

Final Fantasy XIV

The game was chosen due to it being my most played game in recent years.

The Game Mechanics

The most important ones?

The most important game mechanics are the quests, the jobs/classes, the duty finder, currencies and loot.

Why are they important?

The quests that allow the player to experience the story of the game and earn certain extra rewards such as in-game currency, achievements or experience points for the job they are playing as. Figure 1. shows the player what step they are on in the story.

The jobs, or classes if under level 30, in the game allow for different ways of defeating encounters in the game. While all jobs can do damage to enemies, some have their own specialisation or playstyle. Some are damage dealers that exclusively damage enemies, while others may tank and mitigate damage or heal other players. Jobs also have the option of choosing whether they are magical or physical damage dealers or if they want to be melee or ranged. Tanks are melee physical and healers are ranged magical by default. Figure 2. shows the different jobs the different jobs that can be played as.

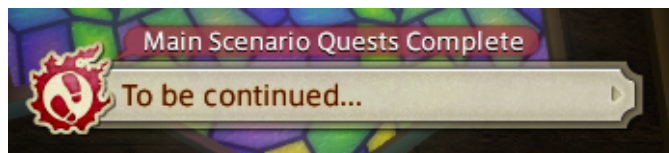


Figure 1. Shows the next story progression step



Figure 2. Showing the jobs in-game

The duty finder allows the player to queue up to the different duties in the game. Some of these duties include dungeons, trials, raids, and guildhests. Most of these duties are required to progress through the game. Roulettes can also be accessed. Figure 3 shows the different kinds of roulettes.

Currencies such as gil are dropped by enemies as loot. Gil can be used nearly for everything from player customization and progression to the market board to buy an assortment of items. Other currencies such as toimestones can be used for player gear upgrades which come from completing certain duties. Other currencies such as wolf makes can be earned from PVP. Figure 4 shows the different types of battle currencies.



Figure 3. the duty finder with roulettes shown Figure 4. the battle tab in the currency window

Finally the loot, which drops from bosses or trash mobs allows the player to collect items of worth to sell to vendors or to sell to other players. Certain items are used to upgrade the gear of the character, thus improving the item level of the character. Figure 5 shows an example of an item earned through a raid encounter.

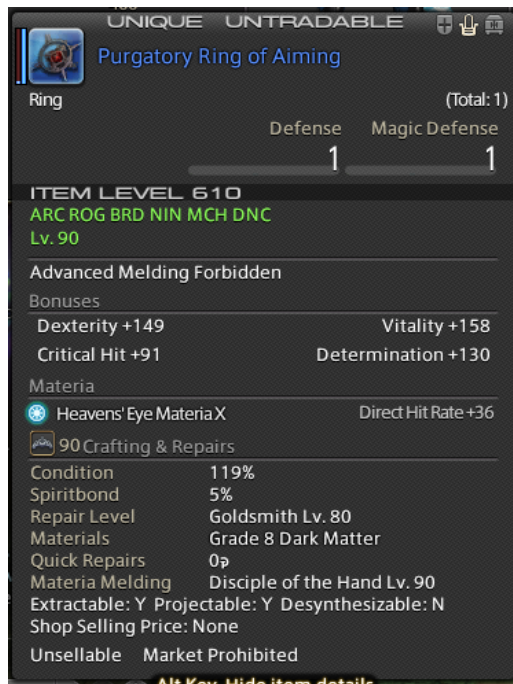


Figure 5. Purgatory Ring of Aiming, an item that can be earned from the Abyssos raid tier

Which of them overlap?

They all overlap as they are required for the main loop of the game which is called the Main Scenario. They are also needed for the end-game loop, which is not fully necessary in progression.

How do they overlap / support each other?

The quests allow for the player to progress through the main story or many of the other side-stories in the game. Certain quests lead up to duties that require other players to complete with. While forming a party through the duty finder the player must select a job or class as nearly all duties require a specific amount of certain roles. For example the leveling roulette requires one tank, one healer and two damage dealers. On top of that, certain duties cannot be accessed if the item level of a character is too low. Once inside a duty, loot such as gear, mounts, minions, gill or tomes can drop to allow further progression and to strengthen the player character.

The Loops

Feedback loops

Positive Loops

An example of a positive feedback loop would be the Adventurer in Need system in the duty finder. When a certain role is missing from the queue, the duty finder incentivises players to try in need roles with extra rewards. Figure 6 shows the bonus for a damage dealer (DPS) to be 4320 extra gil on top of the normal rewards. Another reward would be the ability to get to a duty faster than most.



Figure 6. The Trial Roulette, with normal and bonus rewards

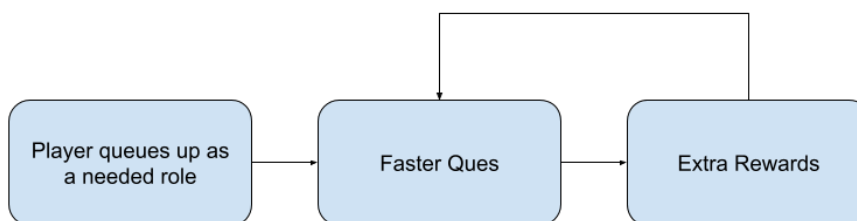


Figure 7. Loop for duty roulettes

Another example is the combo system in which abilities do more damage when done in a certain order.



Figure 8. The Ninja Combo

If one of the abilities is done out of order the combo breaks. Figure 9 shows that if the ability, Gust Slash, is used out of order the damage potency drops from 320 to 160.



Figure 9. Gust Slash ability description

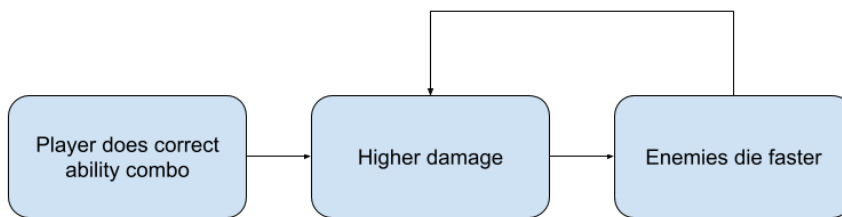


Figure 10. Loop for ability combos

Negative Loops

One example of a negative loop is the Vulnerability Up debuff. If a player fails a mechanic in an encounter, it is possible for them to receive the debuff, which makes them take more damage the next time they fail another mechanic.

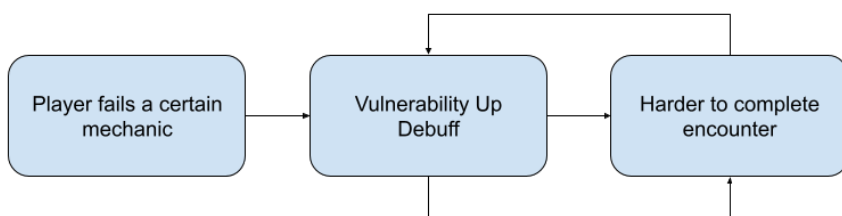


Figure 11. Loop for Vulnerability Up Debuff

Core Loop

The main core loop of the game is the main scenario. While many MMOs are known for their leveling and endgame, FFXIV is known mainly for its story updates that happen every few months. These story updates are vital for the progression for the rest of the game as only after certain quests have been completed the rest of the game opens up with further content to engage in.

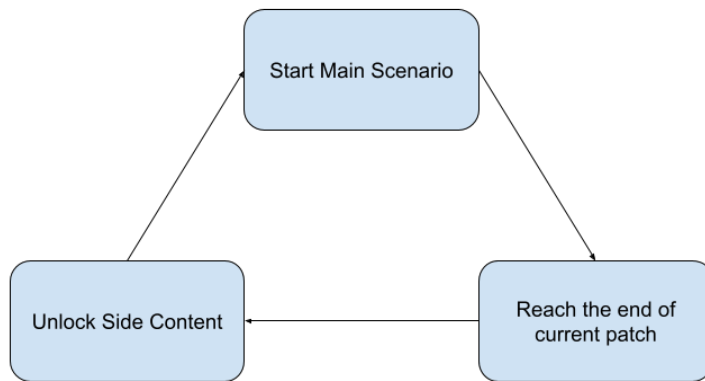


Figure 12. Core Loop

Sources:

1. https://eu.finalfantasyxiv.com/game_manual/
2. https://ffxiv.consolegameswiki.com/wiki/FF14_Wiki