goals. Discuss the purpose(s) of your game and how you expect the game will be used by the players.
- **Premise/high concept** – Include your 1-2 sentence premise (also known as a “high concept”) here. Address the player directly (2<sup>nd</sup>-person voice), and describe the mood and unique “hook” of the game. Think of the premise as something that will be used on marketing materials and social media.
- **Genre** – Discuss your primary genre here. Use an accepted genre, a hybrid – or make up your own!
- **Platform** – Discuss your primary and secondary platforms here. If you are focusing on the paper prototype (and you expect to make it function well enough so that it can stand on its own), discuss your primary platform as board, dice, card or tile-laying game. If you plan to eventually develop a digital version, mention primary and secondary digital platforms in the “summary/future updates” section below.
- **Audience/market** – Discuss your target audience here. This is the portion of the game-playing audience that will be most likely to play your game. Make sure you include a specific age range. The target audience will also tie into the game’s genre.
- **Rating** - Indicate what the expected target ESRB rating for your game will be, and why.
- **Player mode** – Indicate whether this is a single-player, two-person or multiplayer game. Be specific about minimum and maximum players. If two or more, will it be played locally, through a LAN or online?
- **Time interval** – Turn-based, time-limited, player-adjusted, or real-time?



- **Backstory/synopsis** – What happens before the game’s action begins? After the game gets started, how does the present action tie in with the backstory?
- **Character descriptions** – Choose 3 characters in your game. Using 1 paragraph per character, provide each character’s name and a description of their physical/personality characteristics, and how the character ties in with the game’s story.
- **Competitive analysis** – Choose 3 game titles currently on the market that could be considered competitors of your game. Describe each of these titles (1 paragraph per title), and discuss why your game can attract the same audience and establish a competitive edge over the other titles.
- **Rules** – Describe the following (even if you’ve already mentioned some of this earlier in the document): Number of players, age range, approximate length of time to play, victory & loss conditions, gameplay (step-by-step), scoring, game end. Include illustrations where necessary.
- **Challenges** – What types of challenges and obstacles do players have to face or overcome during the game? Some examples might be powerful monsters/bosses, locked doors, puzzles, mazes, riddles, trivia questions, or flying potatoes. Be specific about the challenges that tie in with your particular storyline.
- **Strategies** – Discuss 3 strategies that players must use during the game to overcome the game’s challenges. Examples might be collecting, exploration, resource management, social interaction, direct vs stealth combat, hiding, quick reflexes, knowledge application (intrinsic or extrinsic), spatial navigation, pattern recognition, color matching, or quick reflexes.
- **Theory/game balance** – What type of game theory elements are you using in the game? How are you maintaining game balance? Some examples might be transitive vs intransitive relationships, perfect vs imperfect information, Prisoner’s Dilemma or tragedy of the commons scenarios (cooperation/non zero sum games), dominant strategies, skill vs luck (randomness), and difficulty levels.
- **Perspective/game view** – Describe the game environment and the objects within it. Will you be using a 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> person perspective? What will you use for the game view (e.g., aerial, isometric, side-scrolling)?
- **User interface** – How will players be able to play the game? Discuss available manual and visual user interfaces. What interface elements will be active vs passive? How will the interface make the gameplay straightforward, usable and accessible?

# GAME DEVELOPMENT ESSENTIALS

AN INTRODUCTION

Fourth Edition



- **Audio** – How will you incorporate audio into your game? Will you use music, sound effects, and/or voiceover? Will you use looping or adaptive audio?
- **Summary/future updates** – Summarize your game's unique features – elaborating on the feature set listed at the beginning of the document. Discuss any future updates you might make to the game with regard to platforms, interface, gameplay, story/character expansions, and multiplayer capabilities.