TBD Game

DESIGN DOCUMENT

By Laynoxer for the Pirate Software Game Jam 16

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## 

## Introduction

### Game Summary Pitch

**TBD** is a physics based platformer where the player is a handgun and you have to use the recoil of your shots to move yourself while still needing the bullets originating from those same shots to defeat enemies and destroy obstacles in your way

### Inspiration

**Jump King**

Jump king is a high difficulty precision platform game that puts you in control of the jump king, who has the objective of climbing a very tall tower while being able only to walk left to right and do jumps that cant be controlled while in the air. Failing these jumps can be very punishing as there are no checkpoints and a fall can take you several steps/levels back.

**Getting over it**

Getting Over It with Bennett Foddy is a platform game developed by the titular Bennett Foddy, that has a similar concept as jump king, where you have to climb a perilous mountain using unconventional ways, and if you fail, you can lose most if not all your progress. Oh, and about that unconventional way, you can only use a sledgehammer to climb because you are stuck inside a metal pot, yeah...

### Player Experience

In a single screen dungeon for each of the **15 levels**, the player will solve a short but perhaps complex puzzle **requiring planning and management**. The player must learn and use their knowledge of the interactions between the player cells and various environmental items to understand how to pass through each level.

### Platform

The game is developed to be released on windows PC

### Development Software

* Gamemaker Studio version 2.3 for programming
* Aseprite for graphics and UI
* FL Studio 12 for all music and SFX

### Genre

Singleplayer, platform, casual

### Target Audience

Without heavy or complicated ideas, and intuitive-to-grasp mechanics, this game is marketed to at least **casual game players** who are up for puzzling challenges as well as more veteran players up for solving complicated problems

## Concept

### Gameplay overview

The player controls a mass of player cells, each with **individual status**, but **moves as a collective**. Individual cells may die or be created which influences the total shape of the mass. By navigating through each level, the player must **strategically manipulate the shape** of the mass to be able to pass around or through obstacles to reach the goal.

### Theme Interpretation (Sacrifice Is Strength)

**‘Sacrifice’ interpretation - The player voluntarily offers something they would otherwise use to their benefit to then gain something else of use in its stead.**

Within the context of a puzzle game, rather than a sacrifice strictly being an optional upgrade of sorts, the timing, placement, and orientation a ‘sacrifice’ within this game instead occurs to allow the solution or progression of the puzzle. Only through careful planning of movement to remove parts of the player’s mass can the player make their way to the exit. ***One must often sacrifice a part of the player mass to pass through specific areas as they may be too large or encompass the wrong shape.***

### Primary Mechanics

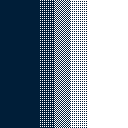
| **Mechanic** | **Animated Mockup**  ***(Art not necessarily final)*** |
| --- | --- |
| **Walls** a  A stopping force to prevent a player too large to access a certain area. Otherwise to simply restrict movement. |  |
| **Spikes** a  When a player cell walks on top of a spike, that cell will die and further simplify the player mass. |  |
| **Holes** a  The player mass can walk freely over a hole as long as at least one cell is on a floor tile. If the entire mass is over the hole, the entire player mass dies. |  |
| **Fruit** a  If a player cell moves over a fruit, it will eat the fruit and generate a new cell on the ***opposite side***of the mass it is a part of. |  |

### Secondary Mechanics

| **Mechanic** | **Animated Mockup**  ***(Art not necessarily final)*** |
| --- | --- |
| **Independence** a  If two player masses happen to separate, they will still move synchronously but interact with the environment independently. If then connected again, the two masses will join to act as one. |  |
| **Set Spikes** a  When a player cell walks on top of a set spike, ***after moving off*** of it, it will then become a regular spike trap |  |

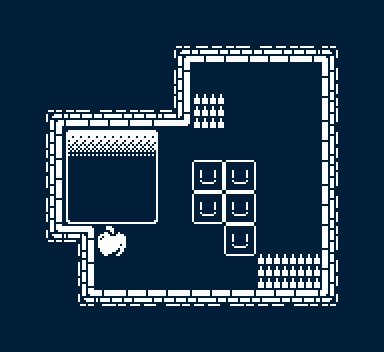
## Art

### Theme Interpretation

While maintaining the very limited color palette theme, the sole use of black in white seems way too common, and a bit harsh as a color scheme for a relaxing puzzle game. To circumvent this, a soft, **dark blue color** will act as the unique accent color as opposed to black with white being the primary, carrying color to base the sprites off of.

### Design

A very **minimalistic** approach will go into the design of the game, heavily relying on the severe contrast of the limited colors to provide detail. Though, the design still is clean and smooth in the sense that, the use of many shades of a color will not be as present to confront the **retro style** and pixel art.



*\*Not an actual puzzle/level, merely a full example of the tileset and art style\**

## Audio

### Music

To add to the overall theme and vibe of the game, there will be minimalism incorporated into the music. Heavy use of reverb and effects to fill space within the few instruments. Bass and drums will generally constitute the majority of tracks with accompanying softer sounds. Mainly through synthesized sounds rather than acoustic will further suggest the retro style.

### Sound Effects

To add more flare and polish to the experience, a multitude of environmental sound effects will give weight and feedback to the player’s actions. Rather than foley, or otherwise realistic sounds, synthesized blips, bloops, and whooshes are used.

## Game Experience

### UI

On top of the rigid pixel art constituting the rest of the art, a more smooth, higher definition style will be incorporated in the UI. Utilizing many shades of white and black allowed in the art restriction, anti-aliasing is used to further emphasize the UI.

### Controls

**Keyboard**

Arrow keys / WASD  
**Gamepad**

Dpad

## Development Timeline

**MINIMUM VIABLE PRODUCT**

| **#** | **Assignment** | **Type** | **Status** | **Notes** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Design Document | Other | In progress |  |
| 2 | Create player and wall assets | Art | Not started | Prototype for GDD is done |
| 3 | Main menu theme | Audio | Not started | Can be really short, player won’t be on main menu for long |
| 4 | UI / Main menu | Coding | Not started | Button UI, screen transition, title screen |
| 5 | Level theme | Audio | Not started | Should be more substantial and not annoying |
| 6 | Simple player movement | Coding | Finished | Move single cells around and collide with walls |
| 7 | Complex player movement | Coding | In progress | Multi cell masses act together to collide with walls |
| 8 | Spikes and holes with player interactions | Coding | Not started | Implement spike and holes mechanics |
| 9 | Fruit interaction | Coding | Not started |  |
| 10 | Special effects | Art | Not started | Dust particles during movement |
| 11 | Player animation | Art | Not started | Idle blinks, movement polish |
| 12 | Sound effects | Audio | Not started | Player movement, UI interaction |
| 13 | Pause menu | Coding | Not started | Access to the main menu or resetting the level |
| 14 | Level select menu | Coding | Not started |  |
| 15 | Level design (1-7) | Other | Not started | Create levels 1 through 7 |
| 16 | Level design (8-15) | Other | Not started | Create levels 7 through 15 |
| 17 | Any extra polish | Other | Not started |  |
| 18 | SUBMIT | Other | Not started | Create Itch Page and upload |

**BEYOND (if ahead of schedule / extra time)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Undo | Other | Not started | At any point, the player may undo their move, any movement, creation, or destruction of a player cell is reversed |
| Extra levels | Other | Not started |  |
| Settings Menu | Coding | Finished | Volume slider, fullscreen toggle |