

A dark, atmospheric photograph of a prison corridor. On the left, a series of cell doors with vertical metal bars are visible. The walls are made of concrete and show signs of wear and peeling paint. A high window on the right side allows some light into the space. The floor is dark and appears to be covered in debris or trash. The overall mood is somber and institutional.

The Prison

Level Design Document

Fernando Barroso

Level Pitch

- A **third person action adventure** single player level, with focus on exploration, puzzle solving and combat design. Estimated duration: **15 minutes**
- Our lost protagonist must **reach the radio station** located at the top of a prison tower to contact his group before it's too late. Little does he know that taking a seemingly safe route to reach it will cause him to face horrors that had been sealed for years...
- **Core concept:** Offering the player various **apparently obvious but actually fakes goals** through the level → subverting their expectations

Making them think outside the box in the slow-paced beats, and force them to face unexpected challenges and make immediate choices in the tense combat encounters.



Setting & Theme

- The level is set on a **post apocalyptic Earth**, where a zombie infection has take over the world and the few survivors left fight the dead and look for supplies in order to survive.
- The prison is located in the downtown of a decaying metropoli. Its entrances were closed long ago, so inside it, the infected have been trapped for years and the majority of the structures haven't survived the pass of time.
- This particular level has an overall **hopeless, dark and claustrophobic** feeling that aims to depict the most horrible face of humanity.



Level Design Pillars

- **Readability**

The level should allow players to easily distinguish what's going on in the level, where different paths are and how to progress. To help inform the player so they can make informed decisions.

- **Curiosity**

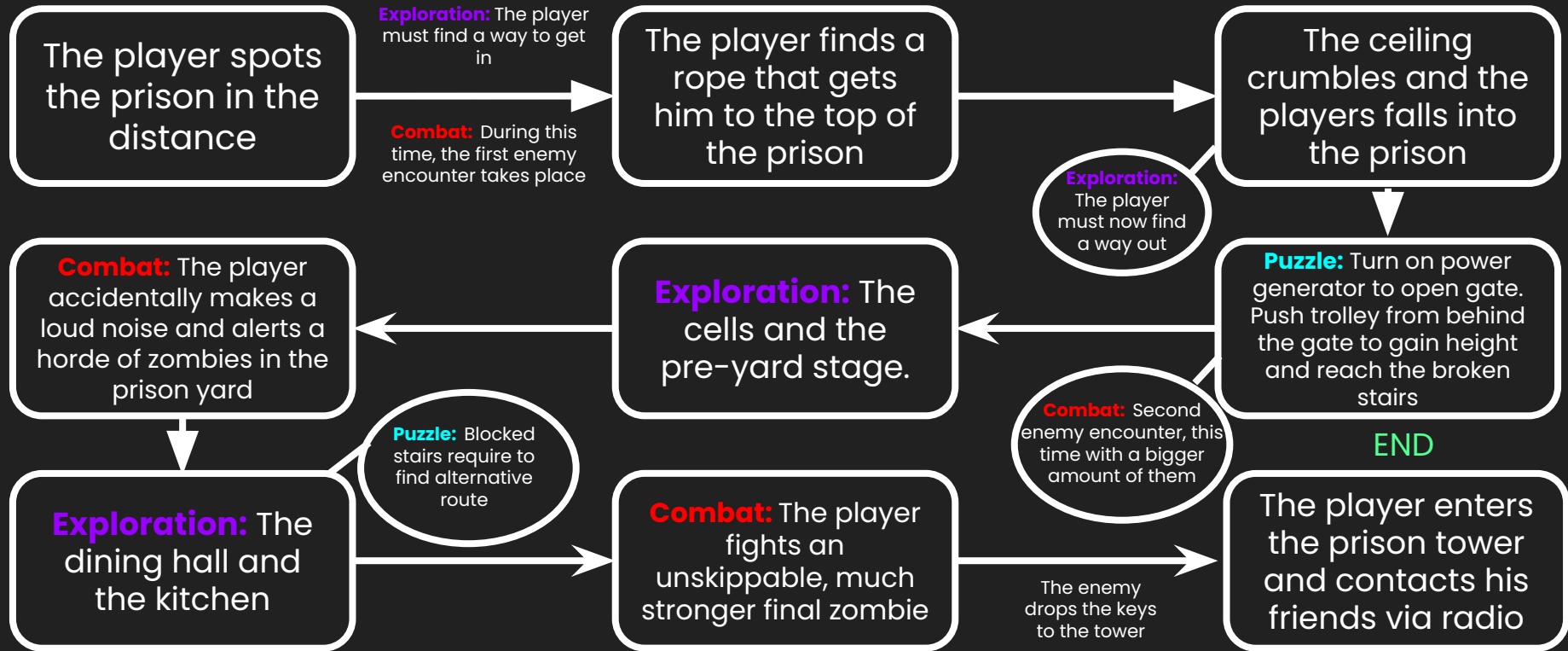
The level should pique the players curiosity in different ways to motivate them to investigate and explore their surroundings

- **Escalation**

The level should give the player a sense of escalation. The level should increase the challenge the further along the player gets.

Level Beats

START

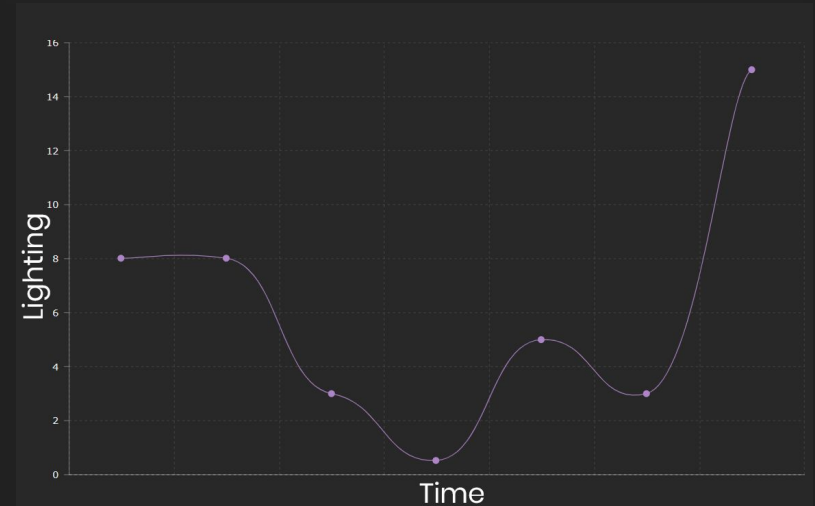
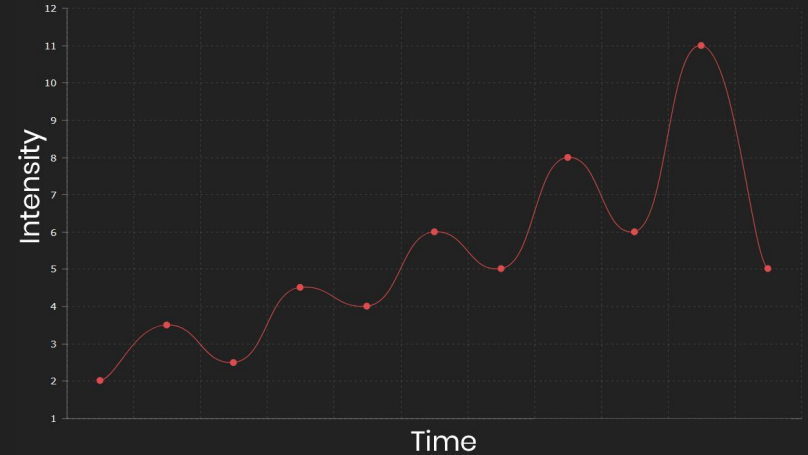




Pacing Graph

The pace is managed to create a constant **increasing sense of tension** as the level progresses, but giving **short breaks** in the form of exploration or puzzles after each combat peak to avoid the level from being exhausting to play.

The level's lighting follows a rather opposite curve, because I will use darkness as a way to increase tension. The level will start with a **cloudy evening** under a pouring rain and after the "crumbling ceiling" beat, the player will wake up in the **middle of the night**. After the turning the generator on, the player will gain some weak artificial light. At the end though, the player will peak the **morning sun** at the top of the prison tower.





Game Mechanics

- **The player**

The player's locomotion allows him to **walk, run, jump and crouch**. These actions will make a different amount of **noise** which will alert (or not) nearby enemies. He can **shoot and melee attack** to defend from these enemies. In terms of vertical navigation the player can also **climb reachable structures**.

- **Supplies and collectibles**

There will be supplies in form of **health packs, weapons and ammo** scattered all across the level. The player must manage and use them wisely in order to succeed, as they are limited. Apart from these, there will also be pickups in the form of **collectibles**, which will give pieces of information about the game's world and setting.

- **Enemies**

Enemies represent a threat to the player, they have a **short range of attack** but generally **move faster** than him. The enemies can **see** (if player enters in their cone of vision) and **hear** the player (if alerted through noise)

Basic enemy → The first enemy the player will encounter. They don't take much damage but can cause problem in groups.

Advanced enemy → They first appear around the half part of the level. They and cause more damage.

The final enemy → A more deadly, though version of the advanced enemy, but slower.

Look & Feel – Moodboard





Look & Feel

- **Architecture Style**

The level will be feature a **ruined, post-apocalyptic look** of a nowadays developed city. The **puzzles** to solve will then be cause of the deteriorated state of the structures and will about finding **alternative ways** to advance.

- **Materials**

The prison uses **cement, dirt, vegetation and metal** materials.

- **Lighting**

As briefly discussed earlier, the **lighting will change drastically** through the course of the level to **match its tone**. Inside the prison, the overall tone will be dark and gloomy, but bright enough to see the surrounding environment. There will be some zones, however, in which the player will need to use a flashlight to even see in front of him.



Challenges

There is a **high demand of scripting** on this level. However, I see myself capable of achieving it. The most complex element to implement will be the **enemy AI behaviour**, and I will have to do some research about it.

Ultimately, as it is a solo project, it will **take more time to complete** than a regular blocking.