

Otter This World

Game Document

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Concept:

A simple otter-rancher tending to their ranch suddenly has their day interrupted when all of their otters are abducted by a massive spacecraft, so they must board the ship in order to rescue them. Now onboard the foreign ship, the rancher has to navigate their way through the futuristic corridors full of all sorts of technological contraptions in search of their missing otters; Along the way, being forced to move and platform across various crates, reroute power supplies, raise and lower the water level of flooded regions, as well as all sorts of other puzzles on this high tech but seemingly abandoned ship.

Finally coming across one of the captured otters held within a Stasis - Pod, they are able to release it before the ship could perform any more experiments on it. Gaining the assistance of the now freed otters, the rancher can now access the ship further in order to save the rest and escape.

Freed otters traveling alongside the rancher assist the rancher by lifting them up to reach higher platforms and carrying the rancher across deep water, since the rancher cannot swim and sinks like a rock. Some otters, having been altered by the experimentation, have gained unique features which end up being useful in solving the various electrical and water based puzzles of the ship.

Going deeper and deeper into the ship in search of their abducted companions, the rancher discovers how different regions of the ship contain unique decorations, room layouts, and interactable contraptions coming together in ways making exploration much more complex than it was in the regions that came before. But the rancher is determined to free their otters and return everybody home safely.

Objective:

The player's goal is to explore the ship and rescue your otters from experimentation. Along the way, they will be able to discover various different power ups to help them do so. Power ups, obtained via collected wearable Gear items, give the player the ability to reach previously unreachable areas by expanding their oxygen and stamina meters or giving them more complex movement techniques.

Another way to reach places previously could not is by bringing different otters with you as you explore. When freeing a captive otter from their Stasis-Pod, you have the option to either have the otter travel alongside you, or send it back to the main HUB where you can choose to travel with it later. Different types of otters have different unique abilities, so choosing which otters to have with you (since you can only keep so many otters with you at once) gives you access to many different routes to take and environmental puzzles to solve.

Discover Gear and free otters to be able to traverse the entire ship.

Otter this World is a 2D puzzle platformer. The player leaves the HUB with their preferred selection of Gear abilities and otter companions, not being able to change either until they reach the next HUB (or mini-HUB) area, or if they return to the one they previously left from.

The pacing of the game is not meant to be fast-paced, high precision platforming, but rather a more casual platformer where you can take your time getting to the next room via any method you choose to take with the given interactable objects in the room and prior-chosen moveset. However, this approach includes letting the player be able to blitz through the room if they already know how to approach the room and want to get through quickly. (Allowing this fast-paced approach for both quicker-backtracking and speedrunning purposes.)

Scope:

Game World:

The entire game world is contained within the one spacecraft, with a futuristic feeling to every environment onboard. The ship has seemingly been long abandoned, where the only signs of activity are coming from onboard machinery. The ship is divided into different regions, each with their own unique purpose in mind, but a common thread amongst all of them is the complex machinery (wires, levers, mechanical doors) and the importance of water (pipes in the background, drippy ceilings) for both gameplay and environmental decorative reasons.

Different Areas:

- The Hanger, where the player begins. Emphasis on moving crates and rising platforms.
- The HUB, the location the player will see the most of throughout the playthrough. Serene, natural environment where plant life began overtaking the long-unused machinery and pseudo-pond formed from a broken pipe in the background. Freed otters not with the player seen by this pond as well. Multiple exits to the room in all four directions leading off to the rest of the game. Here, the player is prompted to save their game and change their Gear and otter selections.
- Mini-HUBs, small rooms inbetween hallways of different regions that allow the player to save and contains a shortcut back to the main HUB that can be taken in both ways once the Mini-HUB is discovered.
- Research Hallway, early-game area connecting the HUB to the Laboratory. Theming should transition from more abandoned (mossy/pipes backgrounds, crate puzzles) to more active (flashing computers/lab equipment backgrounds, lever puzzles)
- Hydro-Engine Room, pipe emphasis background, more water-based puzzles. Additional steam mechanic.
- Library, computer servers in background, fewer water-based puzzles, more Power-Source based puzzles. Additional darkness mechanic.

- Flooded Corridors (Shortcut from Hydro-Engine Region Mini-HUB to HUB) No changing water level mechanic.
- Maintenance Tunnels (Shortcut Library Mini-HUB to HUB) Flickering lights and active wire hazard mechanics.

Art Direction:

Stylized, simple, cell-shaded-esque graphics.

Tone:

Along with the more casual-pacing to the game and simplistic art direction, the game should never take itself too seriously. No heavy subject matter should be addressed, and any sense of graphic content, even in the slightest, should be avoided. The scientific experiments should be presented more along the lines of granting super-powers than anything else.

G.U.I.

Menu Settings:

- New Game
- Continue
- Load Game
- Options
- Quit

The game overwrites the Autosave file when entering the HUB or any Mini-HUB, and in those locations, the prompt for a manual save is displayed on screen as well.

In-game UI:

Constant:

- Oxygen Meter, Top-left
- Stamina Meter, Top-left (under O2)
- Otter Party, Top-right

Occasional:

- Interaction Prompt, when near an interactable item
- Jump Meter, when charging a high jump*

Otter Party displays the icons of the otters you are currently traveling with. The icon is in-color if they are currency beside you and grayed-out if ordered to wait elsewhere.

Mechanics:

Player Mechanics:

Default:

The player is able to move either left or right at a walking or sprinting pace, where sprinting costs a small amount of Stamina. They are also able to jump the height of a single tile / crate. However, the player is not able to swim, instead they will sink to the bottom of the water. While under water, the player falls at a slower speed and will lose oxygen from their oxygen meter. Completely depleting the oxygen meter will reset you to the beginning of your current room.

Gear:

The player will have a variety of equitable gear pieces discovered and/or unlocked throughout their playthrough. Gear can be equipped by the player in their inventory menu for additional movement options. Some examples are:

Wall-Jump Boots:

- Allows the player to jump off of walls when making direct contact against it. Equitable in Boots Slot.

Scuba Suit:

- Gives the player a larger oxygen meter when submerged. Equitable in Helmet Slot.

Spring Boots:

- Hold the jump button to charge and release to jump higher. Equitable in Boots Slot. (Does not provide extra height off of existing Bounce Pads.)

And More.

Otter Mechanics:

Otters are rescued from Stasis-Pods at the end of certain levels. Upon freeing an otter, you can choose to let it follow alongside you or send it to the central HUB. You can only have up to three otters with you at a time (at first). Some otters obtained special abilities since being abducted, and can help in solving certain types of puzzles encountered throughout the ship.

Otter Types:

Default Otter:

- Follows the player until given an order. Swims at a slow speed when ordered to enter a body of water. Can wait on a Pressure Plate weighing it down by one and acts as a platform the player can jump off of while sitting. All otters can do what the Default Otter can unless otherwise stated.

Sea Otter:

- Does not swim when ordered to enter a body of water, but instead tosses the player upwards, acting as a Bounce Pad. Behaves as Default otherwise.

River Otter:

- Swims at a fast speed, even against a strong water current. Behaves as Default otherwise.

Electric Otter:

- Gains a charge from Power-Sources and carries this charge until used at a Power-Spot. While charged, it cannot travel through water or act as a platform for the player.

Giant Otter:

- An otter that grows to twice the original size when given a command to swim or wait where it is at. It also weighs twice as much for weight-based puzzles.

And More.

Otters will be unlocked upon completing certain levels and the type of otter unlocked is predetermined (not randomized) in story gameplay.

Environmental Mechanics:

Interactable Objects:

Objects found across most levels that the player can interact with. Some objects are connected to other objects via wires and cannot be directly interacted with by the player. The player must activate the powering device in order to affect the powered device.

Crates:

- Can be pushed by the player from the sides or jumped off of as a platform when stepped upon. Crates float in water, giving the player non-otter based solutions for crossing wide bodies of water. Crates can be stacked by pushing one onto another, useful for creating tall movable platforms.

Pressure Plates:

- Activate when stepped upon by the player, covered by a crate, or sat upon by an otter ordered to do so. They are weight based and may require more than one object atop it to activate.

Levers:

- Only activated by the player. Stays set until switched off.

Buttons:

- Only activated by the player. Only remains activated for a short amount of time.

Doors:

- Movable walls that block the player and need to be powered to open and close.

Lifts:

- Platforms that either raise and lower or move horizontally when powered.

Power-Sources:

- Locations where Generators (and certain otters) can be charged.

Generators:

- Crates that gain charges from Power-Sources. They do not float and electrify water when charged. Contact with electrified water resets the room.

Power-Spots:

- Power connected doors and lifts when given a charge.

Otter-Return Stations:

- Locations where a player can recall all otters ordered to wait elsewhere across the level. Typically found near the beginning and end of levels.

Water Height:

An important aspect of the game is changing the height of various bodies of water. Water height can be raised and lowered by a predetermined amount at Water Pumps. Water Pumps raise the water level to a specific height when powered and lower the water level when not. Water Pumps are visually connected to their corresponding water bodies via pipes. If multiple Water Pumps are connected to the same body of water, then multiple pumps may be required to raise the water fully.