

FIT 2073 - Assignment 3

# Afro Disco

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# Story

## Characters

**Afro Disco** - The main character of the story who the player controls. Afro Disco, or just Afro for short. He's a 30 something guy who is glowing with confidence and arrogance. As his name suggests, he has a massive luscious Afro that he values more than anything. Some even say he came out of the womb with a small afro. The only thing he likes more than his hair is disco. He doesn't just love disco, he is disco. He lives for disco. This has been Afro's single minded desire his entire life and has danced everyday of his life. Afro has built up a reputation for this over many years and is now considered to be a god among the people of the city due to his sweet moves. His face is plastered on billboards, merchandise is sold in his likeness his songs instantly hit the top of the charts. Afro spends most of his time in his night club "The fro' comb".



**Rock Mullet** - The arch nemesis of Afro Disco. Once the best friend of Afro, he now hates him with a passion. From their time together, Mullet is quite similar in personality to Afro. He's hotheaded and arrogant. He considers himself to be better than everyone else due to his superior taste in music. He never goes anywhere without his signature leather jacket which he wears open so that people can see his T-shirt of a band that no one has heard of. He kinda smells like a musky 3 star hotel room. As his name suggests he has a filthy mullet that he takes pride in. He wasn't always like this though, he used to love disco and knew Afro before he got famous. Though Mullet grew tired of disco and its hair styles; he yearned for more depth in the music. He tried to convince Afro of this but couldn't persuade him. They had a falling out and went their separate ways.



**Ponytail Soul** - A mysterious and wise old man who mentors Afro. Ponytail wears his hair in a short ponytail and usually seen wearing circular rose tinted glasses and a floral or dyed rainbow t-shirt. Soul has a mysterious and quiet persona. Not much is known about Ponytail's origins only that he was once in a position similar to where Afro is today. He smells pretty bad and is almost always on some kind of mind altering drug. Some speculate that this might be to help his PTSD from what he's done in the past.



## Story

Our story takes place in the city of Boogalooington where Afro disco is a god among men. He is the leader the people of Boogalooington blindly follow and love to death. His face is on posters and billboards all over the city. People wear his line of clothing, drive to work in their Afro branded car listening to the top hits by Afro Disco on the radio. Life is good for the people living there. Afro spends most of his time at his nightclub, "The Fro' Comb" where he drinks and boogies around the clock. This is where the story starts.

Afro's arch nemesis, Rock Mullet bursts through the door of the club with a small band of groupies. Mullet plays a mysterious chord on his guitar that seems to turn people against Afro. Mullet then gathers his new following in the club and confront Afro. He tells him and the club that Disco is no longer relevant, Rock is the new genre that reigns supreme! Before Afro can even get a word in he is blasted with another chord from Rock Mullet through the wall and out of the club. In total shock and disappointment, Afro heads home.

After being kicked off his throne, afro doubts himself. Without his club and disco Afro is nothing. His merchandise sales take a hit and he's not really sure what do with himself. Part of him even agrees that Disco isn't cool anymore. Later that night Afro goes on a self loathing, binge drinking adventure.

After stumbling around the streets blacking out Afro eventually ends up at his old mentor's apartment, Ponytail Soul. After a long deep and meaningful talk, Ponytail reminds Afro of his love of disco and tells a great tale of the local music scene from when he was young. After a barely coherent rambling about what happened, Soul tells afro of the universal AUX cord. A cord so powerful that is could control every speaker in the world to player whatever the user wanted. The cord was once used to unite all the different musical genres to play together in harmony to fight in the great war against the music labels. When the labels were taken down all of the music genres were allowed to flourish forming all of the different clubs across the city. The cord was then broken into three pieces as the clubs saw it had great power and didn't want it to fall into the wrong hands. Soul tells young Afro that to get this cord he must go to all the different clubs around the city and combine the three pieces of the cord: the tip, the ring and the sleeve.

Soul gives Afro a renewed purpose and a way to bring down Rock Mullet. With this information Afro thanks Soul and sets out to find these different night clubs. Afro gathers what's left of his groupies and tracks down the clubs in the city (these are the different levels in the game). First he visits the punk rock club, the "Goon's Getaway" where he fights its leader Punk Mohawk and the goons. The goons live a counter-culture way of life and to defeat them Afro and his crew must forget what they know about disco and dance to a faster, rougher style of music. Afro makes his way through the club and defeats Punk Mohawk. As Punk is knocked off the stage, Afro steps on his throat and takes the tip of the universal aux cord out of his pocket. Punk urges Afro not to do this and that he doesn't know what he's starting. Afro and his groupies ignore his advice and leave the club.

Afro now moves onto “The Gasworks”, the local metal-head club. The head of the club is Metal Dreads, a revered, partially deaf hardcore metal head with long braided hair. Afro heads into the club to take down Metal’s band of drummers, but the music’s too loud for him. Afro then comes up with an idea to raid the local music shop for acoustic ear plugs. Afro returns to the club with his new ear plugs and defeats the drummers with ease. Afro then faces Metal Dreads and his double kick drum technique that makes literal ripples across the mosh pit making it harder for Afro and crew to perform moves. Afro ends up besting Metal Dreads, but not before he screams “YOU’LL HAVE TO TAKE THE RING FROM MY COLD DEAD HANDS” and rips out his own heart. A slightly confused and amazed Afro takes the ring from him and admires how metal that was.

Then finally the crew moves to to “The D:// drive” to fight Pop Bun and her army of cheesy pop singers and synth players. Afro feels right at home here as the club’s style is similar to Disco and he makes quick work of the club members. It’s hinted at the audience that Afro is kind of a bad guy as he doesn’t show any mercy to the helpless dancers and club members that don’t seem to want to fight. Pop Bun seeing that she is no match for Afro tries to get away but afro cuts her down with a swift boogaloo and takes the sleeve, the final part of the cord, from her.

Now, with all three pieces of the universal aux cord Afro makes his way to back to his nightclub, which Rock Mullet has now named the “Rockit Ship”. Afro makes his way through the club to the main floor where he finds Rock Mullet casually (and unsuccessfully) trying to pick up a girl at the bar. Afro confronts him but Mullet casually brushes him off, snapping his fingers and getting one of his henchmen to take care of Afro. He goes back to hitting on the girl. Before Afro can do anything, he’s pinned down and given a bad haircut!

Afro’s hair was everything to him, the source of his dancing prowess. He’s in shock. He can hear dancers snickering at him as he makes his way to through the night club. Afro tries busting a move on the dancers laughing at him, but finds he can’t dance anymore. Afro doesn’t know what to do and as he’s about to give up, who should arrive but Ponytail Soul. He tells Afro it’s not the end of the world and to help solve his problem, pulls out a flask from his coat and gives it to Afro who takes a swig.

Afro, now more confident than ever, (and slightly tipsy) finds rock mullet on his throne and challenges him to a dance off. He puts all the pieces of the the universal AUX cord together and the speakers of the night club blare with Disco tunes. This is where the final battle between Afro disco and rock mullet takes place. Afro knocks Mullet of the dance floor into a crowd of his dancers that all seemingly hate him now. He’s kicked out and Afro returns once again to his rightful place in the club.

Afro retakes his rightful place on the throne. In the final cutscene of the game we see afro retaking his place on the throne of the club, but as the camera zooms out we see the dancers unhappily dancing in sync to the music. Afro is using disco to enslave the night club members! We cut to landmarks around the world to see that they too have also been enslaved by the hypnotic beat of disco. Plot twist, Afro was the bad guy the whole time. Rock Mullet was actually trying to free the people from his slavery...

# Instructions

The aim of the game is to knock your enemy's dancers off the dance floor while keeping yours alive. This is done by moving your dancers into certain formations specified in the move sheet. Gameplay occurs in turns, where one player performs movement for all their dancers along with performing their allotment of dance moves, followed by the other player (or game AI) doing the same for their own dancers. The player controlling Afro Disco always goes first.

## Objective:

During the levels you win by knocking all your opponents dancers off the dance floor, you lose if Afro is knocked off the floor.

During the final battle between Afro Disco and Rock Mullet you win when you knock your enemy's main dancer off the floor, or 3 of their backup dancers. You lose if this happens to you.

## Rules

- Each turn, you can move each dancer two spaces, or 1 space diagonally.
- You can perform moves at any time in your turn.
- You can only perform each move once per turn.
- Moves can be performed in any rotation of 90 degrees from the move's description
- You cannot enter another dancer's space unless pushed there by a move.
- If a dancer is knocked back, any dancers behind them will be knocked back with them.
- Moving in between units diagonally is allowed.
- Dancers pushed by moves also push any dancers they collide with.
- Note that you cannot crowd surf enemy dancers, but you can crowd surf your own dancers into enemy dancers, knocking them back.

## General Tips (Final battle):

- Try not to end your turn with your units in a line, as they are vulnerable to all being knocked back.
- Try to think about what moves your opponent can perform next turn
- If you can't perform any moves that will knock enemy dancers off the floor, try using moves anyway to make it harder for them next turn.
- Reducing the amount of enemy dancers reduces the amount of options they have
- Try to think of how moves can be combined together
- A dancer on the closest space to the edge is immune to boogies due to the way they're set up

## Game Levels

### How to Read Level Diagrams

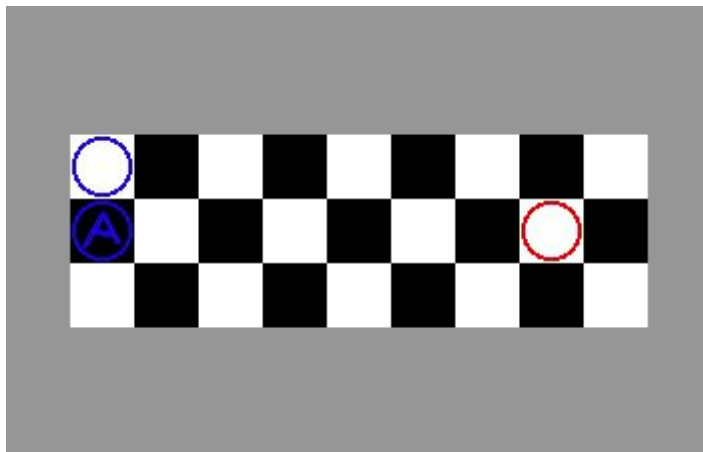
The levels in the rest of this section are presented as a black and white grid of squares. Each of these squares is a single grid space. Areas which are greyed out cannot be moved onto. Being pushed by a move into these areas is equivalent to being pushed off the dance floor. The red and blue circles on the grid show where the various dancers begin the game. Blue circles represent the initial position of Afro Disco's backup dancers. Red circles represent the initial position of enemy dancers. The blue circle with an "A" in it is the initial position of Afro Disco himself. The red circle with a "R" in it is the initial position of Rock Mullet.

### Tutorial Levels

The following three levels included as an example of level design and are exist at the beginning of the game to teach the player the core concepts of playing Afro Disco.

#### Tutorial Level One

This is the very first level of the game, and is played as Afro Disco begins learning from Ponytail Soul. The player controls Afro Disco and the one backup dancer he has left. The only enemy dancer in the level is a rocker with headphones on who does not appear to have any awareness of the world around them.

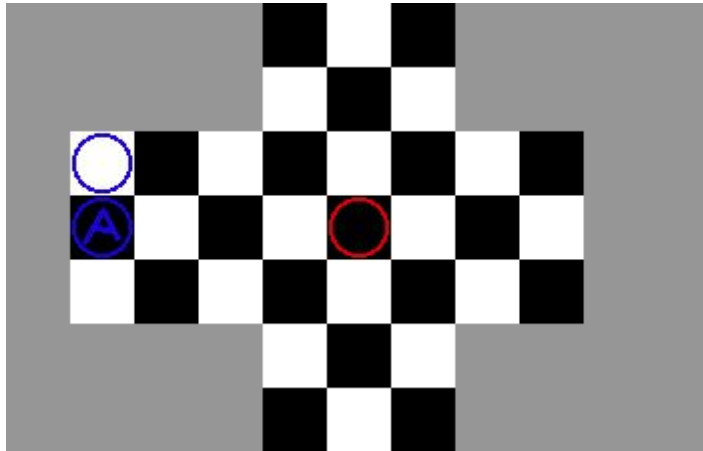


#### Enemy Behaviour

The behaviour of the enemy dancer in this level is extremely simple, it stands still and does nothing.

## Tutorial Level Two

This is the second level of the game and is played directly after Tutorial Level One. The player again controls Afro Disco and a lone backup dancer. The enemy dancer in this level is a guitarist.



### Enemy Behaviour

The enemy dancer in this level follows a simple pattern. On it's turn, it performs a Strum move and does not move any spaces. (Note that Strum is not a move available to player characters.)

### Strum

Dancers required: 1

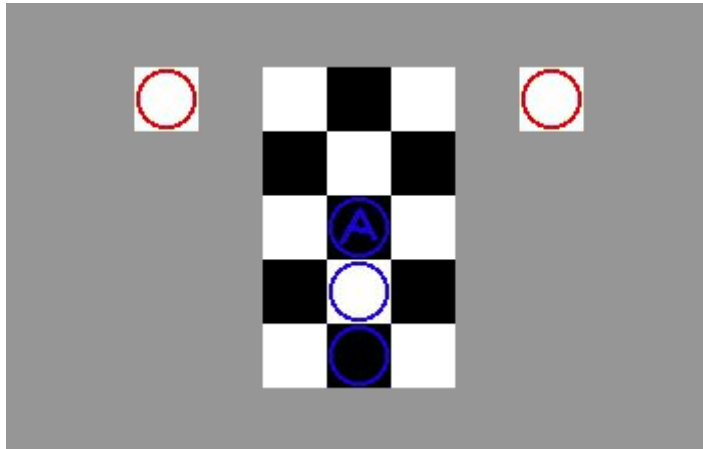
Dancer layout: Only one dancer

Hit shape: The two spaces directly above, below, to the left and to the right of the dancer

Effect: Push enemies hit one space away from the dancer

## Tutorial Level Three

This level is the first of the Punk Mohawk levels, which occur after the player has spent some time playing with a single backup dancer during the Ponytail Soul levels. The player rescued a second backup dancer at the end of Afro Disco's training with Ponytail Soul bringing the player's dance troupe to three members total.



### Enemy Behaviour

The two enemy dancers in this level are electric guitar players, and have have similar behaviour to the guitarists in Tutorial Level Two, but use Amplified Strum instead of Strum. The enemy dancer on the left always takes their turn before the one on the right.

### Amplified Strum

Dancers required: 1

Dancer layout: Only one dancer

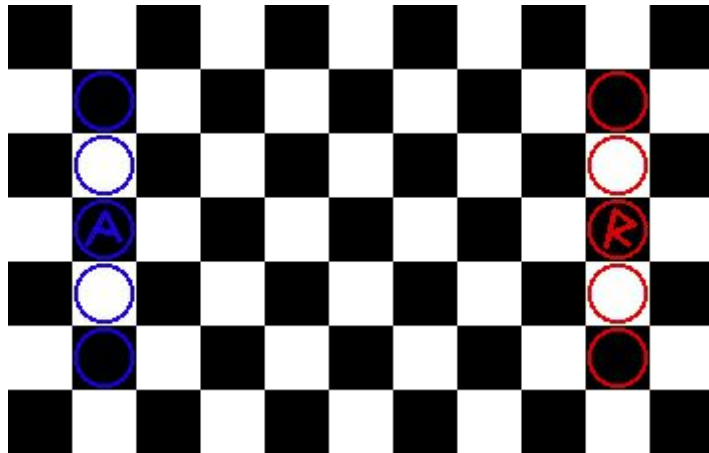
Hit shape: The three spaces directly above, below, to the left and to the right of the dancer

Effect: Push enemies hit two spaces away from the dancer



## Final Level

This level is the final level in the game. At this point, Afro Disco has freed all four of his backup dancers and taken out all of Rock Mullet's band. This final showdown between Rock Mullet and Afro Disco takes place on a full, 11 by 7 dance floor between two evenly matched teams.



### Enemy Behaviour

Rock Mullet and his backup dancers are controlled by a very hard AI which has access to precisely the same moves as the player. To simulate this for paper prototyping, the enemy should be controlled by a different person from the person performing the role of the player and should play as well as they can.

### Further Uses of this Level

As this level presents an almost perfectly symmetric scenario (the only difference is who goes first) it serves very well as a way of testing the player's moves. Playing 1v1 matches on this board, with a second player taking on the role of Rock Mullet and his dancers, is the best way to experience the gameplay of the harder levels of the game, and is also the most enjoyable way to play the paper prototype.

As there is no hidden information in this game, it is possible to play it on the same screen as your opponent, and they level would likely be included in the final game as a player vs player option played by handing off the input (most likely a phone) between the two players.

# Critical Discourse

## Story

The story follows the typical Hero's Journey structure:

**Status Quo** - Afro disco is in his nightclub, he's content dancing his time away

**Call to adventure** - Rock mullet takes everything Afro holds dear away from him

**Refusal of the call** - Afro is depressed and unmotivated to take back what's his

**Assistance** - Ponytail Soul mentors Afro and helps him overcome his troubles

**Departure + Trials** - Afro brings down the different nightclubs around the city to power the universal aux cord

**Approach** - Afro goes back to his club to take down rock mullet

**Crisis** - Afro gets a bad haircut, weakening him.

**Treasure** - Afro defeats his arch nemesis and regains his rightful place on the throne of his nightclub

**New life** - Afro uses the power of Disco to enslave the people of Boogalooington

There is no resolution to the journey as the story is cyclic. Rock Mullet (or someone similar that takes his place) then goes through the same things as Afro just did after being kicked off his throne: he gets depressed, gets help, finds a way to bring down Afro with a McGuffin (the hypnotic strum in this story) and retakes the throne.

The plot also utilizes a plot twist at the end. By not telling the audience that Afro disco is actually the antagonist, it brings into question all of the things that the player has done throughout the story and provides more depth to the characters and their motivations. For example, Ponytail Soul is always very mysterious throughout the story and always conveniently shows up to help Afro out at his lowest points. It's possible that Soul's motivations aren't truly altruistic in helping out Afro. Maybe he knows Afro is evil and is using him to gain power once Afro takes the throne.

The story also follows the three act structure:

**Act 1** - Afro is king of the city, everyone loves him, then Rock Mullet kicks him off the throne which is the first plot point

**Act 2** - Afro then goes onto take down the other clubs around town, and once this happens he is ready to activate the universal Aux cord which is the second plot point

**Act 3** - The story intensifies with afro losing his hair and reaches its climax with the final fight between Afro disco and Rock Mullet. The act then resolves by afro retaking the throne.

The characters in the story also take cues from traditional TV tropes so that the audience can understand the characters more easily. Eg both Afro Disco and Rock Mullet are arrogant and hotheaded celebrity rock stars that usually get everything they ask for due to their fame.

The story uses the universal AUX cord as a macguffin to advance the plot to the next stage. The following parts of the hero's trial where Afro takes down the different clubs are

effectively “plot-coupons”; When Afro collects enough of them, the story advances. The plot uses an “action-plot” structure where there is a clear goal throughout the story and one thing is revealed to the audience at a time.

The story in game uses passive storytelling initially to introduce the player to the story (Afro getting kicked off his throne as an intro cut scene). But then tells the rest of the story actively (the player defeating the different clubs around Boogalooington).

## General and Game Rules

### Target Audience

- The target audience is primarily casual players who are interested in the idea of a turn based tactics game and are looking for a friendly path into the genre
- No hidden information is included to help cater to casual players
- No health or other highly graduated numbers are included to help cater to casual players
- Pushing enemies around makes it very clear how close a dancer is to being removed from play
  - Allusion to Super Smash Brothers, a game which is very popularly played casually
- Music theme is approachable to casual players
  - This contrasts with the historical and military themes of many tactics and strategy games, which are less approachable
- “Simple to learn, difficult to master”
  - Low complexity, high depth
  - This maintains accessibility for casual players while allowing core players to dive deep into the mechanics should they want to
- Turn based with nothing forcing the player to make decisions quickly
  - This results in low stress, which is good for casual players
- The intrinsic skill increases over time, which is good for casual players

### Thematics

- Moves fit the dance theme very well
- The gridded floor works perfectly as a disco dance floor with coloured squares

### Movement

- Movement is limited to two spaces to give small windows to set up moves so as to not make displacement irrelevant
- All of a player’s dancers move each turn to allow for more interesting combos and speed up gameplay

## Moves

- Multiple moves can be used per turn in order to allow combos
- Each move is limited to one use per turn in order to make combos more interesting by forcing them to include different moves
  - Additionally, this forms a “safety valve”, a game design heuristic which limits the effects of a mechanic to put a cap on the power for strategies which attempt to abuse loopholes

## Conga Line

- Very straightforward move
  - This is sensible for the first move to be learned
  - It requires the fewest dancers of any move
  - Afro Disco is not required and his position is irrelevant
- The move has some complexity in increasing range by having more dancers in the line
  - This complexity is completely removed in early levels because there are only two dancers
- Being in a line is generally bad, because if your front dancer is pushed all the others will be pushed too, introducing a risk versus reward decision to Conga Line
- The line fires out in both directions, which allows for clever, complicated moves (increased depth), without adding any extra mental load for players who don't want to use it like that (minimal increase in complexity)

## Boogaloo

- The only move which can push an enemy dancer sideways relative to the direction of the move's targeting line
- Range scales with number of dancers
- Afro Disco required and his position determines the move's effect
  - Moves like this are important to make Afro Disco feel more important than the backup dancers
- Cannot be used to push an enemy dancer off an edge they are standing right next to due to the way the front dancers of the move must be positioned
- Pushes the enemy three squares, one more square than the enemy can move back after being hit
- Requires three dancers, which means it has no chance of confusing players in the early levels when they have only two dancers
- Afro Disco has to be at the front of the move, opening him up to being counterattacked

## Booty Call

- This is a defensive move, and cannot be used to push enemy dancers around
- The move can be very powerful, pulling allied dancers to safety, and so it's made difficult to pull off by requiring both Afro Disco and an extra dancer
- Because the move is defensive and could make the opponent feel "cheated" out of removing a dancer from the board, it leaves the dancers in a line, which exposes them to being pushed as a group
- Requires three dancers, which means it has no chance of confusing players in the early levels when they have one two dancers
- Requires nothing blocking the moving dancers' paths to avoid messy edge cases with enemy dancers in the way
  - Strange rules like would be required to deal with these cases would increase the game's complexity for little increase in depth, which is poor design

## Crowd Surf

- Requires four dancers, which means it has no chance of confusing players in the early levels when they have only two or three dancers
- Requires three dancers, which means it has no chance of confusing players in the early levels
- Can be used to push enemies three spaces, which is one more space than a Conga Line
- Can be comboed with Conga Line to move an enemy up to five spaces, or two spaces from a range of four spaces, however it leaves two dancers a long way from the rest of the player's party and ready to be counterattacked

# Level Design

## Tutorial Level One

- Introduces the following new mechanics to the player:
  - Movement
  - Performing moves
  - Using the Conga Line move
  - Removing enemy dancers from the grid
  - New enemy dancer type, the headphone listener
- All of the new mechanics introduced must be utilised to complete the level, forming a hard gate where players must have some understanding of the basics before proceeding
- The player's dancers start in the position to perform a Conga Line, so the player will likely see the move ready indicator when they start the level
  - When ready to perform a move the button to do so has eye-catching visual effects, ensuring the player notices it

- Once the player moves a character (again, there are visual prompts to do this) the Conga Line indicator will disappear, ensuring the player notices that positioning is important

## Tutorial Level Two

- Introduces the following new mechanics to the player:
  - Enemy moves
  - Player dancers being pushed
  - New enemy dancer type, the guitarist
- It's possible but very difficult to end up in a position in this level where you lose a dancer, but very unlikely
  - As this is the second level, it's better for the player to soft fail than hard fail by dying
- If the player simply rushes towards the enemy dancer they'll be knocked back
  - It's not going to knock any of their dancers off the floor, but it makes it very likely that they'll experience being pushed by an enemy move for the first time here
  - The arm of the cross shaped level where the player's dancers begin is longer to make it harder to lose a dancer

## Tutorial Level Three

- This level takes place a dozen or so levels after the previous two examples
- Introduces the following new mechanics to the player:
  - Increased range on Conga Line from the new dancer
  - New enemy dancer type, the electric guitarist
- This is an easier level than the previous set, as it's the first level of the new set (Punk Mohawk's levels), as so is a low point on the game's interest curve after the peak at the end of the last set of levels
- While the enemies are both in range for a two-dancer Conga line, a three-dancer Conga Line is likely to be used to complete the level
  - This is not a hard gate which requires the player to use the three-dancer Conga Line to proceed, the next level would include this
    - Completing the level without using the three-dancer Conga Line requires some clever thinking, so most players will use the three-dancer Conga Line
    - The Amplified Strum move used by enemy dancers in this level will knock the player's dancers off the dancefloor if they remain in a two-dancer Conga Line after knocking one of the enemy dancers off the dancefloor
  - The player's dancers start in the position to perform a three-dancer Conga Line, so the player will likely see the move ready indicator when they start the level

## Final Level

- This level does not introduce any new mechanics, as it is the final level
- The size of this level (7x11) is carefully selected based on the player moves in the game
  - The 7 square height stops a Boogaloo on a dancer in the middle row from removing it in a single move
  - The 11 square length allows each player some time to orient their dancers before any conflict can occur
  - The 11 square length causes the most powerful move combo in the game (that is so far discovered) to almost but not quite remove any dancer from the board
    - It requires 3 squares for the dancers performing the move, has a max range of 5 and knocks the target back 2 spaces, for a total of 10 spaces, one less than 11
  - The 1 square border around each group of dancers creates a visually appealing padding around the dancers
  - 11x7 is also used as the maximum grid size for all other levels, making this last level the largest in the game
  - 11x7 interacts nicely with 16:9 screens, which many phones employ as this is the aspect ratio of 1080p full HD
- The dancers start one square in from the edge to help protect them from being removed from the board before they can do anything
- The near-perfect symmetry between Afro Disco and Rock Mullet ties into the final reveal of the cyclic nature of the story

## Paper Prototype Materials

The following are included with the submission to be used for playing the paper prototype:

- Game boards for all four levels
- Sheet of moves available to Afro Disco and Rock Mullet
  - Where the sheet references Afro Disco in the move, Rock Mullet performs that role for his dance group
- 4 white chess pawns to be used for Afro Disco's backup dancers
- 1 white chess king to be used for Afro Disco
- 4 black chess pawns to be used for Rock Mullet's backup dancers and the enemy dancers in each of the tutorial levels
- 1 black chess king to be used for Rock Mullet

*We request that these materials are returned to David Moore after you have completed marking the assignment*

Images courtesy of:

[The atlantic](#)

<http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2014/08/the-greatest-line-every-simpsons-character-ever-delivered/378879/>

[The simpsons wiki](#)

<https://simpsonswiki.com/wiki/Hippie>

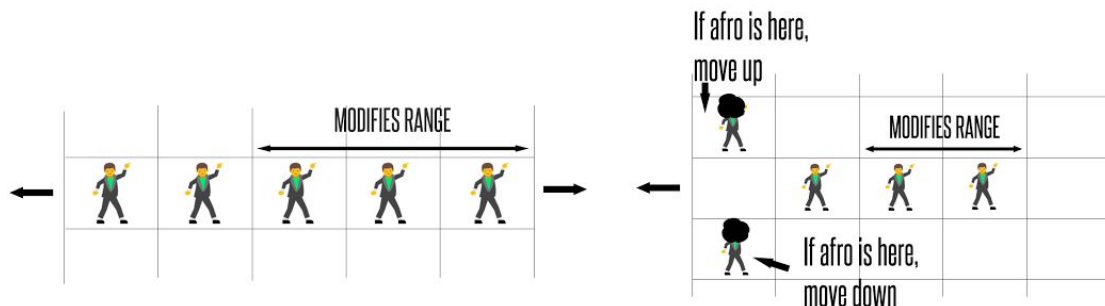
[The simpsons](#)

<http://vignette2.wikia.nocookie.net/simpsons/images/c/cf/Sadgasm1.jpg/revision/latest?cb=20120603165906>



# AFRO DISCO

## MOVE LIST

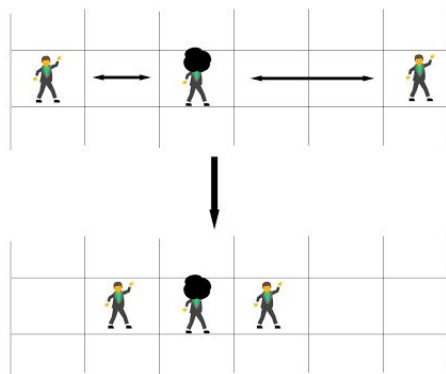


### CONGA LINE

REQUIRED: 2-5 Dancers  
RANGE: Amount of dancers used  
 Pushes anyone in range back two spaces  
 Fires in both directions

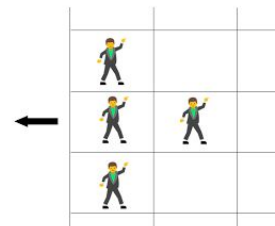
### BOOGALOO

REQUIRED: 2-4 Dancers + Afro  
RANGE: 1 + Extra  
 Moves the first dancer in range 3 places up or down, depending on which place afro is in.



### BOOTY CALL

REQUIRED: 2 Dancers + Afro  
RANGE: Infinite  
 Afro can call back dancers to his side if there is nothing blocking their path

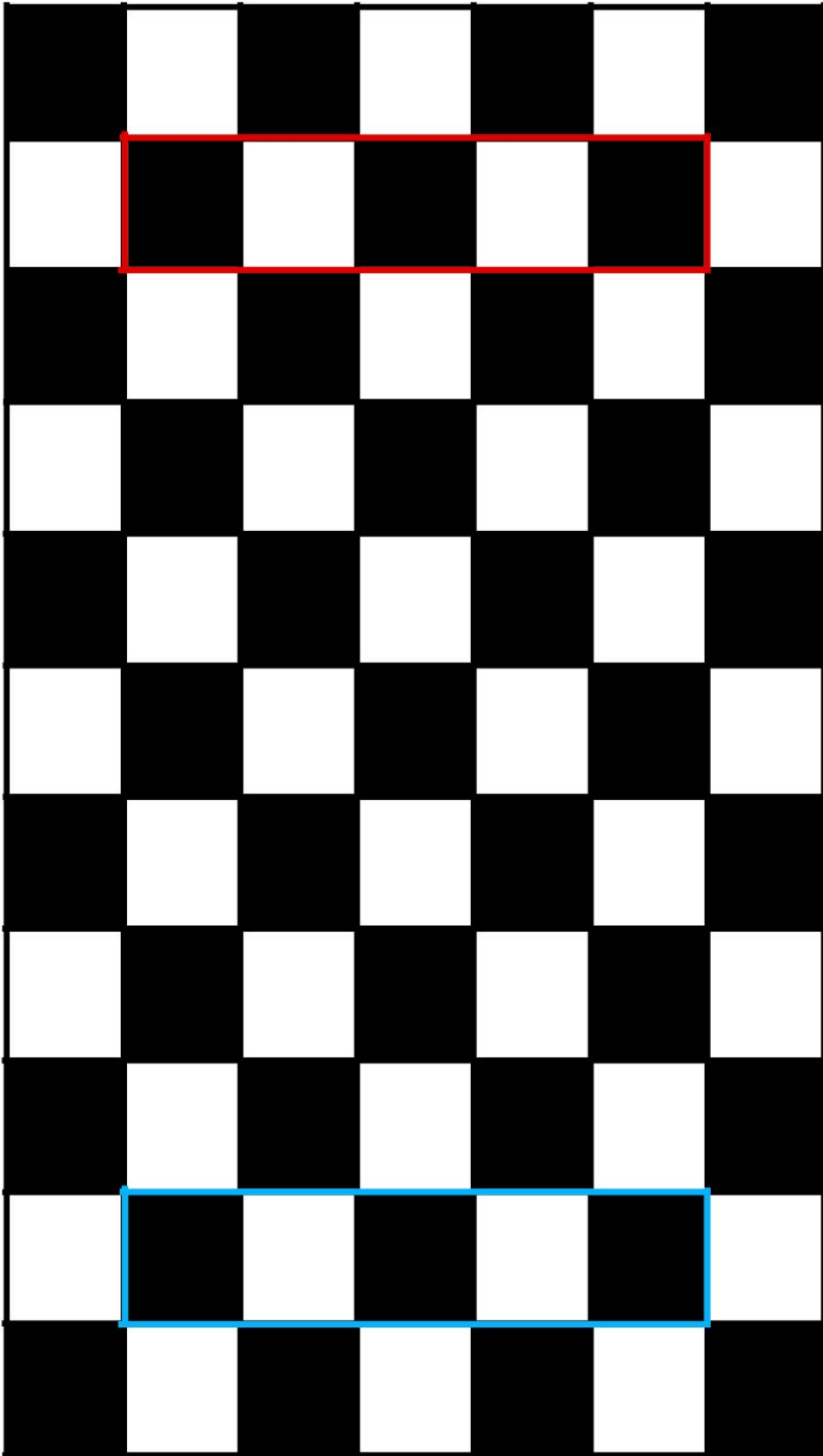


### CROWD SURF

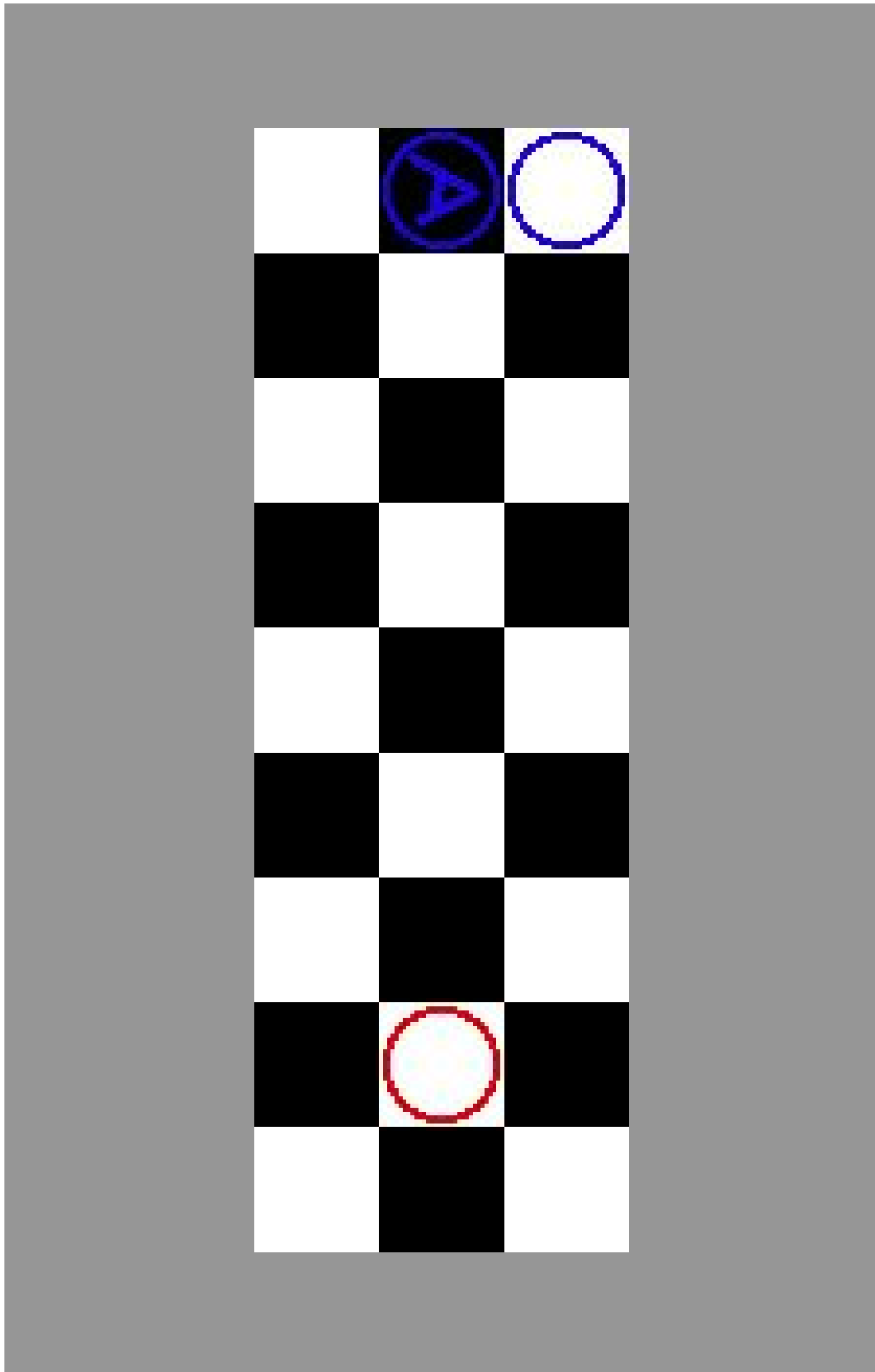
REQUIRED: 4 Dancers  
RANGE: 3  
 Shoot the middle dancer 3 spaces in the direction the move is facing.



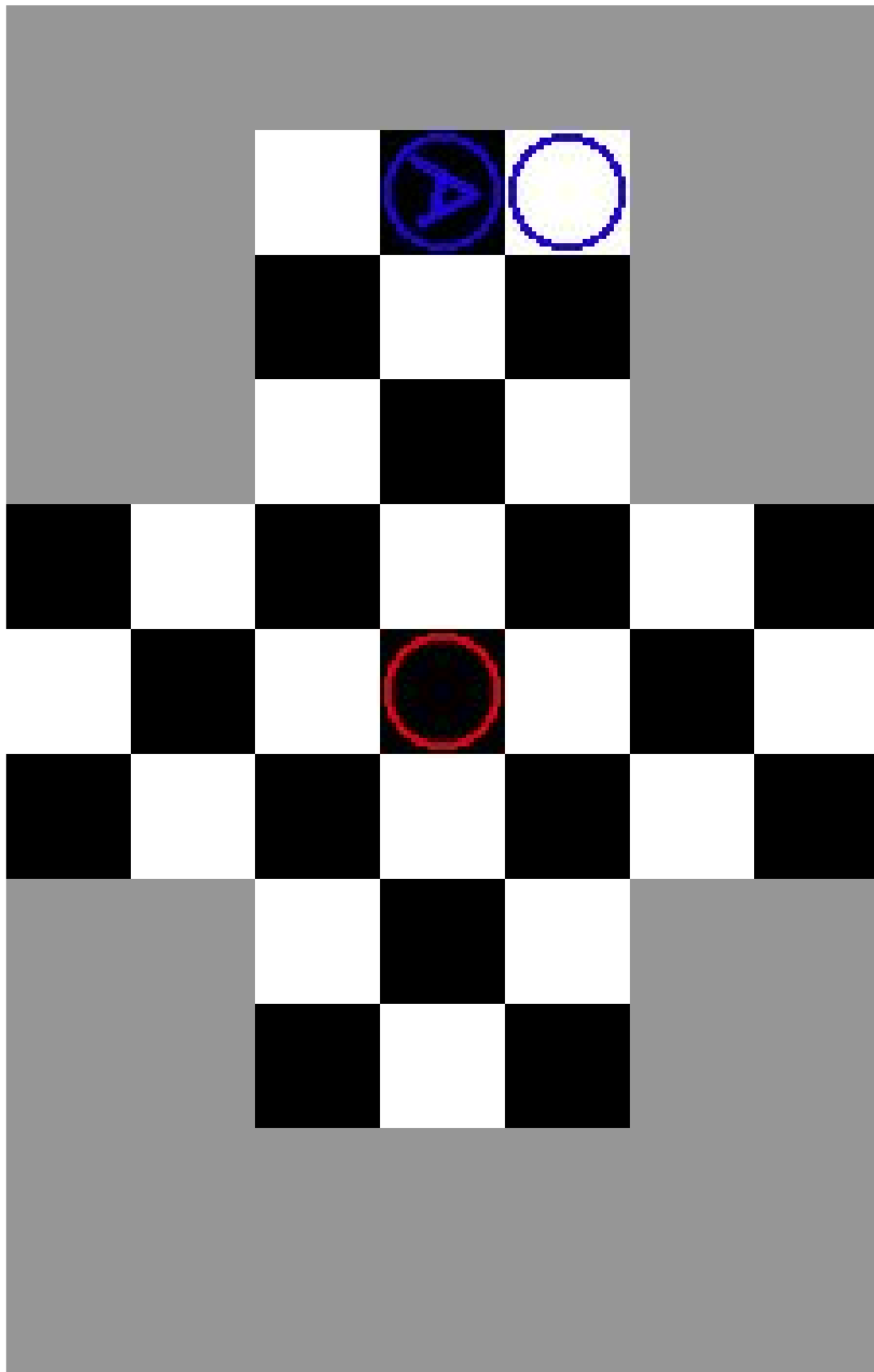
# AFRO DISCO



## TUTORIAL LEVEL ONE



## TUTORIAL LEVEL TWO



### TUTORIAL LEVEL THREE

