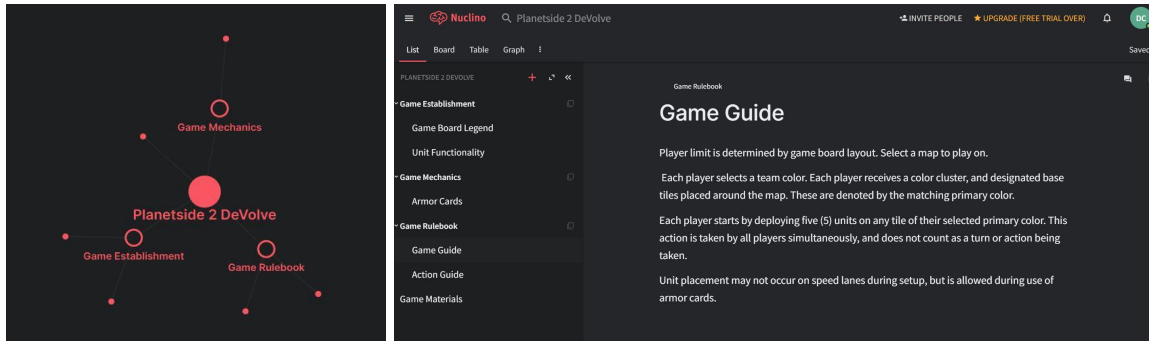


Planetside - The Board Game

Explanation of Devolution

This devolution was organized through [Nuclino](#). Here's [the ZIP file](#) for this board in order to better visualize it if you want to open it in the app. If you don't want the hassle, here's some images of the Devolve Map in Nuclino:



Now that the boring parts are out of the way, let's talk about Devolving this game. Originally, I began work with a team of three that had various ideas on what to create from this project. There was a lot of discussion around what games our group had all played in order to find a universal experience to build out, so we'd all be able to work towards a common goal. This ultimately didn't end up working out due to gaps in similarity of our preferred games. At the time, I had started heavily playing Planetside 2, a strategic FPS with lots of militaristic territory control elements involved in its gameplay. It also happened to have gridlike styling to its maps, so this felt like a great place to start building out a devolution of a game with so many board game-like elements already.

I began by playing the game in the context of Platoon Commander in-game, as it provides the best representation of a tactical mindset while playing the game. You issue orders, move groups of soldiers and artillery around an expansive and varied map, and ultimately fight towards victory over your opponents to control the continent that you've been fighting over for at least a few hours, if not an entire IRL day depending on player competitiveness.

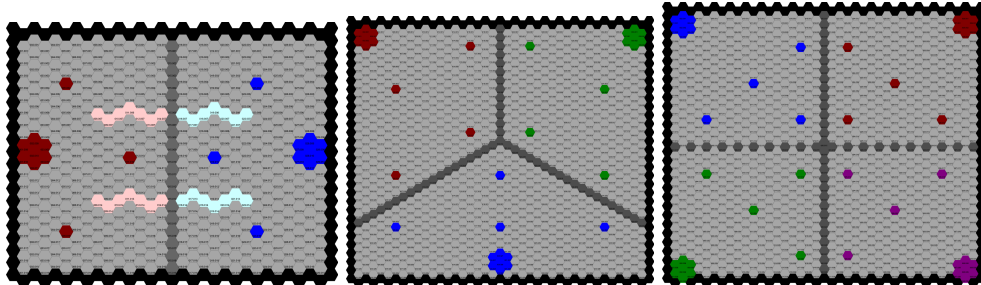
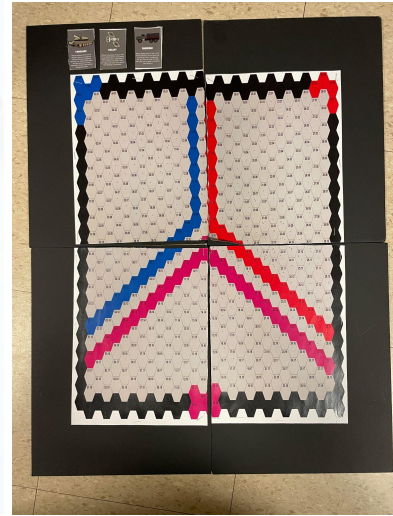
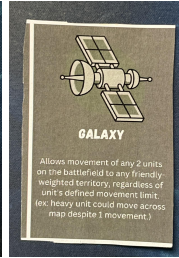
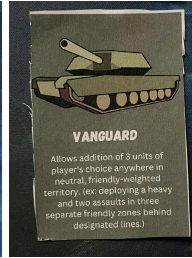
Once I had a good feeling of this dynamic, I moved on to constructing the maps and rules that would be used to fight these vast conflicts at the scale of a tabletop experience. I debated using maps made previously by the developers, but unfortunately the maps didn't lend themselves well to hex conversion in the software I was using to create my map called [Worldographer](#). Instead, I got to creating my own maps for the game, using the basic colors of Planetside's factions to guide the building process. There would be three players, just as the original had three factions in combat against one another. These players would act as I did, playing the commander role of an entire army of units to use at their strategic and tactical wills. I decided on a basic hex map with clearly defined starting points of each player, denoted

by primary colors on the board. This allowed me to build rules off of the digital game which provided different elements of movement, combat, terrain control, and general strategy while coordinating an army. Once this was complete, I moved onto laying the ground rules for the game, as seen in the most recent revision in labeled boxes below this word wall. These would be representative of the core gameplay loop, while not exceeding the scope of the game, which was to simply transfer a digital game's mechanics into tabletop format in about three weeks. By sticking to a small subset of game rules that felt prevalent, I was able to capture the feeling of strategic war in the game without worrying about the FPS or communication snags that would have been encountered without proper definition.

Finally, the game came into the creation and playtest stage. I assembled what I thought would be adequate pieces representing factions for my game board, and soon realized that they were too large for the print size that I could achieve within my time limit. Instead, materials such as thumb tacks were used as units rather than figurines, and a foam game board was created to act as a reusable base for various different maps that could be added down the line. Once these features were sorted out, play testing began. Instantly, my rule set was challenged by the ambiguity of some wording within my documentation, but thankfully through conceptual explanation and interpreted functionality of the rules, the game did not fall apart. Soon after this, it became a great example of adaptation of the game to the format it's played in. A three player game had one leave, allowing only two to continue the fight. The territory was divided up, and a three player map was reworked within seconds to accommodate this change. It proved the versatility of the design, and the fun that could be had with the concept later on through additional map creation work.

Overall, I learned a lot about how what I'd created could work versus how it did work, and this became a highlight of the project as I learned what drove players during a strategy-based experience that was unique to them. This is getting a tad too long, so here are the Ins and Outs of Planetside: The Board Game.

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| Game Materials | <p>Battle Map, 2 players -1x</p> <p>Battle Map, 3 players -1x</p> <p>Battle Map, 4 players -1x</p> <p>Game Board - 1x, 4 sections</p> <p>Faction Pieces - 45x each (Or player assessed amount)</p> <p>Armor Cards - 2x of each per player</p> |
|-----------------------|---|



Game Board Legend

- Primary Color Tiles: Player Strongholds
- Secondary Color Tiles: Speed Lanes
- Divider: Distinction of each player's territories

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|---------------------------|---|
| Game Guide | <p>Player limit is determined by game board layout. Select a map to play on.</p> <p>Each player selects a team color. Each player receives a color cluster, and designated base tiles placed around the map. These are denoted by the matching primary color.</p> <p>Each player starts by deploying five (5) units on any tile of their selected primary color. This action is taken by all players simultaneously, and does not count as a turn or action being taken.</p> <p>Unit placement may not occur on speed lanes during setup, but is allowed during use of armor cards.</p> <p>Turn order is determined by highest dice roll, or winner of RPS.</p> <p>Once Game Setup has been completed, turns can begin.</p> <p>Players have three possible actions to take during their turn. See Action Guide for all plays.</p> <p>Capture of all enemy colored tiles on the map will result in defeat of that player.</p> <p>Defeat all other players to win, or fight other players to surrender by destroying their units.</p> |
| Unit Functionality | <p>Unit movement limit is 5 within friendly lines, and 3 outside of these lines.</p> <p>If a unit is within a speed lane, denoted by a lighter color of each team, then unrestricted movement of that unit is allowed within the lane, even if an enemy unit is blocking the path.</p> |
| Action Guide | <p>Each turn has three actions that can be taken, stated below. These actions are mutually exclusive - only one action may be taken per turn.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deployment - place troops on controlled territories. Multiple units allowed on a single tile. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attack/Defend - Fight to control your current territories, or go on the offensive in new ones. Use dice/RPS to decide winner. • Reinforce - Move troops around your controlled territories in a purely strategic capacity. No movement against other players in this action of the turn. Movement limits defined in Unit functionality apply. |
| Armor Cards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition: Modifier Cards that provide bonuses to players. • Each player gets two of each armor card to utilize during a game. • Sunderer: Allows deployment of one unit in hostile territory with at least one (1) friendly unit in an adjacent tile. (ex: If a unit is cut off, then this card can be used to reinforce their efforts.) • Vanguard: Allows addition of 3 units of player's choice anywhere in friendly territory. • Galaxy: Allows movement of any 3 units on the battlefield to any friendly tile, regardless of defined movement limit. |

Playtest Observations

Key

Feedback implemented in rules In Progress Not Viable/Not Implemented Q&A of Players

colored tacks will allow much more clarity in control of territory

explain that multiple tacks can be placed on one zone

add control nodes for players to capture

- for example, if a player captures all frontline zones of enemy player, provide bonus to aggressor

add commanders of the battlefield, specialized pins that have units attached to them to add power struggle to game.

Maybe 2-3 each per player.

If all commanders of opposing army are killed, game ends.

Commanders could be located at set points on the map. Once killed, capture the enemy base to win the game.

Join all tiles of enemy base to prevent infinite fighting at base, though allow spawning in base even if an

opposing player is attacking the base.

Currently, there is no end goal of the game. Make the final end goal of the game to capture all colored tiles of enemy base.

To balance the map out, move the front lines of each team farther back to encourage neutral ground fights.

add a given number of units for players to use, otherwise infinite numbers of units are called up to fight at the front

add neutral zones for players to capture

convert to 2 player game to allow for better strategic balance.

cards seem to be used to break strategic stalemate. Reword rules on cards to reflect this, but otherwise this is intended. Nice.

Max army size should be determined by having enough to control all enemy colored tiles, plus x additional units to fight back against attacks.

add movement channels, so once a player reaches a line they can move freely within.

- Did it feel slow or strategic?

Little slow, but solved by limiting piece count

- Did you have enough options to play as you wanted?

Yes, make it harder by not allowing backward movement. Cards will allow for this.

- Add a two, three, and four player map to add variety to gameplay

One less of each card, as it provides too much power.

Clearly define ruleset.

- "Like risk and chess had a baby. With a little bit of battleship in there."

