Title: Nail it! (working title)

Genre: 3D platformer with puzzle and adventure elements

Target platform: PC/Console

Core Loop: Explore islands, collect nails to build bridges and solve puzzles, fight screw enemies using hammer attacks and abilities, gather scrap for upgrades.

Art style: low-poly and cartoonish, vibrant visuals

Length: 1-2 hours with 5 islands total (tutorial + 4 main)

Story

You play as a silent carpenter protagonist whose trusty hammer shatters during a construction project. Desperate, you venture from your workshop into the woods to find a huge grumpy sledgehammer embedded in stone.

This sentient hammer—named “Sledge”—becomes your guide, urging you towards revenge against its arch-nemesis: a scheming screwdriver overlord who rules the distant final island.

Sledge and the screwdriver (named “Twist”) were once inseparable partners in a legendary workshop, forging masterpieces together. But Twist, ambitions and oily in his ways, betrayed Sledge during a great war between hammers and screwdrivers; stealing Sledge’s core “spark” (a magical essence which gives tools life) to power his screw army and conquer the archipelago. Sledge was robbed of agency and buried in shame, while Twist twisted the islands into fortified screw strongholds. Sledge’s rage stems from this betrayal, but deep down, he simply wants his friend back. Twist has had his mind warped by jealousy, claiming that hammers are blunt, ugly, and unworthy (but really he thinks hammers are dope as hell).

As you progress, island lore reveals flashbacks via nail NPCS: ancient tool myths, Twist’s rise to power, and hints that redemption (not just destruction) might resolve the feud. The silent protagonist blindly follows Sledge’s hot-headed advice while befriending nails who whisper doubts about blind revenge.

On the boss island, after a dramatic fight, Twist reveals that he kept Sledge’s spark to protect it from rusting away, since he secretly loves Sledge but doesn’t know how to handle it.

Basic Abilities

* Run, jump, double-jump, wall-cling and jump.

Hammer Abilities

* Swing, slam, charge swing, hammer jump boost, aerial slam

Collect nail friends by hammering them in various ways, some will gain respect for you after hammering them into a surface, others will need to be pulled out from the ground or rescued from areas. They join your crew (visual trail behind player) and enable abilities for the player.

* Hammer nails into walls/surfaces to create handholds for climbing or launch them at enemies.
* Hammer nails into switches to weigh them down and activate puzzles

Scrap collectibles

* Nuts, bolts, washers are found all throughout the islands
* Placing these in spots can help guide the player to the right location (or secret locations)

(AMBITIOUS) Island level design

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Island** | **Theme & Visuals** | **Key Mechanics Introduced/Featured** | **Plot Beats & Nail Friends** | **Enemies & Challenges** | **Collectibles & Secrets** |
| **Tutorial Island** | Sandy beach with scattered tool ruins; sunny, introductory vibes. | Run/jump/swing/slam basics; first nail hammering; simple bridge build. | Hammer intro dialogue sets grudge tease. Find 3 nails: "Spike" (brave leader), "Bendie" (flexible climber), "Rusty" (comic relief). They teach basics and build first bridge. | Weak drill-screws; basic pitfalls. | 5 scraps; hidden nail for bonus climb tutorial. |
| **Island 1: Verdant Forge (Forest Level)** | Lush, overgrown jungle with vine-wrapped ruins; dappled light, misty depths. | Nail climbing chains; charge swing for breaking thorny barriers. Introduce enemy variety (vine-screws that lash out). | Flashback nail tells of Forge War origins. Collect 4 nails: Eco-themed (e.g., "Thorn" for vine puzzles). Crew doubts Sledge's rage. | Twisty vine-screws; swinging vine platforming; screw nests to clear. | 12 scraps; secret grove with upgrade altar. |
| **Island 2: Abandoned Mine/Factory** | Dim caverns with glowing ore veins; industrial grit, echoing drips, bioluminescent fungi. | Nail levers for mine carts; echo slam to reveal hidden paths (sound-based puzzles). Water hazards with floating screw debris. | Nail lore on Twist's betrayal—Sledge's spark theft. Collect 4 nails: Miner types (e.g., "Diggy" for burrowing shortcuts). Sledge rants about old glory days. | Burrowing screws; collapsing tunnels; dark ambushes. | 12 scraps; echo chamber secret with audio log (Sledge's "memory"). |
| **Island 3: Stormy Spires** | Wind-swept peaks with precarious ledges; dramatic clouds, lightning effects, precarious nail bridges mid-air. | Double-jump + nail chains for verticality; wind currents for gliding. Magnetic hammer pull for distant nails. | Mid-game twist: A nail reveals Twist hoards the spark "for safekeeping." Collect 5 nails: Aerial aces (e.g., "Gust" for wind deflection). Crew votes on trusting Sledge. | Aerial dive-screws; gust puzzles; falling rock platforming. | 15 scraps; summit vista with panoramic archipelago map unlock. |
| **Island 4: Twist’s Labyrinth** | Maze-like hedges of coiled metal; eerie fog, mirror illusions from polished screws. | Group nail puzzles (e.g., form shapes to fit locks); illusion-breaking slams. | Build-up: Nails share Twist's "jealousy" motive. Collect 5 nails: Trickster variants (e.g., "Mirror" for reflection puzzles). Sledge softens, hints at friendship. | Illusion screws (fakeouts); maze chases; reflective combat arenas. | 15 scraps; hidden "betrayal chamber" with Sledge/Twist relic. |
| **Boss Island: The Screw Throne** | Volcanic core with molten forges; fiery reds, lightning strikes, hammering anvils, throne of twisted screws. | All mechanics combined; dynamic boss arena shifts (idk). | Climax: Boss fight vs. Twist (phases: drill charges, screw summons, spark shield). Post-fight: Wacky fusion ritual—you hammer Sledge and Twist together, revealing bromance. | Mega-screw minions; environmental hazards (lava flows). | 10 scraps |