



# Hungry Space Cat

Analysing a Video Game for Accessibility

# What?



*Hungry Space Cat* is a 2D-feline-inspired arcade game featuring a hungry astronaut cat pursuing purple space bugs. At the same time, it has to evade UFOs, flying hamburgers, asteroids, ghost dolls, spaceships, snails, or a combination of these opponents to keep on pursuing the adorable pickups (Pal, 2024).

Created by yours truly as a final project for a Computer Games Development BSc at the University of London, *Hungry Space Cat* aims to offer a diverse range of players a video game that is customisable, accessible and fun (Pal, 2024), thus paying tribute to the gentle gameplay that the creator of Pac-Man, Toru Iwatani, intended for his game (Retro Gamer, 2016).

The game was written using the Unity engine and C#, utilising 2D development to honour the original design of arcade games (Pal, 2024); future work will further develop the game's features to make it even more accessible and appealing.

# Why?



Video games are becoming increasingly popular with a wide range of players, often serving as the only platform that enables them to communicate with others on an equal footing. Furthermore, video games frequently provide stress relief and entertainment, contributing to feelings of well-being, thus emphasising the importance of designing games that prioritise accessibility (Cairns, 2019).

Often, video games are made with a particular audience in mind, without addressing the complex needs of those who may require more adjustments. Commercial concerns also usually trump the need to adapt a game for an audience with specific needs (Cairns, 2019).

# How?



For the following project, code studies will be the main critical approach to draw upon. According to Marino Mark (2017), as interest in programming languages grows, the need for them to become more readable to a broader range of people has become vital (p. 472), especially in the context of video games.

More precisely, one way of looking at code is to view how it interacts not just with humans but also with other systems; programming should be seen as a creative process, framed by the fact that the people writing the code come from a variety of backgrounds. Thus, in such a line of enquiry, code is not analysed in terms of what it does, but who it was written by (Mark, 2017, p. 472-473). In terms of video games, this means that how they were developed is of significant importance.

# References

Cairns, P. A., Power, C. D., Barlet, M., & Haynes, G. (2019). Future design of accessibility in games: A design vocabulary. *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies*, 131, 64–71.

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Pal, A. (2024). *Hungry Space Cat* (Final project documentation). GitHub.

[https://github.com/HedonisticOpportunist/Hungry-Space-Cat/blob/main/Documentation/Hungry\\_Space\\_Cat.pdf](https://github.com/HedonisticOpportunist/Hungry-Space-Cat/blob/main/Documentation/Hungry_Space_Cat.pdf)

Retro Gamer. (2016). *Retro Gamer book of arcade classics* (2nd ed.). Imagine Publishing.